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## Commitment about making province polio free to be fulfilled: Efforts to be made fruitful for eradication of polio together with international partners & national institutions, pledges Bugti

Chief Minister & President of Global Development Division, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation agreed upon making anti-polio campaign coordinated in Balochistan province

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has reiterated his government's resolve to make the province polio free. He vowed that the endeavours to be made fruitful for eradication of the polio from province together with international partners and national institutions.

The Chief Minister was in meeting with the head of Polio Oversight Board and President of the Global Development Division, Bill and Melinda

Gates Foundation, Dr. Christopher Elias who called on him along with his delegation here at the CM's secretariat on Tuesday.

Also present on the occasion were Provincial Minister for Health, Sardarzada Faisal Jamali and other concerned high ups.

During the course of meeting, there was discussion about eradication of polio in the province. There was also consensus on making the anti-polio campaign coordinated in the

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Head of Polio Oversight Board Dr. Christopher Elias meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

## Pakistan committed to peaceful international relations despite challenges: DPM Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday emphasized Pakistan's commitment to maintaining peaceful, cooperative and good neighborly relations, with all countries despite facing challenges and setbacks in certain instances.

Speaking at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad's (ISSI) 51st Foundation Day, he highlighted the importance of dialogue, the avoidance of bloc politics, and adherence to the UN Charter.

Dar stressed Pakistan's focus on economic development and regional peace, particularly with Afghanistan and India, advocating for stability in South Asia.

He also underscored Pakistan's strong strategic partnership with China, its desire for deeper ties with

neighboring and major powers, and its commitment to multilateralism.

The overarching goal was to enhance regional connectivity and economic security through a pivot to geo-economics, he added.

Dar stated that despite challenges, Pakistan remained steadfast.

He stressed the importance of communication, dialogue, and negotiations to mitigate risks, advocating for a collaborative approach that respected all nations' interests and aspirations.

The DPM reiterated Pakistan's opposition to bloc politics, endorsing cooperation over confrontation and commitment to the UN Charter and international law.

He noted the profound

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar delivers remarks at 51st Anniversary of Institute of Strategic Studies.

## General debate continues on provincial budget in BA: Balochistan's next FY budget lacks concrete strategy for solving issues, any mega project: Opposition MPAs

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The members of provincial assembly belonging to Opposition parties have charged that the next financial year budget of Balochistan is lacking the concrete strategy and mega projects for resolving the issues of province.

They demanded of the government to give equal importance to all areas of the province, as their areas and constituencies are allegedly overlooked in the budget.

The Opposition MPAs were expressing their views on the provincial budget during the budget session here on Tuesday. The Speaker, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq

Achakzai was in the chair. The MPA belonging to National Party, Rehmat Saleh Baloch said that the budget of hope for everyone, however, there is no concrete strategy for resolving the public issues in the budget.

He also said that no mega project has been included in the budget even. He said that the law and order situation is not better in the province while on the other hand, the federation has also overlooked the province.

He said that the people are disappointed due to the unemployment. He said that we have to ponder

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs Federal Cabinet Meeting.

## Cabinet approves Operation Azam-e-Istehkam Azm-e-Istehkam to energize IBOs sans any population displacement: PM tells cabinet

No new duty will be slapped on solar panels for common man

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, ruling out any large-scale military operation, on Tuesday said that Azm-e-Istehkam was a multi-domain, multi-agency and whole of system national vision, aimed at decisively rooting out the nebulous and shadowy presence of remnants of terrorists, and violent extremism.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting of the Federal Cabinet, took the members into confidence about the prevailing misunderstanding and speculations about the Azm-e-Istehkam, saying that instead of any large-scale operation, the already ongoing intelligence-based kinetic operations, would be energized and expedited.

In his remarks, he informed the Cabinet members that no additional duty would be imposed on the solar panels to ensure the accessibility of low-cost energy to every citizen.

He said the government was planning to put the national economy on a positive trajectory and expressed satisfaction over the country heading towards economic stability.

The prime minister reiterated the resolve to boost the country's exports by promoting Small and Medium Enterprises and withdrawing privileges from the elite class and those exploiting the national resources. The economic protection of the common man and providing them equal opportunities were among the government's priorities, he added.

## Govt decides to cut PSDP budget by Rs250bto 'overcome' shortfall

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal said that the government would cut Rs 250 billion from the proposed budget for the fiscal year 2024-25.

Speaking to the media, Ahsan Iqbal said that confirmed that a cut of Rs 250 billion would be made in the federal development program.

He said that the cut was essential to overcome the revenue shortfall and that the development budget had to bear the brunt of it.

"The Public Sector Development Programme's (PSDP) budget has been reduced from Rs 1400 billion to Rs 1150 billion," the minister for planning added.

## Eight of a family shot dead over property dispute

PESHAWAR (INP): Eight members of a family including women and children were shot dead and two injured over property dispute here on Tuesday.

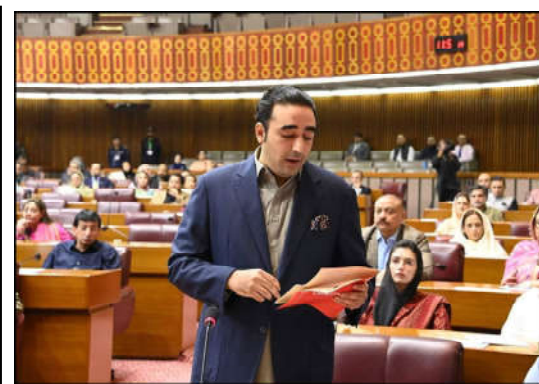
Police said that armed men barged into house of rival in Badaber area of Peshawar and opened indiscriminate fire at the residents.

As a result of firing, eight family members including four women and four children were killed while two others sustained bullet wounds.

The culprits fled the scene after committing the crime.

The bodies and injured were shifted to hospital and police after registering a case against culprits started raids for their arrest.

He regretted that the



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari stressed the importance of taking political input in the formation of federal budget 2024-25.

## Bilawal announces to provide constitutional protection to BISP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday appreciated the government's proposal to increase the allocation for Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) by 27% and announced plans to provide constitutional cover to it.

Participating in the budget debate, he said the objective behind this constitutional cover was to ensure that no future government could reverse the program, following the example of other countries that wanted to provide relief to their masses.

"This program should be provided with constitutional cover so that nobody can reverse it," the PPP chairman said.

The proposed increase in BISP allocation underscores the government's focus on social welfare and poverty alleviation, reaffirming its dedication to the welfare of the most vulnerable segments of society, he added.

He regretted that the

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government tried to end this program, which provided support to thousands of families in the country.

The chairman noted that data gathered for the BISP was being used during floods and other climate disasters to provide relief to the people.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the main issues facing common people were inflation and unemployment and

urged all political parties to sit together and come up with suggestions to overcome these problems.

He believed that it would have been much better if the government had consulted with allied and opposition parties before preparing the budget.

"We know the difficulties of the government; if the consultation had been held, the outcome would have been much better," he added. The chairman said that the people of the country were not concerned with the problems of political parties.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa and Raheela Hameed Khan Durran meeting with Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani.

## There is no law of phone tapping in place, what is being done its illegal: IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has remarked in audio leaks case no law regarding phone tapping is in place and what is going on is illegal.

Adjourning the hearing of the case for indefinite period Justice Babar Sattar remarked this is not matter of national security. I reject your plea for in chamber hearing of the case.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) requested repeatedly for in-chamber hearing of the case.

Justice Babar Sattar remarked I am not asking national security secret from you. We will not start joke of chamber hearing.

He further remarked people should know why are you intruding in the privacy of the people. Here courts don't know you are doing what. This is not national security. You cannot say law has been enacted or otherwise.

Justice Babar Sattar heard petitions of Bushra Bibi and Najam ul Saqib against audio leaks.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) Munawwar Iqbal Dogal told the court interior ministry issued one SOP. ISI and IB can obtain data from service providers directly.

The other law enforcement agencies can obtain data from these agencies when need arises.

Justice Babar Sattar remarked this SOP was issued by a section officer. No mention is made about the respective authority. How this power lies with the interior ministry. This SOP was issued under what law. How live location can be shared without warrant. Government decided under what law that you can obtain this data. You did not tell about phone tapping.

AAG told Sindh High Court had directed to provide data to secret agencies in missing persons case.

The counsel for PTA said we have not allowed any one for phone tapping. PTA is conducting surveillance. It is regulator.

## UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator calls on Balochistan Governor

Coordinator calls on Balochistan Governor

QUETTA (APP): United Nations (UN) Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Muhammad Yahya called on Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandukhel at the Governor's House on Tuesday. During the meeting, the stability of infrastructure in the province, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), development needs, measures to deal with natural disasters, the harms of global warming and awakening a collective sense of

rights and duties among the people were discussed.

Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandukhel said that the correct determination of the objectives indicated the real destination, therefore, we have to demonstrate the efficient use of financial arrangements and human resources in order to reach the destination and set the pace of development.

Continued on page 2

## Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi appointed as Member of PMDC from Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) has appointed Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi as a member from Balochistan. Dr. Buledi is the first female doctor from Balochistan to represent the province in the PMDC.

Currently, Dr. Buledi is a member of the Balochistan Assembly and Advisor to the Chief Minister on Women Development.

She has previously served as Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Science and Information Technology, Law, and Parliamentary Affairs, and Chairperson of the Women Parliamentary Caucus.

Dr. Buledi has been recognized for her outstanding

## Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi appointed as Member of PMDC from Balochistan

services, including her role in drafting the Balochistan Healthcare Commission Act and developing a module for the health sector that was adopted by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She was awarded the highest civilian award, Sitara-e-Imtiaz, by the Government of Pakistan for her services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Virus detected in 18 months old child: New polio case reported in Balochistan; tally of cases rise to five

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Another polio case has been surfaced in Balochistan province increasing the tally of polio cases to five during the current year.

The Health Department sources informed that the new polio case has been reported from Killa Abdullah where the virus was detected in 18-months old child.

With this, the number of polio cases in Killa Abdullah increased to two while to five in Balochistan province.

Prior to this, polio

cases had been reported from Dera Bugti, Killa Abdullah, Chaman and Quetta.

At the outset, six polio cases have so far been reported in Pakistan. One case was reported from Sindh this year.

It may be mentioned here that Balochistan remained polio free province in 2022 and 2023. Earlier, one polio case was reported in 2021 while record 26 cases had been reported in 2020. Aggregately, a total of 59 cases of polio have been reported in Balochistan since 2015.

## President underlines efforts to create awareness about drug abuse, strengthen laws, engage communities

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has stressed that eliminating the scourge of drug abuse required creation of awareness, strengthening of anti-narcotics laws, investing in prevention and treatment and engaging communities.

"We also need to educate our youth about the harmful impacts of drug abuse to save them from this menace. Additionally, we should divert the energies of our youth into healthy and productive activities. The future of our young generation lies in our hands," the president said in a message on the occasion of 'International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking' being observed on June 26.

Today, the president said they commemorated the international day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking under the theme "The evidence is clear: invest in prevention."

The day highlighted the urgency of taking concrete steps to eliminate the scourge of drugs from the society by intensifying efforts to prevent drug abuse and trafficking in Pakistan, he added.

"Drug production and illicit trafficking not only im-

mensely harm our youth and their families, but are also a potential source of financing for criminal and terrorist elements," he observed.

The president also called upon every citizen to support the government in its fight to eradicate drugs from our society.

"I urge each one of you to raise awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse at the individual, family, and community levels, prioritizing prevention and treatment," President Secretariat Press Wing, in a press release, quoted the president as saying.

President Zardari further said that addressing the root causes of drug abuse required an integrated approach involving all stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies (LEAs), media, civil society, parents and teachers.

"We must curb the flow of drugs into our society, especially within educational institutions, by targeting drug suppliers and peddlers. LEAs should adopt proactive measures and take strict actions against persons involved in drug trafficking," he maintained. The president expressed the hope that through their collective efforts, they could achieve a drug-free Pakistan.



QUETTA: Leader of PPP and former Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwala, Rozi Khan Kakar and Changez Khan Jamali and others meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti

## Balochistan's next FY budget

Continued from page 1

upon that how to end the situation of uncertainty in the province.

He said that the issues are not being resolved despite the assurance made by the Prime Minister to Chief Minister.

Speaking in the assembly, the National Party chief and MPA, Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch said that the Opposition should tolerate Opposition.

He said that the time would be wasted if every minister would respond to the

opposition. He said that all knows as who is in the favour of development of Balochistan.

Another Opposition MPA, Khair Jan Baloch said that the scheme of grid station in Awaran has not been included in the budget.

He said that the important issue is that how to take the youth of province in confidence. He demanded of the government to provide ample opportunities of jobs and livelihood to the people.

He said that all areas of the province are important, however, preference should be given to areas which are more backward and disturbed due to law and order.

Khair Jan Baloch on the occasion pledged to defend rights of the people of his constituency. He also said that we are ready to extend every possible cooperation for development of the province. He also demanded recruitments in education department on merit.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretaries Mir Barkat Ali Rind, Mir Asghar Rind, Meena Majeed Baloch and MPs Mir Ghulam Dastagir Badini, Mir Rehmat Saleh Baloch and Khair Jan Baloch expressing their views on budget during Balochistan Assembly session chaired by Speaker Captain (ret'd) Abdul Khalil Achakzai

## Pakistan committed to peaceful...

Continued from page 1

global transformation highlighted by leaders like Xi Jinping and Olaf Scholz, marking the shift towards a multipolar world order.

"We are living in an increasingly tumultuous and dangerous world, with traditional and new security threats," he said, adding that Pakistan's approach focused on a peaceful neighborhood policy and sustainable economic development, emphasizing the link between peace and development.

A peaceful, stable, united, and prosperous Afghanistan was in Pakistan's interest due to shared history, geography, culture, and music, he added.

The deputy prime minister said that since the Taliban takeover in August 2021, Pakistan had cooperated with Afghanistan to avert a humanitarian crisis and support the Afghan people.

Pakistan emphasized that Afghan soil must not be used for terrorism against any state and urged Afghan authorities to address its concerns, he added.

Dar said a peaceful, stable Afghanistan would benefit both countries and promote prosperity in Central Asia and beyond.

He said Pakistan sought good relations with India based on mutual respect, sovereign equality, and a peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, rejecting any unilateral approaches or attempts at hegemony.

"We will maintain strategic stability in South Asia and respond decisively to any ill-considered military actions by the Hindu-driven government in New Delhi," he added.

Regarding the new term of BJP-led NDA government in India, he called for reflection on India-Pakistan relations and regional issues.

The DPM stated that India's unilateral actions on August 5, 2019 in Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, harmed bilateral

relations, and urged India to take steps to create an environment conducive to meaningful dialogue.

He urged India to end its smear campaign, cease state-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, and take concrete steps for positive relations.

South Asian nations must address poverty and low human development rankings, Dar added.

He noted that South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, (SAARC) remained stalled due to one member state's obstinacy.

The DPM emphasized Pakistan's strategic partnership with China as pivotal to its foreign policy, adding

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was trans formative, boosting Pakistan's economy and regional prosperity.

The recent visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China reaffirmed the strategic importance, both countries placed on the relationships and CPEC, the DPM added.

He said upon completing 10 years of CPEC, Pakistan agreed to pursue its upgraded version, focusing on industrialization, digitalization, green initiatives, agriculture, and people-to-people exchanges

Ensuring the safety of Chinese personnel and projects, Pakistan-China relations will continue to benefit both nations.

Pakistan aims for deeper partnerships with Iran, Gulf nations, Türkiye, Central Asian States, and Azerbaijan, prioritizing trade, investment, and regional connectivity through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

Maintaining a stable relationship with the United States was crucial, he said, adding that along with fostering ties with major powers like Russia, the European Union, Japan, and ASEAN to enhance economic security amid global geopolitics.

## UN Resident & Humanitarian...

Continued from page 1

He said that in this regard, sixteen different subsidiary organizations of the United Nations in Balochistan were providing support and guidance to the Balochistan government in various areas of life, with whose partnership we were setting new goals for achieving our development needs and SDGs.

The Governor said that it was our misfortune that Balochistan was still economically and socially backward compared to other provinces of the country, due to the small but scattered population of the province, it was very difficult to provide all the basic facilities to the people. For which we need the help and guidance of international institutions, he said adding that in view of the observance of human rights, we have made concrete arrangements for all our national priorities, development projects and future action plans which were yielding positive results.

He said that apart from this, we were also trying to teach women's economic independence and modern skills to the new generation. While appreciating the full cooperation of the United Nations agencies, he said that overcoming the initial difficulties in achieving the goals of sustainable development and respecting human rights was definitely a positive development but they were using all the available resources to expand the efficiency of their institutions and to raise its quality.

Governor Balochistan drew the attention of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan Muhammad Yahya and said that you should help us avoid the harm of global warming, he could provide full support in establishing modern trauma centers at the district level and ensuring the provision of basic facilities to those living below the poverty line.

## Afghanistan beat Bangladesh to reach T20 last four; Australia eliminated from World Cup

ST VINCENT (INP): Afghanistan advanced to their first-ever T20 World Cup semi-final after completing a dramatic eight-run victory over Bangladesh in a rain-affected clash at the Arnos Vale Stadium in St Vincent.

Defending a modest total of 115 for five on a bowler-friendly surface, Afghan captain Rashid Khan belied three rain stoppages, a slippery ball and a revised target of 114 off 19 overs to take four for 23 as Bangladesh, who themselves harboured faint hopes of making the last four, were dismissed for 105 off 17.5 overs.

An unbeaten 54 from opener Litton Das was threatening to take Bangladesh to victory and earn Australia the last semi-final spot on net-run-rate. But pacer Naveenul Haq claimed the last two wickets Taskin Ahmed and Mustafizur Rahman off consecutive deliveries in the penultimate over of the match to trigger delirious Afghan celebrations.

With India defeating Australia earlier in the day and advancing to the second semi-final against England in Guyana on Thursday, this result assured the Afghans of second spot in the group and eliminated the Aussies together with the

Bangladeshis. Afghanistan will now face South Africa in the first semi-final in Trinidad on Wednesday.

Bangladesh had to chase their original target of 116 down in 12.1 overs to pip both Australia and Afghanistan to the semi-final. Their chase was delayed by half an hour, thanks to a 20-minute downpour. A shorter game, therefore, was disadvantageous to Bangladesh.

After the second rain break, though, Bangladesh sent out mixed signals. Litton attacked Naveen but Soumya Sarkar fell in a bid to do so against Rashid.

Towhid Hridoy's risks against Mohammad Nabi, which included a dropped catch, came off but he, too, holed out off Rashid. But with Litton hitting Rashid for successive fours - first over mid-off and then just past slip - Bangladesh looked on track to hunt the target down to qualify.

But soon, Mahmudullah's indecisiveness and Rishad Hossain's adventurousness meant they slipped to 80 for 7 after 11 overs. Which is when the rainy clouds returned to continuously hover around the stadium, and constantly brought the DLS par scores into picture for the rest of the night.



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Delegation of Istihkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) headed by Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq.

## Azm-e-Istehkam to energize...

Continued from page 1

During the briefing on the Economic Coordination Committee's decision, the Cabinet meeting was informed that the country had sufficient stock of sugar and the Sugar Advisory Board and relevant departments had approved exporting the leftover stock of sugar after taking into account the expected consumption before the next crushing season and assessing the surplus stock.

The prime minister said the government would not tolerate any increase in the sugar price and instructed the formation of a committee to monitor the sugar price and stop its export in case of any possibility of a price hike.

The meeting approved the annual report of the National Economic Council for fiscal year 2022-23, prepared by the Planning Ministry for tabling before the Parliament.

The Federal Cabinet endorsed the Economic Coordination Committee's decisions of June 13, 2024; Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases of June 11, 2024 and Cabinet Committee on State Owned Enterprises' decision of June 20, 2024.

Online adds: Federal cabinet while endorsing the

recommendations of Apex Committee of National Action Plan accorded approval to Operation Azam-e-Istehkam.

11-point agenda of meeting was issued. Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Sharif informed the federal cabinet about speculations regarding operation Azam-e-Istehkam saying operation Azam-e-Istehkam is not like the operation of past. People will have neither to face any difficulty in operation Azam-e-Istehkam nor any action like this will be taken in homes of people. But intelligence based action will be taken against some anti social elements.

Federal cabinet approved operation Azam-e-Istehkam. Federal cabinet also deliberated over annual report of National Economic Council for the financial year 2022-23.

Cabinet also endorsed the decisions of ECC, CCLLC and cabinet committee for government owned institutions.

The federal cabinet also gave approval to NOC for sending shipment of spare parts of world food program to Afghanistan and appointment of first Rector of Peer Roshan Institute of progressive Sciences and technologies.

## Message of Major General Abdul Moeed, HI(M) Director General Anti Narcotics Force on International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

The rising tide of drug

abuse poses an unprecedented challenge to our society, fueled by insidious trafficking networks and influenced by modern trends. It imperils our communities and undermines our values. We must stand firm, crafting robust strategies that weave together prevention, treatment, and enforcement measures. By tackling root causes and embracing a multifaceted approach, we can safeguard our future and reclaim our streets from the clutches of addiction.

Technology has revolutionized drug smuggling, moving beyond borders. From synthetic production to dark web trades with crypto currencies, enforcement faces new frontiers. The Pakistani government, through the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), collaborates with domestic and international partners to counter the production and spread of synthetic drugs. This effort aims to protect the youth and safeguard society from irreparable harm.

ANF engages in international cooperation to combat trafficking effectively by collaborating with foreign law enforcement agencies, participating in joint operations, sharing intelligence and best practices, and adhering to international drug policy commitments to address the transnational nature of the trade.

ANF's relentless pursuit against drug-related crimes is powered by a cutting-edge scientific approach. By harnessing modern forensic techniques, conducting meticulous data analysis, and fostering global partnerships, ANF ensures the gathering of irrefutable evidence. This commitment to scientific rigor not only bolsters investigations but also fortifies prosecutions, delivering justice with unwavering precision.

We owe gratitude to the "Shuhada of ANF" who sacrificed their lives in the noble fight against drugs. Their dedication guides our quest for a drug-free society. Applauding the ongoing vigilance of all ANF personnel.

May Allah be our Guide and Protector. Aameen...



reduce drug supply, including dismantling trafficking organizations, conducting controlled deliveries, eradicating poppy cultivation, and disrupting illicit drug supply chains. These efforts are crucial in combatting drug-related crimes and safeguarding communities from the harmful effects of drug abuse. The ANF campaign focuses on Harm Minimization and Zero Tolerance strategies aligned with global drug policies.

Presently, its Drug Demand Reduction initiatives prioritize awareness campaigns, addiction treatment centers, and community programs to decrease drug demand and assist affected individuals.

ANF engages in international cooperation to combat trafficking effectively

## Efforts to be made fruitfull...

Continued from page 1

province. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister mentioned that full security is being provided to the anti-polio workers engaged in the immunization campaigns in the province.

He said that the provincial and federal governments are determined for making the anti-polio campaign successful.

Meanwhile, the members of delegation led by Dr. Christopher apprised the

initiatives continued for eradication of polio. They also appreciated the resolve of government for ridding the province of polio virus.

They also highlighted the issues faced during the immunization campaigns.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister assured that the achievement of desired goal would be ensured regarding polio eradication moving ahead and resolving the issues faced by the anti-polio teams during campaigns.



QUETTA: UN's Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan Muhammad Yahya meeting with Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

ONE NATION - ONE DESTINATION  
DRUG FREE PAKISTAN

**26**  
JUNE 2024

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OTHERS FROM NARCOTICS  
AND WILL CONTINUE OUR  
EFFORTS AND STRUGGLE  
TO ERADICATE THIS  
MENACE FROM OUR  
COUNTRY.

THE INTERNATIONAL  
DAY  
Against Drug Abuse  
and Illicit Trafficking

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## Young business people, entrepreneurs builders of country's economy: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the young businessmen were the builders of country's future and economy.

He said that the government would provide all possible facilities to the business community for promotion of economic activities. The provision of conducive environment and formation of business friendly policies were among the top priorities of the incumbent government, he added.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of young entrepreneurs that called on him.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Commerce Jama Kamal, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister for Energy Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for

Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan, Chairman PM's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, relevant secretaries of the ministries and senior officials, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister underlined that the promotion of Pakistan's exports at the international level was critical for giving a spur to economic activities in the country in which the young entrepreneurs could play a significant role.

He said that the economic and trade deficits could be plugged with the cooperation of government and the business community, adding that a large number of youth could be transformed into talented manpower that would further bolster the country's economy.

The prime minister said the government was committed to end gender based discrimination in

provision of economic opportunities.

He also noted that the usage of latest technology for increasing agriculture yield could further boost the exports.

The prime minister informed the delegation that they were also reducing the size of the government's structure and resolved to make the state-owned entities more efficient.

During the meeting, the prime minister directed for the constitution of a youth entrepreneurs advisory committee comprising the youth business people on the pattern of Economic Coordination Committee.

The prime minister said the promotion of bilateral business cooperation between Pakistan and China was their top priority, adding with the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, the industrial development would be accelerated.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of young entrepreneurs calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Rubina Khalid advocates for economic empowerment through imparting technical training skills

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Tuesday emphasized the critical importance of economic empowerment as the foundation for all forms of empowerment.

She highlighted BISP's initiative to provide technical skills to its beneficiaries, aiming to lift them out of poverty.

Senator Rubina Khalid was speaking during a meeting with Amjad Zafar, Team Lead at the World Bank, and Gul Najam Jamy, held today at BISP headquarters.

The Chairperson BISP pointed out the global demand for human resource development,

stressing the need to implement a Poverty Graduation Programme focused on women empowerment.

She noted BISP's strong working relationship with the World Bank and underscored the necessity of further strengthening this collaboration.

In addition, Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted the importance of adopting a new payment mechanism with the support of the World Bank to ensure transparency.

She also emphasized the need to improve financial literacy among women beneficiaries. She reaffirmed the political leadership's directive that every BISP beneficiary must receive their full stipend amount

without any deductions, in a dignified manner.

The World Bank team assured their complete technical support in these initiatives and confirmed their availability for a follow-up meeting within the week to present their proposed payment model system for BISP beneficiaries.

Earlier in the day, Vice Chairperson of Punjab Social Protection (PSP), Jahan Ara Watto, also met Senator Rubina Khalid. Ms. Jahan Ara Watto expressed her appreciation for the BISP database, which PSP has been utilizing for its education and health related projects. She highlighted the value of the BISP database in effectively reaching the targeted beneficiaries.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Director General Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and others cutting the cake at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) on the occasion of a ceremony commemorating ISSI's 51 Anniversary at Federal Capital.

## Rana meets with HEC Chairman; discusses strategies for youth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan has said that empowering youth with required resources and development opportunities is the need of the hour as today's youth, are leaders of tomorrow.

He said this during a meeting with the Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr Mukhtar Ahmed here on Tuesday.

The meeting discussed various ways to promote positive engagement and development opportunities for the country's youth.

During the meeting, Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan and Dr Mukhtar Ahmed both emphasized the importance of collective efforts for skills,

education and overall empowerment of the youth population across the country. They discussed various initiatives and programs namely the Prime Minister's National Innovation Award, Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme, National Volunteer Corps and several other schemes that could be implemented to effectively engage and empower the youth. They said that the joint efforts of the Prime Minister Youth Program and HEC will enable to utilize resources and expertise to effectively maximize the impact on youth development. The Chairman PMYP and HEC expressed optimism about the future of youth development in Pakistan and reiterated their commitment to work together towards the common goal.

## ICT admin cracks down on overpricing; arrests vendors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, has directed the Assistant Commissioners and Magistrates for intensifying their efforts to control overpricing of vegetables, fruits, and bread in the Federal Capital.

During the inspection, the Islamabad Capital Territory Administration teams found several shopkeepers and vendors violating government-set rates. Immediate legal action was taken against those not adhering to the official prices, said the ICT Administration's spokesman.

In an action, a vegetable vendor was arrested for selling products at sub-standard and inflated prices, sending a strong message to others in the market.

## Randhawa announces establishment of DMA in federal capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Muhammad Ali Randhawa has announced the establishment of a Disaster Management Authority (DMA) in the federal capital.

The authority will be headed by the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad and the Director General of Capital Emergency Services will also report directly to him, he said in a press release. The chairman said the primary goal for establish-

ing this authority was to effectively handle any unforeseen situations that might arise in the city.

Muhammad Ali said the new DMA would be integrated with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and all emergency service departments also fall under the jurisdiction of the new authority. He also assured that the employment benefits and career progression of the employees in these departments would remain unaffected.

## PPAF disburses 274,730 interest-free loans worth Rs 12.20 billion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Programme (PPAF) disbursed 274,730 interest-free loans (65% loans to women) amounting to Rs 12.20 billion (including reflows) to borrowers from July 2023 to March 2024.

From July 2019 to March 2024, 2,677,227 loans (53% loans to women) with a value of Rs 101.71 billion (including reflows) have been disbursed.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid, meets with World Bank's Mr. Amjad Zafar and Gul Najam Jamy today to discuss initiatives for economic empowerment and technical skills training for BISP beneficiaries.

## USAT optional for university admissions, clarifies HEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC)/ Education Testing Council (ETC) has introduced the Undergraduate Studies Admissions Test (USAT) as a standardized tool for assessing student admissions to universities.

According to HEC, USAT is designed to ensure quality in the admissions process by evaluating academic aptitude.

It has been noticed

that there is misinformation circulating regarding the USAT. It is clarified that while HEC recommends USAT to universities, it is not mandatory for institutions to accept USAT scores. Each university retains the autonomy to decide whether to adopt USAT or conduct its own admission tests.

HEC encourages universities to consider USAT as a valuable option for admissions assessment.

## International day of Seafarer observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): International Day of the Seafarer was observed across the globe on Tuesday.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) designated 25 June as the International Day of the Seafarer in 2010.

The day also aimed to support and promote seafarers and sailors who are essential to the global trade and transport industry.

## Wafaqi Mohtasib directs PIMS admin to take immediate steps to fill vacant posts

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmad

He stated that there is no justification to stop the salaries of Emergency doc-



Qureshi on Tuesday directed the PIMS administration to take immediate steps to fill the vacant posts of Doctors, Nurses and Paramedical staff and make new MRI machine functional by November to provide better facilities to the patients.

tors and their pending salaries were paid immediately. He also directed the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) administration to increase the number of beds in emergency and install fans in all the wards. He gave these directions on receiving a re-

port from the Inspection team which visited PIMS Hospital, said a press release issued here.

Taking notice of specific complaints received against the hospital, Wafaqi Mohtasib sent an inspection team headed by Senior Advisor, Ahmad Farooq Khan and Consultant (Media) Khalid Sial, who submitted a preliminary report after visiting various departments of the Hospital. When the team reached there, it found rush of patients and lack of facilities for patients. The inspection team was informed that 396 doctors are working in the hospital, whereas 415 posts of doctors and 283 posts of Nurses are lying vacant. A total of 1265 vacancies are available including paramedical staff.

## Muqam underscores necessity of consistent, non-political approach to combating terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Engineer Amir Muqam, on Tuesday called for consistent and non-political approach to combating terrorism in the country.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he expressed the gratitude to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Minister of Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaulah for extending the tax exemption in the former FATA and PATA regions.

He said that the tax exemptions, originally granted in 2018, had been extended until 2023.

Despite external pressures from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and industrialists, the Prime Minister, considering the

current situation, extended the tax exemption period to June 2024. "This is not a personal issue; we are grateful to the Prime Minister and Finance Minister for making this wise decision under these circumstances," he added. He said that Minister for Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif also discussed Operation Azm-e-Istikhdam in the National Assembly, highlighting that all actions are taken collectively in the national interest.

Muqam noted that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was present at the apex committee meeting, where all decisions were made with the national interest in mind and said it would continue to be so.

He called for an end to double standards and political maneuvering regarding terrorism, sharing his own experiences to stress the importance of a unified approach.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan in a meeting with Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed.

## Sherry for convening body of Whole on Senate's powers to approve budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPP) Sherry Rehman on Tuesday demanded the Senate chairman to convene the Committee of the Whole to deliberate over the powers of Upper House of the Parliament to approve the Federal Budget 2024-25.

Speaking in the Senate, the PPP leader said though the Senate was the Upper House of the Parliament but its role in the approval of budget was limited.

Senator Rehman underscored that with equal representation of all the provinces, the Senate was the symbol of Federation.

She said it was cited that the senators were not directly elected representa-

tives. For that, she added, "the system of electing Senate members should be changed so that they can be directly elected."

The PPPP leader said the senators painstakingly prepared recommendations on the budget, but the National Assembly had the power to approve or reject them.

She pointed out that the Senate's Standing Committee on Finance, had representation from both treasury and opposition bench, which worked round the clock to prepare the recommendations for the Money Bill. "It is appreciable that the Senate's Standing Committee on Finance, had representation from both treasury and opposition bench, which worked round the clock to prepare the recommendations for the Money Bill. "It is appreciable that the Senate's Standing Committee on Finance, had representation from both treasury and opposition bench, which worked round the clock to prepare the recommendations for the Money Bill. "It is appreciable that the Senate's Standing Committee on Finance, had representation from both treasury and opposition bench, which worked round the clock to prepare the recommendations for the Money Bill."

## Holds Khuli Katchery at CPO Resolving public issues purely on merit is our foremost priority; IGP

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, held a Khuli

citizens' issues on merit is our top priority. Negligence and carelessness in duties will not be tolerated. Any citizen facing any issue related to the police can come



Katchery at the Central Police Office Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

During the katchery, he listened to the issues of citizens and police officers and issued directives on the spot for their resolution.

He said that, resolving

to the Khuli Katchery. My office is always open for my citizens, the IGP said.

IG Islamabad further directed the concerned officers to resolve the citizen grievances on merit within the stipulated time frame and report back to the Central Police Office.

## Excise deptt continues crackdown against illegal car modifications

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Excise and Taxation (E&T) Department has continued its crackdown against illegal car modifications, targeting vehicles with tinted glasses and unauthorized number plates.

On the directive of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, the Excise Department has intensified its efforts to enforce the law, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory Administration here on Tuesday. During recent checks, a total of above 300 vehicles were inspected,

leading to the removal of about 150 tinted windows and 100 unauthorized number plates. Additionally, 10 vehicles had their registrations suspended, while five received warnings.

The crackdown, led by Assistant Commissioners alongside Assistant Excise & Taxation Officers (AETOs) and Traffic Police, focused on areas including Faizabad bus stand, Zero Point, 9th Avenue near IGP, and Marriott Hotel checkpoint. Vehicles found in violation had their registrations suspended until the illegal modifications were rectified.



ISLAMABAD: Charge d'Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy, Rahmat Hindarta Kasuma, COMSTech Advisor for Science and Technology Prof. Dr. Khurshid Hasnain pose for a group photo with the participants of a seminar titled "International Seminar on Sustainable Palm Oil" at COMSTech.

## Nikah during iddat case Counsel for Bushra Bibi raises question on power of jurisdiction of trial court

ISLAMABAD (Online): Suleman Safdar counsel for Bushra Bibi has raised question on power of jurisdiction of trial court in Nikah during iddat case.

The counsel Suleman Safdar argued it was said one part of offence has been committed in Lahore and other part has been committed in Islamabad.

Judge Afzal Majoka inquired why indictment was not framed in this case. This is written in the decision.

The counsel said punishment was awarded in the case which could not be made here.

The petition for early hearing of central appeals and plea seeking suspension of sentences awarded

to Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in nikah during iddat case came up for hearing in district and sessions court Islamabad Tuesday.

Additional district and sessions judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka heard the petitions.

Barrister Suleman Safdar, Khalid Yousuf Chaudhry counsels for Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi and Zahid Asif counsel for Khawar Manika appeared in the case.

While offering arguments Suleman Safdar raised question on power of jurisdiction of trial court.

Suleman Safdar said while giving arguments said he has been contesting criminal cases since several years.

## 3 members of car lifter's gang killed in 'friendly fire'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Syed Ali Raza on Tuesday said that capital police killed three car thieves in early morning raid, dealing a significant blow to the inter-provincial gang's operations.

He said that three car lifters were killed by their own accomplices in "friendly fire", not by police, after a two-month investigation and trap set along their predicted route from Murree to Islamabad, he said in an interview with PTV news channel. The DIG said that the suspects fired at police from two cars, but their own gunfire from one car killed three of their gang members.

He further said that a woman was also injured in the firing.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

Wednesday June 26, 2024

## A new operation

Serious concerns had been raised by opposition political parties — particularly those with presence in KP — after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced the launch of Operation Azm-i-Istehkam on Saturday. Considering that KP has been hit the hardest by terrorism, the concerns raised by these parties were understandable, as local communities were worried about fresh violence and displacement, similar to what was witnessed during earlier military campaigns.

Reacting to these concerns, the administration clarified matters on Monday when, in a statement released by the PM Office, it was pointed out that no large-scale displacement will take place, and the envisaged operation will largely be a 'mopping up' exercise to clear out the "remnants" of militant groups. There can be little doubt about the need to crush the terrorist threat before it gains further strength. It is a fact that militant actors have regrouped after nearly every previous military operation. Thus, to make Azm-i-Istehkam a success, the lacunae of past operations must be studied minutely.

The new operation also seems to be partly influenced by vocal Chinese concerns about the need for security in Pakistan. Whatever the triggers, clear deterrent action is needed against terrorist groups, but without upending the lives of people in the affected areas, and causing mass displacement. The state seems to have realised the need for this balance, as reflected in Monday's PMO statement. The government should continue to take all stakeholders on board, as without feedback from all political forces, it will be difficult to convince the affected populations of the operation's necessity. True, operational details cannot be divulged; but, if need be, sensitive information can be shared with lawmakers in camera. Moreover, Pakistan has been losing an unacceptably high number of security men to terrorist attacks over the past few years. The latest attack came last week in Kurram, in which five troops were martyred. This is not a conventional war, and the military needs to consider forming specialised units trained to counter the asymmetric measures employed by militant groups. In the cities, it is the police, through the CT departments, that should be leading the fight against terrorist groups. The state must also continue to communicate to the Afghan Taliban the need to prevent their soil from being used against Pakistan, and to rein in the TTP. This pressure needs to continue along with CT operations on Pakistani soil. And, as the military takes on the militants on the battlefield, a complementary effort against extremism will also be required. As witnessed in the aftermath of earlier military campaigns, unless the support structure of terrorist groups in the country is completely dismantled, these entities can spring up with new names. The twin battles against militancy and extremism will not be easy to fight, but are essential for Pakistan.

Arifa Noor

In the midst of a budget debate, the government also held a meeting on security and made some big decisions — decisions perhaps far weightier than taxing the salaried class, which comes as easy to all governments as claiming their success in fixing Pakistan's economy. But to return to the weighty matter of security, the government called an apex committee meeting on Saturday and announced a new 'operation' against terrorism. The prime minister approved a "reinvigorated and re-energised national counterterrorism [CT] campaign through the launching of Operation Azm-i-Istehkam, with the consensus of all stakeholders including the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, symbolising the national resolve to eradicate — te extremism and terrorism from the country".

It seems extremism and terrorism are now being seen as twin problems. The press release mentioned a reinvigorated CT strategy, the use of kinetic force, effective legislation

and socioeconomic measures. The National Action Plan was also brought in.

It is worth pointing out that this announcement comes a little over a year after a similar announcement. In April 2023, the PDM government called a National Security Committee meeting, after which it was reported that "The meeting approved launching of an all-out comprehensive operation with the [help] of the entire nation and the government".

One news story added that the government had formed a committee to prepare a report within weeks about the "limitations and implementation" of the operation. It seems this committee proved as effective as the many committees formed to suggest 'austerity measures', because little is known about the fate of the report. Perhaps one can venture to say it didn't prove all that successful because the government has now announced another operation. And this time around, the resolve is stronger — the new operation has been given a name, unlike the unchristened one announced in 2023.

Or perhaps it should

be taken more seriously because of the public request made by the Chinese for better security.

But even if the government resolve and seriousness is accepted as gospel truth, it is hard to quell questions. The problem with pesky souls is that, despite being told about the utmost importance of security, they grapple with doubts, which lead to questions, especially as the press release, while lengthy, appeared short on detail.

It is hard to tell if this new operation will focus on intelligence-based operations (as in the recent past) rather than full-scale operations, as we saw in the noughties. The government has not clarified this. While the press release speaks of a CT campaign, the government did not respond to the uproar created by the PTI in parliament by simply saying that there would not be full-scale military operations as in the past. Instead, the focus was on criticising the PTI for its lack of support.

This does indicate, circumstantially, that large-scale operations are part of the plan.

However, this raises

more questions than it answers. The environment in 2008 was very different when large-scale operations were launched. Back then, the TTP was in control of territory and the operations were launched, along with mass displacement of people, to dislodge the militants and impose the 'will of the state'. So far, from the little that appears in the press, the TTP is not controlling territory in the same way.

Second, the last time around, it appeared the operations were partly based on assumptions that once the TTP fighters tried to escape the military operations by crossing the border, they would be confronted by Afghan and Nato forces. In fact, in those days, there was constant communication between the two sides and efforts at cooperation as well as complaints about the lack of assistance. However, this time around, the border and Afghanistan will make operations more difficult, as the regime in Kabul is already providing havens to the TTP.

Third, the large-scale operations earlier enjoyed widespread public support;

the latter didn't just come from the urban centres and the mainstream areas of the country but also political parties based in KP. This included the ANP and PPP which dominated the province, headed the government and were present in the legislatures.

However, this time around, this support will not be easy to ensure because the people are openly hostile to operations.

The mass-scale displacement of people due to the operations, the challenges of living in refugee camps, and then their return to homes and livelihoods destroyed by war and delayed compensations, has made the Pakhtun population wary. This has been brought home by the mass protests that were held in many areas when the TTP reappeared in 2022. The large gatherings in a number of areas, including Swat, were not simply against the TTP but also against military action; such is the public mood that all parties took a stand against them.

It is noteworthy that the PTM, which enjoys widespread support, is also

critical of military operations; in fact, its emergence and street politics was aimed at raising awareness about the sufferings of the Pakhtun population due to militancy and the state's actions to eradicate it.

This distrust of the state and its institutions will not make it easy to create public support for wide-spread use of state force, as in the past.

Last, but not least, there is also the issue of expense. The extensive military operations in the past took place at a time when aid from the US in the form of coalition support funds was still making its way to Pakistan. At present, with no such aid and the cash crunch the country is dealing with, any planning for military operations will also have to consider how they will be financed. So far, there have been few answers to these concerns in the press release or the debate in parliament. Perhaps once the government is free from budget worries, some of the details will be thrashed out and made public, ensuring that we don't need another such meeting and announcement a year on. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Critical days for Modi and rivals

Jawed Naqvi

The underplayed defeat for his government by 32 seats in the parliamentary elections, with a whopping loss of 63 BJP MPs from the previous tally, may have reined in Prime Minister Modi's self-obsessed march on Indian democracy for now. His new and untested experiment with a coalition government has just begun, with the opening of the 18th Lok Sabha on Monday.

Modi must cling to power not only for himself and his hatchet man, the home minister, but also for his corporate friends who have backed him from his days as Gujarat chief minister, benefiting both sides in assorted ways.

Hindutva was a lubricant in the enterprise but by no means incidental to the project. A slip-up in the new House could be politically fatal and, of course, hugely embarrassing, too. Without Modi at the helm, skeletons are primed to tumble out of the cupboards at the home ministry and the Prime Minister's Office, which jointly and exclusively

ruled the country during the last 10 years.

The days ahead, therefore, could go any which way. There's always a chance of seeing a resolute opposition carry the day for democracy. Or we could see a lurch towards greater authoritarianism, which is Modi's natural stance to rule. In which case, the requirement would be challenging on three counts. He would need to effectively smother the assault from a rejuvenated opposition. He must also keep intact his benign hold on critical allies lest they become vulnerable to the siren calls of opposition. Above all, Modi would need to vacate the challenge from within the Hindutva fold, primarily from the RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, with whom he has had strained relations.

An old story from the Caravan magazine is self-explanatory. It quotes former BJP minister Arun Shourie as indicating a Modi-Bhagwat stand-off. It seems Bhagwat sent an emissary to Shourie to prod Modi to chalk out an election strategy with the RSS chief for the 2014 polls. Modi, we are told,

ignored Bhagwat, but grudgingly agreed to meet him not in the RSS headquarters of Nagpur, as asked, but at a place of his choice in Ahmedabad. The strain burst into the open with the 2024 poll verdict. The BJP's rout prompted Bhagwat to mock the "arrogance" of power, while the RSS mouthpiece, Organiser, slammed the BJP for undermining the parent body's advice in critical ways.

Also, within the Hindutva fold, the saffron-clad chief minister of Uttar Pradesh is said to be in the crosshairs of the Amit Shah-Narendra Modi duo. He is accused of subverting the elections in the state, where the BJP campaign ran aground before the secular forces of Rahul Gandhi and former state chief minister Akhilesh Yadav. Yogi Adityanath does not belong to the RSS stable, and has signalled the revival of his own Hindutva militant brigade, which he had abandoned over the years in office. A potentially rebellious Uttar Pradesh could leave Modi further isolated within the BJP, particularly when by-elections are due for state leg-

islature seats vacated by Lok Sabha winners, with candidates chosen by New Delhi.

An imperative for Modi to effectively fend off the three challenges — from the opposition, the allies, and within the Hindutva fold — to keep his grip on power, lies in the election of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. After the 2019 victory, Modi hand-picked a trusted man for the job, Om Birla. With the Speaker of his choice, he could evict the entire opposition when that was needed to pass crucial bills. He could single out MPs for special treatment, as he did with Rahul Gan-dhi and Mahua Moitra in the previous Lok Sabha.

The Speaker of the House is crucial in a parliamentary democracy. But for the Nazi Speaker in the Reichstag, Hitler would have struggled to become Fuhrer. William Shirer records as American correspondent in Nazi Berlin how Frantz von Papan, a Hitler ally-turned-critic, came running with the decree in hand from president Hindenburg to dissolve parliament. This was their

attempt to stop Hitler from accumulating invincible powers.

The Reichstag president (Speaker), Hermann Goering, deliberately ignored Papan till the Nazi hold on the House was sealed with a vote. Only after this he signalled to Papan to come forward with his papers, just to quickly inform him that he was late as the Reichstag had already voted to preclude its dissolution.

It was, of course, a coincidence that in 1934, when Goering became the Reichstag chief, Kesarinarth Tripathi was born in Uttar Pradesh. As a BJP apparatchik, Tripathi rose to become Speaker of the House in the Uttar Pradesh assembly and became noted for arbitrarily breaking up Mayawati's party to enable the BJP to consolidate power. This BJP trick was used elsewhere, including Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, to dismantle opposition governments and instal their own.

If Modi gets the Speaker of his choice, the opposition could soon find itself fighting him on

the streets instead of parliament. Besides, it could signal trouble for Modi's allies. Three members of the Telugu Desam Party defected to join the BJP in the Rajya Sabha not long ago. Such threats could become ominous should the Speaker be from the Modi team.

Unsurprisingly, the first day of the Lok Sabha began with a violation of the convention according to which the most seasoned veteran MP becomes the protem Speaker. Convention says the most senior member is chosen for the job. The BJP chose its own, a seven-term member over the Congress's eight-term veteran.

Worrying scenarios are already circulating of mid-term polls or worse should Modi feel he is losing the grip on power. Such a crisis could erupt should the BJP be trounced in the Maharashtra and Haryana state polls due in November. To set up a stronger show, Modi may yield to the RSS, possibly surrendering the post of the BJP president to someone handpicked from Nagpur.

## Hundred days on

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Lurching from one controversy to another, the PML-N has marked 100 days in power. To ensure accountability and public welfare, one must regularly review the outcomes of all regimes via a sound framework.

The one I use says that the quality of outcomes of a regime depends on the quality of its strategies which, in turn, depend on the quality of its team. Outcomes occur in five domains (economic, political, social, security and external) and functions (legislation, policy, projects, services and institutional reform). This comprehensive framework allows analysis, while its cause and effect links give it predictive powers: if a set-up can't present a quality team or sound strategies, its outcomes will be poor. In fact, by looking at the team, one can predict accurately, even within months, how it will do in five years.

Seeing its weak team, I had predicted in 2018 that the PTI wouldn't deliver. My following reviews using this lens confirmed the accuracy of the prediction. Unluckily, the same is true for the PML-N. No set-up can show major outcomes in just 100 days. But by then, it must at least present a compelling vision, policies and a competent team, especially given the nature of crises we face. That this hasn't happened in three months is cause for alarm. And if it doesn't happen in six months, it may be cause to start writing its obituary predictively.

The cabinet, even in critical areas like the economy, interior, law, foreign affairs and social sectors, largely has inept persons, reflecting the demands of powerful

forces like the establishment, various Noonie factions, and allies. One struggles to find persons with serious expertise in the ministries assigned to them. The finance minister is the new kid on the block. But though better than Ishaq Dar, he lacks the serious macroeconomic, IMF and public finance credentials needed to deal with our economic crisis. Also, the finance minister largely deals with fiscal matters. To upgrade the economy, one needs competent persons in investment, commerce, IT and industry posts, which are largely filled with inept political appointees. The icing on the cake, the prime minister, shows no ability to graduate beyond his federally irrelevant projects skills.

The team's gaps show in the lack of sound vision and strategy in all five domains and functions. Reflecting its lack of a sound economic vision, the recent budget does badly on key criteria, such as cutting wasteful outlays and subsidies, identifying new and equitable sources of direct taxes, encouraging durable growth in productive sectors and exports, and ensuring equity. It may deliver temporary stability and an IMF deal. But by perpetuating the root causes of our economic ills, it is laying the ground for future economic crises.

Politically, we need civilian sway, political legitimacy and civil rights. The PML-N lacks control over key federal areas such as economy, defence, interior and foreign affairs, having meekly given them to the establishment. Its mandate is rigged, apparently even more than the PTI's. Under the establishment's push, it is taking harsh steps to curtail civil rights, such as cracking

down on media, X, the opposition and dissidents, even more so than the PTI. One sees no legislative agenda to deal with our constitutional and political challenges.

The security situation is precarious, with militant groups in KP and Balochistan and criminal gangs in Sindh and Punjab. Socially, extremism is rampant, resulting in a horrendous situation for women, children and religious minorities. Yet, beyond empty stern warnings from both Pindi and Islamabad after every incident, one sees little vision or capacity to address the root causes of insecurity or extremism in any region.

Externally, ties with major powers like China, the West and Gulf states have improved a bit, but without creating major opportunities to help us economically. Both China and the Gulf states seem reluctant to invest heavily in Pakistan, given the state's lack of vision and the failure to inspire confidence, as was true for the PTI.

Unless the PML-N co-opts able hands, there is little chance of it giving major positive outcomes in five years even if it lasts that long. So, as with the PTI, the establishment's new hybrid experiment may fail.

The 2008-18 era, when it had withdrawn partially from politics, had yielded some political evolution, which may have improved governance too had it been allowed to flourish. But its post-2017 forays have wiped off all those gains and pushed us back by decades. Civilian sway and political legitimacy remain our only way forward, and even that is a long route to progress. But the establishment shows no signs of accepting that. -- Courtesy Dawn

## 'Global boiling'

Masood Lohar

This year's Haj turned tragic as over 1,300 pilgrims succumbed to soaring temperatures, which reached a blistering 51.8 degrees Celsius. This calamity marks a new chapter in the saga of extreme weather events gripping the planet, a phenomenon UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres dubbed "global boiling".

The deadly heatwave in Saudi Arabia is part of a broader trend of unprecedented heat affecting regions worldwide. Earlier this month, Pakistan and India faced similar extreme conditions. In Sindh, temperatures skyrocketed to over 52°C, with Mohenjodaro experiencing 52.2°C, nearly matching the country's record high of 54°C.

Across the border, the situation is equally dire. The Indian Meteorological Department has issued a red alert for the country's longest-ever heatwave. Over 100 deaths and 44,000 cases of heatstroke have been reported, with Delhi's temperatures surpassing 44°C, severely affecting the quality of life and economic activities.

In July 2023, Secretary General Guterres introduced the term 'global boiling' to describe the escalating impacts of climate change, indicating that the planet was transitioning from 'global warming' to a more extreme and perilous state. Initially met with scepticism, this term has since gained alarming validation as unusual weather patterns, including extreme heatwaves and unprecedented rainfall, have been observed globally.

One of the most alarming aspects of climate change is its unpredictability. Events that defy historical patterns have become the new norm, catching com-

munities off guard. This climate ping-pong of drought to flooding and extreme heat to cold is quite intriguing. For instance, only weeks ago near Makkah, where extreme heat has killed hundreds, there were unprecedented flash floods. Videos circulating on social media show powerful floods sweeping across the Fatma Wadi in Al Jumum Governorate. According to witnesses, for the first time in recorded history, the local wadi overflowed.

In April this year, Dubai experienced record-breaking rainfall, the heaviest in over 75 years. Social media and TV screens were flooded with images of luxury cars, including Rolls Royces, Porsches and Lamborghinis, floating through Dubai's waterlogged streets.

The floods wreaked havoc, resulting in deaths in the UAE and Oman, where 10 children died when their school bus was swept away. Over 1,000 flights at Dubai's airport, one of the world's busiest, were cancelled, causing significant travel disruptions.

Such severe storms and heavy rainfalls in April also led to flooding and fatalities in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan reported several deaths caused by heavy rains and snowfall.

Southern China faced severe flooding in Guangdong province, displacing over 100,000 people. Meanwhile, northern China battled prolonged droughts and heatwaves, highlighting the varied and devastating impacts of climate change across the country.

These extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severely impacting human health, agriculture, and ecosystems. Extreme

temperatures and changing precipitation patterns reduce crop yields, increasing the risk of droughts and floods, thereby disrupting food production and supply chains. Accelerated melting of polar ice caps and glaciers contributes to rising sea levels, while thawing permafrost releases large quantities of greenhouse gases like methane, exacerbating global warming. Drastic changes in habitats lead to the extinction of species unable to adapt, with coral reefs facing wi-d-espread bleaching and die-offs due to t e m - p - e - r a t u r e sens-itivity.

The term 'global boiling' underscores the urgency and severity of the climate crisis. The u n p r e c e d e n t e d heatwaves, torrential rains, and their devastating impacts are a stark reminder of the need for immediate and robust climate action. As nations grapple with these extreme events, the global community must prioritise sustainable practices and policies to mitigate the escalating impacts of climate change and safeguard the planet for future generations.

The idea of 'global boiling' ironically aligns with the 'boiling frog syndrome'. This metaphor illustrates the dangers of complacency and gradual change. According to the story, if a frog is put in boiling water, it will try to save itself by quickly jumping out. However, if it is placed in cold water that is slowly warmed, it will not be able to see the danger and will die as the water heats up. This metaphor aptly captures human complacency towards climate action. Nature, it seems, has escalated from 'warming' to 'boiling' to deliver a massive jolt from the climate cauldron. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Maryam chairs 10th cabinet meeting, discusses 56-points agenda

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired a four-hour long 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the provincial cabinet to discuss a heavy agenda of 56-points.

The cabinet approved 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar' and 'Chief Minister Punjab Kisan Card' programs. It also approved the launch of 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar' program on August 14, besides appreciating steps taken by the CM for the welfare of farmers.

The cabinet gave a go-ahead to increase in doctors' allowance at Basic Health Units, Rural Health Centers and some Tehsil Headquarters hospitals to incentivise their appointment in remote areas on temporary basis. The cabinet was briefed that doctors will get a night allowance of 7000, 7500 and 8000 on night duty. They will also get a petrol allowance @ Rs 1000 per

day for being posted in remote areas.

The cabinet accorded approval to Punjab Sikh Anand Karaj Marriage Registrar Rules 2024, and Punjab Sikh Anand Karaj Marriage Rules 2024. Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora briefed the cabinet that Punjab has become the first province in the world to implement Sikh Marriage Act. He said even in India, Sikhs have to get their marriages registered under Hindu Act. He added in a few months, the Hindu Marriage Act will also be submitted for seeking Cabinet's approval.

The cabinet directed to transfer management of TB Hospital Sargodha, Jubilee Female Hospital Bahawalpur, Mazang Hospital Lahore, and that of Data Darbar Eye Hospital to Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department.

The cabinet also approved amendments to Registration Act, 1908 for the provision of transfer of property and other revenue services to overseas Pakistanis living in eight countries of the world. It also agreed to gradually switch rickshaws to alternative eco-friendly transport, besides giving approval to get fitness certificate for motorcycles to eliminate smog. The CM, however, directed to simplify procedure of getting a motorcycle fitness certificate.

The cabinet approved procedure for providing electric bikes to orphan students. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed to complete process of giving electric bikes to orphan students.

The cabinet decided not to extend government house allotment to employees after their retirement.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan administered oath to acting Chief Justice Lahore High Court, Shujaat Ali Khan. Punjab Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz Sharif also present on the occasion.

## Punjab Governor says: Research is important for development of universities

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: The deans of various departments of Fatima Jinnah Medical University led by Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal called on Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, the improvement in international ranking of Fatima Jinnah Medical University, services in the past floods, new programs for public health, male nursing program, and business incubation center were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider said that research is very important for development of universities. He said that it is a pleasure to know that Fatima Jinnah Medical University is showing excellence in education and research. Governor Punjab

also appreciated the post-graduate training program of Fatima Jinnah Medical University at the district level. He said that Fatima Jinnah Medical University is doing excellent work under the leadership of Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal. Governor Punjab said that it is very important to provide health facilities in remote areas. He further said that research and innovation are very important in the field of medicine. On this occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal said that new post-graduate specialties in various fields including four new sub-specialties in Gynecology Department are going to be started soon. He presented the history book and annual report of the university to the governor of Punjab and also invited him to the convocation.



RAWALPINDI: MNA Dr. Shaista Jadoon, Razia Sultana, Samina Shoaib and others expressing solidarity for the rights of women in the event organized in connection with the rickshaw campaign organized by the Aurat Foundation.

## Preparedness, arrangements reviewed to handle expected torrential rains

HYDERABAD (APP): In response to the forecast of potential heavy rains, a high-level meeting was held to secure the life and property of the people in district Sanghar.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner/Chairman of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Sanghar Dr. Imran ul Hassan Khowaja and Pak Army's Colonel Muhammad Ali Khowaja from Chhor Cantt, which was also attended by relevant officers. It also reviewed the dewatering plans for both urban and rural areas.

Deputy Commissioner Khowaja emphasized the need for all

possible measures to safeguard the public and crops. He directed the authorities to clean natural waterways and remove any obstacles to prevent flooding. He also directed HESCO officials to ensure uninterrupted power supply to pumping stations in urban areas.

The Deputy Commissioner urged the municipal and public health engineering departments to keep all machinery in working order and provide training to staff to ensure timely drain out of rainwater.

The Executive Engineer Mithrao Waseem Soomro provided a detailed briefing on the current status of the canal.

## Former Senator Ch Tanvir interim bail plea extended in murder case

RAWALPINDI (Online): Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz of Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench has extended interim bail of former senator of PML-N Chaudhry Tanvir till July 15 in murder case of PTI former provincial parliamentary secretary Chaudhry Adnan murder case.

The court has issued notices to the respondents on the petition of plaintiff against acceptance of bail plea of Chaudhry Changez Khan brother of Chaudhry Tanvir. He is co-accused in the case.

The plaintiff of the case had filed petition against the confirmation of bail plea of Chaudhry Changez by subordinate court declaring the bail of Chaudhry Changez against the norms of justice.

## ATC grants bail to six accused in Jinnah House attack case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday granted post-arrest bail to 6 accused in the Jinnah House attack case of the May 9 riots.

The court directed the accused to furnish surety bonds of Rs 200,000 each for availing the relief of bail.

ATC Judge Khalid Arshad heard the post-arrest bail petitions of the accused and announced the verdict upon completion of arguments by the parties.

The court allowed post-arrest bail petitions of Muhammad Aslam, Muhammad Rashid Bhatti, Mian Muhammad Tahir, Mehmud Mujahid, Imran Ali and Muhammad Irfan.

The Sarwar Road police had registered a case against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders and workers on charges of attacking Jinnah House.



Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora in a group photo during his visit to Solution Army Church.



SWABI Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi addressing 28<sup>th</sup> Convocation of Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute (GIK).

## Sharjeel says: Action taken in Kacha area, drug test to begin in edu institutions from July 01

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon on Tuesday said that Police and Rangers had taken a joint action in Kacha area against dacoits in view of two meetings chaired by the President Asif Ali Zardari on law and order situation.

He said that they would be in position to launch a drug-test campaign in educational institutions from July 01.

While talking to media persons on the premises of the Sindh Assembly, the Senior Minister Sharjeel Memon said that all departments including Police had presented their performance to the

President. He said that the operation against dacoits would continue.

He said that if the dacoits, who were not involved in serious crimes should surrender and the government could negotiate with them to make them a good person.

Sharjeel said that those dacoits, who had been caught would also be given a chance to choose a good path.

Replying to a question regarding launching a drug-test campaign in the educational institutions of the province, he said that they would be in position to begin the campaign from July 01.

## Justice Shujaat Ali takes oath as Acting LHC CJ

LAHORE (APP): Justice Shujaat Ali Khan on Tuesday took the oath as Acting Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court (LHC) in a simple and dignified ceremony held at the Governor's House here.

Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan administered the oath to Justice Khan.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi, Justice Aalia Neelam, Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh, Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza, Justice Syed Shahbaz Ali Rizvi, Justice Shahid Karim, Justice Ch. Muhammad Iqbal, Justice Shehram Sarwar Ch., Justice Sajid Mehmood Sethi, Justice Farooq Haider, Justice Muhammad Waheed Khan and other judges working at LHC Principal seat

attended the ceremony.

Speaker Punjab Assembly, Muhammad Ahmad Khan, provincial ministers, federal and provincial law officers, inspector general of police Punjab, Registrar LHC Ch. Abdul Rashid Abid, LHC officers and family members of the acting chief justice, also graced the occasion.

Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman read out the notification of appointment of the acting chief justice.

Moreover, in a gesture of humility and simplicity, the acting chief justice declined to receive protocol and guard of honor upon assuming his new role. After taking the oath of office, Justice Shujaat Ali Khan arrived at the LHC.



Honourable Chief Election Commissioner, Sikandar Sultan Raja inaugurated office of District Election Commission Attock

## Nigerian delegation briefed about municipal services, infrastructure development

LAHORE (APP): The Department of Local Government and Community Development, government of Punjab, recently hosted a 22-member delegation from Nigeria.

The delegation, led by the Executive Governor of Borno State, Nigeria, Professor Baba Gana, and the Executive Governor of Ube State, Nigeria, May Mala Boni, visited to explore best practices in municipal services and infrastructure development.

During their visit, the delegation met with Local Government Secretary Shakeel Ahmed Mian along with special Secretary Asia

Gull & other officials, who briefed them on the local government system and ongoing development projects in Punjab.

The projects include the extension of solid waste management systems from urban to rural areas, benefiting 200 villages and 16 underdeveloped rural tehsils, as well as the water supply and sewage project, currently in its final stage of completion.

The delegation was also informed about the establishment of three material recovery facilities and two scientific landfill sites, aimed at utilizing garbage instead of dumping it.

## Quality technical education imperative for sustainable economic progress: Governor

SWABI (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi here Tuesday said that quality technical education was imperative to achieve sustainable economic progress and development.

Addressing the 28<sup>th</sup> Convocation of Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute (GIK) at Topi here as chief guest, the Governor said that those countries, which had equipped its youth with quality education and technology achieved tremendous progress and height of economic prosperity in the comity of nations today.

He underlined the need of equipping young minds with ornament of technical education, science and technology to achieve the height of economic glory and make

Pakistan an economic giant.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor distributed degrees among 475 boys and girls students after completion of their graduates, masters and M. Phil degrees in engineering, management and applied sciences. The Governor also awarded gold medals to 15 position holder students.

Congratulating the passed out students, their parents and faculty members, the Governor said that Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute Swabi was a premier educational institute of the country that set highest quality standards in education.

"The secret of GIK's education popularity was its non-compromise on merit and standard in quality education. It is my

wish that GIK-like quality education institutes are established in other areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," he said, adding it was the dream of every student and parents to get education from this premier institution of Pakistan and later contribute to the country's development progress.

To achieve the height of development and economic prosperity, the governor emphasized the need to contribute a praised worthy share in the country's technology education, adding that unfortunately our province has been left behind in education standards.

Underlying the need for market based practical education, the Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said that we need such education.

## Constructions banned in Murree

RAWALPINDI (APP): The District Administration has imposed ban on all types of constructions in Murree. The notification issued by the Commissioner Rawalpindi office, here on Tuesday states that the ban will remain enforced till the completion of Murree master plan. According to the notification violations of government construction policy, illegal constructions causing serious disruption to the peaceful life of the local population, soil erosion and encroachments and illegal deforestation damaging the natural environment are the main reasons for putting the ban on constructions.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit, Excise Taxation and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon talking to media persons, at Sindh Assembly in Karachi.

## IAHRC Rep. at UNHRC concerned over legal flaws, plight of Kashmiri prisoners

MIRPUR (APP): During their visit to the United Nations in Geneva for the UNHRC session, a Kashmir delegation met with Miss K Pormica, the representative from the International Association for Human Rights Advocacy (IAHRA) at the United Nations Human Rights Council.

They briefed her on the prejudiced judicial system in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The delegation, consisting of Advocate Parvez Shah and Dr Waleed Rasool, explained that the judicial system in IIOJK deliberately causes delays in cases involving innocent Kashmiri detainees by granting unnecessary adjournments.

This tactic is intended to break the detainees' resolve, as conveyed in a

message released to the media on Tuesday.

Miss Pormica expressed serious concern over the flawed legal system in IIOJK and pledged to raise the issue of the legal injustices and the plight of Kashmiri prisoners in future events.

The delegation informed her that under-trial prisoners are often not presented in court, limiting their access to lawyers and family. This practice effectively makes the detainees invisible.

They are also tried in special courts outside the state, complicating legal representation, and free legal aid is unavailable.

The IAHRA representative was also made aware of the deplorable conditions in which Kashmiri prisoners are held in various Indian jails.



LAHORE: Young Doctors protest inside and outside the OPD, on the 10th day of the doctors strike at Services Hospital.

## DC reviews flood preparedness for rivers Jhelum, Chenab

JHANG (APP): Deputy Commissioner Jhang Muhammad Umair on Tuesday convened a meeting with officers from the district administration and other relevant departments to review arrangements for potential flooding in the Jhelum and Chenab rivers.

The DC Jhang emphasized the need for emergency measures to ensure effective rescue and relief operations. Additionally, he instructed all assistant commissioners in the district to inspect river embankment to ensure the safety of

residents. He also highlighted the importance of formulating a coordinated policy among all concerned departments to minimize flood-related losses.

He directed that all encroachments on link roads be removed to facilitate the smooth flow of traffic during emergencies. He also issued orders to the irrigation department, WAPDA, Rescue 1122, and the departments of health, agriculture, and livestock to ensure readiness and cooperation in dealing with potential flood situations.

## Woman die, five injured in Abbottabad road mishap

PESHAWAR (APP): A woman was killed while five others injured when a jeep fell into a deep gorge in Abbottabad on Tuesday.

Local police said the incident occurred near Ziarat Masoom, an area of Chagla Galli where a jeep carrying six people fell into a gorge.

## AJK Govt presents Rs 264 bln budget with development outlay of Rs 44 bln

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): The Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Government on Tuesday presented the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 of over Rs 264 billion with a development outlay of Rs 44 billion.

As the total income from revenue sources has been estimated Rs 201.17 billion, the deficit is expected to be met with the grants provided by the Federal Government.

Following the footsteps of Federal Government, the AJK Government announced 25 & 20 percent raise in the salaries of its employees and 15 percent in pension in the next fiscal year.

Presenting the budget in the AJK Legislative Assembly, Minister for Finance Abdul Majid Khan highlighted the estimates of income and expenditures, and also elaborated salient features of the budget and successes of his

government to cut size the non-developmental expenditures by austerity measures and strict financial discipline.

The minister said the Inland Revenue would collect Rs 75 billion during the coming fiscal year in the head of income tax while the government would receive Rs 105 billion from the Federal Variable Grants (share from the divisible pool), besides Rs 1 billion as water use charges from the Federal Government and other revenue and non-revenue collections of the government departments.

He said in the recurring expenditures, the biggest amount of Rs 43.14 billion had been allocated in the head of pension which was almost equal to the total development budget while Rs 43.68 billion earmarked for non-development expenditures of the education department, and Rs 7 billion for the services and

general administration department, besides allocation of Rs. 9.84 billion for police.

He said Rs 41.62 billion had been allocated in the new head "state trading", without elaborating the type of trade carried out by the state. The minister said Rs 14.95 billion had been earmarked for the health department and Rs 10.81 billion for the energy and water resources department for their non-development expenditures.

In the Annual Development Programme, the minister said, priority had been given to the communication and works department with an allocation of Rs. 14.9 billion followed by education department Rs. 4.8 billion and health department Rs. 3 billion, local government schemes Rs. 3.7 billion, and physical planning and housing schemes Rs. 2.46 billion.



ISLAMABAD: In a major breakthrough, NRTC Pakistan, Allied Australian, and Tech Valley Pakistan signed a letter of understanding (LoU) at the Ministry of Federal Education, paving the way for a groundbreaking joint venture to establish a state-of-the-art Chromebook assembly line in Pakistan.

## MNAs take up issues of economic development, tax reforms, infrastructure projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Members of the National Assembly on both sides of the aisle Tuesday raised pressing issues regarding economic development, tax reforms and infrastructure projects.

Speaking on the Senate recommendations related to the Budget 2024-25 in the National Assembly, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Muhammad Ilyas Choudhary said foreign remittances could be increased by providing maximum facilities and incentives to the overseas Pakistanis, which would ultimately steer the country out of economic crisis. Sunni Ittehad

Council's (SIC) Ali Khan Jadoon asked the government to decrease taxes on the business community as the industrial sector was already passing through critical conditions.

He pointed out that there were no taxes on imports across the world while China was giving a rebate to importers. He further said taxing the agricultural machinery and other items would have negative impact on the crops production.

SIC's Rana Muhammad Faraz Noon supported the Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway and a recycling plant for sacred papers, besides seeking tax

exemption on the children's milk. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Pakistan's (JUI-P) Muhammad Usman Badini regretted that construction of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) plants in Balochistan had not completed. He urged the government to take measures to further improve the coalmine sector in the region.

SIC's Dawar Khan Kundi said South Waziristan had been affected due to the war on terror. A number of locals had been physically impaired due to landmines, and the government should give them financial support, he added.



LONDON: High Commissioner of Pakistan to UK Dr Muhammad Faisal addressing a webinar titled "Doing Security Business with Pakistan & Establishing UK pavilion at IDEAS 2024" at Pakistan High Commission.

## Pak needs American investment in IT, energy, agriculture and mineral extraction: Masood

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, invited American entrepreneurs and corporate leaders to invest in IT, energy, agriculture, and mineral extraction when he met them in Washington on Monday, according to a Pakistani embassy's press release.

The ambassador told the business leaders that the US International Trade Administration had identified several advantages for American investors in Pakistan, including the absence of shareholding restrictions, simple work permit regulations, no technology transfer requirements, and a large and sophisticated entrepreneurial community.

"Pakistan is developing the human capital and expertise for manufacturing semiconductor chips for application in various electronic and Generative AI supported devices."

fourth largest freelance provider with over 20,000 ICT registered companies, the ambassador noted that the IT sector, especially tech startups were fast becoming a growth industry in Pakistan.

He also projected that power sector was another priority area as the country wanted to double its energy production from the current level of 45,000MW in a decade and make a fast transition to renewables.

The Pakistani envoy also invited the attention of US entrepreneurs to the treasure trove of minerals in Pakistan that included copper, gold, lead, zinc, iron ore, coal, lithium, rare earth, cobalt, aluminum, chromium and nickel.

"Pakistan is developing the human capital and expertise for manufacturing semiconductor chips for application in various electronic and Generative AI supported devices."

## Minister for Privatization calls on Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary delegation of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, led by Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Tuesday met with Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Deputy Speaker Syed Mustafa Shah.

Members of the National Assembly, Aown Chaudhry, Gul Asghar Bhagour and Munaza Hasan were also present in the meeting, which discussed matters relating to the current budget session of the National Assembly, said a press release.

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Deputy Speaker Syed Mustafa Shah appreciated the role of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, especially during the current budget session.

President Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party and Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan assured all possible cooperation from his party for democratic and parliamentary affairs of National Assembly.

## Rupee gains 12 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Rupee on Tuesday gained 12 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.50 against the previous day's closing at Rs 278.62.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market, however, were Rs 277.75 and Rs 280.6 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by 30 paise to close at Rs 298.74 against the last day's closing of Rs 298.44, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.74, whereas an increase of 92 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 353.51 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 352.59.

## PSX stays bearish, loses 291 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 291.52 points, a negative change of 0.37 percent, closing at 77,940.58 points against 78,232.10 points on the last working day.

A total of 292,186,284 shares were traded during the day as compared to 385,176,598 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 11,414 billion against Rs 15,450 billion on

the last trading day.

Around 433 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 144 of them recorded gains and 219 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 70 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Pervez Ahmed Company with 26,808,974 shares at Rs 2.29 per share, K-Electric Limited with 17,900,691 shares at Rs 4.43 per share, and WorldCall Telecom with 16,871,942 shares at Rs 1.28 per share.

## Gold rates dip by Rs 500 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 500 and was sold at Rs 241,500 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs 242,000 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 429 to Rs 207,047 from Rs 207,476 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs 189,793 from Rs 190,186, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs 2,850.



LAHORE: Activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against prolonged electricity load shedding and high inflated electricity bills, at Thokar Niaz Baig Chowk in Lahore.

## PCMEA for excluding export sector from normal tax regime

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) has demanded that export sector should not be included in the normal tax regime, as it would hit the businesses hard.

PCMEA delegation stated this in a meeting with Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar here at LCCI on Tuesday. The delegation was led by former LCCI president Shahid Hassan Sheikh. The Association's Executive Committee members Mian Atique Rehman, Raja Hassan Akhtar, Abdul Latif Malik, Former chairman PCMEA, Usman Ashraf, Senior vice Chairman, Ijazur Rehman, Major Akhtar Nazir, Tahir Aslam, Ifikhar Tahir, and Faisal Saad were part of the delegation.

The delegation added that government should provide facilities to the export sector. Bringing the export sector into the normal tax regime will reduce revenues and decrease dollar inflow into the country, which will further increase inflation, they argued.

They said that exporters might relocate to countries like the UAE in special economic zones. They demanded the formation of export-friendly policies and the announcement of at least a five-year policy for exports, which should not be affected by future budgets. The government facilities for exporters, such as financing, moved from three to 19 percent, which is not viable. Additionally, all the facilities like DLT and incremental DLT were withdrawn.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships namely, TSS Amber, SinarMendawai, Horizon 1 and Gaslog Geneva carrying Containers, Palm oil, LPG and LNG berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Engro Terminal and Gasport Terminal respectively on.

Meanwhile three more ships, Hanfina Turquoise, Gaschem Fuji and Serenity Gas carrying Mogas, Chemicals and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same day.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them gas carrier Al-Jassasiya is expected to sail on today afternoon, and three more ships, TSS Amber, Horizon-1 and Chem Trans Ionian is expected sail on same day afternoon.

Cargo volume of 161,353 tonnes, comprising 128,100 tonnes imports cargo.

## Atif Ikram says: Increase in MDI will destroy industries, should be withdrawn immediately

**Independent Report** ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Shaikh has rejected the increase in MDI saying that such measures will destroy industrialization.

In these circumstances, when the wheel of the industry is at a standstill, the government should bring such policies to enable the industry to run. We demand that this initiative be withdrawn immediately.

Federation President Atif Ikram said that according to the new table, industrial consumers whose category is B1 will have fixed charges of Rs 1,000 per month.

The monthly charges of B2 category industrial consumers have increased by three hundred percent, they will pay two thousand rupees monthly fixed charges. B3 category industrial consumers will

pay two thousand rupees monthly fixed charges with an increase of three hundred and thirty five percent.

While the monthly charges of B4 category industrial consumers will be 2000 rupees per month with an increase of 355%. After these fixed charges, the entire industry will be closed, more than half of the industry has been closed so far. And will further destroy the industries.

Atif Ikram said that we welcome the decrease of ten rupees per unit for the industries, as a result of which the electricity has decreased from sixteen cents to twelve and a half cents, while the electricity in the region is given to the industrialists and exporters from six to eight cents. Try to reduce this rate further so that we can compete with the region and this move will also lead to increase in employment.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor arranging and displaying tomatoes on handcart to attract the customers at Fruit & Vegetable Market in Federal Capital.

## POL import bill decreases by 0.28%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The imports of the overall petroleum group decreased by 0.28 percent during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of the last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

The total imports of the petroleum group during July-May (2023-24) stood at \$ 15,338.947 million, as against the imports of \$ 15,382.307 million during the same period of last year, according to PBS data. Among petroleum commodities, the import of petroleum products declined by 11.69 percent, from \$ 6,748.197 million last year to \$ 5,959.417 million during the time period under review.

However, the imports of petroleum crude increased by 12.06 percent, from \$ 4,522.559 million to \$ 5,067.850; natural gas liquefied by 3.04 percent, from \$ 3,471.608 to \$ 3,577.164 whereas the imports of petroleum gas liquefied

went up by 14.80 percent and reached to \$ 639.625 million as compared to \$ 734.305 last year.

The imports of all other petroleum group products decreased by 33.37 percent and went down to \$ 0.212 million from \$ 0.318 million.

Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the petroleum group imports witnessed an increase of 12.09 percent during the month of May 2024 as compared to the same month of last year. The petroleum imports during May 2024 were recorded as \$ 1,577.878 million against the imports of \$ 1,407.698 million during May 2023. However, on a month-on-month basis, the petroleum imports into the country decreased by 5.90 percent during May 2024, as compared to the imports of \$ 1,676.753 million in April 2024, according to the data. It is pertinent to mention here that the trade deficit contracted by 15.25 percent during the first 11 months of the current financial year (2023-24).



FAISALABAD: Students of GC University Faisalabad Fashion Designing are exhibiting their designed dresses.

## China's premier slams trade tensions as EV exports are hit by tariffs

**Monitoring Desk** TAIPEI: Open markets and green technologies are vital for stabilizing global growth, China's premier said Tuesday, while criticizing trade tensions as he opened a conference in northeastern China.

Premier Li Qiang told political and business leaders attending the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as the "Summer Davos," that China is on track to attain Beijing's growth target this year of 5%.

Countries should "work closely together, reject bloc confrontation, oppose decoupling and disconnection, maintain the stability and smoothness of industrial and supply chains, and promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation," Li said in a speech to the conference.

"We cannot slow down our pace in green transition in exchange for short-term economic growth nor practice protectionism in the name of green development or environmental protection," he said. China is facing pushback over its electric vehicle exports, which some governments fear will flood markets and hurt domestic producers. The European Union and Canada among others are mulling surtaxes on Chinese EVs. China and the E.U. said over the weekend they are open to talks over the tentative tariffs after Beijing last week announced an anti-dumping probe into European pork, largely seen as retaliation for the EV duties. Polish President Andrzej Duda and Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh joined the business leaders.



MUZAFFARABAD: Minister for Finance Abdul Majid Khan presenting the budget in the AJK Legislative Assembly.



QUETTA: Vendor sells toys to earn his livelihood for support his family, at a roadside stall located on Zarghoon road in Quetta.

## 3 Nigerian governors visit LCCI, discuss enhanced trade ties with Pakistan

LAHORE (APP): Three governors from Nigeria's northern states visited the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and met with LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry.

The delegation included World Bank Coordinator for North East Nigeria, Ms. Serena Cavicchi, Adamawa State Governor Ahmedu Umaru Fintiri, Yobe State Governor Mai Mala Buni, Borno State Governor Babagana Umara Zulum, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Wealth Dr. Mustafa Abba Gidam, Coordinator Halilu Malabu, Chairman Millat Tractors Sikandar Mustafa Khan, and others.

The delegation stated that Nigeria, in terms of area and population, is a large country in Africa and a rapidly developing commercial market. Pakistan and Nigeria have

a history of economic, political, and fraternal relations, with many areas of mutual understanding between the two countries.

They mentioned that Pakistan and Nigeria could increase trade volume by enhancing cooperation in various sectors including agriculture and pharmaceuticals. The delegation also visited factories in Pakistan that manufacture tractors and agricultural equipment, expressing that the agricultural machinery made in Pakistan is impressive. They emphasized the urgent need for both countries to increase cooperation in all sectors.

LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry emphasized Pakistan's interest in exploring agricultural cooperation opportunities with Nigeria and highlighted the strong.

# Israel strikes kill at least 11 in Gaza, tanks push further into Rafah

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: Two Israeli air strikes targeting aid supplies killed at least 11 Palestinians in Gaza on Monday, medics said, as Israeli tanks pushed deeper into Rafah in the south and fought their way back into areas in the north they had already subdued months ago.

One strike at a food distribution centre in Gaza City, near the Shati historic refugee camp, killed three people. Another, near Bani Suhaila town in the southern Gaza Strip, killed at least eight, including guards who accompany aid trucks, the medics said.

There was no immediate comment from Israel, which denies attacking aid efforts and accuses militants of causing harm to civilians by operating among

them. Overnight, an Israeli air strike at a medical clinic in Gaza City killed the director of Gaza's Ambulance and Emergency Department, the enclave's health ministry said. Israel's military said that strike had killed senior Hamas armed commander.

The health ministry said the killing of Hani al-Jaafarawi brought the number of medical staff killed by Israeli fire since Oct. 7 to 500. At least 300 others have so far been detained.

In a statement, the Israeli military said the strike targeted Mohammad Salah, who it said was responsible for developing Hamas weaponry.

More than eight months into the fighting, international mediation

backed by the United States has so far failed to bring a ceasefire agreement. Hamas says any agreement must end the war, while Israel says it will agree only temporary pauses in fighting until Hamas is eradicated.

On Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he remained committed to a proposed ceasefire and hostage deal, announced by US President Joe Biden in May.

"We are committed to the Israeli proposal that President Biden welcomed. Our position has not changed. The second thing, which does not contradict the first, we will not end the war until we eliminate Hamas," Netanyahu said in a speech to parliament.



**Palestinians inspect the damages at Abdulfattah Hamoud school where displaced people were taking refuge, following an Israeli strike, amid Israel-Hamas conflict, in Gaza City.**

## Iran sanctions take centre stage in presidential campaign

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Iranians broadly deplore Western sanctions that have battered the economy, but the country's six presidential candidates offer differing solutions — assuming the winner gets a say on foreign policy.

Punishing US sanctions, reimposed following Washington's withdrawal from a landmark 2015 nuclear deal, have brought years of economic hardships, fuelling political malaise and wide popular discontent.

With the June 28 snap

election fast approaching, debates between the candidates vying for Iran's second-highest office have featured a key question: should Tehran mend ties with the West? Under the late president Ebrahim Raisi, who died last month in a helicopter crash, Western governments have expanded sanctions against Iran over its nuclear programme as well as its support for militant groups across the Middle East and for Russia in its war in Ukraine. The sanctions have sharply reduced Iran's oil revenues, heavily restricted trade and contrib-

uted to soaring inflation, high unemployment and a record low for the Iranian rial against the US dollar.

At Tehran's bustling Grand Bazaar, shopkeeper Hamid Habibi, 54, said years of sanctions "have hit people very hard". "Sanctions should be removed and ties mended with the US and European countries," he said.

In two televised debates focused on the economy ahead of the presidential polls, "almost all the candidates explained that the sanctions have had devastating effects".



**Demonstrators try to obstruct a police vehicle as police use water cannons to disperse protesters during a demonstration against Kenya's proposed finance bill 2024/2025 in Nairobi, Kenya.**

## Police open fire on demonstrators trying to storm Kenya parliament, several dead

**Monitoring Desk**  
NAIROBI: Police opened fire on demonstrators trying to storm Kenya's legislature on Tuesday, with at least five protesters killed, dozens wounded, and sections of the parliament building set ablaze as lawmakers inside passed legislation to raise taxes.

In chaotic scenes, protesters overwhelmed police and chased them away in an attempt to storm the parliament compound. Flames could be seen coming from inside.

Police opened fire after tear gas and water cannon failed to disperse the crowds.

A Reuters journalist counted the bodies of at least five protesters outside parliament. A paramedic, Vivian Achista, said at least 10 had been shot dead.

Another paramedic, Richard Ngumo, said more than 50 people had been wounded by gunfire. He was lifting two injured pro-

testers into an ambulance outside parliament.

"We want to shut down parliament and every MP should go down and resign," protester Davis Tafari, who was trying to enter parliament, told Reuters. "We will have a new government."

Protests and clashes also took place in several other cities and towns across the country.

Parliament approved the finance bill, moving it through to a third reading by lawmakers. The next step is for the legislation to be sent to the president for signing. He can send it back to parliament if he has any objections.

The protesters oppose tax rises in a country already reeling from a cost-of-living crisis, and many are also calling for President William Ruto to step down. Yusuf Mohamed is drying out what's left of his family's belongings in Somalia's capital.

## US pier in Gaza may be extended past July, officials say

**Monitoring Desk**  
GABORONE: The US military's pier off Gaza may be extended well beyond its July 31 authorization date if the United States and aid organizations can get aid flowing again to Palestinians in the coming days and weeks, a senior US official said on Tuesday.

"While the pier was authorized through July 31st, I think it is entirely possible that it will continue on for at least another month, if not longer," said Isobel Coleman, deputy administrator for policy and programming at the United States Agency for International Development. U.S. President Joe Biden announced in March the plan to put the pier in place for aid deliveries as famine loomed in Gaza, a Hamas-run enclave of 2.3 million people, during the war between Israel and the Palestinian militants. Aid began arriving via the US-built pier on May 17, and the U.N. said it transported 137 trucks of aid to warehouses.

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## Gun violence a 'public health crisis': US surgeon

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The US surgeon general on Tuesday issued a landmark advisory declaring gun violence a "public health crisis" and calling for wide-ranging firearm controls that have historically met stiff political opposition.

The advisory by Vivek Murthy, who was nominated by President Joe Biden, is the first such major report on gun violence from a surgeon general, whose office has limited authority but plays a significant role in public health issues. A similar report on tobacco in the 1960s is viewed as a key first step to altering the percep-

tion of the substance's danger, ultimately leading to new regulations and a steep decline in consumption.

"Firearm violence is an urgent public health crisis that has led to loss of life, unimaginable pain, and profound grief for far too many Americans," Murthy said in a statement announcing the advisory.

"We don't have to continue down this path, and we don't have to subject our children to the ongoing horror of firearm violence in America. All Americans deserve to live their lives free from firearm violence, as well as from the fear and devastation that it brings."

## Zelenskiy welcomes ICC warrants for Russian military figures

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy welcomed the International Criminal Court's decision to issue arrest warrants against Russia's former defence minister and chief of general staff for strikes on Ukrainian civilians and civilian objects.

"Every criminal involved in the planning and execution of these strikes must know that justice will be served. And we do hope to see them behind bars," Zelenskiy said on Tuesday.



**Duduzile Zuma, daughter of former president Jacob Zuma along with members of the new political party, uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), reacts after they are sworn into the South African parliament in Cape Town, South Africa.**

## India's lawmakers take oath as two vocal govt critics still behind bars

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: India's newly elected lawmakers took the oath of office Tuesday, but without two vocal government critics because they are jailed on national security charges.

One is the Sikh separatist Amritpal Singh, a firebrand preacher arrested last year after a month-long police manhunt in Punjab state. The other is Sheikh Abdul Rashid, a former state legislator in Indian-occupied Kashmir, known popularly as Engineer Rashid.

Rashid, arrested on charges of "terror funding" and money laundering in 2019, is awaiting his latest bail hearing on July 1, his lawyer Ubaid Shams told AFP. The family of Singh, an advocate of the banned Khalistan movement for an independent Sikh homeland — the struggle for which sparked deadly violence in the 1980s and 1990s — said they had no news on whether he could take the oath.

"We don't know whether he will come out of jail or not", his father Tarsem Singh told AFP.

## Nationalism is not the answer for French voters, says German minister

**Monitoring Desk**  
PARIS: European history shows that nationalism offers no solution to problems, Germany's defence minister said on Monday during a visit to Paris, adding that he would be happier if liberal forces won the upcoming legislative elections in France. "I can say for my part and for the view of Germany that nationalism has never been the solution to problems. This is a lesson from European history that cannot be neglected," Boris Pistorius told a joint press conference with his French and Polish counterparts.

## Bangladesh's hangman who turned writer dies at 70

**Monitoring Desk**  
DHAKA: Bangladesh's deadliest executioner died on Monday a year after he was released from prison where he hanged some of the country's notorious serial killers, opposition politicians convicted of war crimes and coup plotters, police said. Since he was released from prison last June, Shahjahan Bouya, 70, wrote a top-selling book narrating his experiences as a hangman, briefly married a young girl 50 years younger than him, and in recent weeks took TikTok by storm with short clips with teenage girls.

## WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange stops in Bangkok on his way to a US court and later freedom

**Monitoring Desk**  
BANGKOK: A plane carrying Julian Assange landed Tuesday in Bangkok for refueling, as the WikiLeaks founder was on his way to enter a plea deal with the U.S. government that will free him and resolve the legal case that spanned years and continents over the publication of a trove of classified documents.

A chartered flight from London that Assange's wife, Stella, confirmed was carrying her husband landed at Don Mueang International Airport. Officials there told The Associated Press the

plane was scheduled to continue on to Saipan, the capital of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth in the Pacific, where Assange is expected to appear in court on Wednesday.

He's expected to plead guilty to an Espionage Act charge of conspiring to unlawfully obtain and disseminate classified national defense information, according to the U.S. Justice Department in a letter filed in court.

Assange is expected to return to his home country of Australia after his plea and sentencing.

## Russia promises retaliation against US for Ukraine strike on Crimea

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: The Kremlin on Monday squarely blamed the United States for an attack on Crimea with US-supplied ATACMS missiles that killed at least four people and injured 151, and Moscow formally warned the US ambassador that retaliation would follow.

The war in Ukraine has deepened a crisis in relations between Russia and the West, and Russian officials have said the conflict is entering the most dangerous escalation to date.

But directly blaming the United States for an attack on Crimea — which Russia unilaterally annexed in 2014 although most of the world considers it part of Ukraine — is a step further.

"You should ask my colleagues in Europe, and above all in Washington, the press secretaries, why their

governments are killing Russian children," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

At least two children were killed in the attack on Sevastopol on Sunday, according to Russian officials. People were shown running from a beach near Sevastopol and some of the injured being carried off on sun loungers. Kyiv did not comment on the attack but denies targeting civilians.

Russia said the United States had supplied the weapons, while the US military had aimed them and provided data.

Russia's Foreign Ministry summoned US Ambassador Lynne Tracy and told her Washington was "waging a hybrid war against Russia and has actually become a party to the conflict."

"Retaliatory measures will definitely follow," it said.

## South Korea begins search for answers after battery plant fire kills 22

**Monitoring Desk**  
HWASEONG: The South Korean government ordered on Tuesday urgent safety inspections at high-risk industrial sites a day after a fire at a lithium battery factory that killed 22 workers with one person still missing.

Officials from agencies including the National Forensic Service, police and the fire department entered the factory as part of a joint investigation.

The blaze which broke out inside a warehouse with 35,000 lithium batteries produced toxic smoke, and the workers likely lost consciousness and succumbed within seconds, fire officials have said.

The fire was the latest industrial accident in a country where dozens of manufacturing workers lose their lives on the job each year despite repeated calls to improve workplace safety.

"I ask the ministries of labour and industry and the National Fire Agency to conduct an urgent safety inspection and, where there

is concern of an accident, take immediate measures," Prime Minister Han Duck-soo said at a cabinet meeting.

Seventeen of the 22 workers who died were Chinese and one Laotian was also among the dead. Most of them were hired temporarily to work at the plant packing primary lithium batteries run by unlisted company Aricell.

The factory is in Hwaseong, an industrial cluster southwest of the capital Seoul.

Firefighters with search dogs combed the gutted structure looking for the one person who remains missing. They found human remains and personal articles, which will be DNA tested for identification. Hwaseong fire official Kim Jin-young said.

Established in 2020, South Korea-based Aricell makes lithium primary batteries for sensors and radio communication devices. It has 48 employees, according to its latest regulatory filing and its LinkedIn profile.

## Russia says ICC's arrest warrant for Shoigu is part of 'hybrid war'

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia's Security Council said on Tuesday that the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant for former defence minister Sergei Shoigu was legally meaningless and part of a hybrid war against Moscow, state news agency TASS reported.

The ICC issued arrest warrants for Shoigu, who is now secretary of the Security Council, and for Valery Gerasimov, chief of Russia's General Staff, for alleged crimes committed during what Moscow calls its special military operation in Ukraine.

The Hague-based court said Shoigu and Gerasimov were suspected of having committed war crimes and crimes against humanity for directing attacks against civilians and

civilian objects in Ukraine. TASS quoted Russia's Security Council as saying the move was pointless.

"This is just shooting the breeze, since the jurisdiction of the ICC does not extend to Russia, and (the decision) was made as part of the hybrid war of the West against our country," it quoted the council as saying.

The ICC last year issued arrest warrants against President Vladimir Putin and his children's commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova, which the Kremlin said at the time were outrageous and legally void.

The move has, however, limited the number of countries to which Putin can safely travel. Last year he skipped a summit of the BRICS group in South Africa.

## China lunar probe Chang'e-6 returns to Earth with samples

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: A Chinese probe carrying samples from the far side of the Moon returned to Earth on Tuesday, capping a technically complex 53-day mission heralded as a world first.

The landing module of the Chang'e-6 spacecraft touched down at a predetermined site in Inner Mongolia at 2:07pm (6:07am GMT), the China National Space Administration said, hailing the mission a "complete success".

It comes bearing soil and rocks from the side of the Moon facing away from Earth, a poorly understood region that scientists say holds great research promise because its rugged features are less smoothed over by ancient lava flows than the near side.

That means the materials harvested there may help us to better understand how the Moon formed and how it has evolved over time.

Pakistan's "historic" lunar satellite iCube-Q was also launched as part of the Chinese mission.

China's space agency said the probe was "functioning normally, signalling that the Chang'e-6 lunar exploration mission was a complete success".

President Xi Jinping said in a congratulatory message that the "outstanding contributions" of the mission command "will be remembered forever by the motherland and the people", state broadcaster CCTV reported.

Chang'e-6 blasted off from a space centre on the island province of Hainan on May 3 and descended into the Moon's immense South Pole-Aitken Basin almost exactly a month later.

It used a drill and robotic arm to scoop up samples, snapped some shots of the pockmarked surface and planted a Chinese flag made from basalt in the grey soil.



**Emergency personnel work at the site of a deadly fire at a lithium battery factory owned by South Korean battery maker Aricell, in Hwaseong, South Korea.**

## New FY budget aimed at deficit reduction: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD (Online): Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said the budget for the next fiscal year is aimed at reducing fiscal deficit by focusing on measures that enhance the government's revenues and reduce unnecessary expenditures.

Winding up discussion on the budget 2024-25 in the National Assembly Tuesday, he said on the directions of the Prime Minister, the process of simplicity and austerity will be continued in the next fiscal year. He said a committee headed by him has been constituted which will present recommendations in this regard including closing down the ministries or their merger and devolution to the provinces. The Finance Minister announced that the pension expenditures will be brought down through pension reforms in future.

Muhammad Aurangzeb pointed out that the home-grown reforms program is the basis of the next year's fiscal budget in order to steer the country out of a difficult economic situation.

He said the reforms include enhancing tax to GDP ratio to thirteen percent, SOE reforms, public private partnership and energy sector reforms.

The Minister said the government is seriously committed to this plan and started its implementation. He assured that all the stakeholders will be taken on board about the implementation of this plan.

He said the digitization process of FBR is being accelerated. He said legislation is being introduced in the parliament to bring changes in the boards of the power sector. The privatization of the PIA has been taken forward.

Highlighting other points of the home-grown reforms plan, the Finance Minister said these include targeted social protection, broad based fair taxation system and initiatives for the health and education sectors.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb addressing to wind up the Federal Budget 2024-2025 in the National Assembly of Pakistan.

## Over Rs. 30mln outstanding against jail: Electricity supply of Mach jail disconnected by QESCO on non-payment of arrears

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The supply of electricity was suspended to the Mach central jail located in Mach area of Bolan, on Tuesday.

According to the Jail authorities, the power supply has been suspended to the Mach jail due to non-payment of electricity dues running in millions of rupees.

The Jail authorities informed that there are dues of Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) amounting to Rs. 30 million against the Mach jail.

According to the Jail authorities, it was given assurance to pay the electricity utility dues to QESCO within 15 days. However, the electricity of Mach jail was cut by QESCO despite the assurance.

It may be mentioned here that some 750 prisoners are imprisoned in central Jail Mach these days.

They are included a total of 73 prisoners who are awaiting death sentence in the jail. Besides, more than 100 high profile prisoners are also undergoing imprisonment in the Mach jail, the sources informed adding that the security concerns were increased in the prison due to power disconnection.



QUETTA: Members of Sunni Ulema Council chant slogan during rally on the martyrdom day of Hazrat Usman Ghani (RA), at Quetta press club.

## Political stability, peace essential for country's development: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday said that the key prerequisites for moving forward include policy continuity, political stability, and peace in the country.

Without these basics, the country's progress will be stunted, he said while talking to a private news channel. In response to a question about CPEC, he said that from 2013 to 2018, work on the project progressed speedily, but government changes later slowed down progress in Gwadar and the Special Economic Zones (SEZ).

The current administration has since reignited these efforts, working at full speed, he added.

The second phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is going to start, which will focus on five key corridors, Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green, and Open corridor, he added.

These corridors were designed to foster regional cooperation and ensure comprehensive development.

Recent terrorist attacks aim to cast a shadow over the development and hinder business activities in the country, he said.

## PPAF to celebrate World Environment Day in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): The Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) in collaboration with the Center for Peace Development, BRDS and IDO is all set to organize a seminar to celebrate World Environment Day in the provincial capital of Balochistan here on Wednesday.

The seminar themed 'Our Land Our Future' is aimed to raise awareness among the communities about climate change and its adverse effects on human lives and environment.

The governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail would be grace the event as a chief guest.

The Provincial Ministers, Parliamentarians, Secretaries, Vice Chancellors, Media, and people from different walk of life would attend the seminar.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani in a meeting with Australian High Commissioner Mr. Neil Hawkins at Parliament House.

## Merit & transparency being ensured for good governance: CM seeks UN support for training of teachers, water preservation & skill development in Balochistan

**Muhammad Yahya appreciates vision of Mir Sarfraz Bugti, emphasize on wholehearted guidance of provincial government for mutual cooperation**

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has sought the very cooperation of United Nations for training of the teachers, water preservation and skill development in the province.

The Chief Minister said that the Balochistan province has large area and, in this view, the UN programme has immense importance. He said that provincial government values the UN cooperation a lot.

He was speaking to the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN, Muhammad Yahya who called on him here on Tuesday.

Also present in the meeting were the provincial high ups besides other representatives of UN.

While apprising his government's initiatives in different sectors including for improvement of education, health, climate change, etc., the Chief Minister stressed the need to promote the mutual cooperation in almost all sectors including education, health, agriculture and technical training and skills.

He said that our biggest challenge is climate change despite ours' no stake in the emission of green house gases.

He said that the quality programmes are being started for training of the teachers in Balochistan.

He mentioned that the provision of technical training and education is included in the top priority of provincial government.

He said that the special programme has been started to impart technical education to youth of the province under public-private partnership mode.

In view of the importance of education, the provincial government has made 300 percent increase in the budget of education sector.

He also mentioned that merit and transparency is being ensured for establishing good governance.

He stressed that the UN may support the provincial government for training of the teachers, water preservation and skill development in the province. He expressed his government's resolve to continue the affairs with better governance and planning.

The Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN, Muhammad Yahya appreciated the vision of Chief Minister and said that wholehearted guidance of the provincial government is necessary for good mutual cooperation. The Chief Minister presented commemorative shield to the UN Resident Coordinator.

## Gilani for enhancing inter-Parl. coop. between Pak, Australia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday stressed for increased exchange of parliamentary delegation to enhance the inter-parliamentary cooperation between Pakistan and Australia.

During meeting with High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins who called him here, Gilani said that Pakistan accorded high value to its relations with Australia and wanted to further strengthen the ties between the two countries.

He also highlighted Pakistan's significant sacrifices in the war against terror and its humanitarian efforts, including the support extended to hundred thousands of Afghan refugees.

Yousaf Raza also emphasized Pakistan's proactive role in combating climate change, underscoring the country's ongoing initiatives and achievements in this critical area.

## 'Azm-e-Istehkam': KP CM calls all party conference

PESHAWAR (INP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Ali Amin Gandapur has called to convene an All Parties Conference (APC) to discuss Operation Istehkam Pakistan, address the current situation and foster peace in the region. Barrister Saif stated that all political parties would be invited to the APC, with the date and time to be decided soon. The conference aims to brief political parties on the current situation and secure their confidence and cooperation. In addition, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-organized tribal peace jirga is scheduled for tomorrow at 3pm to see participation from central and provincial PTI leaders.

## Six injured as passenger van overturns in Duki

DUKI (INP): Six people including women and children were injured when a passenger van overturned here on Tuesday.

According to details, the accident took place in Rabat area where a passenger van headed to Duki from Taunsa got out of control of driver due to over speeding and turned turtle.

Six people including two women and children were injured in the accident. The injured Usman Ghani s/o Rafique, Nasrullah s/o Bakhtiar Khan, Muhammad Bux s/o Malib Taj Muhammad, Misbah w/o Asif Ali, Rohi d/o Jehanzeb and Nawah d/o Loralai were shifted to Loralai hospital.



QUETTA: Leader of PPP and former Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandiwala, Rozi Khan Kakar and Changez Khan Jamali meeting with Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola.

## Opp. brushed aside resolution condemning mob lynching on under garb of protest: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday accused the opposition benches of brushing aside the resolution condemning mob lynching incidents on the garb of their protest.

Speaking in the Senate, the minister apprised the chair that he was scolded and pushed by the opposition members during their protest in the House.

"The opposition members are not ready to listen to but I took the signatures of their members namely Senators Anwar ul Haq Kakar and Kamil Ali Agha openly on the resolution." Earlier, Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarian (PPP) Parliamentary Leader Sherry Rehman decided the Leader of the Opposition for accusing the treasury benches of bypassing the opposition on the resolution condemning mob lynching incidents in Swat and Sargodha.

"The Leader of the Opposition is protesting and making false statements regarding the resolution. I requested the Law Minister to get the signature of the opposition on the resolution but he told me that the opposition members were not signing it. It cannot be that the government brushed a resolution and does not take the opposition on board," she added.

Leader of the Opposition Shibli Faraz apprised the chair that the resolution passed a day earlier was unilaterally approved without consulting the opposition.

## Balochistan roads declared as 'bloody highways'

QUETTA (INP): Balochistan Medical Emergency Response Center Director-General declared the national highways of Balochistan as 'bloody highways'.

He said during the last five years, 64,000 people were injured in 46,000 traffic accidents. There are eight national highways covering 4,500 km in Balochistan. The statistics of accidents in the last five years are alarming.

Over 46,000 accidents occurred in the last five years while over 63,000 people were injured in the last five years.

For most of the 20th century, the southwestern Pakistani province of Balochistan lacked good tarmac roads. Its impoverished residents often cursed the bone-jarring journeys they were forced to take on dilapidated roads and dirt tracks in the vast region, which borders Iran and Afghanistan.

But over the past two decades, the construction of new infrastructure across the province is causing alarming numbers of road accidents due to narrow highways, poor safety, speeding traffic, disregard for traffic laws, and few emergency services.

Tens of thousands of people have been killed and injured in traffic accidents across Balochistan since the turn of the century.

Ghazi Khan, a farmer, knows the danger of Balochistan's roads. Last month, he lost his 16-year-old son in a head-on collision between his motorcycle and a sedan. Khan says his son and his two friends riding with him fell on the asphalt after their motorbike hit a car. They were then crushed by a speeding

flashed truck. "He left home happy and was on his way to break the Ramadan fast with his friends," Khan recalled of his son's last hours.

## Naqvi expresses grief over martyred soldier of ANF in line of duty

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Constable Muhammad Afzal in Panjgur area who embraced Shahadat in the line of duty. The minister paid rich tribute to the martyred constable Muhammad Afzal and expressed his condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved. Mohsin Naqvi prayed for the speedy recovery of injured soldier Muhammad Shahid while ordering to provide best treatment facilities to injured Sepoy Mohammad Shahid. Shaheed Constable Afzal got high status of martyrdom, said Mohsin Naqvi adding that those who sacrifice their lives for the national mission of drug eradication are the heroes of the nation.

## Tangible outcomes of govt efforts to reduce expenditures soon: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that tangible results of the government's ongoing efforts to reduce its expenditures would appear within around one and a half months.

The prime minister, responding to a point of order by an opposition member at the National Assembly, said the government had already ordered abolishing the Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak PWD), citing massive corruption in its development budget.

He told the House that a rightsizing committee had been formed under Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and expressed the hope that he would come up with tangible results within almost one and a half months.

The prime minister said that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz led government always gave special focus on the uplift of South Punjab by providing the budget and employment higher than the population ratio. Besides, a 10% increased share was given to the region in the laptop as well as PM Rozgar schemes and the stipend for girls students was raised from Rs 200-Rs 1,000 under the Zevar Taleem Programme.

Moreover, he said, the Federal Government had also funded mega infrastructure projects in South Punjab, including Lodhran-Khanewal Motorway and Dera Ghazi Khan-Muzaffargarh Motorway.



QUETTA: UN's Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan Muhammad Yahya meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

## Acting President BNP rejects Operation Azm-i-Istehkam

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The acting President Balochistan National Party (BNP), Sajid Tareen Advocate has stated that his party fully reject the government's Operation Azm-i-Istehkam in the country.

He was addressing press conference at the Quetta Press Club on Tuesday.

Other leaders of BNP Sanullah Baloch, Ghulam Nabi Marri, Shakela Naveed Dehwar and others were also present.

The acting President BNP said that the Operation Azm-i-Istehkam would turn out to be Operation Adm-i-Istehkam in the country.

He said that the resources were also wasted on different operations in the past, but terrorism could not be eliminated.

He alleged that the Operation Azm-i-Istehkam is a new trick to loot the resources of Pashtoons and Balochs.

He charged that an unannounced martial is imposed in the country. He said that there is no mention of Apex committee in the constitution, but it is being given edge on the parliament.

He also criticized the statement of Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti in which he said that Balochistan needs the Operation Azm-i-Istehkam much.



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party (BNP) Leader, Sajid Tariq addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

## We have to make joint efforts for development of country: Karim

QUETTA (APP): Central senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Chaudhry Naeem Karim on Tuesday said that we have to make joint efforts for the development and prosperity of the country.

In statement issued here, he said that the federal government under the leadership of Prime Minister Mian Shabbaz Sharif and Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was taking steps to promote investment and prevent inflation.

Due to the positive measures taken by the government, there has been a clear reduction in the rate of inflation in the country, he said.

Chaudhry Naeem Karim said that Pakistan was currently facing many problems, to get the country out of these problems, all political and religious parties have to unite on one page and make efforts.

He said that the politics of hatred and division has caused a lot of damage to the country.

## Pishin DC holds emergency meeting ahead of monsoon rains

PISHIN (APP): An emergency meeting was held on Tuesday, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Pishin, Jumma Dad Mandokhail to prepare for potential monsoon rains and discuss strategies for dealing with emergency situations. In the meeting, Jumma Dad issued directives to the heads of relevant departments, emphasizing the importance of maintaining mutual communication among all agencies to ensure a prompt response in providing aid to the people in the event of any unexpected situation.

The deputy commissioner stressed that all possible measures should be taken to protect the lives and property of the public.

He noted that assisting people in difficult times is not easy task and instructed all relevant institutions to deliver their best services.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over meeting of Land Evaluation Committee.