

# Independent

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## 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 has been 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.



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

## Cabinet approves Operation Azam-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.

Discussing the annual budget 2024-25, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif instructed the cabinet members to ensure their presence in the ongoing budget debate in the Parliament.

During the briefing, the cabinet members were informed that the privatisation of the PIA was moving ahead swiftly as companies showing interest in the pre-bidding process, were visiting different PIA sites and bidding of the PIA will be held in the first week of August.

The prime minister instructed to accelerate the PIA privatisation while ensuring transparency in the process.

On the Commerce Ministry's recommendation and request from the World Food Programme of Afghanistan, the federal cabinet approved transit of a truck from Karachi to Kabul carrying the spare-parts of the trucks, just for once on humanitarian grounds.

The body gave the go-ahead to signing of an MoU between the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pakistan and that of Saudi Arabia. It also extended till March 2025 the time-frame of an implementation committee on the immovable property of late Ameer of Bahawalpur, in the light of the Supreme Court of Pakistan's ruling and recommendation of the States and Frontier Regions Division. The Executive Cabinet also approved the appointment of the Executive Director of the Frequency Allocation Board.

## 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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz 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 Global Development Division, Bill & 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 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.



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



QUETTA: UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan Muhammad Yahya meeting with Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhel

## UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator calls on Balochistan Governor

QUETTA (APP): United Nations (UN) Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Muhammad Yahya called on Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhel 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 Mandokhel 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.

## 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



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.

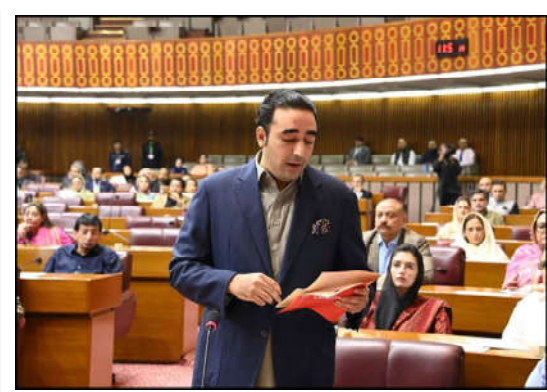
## SC's three new judges take oath

ISLAMABAD (APP): The three new judges of Supreme Court of Pakistan on Tuesday took oath of their offices in a ceremony at apex court Islamabad.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa administered the oath to Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi, and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan as top court's judges in a ceremony.

The oath taking ceremony was attended by judges of SC, attorney general of Pakistan and senior lawyers.

The law ministry has issued the notification on Monday, which stated that under Article 177 of the Constitution, the president pleased to appoint Sindh High Court (SHC) Chief Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi, Lahore High Court (LHC) Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan and LHC's Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan as judges of the Supreme Court.



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.

## Govt decides to cut PSDP budget by Rs250b to '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.

## 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.



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 bud-

get 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 happens to be 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.



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



# 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 un-christened 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 widespread 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 Papen, 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 Papen till the Nazi hold on the House was sealed with a vote. Only after this he signalled to Papen 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, Kesarinath 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 Maharashtra 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, bey-o-nd 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

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 António 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 widespread bleaching and die-offs due to temperature sensitivity.

The term 'global boiling' underscores the urgency and severity of the climate crisis. The unprecedented 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



## 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.

## 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.

## 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).



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. "A new entity - Special Investment Facilitation Council - has been created to facilitate foreign inflows into these areas," he told the gathering. Pointing out that Pakistan was the world's

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, chromite 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 Ashgar 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.



LAHORE: Activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against prolong 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 Saeed 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 I 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, Hanfnia 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.



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.



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.



## 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 Zevra 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 Sanaullah Baloch, Ghulam Nabi Marri, Shakeela 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 re-

sources 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 Tarin 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.

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## 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 commu-

nication 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.



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 qual-

ity 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 estab-

lishing 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.



QUETTA: Leader of PPP and former Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwala, 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 Parliamentary Leader Sherry Rehman

derided 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 brings a resolution and does not take the opposition on board," he added.

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

tion. Parliamentary Leader of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Manzoor Ahmed Kakar urged the House to pay heed towards the issues of professors and lecturers serving in different varsities of the country demanding increase in their remunerations in the budget.

"There are a total of 200 universities in Pakistan and Rs 65 billion has been allocated for them. However, the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan is demanding Rs 130 billion for distribution of funds to these varsities, whereas the provincial demand is of Rs 500 billion," he added.

He mentioned that there was exodus of lecturers and professors from the country that should not be ignored as it was detrimental for the future.

## 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

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

flatbed 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.

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.

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## 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.

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ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb addressing to members of 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 electric-

ity 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.

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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, he further added.

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

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## 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.

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