

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti presiding over a meeting to review implementation of development budget of new FY and arrangement by PDMA for monsoon season

PM chairs video link meeting attended by CM; decides:

Federal Govt. to bear 70 pc expenses on solarization of agricultural tube wells with rest 30% by provincial Govt.

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif presided over a video link meeting on solarization of the agricultural tube wells, on Saturday.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti through video link from Quetta with Provincial Ministers Finance and Agriculture, Parliamentary Secretary for Energy, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan and other concerned high ups.

During the course of meeting, it was decided to finalize matters about solarization of the agricultural tube wells in the province.

It was also decided that the federal ministry of Energy would pay visit to the

province within next couple of days.

In this regard, agreement would be made with the government of Balochistan. Under the agreement, 70 percent expenditures would be incurred by the federal government with remaining 30 percent by the provincial government.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the provincial government would ensure with cooperation of the district administration that the agricultural tube wells would be converted on the solar energy at the place the electricity supply would be disconnected from the QESCO's feeders.

In this regard, the provincial government would also pass an Act after the

legislation to be made in the provincial assembly.

He stressed that the solarization of agricultural tube wells is unavoidable due to shortage of energy.

With this, billions of rupees would also be saved which otherwise are spent on subsidy, he added.

The Chief Minister requested to the Prime Minister to ensure supply of six hours electricity to zamindars until the implementation is made on the important project.

He also thanked Prime Minister for taking interest in resolving the issues of Balochistan.

He believed that the important project would be implemented soon because of the special efforts being made by the Prime Minister.

Moderate Pezeshkian wins Iran's presidential race



DUBAI (INP): The low-profile moderate Masoud Pezeshkian, who has pledged to open Iran to the world and deliver freedoms its people have yearned for, has won the country's run-off presidential vote, the interior ministry said on Saturday.

"By gaining majority of the votes cast on Friday, Pezeshkian has become Iran's next president," it said.

The participation was around 50% in a tight race between Pezeshkian, the

PM Shehbaz says: New era of Pak-China cooperation in diverse fields to boost economic prosperity, regional connectivity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that a new era of cooperation with China commenced in areas of information technology, communication, minerals and mining; and energy which would boost economic progress, regional connectivity and the bilateral ties.

Chairing a meeting to review implementation of agreements and MOUs between the two countries

reached during PM's recent visit to China, the prime minister said that he would not tolerate any disruption in the implementation of the same, declaring that he would personally supervise the process.

Referring to time-tested Pak-China friendship, he said that China had always supported Pakistan in difficult and hard times.

"China has emerged as the strongest economic power and Pakistan can emulate its development,"

he added.

The prime minister observed that recently a delegation of Chinese shoes manufacturing companies had visited Pakistan with regard to relocation of their plants in Pakistan, adding that such companies had the capacity to invest about 5 to 8 billion dollars in Pakistan, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He said that the local shoes manufacturers association was in constant contact with the Chinese com-

panies in this regard.

Moreover, he said about 12 renowned Chinese companies related to agriculture sector would be taking very active part in the Food and Agri Expo being held in Pakistan.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, federal ministers including Jam Kamal Khan, Attaulah Tarar, Abdul

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on implementation of Agreements and MOUs agreed upon during PM's visit to China.

PTI calls off Islamabad rally, files contempt plea against administration

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Saturday called off its Islamabad rally and moved the Islamabad High Court (IHC) seeking contempt of court proceedings against those responsible for the suspension of the no objection certificate (NOC) in this regard.

The former ruling party had announced to hold a rally on Saturday in the Tarnol area in the outskirts of the federal capital and had filed a petition in the IHC seeking permission for its rally. In response, IHC's Babar Sattar on June 26 directed the party and the city's administration to amicably sort out the issue after which the deputy commissioner allowed the PTI to hold its rally.

However, Islamabad Chief Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa later suspended the NOC citing the beginning of the month of Muharram and security concerns along with complaints lodged by the local people.

The chief commissioner, in a letter dated July 5, said that the police on Wednesday confirmed recovering a heavy cache of weapons and ammunition.

Stressing that an intelligence-based operation (IBO) was still underway in Tarnol, the official highlighted insufficient manpower to secure a local Imam Bargah and the rally at the same time, particularly in Muharram.

Under leadership of Pezeshkian ties with Iran will further strengthen: President Zardari

PM felicitates Dr Masoud on his victory in Iran's presidential election

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Asif Ali Zardari while congratulating Masoud Pezeshkian on his election as the Iranian President has hoped under his leadership the relations between Pakistan and Iran will further gain strength.

In a statement, issued from press wing of president house, president said both Pakistan and Iran enjoy fraternal ties.

President said we will work together for the peace and prosperity of the region.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday

extended congratulations to Dr Masoud Pezeshkian on his victory in Iran's presidential elections.

"I look forward to working closely with President-elect Dr Pezeshkian to further strengthen Pakistan-Iran bilateral ties and promote regional peace and stability," the prime minister wrote on his official 'X' account.

He said as neighboring countries, Pakistan and Iran enjoyed a close and historic relationship. "We must ensure a bright future for our two peoples through mutually beneficial cooperation," he added.

Crescent not sighted, first Muharram on Monday

QUETTA (APP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on Saturday announced that the first Muharram-ul-Haram 1446 AH would fall on Monday, July 8, 2024 as the crescent has not been sighted from any nook and cranny of the country.



According to the notification issued here, the ministry has made this announcement in pursuance of the decision of Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, in its meeting held in Quetta.

Release of funds for dev. projects without physical progress to be serious offense; action to be taken against those responsible, warns CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has warned that the release of funds for development projects without physical progress would be serious offense, and strict action would be taken against those responsible.

He directed to the administrative secretaries of the provincial government departments to make the release of funds conditional with speed of work and not to accept any political pressure in this regard.

The Chief Minister announced that the departments of Planning and Development and Finance would be empowered and answerable.

He said that the provin-

cial government is initiating the process of answerability and self-accountability to assess the performance.

The Chief Minister was chairing review meeting about implementation on the development budget and arrangements made by PDMA for the monsoon season, here on Saturday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included: Provincial Minister for Planning and Development, Mir Zahoob Buledi, Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan, Director General PDMA, Jahanzaib Khan and other concerned high ups.

and DG PDMA conducted briefings about their departments related issues and matters separately.

During his briefing, the Secretary Finance informed that the implementation has been started on development projects without delay.

Similarly, the DG PDMA told that measures have been taken to cope with the situation to be emerged due to the monsoon rains and flood situation.

It was disclosed in the meeting that 22 Naib Qasids are posted under an Assistant Director of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in a district of Balochistan.

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Nefarious elements no interest's in democracy, peoples' problems: Nawaz

MURREE (APP): Quaid Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Saturday said that the nefarious elements those are creating instability inside the country and malign its image abroad have no interest in democracy and people's problems.

These views were expressed former PML-N prime minister Nawaz Sharif while talking to the parliamentary party leader, Senator Irfan Siddiqui here.

Seven years ago, he said that his government had overcome problems like inflation, load shedding and terrorism from the country and it was also committed to diminish such issues on priority basis to provide relief to the com-

mon man.

He said the armed forces including security agencies were fully supporting the government in eradicating the menace of terrorism because law and order situation was closely related to investment, development and prosperity of Pakistan. "Parliament was also playing an active role in this regard," he maintained.

Nawaz Sharif said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-led government had done nothing for the welfare and development of the country and masses, adding that it had only focused on doing corruption rather than overcome the problem's people seriously.

Imran Khan seeks better jail conditions in letter to President, PM

LAHORE: Imran Khan the incarcerated founding leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has urged President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to ensure proper jail facilities through a letter penned by his counsel, Azhar Siddiqui.

On Saturday, Siddiqui, who is the head of the Judicial Activism Panel said through the letter that the PTI chief was not being provided with the facilities mandated by law and was being denied visits from people.

"Why is there an obstruction in Imran Khan's meetings?" the letter questions, emphasising the need for Khan to be given basic amenities in prison.

GoB suspends junior clerk over corruption allegations

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has suspended junior clerk Tariq Mehartha Bugti from the education department after allegations of corruption and embezzlement surfaced. An inquiry has been launched against the suspended employee, who is accused of misusing his position and embezzling funds meant for public welfare projects says notification issued here late night.

According to detail Tariq Mehartha Bugti was accused of embezzlement and misconduct by PPP workers in a meeting with the Chief Minister of Balochistan.

The Chief Minister ordered an inquiry into the allegations and suspended the accused employee.

The education department has issued a notification regarding the suspension and inquiry.

Further details are awaited as the inquiry is underway.



QUETTA: Chairman Senate Standing Committee for Aviation Senator Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Tarar questions credibility of Awam Pakistan party founders

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaulah Tarar on Saturday questioned credibility of the founders of the newly launched political party named as Awam Pakistan.

The minister, reacting to their presser held at the launching ceremony, said it was nothing but a gathering of investors who had billions of rupee in their possession.

The presser was a re-

Announces new party 'Awam Pakistan Party' Nations can't be built by 'Form 47' politicians: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi launched his new political party, the Awam Pakistan Party (APP), on Saturday, criticising the country's current political and economic instability.

"Pakistan is plagued by political and economic instability. Remember, countries cannot be built by those relying on Form 47," Abbasi said during the launch event in Islamabad.



Abbasi expressed concerns about the country's leadership, stating, "The rulers do not care about the country. What can a government that taxes milk do? The majority of those sitting in national and provincial assemblies have lost elections. We are standing at the brink of disaster, and the current rulers are indifferent."

Pakistan, US agree qualified Pakistani nurses employment in New York

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Speaker of New York State Assembly Phil Ramos and his delegation on Satur-



day met with Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi at the Ministry of Interior.

Both sides discussed matters of mutual interests including education, health and increasing cooperation in policing and economic sectors.

Both sides also agreed to send qualified Pakistani nurses to New York for employment after completing the necessary process and the procedure will be finalized soon in this regard.

Deputy Speaker New York Assembly Phil Ramos told Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi that there is a shortage of qualified nurses in America and Pakistan has a lot of potential in this regard.

Expressing his views Minister Mohsin Naqvi said he will take necessary steps to recruit qualified Pakistani nurses in New York.

The meeting also decided that a workable plan will be developed to utilize the opportunities to increase cooperation in the education, health and economic sectors.

The Deputy Speaker of the New York Assembly invited Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to visit New York.

PCB allocates Rs. 12,800m for upgradation of stadiums ahead of ICC Champions Trophy

LAHORE (APP): The Board of Governors (BoG) of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Saturday approved Rs. 12,800 million for upgradation of the cricket stadiums in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Karachi ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, to be held in Pakistan.

The BoG took important decisions for development of domestic and women cricket in the country during its 72nd meeting at the Board Room of the National Cricket Academy (NCA) Gaddafi Stadium, here on Saturday. The meeting was chaired by Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi. The BoG also approved enhancing the annual budget for women cricket from Rs. 70 million to Rs. 240 million, besides raising the central contracts of the women cricketers.

The meeting also set aside Rs. 450 million for the

promotion of domestic cricket in the country. It was also decided that the PCB will look after 12 cricket grounds across the country besides providing funds for the upkeep and salaries of staff of 100 cricket grounds in Pakistan.

The meeting was briefed on the preparation for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 to be held in Pakistan next year.

The Chairman PCB emphasized the need of completing the upgradation work on the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore, National Bank Cricket Stadium Karachi and Pindi Stadium Rawalpindi ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, adding that the international standards will be met in the upgradation.

Mohsin Naqvi said that the upgradation of the stadium will ensure better facilities for the cricket fans. He directed to work on new

venues for the domestic tournaments.

The Chairman apprised the BoG of various initiatives to strengthen domestic and women cricket. Various proposals were reviewed for the betterment of domestic cricket in the country.

Chief Operating Officer (CEO) PCB and Secretary BoG Salman Naseer and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) PCB Javed Murtaza briefed the BoG on the salient features of the budget.

The BoG members including Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhter Zaman, Sajjad Ali Khokhar, Zafarullah, Tanvir Ahmed, Tariq Sarwar, Dr. Anwar Ahmed Khan, Muhammad Ismail Qureshi, Meraj Mehmood, Usama Azhar and PCB's Director Domestic Cricket Abdullah Khurram Niazi attended the 72nd meeting.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti giving away prizes among women who got 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions in cycling race organized by district administration

Seminar report on prevention and countering terrorism in Balochistan

A seminar on "Prevention and Countering Terrorism in Balochistan, Pakistan" was jointly organized by PDRE (Peace, Development, Research, and Education) and BUIITEMS (Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences) on June 26th, 2024 at 11 am at the Training Hall, BUIITEMS, Quetta, Balochistan. After the recitation of the holy Quran and the National Anthem of Pakistan the stage secretary, Ms. Fiza Batool, a BS student introduced the topic of the seminar and showed the video clips of Terrorist attacks on the stock exchange in Karachi and then on Gwadar port for the information of the participants. Four Keynote speakers delivered presentations/speeches in the seminar.

Prof Abdul Wadood is delivering his speech at the seminar

Prof Dr Abdul Wadood, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, BUIITEMS, Quetta, Balochistan delivered his thought-provoking presentation on "Terrorism trends in Balochistan: Changing dynamics and new challenges."

The learned speaker explained the devastations of terrorism in Balochistan since the start of the 21st century and highlighted different aspects of terrorism in the context of terrorist attacks in Balochistan. The speaker elaborated on how it impacted the daily lives of people and how it caused disruptions in the human resource development and facilitation of people's living. Furthermore, he provided an insight into the historical context of terrorism and explored the past waves of violence in Balochistan. Moreover, he expressed his views on the ethnic dimension of the violence and also used statistical data to augment his arguments. He critically analyzed the current dimension of terrorism in Balochistan and highlighted opportunities for the people of Balochistan in the CPEC mega project which

Pakistan has started in collaboration with China. By wrapping up his views, he provided several solutions to address the preexisting tensions of violence and terrorism in Balochistan.

Prof Abdul Wadood is receiving the shield in the seminar

Dr Siraj Bashir, Director, Research Balochistan Think Tank Network, Balochistan. Spoke on peacebuilding in Balochistan in the context of terrorist attacks and explained youth engagement will help in countering terrorism in Balochistan. There is dire to address the genuine socio-economic issues of the people of Balochistan.

Dr Siraj Bashir is delivering his speech at the seminar

The government should provide opportunities to young people which will reduce their reliance on sardars / feudalism. Young people in a democratic government have freedom of expression, which enables them to express themselves without much ado. Regarding teaching at a higher-level Dr Siraj Aziz said that instead of teaching students to memorize information and learn by rote, the curriculum should emphasize the development of logical and critical thinking.

Dr Siraj Bashir is receiving the shield at the seminar

If we develop the right strategies and policies today to meaningfully engage the youth in the province, provide quality education, and secure future socio-economic development, the youth will not be at risk of becoming marginalized, intolerant, vulnerable to social ills, and they will play their due role in local, provincial and national development.

Madam Faiza Mir is delivering her speech at the seminar

Ms. Faiza Mir, a faculty member in the International Relations Department at the University of Balochistan, Quetta discussed countering terrorism in the context of conflict

management. She particularly explained Conflict Management at the National Level: A Case Study of Balochistan. In her speech, Ms. Faiza Mir discussed International, regional, and national aspects of the conflict in Balochistan.

Madam Faiza Mir began her thoughtful presentation with an explanation of conflict management and its importance in the con-

text of countering terrorism in Balochistan. Furthermore, she delved into the various strategies that can be used to tackle the conflicts peacefully and without using violence.

Madam Faiza Mir is receiving a shield at the seminar

As her topic of discussion ranged to the national level, she provided insight into the case study of Balochistan to resolve the issues and conflicts. She presented several case studies throughout history to support her arguments and gave an overview of strategies that have already been used to resolve the pre-existing conflict in Balochistan. She presented several solutions that can be used to resolve the conflict in Balochistan.

New International Airport in Gwadar

There are many separatist movements in India including the Khalistam Movement and Jammu and Kashmir. Indian experts stated on media that since Pakistan is supporting the struggle of the people of Jammu and Kashmir India

is taking revenge in Balochistan. India is opposing CPEC and its development projects, especially in Balochistan directly and indirectly. It is using non-state actors and the security forces of Pakistan arrested Indians in this connection. The regional economic connectivity projects which are in different stages of construction in our region including

tional Institute at Gwadar, Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan and New Gwadar International Airport.

Gwadar Expressway Terrorism is a menace that harms the development of a country and blocks people's access to facilities. It has become a big hurdle in regional connectivity. Regional connectivity is a straight way to develop-



ment and employment opportunities. There are global regional and national factors that are causing terrorism. We, the educated people of Pakistan should be aware of these global and regional factors to counter terrorism properly. Inside the country, we should oppose injustice, corruption, violence, and ignorance. He ended with a note that instead of criticizing others for not playing their due role in countering terrorism, we should play our part in strengthening counter-terrorism efforts.

Dr Manzoor Ahmed Khan, Chairman, Department of International Relations in his concluding remarks stated that terrorism is casting a shadow over the development of Balochistan province and brought the attention of the youth to their responsibility and constructive role in countering the menace of terrorism.

A lengthy question-answer session was held in which students actively participated and the speakers answered their questions about terrorism.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairs a meeting of committee to firm up agenda for the upcoming 52nd meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI).

Many initiatives taken to empower women through schemes and programmes: Shaista

Independent Report

SUKKUR: Step Foundation Chairperson Shaista Baloch said that for sustainable and comprehensive economic development in any country, equal opportunities for women and men in terms of access to and pursuit of financial and professional activities are essential. She expressed these views.

Addressing a large number of women in Sukkur on the occasion of giving awareness to women about giving employment scheme to females of communities, Shaista Baloch said that recognizing the importance of women empowerment and considering it as a way to eradicate poverty. According to the source, our foundation and team have taken several initiatives to empower women through schemes and programmes, creating an



environment in which women can realize their full potential. Shaista Baloch further said that there is a need to provide guidance to women in order to benefit from projects like the Women's Employment Scheme, which will create employment opportunities for women as well as enable them to set up their own businesses. Appreciated the Chairperson of Step Foundation Shaista Baloch for regularly organizing the awareness session

New era of Pak-China cooperation...

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Aleem Khan, Sardar Awais Khan Leghari, Dr Musadik Malik, Rana Tanvir Hussain, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State Shaza Fatima Khawaja, PM's Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jahanzaib Khan and relevant authorities.

The prime minister also reviewed progress on sending a total of 1,000 Pakistani students on government scholarships to China for seeking the latest training in the agriculture sector.

He also directed for sending of students from the backward areas of Balochistan province on priority basis, besides other students from the four provinces, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir on merit.

The prime minister further directed for sending of students in the upcoming educational semester.

The meeting was apprised that owing to the agreements and MoUs signed during prime minister's recent visit, more than 100 Chinese companies were in contact with the Pakistani counterparts

for the business and investment purposes.

The meeting was also informed by the ministry of IT on the progress made for imparting of technical training, one-stop operation for business facilitation, smart governance and smart city by Huawei to a total of 3,00,000 students.

The prime minister directed WAPDA authorities for the establishment of safe center for the fool-proof security arrangements of Chinese nationals working on Dasu and Diamer Bhasha dams.

He asked for immediate implementation of all directives. The prime minister was also apprised of the progress on different projects related to communication infrastructure, power and Gwadar.

He directed for expediting work on steps for the development of Gwadar port, airport and industrial zone for transforming Gwadar into a regional corridor hub.

The prime minister also asked for accelerating negotiation process with the Chinese manufacturing companies for relocation of solar panels and its accessories units into Pakistan.

Release of funds..

Continued from page 1

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that the trial of performance of the provincial government has been started with the beginning of new financial year.

The Chief Minister said that tendering process of the development projects has been started on July 1 for the first time in history.

He announced to pay visit to the projects to review the projects twice in a week.

He also directed the provincial ministers and administrative secretaries to review implementation on the projects after conducting field visits constantly.

The Chief Minister asserted that unnecessary recruitments were made in the past.

He regretfully pointed out that majority of the employees are not ready to perform and all are demanding of salaries while sitting at home.

For instance, he visited Rural Health Center (RHC) where he found the doctors to Chowkidars absent from their duties while the offices were closed with locks outdated.

The Chief Minister said that the existing rules are hurdles in termination of the habitual employees and officers.



QUETTA: Members of Naseerabad Educational Council are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, held at Quetta press club

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

A Donor Funded Project seeks to hire dynamic and career oriented professionals on contract basis for the following positions

S.No	Name of Position	No of Positions	Quota	Criteria / Required Qualification and Experience	Place of Posting
1	Microbiologist / Molecular Biologist	1	Merit	MSc /Bsc Microbiology or BS (MLT) from any recognized university. preference will be given to the candidates holding the domicile of Diamer region GB. Max Age 45 years. Minimum 3 years of working experience in clinical microbiology laboratory and hands on experience in Tuberculosis diagnosis is required. Orientation of techniques, quality assurance, procedure, use of laboratory equipment and its care applicable to tuberculosis lab is mandatory.	Gilgit
2	HIV Physician - ART Centres	1	Merit	MBBS with valid PMDC registration. Preference will be given to candidates with FCPS in Medicine/ Infectious Diseases. 03 years of experience in hospitals for managing infectious diseases. Age 50 years.	1 - PIMS,
3	DIVISIONAL DHIS-2 COORDINATOR	4	Merit	Bachelor, preferably with IT qualification. A minimum of 2 years' experience, preferably in health related programmes providing technical support, liaison & coordination. Familiarity with functioning of health care facilities. Max Age 50 years.	1 Faisalabad, 1 Gujranwala, 1 Sargodha, 1 Kalat.
4	Counsellors at ART Sites	2	Merit	Masters degree in Clinical Psychology from HEC Recognized university. At least 03 years of work experience as counsellor in health sector programmes. Preference will be given to female candidates. Age limit: 45 years.	1- Federal -1 GB
5	Pharmacist - PMDT	1	Merit	Doctor of Pharmacy. Minimum 3 year's post qualification experience in hospital pharmacy is required. Computer Skills particularly working on MS Office is mandatory. Max age 50 years.	PMDT GB
6	Nurses at ART Sites	1	Merit	Diploma in Nursing candidates shall be given preference holding BS Nursing from a recognized institute registered with Pakistan Nursing Council. 02 years post qualification experience in public sector hospitals/ well reputed organizations. Age limit: 40 years	1 GB
7	Data Entry Operator at ART Centre	1	Merit	Bachelor Degree in Computer Science/IT At least 02 years of work experience as data entry operator in health projects/ organizations. Age limit: 40 years	AJK
8	Screener - Mobile X-Ray Van	2	Merit	FA / FSc Graduate will be Preferred. Working on MS Office good Communication skills both written and Verbal are highly desired. 2 years experience of working with any NGO/ Hospital shall be Preferred. Max age 50 Years.	ICT - GB
9	Screener	1	Merit	FA / FSc Graduate will be Preferred. Working on MS Office good Communication skills both written and Verbal are highly desired. 2 years experience of working with any NGO/ Hospital shall be Preferred. Max age 50 Years.	Islamabad
10	Support Staff/ Picker & Packer	1	Merit	Middle Pass. Minimum 2 years' Experience of Cargo handling. Loading/offloading, stacking in a warehouse. Max Age 50 years	Islamabad

Interested candidates may apply online. Please visit www.ntp.gov.pk/career/ within 15 days of the publication of this advertisement. Last date of submission of application is 21st July 2024. Government employees must apply through proper channel. Only shortlisted candidates will be called for interviews. No TA/DA will be paid. (ONLY APPLICATIONS APPLIED ONLINE WILL BE ACCEPTED).

Admin HR officer - Contact # 051-9255387

Secretary Health visits new PIMS emergency unit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary for Health, Nadeem Mahbub on Saturday directed that the new emergency department at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) should be completed by December this year.

He issued this direction during his visit to the new 200-bed emergency unit under construction at PIMS hospital.

During his visit, he directed the team to accelerate the work pace to ensure the project is completed by December, according to a Ministry of Health spokesperson.

Nadeem Mahbub also visited the newly built modular operation theater, noting that it has been constructed according to international standards and established on modern lines, and announced that it will be inaugurated soon.

Additionally, he toured the Children's Hospital and directed them to further upgrade and improve the health facilities provided.

He also visited the mother and child hospital, which is being constructed in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and directed the Executive Director of PIMS to ensure it becomes fully functional.

He reviewed the parking facility currently under construction and directed that it be completed soon.

Emphasizing the government's commitment to enhancing healthcare services, Nadeem Mahbub said, "We will leave no stone unturned in providing facilities to the public."

He assured that effective measures are being taken to improve hospital performance and that all resources will be utilized to provide the best medical facilities to patients.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary Health Nadeem Mahbub visited the under construction emergency unit in PIMS.

Apex Court moved for early hearing of case on recovery of missing persons

ISLAMABAD (Online): Petition has been filed in Supreme Court (SC) for early hearing of recovery of missing persons case.

The petition was filed by barrister Aitzaz Ahsan in SC on Saturday.

Through the petition the SC was requested to fix petition for urgent hearing without any delay.

The petitioner said the petitioner is seized with grave apprehensions over abrupt upsurge in enforced disappearances in the country. The politicians, bureaucrats, political workers and those having difference of opinion are being subjected to enforced disappearances. Journalists, politicians and prominent persons are released after some time but the little renowned persons are missing since the last several decades.

The court had sought assurance from federal government on January 3 that no citizen will be subjected to enforced disappearance in future.

The court on previous hearing had sought necessary details from missing persons commission on enforced disappearances. The case could not be fixed for hearing despite lapse of more than six months.

The gravest and agonizing issue of Pakistan is enforced disappearances. Several cases of enforced disappearances have been reported after written assurance was obtained by the court on preventing enforced disappearances.

SC should fix the case for urgent hearing and curb this social evil once for all. In the recent days, professor Zahoor Mashwani, Mazhar Mashwani, PTI information secretary Waqas Amjid, Ghulam Shabbir brother of Shahbaz Gill and others have been lifted.

If case is not fixed for early hearing then it is feared more citizens will be subjected to enforced disappearance.

NDMA warns of floods, landsliding due to heavy falls

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has warned of floods and landsliding due to heavy and very heavy falls in many parts of the country.

According to latest advisory, heavy and very heavy falls with wind and thundershowers are expected in Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Kashmir.

Hot and humid weather with rain-wind and thundershowers has been forecast for few areas of Sindh and Balochistan while partly cloudy weather with rainfall activity is expected in Gilgit Baltistan. The rains are likely to induce flash floods and landsliding in hilly mountainous regions of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir.

The NDMA has also warned of hill torrents along Kirthar and KPh-i-Sulaiman ranges which may affect at-risk areas of Balochistan and Punjab.

It has also warned of urban flooding in Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Narowal, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Peshawar.

Increased temperatures and rains may trigger Glacial Lake Outburst Flooding in vulnerable valleys of KPK and Gilgit Baltistan. From tomorrow, medium to high level flood peaks are expected at river Chenab downstream near Marala, medium level peaks at River Kabul near Nowshera and river Jhelum upstream Mangla dam. In view of the above forecast, NDMA has directed all provincial disaster management authorities to issue early warnings and ensure timely evacuation of at-risk populations from vulnerable areas.



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired a high-level meeting to review security arrangement for Muharram. Meeting attended by all division DIGs, SSPs, AIGs, and SPs.

Ensuring peace, protecting lives Islamabad Police on duty 24/7

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a high-level meeting was chaired by Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi early in the morning. The meeting was attended by all division DIGs, SSPs, AIGs, and SPs.

During the meeting, IGP Islamabad reviewed the peace and tranquility situation in the city, maintaining law and order, ensuring the prevention of crimes, and other important matters, while also issuing directions to complete the various development projects in the Islamabad Police on a priority basis.

On this occasion, he said that maintaining peace and order in the federal capital is the primary responsibility of the Islamabad Police.

The Islamabad Police will ensure the peace of the city and the protection of the lives and property of its citizens at all costs. He further said that from constable to IG, we are all one team, and the purpose of every officer being on duty 24/7 is only to protect the public.

Court approves bail plea of Aamir Mughal, orders to release him forthwith

ISLAMABAD (Online): District and Sessions Court while approving bail after arrest plea of PTI leader Aamir Mughal has ordered to release him.

The case against PTI leader Aamir Mughal for interfering in government affairs came up for hearing before civil judge Abbas Shah in district and sessions court Islamabad on Saturday.

PTI lawyers appeared on behalf of Aamir Mughal in the court.

The court accepted bail after arrest plea of Aamir Mughal.

Civil judge Abbas Shah accepted bail plea against surety bonds valuing Rs 50,000.

The court ordered to release Aamir Mughal immediately.

It is pertinent to mention here case of interfering in the affairs of government is registered in police station Ramna against Aamir Shahzad.

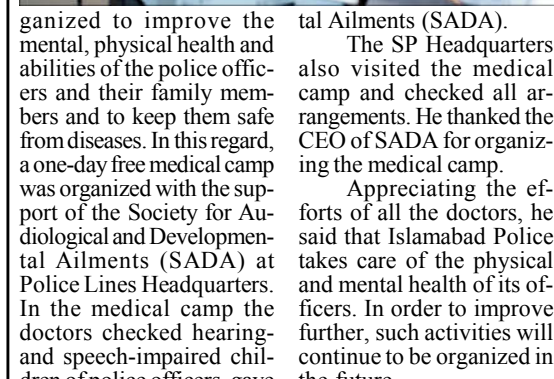
Medical camp organized for Islamabad Police officials

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, various healthy activities, psychological tests and medical camps were organized to improve the mental, physical health and abilities of the police officers and their family members and to keep them safe from diseases. In this regard, a one-day free medical camp was organized with the support of the Society for Audiological and Developmental Ailments (SADA) at Police Lines Headquarters. In the medical camp the doctors checked hearing- and speech-impaired children of police officers, gave them useful advice, and provided medicines to improve their health.

On this occasion, the Chief Executive Officer and other doctors participated in the medical camp on behalf of the Society for Audiological and Developmental Ailments (SADA).

The SP Headquarters also visited the medical camp and checked all arrangements. He thanked the CEO of SADA for organizing the medical camp.

Appreciating the efforts of all the doctors, he said that Islamabad Police takes care of the physical and mental health of its officers. In order to improve further, such activities will continue to be organized in the future.



Punjab govt. enforces Section-144 for Muharram security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Spokesperson for the Punjab Interior Department on Saturday said that the Punjab government has enforced Section-144 across the province in view of security during Muharram.

A private news report indicated that the Punjab Home Department has issued comprehensive guidelines, including a ban on double riding of motorcycles from the 7th to the 10th of Muharram.

The Interior Secretary of Punjab has mandated the strict implementation of foolproof security measures and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) throughout the province.

The spokesperson said that there would be no new construction in Muharram processions and gatherings.

The display of all types of weapons and incendiary materials in public places will be prohibited without the appropriate authorization.

"Provocative slogans and gestures that incite public sentiments, beliefs, and sects are completely banned," the spokesperson emphasized. Section 144 also prohibits any remarks or actions inciting inter-religious, communal, or ethnic hatred through any medium. Additionally, constructing barricades on rooftops or other buildings along procession routes is forbidden. It is also prohibited to stockpile stones, bricks, bottles, or garbage on rooftops along the procession routes. The spokesperson said that the presence of spectators on the rooftops of buildings or shops along the procession route is banned. Furthermore, a ban on double riding of motorcycles will be enforced from the 7th to the 10th of Muharram, with exceptions made for senior citizens, women, and law enforcement officials.

Secretary Info, PIO grieved over death of Jatoi's wife

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid and Principal Information Officer (PIO) Mubashir Hassan on Saturday expressed deep grief over the death of the wife of National Press Club President Azhar Jatoi.

Shahera Shahid and Mubashir Hassan said that they shared grief of Azhar Jatoi and his family in this hour of sorrow.

They prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

PTI files contempt of court petition in IHC against suspending NOC for public meeting

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI has filed contempt of court plea in Islamabad High Court (IHC) against Islamabad administration for suspending NOC for public meeting.

The contempt of court plea was filed by PTI leaders Umar Ayoub, Barrister Gohar, Umair Niazi, Shehryar Afridi, Sana Ullah Mastikhel and Shahid Khattak Saturday.

The petition said suspending the NOC of Tarnol public meeting is contempt of court.

The petitioners requested the court to issue orders for allowing to hold public meeting besides directing the respondents to implement court's orders.

APHC-AJK leaders say: Wani revitalized Kashmir freedom movement

ISLAMABAD (INP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter has paid glowing tribute to the popular youth leader Burhan Muzaffar Wani and his comrades on the occasion of their martyrdom anniversary.

Senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir chapter Muhammad Farooq Rahmani in a statement, paying tribute to Burhan Wani Shaheed, said Kashmir's struggle for freedom is a living reality. He said it is the result of the unprecedented sacrifices of the Kashmiris that the Kashmir dispute is the center of attention at the global level.

Muhammad Farooq Rahmani said the Kashmiri people have rejected India, adding a lasting solution to the Kashmir conflict can only be found through tripartite talks.



ISLAMABAD: A large crowd gathers at the main entry gate of Shrine Bari Imam in the Federal Capital.

Foreign Ministry to resume Apostille certification process from Monday

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced the resumption of the Apostille certification process starting Monday.

Personal and educational documents: Rs3,000 per document; Legal documents: Rs4,500 per document; Commercial documents: Rs12,000 per document; and Previously, the fees were Rs 500, 700, and Rs3,000, respectively.

Traditionally, documents verified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were valid for six months. Now, documents verified through the Apostille process will have indefinite validity.

The Apostille Convention, established in 1961 in The Hague, Netherlands, created a streamlined system for document verification among member countries.

Pakistan will maintain an e-register of all Apostille certifications, audited annually in The Hague. Apostille certifications from Pakistan are recognized in 166 countries.

However, most Middle Eastern and Arab countries, except for Oman and Bahrain, do not recognize Pakistan's Apostille and instead accept verification from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Apostille certification includes a 16-digit unique code and a specific sticker recognized by all Apostille member countries. This sticker is not visible under a normal scanner.

For walk-in customers, the process includes data entry, issuance of a bank challan, fee submission at an on-site bank, document scanning, and the application of the Apostille sticker.

The ministry is also offering online and courier-based Apostille services through five courier companies, including TCS and Gerry's.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is developing an app for Apostille-related services and plans to establish Apostille certification centers in additional cities such as Peshawar, Quetta, and Gujrat within the next two to three months.



ISLAMABAD: Driver unload goods from the truck after a mechanical breakdown at Expressway.

Azadari is legal and constitutional right, restrictions must be avoided: Allama Shabbir

ISLAMABAD (Online): Secretary General of the Shia Ulema Council of Pakistan, Allama Shabbir Maisami stated that Azadari is a legal and constitutional right that should be free from restrictions. Registration of cases against organizers in the four-walled Majalis and Mahafil is an unconstitutional act, and this practice should be stopped.

Under the unfair and unjust policy of balance, it is necessary to avoid the ban on the entry of respected Ulema, Zakireen, speakers and moderate-minded personalities in different districts and prohibition on speech.

The administration should refrain from imposing unjustified restrictions on Majalis and processions, even banning Majalis inside the walls, obstructing processions, limiting, banning and imposing conditions such as bond filling, NOC, and creating various excuses to create obstacles in Majalis and processions.

Positive, serious-minded and moderate-minded people should be employed to ensure the establishment of peace and law and order. For decades, there has been a tradition of broadcasting programs on electronic media on a large scale from 1st to 10th Muharram and publishing articles in print media or on air. However, for some time now, there has been a lot of restriction regarding Muharram al-Haram. Therefore, it is recommended to maintain the previous positive tradition. In addition, electricity transmission should be ensured across the country so that enemy elements, terrorists and miscreants cannot take undue advantage.

CDA chief visits summer camp

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Saturday visited the summer camp organized at F-7/4 Model College for Girls and met senior officers of the Ministry of Education and other department.

Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that a state-of-the-art autism center will be established in the city for children suffering from autism.

In context, suitable place will be identified and allotment of land will be made for the center.

The Chairman said that a technical committee consisting of students under the Principal of Model College for Girls has been formed for the establishment of autism center.

The committee comprising upon the students of the summer camp will conduct research according to the international models of the Autism Center and the students themselves will give a briefing to the CDA board on their research.

CDA will implement these recommendations and finalize the plan.

Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that the purpose of conducting research by the students is to develop the tendency of research in students as the students participating in the summer camp have the enthusiasm of research so they will be able to express their best skills by doing research. He said that this will increase the habit of research in children.

Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that there is a dire need for an autism center in Islamabad so that children with autism can also play their role in the development of the country like other children.

The Chairman also appreciated the initiative of Federal Education for organizing the summer camp.



ISLAMABAD: Shopkeeper displays different stuff including Alam-e-Hazrat Abbas Alamdard (RA) and other things in preparation for the upcoming Islamic Holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram at Bari Imam Sarkar area for the Federal Capital.

Daily Voice of Masses
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Gagging social media

It is hoped that better sense prevails and the prime minister turns down the Punjab government's troubling suggestion calling for the gagging of social media apps during Muharram. The provincial administration had earlier written to the interior ministry calling for a shutdown of various platforms — Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, X, etc — between Muharram 6 and 11 "to control hate ... and to avoid sectarian violence", citing the threat of "external forces" supposedly disseminating hate material.

Security concerns are absolutely valid during Muharram, which begins either tomorrow or on Monday, but mass shutdowns of the internet/social media are not the most advisable method of ensuring peace. This policy focuses more on the symptoms — hate material and misuse of social media — rather than the actual disease — the presence of violent hate groups that have been fanning the flames of communalism in society for decades.

The fact is that the proposed move can be used as a precedent by some elements within the state to permanently throttle free expression, and deny access to apps that have become part of life for millions of Pakistanis.

Shutting down apps can result in disrupting communication across the country, while businesses that depend on these platforms would face immense losses. Moreover, if the state starts deploying such unwise tactics, they can also be used, in future, to shut down apps when strikes, protests or rallies are called by parties or organisations that are not in the state's good books. This has occurred in the past as social media apps have been shut down during PTI rallies post-May 9. Instead of gagging social media, less intrusive and less draconian methods can be applied to maintain peace during sensitive periods, primarily through greater vigilance and monitoring.

In this regard the Punjab government's decision to have all majalis recorded and submitted to the relevant police station may help in monitoring controversial content, and prosecuting hatemongers of all persuasions. This will require considerable manpower as thousands of majalis are organised during the first 10 days of Muharram. But if Punjab's rulers think they have the technology and manpower to pull off this feat, then they could help contain the spread of sectarian material. Since the police will have recordings of all speeches, any errant individuals can easily be traced and investigated.

The fact is that in most countries Muharram passes off without incident. But because significant chunks of society in Pakistan have been radicalised, and confessional differences exploited, things are different in this country. Shutting down the internet, phones and social media is not the way to ensure communal peace. Going after hatemongers and violent sectarian groups, as well as monitoring troublemakers from all confessional backgrounds, can be much more effective in keeping violence at bay.

Rimmel Mohyidin

The last time Karachi's mortuaries ran out of space was in 2015, and frighteningly enough, for the same reason. Nine years ago, a merciless heatwave swept Karachi's most vulnerable, and left behind over 2,000 corpses overwhelming the city's morgues. Today, the same charities that run these morgues are making eerily similar statements as they did then. There is no more space for the dead, in a world that did nothing for them when they were still alive.

And now, the streets of Pakistan's largest city are turning up dead bodies every day. Temperatures have soared to almost 50 degrees Celsius, with humidity levels that can render the human body's cooling mechanisms almost entirely useless. On Monday this week, at least 59 heat-related fatalities were reported. Last week, figures as high as 568 bodies were also being banded about. Most of the dead were homeless people. The youngest victim identified so far was 20 years old.

A probe has been launched by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority to investigate the deaths. A report is sought from K-Electric to determine if their load-shedding schedule could be linked to some of the deaths. While it may be of some use to see if protracted power cuts are to blame, it can only tell the picture in part.

Heatstrokes are fairly treatable, if not entirely preventable. It requires access to shade, cooling, water, electrolytes, lightweight clothing, and minimising activities during the hottest parts of the day. Instinctive, straightforward instructions. The state tried to let people know. At the beginning of summer, tips and tricks to prevent heat-related illnesses were published far and wide. It's easy enough to let people know what they need to do. It's easier still to believe that that's all it takes to save lives.

Awareness campaigns are never the end. This government, that relishes publicising the fulfilling of its most menial obligations, seems to for-

get that often. The most marginalised groups are rarely in a position to follow public health advice, a reality check that the state urgently needs — perhaps almost as much as the victims needed its intervention. If drinking plenty of fluids was advised, then why is access to clean drinking water a privilege and not a right? If staying in shaded areas is advised, then why are there so many people sleeping on the roads? If medical care for heat-related symptoms is perceived as unaffordable, then is hospital treatment really an option? And if physical labour is not recommended during peak heat hours, then why is the government not making modified timings compulsory for employers?

The truth is that Pakistan's poor are despised. This disdain is enshrined in our state budgets, our social structures, the prospects for economic mobility and even in the way we advertise our products. We tax the salaried class into oblivion, make basic utilities scarcely available and charge astronomically for

when they are. We pay our domestic staff what we spend on one evening out.

We lock people out of economic opportunities because their education quality and English-language proficiency is lacking. We advertise skin whiteness as an aspirational quality because dark people work in the sun, and that's because they don't have the choice not to. We sneer at body odour, not realising that access to clean water is a luxury.

There are no safety nets from the heat and there is no one really questioning that absence. Proximity to a life of disease and early, preventable death is determined by real estate. Faisal Edhi, who heads the Edhi Foundation, wryly pointed out that most of the bodies they are collecting come from areas with the highest load-shedding. There would be hell, worse than the Karachi heat, for K-Electric to pay if areas like Clifton and Defence faced the same degree of power cuts.

The Sindh Climate Change Policy acknowledges that "most of the

province is located in the intense heat zone, which is expected to see a 4-5°C temperature increase in the 21st century, therefore the burden on human health will be immense due to heatstrokes, diarrhoea, cholera and vector-borne diseases." It proposes a needs-assessment to support the development of "effective district-wise health, heat and disaster management plans". There are no given timelines for this lofty goal. It also advocates the "availability of medication and clean drinking water during climatic extremes and emergencies". There are no measures indicated as to how either will be ensured.

The Karachi Heatwave Management Plan, a reaction to the 2015 Karachi heatwave, contains detailed guidance on surveillance systems and for issuing public alerts when extreme heat is expected. How closely that's been followed this year is either a scathing indictment of the policy itself, or the district government responsible for implementing it.

Well-designed,
Courtesy Dawn

thoughtful, and gender-sensitive social protection programmes aimed at protecting the poorest people from extreme heat should rank highly in our lawmakers' priorities. Considering there is no provision in our rickety public welfare infrastructure for income support for people who are unable to work normal hours or who suffer sickness due to extreme heat, it is unlikely that Karachi has seen the last of its heat-related deaths. And with climate change taking no prisoners, it is especially likely that the same crisis will unfold next summer.

On July 1, Pakistan's chief meteorologist Dr Sardar Sarfaraz told the press that the "sea breeze has been restored and the heatwave is over". This is obviously a welcome development for Karachi's homeless, daily wage earners, and people who must either brave the sweltering afternoon heat or go hungry. While there is no expectation of the government holding any sway over the weather, to patiently wait for relief from nature is not a policy. --

The privacy myth**Fariha Aziz**

A recent order by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the audio leaks case now establishes on record what was surmised all along: no warrant has ever been sought under the Investigation for Fair Trial Act, 2013, for surveillance. This is important because it goes to the heart of lawmaking in an environment where draconian laws are routinely enacted and over-broad powers are written into them for the executive with the ruse of judicial oversight presented as an adequate safeguard. The executive over-reaches and no 'safeguard' in the law prevents it from doing so in practice, absent a rule of law environment and any enforcement of existing checks in the law and Constitution.

Here's a law that was presented as a check on the executive's surveillance powers. Surveillance of citizens is the norm and the existence of a legal framework to check this practice has proven to be wholly ineffective. The fact that no warrant has been obtained in 11 years, points to a culture

of impunity where the executive, in all these years, has felt brazen enough to carry out surveillance and not fulfil legal requirements — because who is going to hold them to account for it?

Who allows the executive to get away with excesses if not the judiciary? Courts are not in the habit of holding the executive to account — there are very few exceptions — especially when it's about access to citizens' data and devices for 'investigation' or 'national security'.

Everyone rides on the assumption that the executive must and can conduct surveillance and access data. Lawful or not, this practice has been normalised. When was the last time that a warrant for search and seizure, disclosure of content data or court permission for real-time collection and recording of data under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, was sought? Yet, the seizing of devices, accessing data on them and admission of such 'evidence' in court is a common practice. The doctrine of necessity mostly

prevails. Requirements in the law for warrants, due process, reasoned orders, are ignored as though these are mere asides. Why then would the executive feel compelled to abide by checks which the judiciary itself does not enforce?

But even if warrants are sought, can they check technology which monitors in real-time and at scale? Such is the insidious nature of technology, once procured and operationalised, how exactly will warrants and judicial oversight apply? Who is checking on a minute-by-minute basis, who is being surveilled, to what degree and what end? What capacity do courts have to understand the tech involved and its implications on privacy? What on-paper guardrails can possibly extend to such technology?

The 'Lawful' Intercept Management System, which is rightly referred to as a surveillance centre in the IHC order, is not shocking because everyone knows this is happening. Back in 2013, in a hearing before the Sindh High Court, a lawyer representing a telco

insisted before the bench that systems had been deployed and data was handed over to the government, so why did they block their services?

But who uses an open line to speak if they can avoid it? SMSes are obsolete for day-to-day communication and, for the most part, serve primarily as a junk folder for spam advertisements. So how are calls and messages through encrypted channels being monitored and recorded? Is it by targeting devices of individuals or more broad based? Through what methods?

The real question here is what is happening with encrypted data. The order notes: "To the extent that any encrypted material (created through use of mobile apps, etc.) forms part of the consumer data, the encrypted material is also shared with the monitoring centre at the Surveillance Centre. The Lawful Intercept Management System does not provide automated means to decrypt such encrypted data. But requests for decryption can be made to the relevant company that owns the social me-

dia application."

But it's the company route that the state has also sought to circumvent by procuring and deploying technology to access, monitor and decrypt data. They want direct access and these aims are also reflected in proposed legislation — ironically — the Personal Data Protection Bill.

Over the years, various filtering and surveillance technology has been purchased and put to use in Pakistan. In 2012, a tender was floated to procure a national URL filtering system. Ultimately this was shelved, but these aspirations were not. In 2013, Citizen Lab reports revealed the presence of Netsweeper and FinFisher in Pakistan. In 2019, Sandvine's deep packet inspection technology was deployed. This year, press conferences by the caretaker set-up mentioned upgrading of web-monitoring systems. A mere Google search throws up various procurement documents on the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's website. In recent weeks, there has been much speculation around a

firewall that seemingly has been installed — allegedly with help from China. Pakistan has long aspired to take the China route in terms of information control and monitoring of society.

What has come up in relation to the firewall is its ability with respect to encrypted content because such filtering is not limited to content but veers into the sphere of data privacy. Decrypting or breaking encryption from the outside would mean breaking through transport layer security which is not limited to certain data or platforms, but everything flowing through the network making it insecure and affecting secure transactions whether entering passwords or banking information. Several questions arise. What is happening to encrypted data flowing through Pakistan's networks, at what scale and through which tech tools? With whom does the legal authority to procure invasive technology lie — if at all — to monitor and decrypt data: through which legal instrument? Is what is 'legal' also constitutional or right?

What a mess**Asad Rahim Khan**

It's an old saying: that hard cases make for bad law. When the facts are extreme, judges have little choice but to lead with head and heart.

How tragic is it, then, when easy cases make for bad law; where the facts are obvious, and the text already de-cided by far larger benches (11 and 12 judges in the twin Benazir Bhutto decisions)?

That's what happened last January: few verdicts in recent memory have been more ludicrous in reasoning, more corrosive in outcome, and more damaging for democracy than the bat symbol ruling, stripping the country's largest party of its electoral sign right before polls.

Yet even here, the Pakistani voter shocked the system: despite disenfranchisement before and rigging after, the party won a plurality. In the months since, however, that same judgement remains a rolling disaster: parliament is paralysed, reserved seats are up in the air, and a full bench of the Supreme Court picks through the mess.

Consider the chaos: with its bat broken, the PTI fell foul of Rule 94 of the Election Rules — parties are entitled to reserved seats only if allotted a symbol. It's why PTI-backed independents veered far right to join the Sunni Ittehad Council (symbol: ghora).

But then the ECP sprung a second trap: the Election Act requires parties to submit candidate lists to the ECP before polling if they want reserved seats. The Sunni Ittehad has a symbol, but no list, just as the PTI has a list, but no symbol.

If all this sounds like legal jiggery-pokery to suppress the will of the people, that's because it is. First, a party doesn't

dissolve into the ether just because its symbol is taken; by dint of the millions of votes they draw, elected representatives cannot be denied their rightful strength in the assembly.

Second, the supreme law remains Article 51(6)(d) and (e) of the Constitution, which says general seats against which reserved seats are distributed 'include' independents who join a party post-election.

Third, we know this holds true because the ECP handed the Balochistan Awami Party a reserved seat in 2019 without the latter contesting provincial polls in the ex-tribal areas or submitting a list. The ECP has since shrugged it was wrong then but correct now.

Fourth, does form defeat substance? While hearing the case, the chief justice said, "...I do subscribe to the literal interpretation of the Constitution theory."

If CJI Qazi Faez Isa is a literalist, it's a recent development. When overturning lifetime disqualification, he erased Article 62(1)(f), saying the provision was 'non-self-executory' — and didn't mean what it plainly said: that a court of law could declare an electoral candidate dishonest. His decision didn't reinterpret 62(1)(f); it deleted it outright.

Then, as journalist Hasnaat Malik pointed out, it was his Lordship that had challenged the PTI sarkar's reference against him in the Supreme Judicial Council. This was despite Article 211, which bars council proceedings being taken up by the Supreme Court. The matter was not only taken up, the council was knocked aside.

Further back, his early stance on military trials of civilians was the least literalist of all: that

Article 239 — which says no constitutional amendment can be questioned by any court — didn't stand in his way, and that parliament didn't have unlimited authority to change the Constitution.

Even in criminal cases with less room for interpretation, literalism was let go: in 2017, Justice Isa held that though the Penal Code stated that pardoning murder had the effect of an acquittal, this was still "different from an acquittal". Another bench disagreed: pointing to the plain text, Justice Asif Saeed Khosa signed that judges apply law "as it exists", and not "pious wishes".

None of this is to say whether these positions were right or wrong; it's to say literalism was no-where on the scene when arriving at them.

But even going by the literal school, not a single line of text in the law or Constitution allows divvying up a winner's reserved seats to the loser, nor denies them to a party that hasn't contested.

Interestingly, the fight for reserved seats has an old and explosive history here. In his doomed stand for Indian unity in Calcutta in 1928, Jinnah staked his future on a core demand: one-third reserved seats for Muslims in the assembly; the far less popular Hindu Mahasabha sneered at him instead. A heartbroken Quid told friend Jamsheed Nusservanjee, "This is the parting of the ways"; the first time Jamsheed saw him weep. Pakistan was born less than two decades later.

Nearly a century since, the betrayal of reserved seats not only concerns minority representation, but the fate of democracy itself. Whatever the outcome, the Jan 13 dilemma is back: here's another easy case, one that shouldn't make for hard law. -- Courtesy Dawn

A heavy burden**Ehsan Malik**

With its onerous burden on salaried employees and those already taxed disproportionately while leaving out the mighty untouchables or substantially reducing government expenditure, the federal budget is hyped as an essential step to secure the 24th IMF programme. Granted, we need this programme to retain our fragile solvency and avoid debt restructuring. But is the 24th programme likely to be the final programme and achieve the much-required reforms? Is the sacrificial offering to the IMF worth the pain it will cause? I think not.

Pakistan has had 23 IMF programmes to date. For the 24th programme to be the last, it would need to be drastically different from the earlier ones. However, so far, there is nothing to suggest this. Previous programmes were front-loaded with targets that could not lead to sustainable change and were set oblivious of how they would be met.

A prime example is tax targets without consideration of FBR's capacity or the government's political will. Hence, they were met through easy options. Tax the weak, ie, the salaried, and extract more from those already in the tax net. The 2024-25 budget repeats this formula through revenue-extractive measures based on deepening rather than broadening the tax base. It is, therefore, an attempt to appease the IMF, which lacks trust in the government's capacity or willingness to undertake painful reforms. Such knee-jerk, short-term, tactical measures are not good for Pakistan, even if they are acceptable to the IMF.

Pakistan needs exports and foreign direct investment to help manage its external account. Instead of a comprehensive review of all the factors undermining Pakistan's export competitiveness, the budget makes the lives of exporters difficult by exposing them to the vagaries of FBR's notices and harassment that they were spared under the Final Tax Regime. FBR's restructuring and digitisation designed to stem this harassment are held out as hope, but realistically, that will take a few years, if ever, to materialise.

Existing foreign investors would be put off by the threat of disallowance of their advertising expenses. New local and foreign investors will not be forthcoming due to an unpredictable fiscal policy and tax rates that are higher than those of alternative jurisdictions.

Additional taxes on the more experienced talent, which the formal sector employs, will likely lead to more people leaving the country or looking for non-taxed alternatives, ie, the informal sector. Capital flight from Pakistan will continue due to higher income tax and capital value tax.

The imposition of 18 per cent GST on packed dairy will not only create an unlevel playing field versus open and often adulterated milk, it will also lead to inflation. Steel, tea, and edible oil sectors will continue to suffer from the misuse of the concessions, now renewed for ex-Fata and Pata. The levy of advance tax on retailers will only apply to supplies by the formal sector, while smugglers and the informal sector will capitalise by eating into their share. It is also likely that this

burden will be passed on to the consumer as retailers force manufacturers to cover the tax through high prices. The government put an additional burden on the telecom sector by forcing it to act as unpaid tax collectors, raising the cost of connectivity, vital for a digital economy.

None of the major recommendations to reduce the heavy burden of taxes on the formal sector and promote scale and competitiveness were considered in the budget. These included phasing out supertax, withdrawing double taxation of inter-corporate dividends, and restoring the letter and spirit of group taxation as enacted in the Finance Act 2007-08.

In short, the budget is inequitable, unfair, and unreasonable. It lacks vision and is not aligned with the need to balance the external and fiscal accounts or to kickstart investment and employment. Instead, it will thwart the growth of the private sector.

As a result, the government is unlikely to meet its tax targets. That would then trigger an even more extractive mini budget. Inflation is unlikely to recede at the expected rate, nor will the policy rate decline to levels previously hoped for. The Ponzi scheme of printing currency and directing bank lending to feed the government's uncontrolled appetite will persist. A valuable opportunity to set the tone for an IMF programme to achieve sustainable change appears to have been lost. The 24th programme is unlikely to be the last. At best, it will provide temporary solvency. At worst, it will fail to address deep and fundamental economic defects. -- Courtesy Dawn

CM approves 'Punjab Honahar Merit Scholarship' programme

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif approved the 'Punjab Honahar Merit Scholarship Program' and directed the authorities concerned to increase the number of scholarships from 4,000 to 25,000.

Chairing a special meeting of the Higher Education Department here on Saturday, the CM said that 100 per cent fees of students doing BS from government and eight selected private universities would be paid from the scholarship.

Maryam emphasized the need to provide necessary support to the private sector to promote higher education. Private sector's participation would provide opportunities for higher education to the youth of remote areas, she said.

The CM ordered for immediate establishment of new universities in Jhelum, Vehari, and

Bahawalnagar. She reviewed recommendations for establishment of universities under public private partnership, and agreed to facilitate private sector in this regard. She also ordered to immediately launch laptop scheme.

The chief minister decided to introduce new market-driven disciplines in colleges with less number of students. She also directed to introduce a foolproof system for the appointment of Divisional Directors and Principals purely on merit through an online portal system. A plan for providing new buses to government colleges was also presented to the Chief Minister.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that it is advisable to constitute a high-level ministerial committee to review affairs of the private universities. She decided to establish Punjab Board Coordination Commission for reforms in

the affairs of education boards. The chief minister expressed pleasure over the successful program of MD CAT and E CAT free classes in 90 colleges of Punjab. She said, "The scope of free MD CAT and E CAT classes in colleges should be gradually expanded for the students from remote areas." She appreciated the performance of Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat and Higher Education Department.

Earlier, Secretary Higher Education Dr. Farrukh Naveed gave a detailed briefing in the meeting. Senior Provincial Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb and Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat attended the meeting. Chief Secretary, Chairman P&D, Finance Secretary, Principal Secretary to CM and other officers concerned were also present.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Tesori addressing during on the 32nd Annual Convocation of Karachi University at Expo Centre, in the Provincial Capital.

Sindh CM alleges of discriminatory attitude in power supply for Sindh

JAMSHORO (INP): Sindh Chief Minister has alleged of adopting discriminatory attitude towards province in power supply despite providing electricity generated in Thar to national grid.

Talking to media persons in Jamshoro on Saturday, he said that one could not deny the fact that Sindh was providing 3,000-megawatt low cost electricity to the national grid.

Murad Ali Shah said that we were well aware of the sufferings of the people of province due to loadshedding in intense heatwave and making all

out efforts to provide relief to them.

He further stated that Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto has also raised the issue in the National Assembly.

The chief minister ruled out any possibility of further change in the Sindh cabinet.

He termed the recovery of abducted trader Naresh Kumar as major success of the Sindh Police. He said that smart city systems will be installed in all divisional headquarters including Karachi and Hyderabad.

"The recovery of Naresh Kumar is success

of the smart city system," he added.

Murad Ali Shah said the PTI in the past adopted the politics of issuing threats, which inflicted losses to the party.

"Those believe in democracy used to engage in dialogue on political matters", he said.

He said prime minister's invitation to PTI to attend the APC has been a good step and the PTI's response to attend the moot has also been positive.

"We all are victims of terrorism, we have to join hands to get rid of it", he added.

Governor Kundi pledges to advocate for rights against imposition of taxes

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Saturday vowed to consistently represent the rights of public and the province in opposition to the decision to impose taxes on Malakand Division.

Addressing a gathering of party workers and members of the local government at the residence of former MNA Dr. Haider Ali in Khwazakhela, Swat.

He emphasized the need for political parties to make decisions with confidence to eliminate lawlessness.

Governor Kundi criticized the current political atmosphere, stating that the same party that had guaranteed peace for armed groups today questions their settlement in the province.

He further underscored that accountability should start with the party that made promises of population increase and ignored the

province's welfare.

Former provincial president Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, former federal minister Naimuddin Khan, former MNA Swat and PPP leader Dr. Haider Ali also addressed the gathering.

The Governor said that the KP government weeping over an empty treasury after plundering for ten years. He added that under the NFC Award, FATA was to receive one hundred billion annually, which was not received.

He said that PPP opposed imposition of taxes on FATA and PATA.

He said that work will start on Chakdara-Chitral road soon.

He said that the Governor House is open for all and he will share their problems with center.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi also visited the residence of Malik Akram Khan Divisional President PPP Malakand and met with different delegations.



LAHORE: Acting Governor Punjab Malik Ahmed Khan is inaugurating the Education Expo at Expo Center.

Minister inspects PDMA head office for monsoon preparedness

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Disaster Management, Khawaja Salman Rafique, made an unannounced visit to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) head office on Saturday. His visit included an inspection of the PDMA control room, where he assessed the ongoing weather conditions amid the monsoon rains.

During the visit, DG PDMA Irfan Ali Kathia provided Minister Salman Rafique with a comprehensive briefing on the current monsoon rainfall, focusing on water inflow and outflow at various river barrages and the status of water levels

in dams. The minister also reviewed the safety measures and the flow of water in the rivers.

Khawaja Salman Rafique emphasized the readiness of the provincial government to handle the heavy rains, stating, "We are fully alert for safety measures during the heavy rains. Proactive steps have been taken to prevent potential flooding. Our priority is the timely implementation of measures to protect human lives." He highlighted the coordination between various departments and the divisional and district administrations, noting that effective collaboration would enhance the management of emergency situations.

Two women die, eight injured in Faisalabad road mishap

FAISALABAD (INP): At least two women died and eight others including women and children injured in collision between two over speeding vehicles here on Saturday.

According to details, a speeding car and a mini-truck collided near Painsra Interchange in Faisalabad.

As a result of collision, two women Munazza and Sumera died on the spot while eight people including Aslam, Roshan, Samra, Arslan and other sustained critical injuries.

The driver of mini-truck managed to escape from the scene.

The bodies and injured were shifted to hospital and police after registering a case into the incident started the investigations.

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Civil Defense KP holds training for volunteers

LOWER DIR (INP): Directorate of Civil Defense Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Saturday arranged a training program for volunteers of Kar-e-Khair Foundation.

The training was organized following the directives of Director General Civil Defense KP and Deputy Commissioner Lower Dir, Wasil Khan.

Training instructor of Civil Defense, Noor Alam oriented volunteers about skills and procedures being used to save lives during emergencies.

A practical demonstration session was for also held involving volunteers to use these skills in an efficient manner in meeting any untoward incident.

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CJ PHC chairs meeting on Case Management Policy

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishfaq Ibrahim along with Judge(s) Members of the Administration Committee chaired a meeting on Case Management Policy for District Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan and Swabi.

The meeting was attended by the District and Sessions Judge(S), the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council Members, besides President(s) and senior Lawyers of the four districts, as well as Tehsil Bar Associations, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

Registrar Peshawar High Court Ikhtiar Khan briefly elaborated the agenda of the meeting with a view to discuss the total number of institution, pendency and disposal of cases in the four districts, the working strength and vacant positions of Judicial Officers, as well as the factors affecting the dispensation of justice in the four major (central) districts of the province.

He emphasized that identification of lacunas in the Justice System will help in formulating an effecting "Case Management Policy".

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AWAT: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi addressing public gathering at the residence of Former MNA Dr. Haider Ali.

Azma assures of status of district for Murree soon

RAWALPINDI (INP): Punjab Information Minister, Azma Zahid Bukhari has assured that Murree will be soon given status of district and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is focusing on the grand development plan of Murree by introducing innovative development projects.

Speaking to media persons during his visit to Murree Press Club on Saturday, she announced construction of specialized hospital in Murree. She also affirmed to take all measures for the welfare of journalists belonging to

Murree.

Azma Zahid Bukhari said that the Punjab chief minister put a special focus on the development of Murree soon after assuming her office. Murree is the second home of Chief Minister, she added. She further said that the government was working under a great vision of CM Punjab for Murree's infrastructure, development and promotion of tourism.

She said that the performance of Basic Health Units (BHUs) and Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital.

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PU awards PhD degrees to 10 scholars

LAHORE (INP): Punjab University on Saturday awarded PhD degrees to 10 scholars in different subjects after approval of thesis.

According to details, Rao Mansoor Ali Khan S/o Rao Muhammad Ali was awarded PhD degree in the subject of Space Science, Syed Shakeel Shah S/o Syed Imtiaz Hussain in the subject of Zoology, Inam-ur-Rehman Safdar S/o Ch. Muhammad Safdar in the subject of Punjabi, Ahmad Hussain Bukhari S/o Bad-uz-Zaman Bukhari in the subject of Philosophy, Atta-ur-Rehman S/o Muhammad Yousaf in the subject of Public Health.

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KHUNJRAB: Tourist their visits to China Gate at Khunjrab pass.

Foolproof security arrangements made for Muharram: Salman

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Health Minister and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order, Khawaja Salman Rafique has said that foolproof security arrangements have been made for Muharram-ul-Haram.

Speaking during his visit to Darbar Bibi Pak Daman on Saturday, he said that the government was committed to ensure safety of mourners. The provincial government would install 'Niaz' [free food] and 'Sabeel' [drinking water] stalls along the routes of Muharram congregations and processions, he added.

Khawaja Salman Rafique said that all procession routes would be closely monitored and a control room would be established within the Home Department to oversee the security measures. "Ensuring the best arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram is a religious duty for all of us," he noted.

On the occasion, SP Civil Lines Police Abdul Hanan and Assistant Commissioner City Dr. Anam Fatima briefed the minister on the current security preparations. The minister also reviewed the ongoing expansion project at the Darbar.

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Meeting reviews preparations for conduct of MDCAT 2024-25

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudry chaired a meeting here Saturday to discuss the preparation and conduction of the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) 2024-25 by Khyber Medical University (KMU).

During the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary Home Abid Majeed and Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq presented the report on

MDCAT 2024-25 preparations. The Chief Secretary praised KMU's efforts and administrative efforts for last year's successful MDCAT test and assured a similar support for 2024-25. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet has declared KMU as the admitting university for the session 2024-25 and onwards. The KMU will conduct a centralized MDCAT at the provincial level and make centralized admissions in all public.

During the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary Home Abid Majeed and Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq presented the report on



PESHAWAR: Members of Insaaf Students Federation are holding protest demonstration for releasing Tehreek-e-Insaaf Chairman, Imran Khan, held at Peshawar press club

Unlocking KP's forests carbon stocks vital to offset ecological changes

KP and Gilgit Balistan is blessed with around 3,000 lakes out of which 33 were most vulnerable due to climate change. He said chances of Glacial Lakes Outburst Floods (GOLF) in Chitral, Swat and Gilgit Balistan have enhanced due to rapid melting of glaciers in down valleys of northern areas due to deforestation.

"The developed countries are earning millions of dollars due to industrialization and economic projects and give low financial assistance to poor countries as carbon credits that need to be enhanced," he said.

Highlighting KP's carbon potential stocks, he said 51% of the country's

forest carbon stocks were present in KP.

In Pakistan, he said most of the carbon dense forests were temperate forests KP contains about 170 tons carbon per hectare.

He said "Avoiding one hectare deforestation means emission reduction of 367 tons of carbon dioxide." Through natural forests and substantial plantations on vast areas achieved under billion tree project having a potential of annual carbon sequestration ie 11.20 million tons and gets stock of 194.31 million tons including 67.60 million tons in Hazara division, 73.25 million tons in Malakand division.

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CHINIOT: People passing through stagnant rain water after heavy rain in the city.

E&P sector firms announce \$5 bn investment in Pak oil, gas sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The local and international firms of Pakistan's oil & gas exploration and production (E&P) sector, expressing confidence over the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday, announced an investment of US\$5 billion during next three years in the country.

The announcement was made in a meeting presided over by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at PM House.

A delegation of oil and gas exploration and production sector

companies told the meeting that during three years, around 240 places would be excavated with an investment of \$5 billion to explore petroleum and gas in Pakistan.

The prime minister constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar that would include experts, secretaries and the relevant authorities.

The committee, after consultation with the representatives of the sector, would formulate proposals to create

attractive policy for the exploration and development of petroleum and gas reserves in Pakistan.

PM Shehbaz directed the relevant authorities to solve all the problems of the sector, and submit policy proposals to the constituted committee on priority.

The delegation thanked the prime minister for making the petroleum and gas exploration and production sector, a part of the consultation process, listening to their problems and finding serious

solutions to them.

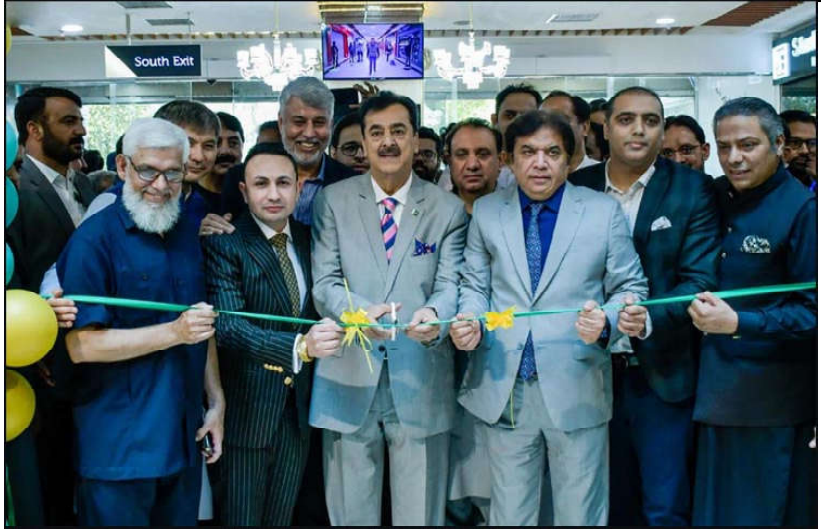
The meeting was informed that currently, Pakistan's domestic production stood at 70998 barrels and 3131 MMSCFD gas per day.

The prime minister invited petroleum and gas exploration and production companies to also find the offshore reserves.

Exploring the oil and gas reserves at the local level in Pakistan is our top priority, PM Shehbaz said adding that Pakistan spent billions of dollars every year on importing oil and gas.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Petroleum and Gas Exploration & Production companies calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gilani, MNA Hanif Abbasi and president IBA Sardar Yasir Ilyas cutting ribbon to inaugurate Mango festival.

Govt should revisit IPPs contracts rendering severe damages: President ICCI

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) are rendering irreparable damages to country's economy making it indebted and lives of countrymen problematic, restless and miserably.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, he demanded of the federal government to revisit all contracts with IPPs and focus on cheaper sources of energy without capacity

charges as crippling impacts of high tariff of electricity was resulting in widespread industrial closures and substantial job losses.

Ahsan Zafar said that contracts with IPPs were major reason of power crisis in the country besides power theft due to which masses and business community have to face the consequences in the form of non-availability and expensive electricity. The federal government should formulate a strategy to deal with IPPs and ensure affordable electricity prices

for industries and domestic users in the national interest. ICCI President blamed 1994 Power Policy for trapping Pakistan's energy sector in unfavorable contractual agreements with IPPs, leading to a spiraling circular debt that reached PKR 2.64 trillion by February 2024 and the dollar-linked guarantees benefit IPPs at the expense of the government and the public. Any depreciation of the Pakistani rupee translates to higher returns for IPPs, further straining the national budget.

PARC introduced 10 high-yielding pulses seed varieties in current year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali Saturday said that the Variety Evaluation Committee of the Council during current year has approved 10 high yielding pulses varieties to boost output of pulses in the country.

Talking to APP here on Saturday, he said that the pulses play a crucial role in global food security and nutrition of the country, adding that Pakistan needs 1.56 million tons of pulses annually.

We have become self-sufficient in mung

production during 2021-22 which was 0.263 million tons against the total requirement of 0.180 million tons, he added.

These ten high-yielding pulses varieties poised to revolutionize the pulses output, adding that now the country is focusing on increasing the production of other pulse crops, such as chickpea, lentil and mash bean.

Out of the recommended 10 pulses varieties that included 05 chickpea and 01 mung bean variety of NIAB, Faisalabad, 01 lentil and 01 mung bean variety of Pulses Research Program, NARC, Islamabad.

Tomato prices soar to Rs. 300 per kilogram in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): The cost of tomatoes in Abbottabad has skyrocketed on Sunday with retail markets now selling them at 300 rupees per kilogram. This price hike is a significant blow to residents already grappling with hunger and poverty.

According to details, currently, retailers are selling tomatoes at 300 rupees per kilogram. In wholesale markets, tomatoes are being sold for 2100 rupees per crate. Furthermore, the quality of the tomato has also been decreased, with three to four kilograms of spoiled tomatoes per crate.

WAPDA generates 34.436b units in FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 22 Hydel Power Stations of WAPDA cumulatively provided 34.436 billion units of electricity to the National Grid in 2023-24, which is 3.266 billion units more than that of fiscal year 2022-23.

WAPDA achieved this additional hydel power generation because of the improved hydrology and effective operation and maintenance of its Hydel Power Stations, said a press release. This increase in hydel generation by WAPDA to the tune of 3.266 billion units helped

save national exchequer an amount of Rs. 143.7 billion, if the same quantum of electricity had to be generated through imported furnace oil.

It is pertinent to note that the cumulative installed generation capacity of WAPDA Hydel Power Stations, including Neelum Jhelum, stands at about 9,500 MW. Hydel generation is the most economical electricity, generated in the country. The tariff for fiscal year 2023-24 determined by NEPRA for WAPDA hydel electricity is Rs. 3.81 per unit.

HESCO chief directs officials to reduce line losses

H Y D E R A B A D (APP): Chief Executive Officer of Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) Roshan Ali Otho has directed his subordinate officers to complete the works of combing and securing to curtail the line losses of certain 11 KV feeders by July 15. The company's spokesman informed that Otho visited the areas of Qasimabad, Citizen, Heerabad and Kohsar subdivisions here on Saturday to review measures being taken for curbing the power theft.



MULTAN: Members of Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajran are holding protest demonstration against price hiking and the highly inflated electricity bills, held in Multan.

Govt reverses advance turnover tax on petroleum dealers following PPDA advocacy

ISLAMABAD (INP): In a significant turnaround, the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) has successfully convinced government officials to revoke the imposition of a 0.5 percent advance turnover tax on petroleum retailers.

The PPDA's Reforms Group engaged in extensive discussions with key government figures, emphasizing that the tax was a misinterpretation of existing laws. They argued that petroleum outlets were already subject to fixed withholding taxes, rendering the additional turnover tax burdensome and unjust.

Hassan Shah, spokesperson for the

PPDA, highlighted the impact of the proposed tax on fuel traders, noting their slim profit margins amidst soaring inflation. The association's efforts culminated in meetings with Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervez Malik, FBR Chairman Amjed Zubair Tiwana, and other high-ranking officials, leading to a reassessment of the taxation policy.

Following the discussions, the Ministry of Energy sought clarity from the FBR regarding the applicability of the tax, leading to an official memorandum clarifying that such taxes do not apply to dealers under the Final Tax Regime.



QUETTA: Haji Gul Agha, Senior Vice President Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry presenting shield to Principal of Al-Hamdain School during her visit to QCCL.

SCCI for strengthening trade, economic relations with Philippines

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior Vice President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Sanaulah Khan has stressed the need for further cementing bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Republic of Philippines. He said this during a meeting with Maria Agnes M Cervantes, Ambassador of Philippines to Pakistan who visited SSCI Peshawar on Saturday, said a release issued here. He said that there was huge potential of trade between Pakistan and the Philippines and joint initiatives were needed to take benefit from each other's experiences.

Speaking on the occasion, Maria Agnes M

Carvantes invited the KP businessmen to visit Philippines and invest in potential sectors of the country. She said prospects for further improving Pak-Philippines bilateral trade and economic relations are brighter. Both countries have enjoyed cordial trade, cultural and diplomatic relationships and mutual cooperation would lead to further enhance collaboration in multi sectors, she added.

During the meeting, a detailed multi-media presentation was given by a senior officer of the Embassy, highlighting the Philippines' historic importance, potentials, trade volume and investment opportunities in important sectors.



KARACHI: Women purchasing used clothes at Saturday Bachat Bazar.

FCCI says: Extensive tree plantation imperative to overcome ill impacts of climate change

FAISALABAD (APP): Extensive tree plantation is imperative to check the increasing temperature in addition to overcoming the ill impacts of climate change on the inhabitants of the city, said Dr Sajjad Arshad, Senior Vice President, Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FCCI).

Addressing a delegation of traders, he said that Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) had been mandated for massive tree plantation but unluckily its focus was on tax collection instead of enhancing tree cover and maintaining the greenery. He said that the business community was

fully convinced to cooperate and collaborate with PHA so that planted saplings could grow into fully mature trees. Dr Sajjad Arshad said that there was ample space along canals and watercourses where trees could be planted with a maximum survival rate.

He suggested that the Punjab government legislate that at least one tree is planted against each marla of houses in all public and private sector residential colonies and buildings. "In this connection, the developers or management of housing colonies may be given responsibility.

Pakistan, China to enhance cultural exchanges under Belt & R Initiative

BEIJING (INP): A Sino-Pak Round-Table Exchange Meeting under Belt and Road Cooperation in Education, Science-Technology sector was held here.

The meeting was attended by the delegations of University of Sargodha and Chinese institutions & enterprises, representing China Association for International Science and Technology Cooperation (CAISTC), Beijing International Economic Research Center (BIERC) and Zhongguancun Talent Association (ZTA), Glodon Company Limited, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday.

During the meeting, Prof. Dr. Qaisar Abbas, Vice Chancellor, University of Sargodha made an introduction of his university to the participants and expressed the willingness to have deeper cooperation in education, science, etc. with the Chinese side.

Prof. Dr. Ghulam Yasin, Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of Sargodha, pointed areas of mutual interest and collaboration between China and Pakistan under the Belt and Road Initiative i.e. cultural exchange and social integration, sustainable development and social policy, migration and mobility, and education

and workforce development. He proposed to enhance bilateral science and technology cooperation mainly in renewable energy, healthcare, environmental protection, and IT by establishing joint research centers, exchanging student and faculty, developing curricula.

According to Prof. Dr. Aamir Ali Chaudhry, Dean, Faculty of Science, University of Sargodha, higher education institutions in Pakistan and China can take the lead in fostering collaborative research and joint exchange programs in areas like agriculture biotechnology.

Gold rate surges further

LAHORE (APP): Gold prices in Pakistan continued increasing in markets of the country on Saturday in line with an increase in the international rate.

According to All Pakistan Gem and Jewellers Association (APGJA) sources, gold price per tola stood at Rs246,400 after a single-day gain of Rs2,000.

The 10-gram gold was sold at Rs211,247 after it registered an increase of Rs1,740, All-Pakistan Gems and Jewellers Sarafa Association (APGJSA) said Saturday. Meanwhile, already on Friday gold price per tola increased by Rs1,100 in Pakistan.

Mango Festival held at Pak Association Dubai

DUBAI (APP): The Pakistan Association Dubai, in collaboration with the Pakistan Business Council and the Consulate General of Pakistan in Dubai, organized a grand Mango Festival event in Dubai. The event was attended by a large number of guests including diplomats, dignitaries, prominent members of the Pakistani community and government officials.

The ceremony was inaugurated by Ambassador of Pakistan to United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, and Consul General of Pakistan Hussain Muhammad. The event started with

recitation of verses from the Quran followed by playing of the National Anthem. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi while addressing on the occasion said, "This is the most anticipated event of the year. Mangoes like citrus are indigenous to the Indus Valley, which constitutes Pakistan".

Thanking the participants for attending the festival, the Ambassador said that presence of so many people was testimony of this special fruit which is eagerly awaited in summer.

Hussain Muhammad said that Pakistani mangoes are deeply rooted in our culture and heritage and is a symbol of our hospitality.



SIALKOT: President Chamber of Commerce Abdul Ghafoor Malik in a group photograph with Pakistan Football Federation President Haroon Malik and other participants at SCCI.

DCs told to keep check on prices of flour, wheat

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman has directed all deputy commissioners to strictly monitor the prices of flour and wheat.

He issued this directive while presiding over a meeting held to review the prices and availability of food items, here on Saturday. The administrative secretaries of industries, food and relevant departments attended the meeting while all the divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners participated through video link.

The Chief Secretary said that the sale of food items including Roti at higher than the fixed price is not acceptable in any case. He ordered the deputy commissioners to ensure hundred percent implementation of the rates fixed for Roti. He said that those who fleece consumers by creating artificial inflation would be dealt with an iron hand. He further said that responsibilities should be assigned to price magistrates after allocating areas to them.

Hayatabad Industrialists meet DG PDA to address key issues

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of the Hayatabad Industrialists Association (HIA) here on Saturday held a meeting with the Director General (DG) Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) Capt. Khalid to discuss pressing issues faced by the industrialists community.

The primary agenda of the meeting was to demand the reopening of a closed entry point to the Hayatabad Industrial Estate.

The DG PDA listened attentively to the concerns presented by the HIA delegation and agreed to address the matter promptly. He assured the delegation of resolving all the issues and send the Chief Engineer to reopen the pathway for vehicular access causing a major inconvenience for the industrialists.

The delegation apprised the DG about various challenges faced by the industrialists, including infrastructure and accessibility issues.

Employees demanded to restore abolished taxes of local bodies

PESHAWAR (APP): The Local Government Employees Association (LGEA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Saturday demanded from the provincial government to restore the abolished taxes of local bodies, including one percent property tax and license fee.

Talking to a group of gathering, the provincial

leaders of LGEA Shaukat Ali Anjum, Shaukat Kayani, Haji Anwar Kamal Marwat, Haji Niaz Ali Khan, Sulaiman Hoti, Mehboob Allala and Raheel Ahmed in a joint statement said that Tehsil Municipal Administrations had been paralyzed by the provincial government.

They said the municipal bodies.

Hamas agrees on talks to free Israeli hostages

GAZA (INP): Hamas has accepted a U.S. proposal to begin talks on releasing Israeli hostages, including soldiers and men, 16 days after the first phase of an agreement aimed at ending the Gaza war, a senior Hamas source said on Saturday.

Hamas has dropped a demand that Israel first commit to a permanent ceasefire before signing the agreement, and would allow negotiations to achieve that throughout a first six-week phase, the source told Reuters on condition of anonymity because the talks are private.

A Palestinian official close to the internationally mediated peace efforts had said the proposal could lead to a framework agreement if embraced by Israel and would end the nine-month-old war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

The conflict has claimed the lives of more than 38,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza health officials. The war erupted after Hamas attacked

southern Israeli cities on Oct. 7, killing 1,200 people and taking some 250 hostages.

The Hamas source said the proposal ensures that mediators would guarantee a temporary ceasefire, aid delivery and withdrawal of Israeli troops as long as indirect talks continue to implement the second phase of the agreement.

The war has displaced hundreds of thousands of Gazans and caused a humanitarian crisis. It has also fuelled tension across the region, triggering exchanges of fire across Israel's northern border with Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Hamas said it had told Hezbollah it had agreed to a ceasefire proposal in Gaza and that the Lebanese group's leader had welcomed the step, two sources familiar with the matter said. "If there is a Gaza agreement, then from zero hour there will be a ceasefire in Lebanon," said one of the sources, an official in Hezbollah, which says its rocket and drone

attacks on northern Israel are in support of the Palestinians. Turkey's president, Tayyip Erdogan, was quoted by Turkish media as saying he hoped a "final ceasefire" could be secured "in a couple of days", and urged Western countries to put pressure on Israel to accept the terms on offer.

Some far-right partners in Netanyahu's governing coalition have indicated they may quit the government if the war ends before Hamas is destroyed. Their departure would probably end Netanyahu's premiership.

Israel's Channel 7 News reported that, at a cabinet meeting on Thursday, far-right coalition partner Itamar Ben Gvir had accused security and defence officials of deciding to resume the Gaza talks without consulting him.

Hamas' new proposal responded to a plan made public in late May by U.S. President Joe Biden that would include releasing about 120 hostages still held in Gaza and a ceasefire.



Britain's King Charles talks with Sir Keir Starmer during an audience at Buckingham Palace, where he invited the leader of the Labour Party to become Prime Minister and form a new government following the landslide General Election victory for the Labour Party.

Seven killed in Israeli raid in occupied West Bank

Monitoring Desk

JENIN: Israeli troops killed seven Palestinians in a raid on Jenin in the occupied West Bank on Friday, officials said. At least 14 Palestinians have now been killed in Israeli operations this week in the occupied West Bank, where the Gaza war has fuelled tensions since October last year.

The Palestinian Authority health ministry said the seven dead were aged between 19 and 54. Hamas said one of the seven was a "commander" in the group.

An Israeli military statement claimed there was a gun battle in the Jenin refugee camp.

The Wafa official Palestinian news agency said military vehicles surrounded a house and demands were made by loudspeaker for one occupant to surrender. Shoulder-launched missiles were fired and a drone used in the four-hour raid, it added.

However, according to the Israeli military, two Palestinians who took part in an attack on Israeli forces last week were killed. The military admitted that a drone was used for the strike.

A Hamas statement said five of the "martyrs" were members of the group that rules the Gaza Strip.

Stubborn Biden dismisses calls to quit in key TV interview

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden fended off questions about his mental fitness and electability in a TV interview on Friday meant to draw a line under a disastrous debate performance that triggered calls for him to quit his re-election bid.

With rebellion brewing among some nervous Democratic voters, lawmakers and donors, the one-to-one with the ABC network was hyped as the most consequential of the 81-year-old president's long career.

But the 22-minute sit-down appeared to provide little reassurance, as Biden blamed sickness for his sub-par performance and repeatedly dismissed polling and fears within his party that the debate had gravely wounded his prospects. "I was sick, I was feeling terrible I just had a really bad cold," said the president, in his first unscripted remarks of any length since last week's showdown with Republican rival Donald Trump.

The interview was intended to help Biden weather the storm, but his hoarse voice and meandering answers drew immediate Democratic fire for appearing "out of touch."

Asked if staying in the race might jeopardize Democrats holding on to the White House, Biden said: "I don't think anybody's more qualified to be president."



Colonel Angela Ochoa of the US Air Force welcomes President Joe Biden as he arrives to board Air Force One at Andrews base in Maryland.

Firms weigh removing Taiwan staff from China after death penalty threat

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: Some foreign companies are considering moving Taiwanese employees out of China after Beijing said it could impose the death penalty on "diehard" Taiwan independence separatists, said four people familiar with the matter.

The new guidelines have caused some Taiwanese expatriates and foreign multinationals operating in China to scramble to assess their legal risks and exposure, said the people, who include a lawyer and two executives with direct knowledge of the discussions.

"Several companies have come to us to assess the risks to their personnel," said the lawyer,

James Zimmerman, a Beijing-based partner at the Perkins Coie law firm. He declined to identify the companies or industries for confidentiality reasons.

"The companies are still concerned that there may be some grey areas such as whether a benign social media post or voting for a particular political party or candidate in Taiwan elections could be interpreted as engaging in pro-independence activities," Zimmerman said.

Reuters has previously consulted Perkins Coie on unrelated matters in China.

Some 177,000 Taiwanese were working in China as of 2022, according to the most recent Taiwan government survey.

Discharge of Indians serving in Russian army: Modi to raise matter with Putin

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: The early discharge sought by India of its nationals who were "misled" into serving in the Russian army is expected to be discussed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Moscow next week, his foreign secretary said on Friday.

Several cases of Indians who were lured to Russia with the promise of lucrative jobs or education and ended up fighting against Ukraine have emerged over the last few months, and Indian police arrested four people in May linked to a human trafficking network behind the practice.

Spanish judge postpones hearing in probe of PM Sanchez's wife

Monitoring Desk

MADRID: A Spanish judge postponed a hearing on Friday in a corruption investigation of Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's wife after her defence team said she had not been properly notified of another complaint brought against her.

The high-profile probe into whether Begona Gomez used her position as the prime minister's wife to influence her business dealings led Sanchez in April to consider resigning amid an outcry from the opposition.

Gomez appeared for her hearing on Friday morning, but after testifying for less than 45 minutes, Judge Juan Carlos Peinado granted her attorney's petition for an adjournment until July 19, a court spokesperson said.

"She was willing to testify if the judge clarified the facts."

Biden under pressure from donors to quit race

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden is under pressure from some Democratic donors who have warned they will withhold funds unless he is replaced as the party's candidate in the wake of his disastrous debate performance last week, according to the BBC. Pressure on the 81-year-old Biden to quit the Nov 5 presidential race has grown following several instances during the debate where he lost his train of thought.

While he admitted that he "screwed up" that night, he has vowed to stay on as his party's standard-bearer taking on Donald Trump.

Scrutiny on his public appearances has markedly risen since the debate. In a White House speech to military families on Thursday to mark July 4 Independence Day, he stumbled over his words when referring to Trump as "one of our colleagues, the former president". And in an interview in Philadelphia, he lost his thread and appeared to say he was proud to be the first black woman to serve with a black president. Donors have been reconsidering their bets. Abigail Disney, an heiress to the Disney family fortune, told business news channel CNBC.



Libyans gather for a demonstration in solidarity with Palestinians at Tripoli's Martyrs' Square.

Russian opposition figure Kara-Murza in prison hospital, wife says

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: Russian opposition politician Vladimir Kara-Murza, who is serving a 25-year jail sentence for treason, has been transferred to a prison hospital, his wife Evgenia said in a post on X on Friday.

The 42-year-old Moscow-born Kara-Murza, who has Russian and British passports, was jailed after repeatedly condemning Russia's war in Ukraine and calling for Western sanctions against

Moscow. His wife said he was transferred on Thursday evening to the prison hospital in Omsk, where he is incarcerated, but gave no further details about his condition. She said his lawyers had waited five hours to see him but were denied visitation rights. Kara-Murza suffers from a nerve condition called polyneuropathy after surviving two poisoning attempts and has repeatedly voiced concerns about his health in prison, his wife said.

Lower caste rights champion K. Armstrong hacked to death in Chennai

CHENNAI (INP): K. Armstrong, an Indian politician known for championing the rights of lower caste Hindus, was brutally murdered near his home in Chennai, the capital of India's Tamil Nadu state.

Armstrong, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief in Tamil Nadu, was attacked by six men on motorbikes with machetes and sickles while he was chatting with friends and supporters. The attackers managed to flee the scene before anyone could intervene.

Chennai police officer Asra Garg reported that eight individuals have been arrested in connection with

Armstrong's murder and are currently being interrogated.

The assassination has sparked outrage, with Armstrong's supporters taking to the streets to protest and demand justice. BSP head Mayawati condemned the attack, calling it "highly deplorable and condemnable," and urged the state government to ensure the perpetrators are punished.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin expressed his shock and sadness over the incident, urging the police to expedite the investigation. "Armstrong's assassination is shocking and deeply saddening," he stated.

Kenya's Ruto pledges government changes after nationwide protests

Monitoring Desk

NAIROBI: Kenyan President William Ruto said on Friday that he would make changes to the government soon, after weeks of nationwide protests that started as online anger over tax hikes and culminated in the violent storming of parliament.

The protests prompted Ruto to withdraw the finance bill that contained the proposed tax hikes, leaving a 346 billion shilling (\$2.7 billion) hole in the budget for the fiscal year that started on July 1.

Air pollution claims 33,000 lives annually in 10 Indian cities: Lancet study

NEW DELHI (INP): A recent study published in The Lancet Planetary Health has revealed that air pollution contributed to the deaths of 33,000 people annually across ten major Indian cities from 2008 to 2019. These cities include Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Shimla and Varanasi. The study, conducted by the London-based journal, focused on the impact of short-term exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5).

New UK PM Starmer declares Rwanda deportation plan 'dead and buried'

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: Britain's new Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Saturday he would scrap a controversial plan to fly thousands of asylum seekers from Britain to Rwanda in his first major policy announcement since winning a landslide election victory.

The previous Conservative government first announced the plan in 2022 to send migrants who arrived in Britain without permission to the East African nation, saying it would put an end to asylum seekers arriving on small boats. But no one was sent to Rwanda under the plan because of years of legal challenges.

At his first press conference since becoming prime minister, Starmer said that the Rwanda policy would be scrapped because only about one per cent of asylum seekers would have been removed and it would have failed to act as a deterrent. "The Rwanda scheme was dead and buried before

it started. It's never been a deterrent," Starmer said. "I'm not prepared to continue with gimmicks that don't act as a deterrent."

Starmer won one of the largest parliamentary majorities in modern British history on Friday, making him the most powerful British leader since former prime minister Tony Blair, but he faces a number of challenges, including improving struggling public services and reviving a weak economy. At the press conference in Downing Street, Starmer answered about a dozen questions and was repeatedly asked about how and when he would start delivering on his promises to fix the nation's problems, but he gave few specifics about what he planned. Asked if he was willing to take tough decisions and raise taxes if necessary, Starmer said his government would identify problems and act in areas such as tackling an overstretched prison.

Fuel shortage to have 'catastrophic' impact on hospitals in Gaza: WHO

Monitoring Desk

GENEVA: The World Health Organisation chief has warned that a dire lack of fuel could have a "catastrophic" impact on already devastated health services in the war-ravaged Gaza Strip. Desperate fuel shortages have been a constant problem in the besieged Palestinian territory.

"Further disruption to health services is imminent in Gaza due to a severe lack of fuel," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Thursday.

The UN health agency cautioned that only 90,000 litres of fuel entered Gaza on Wednesday. The health sector alone needs 80,000

litres daily. This is forcing WHO and its partners working in Gaza "to make impossible choices", Tedros said. Gaza is completely sealed off and everything that enters it is controlled by the Israelis.

Fuel, which has been particularly difficult to get in amid Israeli fears it could benefit Hamas fighters, is vital to keep hospital generators running, as well as humanitarian and emergency vehicles. WHO said its partners were directing limited fuel supplies to "key hospitals", including the Nasser Medical Complex and Al Amal Hospital, in Khan Yunis, and the Kuwaiti field hospital in Rafah.

Fierce fighting breaks out as militias launch new attacks against regime in Myanmar's civil war

Monitoring Desk

BANGKOK: New fighting has broken out in northeastern Myanmar, bringing an end to a Chinese-brokered cease-fire and putting pressure on the military regime as it faces attacks from resistance forces on multiple fronts in the country's civil war.

The Ta'ang National Liberation Army, one of three powerful militias that launched a surprise joint offensive last October, renewed its attacks on regime positions last week in northeastern Shan state, which borders China, Laos and Thailand, and the neighboring Mandalay region with the support of local forces there.

Since then, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army has joined in, and by Friday, combined forces from the two allied militias had reportedly encircled the strategically important city of Lashio, headquarters of the regime's northeastern military command.

This is the next phase of October's "1027" offensive, said Lway Yay Oo,

spokesperson for the TNLA, which last week said the military provoked retaliation with artillery and airstrikes despite the cease-fire.

"In phase two, our number one aim is the eradication of the military dictatorship, and number two is the protection and safety of local people," she said.

There was no indication that the third ethnic armed organization that makes up the Three Brotherhood Alliance, the powerful Arakan Army, has joined in the renewed fighting in Shan state, but its troops have never stopped fighting in its home Rakhine state, which was not covered by the Jan. 11 cease-fire. The TNLA claims to have already captured more than 30 army outposts, and to now control the western part of Mogoke, whose ruby mines make it a lucrative target.

There is also fighting for the town of Kyaukse, which sits at a highway crossroads, and Nawngkhio to the southwest, which leads toward the major military garrison town of P'ayin O'Lwin along the same highway.

Kenya rights groups decry abductions as government cracks down on protests

Monitoring Desk

NAIROBI: Kenyan activist Bill Eugene Omollo was walking home after dark in his Nairobi neighbourhood on June 20 when he spotted trouble - two men eyeing him next to a parked white pick-up without number plates.

The 28-year-old had been involved in the youth-led protests that have upended Kenya since last month and had been released by police only hours earlier following his arrest at one of the demonstrations.

"But people were also running. So they took me," he told Reuters.

Dozens of Kenyans have been targeted in similar abductions in the past two weeks, said human rights groups, who blame the extrajudicial arrests on Kenya's intelligence services.

Organised online and leaderless, the protests - initially a call to repeal tax hikes - have developed into a movement that has cut across Kenya's traditional ethnic divisions, becoming the biggest threat of Will-

iam Ruto's two-year-old presidency.

Though Ruto withdrew the tax increases in a victory for the movement, the heavy-handed reaction to the protests - campaign groups have documented hundreds of arrests and at least 39 deaths - has raised fears of rights backsliding. "The president and I gave a categorical promise to the people of Kenya that the issue was abductions and extrajudicial killings will never happen again," Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua said in a televised address. "Sadly, this is back."

A police spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment on the abductions. Nor did Noordin Haji, the director of Kenya's intelligence services. In an interview on Sunday, Ruto denied police involvement in disappearances but broadly defended the actions of the security forces. However, Irungu Houghton, executive director of Amnesty International Kenya, told Reuters there were clear cases of abuse.



Relatives mourn the death of stampede victims in this file photo taken in Daunkeli village in Hathras district.



BOLAN: A large numbers of vehicles stuck in traffic jam at Bolan Quetta Highway road due to traffic accident while passengers are facing difficulties in the extreme heat weather of summer season.

PM directs proceedings against officials, employees of power companies for extra units

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday directed for initiation of proceedings against those officers and personnel of the power distribution companies who were found sending extra units in the electricity bills of consumers. The prime minister directed the power division to suspend such officials of power distribution companies, besides ordering the Federal Investigation Agency to launch investigation into such matters. The prime minister chaired a meeting regarding reforms in power sector and solarisation process, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, federal ministers, Jam Kamal Khan, Sardar Awaiz Khan Leghari, Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State Ali Pervaiz Malik and senior relevant officials.

The prime minister said that exemplary punishment should be given to those officials who had included extra units in the

monthly bills of consumers with their anti-public attitude, besides unmasking them who had sent extra units to the protected consumers category, using less than 200 units per month.

During the meeting, the prime minister directed for accelerating efforts over renewable energy for power generation, adding that Pakistan could no longer afford to generate power on imported fuel.

He also expressed his resolve not to pass on the buck to the poor segment of society of the wrong policies measures of the past. The prime minister said that the consumers would get relief in their monthly bills after utilization of affordable renewable energy resources for power generation.

He directed for immediate closure of dysfunctional government run power units and those which had been producing expensive electricity.

The prime minister observed that the world was generating power by using renewable energy, adding in Pakistan, there was immense capacity to produce solar power.

We would defeat terrorism by promoting sports in Balochistan, vows CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has reiterated his government's resolve to defeat terrorism by promoting sports in the province.

He also vowed to keep the youngsters busy in the healthy activities.

The Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the ceremony of cycling competition organized by the district administration in Quetta on Saturday.

He said that we have prepared the calendar of the whole year for promotion of sports in the province.

The Chief Minister mentioned that we are going to introduce first youth policy in Balochistan.

He stressed that the gulf would have to be reduced between youth and state.

He appreciated the endeavours of Nawabzada Jamal Raisani in formulation of the youth policy.

He announced to organize Nawabzada Shaheed Siraj Raisani Football Tournament.

Besides, Shaheed Professor Nazima Talib Cricket Tournament would also be organized.

In addition to this, a festival would also be organized every month, he added.

The Chief Minister said that youth is our asset and as such the provincial government would continue special initiatives for our youth.

Pakistani delegation visits UK to strengthen academic collaborations

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Pakistani delegation led by Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui is on visit to the United Kingdom to strengthen academic collaborations.

The visit aimed at fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing between Pakistani and British educational institutions.

During the visit, the delegation will engage in deliberations with renowned academicians and education experts to learn about best practices in education.

The discussions will focus on exploring opportunities for mutual cooperation, exchange programs, and capacity building initiatives.

The minister emphasized the importance of this visit, stating, "We are committed to improving our education system and providing quality education to our students.

This visit will enable us to learn from the expertise of Cambridge University and other UK institutions, and to share our own experiences and best practices."

The visit is expected to strengthen educational ties between Pakistan and the UK, leading to enhanced collaboration and cooperation in the education sector.

MQM-P rejects CM Murad Ali Shah's claims of development in Sindh

KARACHI (INP): Kamal said that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government has done nothing substantial for Sindh during its tenure and has spent billions of rupees on advertisements alone.

He criticized the PPP for trying to deceive the people of Sindh, claiming that if there had been any real improvements, the public would have praised the CM themselves.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for upcoming meeting of CCI

Blome attends US 1-Day ceremony

LAHORE (APP): US Ambassador Donald A Blome attended a ceremony to mark the 248th Independence Day of the United States of America (USA) hosted by the US Consul General to Lahore Kristin Hawkins. The event was attended by a wide range of government, business, and civil society representatives. It highlighted key areas of partnership between the United States and Pakistan, including a robust trade and investment relationship, innovative collaboration through the US-Pakistan "Green Alliance" framework on climate challenges, extensive people-to-people ties, and more.

Ambassador Blome, in his address, said the United States would remain a committed partner of the people of Pakistan in strengthening fundamental freedoms.

ATC reserves judgment on confirmation of interim bail pleas of Imran in 3 cases

LAHORE (Online): After hearing the arguments of counsels for the respondents Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore has reserved judgment on confirmation of interim bail of PTI founder Imran Khan in three cases of attacks on Jinnah House, Askari Tower, and the torching of Shadman Police station.

The court remarked the decision will be announced on July 9.

ATC Judge Khalid Arshad conducted the proceedings on the bail petitions of the PTI Saturday.

Barrister Suleman Safdar counsel for Imran Khan appeared in the court and offered his arguments in support of confirmation of interim bail.

The state counsel opposed the confirmation of interim bail.

The court reserved judgment on completion of arguments of the counsels of the respondents.

It is pertinent to mention here Lahore High Court (LHC) had ordered to decide the case of interim bail within 6 days.

In four cases the ATC No 3 had confirmed the interim bail of PTI founder.

Counsel for PTI Barrister Suleman Safdar argued the bail of PTI founder can be confirmed in spite of absence of PTI founder. We should thank for PTI founder that due to him several cases have come to the open cases have come to the open. The learned judge directed the subordinate staff of the court contact be made with Adiala jail for appearance through video link.



QUETTA: MNA Mian Khan Bugti meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Saudi Group to invest in Retail Oil Sector in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): In a recent development, Saudi Group Asyad Holding through UAE-based Wafi Energy Holding Limited has acquired 77.42% shareholdings and control of Shell Pakistan Limited.

The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the acquisition under Section 11 of the Competition Act, 2010, thus solidifying the said transaction to boost the retail oil sector in Pakistan.

M/s Shell Pakistan Limited, listed on the Pakistan Stock Exchange, maintains a substantial business footprint in retail supply of motor fuels and lubricants across Pakistan. Whereas, M/s Wafi Energy LLC is a wholly-owned affiliate of Asyad Holding Group which specializes in the management and operation of fuel stations in Saudi Arabia. The Group has established M/s Wafi Energy

Holding limited to flex its wings for investment purposes in Pakistan.

The CCP's Phase I competition assessment identified 'Retail Fuel, Vehicle Lubricants and Industrial Lubricants' as the relevant product markets. It was also revealed that Shell Pakistan has distinct shares in all three relevant markets but that will remain unchanged post-transaction.

The analysis further confirmed that Wafi Energy Holding Limited will not gain dominant position in the relevant markets even after attaining the direct control of Shell Pakistan. Therefore, the CCP has swiftly authorized the said acquisition under Section 31 of the Competition Act, 2010. Chairman CCP, Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, while signing the Order expressed that this development is expected to boost competition by elevating service standards.

WAPDA's hydropower boost saves Pakistan's economy Rs143b

LAHORE (INP): WAPDA hydropower plants have set a new benchmark in Pakistan's energy landscape, supplying over 34 billion units of cost-effective and eco-friendly electricity to the National Grid during the fiscal year 2023-24.

Marking a significant increase of 3.26 billion units from the previous year, this achievement not only bolstered national electricity reserves but also saved the exchequer a substantial sum of 143.7 billion rupees. With a tariff of Rs 3.81 per unit, WAPDA hydropower remains the most economical source of electricity in the country.

Highlighting its pivotal role in reducing overall electricity costs, WAPDA hydropower currently accounts for 30% of the National Grid's supply.

The organization is actively pursuing multiple projects aimed at further enhancing hydropower capacity nationwide.

MQM-P rejects CM Murad Ali Shah's claims of development in Sindh

KARACHI (INP): Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan chapter (MQM-P) leader Mustafa Kamal dismissed Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah's claims of development in Sindh in a press conference held in Karachi on Saturday.

He accused CM Sindh of misrepresenting the province's progress in the advertisements on electronic and print media.

Minister Food visits Ziarat; inspects ongoing development schemes in constituency

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Food, Noor Muhammad Dummer visited Ziarat on Saturday.

He was warmly welcomed by the elders and elites of different areas of his election constituency.

The Minister inspected the ongoing development schemes in his constituency.

The people of different areas apprised Noor Muhammad Dummer about issues being faced by them in their areas.

The Minister gave patient hearing to the issues and assured to resolve them.

Tarar grieved over death of NPC President Jatoi's wife

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Saturday expressed deep grief over the death of the wife of National Press Club (NPC) President Azhar Jatoi.

In his condolence message, the minister said he was grieved over hearing the news of the death of Azhar Jatoi's wife.

The death of the deceased was a great tragedy for Azhar Jatoi and he shared the grief of the bereaved family.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

PTI power show: Court moved against NOC suspension

ISLAMABAD (INP): A contempt plea has been filed in Islamabad High Court (IHC) against the suspension of No Objection Certificate (NOC) for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Islamabad power show. As per details, the plea was filed by the Coordinator of Tehreek-e-Tahafuz-e-Aein Khanzaada Hussain against the suspension of the NOC for Tarnol Jalsa.

The petition urged the court to initiate contempt of court proceedings against the officials as the NOC was cancelled despite the court order.

The petition named the Chief Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Inspector General, and Superintendent of Police (SP) Tarnol, among others, as respondents. According to the petition, the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad on July 4 had informed the court that an NOC has been issued to PTI.

Later when the PTI leader Amir Mughal was taking the officials to the power show site, he was arrested by police outside the DC Office, the petitioner added. They petition further stated that PTI came to know about the development after the Islamabad Police tweeted regarding the cancellation for Islamabad power show NOC. After the tweet, the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad yesterday sent a letter to the petitioner, informing him of the cancellation.



QUETTA: Secretary Health Saleh Muhammad Baloch giving away shield to Dr. Saifullah Nassar on his good performance

Saudi Arabia conducts airdrop of food aid to Gaza Strip

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor at the Royal Court and Supervisor General of King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief), Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Rabeah on Saturday announced the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in cooperation with the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO) and the Jordanian Hashemite Armed Forces (Arab Army), has successfully conducted an airdrop of food aid to the Gaza Strip.

The operation aimed to bypass the closure of border crossings by Israeli occupation forces, which had previously hindered the entry of humanitarian aid to the affected people in the Strip.

Dr. Al Rabeah highlighted that Saudi Arabia, through KSrelief, provided Jordan with parachutes and dedicated networks for air-

drops weighing a total of 30 tonnes. He disclosed that the food supplies dropped by air are suitable for immediate consumption without the need for heating.

Underscoring Saudi Arabia's commitment to supporting humanitarian efforts in the Gaza Strip and assisting the Palestinian people, Dr. Al Rabeah emphasized the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz. This airdrop of food supplies effectively bypassed the issue of closed land and sea crossings, which had previously stopped aid from being delivered. However, Dr. Al Rabeah called for the opening of border crossings to facilitate the delivery of substantial humanitarian assistance to the afflicted.

Shujaat endorses 'Azm-e-Istehkam' to bring peace in country

LAHORE (INP): PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain on Saturday announced that his party would participate in the All Parties' Conference (APC) convened by the prime minister on Operation Azm-e-Istehkam.

The former prime minister said in a statement that Operation Azm-e-Istehkam is inevitable to get rid of the menace of terrorism.

"Pakistan and Afghanistan need to further expand the bilateral ties in order to ensure peace in the region," said the veteran politician.

Meanwhile, provincial minister for industries Ch Shafay Hussain said that terrorism is an international issue and the war against this monster can only be won by our joint efforts.

"PML-Q will fully support the efforts to bring peace in the country," he said.

APHC-AJK will hold rally in Karachi on Burhan Wani's martyrdom anniversary

KARACHI (INP): All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter will hold a rally in Karachi on July 08 to mark the martyrdom anniversary of the popular youth leader, Burhan Muzaffar Wani.

According to Kashmir Media Service, Burhan Wani, along with two other associates, was martyred by Indian troops during a fake encounter in Kokernag area of Islamabad district on July 8, 2016.

Court confirms bail of Amin Gandapur

RAWALPINDI (Online): Additional District and Sessions Judge Rawalpindi Faisal Rashid has confirmed interim bail of Chief Minister (CM) KP Ali Amin Gandapur in the case registered against him for interfering in the affairs of government and under other clauses. The court has directed Gandapur to submit fresh surety bonds in the sum of Rs 20000. Ali Amin Gandapur appeared along with his counsel Malik Muhammad Faisal advocate in the court Saturday.

The counsels for the respondents offered arguments. The court allowed Ali Amin Gandapur to go after hearing the case. Later the court maintained in written decision any role of the petitioner has not been determined in the case.

Minister Food visits Ziarat; inspects ongoing development schemes in constituency



ZIARAT: Provincial Food Minister Haji Noor Muhammad Dummer listening to problems of people at his constituency



QUETTA: IGP Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh and Additional AIGP Muhammad Saeed Khan pinning rank on officers promoted as SPs