🗾 🔟 🏏 🚹 Quettavoice

# UETTA VOICE

Email adderss: quettavoice@gmail.com

> Friday 22 April ,2022



PTI rally in Lahore: Khan tells supporters to 'wait for my call' for Islamabad



**NA Deputy Speaker** Zahid Durrani takes oath of office

### Divisional, district committees to improve governance: CM Balochistan

WWW Https:// www.quettavoice.com/

Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo termed the formation of provin-cial, divisional and district comcial, divisional and district committees imperative for improving the governance in the province. The provincial government has established committees on division and district levels to improve governance and address the grievances of the masses across the province. Mr. Bizenjo chaired an inaugural meeting of division review committees at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Thursday.

Thursday. Thursday.
Commander 12-Corps,
Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ali,
Home Minister, Mir Ziaullah
Langove, Chief Secretary Mathar
Niaz Rana, Additional Chief
Secretary (Home) Balochistan,
Hashim Ghilzai and other high
ups participated in the meeting.
IG FC South, Divisional

**Monitoring Desk** 

LONDON: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on former

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in

Commissioners participated in the meeting through a video link The Inspector-General

the meeting through a video link
The Inspector-General
Frontier Corps (South), and divisional commissioners participated in the meeting through video
link. ACS (Home), Muhammad
Hashim Ghilzai thoroughly
briefed the meeting about the
establishment of divisional committees and their impacts on
improving governance and improving governance and addressing the grievances of the

addressing the grievances of the masses.

"Major reason behind the formation of committees is to address the issues of the masses timely", Quddus Bizenjo told the meeting. He noted that the masses were facing difficulties because of a lack of coordination among the government departments.

"Institutions and government will continue to support division committees", Lt. General committees", Lt. General Sarfaraz Ali "Institutions and government

**Bilawal Bhutto** 

Zardari meets Nawaz

**Sharif in London** 

London on Thursday.

The two leaders discussed political situation in the country and formation of

The two leaders discussed political situation in the country and formation of coalition government. There was no formal declaration issued by either party. However, sources said the two leaders agreed to make joint efforts for supremacy of constitution and rule of law in the country.

Last time, Bilawal had met Nawaz Sharif in Kot Lakpat Jail.

PPP leaders Syed Naveed Qamar, Qmar u Zaman Kaira, Sherry Rehman also accompanied Mr. Bilawal. However, Ishaq Dar, Abid Sher Ali and Hussain Nawaz accompanied Mian Nawaz Sharif during the meeting.

Bilawal's meeting with Nawaz Sharif has come after differences within the joint opposition over the slot of President of Pakistan Asif Zardari and

joint opposition over the slot of President of Pakistan. Asif Zardari and Maulana Fazal ur Rehman are testing their muscles for the position.

ISLAMABAD: MNA Amir Haider Khan Hoti and Aimal Asfandyar Wali called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad.

Miftah Ismail meets Nawaz Sharif

ahead of talks with IMF

LONDON: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail on Thursday met former prime minister Nawaz Sharif in London before departing for Washington to hold talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the resump-

tion of the delayed \$6 billion loan programme, ARY News reported.

Miftah Ismail held a meeting with the PML-N supremo ahead of his crucial talks with the IMF officials. Talking to the media after his meeting, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said the upcoming budget will be in

He termed putting the ailing economy back on the track before next general elections, a big task for the coalition government as the interim government cannot hold talks with IMF.

Read more: Govt to restore IMF programme; present people-friendly budget: Miftah Ismail

The minister said Pakistan will have to get a fresh loan if it continues with the subsidies on petrol and electricity. Having said that, Miftah main-

tained that he was directed by the former prime minister Nawaz Sharif not to overburden the already inflation-hit people of the country.

Miftah said that the past government of Imran Khan took record loans and never returned a single penny.INP

Parvez Elahi kept his promise

to support Imran even when all

allies left: Asad Qaiser

LAHORE: Former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has said that Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Parvez Elahi kept his promise to support Imran Khan and PTI in difficult times even when all allies left.

He was speaking during his meeting with Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Parvez Elahi and former Federal Minister Moonis Elahi at their residence here on Thursday. Senator Zeeshan Ahmed, Khanzada Hussain, former provincial minister Muhammad Basharat Raja, Chaudhry Nazir Jutt and Amir Saeed Rawn were also present on the occasion Asad Qaiser said "PTI chief

Saeed Rawn were also present on the occasion Asad Qaiser said, "PTI chief Imran Khan appreciates your decision from the bottom of his heart, so I have

come to thank you personally."He said that Ch Parvez Elahi bravely faced the N-League goons on the floor of Punjab Assembly. Speaking on the occasion, Ch

Parvez Elahi said that the present rulers can't give relief to the people, they can only hurt them. Imran Khan has come out for the rights of the nation and we are

all with him in this struggle, he added.INP

will continue to support division committees", Lt. General Sarfaraz Ali assured the meeting. He said continuity of such meetings was imperative to make a sure solution to issues faced by the masses.

Commander 12-Corps termed the participation of masses in the development process important for the development of country and nation. He said the masses play a very important role in the maintaining law and order situation in the province.

maintaining law and order situa-tion in the province.
Good service delivery, partner-ship-based development initia-tives and maintaining law and order in the province will be achieved through review committees. The meeting discussed edu-cation, health, clean drinking water, law and order and other issues pertaining to Balochistan. The meeting decided to strength-en the divisional committees to pave the way for an immediate solution to masses issues.

#### PML-N will use PCB to accommodate their cronies: Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Fawad Chaudhry, has accused the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) of using

Twitter account.

confidence motion in the National Assembly, multiple reports have stated that PCB Chairman Ramiz

stated that PCB Chairman Ramiz
Raja will be removed from his role.
Former PCB Chairman Najam
Sethi, who has close ties with the
PM Shehbaz Sharif-led government, is likely to replace Raja.
Normally the PCB Chairman is
elected by the governing board,
however the chief usually has the
backing of the board's Patron-inChief — which is the prime minister. It must be noted that former
Pakistan captain and 1992 World
Cup winner, Raja, was elected
unanimously and unopposed as the
PCB's 36th Chairman for a threeyear term in September last
year.INP

#### Court will not be dismayed by criticism: CJP Bandial

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan has remarked that the Supreme Court stands for the supremacy of Constitution saying that the court will not be dismayed by criticism as long as there are upholders of the Constitution.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Atta Bandial delivered these remarks on Thursday while hearing the presidential réference seeking interpretation of Article 63-A. He was heading a five-judge larger bench of the apex court which also comprised Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Mazhar Alam, Justice Muneeb Akhtar and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel.

During hearing, CJP Bandial remarked that the court did not mind criticism and 'doors of this court are also open for the critics'. We will continue serving country no matter what other people think about us, he said adding that it was duty of the court to do justice with

#### Hina Rabbani Khar, UK HC discuss issues of bilateral interest

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner Dr. Christian Turner on Thursday called on Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar here and felicitated her on assuming the office and hoped that both sides will work together to further deepen the Pakistan-UK relations.

Minister of State Khar thanked

the British High Commissioner for the congratulations and stated that Pakistan highly values its relations with the UK, based on mutual respect and shared perceptions on broad range of regional and inter-national issues.INP

Syed Ali Shah QUETTA: Balochistan High Court (BHC) on Thursday rejected the bail application of Hidayat Khilji, the key accused in the video scandal. Mr. Justice Abdul Hameed Baloch of the BHC rejected the bail application submitted by Hidayat Khilji and his brother Khalil Khilji.

The court directed the trial court to try the case expeditiously in accordance with the law and without being influenced. Police had arrested the accused Hidayat Khilji and his brother Khalil Khilji for allegedly making nude videos of girls and forcing them for sexual abuse in December 2021.

The accused had filed a bail application before BHC
Senior lawyer, Syed Ayaz Zahoor Advocate appeared on behalf of the

the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for accommodating their friends. Chaudhry shared his apprehen-sions in a tweet on his official

Ever since Imran Khan's dis-missal as Pakistan's prime minister recently, following a successful no-

#### Agha Hassan Baloch, Hashim Notezai to take oath as federal ministers

Balochistan National Party (Mengal) MNAs, Agha Hassan Baloch and Hashim Notezai would Baloch and Hashim Notezai would take oath as federal ministers tomorrow (Friday). Agha Hassan would be allotted the portfolio of federal minister for science and technology and Hashim Notezai would be state minister for power, Sajid Tareen Advocate, the Central leader of BNP told Quetta Voice.

Mr. Tareen informed the oathtaking ceremony of the two federal

taking ceremony of the two federal ministers would take place tomor-row in the afternoon. "After assurance of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, we have agreed to be part of the federal cabinet", Mr. Tareen



QUETTA:Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo chairing a meeting about the divisional committees. Commander 12-Corps Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ali is also present on the occasion:

Quetta video scandal:

**Balochistan High Court rejects** 

accused in court. The accused had requested the court to grant them

requested the court to grant them bail. The court however observed that the charged offenses are not only heinous in nature but also dangerous and harmful to the whole society. Granting bail would encourage the accused to play with the dignity and modesty of women at large.

Quetta video scandal had sparked protests across the province. The political parties, civil society and people belonging to various walks of

Chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal had earlier announced not Mengal had earlier announced not to be part of the federal cabinet in the aftermath of the firing incident in the Chaghi district of Balochistan. A driver identified Hameedullah was killed in the fir-ing incident. The killing of the driv-er had sparked violent protests in the area

### Armed men opened fire, killed a person in Panjgur

Ibrar Ahmed

Armed men opened fire and killed one person in Balochistan's Panjgur district on Thursday. Police said the firing incident happened at Mwach Chowk Khudaban.

The victim was identified as Dad Jan. Residents of the area reached the spot and shifted the dead body to district headquarters hospital

The assailants fled away from the spot. Police and levies reached the spot as an investigation into the

incident went underway. In another firing incident, a man named Muhammad Yasin was shot dead by unknown armed men in Panjgur town, the local police shift-



ed the bodies of the deceased to the district headquarters hospital in Panjgur and later handed them over to heirs after medical-legal formali-

The local police lodged cases of both incidents and started an investigation into the matters

bail of Hidayat Khilji life had demanded of the government to give exemplary punishment to the accused.

Police had also recovered nar-cotics from the possession of accused

Police had also recovered nar-cotics from the possession of the accused, Syed Fida Hassan Shah, the

accused, Syed Fida Hassan Shah, the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police Quetta said. He said a narcotics case has also been registered against the accused.

The judge also observed that the accused were involved in other cases, which shows that they are criminal-minded persons. Therefore, granting bail to them would put the modesty and privilege of innocent girls at risk.

Thus, the accused being habitual of such crimes are not entitled to any leniency, the court concluded.

#### NA Deputy Speaker Zahid Durrani takes oath of office

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Speaker of National Assembly Zahid Akram Durrani took oath of his office on Thursday. National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf administrated the oath to Mr. Durrani istered the oath to Mr Durrani According to the NA Secretariat noti fication, JUI's Member National Assembly Durrani was elected National Assembly Deputy Speaker unopposed on Wednesday as no other candidate except him submitted the nomination papers. The seat fell vacant after Qasim Suri resigned from the post following the no-confidence motion submitted against him by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) lawmaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on April 16 was elected 22nd Speaker of the National Assembly unopposed as no other candidate submitted nomination papers against

#### PM withdraws foreign affairs portfolio from Tariq Fatemi

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday withdrew the portfolio of foreign affairs from Tariq Fatemi a day after appointing him as his special assistant on foreign affairs, and he also approved a change in the portfo-lio of Federal Minister Ehsan Mazari from Human Rights to Inter-Provincial Coordination.

"According to a federal government's notification, Tariq Fatemi will continue to serve as special assistant to the prime minister (SAPM),".

He has also been granted the additional status of a minister of state, according to the new notification. Earlier, the notification of his appointment as special assistant to the prime minister on foreign affairs did not grant him the status of a minister of state. On the other hand, a notification of the other hand, and the other hand, a notification of the other hand, a notification of the other hand, and the other hand, and the other hand, a notification of the other hand, and the other h cation for change in the portfolio of Federal Minister Ehsan Mazari from Human Rights to Inter-Provincial.INP

#### PTI rally in Lahore: Khan tells supporters to 'wait for my call' for Islamabad

LAHORE: The Lahore leg of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's public power show is underway at Minar-i-Pakistan, where party chairman and former

prime minister Imran Khan is addressing his supporters.

"Lahore ... thank you! No matter how much I thank it can never be

enough," Khan said in his opening remarks. I knew you would not disappoint me. I've never addressed such a big crowd."

The former prime minister continued: "Now you know what a selected government is. It is placed atop after being selected from abroad and is

afraid of elections. I, in any situation, will not accept this government."

Khan, not for the first time, claimed that he was out of power due to pursuing an independent foreign policy for Pakistan, which he said was not liked by international powers. He accused global forces of colluding with local "Mir Jaffars and Mir Sadiqs among others" to end his government at a time." When the account was chooting the exports were record high. a time "when the economy was shooting, the exports were record high - and all of this at a time when the coronavirus was wreaking havoc."

Khan explained the cablegate issue, repeating his allegation of US Assistant Secretary of State for Central and South Asia Donald Lu threat-ening Pakistan's ambassador to the US that Khan must be ousted from the power to get back in American good books.

"What crime had we committed that it warranted forgiving? Was it that we went to Russia? Or that we said we won't give military bases? Remember Lahore where they got these bad habits from. Why don't they

The PTI chairman said his government was conspired against at a time when it was on the cusp of "breaking the shackles of the IMP".



Khan defended the Toshakhana scandal against him, saying that everything he bought back was on record. He said the money gained from the sale of gifts he retained were used to mend roads leading up to his residence, which are also used by the general public.

"During their time, when presents came, they could buy them back by giving just 15pc. We came and increased the minimum price to 50pc," he

"The wall I had to erect ... I did not take money from the government, and these people are today doing this propaganda. I'm challenging that never in Pakistan's history a prime minister has ever spent as less on him-

Khan urged his audience to never vote his this political rivals, saying

that "If you allow them to win in any constituency, you would commit trea-The PTI chairman criticised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his son

Hamza Shehbaz for the corruption cases against them and urged the judiciary to protect officers in charge of pursuing corruption cases.

"These people — where they're sitting — tell me, which govt officer will take action against them when they know they will be subjected to revenge. I ask the courts, 'is it not your job to protect these officers?"

"I tried in my 3.5 years of government that cases against them progressed ... but nothing happened. The NAB wasn't under me, the courts were free ... what could we have done apart from their FIA cases? And those who had power in their hands did not consider corruption to be bad. It wasn't anything big for them."Web Desk

## QUETTA VOICE Editor Asim Khan Flaws in LBs wards, delimitations in Balochistan

Initial delimitations of union councils and formation of wards suggest serious flaws regarding the upcoming local bodies elections in Balochistan. Technically or deliberately, the election commission of Pakistan has surpassed all past records of mismanagement/faults in terms of formation of new wards and delimitations of union councils across the province, which covers half of the country in terms of area.

Local bodies elections are scheduled to be held on May 29th throughout Balochistan except Quetta and Lasbella districts because of some delimita-tion issues. The Balochistan High Court (BHC) has also ordered the election commission of Pakistan to address the grievances of the people in Zhob, Pishin and other districts of the province regarding the formation of

For instance, in Pishin's Chur Badizai and Toorkhail union councils, the election commission has made one ward comprising 32 voters, whereas, another ward comprising of more than 5,000 voters. Votes of people from quite far away have been registered in the union council. This has created doubt among the people of the area about the credibility and transparency about the upcoming LBs elections.

In Naseerabad district, political and tribal personalities have also expressed serious reservations and apprehensions about the establishment of new wards and delimitations of union councils. People have accused the ECP of making special wards for politically and tribally influential people,

thus depriving majority of the people.

This daily has received scores of complaints regarding the flaws in the establishment of new wards and delimitation of union councils. The ECP has to take an urgent notice of the complaints of the people and make sure fair and transparent elections to devolve the power on grassroots level in a

LBs elections play crucial role in the development of country and nation. The ECP has to perform its constitutional responsibility and address the grievances of the masses and restore their confidence. Every individual has to be given the right to vote in his and her area to elect future representa-

The ECP's Quetta office has responded to the complaints of the political parties and individuals. However, it needs to step up efforts to address the grievances of voters before it is already late.

not just about reverting

to the IMF. It is more

about doing its own homework on identify-

ing a set of policies that

Government is a very

demanding business.

much more difficult than commentators and

critics recognize. It's a

achieved rather than on

how much is achieved

Three-pronged agen-da: Today's economic calling is both about

managing the short-term challenges, and

also about giving a sense that we have an

understanding of the

issues hampering sus-tainable development.

Let us consider a three-

pronged approach. First, making hard but

ment crisis

in the coming months.

process

multifaceted

### A consensus on the economy

Endorsing the previous government's relief package by turning down the summary of the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) for an increase in prices, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has decided to keep oil prices unchanged till May 1. It was an easy decision for him, as the formal engagement formal engagement between his government and the IMF for the resumption of the ongo-ing programme is yet to

**EDITORIAL** 

Start.

Political uncertainty is one of the reasons that led to an impasse with the IMF. The unpleasant events in Punjab last week have added to that uncertainty, which seems far from being over and will likely impact talks with the IMF.

with the IMF.

No one knows whether the alliance government will complete its remaining tenure till August 2023 or call (or be compelled to call) early elections. Clarity on its remaining term would determine the keenness of Shehbaz Sharif's government on the resumpof Shehbaz Sharif's government on the resumption of the IMF programme. If the government wants to stay in power for the next 15 months, it will aim to keep the IMF's support on its side However if it keep the IMF's support on its side. However, if it is planning for (or is compelled to call) early elections, the focus would be on increasing popularity through pop-ulist measures, leaving the tough decisions to be

taken after the next elections. In any case, who-ever forms the government after the next elec-tions should be ready for

tions should be ready for tough negotiations with international creditors, including the IMF.

In a highly polarized political environment where the polity is divided across all possible fissures, political parties must be careful not to politicize the economy. What goes around comes around. Once in government, the ruling parties end up taking the same measures (on almost every front, but especially on the economic front) that they have been

ly on the economic front) that they have been opposing vehemently while sitting on the opposition benches.

Pakistan's three major political parties went to the IMF while in power and availed the last three IMF packages – the PPP (2008-prematurely concluded in 2010), the PML-N (Sep 2013 to Sep 2016), and the PTI (ongoing since 2019).

A glance at the loan requests and corrective measures agreed upon (letter of intent) for the last three programmes written by PTI finance adviser Hafeez Sheikh and Governor State Bank (GSR) Revz Bagir in

adviser Hafeez Sheikh and Governor State Bank (GSB) Reza Baqir in June 2019, the PML-N's finance minister Ishaq Dar and GSB Yasin Answer in 2013, and the PPP's finance adviser Shaukat Tarin and GSB Shamshad Akhtar in 2008 respectively have a

lot in common.

Their diagnosis of Pakistan's economic ailment remained almost the same - lack of implementation of much-need-ed structural reforms, not trying new avenues for domestic resource mobi-

domestic resource mobilization, non-resolution of the inefficiencies and losses in state-owned enterprises (SOEs), fiscal operations by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), and the issue of energy circular debt.

The prior actions taken by them to show their seriousness about reforms are also quite similar. The PPP government increased the discount rate by two percent, the electricity tariffs by 18 percent, and agreed to issue only a pre-negoby 18 percent, and agreed to issue only a pre-negotiated volume of treasury bills. The PML-N government gave a plan for phasing out Tariff Differential Subsidies (TDS), purchased \$125 million in the foreign exchange spot market, undertook fiscal adjustment measures in the 2013 federal budget, and issued 10,000 notices to potential tax evaders.

potential tax evaders. Likewise, the PTI govcriment's prior actions included quarterly automatic tariff adjustment in the electricity sector and prompt adoption of the fiscal year 2020 gas tariffs; switching to a flexible, market-determined exchange rate: and exchange rate; and undertaking fiscal meas-ures in the 2020 federal budget. To get the last

native. The new govern-

for decades.

tranche released, it with-drew GST exemptions through a mini-budget and gave the SBP autono-my by amending the con-cerned law.

To address the com-

mon root causes of eco-nomic challenges, the end goals (structural benchmarks) agreed

benchmarks) agreed upon in the three programmes are similar.

To achieve macroeconomic stability, the PPP government had committed to bringing tax reforms and general sales tax harmonization. It tax harmonization. It agreed to manage interagreed to manage inter-corporate circular debt, increase electricity tariffs to eliminate TDS, and end the SBP provision for buying furnace oil. For fiscal discipline, it agreed fiscal discipline, it agreed to move to a single treasury account. And to insulate the public from the inflationary impacts of structural reforms, it had committed to strengthening the social safety nets.

The PPP government could neither fulfill its commitments nor complete the IMF programme—partly due to strong resistance from the PMLN, especially on GST harmonization and hike in electricity tariff,

GST harmonization and hike in electricity tariff, and partly due to the devastating floods of 2010-2011. The PMLN, despite its opposition to the PP-led structural reforms, committed to similar reforms under its IMF programme. It pledged to enhance revenue administration, introduce a rationalization plan for

By Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri

gas prices, give autonomy to the SBP, reduce SOEs losses, sort out the energy circular debt after a technical and financial audit, eliminate exemp-tions and concessions granted through SROs, chase tax evaders, and initiate revenue-based loadshedding in the remaining electricity distribution companies

tribution companies.
The PML-N had to face strong resistance from the PPP and the PTI from the PPP and the P11 for its structural reforms. However, it successfully concluded its IMF programme in September 2016, albeit with a dozen waivers. The waivers waivers. The waivers were exemptions it had to seek from the IMF for not fulfilling its commitments. In the run-up to the 2018 general elections, the PML-N government resorted to populist measures and a spending spree. It was clear that the winner of the polls had to go to the IMF once again.

The PTI government wasted its first year avoiding going to the IMF and tried to tackle the current account deficit with the help of friendly countries. However, one-off denosite from friends are

However, one-off deposits from friends are not a substitute for the structural reforms necesstructural reforms necessary to stop economic hemorrhage. The economic woes became worse and the PTI government had to go to the IMF in 2019 with the commitment of not giving further.

### Taking on the economy

By Dr Khaqan Hassan Najeeb

In the immediate, ment and deployment of credible signalling is a gas replacement tech-

gas replac-nologies. Lastly, put in motion the digitalization of the Federal Board of improve Federal Board of Revenue to improve transparency, reduce administrative burden and make it easier for taxpayers to comply. A successful digital jour-ney requires a strategic transformation which can be developed in collaboration with more technologically advanced tax administrations to incorporate international experi-

Growth framework The nation must learn from recent history. In the last five years, two growth episodes have had an identical result balance of payment difficulties and conse-quently the urgency to put in motion contractionary policies. Pakistan must put forward an economic framework beyond the tools amnesties, concessional financing for large businesses, subsidized energy, and incentives for non-tradable sectors This should be the third part of the agenda for the country.A growth framework based on principles of productivity growth, competitive-ness, marketization and privatization. A key element of the framework must be eliminating

## Tests for PM Shehbaz

groups. The raise in salaries and pensions will he ouster of Imran Khan may have creatgo some way in mitigating people's economic hard-ships. The increase in the ed a ripple of excitement among the workers of the PMNL-N but if the party fails to deliver, this euphoappointment, prompting people to look for an alter-

ment faces a myriad of challenges which need meticulous planning and efficient execution of such plans. A few cosmetic steps will not resolve the inveterate problems the country has been facing

As Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif himself during Eid. But it is not only chalsaid, the economy is in a terrible shape, and the government needs to make hectic efforts to improve it. With over \$100 billion in debt, Pakistan faces deficits on all fronts - fiscal and current account. To tide over this, the country needs over \$14 billion a debt could hit a whopping \$350 or 400 billion mark in the next two decades. Trade deficits are also affecting an economy that is grappling with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic which has not only wreaked havoc with millions of Pakistanis but poor people all over the

world Amidst this mountain of challenges, it is positive that the government has taken a few steps to extend help and succor to people belonging to low-income

minimum wage is also very encouraging. Further, the decision to plan in con-sultation with the provincial governments to address the skyrocketing inflation has created a ray of hope that this govern-ment will come up with a package to alleviate economic hardships — but such a plan should be made as early as possible because the people want immediate relief so that they can be at some ease during Fid

lenges on the economic front that this government faces; a number of other challenges could also affect the performance of the Shehbaz-led dispensation. The most pressing is the legitimacy of the new government. The PTI has strictly followed, then it will leave more than 100 seats vacant in the National Assembly. If the party also decides to resign from the upper house and provincial assemblies then it could plunge the country into a new crisis, scupper-ing all chances of reforms that the chief of the PML-

N hopes for.
Therefore, it is important to politically settle this issue. One of the ways to cool down political tem-perature lies in avoiding the politics of vindictiveness. Reportedly, the names of a few former ministers, advisers or spe-cial assistants have been placed on the Exit Control List, fueling speculations that the new government has a dogged determina-tion to take on PTI sup-porters and leaders. This could create intense acrimony between the PTI and the incumbent govern-ment, forcing Khan loyalto launch street protests and agitation. Such a situation would create political uncertainty, prompting investors to withhold their invest-ments. The business class has lost billions of rupees over the last few weeks because of the uncertain situation created by the vote of no-confidence and the unpredictability of Imran Khan. If such a condition is allowed to persist, it could deal a severe blow to an economy that needs a modicum of certainty and

By Abdul Sattar

reaching out to the opposition. There must be elements within the PTI that are not comfortable with the recalcitrance of Khan. Such elements should be engaged and a political dialogue be launched aimed at understanding the grievances of the opposition. The government has already announced that it would hold an in-camera briefing with military offi-cials and the former Pakistani envoy to the US regarding the 'letter'. Blissfully

One of the ways to deal

with the situation lies in

#### should form part of the multifaceted process that requires balancing a range of competing and demanding priori-ties. The future of Memorandum of Economic and Financial document has to demon-strate that it can wind Policies to be agreed with the Fund – that's back the budget deficit Pakistan, and of all its citizens, depends more on the quality of what is what really counts.

Programme continuity can certainly help in managing the rising external financing needs and building the declining reserves of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Focus should be on building the Net International Reserves, which signal the quality and usability SBP reserves. IMF programme resumption will be a positive signal to markets and can create a semblance of con-

fidence.
A lot is said about

necessary choices in the immediate; second, consistency of policy. However, that alone is improving implementa-tion of the work-in-pipeline; and third, prenot enough. It is more about calibration of monetary, fiscal, indus-trial and trade policies, senting a sound eco-nomic framework for which is of significance. growth, which can per-In this regard, Budget 2023 needs to be prepared considering a large reform effort. Whereas revenue reforms get the bulk of the attention, it is the expenditure side that needs serious considermanently overcome the periodic balance of pay-Immediate: Let us build on the short-term decisions partly high-lighted in our last article on April 4, 2022 needs serious consider-ation. Public Sector D e v e l o p m e n t Programmes (PSDP) ('The economy challenge'). There is a consensus that the country should try to complete the on-going pro-gramme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, need a focus towards the software of the economy and a moratorium on new projects funded by PSDP. There it is not that straightforward. For Pakistan, it's should be a clear signal

move beyond amnesties and take tough decisions on taxing agriculture income, capital gains and retail sides. The Budget 2023 without stifling eco-nomic growth. This requires true hard work and calibration.

Energy pricing poli-cies are bleeding the exchequer and are thus unsustainable. The poli-cy needs revision and management. Higher prices driven by the global commodity super cycle and the effect of rupee adjustment are hard to pass to the consumers already reeling under inflationary pressures. But, as tough as it may be, the need is about showing prudence over populism. Increasing

breadth and quantum of adequately targeted sub-sidy has become possible due to newly developed databases such as the National Socio-Economic Registry, which covers about 33 million households through a combined door-to-door survey and desk-based self-regis-tration mechanism. Other direct options like fuel cards for motorcyclists and agriculturists are also possible. Such moves will give cre-dence to eliminating general subsidies in the economy. This requires a lot of effort but must be accomplished.

necessary condition for economic stability. All the above actions are geared in this direction. The goal is to indicate a move to build minimum new foreign debt by minimizing current account deficit, sub-stantively eliminating fiscal deficit and focus spending on the deserv-ing to alleviate the impact of price rises. Implementation: The second part of the agen-

da is about implementation of the work-in-pipeline, which may have lost momentum. This needs strong economic governance and a professional team. The key areas needing a push are quite obvious. The second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPeC), nine underutilized SEZs, new LNG terminals, the northsouth gas pipeline, divestment and pension reforms - all need a

Other areas also attention. Facilitating a shift of the industrial units from the Far East to Pakistan can give a big push to exports. Creation of an market energy Pakistan is something that an energy czar must devote time to on an urgent basis. The federgovernment should coordinate policies to degasify gas networks, primarily through electrification. It should support the develop-

#### Zamir Akram

inefficiency in key areas that underpin a

competitive economy

transition. While the Ghani

including energy.

government will prove to be a hurdle, it can still be given a 'ake news' and 'posttruth' are popular neologisms – but they have actually been part of the political landscape for a very long time. We have learned to live with fake news, fake history and bogus law. We swim in an ocean of lies and dis-informabut somehow manage to survive the

economic and political sharks all around us. What is far more worrisome is the phenomenon that there are 'real facts' that cry out for our attention, that demand urgent action, and that our politicians and media treat as nonexistent or marginal, eg exorbitant expenses, skewed national budgets, xenophobic war-mongering, structural violence, aggression, coercive financial unilateral measures, blockades, the homolo-gation of the media, manifestly unjust laws, the corruption of the 'rule of law' through legal scams and 'law-fare', the penetration of public institutions by intelligence services, the 'weaponization' of human rights, the imprisonment

whistleblowers

Julian Assange, unjust

taxation, tax havens, tax evasion, corporate exploitation, ecocide, extreme poverty, man-made famine, social exclusion, etc.

Now pause, take a breath and ask yourself why these facts are largely ignored or trivi-alized by politicians and media alike. Why are these 'inconvenient' facts shoved aside, as if they were only of marginal importance or as if they did not exist? Without a doubt these facts engender shortterm, medium-term and long-term conse-quences, create or per-petuate imbalances and spread a vague, desta-bilizing sense of inco-herence and cognitive dissonance.

Facts without consequences' constitute a sui generis category of reality. These facts may be present and available in the internet and generally acknowl-edged - but only under the tacit condition that no genuine debate will be conducted and no concrete action will be taken thereon. It is worse than a conspira-cy of silence. It is a conspiracy of irrespon-

There are also 'books without consequences', books without the urgent, imperative fol-

#### unaware By Alfred De Zayas

low-up. Whereas some trash books like Francis

Fukuyama's The End of History and the Last Man are given enor-mous attention, hugely relevant and challenging books by Noam Chomsky, John
Mearsheimer, Stephen
Kinzer, William Blum,
Jeffrey Sachs, Nils
Melzer, President
Jimmy Carter are publighted by metable house lished by notable houses, but there is no fol-low-up. One would have expected that after the publication of C h o m s k y 's Manufacturing Consent', Kinzer's
'Overthrow', Sachs'
'The End of Poverty',
Melzer's 'The Trial of Assange', 'Our Carter's Endangered Values', or The Mearsheimer's 'The Great Delusion' not only polite academic debate and scholarly conferences would follow, but genuine democratic discussion would be conducted in townhalls, in the daily press, in the internet, throughout the spectrum of the media. Politically these and other necessary books were met by silence. They had the potential to advance international law and human rights, and that is precisely why they have been victims of benign neglect'

### The gathering storm US cooperation, underscored by the meeting between Russia and Iran con-

War clouds have once again gathered Afghanistan. Even as American's longest war in its his-tory has ended, the Afghan people are unlikely to enjoy the dividends of peace. In fact, a renewed civil war has already startbetween Taliban and the Afghan government. The impact of such a conflict will not remain confined to Afghanistan but will engulf the entire

region. The Taliban have already made extensive territorial gains. They claim to now control 85 per cent of Afghanistan, especially the rural areas and the crucial highways, thereby encircling the major cities with fighting currently raging for the control of Herat, Kandahar and Lashkar Gah. The Taliban are also trying to rebrand themselves, projecting a more tol-erant and responsible image in order to increase their domes-tic and international acceptability. Rejecting

claims, the Afghan government asserted that its forces are regrouping to halt the Taliban advance and will retake lost territory. The government has also enlisted local Tajik, Hazara

and Uzbek militia to boost the capabilities of its troops while relying heavily on military support by Washington and New Delhi. In these circumstances, a protracted civil war is now the most likely outcome Minister

Imran Khan is correct in stating that the Americans made a mess in Afghanistan. Now they are leaving a mess behind. Instead of ensuring a peaceful transition, the Biden administration has rushed for the exits, a b a n d o n i n g Afghanistan to its fate. American "over the horizon" military operations in support of the Ghani govern-ment, such as recent ment, such as recent air strikes against the Taliban, have encouraged Kabul to reject any compromise solution. The recent meetings in New Delhi between US Secretary of State Blinken and the Indian leadership indicate that India will also militarily assist the Afghan govern-ment. The Indian objective was clearly spelt out recently by former Indian Foreign Secretary Sham Seran that an Afghan civil war would be prefer-able to a Taliban gov-

ernment. A more sinister aspect of such Indo-

Secretary Blinken and Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, is that Indian and Afghan intelligence agencies would feel encouraged to intensify support for terrorist groups like the TTP and Baloch separatists against Pakistan. The Uzbeks Chechens, Uzbeks, Uighurs of the ETIM and ISIS will also gain greater freedom of action to increasingly target China, Russia

and Iran.

In these circum-stances, Afghanistan will not only face further devastation but will also be denied the benefits of its poten-tial role as a hub for regional connectivity. Projects like TAPI and CASA-1000 will remain unimplemented. China's extension of its BRI into Afghanistan as well as its investments in the country would have to be put on hold. For Pakistan, the costs would be even higher continued instability and security threats on its western and eastern borders, influx of Afghan refugees, and denial of access to the region. Since Afghan instability will have regional implications, the geo-political interests of

verge on the need for a peaceful transition in Afghanistan and avoidance of a renewed civil war. As such, all four countries have individually and collectively reached out to the Afghan parties. The Taliban have, in their engagement these countries, stressed their willingness to accept a political solution, sought international recognition and promised to ensure that the Afghan ensure that the Afghan territory is not used against any other country. In a significant development, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told the visiting Taliban leader, Mullah Bradar that the "Taliban... is a pivotal military and a pivotal military and political force in the country and will play an important role in the process of peace, re-conciliation and reconstruction there." Similar endorsement for the Taliban has also been expressed by the Russians and Iranians. Efforts by this 'Quartet', there-fore, hold the most promising option to secure peace in A f g h a n i s t a n. Intensified collective initiatives by them can still prevent a full scale civil war and lead to a peaceful

safe and honourable exit under conditions
that could be guaranteed by the 'Quartet'.
More troublesome
would be the spoiler's role by India which views its strategic riews its strategic rinterests against Pakistan and China being better served by continuing warfare in Afghanistan. But the Indians or the Americans will not deploy their forces in Afghanistan to protect Afghanistan to protect Ghani, having learnt the lessons of history. Consequently, the Kabul government cannot survive for long and would be eventually forced to find a political solution. Pakistan's support for an Afghan-led Afghan-owned peace process is laud-able. But given the high stakes involved and the obvious Indian interference in Afghanistan, there is need for a proactive Pakistan policy in collaboration with China, Russia and Iran to protect shared national interests. Such a collective approach needs to be based on the ground realities, in particular that the Taliban must play a key role in a future Afghan government.

## 03 NATIONAL NAB refutes report of 'zero recovery'

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Thursday refuted reports of zero recovery by the accountability watchdog during last four years and said that it has recovered Rs584 billion during the period.

period. In a statement issued today, the NAB said that it has directly recovered an amount of Rs460 billion from major housing societies while recovery of 140 million Pound

from London was also made owing to accounta-bility watchdog's efforts. "An audit of all recov-eries and expenses have already been carried out by Auditor General of Pakistan," it said and added, "The NAB has also presented the record before the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament."

The watchdog further said that cases against top

during four years

said that cases against top suspects are already being proceeded in trial or appellate courts while 1405 suspects have been convicted after successful trial so far

"Legal action will be taken against those spreading baseless

on April 14, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) have no affiliation with anyone except with Pakistan, Chairman NAB Javad Chairman NAB Javed Iqbal said. In a media talk after

attending the Public Accounts Committee ses-sion, NAB chief said the anti-graft watchdog has nothing to do with the political engineering.

Commenting on any amendment in the NAB law, he urged for amendment in the national interest and not in the personal interest of someone.
"He is a former prime

minister and respectable for me," Justice retd Javed Iqbal said on a question about Shahid Khaqan Abbasi. The NAB chief avoid-

ed to comment over a query when he was asked about his likely resignation from the office after fall of Imran Khan's gov-ernment. INP

#### Miftah leaves for US to meet IMF officials for revival of loan facility

ISLAMABAD: Newly-appointed Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said on Thursday that he said on Thursday that he was leaving for Washington, where he was expected to meet International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials for the revival of a loan facility of the revival of ity that was stalled fol-lowing the premature end of the Imran Khan gov-ernment earlier this

month. Ismail, who has replaced Shaukat Tarin in the role of the country's finance czar in the new coalition setup, tweeted before leaving for Washington that the purpose of the visit was to "put back on track our IMF program that PTI and IK (Imran Khan) derailed, thus endanger-

ing our economy".

He added that he would travel to London on the way, where he would meet PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif.

On Wednesday, Ismail told media persons during a press conference in Islamabad that his priority was to secure one tranche of \$1bn from the IMF and prepare for the coming budget and not to club two quarterly

He further said he was expecting to meet the IMF managing director, chief executive officer of the World Bank, executive directors of the G-7

nations, ministers of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and China and the IMF mis-sion chief to Pakistan. In the same press brief-ing, Ismail revealed that the IMF wanted Pakistan to do away with subsidies extended by the previous government, including extended by the previous government, including those on fuel prices and power tariffs — two relief measures that former prime minister Imran Khan had announced right before the filing of a no-trust motion against him. The move had invited criticism with many describing it as going against Pakistan's commitments to the IMF for the \$6 billion Extended the \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility.

The IMF had set a series of prior conditions

involving steep fiscal adjustment close to Rs1.3 trillion, Ismail said, adding that the IMF wanted an increase in fuel prices to breakeven and taxes restored, amnesty scheme discontinued for industries, circular debt reduced, power rates raised and fiscal savings ensured in order to com-pletely reverse the PTI government's February 8 relief package.

The previous govern-ment had a commitment to have a primary balance of Rs25bn which was now in deficit at Rs1.3 trillion. "We have heard their (IMF) position but have not made any commitment yet," Ismail said.

The PML-N led coalition government, which had severely criticised the previous. Imran-led government, and severely criticised the previous.

previous Imran-led gov-ernment for first failing to control fuel prices in the country and later for "derailing" the IMF programme through fuel and electricity subsidies, is yet to reverse the measure of reducing parted prices. of reducing petrol prices with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last week rejecting the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority's (Ogra) proposal in this

Assuring that no bur-den would be passed on to the people in the process to meet the IMF's conditions, Ismail added, "But something would have to be done because the IMF programme is inevitable.

The government would ensure fiscal discipline and tighten its own belt to restore the IMF programme and no extra burden would be put on the people, he said.

Ismail further said the government would ensure a "gentle landing" of the

a "gentle landing" of the unwinding of the PTI's "unscrupulous" relief package that had put the country's economic sta-bility at stake.INP



QUETTA: A view of traffic jam in provincial capital.

#### PM, CM Murad agree on joint efforts for public relief

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held Thursday a meeting with Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah during which matters relating to the current

political situation in the country came under discussion.

The Sindh chief minister congratulated the prime minister on his commitment to working together for the development of the country at the first cabinet meeting. He also briefed the prime minister on administrative matters of Sindh.

On the occasion, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the Sindh chief minister to ensure implementation of relief package given to the people during Ramazan. "The first priority of the

current government is to pro-vide immediate relief to the people facing inflation," he

added.
"The provinces and the fed-

"The provinces and the federation will work together for providing relief to public," vowed the prime minister.

Meanwhile, while talking to media outside an accountability court in Islamabad, Murad Ali Shah admitted that the Sindh government's response Sindh government's response to the Mehar fire incident was

He said that the fire brigade of the local municipal committee was malfunctioned, adding the negligent officials would be dealt with sternly. "A report on the incident

has been sought within seven days," he stated and vowed to rebuild the houses gutted in the fire.

Murad said Imran Khan

insisted on a foreign conspiracy against his government, but his minister said if their rela-tions with the establishment were good, they would be in the government. He said to Imran Khan that

He said to Imran Khan that people knew his past statements, adding: "You were ousted from the National Assembly because you were lacking the required number of parliamentarians."

Regarding the role of President Dr Arif Alvi, he said that the president's job was to uphold the Constitution. "The president has two options: fulfill his constitutional respon-

fill his constitutional responsibility or leave the office."
He also said he had to come

to Islamabad from Karachi for every hearing of Nooriabad Power Plant reference, adding power loadshedding was being carried out in all over Sindh due to lack of fuel on the power plant. "It will be a big challenge to control power loadshedding in the summer." INP

#### Police recover another girl from Sanghar in raid for Dua Zehra's recovery

KARACHI: Police on Thursday carried out a raid in Sanghar for the recovery of 14year-old Dua Zehra who went missing outside her home in Karachi, only to find another girl who was forcefully kept

The police while detailing the raid said that another minor girl was found during the raid and they are now gathering details regarding her identity and the city she belonged to.
"The raid was carried out on

secret information regarding presence of Dua Zehra," they said and added that the authorities will record statement from the girl found during Sanghar

The father of a 14-year-old girl Dua Zehra Kazmi who has

been allegedly abducted from Alfalah area of Karachi's Shah Faisal Colony yesterday revealed that he has received

ransom calls.
"I do not have enmity with anyone," the father said while revealing that he had received two calls for ransom. "One of the call was made from a telephone number while another one was made from WhatsApp," he

said.
The father further said that he has provided police with details of the numbers. "I do not have enmity with anyone and even my daughter was not going to school for the last one and a half year," he said.

Meanwhile, a team of antiviolent crime cell (AVCC) also met with the father of Dua Zehra. AVCC SSP Zubair Nazir Shaikh said that they have formed three teams working on obtaining CCTVs to trace the suspects.

We are taking all measures for the recovery of the girl and are in touch with the family to gather all information surround-ing her abduction," he said and added, "A case has already been registered at Alfalah police sta-

It is pertinent to mention here that a 14-year-old girl went missing in Karachi's Alfalah Town, police said on Tuesday.

They said the girl has been missing for the last three days. There has been no clue to her

### Electricity shortfall widens to 7,100MW

ISLAMABAD: The electricity shortfall in Pakistan has been recorded at 7,100 megawatts (MW) as the country is producing over 14,400MW including 11,500MW from IPPs against 21,500MW demand, it reported on Thursday.

According to sources in the Power Division, hydel power plants were generating

plants were generating 900MW while Tarbela Dam is only generating 600MW elec-tricity as T3 and T4 projects are under construction at the dam site and no water storage is being processed for power

generation.

Terbela Dam is empty for the last two months and similarly Mangla Dam is also almost having no water storage.

The public thermal power plants capacity if 4,000MW but multiple public power are closed due to technical faults and shortage of fuel, and only 2,000MW electricity is being produced. produced.

The private power plants are closed due to unavailability of the furnace oil, coal and LNG. Sources of power division claimed that the technical fault in the distribution companies are wasting the 2,000MW causing Rs3 billion loss to the animal exchequer.

Due to the above situation,

the power division has been practicing 10-hour unan-nounced load shedding and 18 hours load shedding in the areas with more line losses in comparison to other areas.INP

#### Four TTP terrorists gunned down in Bannu crossfire

PESHAWAR: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and Police on Thursday said that they have gunned down four terrorists in a crossfire in Bannu area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The security personnel recov-ered arms and ammunition from

their procession.

According to a spokesperson of the CTD, the terrorists were killed during an operation in Bannu.

The CTD spokesperson said that they were involved in terrorist activities, target killings, explo-sions and attacks on security

The dead terrorists include Noor Muhammad a wanted terrorist with Rs1.5m bounty on his head. The bodies were shifted to the

had killed at least five terrorists during an encounter in the Bannu.



DADU: A view of village women as they busy in collecting burnt stuff from their burnt damaged house at incident areas, at least nine children including a woman lost their life in a fire that erupted in Dadu village, Freedabad Goht .

#### Good governance to make PR a profitable entity: WealthPK

I S L A M A B A D : Pakistan Railways (PR) is one of the country's most discussed state-owned enterprises (SOEs) for experiencing repeated annual losses running into billions of rupees, and billions of rupees, and widespread dissatisfaction with its performance.

However, as the most economical mode of transportation of goods and commuting, it has been the central point of Pakistan's industrial and commercial development, a symbol of national unity, and a vehicle of socio-political inte-gration. The geographical outlines of Pakistan make it an excellent and cheap-est mode of transportation for long-distance freight

movement. Talking to WealthPk Dr. Karim Khan, Associate Professor of Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), said, last decades, PR has not been on track because of multi-faceted challenges of poor interference, corruption,

inadequate human capital, poor infrastructure, and huge deficits which are preventing it from becoming a well-functioning and optimally utilized organization.

Moreover, running passenger trains on uneco-nomical routes, limited capacity to run freight trains, lack of commercial exploitation of railways land, heavy pension liabil-ities, and federalism are also some of the factors pulling the PR downward. Besides, the growing share of investment in road infrastructure and continued low investment in the railway sector have hurt the financial position of Pakistan Railways overall,

he added. Talking to WealthPK, Saddam Hussein, Research Economist at PIDE, said, "The CPEC early harvest plan of over-hauling the 1,687 kilome-tre Main Line 1 railway (ML-1) between Karachi and Peshawar and a simi-lar major upgrade of 1,254 kilometre ML-2 railway between Kotri in Sindh and Attock in northern between

Punjab province via the cities of Larkana and D G

Khan are mega projects', which cover the key arter-ies of the country. Besides medium-term plans for ML-3 will also include construction of a 560 kilo railway line Bostan near Quetta to Kotla Jam in Bhakkat District near the city of DI Khan, which will also provide access to southern Afghanistan. This railway route will pass through Quetta and Zhob terminating at Kotla Jam and is expected to be constructed by 2025". Lastly, under the umbrella of CPEC, Havelian to Khunjerab, a new railway link of 682 kilometres, will also play a pivotal role in the railway sector. The project is expected to be completed by 2030. So, the stage is pretty much ready to take a big leap forward. Though it would be naive

#### Ahsan Iqbal unhappy at 'sluggish progress' on **CPEC** projects

ISLAMABAD: Iqbal chaired a high-level making meeting after taking the charge of his ministry. The meeting was attended by top official of the planning division, according to a press release by the Press

The minister was briefed about the progress on various projects under the CPEC. "How pathetic the delay on CPEC projects which is the potential game changer for the regions," said Iqbal while directing the officials to hold regular meeting to review the progress. He expressed displeasure on the lack of progress on

industrial zones of Port Qasim, Islamabad and Mirpur The minister noted that further delay in projects will not be acceptable while directed the officials to ensure

the expedite the work.

Iqbal directed all Joint Working Groups to pursue their sector-specific projects and initiate work on them

The SEZs were to be ready by 2020 but unfortunately, in last four years, there has been zero progress on SEZs, said the minister. He has directed the officials to work on removing the bottlenecks that are hampering the pace of work on these projects, especially the infra-structure and energy projects. INP

#### LHC dismisses petition challenging legitimacy of **Buzdar's resignation**

Thursday dismissed the writ petition challenging the resignation of former Punjab chief minister Sardar

The petition was filed through Advocate Nadeem Sarwar in which petitioner M Tanveer argued that former governor Muhammad Sarwar had violated the

gal' because he had accepted the resignation in which he had not been addressed.

During today's proceedings, LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti asked the petitioner's counsel if he was an aggrieved party?

nation should be in handwriting, so if there is a chief minister who does not know how to write and if he comes with a typed resignation then what would you

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on

Constitution by accepting the resignation.

On Wednesday, Tanveer's counsel had requested the court to declare the action of the former governor 'ille-

say about the acceptance of the resignation?INP

### "I am representing a public's large interest case," the counsel responded, adding that the former CM Buzdar's resignation is illegal as he had not addressed the Punjab governor. To this, CJ Bhatti further grilled Advocate Nadeem. He said that the Constitution also stated that the resig-

#### PRGMEA asks new govt to initiate lobbying for GSP Plus continuity Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP) plus

status for Pakistan from

the European Union well

exports growth, as the end of duty-free facility would

to consider these projects as a nosh.INP

ISLAMABAD: The akistan Readymade Pakistan Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) on Thursday felicitated newly-elected Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Commerce & Textile Minister Naveed Qamar, suggesting new government to initiate lobbying for continuity of GSP Plus, besides implementing new Textile and Apparel Policy in its true spirit through revival of Pakistan Export Export

Promotion Board. PRGMEA Coordinator Ijaz Khokhar and regional chairman Sheikh Luqman Amin observed that the largest

value-added exporters' b body, representing the majority of SMEs in the country, wel-comes the new PM and appreciates his selection of Naveed Qamar to assign him the vital min-istry of Commerce & Textile Sheikh Luqman Amin observed that Naveed Qamar's appointment would help boost country's exports, espe-cially of the value-added textile, while all the macro and micro issues of the trade and commerce would be addressed.

the renewal

damage the exports growth volume by at least \$3 billion annually. He made an appeal to the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Commerce Minister Shehbaz Naveed Qamar to get per-sonally involved in this issue of national importance, giving directives to all stakeholders, including foreign, finance, com-merce and industries min-Ijaz Khokhar suggested the new government to initiate work on lobbying federal level istries at while environment

human rights, women development and labour departments at provincial level, besides taking the value-added apparel secvalue-aduced apparer sector exporters onboard to devise a strategy to influence the EU countries for renewal of the GSP Plus status for Pakistan. "Though the present status will expire in Dec 2023, but Pakistan can face its but Pakistan can face its destructive effects from next year because the international buyers will start searching for other regional suppliers for placing new orders, lead-

ing to export loss of around \$3 billion for Pakistan," he warned.

Ijaz Khokhar observed

that extension in the European Union's status has played a great role in enhancing Pakistan's enhancing Pakistan's exports. With a view to sustain the employment opportunities in the country as well as boosting for-eign exchange reserves further the government will have to act immedi-ately to push the EU countries for extension of GSP Plus facility to Pakistan for another 10 years, from Jan 2024 to Dec 2033.

Interaction and communication with ambassadors of the EU bloc and other European countries should have to be initiated in this regard, he said, underlining.INP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan Tarek Mohamed Dahroug called on Naval Chief Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi at Naval headquarters.

#### China to bring its potato technology to Pakistan: WealthPK

I S L A M A B A D: Modern Chinese technol-ogy and high-quality seeds will be used in Pakistan to boost potato output and help the coun-try's potatoes gain a try's potatoes gain a foothold in the Chinese market. reports WealthPK.

Badaruz Zaman Commercial Counsellor of Pakistan's embassy in Beijing, said Pakistan is one of the world's largest potato growers. "The local consumption is esti-mated to be between 4 and 5 million tonnes. We will have a decent excess quantity to export to other countries. We've also countries. We've also brought the matter up with the Chinese authorities and are integrating Chinese machinery into several processing facto-ries in Pakistan, Fried and well-preserved shelved potatoes are highly expensive compared to farm potatoes; therefore, we need to enhance the entire process," Zaman said in a recent meeting.

Waqas Dogar, a scientist at the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC), told

WealthPK that in terms of

#### into the modern age of plant breeding.INP bringing the potato crop CANCELLATION OF TENDERS

The Tender Notice for Solarizztion of Existing Water Supply scheme of PHE Phase-II published in daily newspaper vide PRQ No.3170.08-04-2022 on 9th April 20222 (TS No. 21220443733) is hereby cancelled due to cancellation of E-Bidding notified by the competent authority and complaints of various bidders regarding technical problems in online filling of tenders on B-PPRA Web

> Superintending Engineer/Project Director Solarization of existing WSSs Phase-II

PRQ NO. 3339.21-04-2022 PHE Department Quetta CORRIGENDUN

The tender were invited on 25-04-2022 vide PRQ NO: 3029 & 3238, 13-04-2022 TS:21220332733 E.(CIVIL WORK.

TS:21220333453 E.( S & LAYING JOINTING OF HDPE PIPE. 4- TS:21220333273 E.(S&INSTALLATION OF SOLAR SYSTEM for various Water Supply Schemes District Gwadar have been canceled due to lake of internet and failure to uploading bidding documents on B-PPRA website shall amount to Mis- procurement. Rule 27(4): uncompleted process of E-Tendering

PRQ NO.3341.21-04-2022



HYDERABAD: Convener Muttahida Qumi Movement Pakistan Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui addressing KKF.

#### Govt claims Rs980m spent on Imran Khan's back-and-forth air travel from PM House to Bani Gala

Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb claimed on Thursday that Rs980 million were spent on former prime minister Imran Khan's back-and-forth travel from the Prime Minister House to his private residence in Bani Gala via helicopter during his time in office.

The newly appointed minister made the claim while addressing a press conference in Islamabad where she lambasted the PTI chairman for paying a fraction of the actual price to retain gifts from the Toshakhana. Shortly after the presser, the minister released an official breakdown of the helicopter expenses allegedly

incurred by Imran.

According to the detailed breakdown of expenses, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, the total expenditure from June 2018 to March 2022 was Rs984m — Rs512m for maintenance and Rs472m for "expen-

The helicopter was used for a total of 2,723 flying hours from August 2018 to March 2022 with an average cost of Rs275,000 per hour.

Total flying hours and expenditure during flight per year:

During her press conference, the information minister called on Khan to provide the money trail for the gifts retained from the Toshakhana and accused him of retaining a watch, a pair of cufflinks and a ring at an even lower price than what was being claimed. "Where is the money trail for the gifts you (Imran) retained? Give the money trail for the Rs30 million you paid in one installment to retain these three things," she said.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi being presented the Annual Report-2021 by Federal Tax Ombudsman, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

#### LHC directs AG to get instructions from Punjab governor on Friday

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court on Thursday ordered the advocate general to get instructions from the

general to get instructions from the Punjab governor and present the report to the court on Friday (today) while dismissing petitioner's plea to continue hearing of the Hamza Shehbaz's oath taking case.

LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti was hearing Punjab Chief Minister-elect Hamza's case. The court ordered the advocate general to seek instructions from Punjab Governor Umar Sarfraz Cheema who refused to take oath from Chief Minister-elect Hamza Shehbaz on the grounds that his election was disputed grounds that his election was disputed as per the report of Punjab assembly secretariat. The court directed the AG

to present report on Friday.

But the petitioner's lawyer Ahson
Bhoon Advocate pleaded with the
court to continue hearing of the case
after 1pm as additional advocate general was already present in the court.

The chief justice was irked by the lawyer's haste and told him off by saying 'lawyers stay at home for 10 days and when they come here, they keep on insisting to decide the cases quick-

ly'.

Justice Bhatti told him that 'courts follow a system and let the courts work as per their system'. Meanwhile, the PML-Q filed an application seeking to become a party to the Hamza Shehbaz's oath taking petition.

PML-Q General Secretary Kamil Ali Agha submitted the petition.

The patition states that PML Q is

The petition states that PML-Q is also an affected party in Hamza oath-taking case. It says that ruckus broke out in the Punjab Assembly during the election of chief minister. Let the PML-Q become party to the case, the petition adds.INP

#### Pakistan reports 103 COVID-19 cases, no deaths in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported no deaths in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has risen to 1,527,589. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 30,368 on Thursday.

According to the latest figures by the National Institute of Health (NIH) 103 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours.

Punjab remains the worst-hit province in terms of deaths followed by Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.Till now 13,560 indi-viduals have lost their lives to the epidemic in Punjab, 8,101 in Sindh, 6,323 in KP, 1,023 in Islamabad, 792 in Azad Kashmir, 378 in Balochistan

Furthermore 576,677 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Sindh, 505,810 in Punjab, 219,411 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 135,165 in Islamabad, 43,306 in Azad Kashmir, 35,483 in Balochistan and 11,737 in Gilgit-

Baltistan. Pakistan has so far conducted 27,987,766 coronavirus tests and 21,904 in the last 24 hours. 1,493,870 patients have recovered in the country whereas 205 patients are in critical

condition.

The COVID-19 positivity ratio was recorded at 0.47 percent. So far, 134,009,159 people have received their first dose of coronavirus vaccine including 44,102 in last 24 hours. 120,936,554 citizens have been fully vaccinated while 98,317 received their second dose in last 24 hours.

second dose in last 24 hours. The number of total administered doses has reached to 244,920,963 with 159,016 in the last 24 hours.

#### Lawyer shot dead in Arifwala over old enmity

ARIFWALA: Rivals shot dead a 30-year-old lawyer at the doorstep of his house in a village of Arifwala over a so-called old enmity on Thursday.

A large contingent of police force reached the village and cordoned off the area for investigation. The incident was occurred in the premises of the Police Station (Saddr) in village

The body of the lawyer was shifted to Arifwala hospital. Police said that both parties had old enmity and have launched further investigation into the matter.INP

#### **Efforts underway** to finalize KP **Urban Policy**

Peshawar: "Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is ensuring best possible transit and commercial trade routes to facilitate trade with Afghanistan", this was quoted by Shahab Ali Shah, Additional Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a high-level consultative session held to discuss the draft Urban Policy for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Once approved this will be the first urban policy by any province across Pakistan. The session was organized by UK's FCDO-supported Sub-National Governance (SNG) Programme in collaboration with KP Planning & Development Department's Urban Policy & Planning Unit (UPPU).

On this occasion Mr. Shahid Mahamada Additional Governance (SNG) Programme in the Planning Unit (UPPU).

On this occasion, Mr. Shahid Mahmood, Additional Secretary, Planning & Development Department informed that this policy will pave way for inclusive opportunities for individuals, businesses, and ommunities in urban centers, leading towards social and economic

uplift while ensuring environmental sustainability.
It was discussed that Mr. Shahab Ali Shah, Additional Chief Secretary, Planning & Development Department is closely following up on the progress towards formulation and implementation of this urban policy. In line with recommendations by SNG programme, ACS has also directed that strong coordination should be maintained with other devel-opment partners who are supporting sustainable development goals at a local level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.Furthermore, Mr. Shah Mahmood, Secretary Planning & Development Department has advised that Urban Policy will be operationalized through inclusive public investments which will be part of the Annual Development Programme. During his technical presentation, Dr. Naveed Iftikhar from SNG Programme explained that rapid urbanization at an unprecedented pace is seen in Peshawar, Hazara, and Swat regions. Online

#### **Development Partners briefed on** Pakistan Single Window

ISLAMABAD:Pakistan Single Window (PSW) organized a donor's meeting at the PSW Islamabad headquarters to brief them on the implementation of the Single Window system. The meet-ing was attended by officials from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the USAID-funded Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity (PREIA), and the International Finance Corporation Corporation.

The participants were briefed on the implementation status of the Pakistan Single Window and were also given a walkthrough of the recently launched Trade Information Portal of Pakistan (TIPP). The briefing was followed by an interactive Q&A session focusing on PSW's implementa-tion strategy, financial sustainability, and future plans. The Pakistan Single Window allows parties involved in trade and transport to file standardized information and documents at a single entry point

for all import, export, and transitrelated regulatory requirements.
Around the world, bureaucratic

business and discourage exports. PSW expedites cross-border trade. enabling businesses to expand their operations, and the govern-ment to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy. The single window is a key trade facilitation tool that helps countries improve efficiencies in customs and regulatory clearances, increase the speed at which goods can move, and reduce the overall cost of trade. The CEO of PSW Mr. Aftab Haider thanked the donor commu-

nity for their significant support to PSW and said, "PSW has tremendously benefitted from multi-donor support and collaboration who have provided technical and financial assistance on various components of the PSW. Strong program management by the PSW team has approach that the PSW team has ensured that donor support to PSW development and implementation remains.INP

#### **UN Chinese language Day** marked in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: In connection with commemoration of The UN Chinese Language Day observed on 20th April annually, celebrations are solemnized with zeal and zest in Pakistan, Gwadar, Programment on the control of the contro Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday

On the occasion, Chinese Acting Consul General in Lahore Peng Zhengwu said that The UN Chinese Language Day is to pay tribute to Cangjie, who is believed to be the inventor of the Chinese characters about 5,000 years ago. "Characters and languages are the symbols of civilization.

With the growing demands of communication between peoples, Chinese language has been spread to a world-wide range,'

he added. In Pakistan, he said, there are several Confucius Institutes in local universities offering local universities offering Chinese language teaching and certification. "Moreover, lots of local schools, such as Atchison College, Grammar School and Lahore American School have Chinese language courses.

There are more and more peo-ple in Pakistan taking Chinese language as the key to the life and work of the coming era. With the peaceful and dynamic development of China, they believe, those who can master Chinese well will share the benefits of a stronger China and become the leaders of future generation," he explained. He further mentioned that

some Pakistani people are famous for their fluent Chinese and good way of teaching.
"There are numerous Chinese courses taught in Urdu on line as well. Institute of

International and Chinese universities offer hundreds of scholarships to Pakistan students every year, which facili-tate them to learn Chinese language in local society. Chinese companies prefer to recruit Chinese-speaking.INP

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Balochistan Awami Party led by Khalid Hussain Magsi

and Jam Kamal Khan called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Aurangzeb said Imran's income records with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) did not reflect that he was in possession of the money he paid to retain the gifts.

Reiterating her demand for a money trail, she said that it was no longer a matter of Imran's "personal choice". "For 40 years, you asked for others to provide records and receipts of dead parents and deceased [relatives]. Now, Imran Khan sahab you will have to give receipts."

Established in 1974, Tosha-khana is a department under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division and stores precious gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats and officials by heads of other governments, states and foreign dignitaries as a goodwill gesture.

It has valuables ranging from bulletproof cars, gold-plated souvenirs, expensive paintings to watches, ornaments, rugs and swords.

It has valuables ranging from bulletproof cars, gold-plated souvenirs, expensive paintings to watches, ornaments, rugs and swords.

Last week, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had accused Imran of selling expensive gifts received from foreign states, including a wristwatch by Saudi Arabia, in Dubai. PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry had downplayed the matter, saying that "selling one's own assets (after purchasing them from Toshakhana) is not a crime".

Imran had also addressed the topic in an interaction with journalists on Monday, saying that he had bought a gift from a foreign president at 50 per cent of its price.

The information minister pushed back against the claim in her press conference today, saying that a watch, a pair of cufflinks and a ring were retained at 20pc of their original price instead of 50pc.INP

### Govt suggested to generate addition 26b via 30% increase in FED on tobacco products

ISLAMABAD: The Anti-Tobacco Activists have suggested the new government to generate additional 26 billion rupees by increasing Federal Excise Duty (FED) on Tobacco Products by 30% that can be used for human development.

The suggestion was put forward by Anti-Tobacco Activists during a discussion organized by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) on saving youth from tobac-co hazards through sustainable tobacco control policies in Pakistan at a local hotel, Islamabad

policies in Pakistan at a local hotel, Islamabad on Thursday.

Program Manager, SPARC, Mr. Khalil Ahmed Dogar shared that due to affordability and easy availability, the number of smokers has reached up to 29 million, including 1200 children who initiate smoking daily and 170,000 people die yearly due to tobacco consumption.

He further added that the use of tobacco causes an economic burden of 615 billion which is 1.6% of Pakistan's GDP contrary to the revenue generated from the tobacco industry (120 billion

generated from the tobacco industry (120 billion in 2019) is approximately just 20 percent of smoking's total cost. This situation calls for immediate implementation of the World Health Organization's recommendation of a 30% increased tax on tobacco products. The increase in Tobacco Tax will generate revenue of approximately 26 billion.

#### PM urges Sindh govt to implement Ramazan relief package

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday urged the provincial government of Sindh to ensure the implementation of a relief package during Ramazan for the facilitation of the common man.

In a meeting with Chief

In a meeting with Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, he said providing relief to the people bur-dened with the challenges

of inflation was a top pri-ority of the government. PM Sharif said the fed-eral and provincial gov-ernments needed to work together with an aim to extend relief to the general public. He also briefed the

prime minister on admin-istrative matters of Sindh. The meeting also dis-cussed the current politi-cal situation in the coun-try. INP

#### PM, JUI-F Chief discuss overall political situation

ISLAMABAD: Head of JUI-F Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on

Thursday.
They discussed over-all political situation of

the country.
The JUI-F chief expressed concern over the economic statistics of last four years pre-sented in the first cabinet meeting. He, howev-er, welcomed the new cabinet's commitment to take the country out of this difficult situation and put it on the path of progress and prosperity. Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah and Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique were also present on the occasion, INP

#### PTI Lahore rally: Punjab govt suspends Orange Line, Metro bus services

LAHORE Government of Punjab took serious steps to prevent any mishaps over the security con-cerns after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Inaf (PTI) Tehreek-e-Inaf (PTI)
Chairman Imran Khan
scheduled his power
show in Lahore on Thursday.
According to details.

the Government has decided to temporarily suspend the Metro bus service and Orange Line train service before the PTI power show.

The metro and orange line services will be completely closed at 4 o'clock today and the mass transit.INP

### rigarettes – a significant step to protect Pakistani youth. For decades, tobacco companies have used strategies like youth-oriented marketing to lure young people into a lifetime of addiction. We must not allow our youth to face this fate, he added. INP Maryam Nawaz wants her passport back to travel to London

price sensitive.

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz has filed a plea before the Lahore High Court (LHC) to get back her passport for traveling to London to visit her ailing father Nawaz Sharif besides also performing Umrah in

In her plea, Maryam Nawaz said that she was arrested by NAB in 2019 in Chaudhry Sugar Mills case and later the LHC approved her bail plea and in return she submitted her passport to the

The PML-N leader said that she want-ed to travel to London to visit her ailing father however she could not travel owing to absence of her passport. The court should issue directives to

return passport of the applicant and allow her to travel to London, the plea said, Maryam Nawaz further added that she also wanted to perform Umrah dur-

Dr. Ziauddin Islam, Country lead of tobacco control Pakistan for Vital Strategies, said that Pakistan's youth consists of 64% of the population, which is an easy target for the Tobacco Industry. The industry considers adolescents as replacement smokers. In Pakistan, cigarettes are available at some of the cheapest rates in the region which grants easy access to youth. The increased price of tobacco will make them unaffordable for youth because youngsters are more price sensitive.

Mr. Shariq Mahmood Khan, CEO of Chromatic Trust added that taxes are the most

cost-effective tobacco control measure. He requested to the new govt. to increase tobacco taxes on tobacco products to reduce consumption and generate additional income.

Ch. Sanaullah Ghuman, General Secretary, Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH), said that there is a high prevalence of smoking among youth. The new govt should strictly comply with the laws that ban the advertising, promotion and sponsorship of all tobacco products.

motion, and sponsorship of all tobacco products;

increases the size of warning labels required on

ing the month of Ramazan.

The court has fixed hearing into the PML-N vice president's plea today. This is not the first time that Maryam Nawaz is not the first time that Maryam Nawaz has approached the court for seeking return of her passport. In 2019, the PML-N stalwart Maryam Nawaz in her plea, has requested the court to pass orders for the return of her passport. "My father is seriously ill, want to fly to London to look after him", the plea states. The court then directed NAB to submit response by December 24. The PML-N leader said that she wanted to travel to London to visit her ailing father.

travel to London to visit her ailing father however she could not travel owing to

absence of her passport.

The court should issue directives to return passport of the applicant and allow her to travel to London, the plea said, Maryam Nawaz further added that she also wanted to perform Umrah dur-ing the month of Ramazan.INP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Balochistan National Party Sardar Akhtar Mengal

#### ITTMS to help develop Pakistan into a regional transit trade hub: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has said that the Integrated Transit Trade Management System (ITTMS) project has been initiated under the vision of the Pakistan government to develop trade and transit network that traverses South Asia to connect Central Asian coun-

Asia to connect Central Asian countries to Southeast Asia.

According to a working paper of the FBR, a copy of which is available with WealthPK, the primary objective of the project is to address all those inadequacies that are hampering full capitalisation of the transit trade potential of Pakistan by incorporating improved and integrated process improved and integrated process, using information and communica-tion technologies (ICT)-backbone, in order to enhance trade facilitation in international supply chain.

After the smooth implementation of the project, it will provide tangible outcomes to boost transit trade, and promote ease of doing business.

The project will digitise non-intru-

sive scanning and entry/exit of cargo traffic, and also the passengers profil-ing in compliance with Customs-

Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT), Convention on International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Carnets of TIR C Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention), and Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) and other regimes. It will help in digital end-to-end tracking of containerised cargo on the whole supply chain through geo-fencing to reduce enroute pilferage of goods, thus ensuring cargo security and national revenue.

age of goods, thus ensuring cargo security and national revenue.

The project will integrate Web-Based One Customs (WeBOC) system with Pakistan Single Window (PSW) portal for real time data sharing with concerned stakeholders. It will provide electronic data interchange (EDI) with regional economies/trading partners and institutional development for port govertutional development for port gover-nance through Pakistan Land Port Authority (PLPA) The sectoral objective of the project is to enhance ease of doing business that records time and cost associated with the logistical process of exporting and importing goods. The key performance indicators (KPIs) .INP

#### SC dismisses customs appeal against Czech model in drug case

ISLAMABAD: A Supreme Court bench on Wednesday dismissed the Customs appeal in drug smuggling case against Czech model Tereza

Hluskova after summary hearing.
"Did the customs had sent the samples of heroin recovered from the Justice Ijazul Ahsan questioned while hearing the case. "The trial court had declared dispatch of the samples lawful," Customs lawyer replied. "The accused destined to fly out to Czech Republic on April 23," the lawyer further said. further said.

The name of the accused can be added to the 'stop list' if the case have substantial grounds," Justice Ahsan remarked.

The apex court bench upheld the high court's acquittal decision of Czech model Tereza Hluskova.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan had yesterday stopped Hluskova from travelling abroad in drug smuggling

The Czech national was sentenced to eight years and eight months in jail by a sessions court in April 2019. She was arrested at Lahore airport for attempting to smuggle heroin from Pakistan to Abu Dhabi on January 10,

The high court acquitted her last year in November and was released from prison the same month.

Customs counsel yesterday stated before the court that Tereza Hluskova was sentenced to eight years in prison

by the trial court for smuggling drugs and was later on released by the Lahore High Court (LHC). The counsel pleaded the court to stop Hluskova from going abroad as she had booked her flight for April 23

A two-judge bench of the high court, headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi, had allowed Hluskova's appeal against the trial court's ver-

appeal against the trial court's ver-dict, acquitting her in the case. Earlier, the Czech woman had told investigators that she had come to Pakistan to work as a model but someone slid narcotics into her lug-gage. According to a case registered against her, 8.5 kilogramme of heroin was seized from her possession INP was seized from her possession.INP