

# QUETTA VOICE

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Thursday 19  
May ,2022

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## Thieves, murderers, drug peddlers imposed on Pakistan: Imran



## Dialogue and not guns solution to the differences: Ahsan Iqbal

## No confidence motion submitted against CM Balochistan Quddus Bizenjo

Syed Ali Shah  
Manan Mandokhail

QUETTA: No-confidence motion was submitted against Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo on Wednesday. Former Chief Minister, Jam Kamal Khan, parliamentary leaders of Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI), Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, Asghar Khan Achakzai, the parliamentary leader Awami National Party (ANP), Saleem Khan Khosa and others were present on the occasion. "We are fed up with this Chief Minister", Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, the parliamentary leader of PTI in Balochistan told reporters. Over a dozen of lawmakers from the ruling BAP, PTI, and ANP had signed the no-confidence motion against Chief Minister Mir Quddus Bizenjo. Lawmakers lashed out at CM Bizenjo. They lashed out at the CM of



Balochistan for what they called his anti-masses policies in the province. The movers of the no-trust motion asserted that the CM and his team have ruined the governance and stopped work on ongoing development projects. "We do not want to be part of this destruction, therefore, we brought this no-confidence motion", Jam Kamal Khan said. He said the CM had no capacity to address the issues faced by the people of Balochistan. The incumbent CM, Mir Quddus Bizenjo had played a key role in the

removal of Jam Kamal Khan as the CM last year in October through a vote of no confidence. CM Bizenjo was the speaker of the Balochistan Assembly at that time. "We don't want to disrupt the system, but, this government is destruction", Asghar Khan Achakzai "We don't want to disrupt the system, but, this government is destruction", Asghar Khan Achakzai, the parliamentary leader of ANP said. Mr. Achakzai strongly criticized the CM and his cabinet ministers for what he called ignoring the pressing issues, the people of Balochistan have been facing. "They have no time to visit Pir Koh and Dera Bugti", the ANP leader said. There was no lawmaker from the mainstream opposition parties including the Jamiat ul Ulema e Islam (JUI) and Balochistan National Party (Mengal) during the submission of the no-confidence motion against CM Balochistan.



ISLAMABAD: Representatives of Polio Oversight Board led by Dr. Christopher Elias called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## CM Bizenjo sacks Tariq Magsi, Khilji, Bazai others after no confidence motion

Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo has sacked provincial ministers, parliamentary secretaries and advisers who had signed a no-confidence motion against him. The CM has sacked Nawabzada Tariq Magsi, Mobeen Khilji, Mir Niamatullah Zehri, Mitha Khan Kakar, Malik Naeem Bazai and Shahina Kakar, an official handout issued on Wednesday night said. However, Nawabzada



Tariq Magsi, the provincial minister from the ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) had resigned prior to the official handout.

"Morally, I could not be part of the cabinet after signing the no-confidence motion", Mr. Magsi told Quetta Voice via tele-

phone. The CM has issued an advisory in this regard. The Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) will shortly issue a notification regarding the termination of the provincial ministers, parliamentary secretaries and advisers, the statement concluded. The CM has taken this step in the aftermath of a no-confidence motion against him by the former Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan, Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, Asghar Khan Achakzai and others.

## Accused convicted to 7 years RI in a child rape case in Quetta

Syed Ali Shah

A court in Quetta convicted an accused to seven-year rigorous imprisonment in a child rape case on Tuesday. District and Session Judge Quetta, Dawood Khan Nasar convicted the accused Ramazan alias Maghal to seven-year RI and a fine of Rs 1,00,000 for subjecting a six-year-old minor child to sexual abuse. According to the prosecution, the accused had subjected the minor to sexual abuse on June 26, 2021, in Killi Char Gul Kuchlak. Police had registered a case against the accused on an application of the victim's parents. Police had submitted challan in the court and the arguments were completed by lawyers the other



day. The court had reserved the judgment. Announcing the judgment, Judge Dawood Khan Nasar said that the accused had to spend an additional one and half years in the case of non-payment of the fine amount. Police shifted the accused to the district jail in Quetta after the judge announced the judgment.

## Dollar busts previous record, rises past Rs200 in open market

ISLAMABAD: The US dollar continued its rising streak against the rupee on Wednesday as the greenback reached an all-time high of Rs200 in the open market.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the greenback gained Rs1.68 in the interbank market from the previous day's close of Rs196.50 and climbed to Rs197.66 around 11:26am.

The forex dealers said that US dollar gained Rs 2 in the intraday trading in the open market to trade at over Rs200.

When the PM Shehbaz Sharif-led coalition government took over on April 11, the dollar was valued at Rs182.3. Since then, the rupee has lost Rs11.4 or 6.2 per cent of its value. INP

## Zardari visits UAE embassy to offer condolences

ISLAMABAD: Former President Asif Ali Zardari visited the embassy of UAE in Pakistan.

The former president expressed his condolences on the demise of the late UAE President, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

President Zardari said that Sheikh Khalifa was a sincere friend of Pakistan. He also recorded his impressions. INP

## Announce elections or prepare for revolution, warns Sheikh Rasheed

GUJRANWALA: AML Chief Sheikh Rasheed has demanded to the government to announce fresh elections before PTI's Azaadi March or be ready for a 'revolution'.

The Awami Muslim League (AML) head Sheikh Rasheed addressed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's public gathering in Gujranwala and demanded the government to announce new elections immediately.

The government should get ready to face a 'revolution' if they do not announce elections before the Azaadi March.

The former Interior Minister alleged the incumbent government of using their influence to end corruption cases and said that they will not let them do it.

Sheikh mocked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and said that he develops backache every time he has to appear in a court hearing.

He took to JUI-F leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman and said that his son, who has not even constructed a bathroom, has been made the communication minister.

The AML head Sheikh Rasheed said that the country is going to default soon as the dollar has crossed Rs200. INP

## Thieves, murderers, drug peddlers imposed on Pakistan: Imran

GUJRANWALA: Addressing the Gujranwala public gathering, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan said on Wednesday that the notorious thieves, murderers and drug peddlers have been imposed on Pakistan by the 'conspirators'. Imran Khan said that Pakistanis will have to give a clear message to the 'conspirators' that they are an independent nation. He thanked Gujranwala citizens for attending the PTI public gathering in a huge number and said that the city is ready to march toward Islamabad on his call. "We are not playing a political game but a revolution is about to come. The nation has stood against the powerful mafia and dacoits who used to exploit people through their corrupt system. We will fight and give a

humiliating defeat to these mafias and dacoits." "An elected government was toppled by uniting notorious dacoits of the country through a conspiracy hatched by the United States (US). There is always a conspiracy before the interference. They think that sweets will be distributed when a prime minister is removed. The nation took to the streets after their prime minister was ousted by the conspiracy." The former premier said that he is calling the nationals to Islamabad for foiling the alleged US conspiracy. He criticised an elected government that was removed was collecting achievements on the economic front with a record increase in exports. He thanked overseas Pakistanis for sending over \$31 billion in remittances, whereas, the highest revenue collection. INP

## Pakistan expects more Chinese investment in renewable energy: Khaqan Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that China plays an important role in Pakistan's energy production and the Pakistani government expects China to invest more, especially in the country's renewable energy sector.

Mr. Abbasi also expects that Chinese companies will bring solar photovoltaic technology to Pakistan. In an exclusive interview with Gwadar Pro, Shahid Khan Abbasi said, "China has a large role in Pakistan's energy production today", adding, "There are almost 4000 MW coal based power plants that generate the most efficient power in Pakistan." Talking about future investment in the country's power and energy sector, Mr. Abbasi expects that China will

"invest further" in Pakistan, especially in renewable energy. "So, we hope that in the future we will see more Chinese investment," he said.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, who in the past also served as the country's Energy Minister, said that Chinese companies are currently constructing Diamer Basha Dam, Mohmand Dam, and Dasu hydropower. Their (Chinese) role is growing which is "vital for Pakistan", he told Gwadar Pro.

According to Mr. Abbasi, in today's energy market when the prices of fossil fuels have gone up, "solar is very critical to Pakistan's need today", adding, "I am thinking China has the most experience in solar, they will come to Pakistan and help the country get more sustainable energy." INP

## Directory Retirement issue comes under discussion during Senate Body meeting

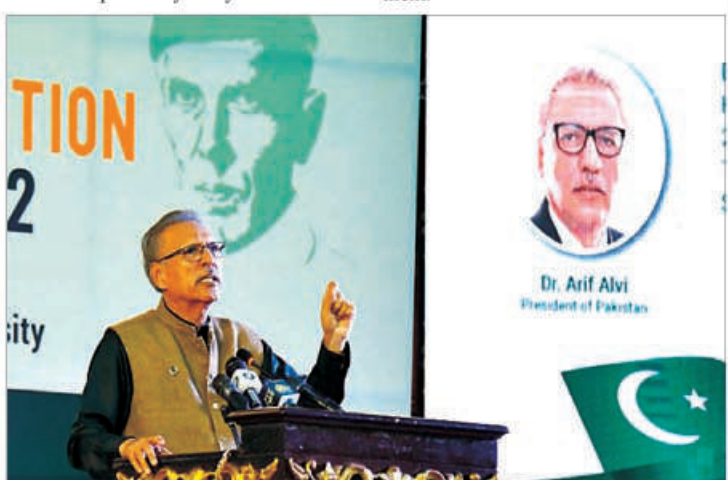
ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat, Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmad chaired the meeting of the Senate Body held at Parliament House on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by Senators Saadia Abbasi, Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee, Kamal Ali Agha, Khalida Ateeb and Naseebullah Bazai. Secretary Establishment Division, Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary Establishment Division also participated.

At the onset, in light of the direction of the committee, Joint Secretary Establishment Division apprised the Committee regarding progress pertaining to a unanimous decision by the Committee regarding proceedings of the Central Selection Board (CSB) and High Power Board (HPB). The Secretary Establishment Division said that insight of the parliamentarians has also been taken at the request of the Prime Minister regarding the proceedings of CSB and HPB for which names have been received.

Senator Sadia Abbasi observed that there were objections to the method of promotion. The Prime Minister should review the procedure because the general impression was not right and straight. The Chairman Committee asserted that over time things will be brought to the notice of the Prime Minister and hoped that it would be implemented as well. He remarked that Directory Retirement has become the story of the past. The Cabinet has taken action on the matter of Directory Retirement for which the work of this committee and its members must be appreciated.

Sharing details related to the matter, the Chairman Committee underlined that the report of the Sub-Committee on the issue of Directory Retirement was sent to the prime minister and forwarded to the Cabinet for required actions. INP



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Addressing The National Youth Convention 2022, organized by the Pakistan Institute of Conflict and Security Studies.

## Dialogue and not guns solution to the differences: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said that dialogue and guns is only solution to differences. He said that scientific research is needed to get rid of terrorism and extremism.

While addressing a two-day International Islamic Conference on Peace organized by the Islamic Research Institute (IRI) of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), he said that the widespread access to social media has allowed extremist elements to propagate negative attitudes. He said wars are now fought on a hybrid level.

Ahsan Iqbal said that the main weapon of hybrid war is propaganda of hatred. He said that few elements were attempting to pollute the minds of the people by disseminating lies. He stressed upon the need of the establishment of institutions to curb the uncertainty caused by negative elements.

Talking about the issues of peaceful coexistence in India, he said that the identity of Muslims and Islamic values were at stake in India as Indian government was supporting prejudice against Muslims. He also said that in this globalized era, a conflict or an act of hatred, engulfs the whole world. He opined that effects of the conflict are global, as exemplified by the Russia-Ukraine war. He said that peace and justice are the guarantors of social development and prosperity. The Federal Minister for Planning said that without empathy it is not possible to resolve conflicts and extremism. He said that misguided people have hijacked the narrative of Islam, in order to protect the identity of the Islamic world we have to formulate our own narratives. Ahsan Iqbal further said that humanity is suffering from extremism all over the world. Appreciating the role of Islamic University in promoting peace, he said that we are working together with Islamic University for the promotion of peace. Ahsan Iqbal said that the religion of Islam has immense sanctity of human life. INP

## Number of cholera patients rises to 2640 in Dera Bugti

Syed Ali Shah, Faiq Ali Bugti

The number of cholera patients reached 2,640 in Balochistan's Dera Bugti district on Wednesday. "Women and children are also among the patients", Dr. Azam Bugti, the District Health Officer (DHO) Dera Bugti told Quetta Voice via telephone.

The patients were admitted to government-run hospitals in the Pir Koh and other parts of the district. The Balochistan government has already declared an emergency to cope with the situation. Azam Bugti has however said that the cholera outbreak has caused six deaths in the district.

Although, independent sources and political figures the number at 24 in the aftermath of the cholera outbreak in the Dera Bugti district. "Cholera has caused 24 deaths, we have all the details", Senator Sarfaraz Bugti of the ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) said.

Sarfaraz Bugti calls for a permanent solution to the water scarcity issue



Mr. Bugti urged the provincial and federal governments to evolve a strategy to address the water scarcity issue on a permanent basis. Besides Pir Koh, the water shortage issue exists in other areas of Dera Bugti, Mr. Bugti said.

Residents of the area have lashed out at the provincial and federal governments for their failure to provide clean drinking water to the people of Dera Bugti. "We provided a gas facility to the entire country and rulers even failed to provide drinking water", Muhammad Bakhsh Bugti, an elder of the area said.

PHE, FC, Administration providing water to Pir Koh The Public Health Engineering (PHE), Frontier Corps (FC), and civil administration have been providing clean drinking water to residents of the Pir Koh since the outbreak of cholera. Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz Uqaili has also chaired a high-level meeting to review the relief operation and evolve a strategy to address the water scarcity issue on a permanent basis. The CS has directed PHE, Planning and Development Department and civil administration to submit recommendations regarding the solution to the water scarcity issue in the district.

## QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

## Water shortage in Balochistan

The scarcity of water poses a serious threat to human life in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. Environmentalists and experts on the water issues have warned of an alarming situation with regard to water scarcity in Quetta in near future.

The water level continues to drop with every passing day in Quetta, and most parts of Balochistan. This has sent alarm bells among the indigenous people living for centuries in towns and villages. Environmentalists warn that the shortage of water is likely to force citizens of the provincial capital to migrate.

The Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA) has failed to provide drinking water to citizens of the city. Most of the WASA-run tube wells are either not functional or provide water to officials and influentials.

People pumping water from more than 1,000 deep underground. Gone are the days, when people were pumping water through tube wells 500 feet deep from underground. Currently, it is more than 1,000 feet deep.

Private tankers are meeting the demand of more than 70 percent population of the city. Tankers owners are minting money from the people right under the nose of WASA and district administration. Per tanker is available at Rs. 2,000 to 3,000. No mechanism to check the quality of water. More importantly, none checks the quality of water. Nobody knows whether the water is contaminated or clean for drinking. Since it is a matter of human health and life, therefore, the provincial government should evolve a mechanism to check the quality of water. Set aside, the increasing rates of water tankers association. Depleting water table in Quetta, Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Kalat, Mastung, Noshki and Chaghi have forced the growers to cut their green trees. This has made a large number of people jobless as most of the people in Balochistan are financially dependent on agriculture and livestock.

Construction of delay and check dams imperative. As suggested and advised by the environmentalists, the provincial and federal governments must construct delay and check dams on a war-footing basis to maintain the depleting water table. Supreme Court has already directed the government to ensure the completion of more than 100 dams within the next three years to overcome the water crisis in Balochistan.

## Single national conundrum

By Mehr F Husain

In August 2021, schools across Pakistan reopened their doors to millions of children who had been at home for almost 18 months. The excitement of returning to schools, for many a safe space, was quickly marred with the announcement of the Single National Curriculum.

Since August last year, there has been nothing to prove that this is a national policy – not that it matters; the seat of power, Punjab, is always the goal. And as for the curriculum itself, it quickly emerged the new offering was more of a conundrum. And remains so to date.

The confusion surrounding its implementation did not help generate support for it. Why did some private and even state schools refuse to adopt it? And on what basis was a five-year extension for 'consideration' granted to the madrassas?

Then came the content of the SNC-approved books. To their credit, the private-sector schools gave input but the Punjab Textbook Board had to add in their two cents not so much as academics but as policing to see if the content toed the party (read: religious) line. Books that were made for primary schoolchildren from years one to five were riddled with ludicrous content, clearly

ostracised minorities and portrayed regressive gender roles while digital literacy consisted of mere definitions with a digital citizen being defined as one who uses Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. There was zero skill development which could at least offer some foundation for further development at higher education level; zero emphasis on proper translations or language construction which made learning easy; from learning about world history, primary schoolchildren were now learning that being a good citizen means paying taxes.

This is not a curriculum for children aged 5 to 10. This is what the current elected officials believe in.

Despite research being offered by many including esteemed scholars such as Dr Rubina Saigol and Dr Pervaiz Hoodbhoy and many others, all of which fell on deaf ears, it was only until the matter hit the Social Media Courtroom did the director of the SNC begin to engage.

Sadly the communication was a one-way series of videos which do not offer much beyond carefully constructed gloss of what the content is: on paper, it looks good but then one wonders, why the urgency when the content is so problematic and why could it not be

rolled out until all problems had been addressed? Who is gaining what from this?

A YouTube Conference by Nutshell Group did little to reassure; when your rural representative says that the SNC is designed to encourage entrepreneurship in the form of 'dukaans' in the local market, it is easy to say the SNC is anti-progress. Or when your federal minister says the SNC is to be adopted only in spirit but your provincial minister claims 'mafias' are meddling in the strict implementation in all schools, one wonders at whose mercy is these children's future? Who is calling the shots?

A Twitter Spaces conversation with the provincial minister for education which resulted in hurt feelings on his part after being asked why digital literacy was not being given priority over 'achi tarbiyat'. The minister was more concerned why wouldn't we as parents want the government to teach our children tarbiyat? One can only marvel at the confidence.

But let's take a look at the timeline of government issues and orders regarding the SNC post-August 2021. On November 10, 2021 the School Education Department of the Punjab government issued a directive consisting of religious policing. Really,

one can only marvel at the priorities when it comes to children. Religious policing over what they're wearing, gender segregation and eradication of music was being given priority over what they're learning.

On December 2, 2021 a national call via newspapers was also made by the Ministry of Education and Professional Training for textbook publishers, private school operators, individuals, companies, educationists, non-profit organisations was also made. A call was also made by the British Council for sectoral experts around curriculum development, textbook development and assessment. As per Dr Chughtai, the disastrous printing of those books was conducted by her predecessor but it begs to be asked: how did she not know any of this? At the end of the winter term, this is the call being made? Why was the SNC rolled out at all?

And now a term later, what was on offer to rectify this? A meeting with printers and publishers. To create books, not to rectify what was already out there, but for Years 6-8. This is where the horror began to set in. There is a difference between a publisher and printer. A publisher develops books, a printer prints them. In Pakistan, academic books by and large

were either from India, Singapore and Malaysia amongst other countries. These books were then either sold as foreign books or mass produced via local printing and sold in the market. Publishers developing curriculum based books are a handful, with the major one being Oxford University Press.

To ask printers or even publishers who don't have any connection with academia to set the curriculum is just unworkable. The deadline was even more ludicrous – February 2022.

On December 3, 2021 another directive issued that the SNC is a core curriculum and schools are able to add on any books they like. Books are not created overnight. A comic book requires great thought and careful consideration, these were academic books! Where were new books for primary schoolchildren to come from given how all previous books had been scrapped?

Basically, the SNC grossly undermined itself. It emerged as a great equaliser and now it claimed that it offered the 'minimum' as a core. Throughout, the following countries were touted as examples of having single national curricula – Thailand, Finland, US, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Australia, Netherlands.

## Pakistan on the precipice

By Abid Hasan

This year, India's growth rate is expected to reach 8 per cent – highest among all large countries. Its exports touched \$670 billion, and it has foreign reserves of \$630 billion. The picture is equally impressive for Bangladesh – 7 per cent growth rate, exports of \$45 billion and reserves of \$44 billion. These countries are galloping away, while Pakistan is struggling and fast approaching economic and social collapse like Sri Lanka.

Pakistan's 220 million are spiraling into a vortex as a result of: (i) economic mismanagement by all governments, out-of-control government expenditures and SOE losses, untargeted subsidies, harmful fixed exchange rate policies of the previous PML-N government, and the PTI's unwillingness to work with the opposition; and (ii) the game of thrones being played by the cabal of mostly corrupt marshals of the jungle, keepers of the laws, and evangelists of mostly half-truth narratives. If Pakistan goes over the cliff, the blame will squarely lie on its political, military, and judicial leadership and the elite class which has continued to lead an extravagant lifestyle at Pakistan's expense.

Pakistan urgently needs a political consensus on an 'economic emergency' plan, fully backed by the military and the judiciary, to avoid a complete meltdown. Painful and diffi-

cult actions are needed over the next couple of months to stop the gushing twin hemorrhages: over-spending and over-importing.

Pakistan must immediately try to restart IMF funding by presenting its economic emergency programme, which needs to be bold and credible so that the IMF as well as friendly nations enthusiastically come back to the table on Pakistan's terms. Any programme to plug the twin deficits would require major cutbacks in expenditures and imports, but must also not include any action that further increases the cost of living of urban low-income families – the millions who can ignite the tinderbox at the slightest increase in their cost of living. Once the match is lit in cities across Pakistan, neither political parties nor the military nor the judiciary can stop the flames from engulfing Pakistan – a chaos that India will support.

The economic emergency programme must have the following clear objectives over the next 12 months: 50 per cent reduction from this year's fiscal and current account deficit, by reducing fiscal deficit by Rs2 trillion and imports by \$10 billion. A significant part of this adjustment must be achieved in the first three months, to avoid an economic crisis and give credibility to the reform programme. Also, the majority of this adjustment and belt tightening must be borne

by middle- and upper-income households, to send a clear signal that this time Pakistan's elite will be bailing out Pakistan.

The reform programme must comprise the following measures. First, for the next couple of years, Pakistan must – through tax and credit policies – restrict growth of all highly import dependent industries (cars, white goods, electronics etc) producing for the domestic market. Our economic foundations are mostly quicksand. At best we can construct a one-or-two-storey building, but we insist on building a four-storey building – which comes crashing down every few years.

Second, declaring the premise of every exporting industry as tax-free bonded manufacturing, and ensuring that they get all utilities at regionally competitive prices and subsidized credit. Bangladesh has over 6000 bonded manufacturing units, which account for 90 per cent of its exports, while Pakistan has a handful.

Third, using technology, provide Rs1 trillion of targeted subsidies as digital cash directly to 30 million low-income and poor families – all families currently under BISP/Ehsaas, and those owning motorcycles. Targeted subsidy should be provided for one year, for electricity, petroleum products, essential food items (flour, edible oil, lentils, and sugar) and agriculture inputs.

Through NADRA and the vehicle registration database, owners of motorcycles and tractors can within a month be linked to a CNIC/cell phone, and subsidy directly transferred to them.

In four years, India digitally disbursed \$270 billion to 900 million people. Ehsaas's success shows that Pakistan can also implement a much larger targeted subsidy programme. Once targeted subsidies are in place, market prices of these goods must be increased dramatically, through high import taxes, so the rich not only pay for the subsidies but also contribute to increasing government revenues.

Fourth, the non-interest government expenditures must be reduced by at least Rs1 trillion through cutting waste in civil and military institutions, drastically cutting back development spending except for dams and water management, shutting down loss-making SOEs and reducing untargeted subsidies.

Fifth, additional Rs1 trillion must be raised from the energy sector by quadrupling petroleum prices, and electricity tariffs for all households using more than 1000 kwh. All Pakistanis who own multiple/luxury cars, and who run air-conditioners indiscriminately must pay through their nose. This is a sacrifice they must make to save Pakistan. The aim should be for the energy sector to become a major

source of additional funds to reduce deficit rather than grow it.

Sixth, imposition of a Debt Reduction Tax (DRT) for at least two years to raise Rs2 trillion to reduce public debt. The DRT should be imposed on: (i) all assets (vehicles, agriculture and urban real estate, and PSX shares) of individuals who own assets of more than Rs5 crores; and (ii) capital gains on real estate and shares, and profits of large companies.

In FY21, KSE-100 firms made Rs1 trillion of profits. These profits accrue almost exclusively to the rich, and hence a DRT on profits should be at least 50 per cent. The rate of the DRT for both categories should be such that at least Rs1 trillion is collected each year. This belt tightening of the rich is the need of the hour.

Seventh, suppress lending and deposit interest rates, by 4-5 per cent, for one year. Such policies are harmful over the long run, but can be pursued over the short term and would not lead to capital flight. In cases where lowering of deposits hurts low-income pensioners and widows, who live off interest earning, they can be compensated directly. This action would lower the interest expenses of the government and the private sector. The aim should be to save at least Rs500 billion a year of interest expenses on domestic public debt.

## Nuclear threats

By Mark Mubich

Threats to use nuclear weapons are as old as weapons.

Threats to use nuclear weapons may even be their main function. Increasingly belligerent statements by Putin and Russian State media during Russia's hot war in Ukraine are unprecedented, and must be taken seriously. "All the world should be prepared for the possibility that Vladimir Putin could use nuclear weapons on Ukraine", said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

On Sunday, Putin's Kremlin TV mouthpiece Dmitry Kiselyov called for Russia to obliterate England with its new SARMAT missile, and down Ireland in a 1600-foot radioactive tidal wave created by its new Poseidon torpedo. There appears no preparation in Russia for such a barbaric attack, nor any heightened alert levels from US or Nato counterforces. But such desperate threats to use weapons of mass destruction are concerning, obscene... And illegal. Under an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice in 1996, threatening a nuclear attack beyond the standard of war for self-defense is illegal. The ICJ stated that while nuclear weapons were not technically illegal, their use must adhere to the war doctrine of "necessity and self-defense".

Certainly, drowning Ireland or nuclear bombing Mariupol, Ukraine would not meet that standard of necessity and self-defense. Threatening to use nuclear weapons in

Russia's disastrous invasion of Ukraine is also an international crime.

Protocol I of the Geneva Convention prohibits the deliberate or indiscriminate attack on civilians or civilian objects. Of course, these are precisely the objects of nuclear weapons regardless of the ICJ's parsing. Threatening nuclear weapons attacks would not top the list of Russian war crimes in Ukraine. But threatening to ignite a nuclear war must be acknowledged as a war crime; the inhumanity of a nuclear war is incalculable, and threatening it should be indicted in the court of international morality.

The ICJ does not define the use of nuclear weapons though. Every opening of the United Nations General Assembly since 1975 votes to eliminate nuclear weapons. The General Assembly has initiated international nuclear weapons treaties such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty 1968 and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons 2017. The majority of countries in the world are members of nuclear free zone treaties, NFZT. The international community is increasingly impatient with the progress of nuclear disarmament as agreed in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 1968. The nuclear armed nations can destroy the world many times over, but are increasingly held to a higher moral and human standard by the international community.

However much the United States abhors the nuclear threats from

Russia in Ukraine, we still maintain the right to use nuclear weapons first, and at our discretion. With the absurdity of the Russian nuclear arsenal being jammed into Russia's Ukraine invasion debacle, the alternative to nuclear weapons could never be stronger or clearer. Threats to use nuclear weapons are as old as nuclear weapons. Threats to use nuclear weapons may even be their main function. Increasingly belligerent statements by Putin and Russian State media during Russia's hot war in Ukraine are unprecedented, and must be taken seriously. "All the world should be prepared for the possibility that Vladimir Putin could use nuclear weapons on Ukraine", said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

On Sunday, Putin's Kremlin TV mouthpiece Dmitry Kiselyov called for Russia to obliterate England with its new SARMAT missile, and down Ireland in a 1600-foot radioactive tidal wave created by its new Poseidon torpedo. There appears no preparation in Russia for such a barbaric attack, nor any heightened alert levels from US or Nato counterforces. But such desperate threats to use weapons of mass destruction are concerning, obscene... And illegal. Under an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice in 1996, threatening a nuclear attack beyond the standard of war for self-defense is illegal. The ICJ stated that while nuclear weapons were not technically illegal, their use must adhere to the war doctrine of "necessity".

## Economic meltdown?

By Farhan Bokhari

As Pakistan's economic team begins meeting with IMF officials in Doha today (May 18) to pave the way for more funds from the Washington-based lender, the writing on the wall for the country's mainstream households is abundantly clear: the increasingly pressing need to tighten belts excessively more just to stay afloat.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has so far remained wary of reversing an ill-advised drop in domestic fuel prices, left behind among the last pre-departure legacies of Imran Khan. Whether this was the former prime minister's booby trap of choice for his successor or a well-thought-out plan to insulate Pakistan from globally rampant inflation remains a matter of speculation.

But with Pakistan's stock market and the value of the rupee versus the US dollar rapidly plummeting, the country's economy remains increasingly in crisis. In brief, Pakistan faces the danger of an economic meltdown unless its national decision-makers in partnership with foreign stakeholders successfully set the course for stability.

Unlocking further funds from the IMF not only requires a reversal of the Khan imposed drop in oil prices. The exercise may also force the government in Islamabad to accept additional painful steps to rein in an increasingly out of control economy. A failure to rebuild Pakistan's ties with the

IMF could well take the country towards some of the worst imaginable economic trends ever witnessed in Pakistan's history.

Not too far from Pakistan, continuing turmoil across crisis-stricken Sri Lanka must work as an eye-opener. The sharp contrast from the once much touted tourism-led island nation armed with prospects of joining Asia's tiger economies, versus the riots that have engulfed Sri Lanka in recent days clearly shows the reality of a journey gone sour. The ever swelling crowds of protesters stung by their government's failure to provide basic needs are out on the streets of Sri Lanka, amply demonstrating the consequence of economic turmoil turning in to a full blown national calamity.

Meanwhile, recent events such as a mob ransacking the home of Sri Lanka's former prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and the subsequent imposition of a curfew, clearly demonstrate the worst outcome from an economic crisis spiraling out of control.

Any honest study of Pakistan's economic history will convincingly highlight the many gaps that have evolved over a long period, not only in undermining the nation's economy but more so the critical element of national stability.

Though Pakistan has witnessed periods of relative economic improvement, those eras have been far too few to be

counted in the long term. Such periods of relative success have failed to sustain themselves for a longer haul. In hindsight, it is very obvious that the surgery required to put Pakistan on the road to economic stability requires painful and unpopular surgery as never witnessed before.

At the center of Pakistan's economic challenges lies the repeated failure to reform the country in two fundamental ways.

First, Pakistan's rich and powerful elite have repeatedly defied the state on matters related to paying up their dues. It is hardly surprising that influential Pakistanis, notably those linked to powerful individuals and lobbies, have repeatedly failed to keep up with their tax obligations. Unless Pakistan turns around this legacy and forces affluent figures – ranging from large landowners to affluent industrialists and business figures – to pay their dues, the country will remain locked in recurring fiscal crises.

This exercise to force significantly greater financial discipline will remain incomplete unless undertaken in tandem with a massive effort to cut wasteful expenditures. Pakistan has been heaped upon with ever-growing financial pressure year after year from unproductive areas, notably a large lineup of public sector companies repeatedly running in loss. It is a legacy that has weakened the country's

finances and forced it periodically to turn to the likes of the IMF for bailouts.

Second, Pakistan has failed over time to build the fundamental ingredients necessary to secure its balance of payments in a safe zone. The result has witnessed periodic crises surrounding the country's foreign exchange reserves, typically following periods of high expenditure on imports, including luxury imports, while export growth has tagged behind. Pakistan must take steps to first pump up its exports before the country can afford larger expenditure on imports. For years, Islamabad has relied on remittances from its expatriates worldwide to bridge the gap. But even this valuable resource has shrunk over time, forcing policy-makers to accept the need for alternative emergency measures.

These objectives – improving the fiscal balance and tackling out of control balance of payments – require both short- and long-term measures are essential first steps to secure Pakistan's increasingly rudderless economy. Unless the country is nudged fast towards greater discipline, Pakistan will have to brace for a meltdown with unpredictable consequences for the future.

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## Avoiding default without misery

By Dr Akmal Hussain

The challenge in dealing with the short-term crisis is to avoid debt default without making the poor pay for it. At the same time, the tactical measures undertaken should be designed to set the strategic direction of the economy towards a people-centred economic growth process. In this article, I will attempt to address this challenge.

There are two inter-related aspects to the current crisis. First, the State Bank reserves, net of liabilities and repayments over the next two months are reported to be substantially negative. Without a quick injection of US dollars by the IMF, there is a danger of an exchange rate collapse accompanied by hyperinflation.

Second, the budget deficit must be kept at a level that prevents a huge build-up of foreign debt in the process of financing it. Historically, when faced with such a situation, the government has selected policy instruments that have added to the burden of the poor, while protecting elite interests.

Given the current crisis of state, society and economy, the government needs to stem the financial rot by placing the burden on the rich rather than the poor. The following measures can be undertaken in this regard.

First, the critically low State Bank reserves create the imperative of a drastic reduction in foreign exchange expenditures on non-essential imports. For example, the import of motor vehicles alone during 2020-21 was \$1.53 billion which constituted almost 4 per cent of total import expenditures. This figure represents an 80 per cent increase in import expenditures on motor vehicles, compared to the previous year.

The expenditure on the import of consumer durables, excluding motor vehicles, in the same period was another \$1.1 billion, or 2.8 per cent of total import expenditures. Mobile phone imports added another \$1.54 billion to the import bill (about 4 per cent of import expenditures) and food imports (including Norwegian smoked salmon, French cheese, marmalade and Swiss

chocolates) at \$6.1 billion constituted 15.6 per cent of total import expenditures. Import controls over just these items alone could save the country over \$10 billion.

Second, the budget deficit issue needs to be reconceptualized in light of recent research. The key thing to understand is that it is not the size of the budget deficit that should worry the government, but what causes it. If the budget deficit, even at 9 per cent of GDP, is generated by productive investment, then the ensuing economic growth and the associated increased income stream will reduce the deficit over time. It is unproductive expenditure of the government that needs to be curtailed, not productive expenditure. Thus, the preoccupation with 'finding fiscal space' is misconceived. As Professor Lord Robert Skidelsky observed at a recent Government College University Lahore (GCU) webinar, the government can create as much fiscal space as it wants to by borrowing from the State Bank and spending it on productive investment.

## Karachi Saddar bomb blast: Main accused, accomplice killed in encounter

KARACHI: Main accused involved in Karachi Saddar bomb blast along with his accomplice has been killed in encounter with intelligence agencies and Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) personnel in Karachi in the wee hours of Wednesday. According to details, intelligence agencies and CTD conducted a joint operation in Maripur area of Karachi during which terrorists present in the area opened fire. The law enforcement agencies returned the fire due to which two terrorists were killed.

According to CTD spokesperson, the killed terrorists were identified as Allah Dino and Nawab and belonged to a banned organization. The spokesperson also informed that two other terrorists managed to escape from the scene.

It is worth mentioning here that one person was

killed and 13 other were injured in the powerful bomb blast in Karachi's Saddar on Thursday in which 2.5-kilogram explosive material was used as per the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) findings. According to CTD spokesperson, the killed terrorists were identified as Allah Dino and Nawab and belonged to a banned organization. The spokesperson also informed that two other terrorists. INP

## Pakistan highly values trade relations with EU: Naveed Qamar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar has said that Pakistan highly values trade relations with European Union, which is one of the biggest export destinations of Pakistan.

Syed Naveed Qamar, while hosting a reception in the honor of EU Delegation to Pakistan and EU Ambassadors said, Pakistan enjoys great friendly trade relations with the member states of European Union. Trading relations are mutually beneficial as Pakistan's export to EU increased by 86% from Euro 3.56 billion in 2013 to Euro 6.64 billion in 2021, while exports of EU to Pakistan increased by 69% from Euro 3.31 billion in 2013 to Euro 5.59 billion in 2021, according to Eurostat.

The increased trade is result of practice facilitation provided by Ministry of Commerce to the businesspersons from both the parties. The Minister hoped that with greater avenues for B2B contacts through various instruments such as business forums, trade exhibitions, webinars/seminars, exchange of dele-

gation will give a further boost in increasing trend in trade.

Minister for Commerce appreciated that many European companies have invested in Pakistan, especially in Agro Food, Energy and Renewable energy sectors. The Minister hoped that many more European companies will get benefit from the ease of doing business initiative of Government of Pakistan.

Commerce Minister underlined importance of the GSP Plus scheme for Pakistani economy and particularly for export sector. He emphasized that the scheme helped in promoting universal values and created an enabling environment for implementation of 27 International Conventions in the beneficiary countries besides increasing employment opportunities, especially for women.

Syed Naveed Qamar appreciated European member states for their support for Pakistan in securing the GSP Plus status and its continuity in last three reviews conducted by European Parliament and hoped



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Syed Naveed Qamar, hosting a reception in the honor of EU Delegation to Pakistan and EU Ambassadors in Islamabad.

## ECP defers verdict in dissident PTI MPAs case

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), which was due to decide the fate of 25 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members of the Punjab Assembly (MPAs), who had defected to the then opposition ahead of the election of the provincial chief minister, Wednesday now deferred announcement of the decision, and said that it will first issue notices to the respondents instead.

The ECP's verdict gained special significance after the Supreme Court's yesterday's (Tuesday) verdict, in which it, while interpreting Article 63-A of the constitution, had said that the votes of a party's turncoats would not be counted.

Reserving the verdict in the case Tuesday, the ECP had said it would pronounce the decision today at 12:00 PM.

Punjab Assembly Speaker

Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi had sent a reference to the election commission against 25 PTI dissidents, who voted against the party policy in election for the Punjab chief minister on April 16, 2022.

Earlier, lawyers of all the parties completed their arguments. After listening to their arguments, the ECP bench, headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, reserved the verdict.

It is pertinent to mention here that the election commission in its May 11 verdict, rejected the disqualification reference against the MNAs of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) involved in floor crossing during the no-confidence motion against their party's Prime Minister Imran Khan.

The ECP said in its verdict that the reference against 20 MNAs of the PTI was not

proved.

The PTI dissident MNAs included: Raja Riaz, Noor Alam Khan, Ahmed Hussain Dhar, Nawab Sher Waseer, Ramesh Kumar, Riaz Mazari, Basit Bukhari, Rana Qasim, Basit Sultan Raja, Khawaja Sheraz, Ghaffar Wattoo, Nuzhat Pathan, Wajaha Akram, and others. After listening to their arguments, the ECP bench, headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, reserved the verdict. It is pertinent to mention here that the election commission in its May 11 verdict, rejected the disqualification reference against the MNAs of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) involved in floor crossing during the no-confidence motion against their party's Prime Minister Imran Khan. The ECP said in its verdict that the reference against 20 MNAs of the PTI was not proved. INP

## Mushtaq Mahar removed as IG Sindh over rising terror acts in Karachi

KARACHI: Inspector General of Police (IG) Sindh Mushtaq Mahar has been removed from his post on the directives of Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah over the ongoing wave of terrorist acts in Karachi.

A notification was issued on Wednesday that Mushtaq Mahar has been directed to report to the establishment division and a BPS-21 officer Dr. Kamran Fazal has been given additional charge of the IG Sindh.

According to sources, the names of Mohsin Butt and Ghulam Nabi Memon have been considered as IG Sindh. "Kamran Fazal will remain IG until his retirement," they said.

On February 28, 2020, the federal cabinet Friday gave the go-ahead to the appointment of Mushtaq Mahar as new Sindh police chief.

"Mushtaq Ahmed Mahar, a BS-22 officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently serving as Inspector General, Pakistan Railways Police (PRP), under Ministry of Railways, is transferred and posted as Provincial Police Officer (PPO), Government of Sindh, with immediate effect and until further orders," a notification issued to this effect read.

Mahar, one of the five police officers recommended by the Sindh government for the post of IG Sindh, replaces Kaleem Imam. INP

## CTD kills two terrorists in Karachi's Maripur

KARACHI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) along with the intelligence agencies claimed to have shot dead two terrorists associated with a separatist group in Karachi.

According to incharge CTD, Mazhar Mashwani, intelligence agencies and CTD conducted a joint operation in Maripur area of Karachi in the wee hours of Wednesday, during which terrorists present in the area opened fire. The law enforcement agencies returned the fire due to which two terrorists were killed, while their accomplice fled the scene.

The killed terrorists were identified as Allah Dino and Nawab and belonged to a banned organization. Explosive material was also seized from the custody of the dead terrorists. Mashwani further said that the killed terrorists might be the accused involved in Saddar bomb blast. It is worth mentioning here that one person was killed and 13 other were injured. INP

## Raised bed planting promises water saving and higher yields: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Raised bed planting, which involves digging furrows in fields and planting seeds at top of the furrows, is a tried-and-true farming method that promises water saving and higher yields.

It provides an alternative to some traditional practices that may inefficiently utilize soil and water resources, resulting in land degradation and water resource depletion. In wetter places, permanent raised beds are a sensible and cost-effective way to manage some water-logged lands.

Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

(PCSIR) Chairman D Syed Hussain Abidi said precision agriculture can assist in boosting agricultural output and water efficiency. Raised bed plantation, and drip irrigation, among other things, encourage small farmers to conserve water.

Irfan Ahmed, Senior Scientific Officer, from Pakistan Agricultural Research Centre (PARC), told WealthPK that raised beds allow excess water to drain out of the beds into open collector drains, which ultimately discharge off the field (horizontal drainage).

"Raised beds, as well as the drains that go with them, must

be planned for safe and legal water disposal as well as efficient farming operations. Surface drains must be included in all raised bed installations," he said.

Irfan said the land is divided into small strips of raised beds separated by furrows with this approach. Crops are planted on the surface of the bed, and irrigation water is applied through furrows. The bed surface is nearly dry, and lateral water circulation meets the crop's water needs. Due to compaction caused by tractor and mechanical movement as well as irrigation water. INP

Line 03182



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Board of Investment Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Secretary Board of Investment Fareena Mazhar chairing E-Kachehry.

## Transition to clean energy economy to help combat climate change: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change impacts, which has a negative effect on the economy. Global warming, change in weather patterns, droughts, extinction of species, glaciers melting, and food insecurity have been attributed to climate change in Pakistan.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Assessment Report (AR6) 2022, climate change has adversely affected human physical and mental health. It can be mediated through a number of natural and human systems, including economic and social systems.

In April 2022, the country experienced its hottest month in 61 years. On April 30, 2022, the maximum temperature recorded in Jacobabad was 49°C, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD). Both urban and rural populations are affected by climate change. Due to plen-

ty of emissions from industries and the shortage of trees, the urban population faces heat strokes. Furthermore, due to the lack of proper infrastructure, the urban areas were flooded as a result of heavy rains. Climate change has reduced soil fertility, which results in a reduction in agricultural output. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are the major cause of climate change. GHGs are primarily carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrogen dioxide. All aspects of the economy contribute to the emission of greenhouse gases, including energy, industrial processes and product use (IPPU), agriculture, forestry, and other land use and waste. According to the World Bank, carbon dioxide emissions are around 0.98 metric tons per capita which is higher than Bangladesh (0.5 MT per capita). The energy sector is one of the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. In accordance with the World Resources Institute's

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Project Director Covid-19 Response & Natural Calamities Program Balochistan Upgrade of DHOs/THOs invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items: Bid Security 2%, Tender fee Not Required. TSE-2122058971

S#	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Million)	TSE No
1	CT Equipment (Laptop, Multimedia TV, Printer, Hubs) (Total Items/Count: 6)	11.00	2122058993

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity Turnover of at least 1,000,000 PKR Amount in 2 Subsequent Previous Years Presence in Active Tax Payer List Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Firm must be registered as I/T/ICT/General Supply Order. The Bidder must have functional corporate office in Balochistan having PTCL Phone & Fax No. Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms & conditions specified in the bidding documents & contract agreement. The Bidders must comply with all prevailing All Government taxes as notified by FBR from time to time. One Year Warranty Must Require of All Quoted Items. Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed. Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 02 June, 2022, during office hours on working days. Last date of bid submission: The tenders must be submitted latest by 02 June, 2022 till 12:00 PM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 01:00 PM. Address: 1st floor HRD building, western bypass, brewery road Quetta. Phone no: 0819213275 Fax no: Email: cmcpcb@gmail.com

Project Director Covid-19 Response & Natural Calamities Program Balochistan Upgrade of DHOs/THOs

AB NO.481-18-05-2022

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**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Director Electricity (North), Energy Department, Government of Balochistan invites sealed tenders from interested contractors/firms based on composite scheduled rates 2018 On percentage rates for the work mentioned below with the Bid Security of 3% of estimated cost/offered rate in shape of Bank Guarantee or Deposit at Call. The non-refundable Tender fee deposited in head of account C03870 through Green Bank Chellan in any National Bank of Pakistan located within Balochistan Province. Bid Security 3%. Tender fee Rs.1500/- for the work.

Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Million)	TSE No
Installation of Solar Street Lights at Ward No 58,57,56 & 55 Sarlab Road Quetta	11.00	2122058993

The procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Rules, 2014. Eligibility: Presence in active tax payer list. The bidding firms must not be black listed by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Registration with Balochistan Revenue Authority. The bidder must completed one assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of Rs 10,000,000/- at least 3 Subsequent Years showing Financial Capacity of the firm. Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council C-6 and above in the specialized Category of EE11 (i) (Solar). Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage - Two Envelope Procedure. Bid Security: The bid must accompany bid security in the form of Bank Guarantee/Deposit at call of 3% specified above in the name of Under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: Tender documents can be obtained from the office of under-signed. Issuance of tender documents: From the date of publication of NIT in Newspapers till 6th June, 2022 during office hours, on working days. Last Date of bid submission: The bid must be submitted latest by 6th June, 2022 at 11:30 AM. Tender opening Time: All tenders shall be opened on the same day at 12:30 PM in the office of under-signed. Address: Director General Electricity Energy Department, Government of Balochistan, H # 108, Shahnawaz Kurd Street, Saryab Road, Quetta Tel# 081-2442007 & Fax # 081-2452756

Director Electricity (North) Energy Department Government of Balochistan

PRQ NO.3374-18-05-2022

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ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## Government prefers personal interests over national interests

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Wednesday said the government is taking decisions in its own interest instead of the national interest.

The rulers have failed to take a clear stand on oil, gas and electricity subsidies as well as the agreement with the IMF which is adding to the anxiety of the people and investors, it said.

The government should act accordingly to arrest the fall of the rupee otherwise Pakistan will become another Sri Lanka, said Brig. (retd) Aslam Khan, Chairman PEW.

In a statement issued here today, he said that the consultations of the government and its allies are not ending which is affecting the economy and the credibility of the ruling coalition.

Aslam Khan said that the differences between the ruling coalition on important economic matters are also adding to the problems while the PTI's protests are further aggravating the political and economic situation.

He said that the government is accusing the PTI of ruining the economy and but it is also fueling it with indecision. He noted that the subsidies announced by the PTI have brought the economy to a standstill, but the present government cannot make the tough decision to end the subsidy, which destroying the fragile economy.

What can be expected from a government which is not able to stop unnecessary imports which are eroding the exchequer?

**CORRIGENDUM**

The Tender of the Forest and Wildlife Department invited vide PRQ No 3658.09-05-2022 published in daily news papers. The date for financial assessment is hereby extended till 25th May, 2022 at 10:00 AM at office of Divisional Forest Officer, Khuzdar.

Divisional Forest Officer, Khuzdar

PRQ NO.3658.10-05-2022

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**44 MEDICAL BATTALION GWADAR TENDER NOTICE**

1.44 Medical Battalion Gwadar Cantt invites Quotations from reputed GST Registered firms for supply of Daily Local Purchase of Medicines & Disposable Items for the Financial Year 2022-2023. The detail of required Daily Local Purchase with terms and conditions can be obtained from the office of MO I/C Medical Store 44 Medical Battalion Gwadar Cantt on any working day from 0800 hrs to 1500 hrs. An amount of Rs.3000/- nonrefundable will be deposited on collection of tender documents. Last date for submission of the documents is 1030 hrs on 7 Jun 2022.

2. Quotation must be sealed in an envelope containing both technical and financial bids in separate envelopes and must clearly indicate "FINANCIAL BID" and "TECHNICAL BID" respectively for Daily Local Purchase.

3. The Technical Quotations will be opened on 7 Jun 2022 at 1100 hrs and Financial Quotation will be opened on 8 Jun 2022 at 1100 hrs by a board of Officers in the presence of available bidders or their representatives Bid security @ 2% of bid value in the shape of Bank Draft / Pay Order (Refundable) must be attached with the tender document otherwise the tender will be rejected. 44 Medical Battalion may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of bid or proposal in accordance with PPRARule 33 (1).

Commanding Officer

44 Medical Battalion Gwadar Cantt Contact Tel: 0333-6369908 / 0336-5889919

## Rawalpindi administration to deal dengue with iron hands: Commissioner

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Noorul Amin Mengal along with Station Commander Salman Nazir while reviewing the anti-dengue activities said that Islamabad, Rawalpindi Administration and Cantonment Board have to come up with a comprehensive survey plan in the next week.

He said this plan should do mapping and fix responsibility for everyone. Also provide the updated list of focal persona for each department who needs to be

Haider, Regional Diagnostic Focal Program attended the meeting. Noorul Amin Mengal said that there is no limit for mosquitoes so we have to come out of this jurisdiction debate and come up with a comprehensive plan. He directed that dengue should be dealt with iron hands for which it is necessary to take precautionary measures before time. Dire need is to increase the process of eradicating larvae as much as possible. Before the onset of monsoon season, arrangements should be made so that INP

## In maiden official visit to US, FM Bilawal holds 'productive' meeting with Blinken

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday held a meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during his maiden official visit to New York, as they discussed bilateral relations, regional situation, and cooperation in various sectors between the two countries.

The foreign minister had arrived in the US on Tuesday to attend the two-day ministerial conference on the threat to global food security, triggered by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on the invitation of Blinken.

"We reaffirmed the importance of the 75th anniversary of Pak-US relations and mutual commitment to strengthening broad-based, comprehensive ties between the two countries," Bilawal wrote in a tweet after the meeting.

The foreign minister said he had in-depth discussions on issues impacting regional peace and security, including Afghanistan.

"[We] resolved to work together to meet the challenges of food and energy security," he said. The two sides also discussed expansion of cooperation in trade and investment, energy and climate change, health and education, IT and tech, and agriculture as well as the importance of "trade over aid", according to Bilawal.

He said the two countries will continue cooperation in defence and CT sectors. Meanwhile, US State Department spokesperson Ned Price, in a statement, said Bilawal affirmed a shared desire for a strong and prosperous bilateral relationship during a meeting with Blinken.

"The secretary and the foreign minister discussed expanding partnership in climate, investment, trade, and health as well as people-to-people ties. They underscored the importance of US-Pakistan cooperation

on regional peace, counterterrorism, Afghan stability, support for Ukraine, and democratic principles," the statement added.

Earlier this month, Blinken had called Bilawal and invited him to the food security meeting at the UN headquarters.

Shortly after Bilawal arrived in New York on Tuesday, a State Department spokesperson released a statement, assuring Pakistan of strong US support for their efforts to rebuild the Pakistani economy.

"The United States will continue to work bilaterally on ways to grow investment and trade opportunities to build a prosperous and stable Pakistan," the spokesperson had told Dawn in Washington.

Meanwhile, the foreign minister also met United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres today at the UN Headquarters.

According to the Foreign Office, Bilawal underscored the importance attached to multilateralism and the UN in Pakistan's foreign policy.

He stated that Pakistan adhered firmly to the principles of the UN Charter and always supported solutions to global issues in accordance with those principles.

Bilawal particularly emphasised the need to advance the attainment of the first two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at ending poverty and hunger.

Commenting on the situation in Ukraine, the foreign minister appreciated the UN secretary general's efforts to promote a negotiated solution. He also shared Pakistan's perspective on the matter.

Bilawal also highlighted the grim situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) marked by grave violations of human rights and illegal demographic changes. Web Desk

## Pakistan-IMF talks begin in Qatar

ISLAMABAD: The government began talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday over the release of crucial funds, a process slowed by concerns about the pace of economic reforms in the country.

Pakistan has repeatedly sought international support for its economy, which has been hit by crippling national debt, galloping inflation and a plummeting rupee.

The talks are being held in the Qatari capital Doha, the Ministry of Finance said, and are expected to continue into next week.

Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, Minister of State Dr Aisha Ghous Pasha, Finance Secretary Hamed Yaqoob Shaikh, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Acting Governor Dr Murtaza Syed, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman Asim Ahmad and other officials from the Finance Division are participating in the talks.

A major sticking point is likely to be over costly subsidies — notably for fuel and electricity — and the finance minister said he wants the two sides to "find a middle ground". "The government will try to convince the IMF that for political stability purposes it is important to keep at least some of the subsidies," said economist Shahrukh Wani. "The IMF will possibly, rightly, say that these are unsustainable and they should be rolled back to make the trade and budget deficit manageable," he added. A \$6 billion IMF bailout package signed by former prime minister Imran Khan in 2019 has never been fully implemented because his government reneged on agreements to cut or end some subsidies and to improve revenue and tax collection.

Islamabad has so far received \$3bn, with the programme due to end later this year.

Officials are seeking an extension to the programme through to June 2023, as well as the release of the next tranche of \$1bn.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has vowed to jumpstart the moribund economy, but analysts say his fragile government has failed to take tough decisions.

In recent meetings with the new finance minister, the IMF has linked the continuation of its loan programme with the reversal of fuel subsidies, which were introduced by the previous government. However, Prime Minister Shehbaz has multiple times rejected summaries by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority and the finance ministry to increase fuel prices.

"It's an administration that has refused to take hard political steps to bring eventual economic relief — but that's exactly the sacrifice it must make by going to the IMF," said Michael Kugelmann, deputy South Asia director at the Wilson Centre in Washington. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has vowed to jumpstart the moribund economy, but analysts say his fragile government has failed to take tough decisions.

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Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari meets US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in New York.

### CM Murad conveys Sindh's water woes to PM Shehbaz Sharif

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and conveyed reservations of the province over injustices meted out by IRSA with regard to water supply.

The meeting took place at Prime Minister's House where the chief minister shared the people and farmers are facing an acute water shortage. "IRSA is involved in unjust water supply," he said and demanded of PM Shehbaz Sharif to take immediate action against officials involved in it.

The prime minister assured Shehbaz Sharif of addressing his concerns on water scarcity.

Meanwhile, the chief minister also discussed the law and order situation during the meeting and said that the provincial government was digging deep to unearth causes behind the recent spate of bombings in Karachi.

PM Shehbaz Sharif assured all out support from Centre for dealing with the menace of terrorism. The two also discussed deaths of Chinese nationals in Karachi suicide attack.

Matter related to the appointment of a new IG Sindh also came under discussion during the meeting. INP

### Court issues permanent arrest warrant against Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad on Wednesday issued permanent arrest warrants for former finance minister and PML-N leader Ishaq Dar over his absence during a reference against his assets beyond means.

The accountability court barred trial against the co-accused in the case until Dar is being arrested and adjourned the hearing for an indefinite period.

The release of the suspects on bail was also associated with the arrest of the absconding PML-N leader. "The proceedings will not go forward unless Ishaq Dar is presented before the court," Judge Muhammad Bashir remarked.

During the hearing, NAB prosecutor Afzal Qureshi, and co-accused appeared before the court.

It is pertinent to mention here that former Finance Minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ishaq Dar has been issued passport in Islamabad.

According to a report on April 27, Dar was issued passport in Islamabad and he would soon receive it in London. "The officials have conveyed to him regarding issuance of passport to him," they said.

Former finance minister and PML-N senior leader has left Pakistan four years back and is wanted in Pakistan in multiple cases. INP

### Sheikh Rasheed claims interviews for caretaker pm underway

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed on Wednesday claimed that interviews for caretaker PM are being held in Rawalpindi, Islamabad.

Speaking to the media after getting an extension in his interim bail from the Lahore High Court bench of Rawalpindi, Sheikh Rasheed took the Shehbaz government by surprise and said that they have only one vote majority in their centre, the entire opposition is alive on a single vote.

"The incumbent government is begging the institutions to give them one year guarantee," Sheikh Rasheed claimed that interviews of economists for the caretaker Prime Minister are being held. Major decisions are to be taken before May 31, he added.

The former interior minister further said that the whole nation is with Imran Khan for the long march, it would be better to announce the election before the long march.

On Tuesday, former president and Pakistan People's Party co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari advised PM Shehbaz Sharif to continue with courage, said sources.

According to the inside story of the meetings of PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari and JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman with PM Shehbaz Sharif to discuss the country's present economic woes. INP

### Govt to bring electoral reforms bill next week: Khursheed Shah

ISLAMABAD: The government on Wednesday decided to bring the electoral reforms bill in the National Assembly next week.

Talking to media, Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khursheed Shah has said that the government will bring legal and electoral reforms before and after the upcoming Federal Budget. "Next elections could not be held before the electoral reforms," Shah said.

"The election commission has demanded seven months for preparations to hold the next general election," People's Party veteran Khursheed Shah said. The elections are not possible to hold by October or November this year, he further said. Replying to a question, federal minister said that the coalition parties have not yet decided about bringing a no-confidence motion against the incumbent Chairman Senate.

On a question Khursheed

Shah said that Imran Khan's movement is not against the government. "It is against the state." "The PPP was not consulted over the cases against Imran Khan," he said.

"Imran Khan's government was removed with a procedure allowed in the constitution," PPP leader said.

Commenting on political situation after the Supreme Court's verdict on Presidential Reference for interpretation of the Article 63-A, Khursheed Shah said that Hamza Shehbaz have still majority of four votes in Punjab Assembly. Replying to a question, federal minister said that the coalition parties have not yet decided about bringing a no-confidence motion against the incumbent Chairman Senate.

On a question Khursheed Shah said that Imran Khan's movement is not against the government. "It is against the state." INP

### NAB staff probing cases against PM Shehbaz Sharif receive threats

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) teams probing corruption cases against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have allegedly received threats, sources told a private TV news channel on Wednesday.

Teams appearing in money laundering, Ashiana Housing scandal and Ramazan Sugar Mills cases received threats and were asked not to pursue cases against PM Shehbaz Sharif, the sources privy to the development claimed. The teams were threatened with dire consequences if they continue pursuing the case against the premier. The teams have informed the higher-ups about the threats. Earlier, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) refused to lead a trial into the money laundering case against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief Minister Punjab Hamza Shahbaz.

Special Judge Central Aijaz

Hasan led the hearing today where Special Prosecutor of the FIA Sikander Zulqarnain submitted that he has been asked by the DG FIA through an investigation officer to leave the case.

While detailing messaging from the top official of the FIA, the special prosecutor said that he was barred from the DG FIA from appearing before the court hearing the money laundering case against Shehbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz.

"It was conveyed that the DG no longer wanted to pursue the case," he said in his written request which was later made part of the record of the case by the court. While detailing messaging from the top official of the FIA, the special prosecutor said that he was barred from the DG FIA from appearing before the court hearing the money laundering case against Shehbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz. INP

### PTI finance expert argues before ECP in funding case hearing

ISLAMABAD: A financial expert of PTI on Wednesday presented their contentions before a bench of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) headed by CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja.

The financial consultant said that the PTI had submitted its standard audit report to the election commission (ECP). "The scrutiny committee ignored the PTI report, it had to indicate the flaws in the report," expert said.

"We produced all bank details in the report," he said while referring the paras of the scrutiny committee's report.

"We produced the details of the bank officers and accounts. It was the requirement of banks for opening accounts," the expert argued.

"The name of banker was required in the Form-I and not the accounts," he said. "The

scrutiny committee mis-perceived the audit accounts," he argued. "Scrutiny Committee's proceedings were one-sided," financial consultant claimed.

"Large amounts were deposited in some accounts, other are small accounts," he said. "There were duplication of depositing amounts," he argued. "The cheques that were returned have also been shown in the report as deposited," PTI consultant said. "The scrutiny committee didn't try to understand our contentions," PTI financial expert said.

"Don't talk over the matters, which have already been argued," Chief Election Commissioner said. "This will become an unending matter, talk over the figures," CEC remarked. "We will talk over the figures from tomorrow," PTI lawyer Anwar Mansoor assured the ECP panel. INP

### Omar Sarfraz Cheema to challenge his removal in IHC

ISLAMABAD: Omar Sarfraz Cheema has decided to challenge his removal as Punjab governor in Islamabad High Court (IHC).

According to details, the former Punjab governor has completed consultation with his lawyers and the latter will file a petition in IHC today against Cabinet Division notification of his removal from Punjab governor post.

The federal government on May 10 denotified Omar Sarfraz as Punjab governor. According to a notification issued by the Cabinet Division, Omar Sarfraz was removed from his office after President refused to remove Cheema.

President Dr Arif Alvi repeatedly rejected the Prime Minister's advice to remove Punjab governor Omar Sarfraz.

Soon after his removal, Cheema took to Twitter and termed the notification issued by the Cabinet Division unconstitutional and announced that he was in contact with the constitutional experts and will announce his future strategy soon. INP

### Prolonged power outages test public's patience

ISLAMABAD: Power outages have been testing public patience in different areas of the country amid rising temperature on Wednesday.

It is learnt that 10 to 12 hours power loadshedding is being conducted in several areas of Karachi. The electricity supply also remains suspended at night in many areas.

In Lahore, students are facing a great deal of inconvenience due to power loadshedding during exam hours. They are also faced with difficulties while preparing for exams at night amid prolonged outages.

They said that there should be no loadshedding during school hours, adding that they found it difficult to solve their question papers amid power suspension.

They have also demanded summer vacations from May 20 immediately after the culmination of their exams. "The demand of early summer vacations is under consideration," said the school education department.

In Hyderabad, power loadshedding is being conducted during the exam hours of matriculation. INP

### PPP's stance very clear first electoral reforms then general polls: Sindh Ministers

ISLAMABAD: Sindh Ministers belonging to Pakistan People's Party have said the PPP until the present day has been ready for the general elections in the country but its stance is very clear that first electoral reforms should be adopted before the polls. Sindh Information Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon, provincial Labour and Human Resources Minister, Saeed Ghani, and Local Government Minister, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, stated this while addressing a joint press conference here on Wednesday.

Answering a question, the Sindh Information Minister said that only electoral reforms could ensure that the next general polls were held in the country in a transparent and fair manner.

Responding to another query, Memon said the present coalition government might have to take certain unpopular decisions in view of the alarmingly weakened state of the national economy due to certain terms of the agreement the previous regime had signed with the IMF.

He said that all the concerned political parties were required in the present scenario to join hands to take the urgently required steps for the improvement of the economy.

Sindh Information and Labour Minister, Saeed Ghani, told media persons that he had come to Islamabad for the signing of an agreement between the Sindh Employees' Social Security Institution (SESSI) and the National Database and Registration Authority. INP



ISLAMABAD: Wang Daxue, Counselor of the Department of External Security Affairs of China shake hand with Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah in his office before a meeting held.

### Optical fiber cable to boost Pakistan Railways operations: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Railways (PR) is keen to upgrade and boost its rail operations through the Optical Fiber Cable (OFC), which will be installed under the second phase of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), reports WealthPK.

A senior official of Pakistan Railways told WealthPK on condition of anonymity that the OFC would be deployed along the Main Line - 1 track, which will help enhance the operations and communication system of the rail haulage. The survey of laying the cable has been awarded to the Transworld, while the inspection work is in process along the rail track's right of way, he said.

According to Engr. Rizwan at Lucky Phone, the OFC is utilized as a medium for telecommunication and computer networking due to its flexibility and can be bundled as cables. It is especially useful for long-distance communications because infrared light spreads through the fibre with a

much lower reduction compared to electricity in electrical cables.

Under the first phase of the CPEC project, the Special Communication Organisation (SCO) has installed 820km OFC from Rawalpindi to Khunjerab and has established the first-ever direct telecom connectivity with China, which will generate a lot of revenue for the government.

In addition, the project of laying the fibre optic cable along the BRI route is considered to be the backbone of digital connectivity and is important for exchange of information technology between China, Pakistan and the entire Europe.

In the same way, the planned extension of the OFC network from Rawalpindi to Karachi and Gwadar covers phase 2 of the project, which is a part of the Belt and Road Initiative. This phase will also see the SCO deploying OFC from Rawalpindi to Gwadar and Karachi along the CPEC routes, and establishing a landing station at Gwadar. INP

### Accountability Court issues perpetual arrest warrant of Ishaq Dar

Islamabad: An Islamabad accountability court on Wednesday issued a perpetual arrest warrant for former finance minister Ishaq Dar in a corruption reference.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had filed the reference against Dar, who has been declared an absconder in the case since he has missed hearings owing to his prolonged stay in London, alleging that the former minister had acquired assets beyond his known sources of income.

At today's hearing, NAB prosecutor Afzal Qureshi and counsel for the co-accused appeared before the court, and Judge Muhammad Bashir presided over the proceedings.

The judge ruled that the reference's proceedings would not progress until Dar was arrested and presented before the court and the decision on the acquittal of the co-accused would be

issued only after that.

The court then adjourned the hearing of the reference until Dar's arrest.

On July 28, 2017, a five-member Supreme Court bench had ordered the NAB to file three references against former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and one against then-finance minister Dar, on petitions filed by PTI chairman Imran Khan, Jamaat-i-Islami's Sirajul Haq and Awami Muslim League's Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

In its reference against Dar, NAB had alleged that "the accused has acquired assets and pecuniary interests/resources in his own name and/or in the name of his dependants of an approximate amount of Rs831.678 million (approx)".

The reference alleged that the assets were "disproportionate to his known sources of income for which he could not reasonably account for". Online



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain welcomed a delegation of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Pakistan Boy Scouts Association (PBSA) and Aiming change for tomorrow (ACT International).