

QUETTA VOICE


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COAS Qamar Bajwa administers polio drops to children



Inflation soars to record high of 42.31pc, shares PBS data

Heroic men retrieved dead body of Balach after 14 hours in Quetta

Manan Mandokhail, Syed Ali Shah

The two heroic men retrieved the dead body of Mir Balach Nowsherwani after 14 hours in Quetta's Sariab Road area. Mir Balach sacrificed his life while saving a minor boy who fell into a well. The minor boy and Mir Balach died inside the well completely flooded.

"I retrieved the dead body of Balach at the cost of life", Jalil Ahmed Shahwani, one of the heroes told Daily Quetta Voice. Jamil and Amir Hamza made hectic efforts to retrieve the dead body of Mir Balach.

"There was horror, darkness and we were facing difficulty in breathing", Jalil said. Jalil Ahmed and Amir Hamza rushed from the Mastung district of Balochistan to rescue Mir Balach Nowsherwani trapped inside the well.

PDMA team reaches the spot after 3 hours

Rescue workers from the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) reached the spot of the incident after three

hours. However, they appeared to be helpless in retrieving the dead bodies.

"It was a challenge for us to retrieve the dead bodies", Amir Hamza said. He recalled that a crowd of people was also crying for them when they went inside the well.

CM announces jobs and rewards for two men

The bravery of the two heroic men prompted Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo to announce jobs and rewards for them. The CM has announced jobs for Jalil Ahmed Shahwani and Amir Hamza Shahwani in recognition of their bravery and bold step, a statement issued by the CM Secretariat said on Friday evening. "We were jobless and we are thankful to the CM", Jalil and Amir Hamza told this daily via telephone after hearing this announcement. They vowed to continue their struggle for serving the needy and deserving humanity in the future.

Media men thronged the two heroic men after CM Bizenjo announced rewards and jobs for them.



Quetta: this brave young man lost his life while saving a child

Manan Mandokhail
Syed Muhammad Yaseen

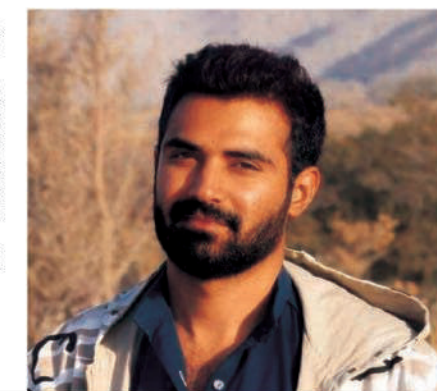
Mir Balach Noshewani, a young man from Quetta's Sariab Road sacrificed his life while saving a child who fell into a well. A minor boy was collecting garbage in the area and suddenly fell into a well in the Sariab area of Quetta. To save a young soul, Mir Balach put his life at peril and went down into the deadly well full of rainwater. Floods and rains have claimed 207 lives including 61 children across Balochistan.

"Despite repeated appeals, no offi-

cial rescue team came", Jamil Ahmed, one of the relatives of Balach lamented.

It's very unfortunate to mention that Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and other rescue organizations seemed to be ignorant of the whole scenario. "They came when residents of the area retrieved the dead bodies on their own", Mr. Ahmed said as his voice cracked because of the trauma.

Dead bodies were retrieved after 14 hours



After 14 hours of continuous search operation by locals and PDMA, the dead bodies of both the young boy and Balach were found in the well full of rainwater. This daily repeatedly tried to speak to the PDMA official but none responded in this regard.

The body of the young man was removed from the well after 14 hours by the insensible rulers and nominal rescue organizations. The residents of the area lashed out at the provincial government and the PDMA for their failure to launch a timely rescue operation.

PDMA team arrives after the recovery of dead bodies

This daily timely reported the incident to mount pressure on the government to move technical staff and machinery to save human lives. Mir Balach Noshewani in Sariab who was trying to rescue children drowned in the water. The child who fell into the well and the rescuer could not be pulled out at 12:00 AM in the Quetta Sariab area. After 14 hours of a continued search operation, the dead bodies of Balach and a young Pashtun child were found.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at the launching ceremony of National Polio Vaccination Campaign.

Gas Supply Suspended to Quetta and other parts of Balochistan

By: NEWS DESK

QUETTA: The gas supply suspended to Quetta and other southern parts of the Balochistan as 24-inch diameter Pipeline washed away by flash-flood late on Friday evening.

According to a senior officer of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) 24-inch diameter gas Pipeline passing through Bolan River in Bibi-Nani area of the district Bolan, washed away by flash-flood, caused suspension of the supply to Quetta,



Mastung, Kalat, Pishin and other parts of the Province.

Due to increasing level of water, repairing work has not been started yet, said Malik Musa, an official of SSGC, adding that technical teams have been reached to the area

and repairing work will be started soon.

According to sources familiar with matter relayed that it will take 24 to 48 hours for restoration, however efforts are underway for provision of gas supply to affected towns through another way.

Death toll rises to 207 including 61 children in Balochistan floods

News Desk

QUETTA: The death toll in rains-related incidents rose to 207 including 61 children across Balochistan on Thursday evening. Rescue workers found five more dead bodies in various parts of the province.

According to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), 98 men and 48 women were also among the dead. Five dead bodies were recovered in Bolan, Quetta, Zhob, Dukki and Khuzdar, the PDMA statement said.

Flash floods unleashed by heavy rainfall have claimed precious human lives and destroyed over 40,000 houses across the province. Floods have also killed livestock and swept away bridges, roads and dams throughout Balochistan.

Barkhan, Kohlu, Quetta, Pishin, Killa Abdullah and other parts of Balochistan received heavy rainfall on Thursday.



COAS Qamar Bajwa administers polio drops to children

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Friday administered polio drops to children as nation-wide anti-polio campaign was launched today amid more than dozen cases being reported in the country since May.

COAS Qamar Javed Bajwa visited National Emergency Operations Centre and administered polio drops to the children to encourage parents nationwide to join the campaign against the crippling disease.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif launched the nationwide anti-polio vaccination drive with an aim to eradicate the crippling disease from the country.

According to details, PM Shehbaz Sharif kicked off the anti-polio drive by administering drops of polio vaccine to children under five years of age at the Prime Minister's House.

Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Federal

Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb and representatives of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation attended the ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, the premier vowed to get the country free from polio, which he said was affecting the children in some areas.

He urged the parents not to miss getting their children administered the polio drops and support the government's goal to make Pakistan polio-free.

The prime minister expressed Pakistan's commitment to ending polio and emphasised the role of the government leaders, health workers, and parents to ensure that the disease never paralyzed a child jointly.

PM Shehbaz Sharif called upon the federal, provincial and district managements to address the challenges of persistently missed children and also encourage the people by raising awareness about the gravity of the situation. INP

Inflation soars to record high of 42.31pc, shares PBS data

ISLAMABAD: The weekly review of the sensitive price index (SPI) on Friday highlighted a record increase in inflation upto 42.31 percent on a year-on-year basis in August, the data shared by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said. According to the PBS, the SPI for the current week ended on 18th August recorded an increase of 3.35 percent with hike in prices of 25 items. The report said that the increase was observed in the prices of food items including tomatoes 20.28 percent, chicken 7.57 percent, onions 2.30 percent, powdered milk 2.03 percent, eggs 1.63 percent, pulse moong 1.42 percent and potatoes 1.07 percent.

The non-food items that witnessed increase in prices included electricity 6.83 percent, petrol 2.96 percent and cigarette 1.69 percent.

On the other hand, a decrease was observed in the prices of 11 items including LPG 3.46 percent, vegetable ghee 1.16 percent, garlic 0.94 percent, mustard oil 0.71 percent, pulse masoor 0.42 percent, pulse gram 0.36 percent. INP

CM Balochistan approves release of Rs.2.5 bs grant for universities

News Desk

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo approved the release of an Rs.2.5 billion grant-in-aid for 10 universities in the province. CM Bizenjo chaired a meeting, which reviewed the financial and administrative issues of the universities of Balochistan.

Vice-Chancellors of all universities participated in the meeting. Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz Uqaili also attended the meeting. The release of grant-in-aid has come after a protest by staff and faculty members of the University of Balochistan and Balochistan University of Information Technology Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTEMS).

As per the set formula, the grant would be distributed among the universities in Balochistan, an official handout issued on Friday said. The VCs thoroughly briefed the CM about the financial and administrative issues in universities.

"Our future is linked with these universities", CM

"Our future is linked with these universities", Chief Minister Balochistan said. He said the present government has decided to do investment in the edu-



cation sector to enable students to compete on national and international levels.

According to the formula of the National Finance Commission, the universities of the province should get a 9% share from the Higher Education Commission, it was agreed in the meeting. The share received from the Higher Education Commission to the universities of the province is 4.5 percent.

Universities to face a shortfall of Rs.2.9bs

Universities are facing financial problems due to not getting the full share. In total, the universities have to face a shortfall of 2.9 billion rupees annually. The total income of universities in terms of fees is 1.4 billion rupees, the VCs informed the meeting. They mentioned that 3.4 billion rupees are received from the Higher Education Commission. The provincial government gives Rs 2.5 billion grants-in-aid. The Chief Secretary along with the Vice Chancellors of major Balochistan universities will meet the Chairman HEC. Under the NFC award, the universities of the province will be discussed obtaining a grant according to a 9% share. The chief minister will send a letter to the prime minister to increase the grant to Balochistan universities, it was decided in the meeting.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

Balochistan floods: Govt and friendly opposition missing

The disastrous situation developed in the aftermath of heavy rainfall in Balochistan demands the provincial rulers and ‘friendly opposition’ to spend their days with flood affectees. However, the situation is quite different here.

Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo once visited the flooded Lasbela district in a helicopter and then visited Killa Saifullah along with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The cabinet members are hardly seen in the flood-affected areas. The friendly opposition has also preferred to be mum when it comes to supporting the flood-affected people and criticizing the government.

Flash floods unleashed by heavy rainfall have wreaked havoc across Balochistan. Floods and rains claimed precious human lives, destroyed standing crops, killed livestock, and swept away bridges, dams, and roads throughout the province.

The 30-year average rainfall record has been broken. A statement from the climate change ministry said that the 30-year average for rainfall in Balochistan and Sindh had been broken. In Balochistan, the destruction caused by floods is beyond imagination.

The Balochistan government has declared an emergency in 26 out of a total of 34 districts of Balochistan. Some deputy commissioners have performed well when it comes to rescue and relief operations. Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps have extended all-out support to the provincial government in evacuating the stranded people.

Above all, Commander 12-Corps Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ali and other military officers embraced martyrdom in the relief and rescue operation in Lasbela.

The Balochistan government should take the lead. Nevertheless, it is the core responsibility of the Balochistan government to get a leading role in the rescue and relief operations. The CM and cabinet members should come out of their offices and support the people on the ground and encourage the rescue workers to evacuate the people.

The damages are beyond comprehension. Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili has comparatively performed well when it comes to monitoring the situation and directing the concerned quarters in supporting the flood affectees. A comprehensive and fair survey of the damages needs to be conducted to ensure compensation to the affectees across Balochistan. The provincial government should also seriously approach the federal government to announce a special package for the rehabilitation of affectees, growers, and farmers of Balochistan.

The Looming threat of Climate Crisis in Pakistan

Sardar Mengal

Climate change is unleashing its worst effects in the form of heavy rainfalls and disastrous floods. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had already waved multiple red flags about dire consequences of climate change in Pakistan. The authorities should have been on their toes in response to the contours of the crisis but we witnessed everything otherwise.

Balochistan Vulnerable to Climate Crisis

It is noteworthy that almost 30 districts of Balochistan have been badly hit by the current climate emergency. People who were already drowning in man made disasters of inflation, poverty, political crisis are currently drowning in a Natural disaster. Nushki, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Bolan and Jhal Magsi received much of the inflictions of flash floods.

People were left stranded to flow with the waves as seen in



footages, circulating on social media. Unfortunately, disturbing pictures of dead bodies of children covered with mud, families who were sitting helplessly on debris of their houses and sinking valuables of the people couldn't awaken the government from its stupor. Even more gloomily, the enraging waves of floods-engulfing lives and property, converting everything into dust & debris and wreaking havoc all around couldn't merit break-

ing news on national media.

Prior disregard and later delayed response have multiplied afflictions of the catastrophe. Loss of land communication has further isolated the stricken areas making true estimation of destruction more exhausting.

Timely decision and act can reduce the effect of Climate Change

To stop ballooning problems into crisis; rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations should be carried out on full scale as the

current pace is insufficient to meet the requirement. NDMA and PDMA need to reach out to the peripheral areas that are out of the radar.

It's high time for the provincial and federal coalition government to pay special attention to those whose lives are at the stake. Political parties need to rise above the traditional politics and launch concerted efforts to help out the calamity stricken at the earliest. Social welfare organisations should come forward

to heal the lesions of suffering humans. On national media, there should be special discourse and discussion on settlement and rehabilitation of the affected people.

In addition to ensuring; re-building of eroded infrastructure, compensation for losses, clean water, adequate supply of food, there should be numerous measures in pipeline to overcome the post-flood outcomes such as increased risk of infectious diseases. The flood-stricken area can become a breeding ground for many health related problems. Supplying preventive medicines and upholding precautionary measures can halt the onslaught of infectious diseases.

The state machinery in its all forms should come into play to navigate a safe passage out of this hurricane of climate emergency enveloping us now.

The author is a final year MBBS student at King Edward Medical University Lahore, Pakistan. He can be reached on twitter via @SardarMengal11.

Seventy-five years of Pakistan's economy

By Ishrat Husain

A large majority of Pakistan's population was born after the country got its independence. The median age today is 23 years and the youth have only experienced economic difficulties and hardships in their lifetime. They are hardly aware of the glory days of Pakistan. Despite the many articles that have appeared on this subject, it is essential to make them aware of the historical context in which they are today leading their lives.

At the time of independence, the prospects of the economic survival of a ramped Pakistan appeared quite dim as it inherited an extremely weak and fragile economy. More than 80 per cent were small farmers, and the rest were shopkeepers and artisans. From India, Pakistan got another eight million impoverished Muslim peasants and hardly any skilled technicians or businessmen. The country had no big industry worth the name except a few cotton mills, a cement factory, railway repair shops.

The financial resources allocated to it at the time of Partition were never released by the Reserve Bank of India and the salaries of the civil servants were paid by a few rich Muslim businessmen. Only a few hundred civil servants opted to serve the country and they formed the nucleus of the new government

machinery sitting in dilapidated and makeshift offices. LIFE Magazine had predicted in its issue of January 1948 that Pakistan would collapse within six months as it would not be able to sustain itself economically.

From such a shaky start, Pakistan today is the 24th largest economy in the world with a GDP of approximately 1500 billion (PPP dollars) and per capita income of PPP \$6672. In terms of official exchange rate, per capita income is \$1700 compared to \$100 in 1947. Pakistan's overall growth record has been quite impressive; on average, the economy grew at an annual rate of slightly above 5 per cent during the last six decades. In per-capita terms, the growth rate was 2.5 per cent annually. Consequently, the incidence of poverty has halved from 40 per cent to around 20 per cent. The manufacturing sector has been the most dynamic sector of the economy.

For the first four decades – 1950-1990 – Pakistan was among the fastest growing economies in the developing world. This achievement was remarkable because Pakistan without any industrial base had to rehabilitate and absorb eight million refugees – almost one fourth of the total population; had to fight a war with a much bigger and stronger neighbour in

1965; lost its eastern wing and suffered a trauma in 1971. In the 1970s all major industries, banks, and educational institutions were nationalized. In the 1980s, the country participated in the Afghan war against the Soviet Union which created some harsh social and geopolitical consequences. India in this same period was growing at 3 per cent per annum – almost half of Pakistan's growth rate. But there are other remarkable achievements that the country can proudly boast of.

A country with 30 million people (present-day Pakistan) in 1947 couldn't feed itself and had to import all its food from abroad. By 2016, the farmers of Pakistan were not only able to fulfill the domestic needs of wheat, rice, sugar, milk for 200 million people at a much higher per capita consumption level but also export wheat and rice to the rest of the world. Pakistan has emerged as the world's fourth largest exporter of rice.

Agriculture production has risen more than five times with cotton attaining a peak level of more than 14 million bales compared to one million bales in 1947. Pakistan has emerged as one of the leading world exporters of textiles. Steel, cement, automobiles, sugar, fertiliser, cloth and vegetable ghee, industrial chemicals, refined petroleum and a variety of

other products that did not exist at the time are now manufactured for the domestic market and, in many cases, for the world markets too.

Per capita electricity generation is 10,160 kwh compared to 100 in 1947. Pakistan's vast irrigation network of large storage reservoirs and dams, barrages, link canals constructed during the last six decades has enabled the country to double the area under cultivation to 22 million hectares. Tubewell irrigation provides almost one-third of additional water to supplement canal irrigation.

The road and highway network in Pakistan spans 260,000 kms – more than five times the length inherited in 1947. Modern motorways and superhighways and four-lane national highways link the entire country along with secondary and tertiary roads.

Natural gas was discovered in the country in the 1950s and supply has been augmented over time. At its peak, almost four billion cubic feet/day of natural gas was generated, transmitted and distributed for industrial, commercial and domestic consumption and until recently accounted for 40-50 per cent of the country's energy needs.

Private consumption standards have kept pace with the rise in income. There are 30 road vehicles for 1,000 persons compared with only one

vehicle for the same number of people in 1947. Mobile phone penetration is 88 per cent compared to almost less than one per cent having phone connection in the 1950s. TV sets, which were nonexistent then, adorn 122 out of every 1,000 houses.

These achievements in income, consumption, agriculture and industrial production are extremely impressive and have lifted millions of people out of poverty. But these do pale into insignificance when missed opportunities are looked at. Since 1990, the tables have turned. India has surpassed Pakistan not only in per capita income, GDP growth, human development indicators but has become one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Bangladesh which was way behind us in all economic and social indicators in 1990 has forged ahead of us and is recording 6-7 per cent growth rate with impressive gains in social and human development.

Pakistan has become a laggard in South Asia, facing episodes of boom and bursts. The country had to approach the IMF for meeting its balance of payments crisis 22 times in the last thirty years. What explains this reversal from a dynamic and vibrant to an externally dependent economy? There are many factors, but I would confine them to only a few.

Pakistanis celebrated the diamond jubilee of their beloved country on August 14 with great zeal and passion. While celebrating independence, we must think about what we have lost, and gained, in these 75 years. It is necessary to analyze past mistakes and formulate an action plan for the future.

At the time of independence, Pakistan consisted of two parts. East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh), which was 1,000 miles away from us, had 55 per cent of the total population, but West Pakistan (now Pakistan) was dominant in state affairs and policymaking. The two parts finally separated in 1971.

In the five decades of separation from us, Bangladesh has moved far ahead in every aspect of life. The currency of Bangladesh (taka) is stronger than the Pakistani rupee. One US dollar is worth around 90 taka there. There was a time when heavy rains used to bring massive destruction there. Today, Bangladesh has controlled the ravages of floods by building dams and barrages.

In the first ten years since its creation, Pakistan faced so much political instability that the late Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru made a snarky comment on how quickly a prime minister was replaced in

Pakistan. In the last 75 years, not a single elected prime minister has been able to complete his/her full term.

In our national history, every government has claimed to achieve success by obtaining foreign loans to pass its time quite well. Every ruler tied the country to heavy chains of debt, but no one thought how to pay it back. This attitude has not only put our national sovereignty at stake, but we have also lost the ability to take decisions in the interest of the country.

It is a constitutional duty to conduct a census every 10 years, but we have failed to perform this procedure regularly. Bangladesh, however, ensures proper utilization of its resources by conducting regular census. Interestingly, Bangladesh's population, which was higher than ours in 1947, is now less than Pakistan's due to population control.

In the traditional politics of Pakistan, the PTI, under the leadership of Imran Khan, emerged as the political party that raised the slogan of change. During my first meeting with Imran Khan, I made it clear to him that in order to make the state of Madina, open amnesty should be announced to everyone, including political opponents. "The PTI should take special care of patriotic minorities," I mentioned that prisoners of the Battle of Badr were

offered freedom in return of educating Muslim children. After the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) forgave even the worst enemies.

I also highlighted the example of the great leader of modern history, Nelson Mandela, who did not lose his patience against peaceful struggle and declared amnesty after coming to power. In order to take Pakistan forward, I presented my viewpoint before then PM Imran Khan that the PTI should also follow the same path by demonstrating great values. Alas, the tenure of the PTI did not prove to be a good symbol for Pakistan, and the politics of backbiting, accusations and slander flourished. However, I am still hopeful for a bright future for Pakistan.

On the occasion of Pakistan's diamond jubilee, all politicians should take a pledge beyond their political party affiliation to serve the country by adopting the vision of Qauid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. We should not compromise on truth, justice and principles under any circumstances; we should sacrifice our ego for the best interest of the country and the nation.

We need to review our 75-year history and think whether we want to see a debt-ridden Pakistan or an economically strong Pakistan on the 100th birth anniversary to be celebrated.

Mad, bad and dangerous to know

By Dr Naazir Mahmood

When Lady Caroline Lamb described Lord Byron – one of the greatest English poets – as “mad, bad, and dangerous to know”, she was of course sharing her personal impressions of Byron.

This expression comes to mind when you look at today's Pakistan and find an entire breed of people who seem to be ‘mad, bad, and dangerous to know’. For ease of conversation, let's call them MBD here. There are multiple factors that have contributed to the emergence of this phenomenon among some Pakistanis living at home or abroad. They have made plenty of observers seem clueless about what shape this anomaly would take next. They let rip at the slightest provocation – or even without it. Mostly they are instigated by their leaders who are equally clueless and ready to let rip. What they did in Madina on April 28 is just one example of their uncontrollable behaviour that they have become prone to display.

MBD is not a new phenomenon; we have seen such cases both nationally and internationally. The trick of their leaders is to make such behaviour appear perfectly normal. Some commentators have made comparisons with fascist and Nazi tendencies in Italy and Germany in the first half of the 20th century. We may also recall the Altaf Hussain times in Karachi, when he unleashed a reign of terror on all who disagreed with him or dared to raise a voice of dissent.

The prime span of fascism and Nazism was

nearly 25 years, after which their steam was snuffed out. Nearly all followers of these ideologies were mad, bad, and dangerous to know. They wreaked havoc within their homelands and on their own people, and they would have continued with their destructive behaviour for decades to come. Even after an end to their violent extremism, their remnants are still around and reemerge here and there with their fossilized thinking patterns and a potential to erupt any moment.

Specific to Pakistan, this intolerance was pioneered by the state itself. A curious and dispassionate reading of history makes facts clear, which Pakistan Studies textbooks tend to hide. Though it will be a slight exaggeration to blame everything on the state, there is ample evidence that state policies and practices cultivate – to a great extent – ideas of self-righteousness and narcissism among common citizens, through education and propaganda. The state loves to nurture birds that fly blind, and this flight leads them to mostly wrong destinations. Authoritarianism or pluralism, democracy or dictatorship, humility or hubris, prejudice or tolerance – all are there to crush or groom. The state makes most decisions about where to lead the nation. There are bursts of affection for certain personalities that develop personality cults.

Does this have anything to do with dogmas, religiosity and sectarianism? Of course. The more dogmas are propagated,

the more intolerant people tend to become. Dogma means a blind faith in unquestionable ideologies and personalities. If there is one ideology you can't question, there will soon be more of the same ilk. When you revere a personality at the cost of a more balanced assessment of personal traits, there are greater chances of more leaders emerging with the same claims of infallibility. It becomes a kind of a crusade for their followers to defend their leader at all costs, no matter how destructive or dumb that person may be.

The question is: why does a state nurture or tolerate such mad, bad, and dangerous behaviour? Perhaps the answer lies in understanding the nature of the state itself. In countries such as Pakistan there is always a cosseted elite embedded in the state itself. This elite comes from diverse sections of society: bureaucrats, capitalists, feudal lords, generals, industrialists, judges, and many more. If they are not from the existing elite, the state co-opts them for its own and their benefit. They are mostly complacent in their own attitudes and want to keep the people engaged in one preoccupation or the other.

These elites are safe in their own guarded compounds and their well-defended capital – or they think so. The country carries on its downward spiral from which it always struggles to emerge. When people are exposed to excessive chauvinism, ideological and narcissistic overdoses, religiosity, sectarianism, and xenophobia, they seldom think about their real problems such as illiteracy, unemployment, lack of public healthcare, and shortage of power and water. The elite that composes the state itself is unaffected by these problems and sits comfortably while the people are fed with personality cults and chant slogans against purported enemies. Gradually, malign forces in society take a deep hold of the people who fail to understand the real conspiracies within – while believing in imaginary conspiracies from outer lands. It may be Afghanistan, America, India, or even Iran, hatching sinister plans against Pakistan while our own elite is safe and sound; bunting up nearly all sectors of society from education to health to power to security and water and sanitation, and what not. That's how the mad, bad, and dangerous behaviour thrives. There are segments of society that pose a lingering threat to the constitution, democracy, financial stability, and overall health of society but the elite in power does not consider them a threat to itself. Amid this chaos emerge authoritarian personalities who may be from civilian or military backgrounds. They offer precise solutions to imprecise challenges. Such leaders master the art of grabbing people's attention without disabusing them of their false notions. People tend to overlook their leaders' abusive language, their acerbic tongues with brimstone rhetoric. Once these leaders come to power, they try to stack

the country's institutions with pliant people. They bully political opponents, criticize media outlets that refuse to support the great leader, and curb freedoms of assembly and expression.

They develop a mad, bad, and dangerous following that targets even a flicker of resistance. Such people are irrelevant in the broader scheme of things both nationally and internationally – but assume an air of importance as if the whole world is conspiring against them. They struggle to become relevant, and while doing so they inflict even more harm to their country internally – and to its standing externally. Their system of thinking is premised upon a desire to dominate; this desire underpins nearly all their acts, including violence. They try to sound impressive but lack substance. Then what should the state do? An immediate solution is legal proceedings against them. But, unless there is a realization that we need to democratize our society as a whole through education and economic opportunities, there is hardly anything that can control this mad, bad, and dangerous to know lot. Democratization does not mean just holding elections; and modernization is not just reflecting in constructing bridges and buildings. What is needed is a democratic outlook that is opposed to authoritarianism; and a modern education that is not chauvinistic, conservative and sectarian. The state needs to initiate and promote a culture of dialogue in education.

Selling lies

By Nick Licata

We are in an era of disinformation. That term is thrown around by all political persuasions to accuse their opponents of not being truthful. The systematic dissemination of disinformation, however, is more than just lying. It is a political strategy in a war to take control of public power. Its intended purpose is to create confusion, which leads to rejecting government institutions entrusted to deliberate over verifiable facts.

There is a significant difference between lying about a particular action or product and a disinformation campaign to undermine public trust in a democratic republic. A classic example of the former is how the tobacco industry lied or created doubt about scientific findings that demonstrated that smoking caused lung and cardiac diseases. Up to the mid-Fifties, the tobacco industry had succeeded in elevating smoking to be one of the most popular, successful, and widely used items of the early 20th century.

In response to the mounting evidence that smoking cigarettes damaged one's health, the tobacco industry hired the nation's leading

public relations firm. The industry followed the consultant's advice and focused its efforts on disrupting the usual processes of knowledge production in medicine, science, and public health. Consequently, the leading tobacco companies embraced the scientific discourse that assumes there is always more to know. The tobacco industry's strategy was to exaggerate that principle in order to spread doubt and uncertainty about the known facts. The tobacco industry's campaign did not attack the validity of scientific institutions to analyze the facts; instead, they accused scientists of not wanting to find the correct data.

Eventually, the tobacco industry lost its battle by paying over \$206 billion through a court settlement. However, that punishment was only achievable because it was delivered by an independent court system that fairly weighed the facts.

Borrowing a page from the tobacco playbook, Donald Trump has not directly attacked the concept of democracy; instead, he undermines the credibility of democratic institutions by accusing them of not treating him and his supporters fairly. For example, he

attacked Congress for not throwing out Biden's electoral votes, and he condemned the courts for their tossing out his 60 cases challenging the outcome of the election. His repeated message was that the election was rigged.

All politicians and political parties can be justly accused of lying from time to time about their accomplishments or their intent to accomplish things they have no power to do. However, past efforts from major political players have stayed within a sandbox of playing with democratic institutions.

Trump stepped outside that sandbox on the night of the 2012 presidential election when he tweeted, “This election is a total sham and a travesty. We are not a democracy!” He mistakenly thought that Obama had won the election without the majority popular vote.

Four years later, Trump won his presidential election without winning the popular vote, but he didn't mention that fact. Instead, when the polls indicated that he might lose the 2016 election to Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton, he claimed it would have been rigged if she had won. Then,

Imran Khan confessed to being 'selected', says Khaqan Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi says PTI Chairman Imran Khan has confessed to being "selected".

"The hallmark of Imran Khan is that his statements from two different days do not match," said the PML-N leader while talking to a private TV news channel on Thursday night.

"Imran Khan should tell the nation if it was the establishment that brought him to power in the 2018 elections. He may say that it was by mistake that he entered politics. It was [the] establishment that dragged me into power

after [the] 2018 elections."

He said most of the PML-N leaders were put behind bars during his [Imran Khan's] four years in power. Now, he should reveal if it was he or the establishment that made such decisions, he said.

"Similarly, national debts increased manifold in his tenure. He should tell if the establishment was responsible for this volume of debts," he said.

Imran Khan, while addressing a seminar on August 18, criticised the establishment and asked them to review their policies as there is still time left to make changes. Referring to the incum-

bent government, he said that the establishment imposed these "thieves" upon Pakistan.

"How did the establishment let them [the current government] rule us knowing about the foreign conspiracy? This is because they have the power right now," said the former premier.

"No matter how much you [the establishment] call yourself neutral, the nation will blame you for imposing this government on us." He also said, "It [the establishment] is forcing us to accept these thieves and for that, they are spreading fear among the nation." Reacting to Imran Khan's INP



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan, Aibek Artykbaev calls on Federal Minister for Commerce & Investment, Syed Naveed Qamar.

Islamabad court orders authorities to shift Gill to PIMS, conduct another medical check-up

ISLAMABAD : An Islamabad district and sessions court on Friday directed Islamabad police to shift PTI leader Shahbaz Gill to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) for another medical examination and submit a report on the condition of his health.

The court issued the directives as it suspended a plea by police seeking the physical custody of the PTI leader for another eight days.

Gill, who has been arrested in connection with the FIR registered against him for allegedly inciting mutiny among armed forces, was produced before Judicial Magistrate Raja Farrukh Ali Khan earlier today. He was taken to court in an ambulance from PIMS, where he was shifted late on Wednesday night after he complained of breathing problems amid reports of him being subjected to torture while

in police custody. Footage from outside the courtroom showed officials crowding around Gill, who appeared to be having difficulty breathing, as he arrived in a wheelchair. In a video shared by the PTI's official Twitter account, Gill could be seen crying out for his "mask" while being taken to the courtroom. The tweet described the scene as "heartbreaking". In its order, the court contemplated whether the period of Gill's two-day remand, which was approved on Wednesday, had lapsed. The court observed that the investigating officer (IO) had sought permission from the PIMS' management to conduct an investigation at the facility, but his request was denied.

Had the IO's request been accepted, "it could have been considered that the time of physical remand started from the point when the doctor granted permission for [the investiga-

tion]," the court order said.

It added that the time of the physical remand "would start when the custody of the accused would formally be given to the investigation officer for interrogation and recovery and by no stretch of imagination the time spent by the accused in hospital can be considered as a time of physical remand".

During the hearing, police asked the court to extend the PTI leader's physical remand for another eight days.

The judicial magistrate noted that the court had previously granted police two-day physical remand of Gill. "Why are you making a request for eight [more] days?" he questioned.

The judge also questioned whether the previous physical remand remained "uninitiated". "Was the earlier two-day remand technically uninitiated? Were police able to investigate during the two days' time?" INP

Gilgit-Baltistan platinoids await exploration: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The earthen crypts of Gilgit-Baltistan province of Pakistan are rich in Platinum Group Metals (PGMs) that can be a potential source of foreign exchange earnings for the country, reports WealthPK.

"About 200 kgs of different PGM group metals can be extracted from 200 tons of raw material a month, and this processing rate is enough to tackle the country's financial crisis," said Principal Geologist in the Global Mining Company and former GM Geology in the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) Muhammad Yaqub Shah in a discussion with WealthPK about the strategic minerals.

Yaqub said he had worked in Gilgit-Baltistan as a field geologist in different positions for more than 20 years. He said in every developed country, the list of PGMs or strategic minerals was periodically notified officially. These minerals are classified as prioritized over all other ordinary minerals. Sometimes, these precious metals are stockpiled or traded by countries but only under strict official control. No pri-

vate body is allowed to trade them. Unfortunately, in Pakistan no such type of official activity is ever performed in Pakistan.

The PGMs consist of six precious but rare earth metals i.e., 1) Osmium Os, 2) Rutenium Ru, 3) Platinum Pt, 4) Palladium Pd, 5) Iridium Ir, 6) Rhodium Rh, etc. The industrial application of every mineral is separate. In the upper crust of the earth, the average distribution of PGMs is different but mostly they are found in the quantity of 0.0005 parts per million (PPM is gram per ton in a rock). Their concentration of 5 grams per ton is considered economic.

In the international market, they are sold at a price. During the month of July 2022, the rates of different PGMs were – Osmium US\$14 per gram, Ruthenium US\$22 per gram, Platinum US\$33 per gram, Palladium US\$66 per gram (mostly its price is equal to gold with little difference), Iridium US\$176 per gram, and Rhodium US\$453 per gram.

Yaqub also discussed with WealthPK about the successful exploration chapter of PGMs in GB named 'Geo-Chemical

exploration and evaluation of gold, base metals, Northern Areas (NA), Pakistan". It was executed from 1992 to 2001 by the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) with the technical and partly funded coordination of the Australian government.

After a deep analysis, Australian experts recommended Gilgit-Baltistan for further proceedings. They extensively trained the Pakistani experts from different geological departments, such as Pakistan Minerals Development Company (PMDC) and Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP). At the end of training, Australia deployed two experts in Pakistan to lead the project. During 10 years, 50,000 sq. km area out of the total area of 70,000 sq. km was fully explored. The remaining area could not be explored due to regular snowfall on glaciers. It was impossible to collect samples from there.

About 4,096 samples were collected from 2,296 sites of GB and were analyzed in different labs in Pakistan. 1,379 samples were sent to Ultra Trace Laboratories. INP



KARACHI: Newly elated President Pakistan Hockey Federation Sadar Khalid Sajjad addressing a press conference at KPC.

Avocado production promises sizable foreign exchange: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan can earn sizable foreign exchange by promoting avocado cultivation on commercial scale, as the fruit is in great demand worldwide.

Owing to its nutrient profile, avocado is one of the most popular fruits on the global market and is regarded as a superfood. It is uncommon in Pakistan and usually imported by supermarkets and sold to a limited number of people at a price.

Talking to WealthPK, Senior Scientific Officer at the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) Dr. Nur Ullah said, "Aside from its smooth, creamy, and delicious flesh, avocado fruit is a favourite because of its special vitamin profile, which places it among the superfoods. The best growers and exporters of the fruit are Peru, Mexico, and California, US."

"In Pakistan, both grafted (vegetatively grown) and non-grafted (seed grown) avocado plants are available, but it is crucial to remember that grafted plants are superior to non-grafted ones since they are more true to type. By this, we mean that the taste, shape, or color of the fruit may differ from the mother tree from which the seed is obtained owing to cross-pollination in non-grafted plants," Dr. Nur Ullah added.

"Furthermore, fruit-bearing is not guaranteed. With a high plant mortality rate, the un-grafted plant may produce fruit after 5 years, 10 years, and 13 years, or not at all whereas grafted plants typically begin to produce fruit after 3 to 5 years of plantation," he said.

"Hass and Lula grafted avocado trees have been successfully cultivated in Pakistan in Sargodha,

Lahore, Sukkur, and even Charsadda in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Hass is an export variety," he added.

"Since no concerted efforts have been made to increase avocado production for export, the local crop ends up rotting in the fruit stands," said the NARC scientist.

"Avocado plant requires adequate drainage, water availability, and warm, humid weather without frost. Since they grow to be as large as mango trees, the trees require space between them. They are often planted in hilly areas for good drainage and to prevent the cold from settling in the lowlands," he said. "Avocado plantlets should be planted in the Kharief season, shielded from frost for three years, and should bear the fruit in October or November. Fruit setting takes place a few months after flowering. INP

Shahbaz Gill bursts into tears on his way to court

ISLAMABAD: Senior PTI leader Shahbaz Gill was shifted to an Islamabad district and sessions court from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) at 7:30am on Friday under strict security arrangements for a hearing on the seditious case filed against him.

Gill came out of the rear gate of the medical facility on a wheelchair and had on an oxygen mask due to breathing issues. He was coughing in the ambulance. A doctor accompanied Gill to monitor his health.

Ahead of the start of formal proceedings, Gill's counsel Faisal Chaudhry went to inquire after him as well. A video of Gill crying and saying he is unable to breathe when he was shifted out of the ambulance is being circulated by media outlets. On reports of Gill's mask being snatched, the correspondent said that due to overcrowding his mask was removed from his face. During the hearing, Gill appealed to the court for his mask to be given back. "For God's sake, give me back my mask," he said. At this, the judge asked him if he intends to stay, to which Gill said he will if his mask is provided to him. Later, an oxygen cylinder was also brought to court for Gill. INP

Pakistan rejects deliberate Indian attempts of pre-poll rigging in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has categorically rejected the deliberate Indian attempts of pre-poll rigging and overt manipulation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement today [Friday], Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Ifikhar said the latest announcement of permitting even temporary residents in the occupied territory to register as voters is a clear manifestation of the treacherous Indian design to influence the outcome of so-called elections in IIOJK.

The Spokesperson reiterated Pakistan's complete rejection of India's steps aimed at turning the Muslim majority in IIOJK into a minority.

The spokesperson said despite its reprehensible measures that have followed the illegal and unilateral actions of 5th August 2019, India will not be able to break the will of the Kashmiri people or to mislead the world community.

Asim Ifikhar urged the Indian government to desist from all actions in the IIOJK that violate the international law, the UN Charter, and the 4th Geneva Convention. INP



ISLAMABAD: Ex-CM GB, Hafiz Hafeez ur Rehman calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

CPEC enhances Sino'-Pak cooperation for sustainable development: Envoys

ISLAMABAD: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has contributed to the high-quality green and sustainable development in Pakistan, and it will push for more such cooperation to promote sustainable and green development in the country.

The views were expressed by Chinese and Pakistan envoys at a webinar exploring green development under CPEC, according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Friday.

While delivering a keynote speech at the forum, Nong Rong, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan said that China and Pakistan have boosted cooperation in green energy. "Five wind power projects have been completed under CPEC with a total capacity of 300 megawatts, and another 300-megawatt solar power project has been completed," noted

Nong Rong revealed that more green projects are ongoing under CPEC as "[the] Karot hydropower plant has successfully entered commercial operation[s] and large hydropower projects such as SK are progressing," adding that the Matiari-Lahore power transmission line helps cut "the line loss from 17% to 4%, greatly reducing energy loss and improving efficiency."

Green and sustainable development is also generating huge employment opportunities in Pakistan, shared the envoy. "According to statistics, CPEC has created 85,000 jobs for Pakistan," Nong explicated, "For example, the construction of Gwadar port has created 4,000 jobs among which 3,800 are [taken by the] Pakistani people."

Such ideas are echoed by Moin Ul Haque, Pakistani Ambassador to China, who termed CPEC as a "people-centric, socially inclusive, environmentally friendly, and green and sustainable" initiative.

Haque said that "the recently completed Karot hydropower project is an example of [the] clean, green vision of CPEC" and that he was more than "happy to see more CPEC projects [being] taken into consideration in the green development aspect."

With a growing emphasis on green development, said Haque, China and Pakistan have been working to build a green corridor to focus on areas of agriculture, environment, food, climate change, and food security. "Our two sides are now working to finalise the blueprint of the green corridor to carry out practical cooperation. And in this respect, agriculture has been identified as a key area of cooperation," noted Haque. As per Haque, a bilateral meeting to this end will be held before the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) on CPEC this year, and an action plan is also underway with the support of many research institutions, the academia and ministries. Hosted by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), the CPEC Green-Development High-Level Policy Dialogue aims to engage the key stakeholders from China and Pakistan including the governments, investors, regulators, developers, academia, and civil society to reflect on the success of major initiatives implemented under the BRI and seek a better way forward. INP



WASHINGTON DC: Ambassador Masood Khan met Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Ambassador Michele J. Sison to discuss a host of issues ranging from Pak-US multi-lateral cooperation on sustainable development goals, connectivity and digital inclusion.

Digital health sector needs public-private partnerships: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Renowned digital health innovator and co-founder of doctHERs — an integrated digital health care platform — Dr. Asher Hasan said public-private partnerships are the most viable model for health tech and can offer each party shared resources, opportunities, and capabilities.

Talking to WealthPK, Asher said the e-health sector has suffered several setbacks in terms of viability of business models to both develop and implement digital health programs.

"Here at doctHERs, we

believe a large number of challenges the e-health sector currently faces can be overcome with multi-lateral partnerships with like-minded partners," he added.

Dr. Asher said collaboration with digital health stakeholders is also the key, as a 'single player' does not have access to every set of capabilities (e.g., IT, health, market expertise) or resources (e.g., infrastructure, funding, market access) required to succeed.

He said there is lack of a holistic ecosystem with enough diverse stakeholders and the agendas

may be converging to visionary goals.

"Finally, we regularly see users across Sindh, Punjab, etc. with limited understanding of personal health, low usage of mobile devices by the older age users, and limited internet connectivity access in rural areas of Pakistan," Dr. Asher said.

He suggested that the Government of Pakistan take some key steps to unleash e-health nationally, such as promoting provisional and district-level health programs — possibly public-private partnership is the only way to strengthen the

system for delivering quality maternal and child health services, including financially managing systems.

"Regular monitoring of existing and future e-health interventions for short and long-term change in outcomes can improve targeted areas of the health sector," he added.

Dr. Asher said a real-time dashboard can provide immediate results of progress and bring Pakistan to the international scale where the availability of pharmaceutical medicines or healthcare workers in the

vicinity followed by the expectant mothers transported to nearby centers for assisted delivery can allow live maps and surveillance — powered by digital technology.

Commenting on the future of e-health, Dr. Asher said it is important to consider how digital health is well-positioned in a low and middle-income country like Pakistan. The application of digital health can revolutionize health care in part by improving the uptake and adoption of mobile devices and internet technology in primary care. INP

Pakistan categorically rejects India's pre-poll rigging attempts in occupied Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has categorically rejected India's pre-poll rigging attempts in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and called on the international community to take cognizance of its attempts at effecting illegal demographic changes in the region.

In a statement issued on Friday, the Foreign Office spokesperson said: "Pakistan categorically rejects the deliberate Indian attempts of pre-poll rigging and overt manipulation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir."

The statement said that the latest act of permitting temporary residents in the occupied region to register as voters "is a clear manifestation of the treacherous Indian design to influence the outcome of 'so-called' elections" in the territory.

"Pakistan reiterates its complete rejection of India's entire litany of steps aimed at turning the Muslim majority in [occupied Jammu and Kashmir] into a minority — including the formulation of the so-called 'Delimitation' Commission and its baseless report, the issuance of fake Kashmiri domiciles to millions of outsiders, and changes in the property laws," the FO statement read.

Despite all reprehensible measures that have followed the illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, "India will not be able to break the will of the Kashmiri people or to mislead the world community", the FO said. India stripped semi-autonomy from occupied Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, changing the Indian constitu-



QUETTA: A view of accumulated rainwater in Gawalmandi chowk during rain.

Three children saved from drowning in Korangi Nadi

KARACHI: The police have rescued three children from drowning in the Korangi Crossing Nadi of Karachi on Friday.

According to details, the Baloch Colony police said that it received a distress call on emergency helpline 15, where citizens told the officials that three children have drowned in Korangi Nadi.

Upon receiving information, the Baloch Colony police reached the spot and launched a rescue operation. "Three girls — aged 14, 13 and 9 — were stuck in the Korangi Nadi," officer Sikandar said.

The police later rescued all three children and shifted them to a nearby hospital for medical treatment.

A day earlier, seven people of a family were swept away in Karachi's Malir River as heavy rains continued to batter the metropolises.

The accident occurred around the Malir river, where the car of the family was swept away in Malir river by a flash flood due to the rain. The rescue teams found the vehicle, while the search for the missing seven people was underway. INP

70% of Sukkur still submerged with rainwater

SUKKUR: Almost 70 per cent area of Sindh's third biggest city, Sukkur is still submerged with rainwater as the drainage system has collapsed.

According to details, after heavy rains in Sukkur, 70% of the city area has been flooded. Old Sukkur, New Pind, Shalimar and Barrage Road areas have been submerged in water as the drainage system has been badly affected.

Station Road, Ghanta Ghar, Hussain Road and other business areas were also submerged in water.

It should be noted that 17 districts in Sindh province have been severely affected by floods, so far 141 deaths including 66 children have been reported and around 500 people have been injured.

Due to the floods, more than 500,000 people have been displaced, thousands of houses have collapsed and many roads have been damaged. Furthermore, more than 600,000 acres of agriculture land has also been affected after heavy rains and floods across the province. INP

Sadiqabad: Two Wapda employees 'kidnapped'

SADIQABAD: Unknown men on Friday have 'kidnapped' two Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) employees in Sadiqabad, Punjab.

According to the local police, the WAPDA went to restore electricity on the complaint in Nawazabad. They were reportedly kidnapped after they were returning to Mahi Chowk.

The police said that teams have been set up and they are trying to trace the location of the WAPDA employees. According to details, Nizam Din Khoso, in-charge Karampur Gird Station, resident of Tangwani Taluka was returning from his duty late night on his bike when he reached near Sokar Stop, suddenly unidentified armed men intercepted him kidnapped him at gunpoint. INP

Punjab govt decides to arrest Pml-N leaders in assembly riots case

LAHORE: The Punjab government on Friday decided to arrest Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders in the PA riots case.

As per details, arrest warrants for SAPM, Atta Tarar, Rana Mashood, Mirza Javed, Raja Manan and others have been issued in the Punjab Assembly riots case. The case of the riot is registered at PS Qila Gujjar Singh. On April 16, as the Punjab Assembly met to elect a new chief minister after Usman Buzdar resigned, the house turned into a battleground after lawmakers from PTI tossed lotas at the then deputy speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari. INP

After Saeed Ghani, Shehla Raza also resigns as Sindh minister

KARACHI: Another Pakistan People's Party leader Syeda Shehla Raza has tendered her resignation as member of the Sindh cabinet to lead political campaign of the party during local government elections scheduled on August 28.

Taking to Twitter, Shehla Raza said that she has submitted her resignation to Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah.

The resignation came within an hour after Sindh Information Minister Saeed Ghani resigned from his post to participate in the upcoming local government (LG) elections.

According to details, Saeed Ghani has resigned as Sindh information minister to participate in the upcoming local gov-

ernment (LG) elections.

In a tweet, Saeed Ghani — who is also the PPP Karachi President — noted that his resignation was not accepted yet. "PPP leadership and Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah will approve the resignation," he added.

It is pertinent to mention here that the second phase of the LG elections in 16 districts of Karachi and Hyderabad will now take place on August 28.

The second phase of the local body elections was originally going to be held on July 24 in 16 districts of Karachi and Hyderabad division. The by-polls on the NA-245 were scheduled to take place on July 27. INP

Chinese firms receive prestigious environmental awards

ISLAMABAD: Chinese firms operating in Pakistan have bagged prestigious awards for putting in place the best practices to preserve the environment, according to Gwadar Pro. The 19th Annual Environmental Excellence Awards (AEEA 2022) were presented by the National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH) in a ceremony held in Karachi.

As per the details shared with Gwadar Pro by Ruqiyah Naeem, General Secretary NFEH and Project Director AEEA 2022, the Chinese firms including China Power Hub Generation Co., Harbin Electric Int'l (O&M), HUANENG SHANDONG RUYI (PAKISTAN) ENERGY (Pvt.) Ltd., LONGi Solar, and SEPCO III Electric Power Construction Co. received the environmental awards. The Thar coal mining and integrated power plant projects are

being executed by Chinese firms including Sino-Sindh Resources Ltd. (SSRL), Thar Coal Block-1 Power Generation Co. (TCB-1), and Sindh Engro Coal Mining Co. (SECMC). They also got the awards. SSRL and TCB-1 are owned by Shanghai Electric, while China Machinery Engineering Corp. (CMEC) is a major shareholder and EPC contractor of the SECMC. SSRL, TCB-1, and SECMC are among the early-harvest projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative. The Harbin Electric Int'l received two awards, with the second award for tree plantation at its sites. Moreover, Bestway Cement received the award for installing Pakistan's largest commercial solar power plants with a combined capacity of over 49 megawatts. INP

Punjab announces dates for Matric, intermediate exam results

LAHORE: The Punjab education boards have finalised the dates for the announcement of results of the annual examination of matriculation and intermediate.

According to details, all Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISEs) have finalized the dates for the announcement of the results of classes 10 and 12.

All BISEs will announce the results of class 10 on August 31 while class 9 results will be declared on September 19. Meanwhile, the results of first year and second year will be announced on November 17 and October 20, respectively.

The dates were finalized during a recent meeting of the Punjab Boards Committee of Chairmen (PBCC) in which chairpersons of all nine BISEs

participated. Chairpersons of BISE Bahawalpur, DG Khan, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, and Sargodha attended the meeting.

The annual exams of class 11 under all BISEs started on 6 July and ended on 26 July. The final papers of class 12 started on 18 June and ended on 4 July.

Whereas, the annual exams of class 9 under all BISEs started on 26 May and ended on 10 June, while the final papers for class 10 started on 10 May and ended on 25 May.

Chairpersons of BISE Bahawalpur, DG Khan, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, and Sargodha attended the meeting. INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Agha Hassan Baloch chairs fourth meeting of Board of Governors at the ministry.

tion to allow non-Kashmiris to vote and own land there.

Pakistan has called on India to desist from all actions in occupied Jammu and Kashmir that violate the international law, the UN Charter, and the 4th Geneva Convention.

Furthermore it has demanded that India "release all political prisoners detained on trumped-up charges, halt human rights violations in the [occupied Jammu and Kashmir], lift the brutal military siege, and let the Kashmiris exercise their legitimate right to self-determination as stipulated in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions".

Pakistan has appealed to the international community to take immediate cognizance of the blatant Indian attempts at effecting illegal demographic changes in the occupied Jammu and Kashmir and to hold India to account.

India is expected to register as many as 2.5 million new voters in the occupied region, a top official said late on Wednesday, in a move local political parties said was an attempt to influence upcoming elections.

Chief Electoral Officer Hirdesh Kumar in occupied Jammu and Kashmir told reporters that more than 2 million new voters are expected to be enrolled in the region ahead of local polls due in November. The new registrants could increase the voter count by more than a third, adding to the existing 7.6 million voters in the region. INP

Marriyum dares Imran to name agencies that briefed him on PPP, PML-N's 'corruption'

Minister for Information Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday challenged PTI chief Imran Khan to name the agencies and the people working in them who he claimed had briefed him on the PPP and PML-N alleged graft.

"Who used to give you the reports? Who used to tell you all these things? Name them," she pressed.

Aurangzeb's statements came a day after the former premier claimed that the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) used to tell him about the alleged corruption done by the two political parties. "I started believing that the establishment would act but that did not happen," he said in a seminar yesterday.

He had also urged the "neutrals" — a term he uses for the military establishment — to review their policies while there was still time, adding that "decisions taken behind closed doors" were not in the country's favour.

Addressing a news conference today, the information minister recalled that the PTI chief had passed similar comments regarding the appointment of Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja.

"You said the agency had given you guarantees about the CEC [...] who had given you the guarantees? What did they say? And why were you receiving guarantees?"

Read more: Coalition leaders want Imran to name the 'neutrals' who backed CEC Raja's appointment

And then, Aurangzeb continued, Imran said that he used to receive reports from agencies. "Did you ask for those reports? And who from the agencies gave you reports?"

"Imran Khan sahab, stop this drama and lies. If you have the courage, tell us who from what agency used to give you reports on PPP and PML-N [...]" she demanded.

And reveal the guarantees that were given, she went

on, asking if those guarantees involved not declaring Imran a "foreign agent or the PTI a foreign-funded party".

Marriyum then said that Imran always levelled allegations on others all the while refusing to give answers himself, appear before courts, or provide evidence to back up those accusations.

"You slung mud on other people, and you say the agencies were giving you briefings? Do you have any shame?" she questioned. "You made a joke of such a big country's democracy. Do you think your sins will be forgiven if you say agencies were giving you briefings? Then take their names."

The minister recalled that PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif appeared in courts even when his wife was on her deathbed. "Even after being removed, he talked about respecting the vote."

"He attended hearings every day but never said that he would set the country on fire or break it into pieces," she said. "He, instead, said that the institutions should stay out of politics."

Aurangzeb alleged that after the no-confidence vote, Imran "begged the neutrals to protect him".

"But when the institutions played the role of neutrals, which is a line sketched by the Constitution [...] you are now, once again, asking them to help you and save your false politics."

Responding to the PTI's claims of the government crackdown against journalists, she said that the largest number of violations took place in Imran's tenure.

"But now you will have to answer. You keep mentioning 'Mr X' and 'Mr Y' [...] take their names," the minister pushed. "We want answers, not allegations. This drama needs to come to an end now. Give answers on the foreign funding [...] nothing can divert attention from this now. You will have to give answers, no matter how far you go," she added. INP

PM Shehbaz Sharif pledges provisions of agricultural loans

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday pledged to ensure provision of agricultural loans, quality seeds and pesticides to the farmers of the country.

Taking to his official Twitter handle, the prime minister noted that eight sub-committees have been constituted to bring reforms in the agricultural sector as "it is the backbone of our economy".

PM Shehbaz Sharif further said that the government would take important decisions for the development of the agricultural sector in the coming days.

A day earlier, PM Shehbaz Sharif directed the concerned authorities to formulate an emergency agricultural reforms plan within two days

to facilitate the farmers and uplift the sector.

According to details, the prime minister made the directives while chairing a high-level meeting on agricultural sector reforms held in Islamabad.

PM Shehbaz, who was presented the recommendations of eight sub-committees of different relevant sectors, said the reforms plan should be based on the recommendations of the said sub-committees.

The prime minister said the government would also provide modern equipment and facilitate the process of loans. Moreover, the silos would be constructed to help the farmers store wheat and agricultural produces. INP



ISLAMABAD: Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Faisal Al-Thani, Ambassador of the State of Qatar called on the Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Miftah Ismail at Finance Division.

NA-245 Karachi by-poll: Pak army to act as 'Quick Response Force'

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army troops will perform 'Quick Reaction Force' duties in case of any law and order situation arising during by-election on a Karachi National Assembly, NA-245.

According to details, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Raja Sultan has directed the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and the Sindh government to provide peaceful environment to the voters of the constituency.

The CEC, Sikandar Raja, personally spoke to the Chief Secretary Sindh, Inspector General of Police (IGP) and senior officials of the concerned agencies on telephone and asked them to ensure implementation of election code of conduct at all cost.

District Police Officer (DPO), District Returning Officer (DRO), Returning Officer (RO) and District Monitoring Officer were directed to inform law enforcement agencies of any miscreant spoil or intend to spoil the election environment during the preparation of the polling

results.

In a statement, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said that Pakistan Army will perform 'Quick Reaction Force' duties in case of any law and order situation arising during NA-245 by-poll. "Pak Army officials will be deployed outside the most sensitive polling stations", he added.

The electoral watchdog also directed the Sindh administration to take immediate action against violators of code of conduct. "Stern action should be taken against the elements on the interference in the election process", it added.

The Election commission has also constituted a central control room in Islamabad, which will continue to function till the results are announced.

The by-election on Karachi's NA-245 is scheduled to take place on August 21. The NA-245 seat had fallen vacant after the death of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNA Dr Aamir Liaquat Hussain. INP

Imran used 'NAB' against his political opponents: Kaira

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qasim Zaman Kaira on Friday accused former prime minister Imran Khan for using the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) against his political opponents and for personal vested interest.

Addressing a press conference here flanked by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader Mian Manzoor Ahmed, he said that during the democratic tenure of PTI they have arrested the individuals prior to any accusations against them.

Kaira said Imran Khan was changing his narrative on daily basis and did not abide by the rules and laws of the state.

He said that the chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would visit the hospital with a huge delegation to inquire the health of his party leader Shabbaz Gill, adding that Imran continued blaming the national institutions without any authentic proof.

Imran Khan had blamed the national institutions and other countries for

toppling his government through 'regime change' but it had changed through a democratic process without involvement of any external force.

Kaira claimed that Imran Khan had already lost his popularity among the masses and now every citizen knew his reality and blame game on others.

The adviser alleged that Abraj Group and Arif Naqvi were involved in money laundering and had looted the national institutions during Imran Khan's so-called democratic tenure. He said that Imran Khan could not run away from the case of Tushkhana, he should be held answerable to the court and people of the country.

"Sometimes Imran talks about the division of the country and hence not following the law of the state."

Replying to a question, he said that the Government of Pakistan would highlight the Kashmir issue at all international forums and strongly condemned the heinous acts of fascist Modi regime against the innocent Kashmiris during the recent wave of state-sponsored terrorism. INP