

QUETTA VOICE

Email address:
quettavoic@gmail.com

Saturday 10
September, 2022

[https:// www.quettavoic.com/](https://www.quettavoic.com/)

ABC Certified

Quettavoic



Cholera claims lives of 2 minor girls in Dukki, 1500 infected



NFRCC takes stock of latest flood situation, UNSG to visit centre

Pakistan's contribution to climate change minimal but country among most affected: UN chief

ISLAMABAD: United Nations (UN) Secretary General Antonio Guterres said on Friday that Pakistan's contribution to climate change was minimal but it was one of the countries most affected by its consequences.

He made the remarks as he attended a briefing at the National Flood Response Coordination Centre (NFRCC) alongside Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The UN chief is currently in Pakistan on a two-day trip to seek the world's support for the catastrophic floods which have devastated the country and to highlight the urgency to deal with the climate change crisis.

Guterres began by expressing his appreciation for all those working tirelessly to support the victims of this "unprece-

dent natural disaster". "Humanity has declared war on nature and nature is tracking back. But nature is blind. It is not striking back on those who have contributed more to the war on nature," he said.

Pakistan has contributed very little to climate change but is one of the countries most affected by its consequences, he highlighted.

"It is like nature has attacked the wrong targets. It should be those that are more responsible for climate change that should have to face these kind of challenges."

It is the international community's obligation to drastically reduce emissions and support countries that need to invest in resilience and recovery, he said.

"My voice is entirely at the service of Pakistan and its peo-



ple. We know our contribution is limited [...] but we are totally committed."

He went on to say: "I have always seen an enormous sense of solidarity in Pakistan. My

admiration for this country and its people is limitless [...] I will do my best to raise awareness in the international community." Speaking at the briefing, the premier thanked the UN chief for undertaking the visit, saying that his empathy and support was "great encouragement".

"The government of Pakistan, along with the provincial governments and all stakeholders [...] are working together to provide relief and rescue to millions," he said.

PM Shehbaz said that efforts were underway and flood affectees were being moved to safer areas while also being provided food and shelter. "The challenge is absolutely beyond human capacities, yet humans have to handle it and we are."

He once again thanked the UN secretary general for visit-

ing Pakistan, stating that authorities would provide him with first-hand information about what was happening in the country.

Earlier in the day, the prime minister had welcomed the UN secretary general as he arrived at the PM House along with his delegation.

The premier and the UN chief held a meeting to discuss the situation arising out of the catastrophic floods in the country.

The two sides focused on joint efforts to carry out relief, rescue and rehabilitation at international level to mitigate the sufferings of the flood-affected people.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb and senior officials were also present in the meeting. INP

The curse of narcotics in Balochistan

Syed Ali Shah Analysis

The curse of narcotics has ruined our society. Thousands of young people fell prey to the curse of heroin during the last four decades in Balochistan, Pakistan's least developed province. In Quetta, it is very difficult to walk on Jinnah Road because of the young heroin addicts begging and snatching things on the roadside.

First, they (addicts) beg and then try to snatch anything from mobiles to watches and purses from women. Such incidents have frequently taken a place with addicts snatching purses, mobiles, etc, and sneaking into the main city nullah, which snakes through Quetta's high-security zone.

This situation prompted the Quetta police and the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) to launch an operation in the main nullah the other day. CTD and police claimed to have killed eight alleged drug peddlers during an exchange of fire.



This was for the first time that police and CTD conducted such a targeted operation.

about the curse of narcotics. This would be a good initiative to prevent the youth from falling prey to drugs.

Fate of thousands of addicts is still shrouded in mystery

However, the fate of thousands of young addicts still shrouds in mystery as the government is yet to make a plan for their complete rehabilitation. The challenge for the government is to stop the narcotics smuggling from Afghanistan and rehabilitate the addicts.

Officially an awareness campaign on social media, radio, newspapers, and TV channels should be launched to create awareness among the people

History of heroin dates back to USSR invasion of Afghanistan in 1979

The menace of narcotics in general and heroin, in particular, dates back to the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan at the end of December 1979. The war in Afghanistan had and has direct impacts on Pakistan in general and Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces in particular. It is a common saying that 'Kalash inkove and Heroin' culture is the product of the Afghan war, which distorted the true tolerant face of the two provinces.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing a joint press conference along with United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres at Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Federal Capital. Guterres called the lack of global attention to climate change "insani."

GTAB called off hunger strike after acceptance of demands

News Desk

QUETTA: Government Teachers Association (Constitutional) called off its 37th days hunger strike till death after acceptance of demands. The GTAB observed 37th days of hunger strike till death for the degradation of the junior teachers.

"We have decided to end our strike", Mujeebullah Gharshen, the President of the GTAB (Constitutional) announced on Friday evening. Provincial ministers Naseebullah Marri, Muhammad Khan Lehri, Noor Muhammad Dummar, MPAs Malik Naseer Shahwani, Nasarullah Khan Zarai, and others were also present on the occasion.



The provincial ministers assured the protesting teachers that the Chief Minister Balochistan has already issued directives regarding the degradation of the junior teachers. "Government has decided to upgrade all junior teachers", Naseebullah Marri, the Balochistan Minister for Education said.

The minister assured the notification about the degradation of the junior teachers would be issued very soon.

Cholera claims lives of 2 minor girls in Dukki, 1500 infected

Hussain Zarkoon

Cholera claimed two lives of minor girls in Balochistan's Dukki district on Friday. Health officials said a cholera outbreak has been reported from various parts of the district. Over 1500



people were infected by cholera in the district.

Two-year-old girl Ayesha daughter of Syed Mohammad Nasir in Killi Hayat Khan Nasir and the seven-year-old girl died in Yaro city, the official informed. The death toll in cholera-related incidents rose to six during the last few days in the district, the health official mentioned. He requested anonymity since he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Cholera has infected people in 19 union councils including Dukki, Lumi, Tal Ismail and others. The Balochistan health department is yet to establish medical camps to overcome the situation and make sure provision of timely health facilities to the affected people.

No necessary health facilities in the district headquarters hospital in Dukki. The patients have been facing problems because of the non-availability of medicines and trained health professional staff.

Commander 12 Corps visits PakAfghan border friendship gate

Sardar Muhammad Khondai

QUETTA: Commander 12-Corps, Lieutenant General Asif Ghafoor visited Pak Afghan border Chaman on Friday. The Commander visited friendship gate at Pak Afghan border Chaman and interacted with pedestrians. Best possible mechanism being developed to facilitate citizens of both countries for their legal travel and trade.



NFRCC takes stock of latest flood situation, UNSG to visit centre

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is scheduled to visit the National Flood Response Coordination Centre (NFRCC) on Friday and will receive a briefing on the scale of damage. During the morning session of the flood response centre today, a comprehensive review of the current flood situation and response measures with a focus on the rehabilitation plan was taken. Guterres arrived in Pakistan on Friday for a two-day solidarity visit amidst the catastrophic situation caused by floods

in the country. He was received by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar at the Islamabad International Airport. During his visit, Guterres will be visiting flood-affected areas in the country.

The districts that are affected the most in Sindh due to the heavy rains and flooding are, Qambar Shahdad Kot, Jacobabad, Larkana, Khairpur, Dadu, Noshero Feroz, Thatta and Badin, while Quetta, Naseerabad, Jafarabad, Jhalmagi, Bolan, Sohbatpur and Lasbela are worst-hit in Balochistan. Web Desk

Imran will understand everything after going to jail: Rana Sanaullah

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Friday said that if Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan goes to jail, he will understand everything. Addressing the media, Rana said that with the efforts made by the government on the issue of missing persons, relief has been given to the people. He said that with the way the Chief Justice has emphasized the issue of missing persons, people had already got relief.

Expressing his views on Imran Khan's statement of being "dangerous", the federal minister said that such things can only be said, adding that he [Imran] will go to jail, he will understand everything. The 'jail season' is also passing so fast, adding that he could have been sent to jail in July or August. INP

OGRA notifies increase in LNG prices for September

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Friday notified an increase in prices for imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for September. OGRA has increased the LNG price for Sui Northern System by \$0.0283 while the price for the Sui Southern System has been increased by \$0.0021 for September.

According to the OGRA notification, the new LNG price for SNGPL has been set at \$17.47 per unit while the prices for SSGC has been set at \$17.4762 per MMBTU.

Earlier in August, OGRA had set the LNG price for SNGPL at \$16.94 while the price for SSGC was set at \$17.47. INP

US extends further \$20m humanitarian assistance for Pakistan's flood

ISLAMABAD: US Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Samantha Power on Friday announced that the United States, through the USAID, extended an additional US\$20 million in humanitarian assistance to support the people affected by severe flooding in Pakistan.

Pakistan was ravaged by heavy monsoon rains, as well as landslides and glacial lake outburst floods that have been ongoing since June, the USAID Administrator said.

"The impact of these floods has been felt widely across Pakistan. An estimated 33 million people have been affected, nearly 1,400 have died, and more than 12,700 have been injured. Infrastructure in the flooding's path has been decimated, with more than 1.7 million homes, an estimated 13.8 million acres of cropland, thousands of miles of road and hundreds of bridges damaged or destroyed," she said here in a press briefing.

Power said this support was built on an announcement last week of US\$30 million in humanitarian assistance to help the people of Pakistan affected by these devastating floods. Since August 12, the United States has provided over US\$50.1 million in disaster assistance to help the people of Pakistan.



"With these additional funds, USAID partners will continue to provide emergency relief supplies, multi-purpose cash and shelter assistance, support for livelihoods, logistics, and humanitarian response coordination systems. USAID will also prioritize water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance as a preventative measure to mitigate the anticipated spread of waterborne diseases."

USAID has also deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to lead the US government's humanitarian response efforts in Pakistan. This elite team, composed of disaster experts from USAID, is assessing the damage, identifying priority needs, and coordinating with the Government of Pakistan and humanitarian partners. The United States is the single largest humanitarian donor to Pakistan.

US Ambassador Donald Blome on the occasion said the worst flood has occurred in Pakistan "Our sympathies are with the people of Pakistan", he added.

"The United States is deeply saddened for the flood victims and the loss of loved ones, livelihoods, and homes throughout Pakistan. We stand with communities in Pakistan during this difficult time and will continue to help them in this time of need." INP

QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

Balochistan needs inclusive development

Balochistan, the country's resource-rich province is lagging behind all other provinces in terms of key social indicators including education, health, sanitation, clean drinking water etc. Mismanagement, injudicious distribution of development funds coupled with a lack of political commitments are the underlying reasons behind backwardness of the province.

Track record shows, successive governments have always launched politically motivated development schemes to please their influential supporters. Constituency, individual and political schemes always dominated the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) in every year's financial budget. Nexus among the Chief Minister's Secretariat, the Planning Development and Finance Department continue to deprive the constituencies of other lawmakers.

Opposition's constituencies were ignored. Opposition lawmakers constituencies remained ignored during last three-years of former chief minister, Jam Kamal Khan's government. Despite agitation in and outside the assembly, the opposition lawmakers were not able to force government to allocate funds for their constituencies.

This is irony of fate that the mandate of the lawmakers is to frame laws since the assemblies are called legislative assemblies. But legislators are least bothered about the legislation rather they take keen interest in construction of roads, buildings etc. That's why, provincial governments prefer not to hold local bodies elections rather decentralization of development projects.

Development deficit of Balochistan is likely to be Rs. 100b. Balochistan government announced to have allocated Rs. 172 bs for the PSDP during the financial year 2021-22. However, currently the government has more than Rs. 40bs as per the statement of ruling party's Spokesman Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetrar. The province has already spent Rs. 40bs and it has more than 40bs for the remaining year. It means the deficit is close to Rs. 100bs.

Chief Minister Qudus Bizenjo needs to put his house in order and introduce a strict financial policy to ensure completion of development projects. The government should ensure inclusive development and end the practice of exclusive development so that this backward province could come at par with other parts of the country. Action should match words now.

Vulnerability of Balochistan Pakistan to Climate Change

Syed Muhammad Qaseem

According to Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI), Pakistan is the 5th most vulnerable country to climate change. Pakistan will face a \$26 billion annual loss. The greenhouse gas emissions of Pakistan are 0.7% which is nearly negligible. Greenhouse gases are resulting in the increase in temperature of the planet earth.

Pakistan received heavy rainfall in this monsoon. The rainfall was followed by extreme flash floods in many parts of the country. The 3 provinces Khayber Pakhtun khwa(KPK), Sindh, and Balochistan particularly received heavy rainfall and floods. Till now most damages are recorded in the Balochistan province.

Balochistan is the most vulnerable to climate change.

Balochistan is the most vulnerable province of Pakistan to climate change. Many times this province has faced different types of natural disasters due to climate change. Drought is the major threat to Balochistan as Barkan the district of Balochistan faced a prolonged drought of 22 months from 1999 to 2002, and Quetta experienced severe droughts in 2000, 2004, and 2008. During this monsoon season, Balochistan faced extreme floods in almost every part of the province.

Houses damaged in Quetta



The floods swept away dams and destroyed the buildings, houses, roads, and bridges in Balochistan, KPK, and Sindh. The communication links were destroyed by the merciless waves of the flash floods. This resulted in the break-

down of physical communication between the provinces. The provinces faced food shortages, as all of the roads were broken and the bridges collapsed. Train service was also suspended due to the collapse of a bridge in Bolan, a dis-



Balochistan totally paralyzed due to floods: The flood waves destroyed the infrastructure in Balochistan. The primary source of income for Balochistan's 85 percent population is agricultural. Floods destroyed crops on

large scale, and people faced economic issues. Life in the province was totally paralyzed as it faced a prolonged Sui gas suspension, no electricity, a shortage of food items, and no mobile network. The government announced 7 days holiday for all educational institutions in the province, due to the continuous floods.

The floods claimed many precious human lives. Most of them were children, women, and aged men. The provincial government and Federal government seemed very weak to cope with the situation. Balochistan's government called for the Pakistan Military to be stationed in the different flood-affected areas of the province in order to handle the unwanted incidents.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) need to make disaster management plans to handle such situations. It should highly train its employees so that human lives can be saved. Dams must be built on emergency bases to prevent floods and store water for drought-like situations. The dam construction work should be strictly supervised to increase the construction quality of the dams. The provincial government must ensure zero encroachment in the waterways. Pakistan as a developing

country needs the cooperation of the International community.

Pakistan's economy is mainly based on agriculture and climate change is adversely affecting its crops. Climate change is having an impact on the seasonal conditions of Pakistan in which summers will get longer and winters will be shorter. Pakistan is economically weak and it is difficult for the country to fight climate change. As a developing country, it has limited resources and poverty is spread all over the country. The average daily income of more than half of the population is around 2 dollars.

Bridge collapsed in khuzdar district of Balochistan

The highest emitters of greenhouse gases are developed countries. Interestingly only 10 countries emit 68 percent of the greenhouse gases. Pakistan being a signatory of the Paris agreement on climate change and being the least emitter of greenhouse gas needs the cooperation of the international community to help it to fight against climate change.

The author is a student of Software Engineering at the Balochistan University of Information Technology Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIEMS). He frequently writes about looming threat of climate change and global warming in Balochistan and Pakistan

Demons of darkness

By Raof Hasan

This is a season of desperate voices emanating from all those who see their political fortunes dwindle. Not used to such treatment in the past, they remain incredulous that it is actually happening to them and they are no longer being rescued by their traditional benefactors.

Every day, a new rumour is malevolently coined about a deal which has been struck with the powers that matter. Be it the Sharifs or Bhutto/Zardaris, they appear to be virtually begging for the reprieve they once thought was their prerogative.

The Sharif camp is buzzing with news that their leader is coming back after settling things with their nemesis while Zardari is calling out loud that his help has been sought to put things right in the country. Apparently, neither is true. In fact, the reverse may be closer to reality.

The stranglehold is tightening around Nawaz Sharif on two counts. The British government has refused to extend his visa for further stay and his appeal before the court is likely to be rejected soon, and for good reasons, too. Whether it was the case of his illness and consequent escape to London, or the pretence of his subsequent treatment for imaginary suffering, he has been lying through his grinding teeth. Once his appeal is thrown out, no further legal means

will be available to him to continue living in the UK with his present status. The options for him would include seeking political asylum there which his party stalwarts claim he would not, or shift to another country that is willing to receive him which is unlikely, or come back to Pakistan to walk into the prison cell to complete his term.

On the other count, the Rana Shamim gambit has turned out to be a disgraceful sham. First, he refused to acknowledge the authenticity of the original affidavit in the court. After going through the contents of a sealed copy of what he calls the genuine affidavit, together with dealing with a number of sordid twists and turns in the case, the bench has decided to indict him and others involved for contempt of judiciary on January 7. This has turned the tables on the Sharifs who played the devious game to bring the courts under pressure by assaulting their credibility to steal relief in cases which are pending before them for adjudication.

On the Zardari front, under growing political pressure because of endemic corruption and lack of performance, the PPP government in Sindh is gradually losing ground even in the rural sector which has been generally considered to be its strong base. Every day, there are cases in the courts where its stalwarts

are routinely reprimanded, even humiliated on account of their shoddy deals and grossly deficient governance.

Yet their leader does not shy of saying that unnamed people have sought his help in putting things right in the country, and that he has conditioned it with the ouster of the incumbent government. So, apparently, he considers this to be cuckoo land where he can manipulate things as he may deem and desire, completely oblivious of the reality that times have undergone a drastic change and there may not be much sympathy anymore for these corrupt charlatans and their sycophants and bootleggers. Not only that those times of yore do not exist any longer, there is no likelihood of any movement to bring them back either.

But their likely political demise will impact many a people who have been recipients of their largesse in the past and who would like to keep the coffers flowing in the future also. Their fascinating structure with corruption and glorification of crime is immeasurable. No wonder that these politically comatose politicians are being kept alive artificially only on television screens and newspaper pages. There is a dire desperation to this effort as if its failure will signal the demise of the entire media edifice. So stories of their rampant corruption are regu-

larly pushed under the carpet while grandiose fictional achievements are attributed to their tenures in power. Those whose induction and survival in the power echelons was owed entirely to the patronage of the most vicious of dictators are projected as ardent champions of democracy and stalwarts who have kept the candle of freedom burning. Nothing could surpass this utter distortion.

While the media is likely to continue playing a demeaning role, it is the judiciary which can rid the country of these worms which have skinned it of its flesh and spirit. The devilish machinations of these criminals lie exposed before the courts. Rather than letting them escape the dragnet of justice yet again, it is for these courts to punish them for their grievous excesses. They don't deserve any mercy. The country has plunged to its nadir simply because of a culture of crime and corruption they cultivated and sponsored. Today, it is a towering structure which casts its hideous shadow on all who move within its precincts.

Their punishment and elimination from the political arena is not going to bring the twin scourge of crime and corruption to an end. It would only be the beginning of a prolonged struggle to cleanse society of its numerous contaminations which are

sunk in deep. It is not going to be an easy task. It would require the best of intentions, promulgation of progressive, pragmatic and effective policies and a string of transparent, accountable and functional institutions to work in tandem with unprecedented resolve and dedication to do the job.

But for brief interludes, the country has mostly been subjected to merciless demonisation. Completely drained of its spirit and character, it has been horribly mauled. Work needs to be done on a variety of fronts which would require immense courage and character. No shortcuts will do. The entire distance will have to be covered in measured and well thought-out steps targeting the entire repertoire of maladies that Pakistan is afflicted with. It is a mammoth challenge, but one which has to be undertaken urgently. The Pakistan that we have today is a poor replica of the entity that the Quaid had envisioned on August 11, 1947: a liberal, progressive, enlightened and tolerant country. Instead, we have turned it into a regressive and bigoted country. It continues to plunge further depths of retrogression as the demons of corruption and religiosity cast a long shadow on its ability to rise from despair. But rise it must because, without that happening, there is no recourse to salvation.

Future directions

By Atta-ur-Rahman

As the floods sweep across much of Pakistan, they have highlighted the need for proper water management. It was in the 60s when President Ayub Khan built the Warsak, Mangla and Tarbela dams. Little work on new dam construction has been done in the subsequent 50 years.

In contrast China has constructed 80,000 large dams, and India has built over 5000 large dams while Pakistan has only two big dams. If Pakistan too had built about a thousand large dams, much of the water that is causing national devastation could have been stored and used both for agriculture as well as for electricity generation.

The country's river systems are dependent on melting of glaciers in the snow-covered Himalayas and with global warming, increased flooding is to be expected both in terms of overflowing rivers as well as flash flooding due to unusually heavy rains, as has happened now. The water storage capacity of Pakistan in the Indus Basin is hardly 30 days whereas India has a storage capacity of about 200 days while in Australia and US this capacity is about 900 days. It is imperative that a well-thought-out water management strategy is urgently implemented as the present floods are likely to be a regular feature with further intensification over the next few decades, on account of global warming.

But dam construction is only one of the major problems facing Pakistan. The

country has dismally failed to tap into its real wealth, our children, by neglecting education. Our planning ministry needs to drastically change the overall directions of the country to a technology driven knowledge economy. Innovation leading to creation of disruptive businesses must become the national priority. For this it is important to promote the venture start-up eco system.

Pakistan's main problem is that its exports are at a miserable level of about \$30 billion since we are exporting only low value textiles, agricultural products etc. We need to emerge from this low value trap and start manufacturing and exporting high value products such as electronics, engineering goods, automobiles, new solar energy technologies, pharmaceuticals as well as AI products such as those based on Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things etc.

To achieve this, a number of steps need to be taken. Our universities and research centers must integrate innovation and entrepreneurship into their programmes. Universities today are harbingers of change. They can act as the platforms from which thousands of successful start-ups can sprout up. Technology Parks need to be made an integral part of all universities, and government support to university budgets linked to their success in promoting new businesses and enhancing national exports.

One excellent model is that of the University of Cambridge. I know the uni-

versity well as I spent over eight years there first for my PhD and later as Fellow of Kings College Cambridge. This association has continued over the last 50 years. A large Science Park is associated with Cambridge University which has been the home to thousands of new start-up companies in high tech fields. Established in 1970 by Trinity College, Cambridge Science Park is today Europe's largest centre for commercial research and development.

Cambridge city is now home to some of the fastest-growing tech companies in the UK such as Darktrace, GeoSpock and more. These companies have been estimated to have an annual turnover of GBP2.4 billion.

There are huge opportunities in Pakistan in many sectors that remain unexploited including waste recycling, mineral extraction and processing, advanced agriculture and energy storage systems. Our universities need to be upgraded with high quality faculty, and technology parks established within them to foster new start-up companies. They should be given liberal research grants in both applied and basic areas of science, for technology development and for social sciences. The private sector has a pivotal role to play in these efforts by investing in Research and Development -- this is almost absent in Pakistan. The government can help jumpstart the private sector R&D efforts by giving tax breaks to industry investing in research and development.

The gathering storm

Zamir Akram

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

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

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

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

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

A more sinister aspect of such Indo-

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

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

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

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

US gun violence

By Belen Fernandez

On July 27, two top executives from prominent US gun companies -- Marty Daniel of Daniel Defense and Christopher Killoy of Sturm, Ruger and Co -- appeared before the United States House Committee on Oversight and Reform chaired by New York Democrat Carolyn Maloney. The hearing came on the heels of the latest succession of massacres -- the Buffalo supermarket, the Uvalde elementary school, the Highland Park July 4 parade -- that have come to define life in America.

As the Guardian noted, this "marked the first time in nearly two decades that the CEOs of leading gun manufacturers testified before Congress". The CEO of Smith and Wesson Brands -- which according to the committee earned at least \$125m in 2021 alone from the sale of assault-style rifles, a frequent prop in mass shootings -- had declined to participate in the attempt at "oversight". But the two willing invitees presumably spoke for the US gun industry as a whole when they shot down the notion that their products and aggressive marketing practices have anything to do with rampant killing.

Killoy insisted that a firearm is an "inanimate object" that cannot accrue responsibility, while Daniel -- whose

firm manufactured the inanimate object that slaughtered 19 school kids and two teachers in Uvalde -- maintained that the blame must be assigned to the individual "murderers". In Daniel's view, "these murders are local problems that have to be solved locally". For her part, Maloney took the opportunity at the hearing to express her "hope [that] the American people are paying attention today", noting "it is clear that gun makers are not going to change unless Congress forces them to finally put people over profits".

But were we Americans really paying attention, we would have noticed long ago that our country is entirely predicated on putting profits over people -- from the corporate destruction of the environment to the manic incarceration of poor minorities to a healthcare system that is decidedly ill. This is not to mention US behaviour abroad, where the "war on terror" and other forms of military slaughter with US-made weapons have also produced many, um, "local problems".

In her initial invitation to the three arms executives to testify before the House committee, incidentally, Maloney encouraged them to "explain to Congress and the American people why they continue to sell products to civilians that

are meant to be used in the battlefield".

Which brings us to the following question: When the US converts the world into a battlefield, how do Americans know where to draw the line? More precisely put, it is not immensely shocking that a country that inculcates its citizenry with a macho, shoot-'em-up attitude vis-a-vis other human populations might end up with some, well, "murderers" on its hands -- particularly when the domestic panorama is one of dystopian capitalism and acute alienation.

As for the culpability of US gun manufacturers in scenes of armed sociopathy from Buffalo to Uvalde, there is no denying that the industry itself is morally depraved -- and yet it is merely fulfilling a nefariously lucrative function made possible by general systemic depravity. The fundamental blame for mass shootings does not lie with the CEOs of Daniel Defense and Sturm Ruger -- just as the blame for US-bound migrant deaths does not lie with off-scaped goat human smugglers, whose reprehensible business is only made possible by America's brand of deadly capitalism and profit-driven border militarisation schemes. On July 29, two days after the House Committee on Oversight hearing, the US House voted to ban assault weapons.

Pakistan reports 160 fresh Covid-19 cases as positivity rate drops

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported 160 new Covid-19 cases during the past 24 hours as the country's positivity rate dropped to 1.03 percent, reports National Institute of Health (NIH) on Friday.

day virus during the same period. Following the detection of new cases, the COVID-19 positivity rate dropped to 1.03 percent as compared to yesterday's 1.22 percent. The NIH stated that almost 98 coronavirus patients were being treated in the Intensive Care Units (ICU) across the country at different medical facilities. It is pertinent to mention here that a total of over 1.5 million Covid-19 cases have been reported in Pakistan so far, while the total number of coronavirus-related deaths has reached 30,600.

Meanwhile, four more patients succumbed to the day virus during the same period. Following the detection of new cases, the COVID-19 positivity rate dropped to 1.03 percent as compared to yesterday's 1.22 percent. The NIH stated that almost 98 coronavirus patients were being treated in the Intensive Care Units (ICU) across the country at different medical facilities. INP



MATIARI: A large number of deserving people standing in a queue to get free food organized by Pak Army.

Police arrest target killer Javed Langra in Karachi

KARACHI: The city police have apprehended a target killer, Javed alias Langra on Friday, alleged to have killed three people, at Rizvia society of Karachi. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Central Maruf Usman announced the arrest of target killer while addressing a press conference in the metropolis.

He revealed that the District Central Police arrested the target killer with the help of technical means and CCTV footages. The suspect was apprehended from Rizvia society near Nazimabad area of Karachi. SSP Central noted that Javed Langra - along with his associates - was involved in targeted serial killing and robberies. During the investigation, the arrested suspect revealed that his group works for Arshad alias Mamu.

Maruf Usman further said that the arrested suspect killed Ibrahim Sheikh in Rizvia on June 4, 2022, with the help of Arshad Mamu and three other associates. "It was a series of murders and Ibrahim Sheikh was the third victim," he added. According to the police official, firstly, Jamshed Alam was killed in Preedy Electronic Market. "When the arrested suspect's associate - Bahadur alias Faisal

- was arrested, Jamshed Alam's drive identified him," he added. During the investigation, Javed Langra revealed that the driver - who testified and identified Bahadur - was later killed in Bufferzone. The suspect further said that money were received for each targeted killing. The SSP central added that the target killer committed 11 robberies from January 1 to August 31, 2020 in various areas of Karachi. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Central Maruf Usman announced the arrest of target killer while addressing a press conference in the metropolis. He revealed that the District Central Police arrested the target killer with the help of technical means and CCTV footages. The suspect was apprehended from Rizvia society near Nazimabad area of Karachi. SSP Central noted that Javed Langra - along with his associates - was involved in targeted serial killing and robberies. During the investigation, the arrested suspect revealed that his group works for Arshad alias Mamu. Maruf Usman further said that the arrested suspect killed Ibrahim Sheikh in Rizvia on June 4, 2022, with the help of Arshad Mamu and three other associates. INP

China-Pak youth group acts as bridge between donors and floods' victims

ISLAMABAD: A civil group named China-Pakistan Youth Exchange Community is acting as a bridge between donors and disaster victims, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. It continues to provide assistance for those affected, improve their work efficiency, and pass on love and care," said Ma Bin, leader of the community. According to CEN, the community received messages from Pakistanis asking for help and started fundraising online since August. Now they have raised around RMB 2 million to buy tents, food, daily necessities and other supplies for flood-stricken people in different districts of Pakistan. The group has provided 600 tents to flood victims in Multan which are urgently needed and mostly used by people displaced by floods. In the future, they will provide another 500 tents for those flood-affected residents in Multan, according to Ma Bin, leader of the community. Ma said that its Multan team had provided a complete set of rescue plan for 100 particularly poor families in flood-stricken

areas. Each of the rescue packages contains a tent, two blankets, drinking water, food and daily necessities. Notably, they also bought PVC sheets used in the construction of animal shelters, forage and feed for animals. Ma told China Economic Net (CEN) that his volunteer witnessed a father who wanted to rescue both his son and a cattle from the water, but had to watch his cattle washed away. "Apart from houses and valuables, flash floods washed away local people's poultry and livestock, and completely damaged standing crops. All these were their source of earnings, now people do not know how they would survive. It's heartrending. We hope to do our best to help iron brothers in distress," said Ma. "Now we have seven groups of volunteers collecting and distributing required items to families in desperate need. On September 3, our fourth team distributed a total of 300 parcels including flour, cooking oil, rice and sugar in Nowshera, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province," Ma told CEN. "We also established cooperation mechanism with China Rural

Development Foundation, Beijing Tongxinyuan Charity Foundation and other foundations who are raising funds in China and providing professional instructions for us," Ma added. Despite traffic disruptions, scattered victim settlements and difficulties in sourcing supplies, the volunteers went deep into the front line of disaster relief and delivered clean water and dry ration packs to 200 families in Gilgit and 375 families in Balochistan. Ma said that large areas of Balochistan still sit half-submerged in the water. "The floods turned people's world upside down. Many household items were also damaged. Disasters and secondary disasters are still developing." On September 4, volunteers of the community distributed cooked food to 8,000 affected residents in Balochistan. "Our efforts are far from enough, now floods in the Gilgit mountainous area have passed through the border. We saw many children's shoes and clothes are worn out, and all kinds of living and food materials are urgently needed," Ma appealed for more support for Pakistani people. INP

Flood-damaged Bahrain Kalam road restored

SWAT: The flood-damaged road from Bahrain to Kalam was opened for traffic on Friday. According to Deputy Commissioner Swat Junaid Khan, the District Administration Swat, Engineers 11 core, FWO and NHA have restored traffic, after which land connectivity has been restored to Matiltan, Gabral, Ariana and other areas, adding that the rehabilitation of the land route will speed up rehabilitation and relief work.

He further added that the road from Bahrain to Kalam has been opened for light traffic, while passing heavy vehicles should be avoided. Travel on the road only with four-by-four vehicles, he said.

The district administration and Deputy Commissioner Swat have also appealed to tourists to avoid traveling to the upper tourist spots of Swat for the time being. INP

One killed, two injured in road mishap in Okara

OKARA: One person was killed and two other were wounded when the motorcycle they were riding on was hit by a truck in Okara on Thursday night.

According to details, the accident occurred at the Rajwal Road in Okara where a rashly driven truck hit a motorcycle, killing a man on the spot and injuring two other.

Police and rescue teams reached the spot and shifted the dead and injured to hospital. According to rescue team the deceased was identified as Muhammad Amjad. Police sources said that the truck driver managed to escape from the scene after the accident. INP

Govt employees' two-day salaries to be deducted for flood relief

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday allowed presentation of a summary carrying proposal to deduct two-day salary of the federal government employees in the federal cabinet for its approval.

The amounts deducted would be later deposited in the Prime Minister's Relief Fund set up for the flood-affected people.

They elaborated that the employees whose salaries would be cut included those working in different ministries, divisions, government departments, civil armed forces, civilian and contractual employees.

Sources further said that if deemed appropriate, the employees would be asked whether they were ready to voluntarily donate money for the flood victims. INP

Two TikTok-crazy Hafizabad girls reach Karachi to become models

KARACHI: The social media craze is misleading millions of innocent youth infusing their minds with the sense of false pretenses and the exciting ideas of instant fame. One such example could be seen when two young girls of Hafizabad studying in grade 10 and who were inspired by TikTok left their homes and reached Karachi to become models, it came to knowledge on Friday.

According to details, two young schoolgirls from Hafizabad who were fascinated by the ideas of fame and stardom took an extreme step and decided to go to Karachi to try their luck in the modelling field.

But to accomplish their dream, the young girls needed money as they didn't have any wherewithal with them. So the girls came up with an idea to steal money from their respective houses.

After stealing money, the duo who are class fellows bought train tickets and reached Karachi some 20 days ago.

When their parents found their daughters missing, they informed the law personnel who with the help of CCTV cameras and latest technology located their whereabouts and recovered them. INP

IHC suspends notification declaring NA-246 vacant

ISLAMABAD: Suspending the notification issued for declaring the seat of NA-246 vacant, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday sought replies from the respondents by issuing notices to them.

During the hearing of the petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) member of the National Assembly (MNA) Abdul Shakoor Shad against the acceptance of his resignation by the NA speaker, his counsel said that his client, who was elected as an MNA from Lyari, Karachi in 2018 general elections, was made to sign the resignation letter to show his solidarity with the party, which had been ousted from power through a no-trust vote.

When IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Athar Minallah asked whether the speaker had called the MNA to his chamber for the verification of his resignation, his counsel replied that he had been called once. "But since he was sick he could not show up," he explained.

"Did the speaker accept his resignation without listening to his point of view?" the IHC CJ questioned. INP

IHC suspends ECP notification declaring NA-246 Lyari seat as vacant

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday suspended a notification from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for declaring NA-246 Lyari as vacant on the request of PTI lawmaker Shakoor Shad.

The ECP declared the seat vacant after National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf accepted resignations of 11 PTI MNAs. Shakoor Shad, however, later approached the court and pleaded that he had not submitted the resignation personally and it was rather forwarded by the party to which he had submitted to show solidarity with the then prime minister Imran Khan. The IHC today directed the PTI MNA Shakoor Shad to join the proceedings of the National Assembly and issued notices to speaker and National Assembly secretariat for their response on the matter. It is pertinent to mention here that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has postponed the scheduled by-elections in 13 constituencies. The decision was taken by the ECP in a high-level session chaired by chief election commissioner (CEC) Sultan Sikandar Raja regarding the organisation of by-elections. It has been decided that the by-polls scheduled for September 11, September 25 and October 2 will be postponed and the new dates will be announced soon. INP

Floodwater from Manchar Lake inundates six more villages

JAMSHORO: The flood water released from Manchar Lake amid rising levels has devastated the nearby villages in Jamshoro district with Pakistan Army and Navy teams working round the clock to shift affectees to safer locations.

According to details, the flood water released from Manchar Lake through deliberate cuts has devastated six more union councils in Sehwan.

Indus Highway at Sehwan and multiple link roads are also submerged, disconnecting multiple villages in Dadu and Sehwan areas.

The National Highways Authority (NHA) on Wednesday closed the Karachi-Larkana Indus Highway due to flooding at various locations.

According to NHA sources, the highway is submerged under flood water near Mehar, Khairpur Nathan Shah and Sehwan toll plaza. The water level on the location is around 3- feet, they added.

The Motorway police has said that the highway cannot be reopened until the water level recedes significantly. INP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman NADRA Tariq Malik and CEO ILink Najeeb Agrawalla exchange signed agreement at NADRA Headquarters Islamabad.

Provincial chief executives also responsible for people going missing: High Court

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Athar Minallah has said that provincial chief executives are also responsible for going missing.

The justice made the conversation as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appeared before the court in the missing person case on Friday.

The premier offered consolation to the young son of journalist Mudassar Naro, who remains missing since 2018.

IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah said that the court now wanted to issue a ruling on the issue of missing persons.

We have already said that the disappearance of people is against the constitution, the justice said. Shehbaz Sharif said that he will not evade his responsibility under any pretext.

The prime minister told the court that Naro's son has urged him to find his father. "This is too disturbing. God knows who has made the child's father disappear, but finding him is my responsibility. I assure the court that I will do my best to find the missing person," Shehbaz Sharif said.

Addressing the prime minister, Justice Minallah said that it was a major issue but the state failed to react in the way it should have. The justice said that the situation was too complex and that unfortunately, a person who remained chief executive of the country for nine years wrote that people were picked up and sent to other countries. This shows that it was a state policy, said Justice Minallah. He also said that the court appreciated the fact that the current government has formed a cabinet

committee on the issue. The court said that the federal government failed to listen to the families of missing persons. The court wants the issue to be solved and this is the reason that it asked the prime minister to appear before it, the judge said.

The Islamabad High Court has been hearing the petition filed by the relatives of Naro and other missing persons since the days when the country was under the PTI. Then-Prime Minister Imran Khan also appeared before the court once in the same case.

The prime minister was accompanied by the court by Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb and Law Minister Azam Tarar.

Before the prime minister arrived at the court, authorities beefed up security at the court and around it. Streets were closed using barbed wires and barriers. INP

Tailored meteorological services provided to Pak to tackle floods: CMA

BEIJING: Meteorological departments from China and Pakistan are gearing up to respond to flood disaster in Pakistan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday quoting China Meteorological Administration (CMA).

On CMA's World Meteorological Centre Beijing website, Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD)'s user account is tailored with global model products in real time for reference. Zhuang Guotai,

Administrator of CMA, noted that CMA attached great importance to the flood situation in Pakistan and has worked closely with the Pakistani meteorological department to tackle floods. He reinforced CMA's commitment in enhancing cooperation with PMD to jointly ramp up the capacity of disaster preparedness and response to climate change. Since mid-June 2022, Pakistan has been drenched by extreme monsoon rains that have led to the country's worst

flooding in a decade. As per CMA, it has been paying close attention to the monsoon floods in Pakistan since June and collaborating with PMD in meteorological satellite monitoring (in particular FY-3 and FY-4 satellites) and remote sensing for flood monitoring and analysis, meteorological information application, weather forecast, etc. "As a long-term partner, CMA will step up cooperation with PMD," Zhuang told CEN. On top of that, on CMA's World Meteorological Centre

Beijing website, PMD's user account is tailored with global model products in real time for reference, assisting the weather service for disaster response. Besides, the CMA Cast system in Pakistan has been upgraded with new equipment and up-to-date application platforms. Also, the reporter learned from CMA that meteorological departments from both countries have held consultation, calling in meteorologists from technical bodies from both sides to jointly analyze the

weather and climate factors of rainstorms battering Pakistan since June.

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Pakistan is facing one of the worst flooding events in its history. As of 27 August, rainfall in the country was equivalent to 2.9 times the national 30-year average.

In March to May this year, Pakistan was gripped by a devastating heatwave, which impacted water supplies, health, agricultural output and the economy, and caused rapid glacier melt. INP

Table with 5 columns: S.No, Permit No, Vehicle No, Name of Owner, Expiry Date. Lists various vehicles and their owners with permit details.

Pakistan may not be able to achieve Rs7.47 trillion tax target amid floods

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan may not be able to achieve tax collection target of Rs7,470 billion as the country faces worst devastation from record monsoon spell that has resulted in flash floods nationwide.

According to sources within FBR, it would be near impossible to achieve tax collection target as stable growth and policy and tax reforms are required for the purpose.

The finance ministry has revised growth rate for the country at 3.3 percent following floods which was previously set at 5 percent. "The growth rate will slowdown in the ongoing fiscal year following flash floods," the sources said, adding that it would vastly affect large scale manufacturing and per capita income. A Finance ministry document has revealed that the economic growth in the country could fall below to 2.3 percent in the ongoing fiscal year 2022-23 after floods caused losses of over Rs2,000 billion which included damages to lives, infrastructure, crops and livestock in the affected areas. According to sources in the ministry, a new strategy would have to be developed to move forward while keeping in view the losses and devastation from the floods.

The economy has suffered an Rs2,000 billion losses owing to floods and the inflation is likely to remain between 25 to 27 percent, the report said. It highlighted that the growth rate was set at 5 percent for FY2022-23 however, it seems difficult to achieve targets set in the annual development plan.

The growth in key crops could likely fall to 0.7 percent from an expected target of 3.9 percent, growth in industrial sector could drop to 1.9 percent from an expected 5.9 percent while growth in services sector could decline to 3.5 percent from an estimated 5.1 percent in the ongoing fiscal year.

It shared that economy which is already facing issues regarding balance of payment and debts will be hurt further from floods and it could result in hike in inflation. Assistance from friendly countries, and global development partners would be required to give a helping hand to the economy, the report added. The growth in key crops could likely fall to 0.7 percent from an expected target of 3.9 percent, growth in industrial sector could drop to 1.9 percent from an expected 5.9 percent while growth in services sector could decline to 3.5 percent from an estimated 5.1 percent in the ongoing fiscal year.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail presided over a meeting on the issue of payments to Chinese IPPs, at Finance Division.

Khurram Dastgir launches Energy Policy report, thanks China for CPEC, Mushahid says Ukraine War underlines need for 'Energy Security'

ISLAMABAD: China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd (CSAIL), in collaboration with Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), invited the international top industry consultants, social and environmental experts, power industry enterprises, officials of Government of Pakistan (GOP), students and scholars, to a Forum on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Power Projects and launch of a Report on "Overview of Pakistan's Power Sector and its Future Outlook". More than 150 people attended the event, including the Federal Minister for Energy Khurram Dastgir Khan, Shahjehan Mirza, Chairman of PPIB, Director of the Political & Information Office of the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad, Wang Shengjie, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Senate Defense Committee & PCI, I and other senior executives of Chinese enterprises in Pakistan. CSAIL actively implements the Belt and Road Initiative and participates deeply in the construction of CPEC Projects and has 3 CPEC projects including the Karot Hydropower Project. With more than 30 years of experience in the development and utilization of clean energy projects, such as hydropower, wind power and solar energy, China Three Gorges Corporation (CTG) has accumulated valuable practical experience in the Pakistan's electricity market, conducted in-depth studies and research on Pakistan's Power Sector, and accumulated the report "Overview of Pakistan's Power Sector and its Future Outlook" was jointly prepared by

CSAIL with the assistance of relevant think tanks such as PCI, National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), and other relevant think tanks and dozens of senior experts and scholars from Pakistan's Power Sector. The report systematically summarizes the practical achievements in the construction of CPEC Power Projects, analyzes the current situation of Pakistan's Power Sector, highlights the achievements of CPEC Power Projects, and looks forward to the future development direction of the industry. Participating Pakistani experts and scholars said that in the past, there were serious shortages in the electricity supply in Pakistan, so CPEC was launched and it has helped alleviate this problem of power shortage. The Chinese government strongly making great contributions to the energy security of the Pakistani people. While attending the launch ceremony of the report, Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division), Mr. Khurram Dastgir Khan said that since the launch of the CPEC, related projects are progressing smoothly. In terms of energy, China has launched a series of power projects under the CPEC to help Pakistan meet its residential and industrial electricity demand. Pakistan's energy shortages have been greatly alleviated. Electricity has always been one of the constraints on Pakistan's development, and China has been able to enhance Pakistan's energy supply capacity not only through the efficient use of various energy resources. INP

'Massive slowdown', Asad Umar reacts to surge in dollar against rupee

ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister and General Secretary Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Asad Umar on Friday said that auto sales fell by 54 percent compared to last year and the massive slowdown in economy is becoming visible.

In a statement on Twitter, Asad Umar pointed out that rupee depreciated by around 5 rupees against the dollar on Friday. Despite all the squeeze, the rupee is once again under pressure and falling sharply after the IMF deal, he said.

General Secretary PTI further mocked the government as he underscored the economic catastrophe that has taken the country in its grip. He said highest inflation in Pakistan's history, rupee tumbling, while the entire power structure of the country focused on what words were used in which speech by Imran Khan.

Seems no one is on the steering wheel as country heads towards a crash, he said. INP

Flood-damaged Bahrain Kalam road restored

SWAT: The flood-damaged road from Bahrain to Kalam was opened for traffic on Friday.

According to Deputy Commissioner Swat Jumaid Khan, the District Administration Swat, Engineers 11 core, FWO and NHA have restored traffic, after which land connectivity has been restored to Matiltan, Gabral, Ariana and other areas, adding that the rehabilitation of the land route will speed up rehabilitation and relief work.

He further added that the road from Bahrain to Kalam has been opened for light traffic, while passing heavy vehicles should be avoided. Travel on the road only with four-by-four vehicles, he said.

The district administration and Deputy Commissioner Swat have also appealed to tourists to avoid traveling to the upper tourist spots of Swat for the time being. INP

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan will announce the next critical phase of Haqiqi Azadi Movement at tomorrow's jalsa in Gujranwala.

In his tweet, the PTI chairman wrote, "Tomorrow our Gujranwala jalsa will be last of our present phase of Haqiqi Azadi Movement. I will announce the next critical phase at the jalsa."

"Imported govt & its handlers are so petrified that nation is standing firmly behind PTI they are desperately moving on Minus 1 formula," he wrote.

Earlier, a meeting of the PTI's political committee presided over by Imran Khan agreed that the rallies in different cities will be held as per the schedule and mass contact campaign will be intensified.

During the meeting chaired by the former prime minister, political situation and the cases against Imran Khan were discussed.

According to the sources, it was

99 more dengue cases reported in Punjab

LAHORE: As many as 99 new cases of dengue virus were reported in Punjab on Friday, while no death was reported.

According to the Health department, a total of 1912 cases of Dengue virus were reported so far during the current year while 4 people died of the virus and 479 patients were under treatment in different hospitals of the province.

The Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department reported 47 cases of dengue in Rawalpindi, 33 in Lahore, 4 in Gujranwala, 3 in Gujrat, 2 in Multan, 2 in Kasur, 1 in Jhelum, 1 in Sheikhupura, 2 in Bahawalnagar, 1 in Okara, 1 in Khanewal, 1 in Muzaffargarh and a case of Dengue was in Sahiwal during

the last 24 hours till filling this news. All suspected cases of Dengue were kept in surveillance and their tests were being conducted.

The Anti-dengue squad under the Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) has killed dengue larvae at 2567 places in the province during continuous daily based surveillance.

The Anti-dengue squad conducted surveillance at 426,050 indoor and 113,349 outdoor places to detect dengue larvae during the last 24 hours in different places.

The P&SHD urged the people to adopt precautionary measures and keep their environment clean and dry to protect themselves from dengue. INP



ISLAMABAD: France Ambassador in Pakistan Nicolas Galey called on Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

Pakistan demands another round of water talks with India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has demanded to hold another round of water talks with India in October to discuss issues pertaining to sharing of water resources under the Indus Water Agreement, sources said on Friday.

According to details, Indus Water Commissioner Syed Mehar Ali Shah has penned down a letter to his Indian counterpart, demanding another round of talks to discuss Pakistan-India water dispute.

Sources that Pakistan has demanded India to convene a meeting on latter's controversial water projects including Pakal Dul. The last meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) was held in May 2022.

Sources said India had expressed its willingness to communicate advance flood-flow information as per the provisions of the Treaty and the practice in vogue since 1989

until 2018. The Indian side assured to arrange tours/inspections of Pakal Dul and other controversial water projects, the sources added.

In the last meeting, Islamabad sought New Delhi's response to its objections over Indian water projects including Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai.

Pakal Dul is a hydropower project with expected gross storage of 108,000 acre feet of water. The project was designed in a manner that would facilitate the dam being filled every monsoon season between June and August.

Islamabad's position on the controversial project was that the design of the project could affect the flow of the Chenab River in Pakistan. This would have a direct impact on the agricultural areas adjacent to Head Marala, a major reservoir near Sialkot. INP

Imran to announce critical phase of Haqiqi Azadi Movement on Today

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan will announce the next critical phase of Haqiqi Azadi Movement at tomorrow's jalsa in Gujranwala.

In his tweet, the PTI chairman wrote, "Tomorrow our Gujranwala jalsa will be last of our present phase of Haqiqi Azadi Movement. I will announce the next critical phase at the jalsa."

"Imported govt & its handlers are so petrified that nation is standing firmly behind PTI they are desperately moving on Minus 1 formula," he wrote.

Earlier, a meeting of the PTI's political committee presided over by Imran Khan agreed that the rallies in different cities will be held as per the schedule and mass contact campaign will be intensified.

During the meeting chaired by the former prime minister, political situation and the cases against Imran Khan were discussed.

According to the sources, it was

US dollar hammers Pakistani rupee again, scores massive gain

ISLAMABAD: The US dollar seemed to remain persistent in its upward swing leaving Pakistani rupee pressured under its vigour as the greenback has appreciated by a massive Rs3.58 in the interbank trading.

Sharing the money market data, the forex dealers informed that the US currency moved up and was being traded at Rs229 by 11am on Friday in the interbank business, up by Rs3.58 as compared to Thursday's close of Rs225.42.

Though the country's foreign reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan rose to \$8 billion with the disbursement of \$1.16 billion from the IMF, the local unit still continues to slide.

The rupee is under pressure because of numerous factors including shortage of dollars in market due to the UAE law for Pakistani travelers asking them to carry 5,000 UAE dirhams, government expenditure on the import of material/products in the wake of large-scale destruction wreaked by the recent floods, and on top of that the forthcoming debt servicing worth billions of rupees. Besides these, the US dollar was rallying all across the world. However, the USD dominance took a breather and on Friday as the Euro gained on the outsized rate hike from the European Central Bank. INP

Multiple explosions heard as fire breaks out in Karachi house

KARACHI: Multiple explosions were heard after a fire broke out in a house near Mukka Chowk in Azizabad area of Karachi on Friday.

According to the spokesperson for Sindh Rangers, two fire brigade vehicles and the Rangers personnel overcame the fire with hectic efforts after cordoning off the area.

"The fire in the house near Azizabad has been overcome completely. The cooling process is underway, and the bomb disposal squad is determining the cause of the two explosions," said the Rangers spokesperson. INP

Father-son duo arrested robbing a woman

KARACHI: Police in Karachi have arrested a father-son duo as they were robbing a woman.

The father, Azeem, and his son, Bilal, were arrested after an exchange of fire in Karachi's Samanabad area.

Bilal sustained a wound during the exchange of fire. Police say Azeem and his son were involved in muggings and often joined hands to rob people of their belongings.

The police have also recovered weapons and a motorcycle from them. Mugging and other crimes in Karachi have peaked this year with over 56,500 street crimes reported in the city so far.

At least 58 people lost their lives while resisting robberies. IHNP

Federal minister fined for breaking election rules

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan on Friday imposed Rs25,000 fine on Federal Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain for violating poll code.

Reportedly, the district monitoring officer of NA-118 Nankana Sahib issued a notification regarding violation of election code to the minister on Sept 5.

According to the notice, Mr Hussain participated in an election campaign of a candidate in violation of the poll rules on which the monitoring officer imposed a fine to the tune of Rs25,000 on the minister. INP

16 outlaws including wanted PO held; drugs, weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital police apprehended 16 outlaws, including a wanted PO, and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a police public relations officer said.

He said that DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha had ordered all zonal officers to curb the crime in their respective areas and arrest those involved in looting innocent people.

Following these directives, a police absconder was arrested by the PS Bani Gala police team during the operation. The accused was involved in murder, attempt murder charges as well, accused was absconding and latterly arrested by police team.

The accused was identified

as Raja Zaheer Ahmed. Police team also recovered one kalashnikov, 12 bore gun, two pistols with ammunition from his possession. Cases have been registered against him and further investigation is underway.

Likewise, Pulghran police arrested two accused namely Noman and Atif and recovered two 30 bore pistols from his possession. Karachi company Police team arrested a drug peddler namely Saneel and recovered 1123 gram heroin from his possession.

Similarly, Tarnol police arrested an accused namely Muhammad Naseem and recovered 1260 gram heroin from his possession. Khanna police arrested accused Umer Khan and recovered one 30 bore pistol from his possession. INP

Burglars arrested; looted cash worth Rs 10 million and valuables recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police apprehended two burglars and recovered looted cash worth 10 million and valuables from their possession, a police public relations officer said.

He said that DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha had ordered all zonal officers to curb the crime in their respective areas and arrest those involved in looting innocent people. According to the details, a citizen submitted an application in PS Bhara Kahu on August 9 that he had gone to his native town on Muharram-ul-Haram holidays, when he returned back to his residence in Islamabad, that the house lock were broken and gold ornaments and cash were missing.

Upon receiving the information, the police teams immediately responded to the crime scene, registered a case and started an investigation. On the instructions of SP City Tasawar Iqbal consti-

tuted teams under the supervision of ASP Bhara Kahu Rana Hussain Tahir consisting of SHO Bhara Kahu Tariq Rao, SHO Phulgaran Nasir Manzoor and other officials. Police teams used the latest technology and human resources and succeeded to trace the case and arrested two burglars. Police also recovered Rs 10 million and valuables from their possession. The burglars were identified as Tariq Khan S/o Khalid Khan and Sabeel Muhammad S/o Khan Muhammad. The recovered money and gold ornaments were handed over to the citizen who appreciated the efforts of the police teams and thanked the Islamabad Capital Police DIG Operations praising the excellent performance of the police teams and issued further instructions to all zonal officers that concrete steps should be taken to deal with street crime and other criminal elements. INP

Flood onslaught on human lives, properties continues

DADU: The floods continue taking its toll on human lives and properties, for they are yet to recede in their might and vigour despite the weeks have gone by on Friday.

As per the official sources, the Manchhar Lake has been breached again as part of the continuous efforts to reduce water pressure in it following torrential rains.

The Karampur embankment of Manchhar Lake has been breached following which the floodwater has started entering the Indus River.

The land connection of Sehwan with Dadu and Larkana has been cut off due to the floodwater everywhere.

Earlier, a bridge had collapsed on the Indus Highway due to torrents of gushing flood that originated from a

breach in Manchhar Lake. In Khairpur Nathan Shah, floods have claimed three more human lives.

One person died after being bitten by a snake floating in floodwater in the suburban village Glen Lander. Whereas, two others died after the roof of their house collapsed on them in Quami Charu village.

It is to be noted here that at least eight people have so far died due to flood in Khairpur Nathan Shah.

Also, the rains and floods have ravaged Qambar Shahdadkot district as the houses of people have been swept away in the torrents of gushing floods. The victims are worried and stranded in their houses, and they are using boats to move from one place to another. INP



ISLAMABAD: Sultan Ali Allana, Chairman of Habib Bank Limited, (HBL) and Director of the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development, briefing the Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani about relief work being carried out in flood stricken areas of Pakistan at Parliament House.