

# QUETTA VOICE

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## President Arif Alvi visits Nowshera to review flood relief operations



## Plan prepared for 6 worst flood hit districts of Balochistan

# Floods paralyzed life in Balochistan

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Flash floods unleashed by heavy rainfall paralyzed life in Balochistan, Pakistan's least developed province. Most parts of the province remained disconnected from the rest of the country for the seventh consecutive day as floods swept away bridges and roads.

Quetta, the provincial capital remained without power and gas supplies for the last seven days. Similarly, the suspension of internet and cellular services has compounded the problems of the people. "The damage is beyond our comprehension", Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo said.

The flood-affected people blocked the Quetta-Karachi



highway at Johan Mangochar against what they claimed unjust distribution of relief goods in the area. The workers of the Jamiat ul Ulama e Islam (F) blocked the main highway to mount pressure on the government to make sure judicious distribution of relief goods. "We will not allow the officials to swallow the relief goods and provide them to their blue-eyed", Maulana Shabir Ahmed, a local cleric who was part the protest said.

Long queues of vehicles were witnessed on both sides of the highway because of the road blockade. Subsequently, the district administration held successful negotiations and reopened the highway for traffic. Seven days on, the authorities are yet to restore gas and power supplies to

Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan.

The situation is worst when it comes to far-flung areas of the province when it comes to the availability of gas and power supplies. Flash floods unleashed by heavy rainfall wreaked havoc across Balochistan.

"Very soon, gas supply would be restored to Quetta", a well-placed Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) official said, giving no exact time for the repair. Similarly, the Spokesman of Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) stated that the power supply can be restored within the next three days to Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. Floods have damaged the 220 kV transmission line in the Bolan area of Balochistan.

## Video of Balochistan Govt helicopter dropping relief items went viral

Syed Ali Shah, News Desk

QUETTA: The video of the Balochistan government's helicopter dropping relief items went viral on various social media networks. People on social media lashed out at the government for dropping relief items in flood-affected areas.



"Look, look, they are dropping relief items and bags are bursting", a man who made the video of the helicopter said.

The debate on social media prompted the Balochistan government to issue a clarification in this regard. "Bad weather conditions, it is not possible for a helicopter to come down", the Chief Pilot of the Balochistan government said in a statement.

Balochistan has been hit hard by floods and heavy rainfall. This has claimed precious human lives and thousands of people are homeless in the province.

"Only 8 to 10 percent of food were dropped", Mir Ziaullah Langove told reporters at a news conference. He said because the entire Naseerabad division has been flooded and it was very difficult for the heli to land in floods.

The provincial government is not serious about the floods operations, people tweeted on the video. They said, "the government is wasting food items". However, the Home Minister stated that next time extreme care would be taken while providing relief items to the affected people.

# Plan prepared for 6 worst flood hit districts of Balochistan

News Desk

QUETTA: Corps Commander Balochistan, Lieutenant General Asif Ghafoor chaired a high-level meeting, which reviewed the ongoing rescue and relief operations in the province. Heads of the concerned departments including the National Highway Authority (NHA), Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) and other officials attended the meeting.

The heads of the concerned departments thoroughly briefed the coordination committee comprising senior civil and military officials about the rescue, relief operations, and the efforts to restore railway link, road link, and gas and power supplies to Quetta and other parts of Balochistan.

## Lt. Gen Asif Ghafoor in Jhal Magsi

7-day plan prepared for six worst-hit districts

Although post-recovery planning and relief efforts are ongoing across Balochistan, a particular focus would be given to the rescue and relief operations in the six worst affected districts, including Naseerabad, Jafarabad, Sahabatpur, Kachhi, Lehrn, and Jhal Magsi.

In these districts, the victims of previously inaccessible areas will be reached immediately. All stakeholders prepared and coordinated a detailed plan for the necessary rescue/relief efforts in these areas for the next 7 days.

Fortunately, the man swept away by floods suddenly grabbed the bushes and saved his life. Photo grabbed from a video made by Manan Mandokhail

## Tent camps to be set up

Tent camps will be set up in



these badly affected districts and all displaced persons will be taken care of in these camps. For better maintenance, it was also agreed that the District Administration and Army/FC posted in the area will set up their offices inside the tented camp.

The district administration will ensure that food and medical supplies are available in these tent camps in the required quantity and that further stockpiles are made to avoid any shortage.

A joint survey will continue for the rest of the districts to assess the damage to the supply of relief goods and timely rehabilitation.

All major highways restored in Balochistan. Chairman NHA (Chairman National Highway Authority) said that almost all major arteries except the N65 have been restored and all roads will be connected within the next seven days. Chairman NHA also offered the services of his department for inter-provincial road links. Commander Balochistan Lieutenant General Asif Ghafoor assured the full cooperation of the Pakistan Army in this regard.

Pakistan railway considering shuttle service from Quetta to Machh. DS Railway Quetta

informed that a high-level technical team of Railways and NLC is visiting Machh to review efforts for rehabilitation of Quetta Sabi railway track and reconstruction of Machh railway bridge. In this regard, it was discussed that the Railways may immediately consider a short-term solution for the restoration of railway services in Balochistan. In this regard, the option of shuttle service for road passengers from Quetta to Machh was also considered.

Chief Executive Officer QESCO, Engineer Kareem

Jamali briefed the forum on the timeline for the complete restoration of electricity in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. The CEO of QESCO will visit the inaccessible/remote affected areas in a helicopter provided by the Army for speedy restoration of power.

## Work is underway on the war-footing basis to restore gas supply

In the backdrop of gas supply disruption to Quetta, the forum was informed that SSGC is working on a war footing to restore gas supply to Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. Technical teams have reached the spot and rehabilitation of both 12-inch and 24-inch pipelines near Bibi Nani is in progress. The army will provide all possible assistance in this regard.

For the restoration of telecommunication services in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan, the Commander informed the forum that the PTA is being approached to repair the fiber as soon as possible.

Finally, the Commander thanked the participants for the teamwork and tireless efforts of all the institutions.



## MDCAT 2022 postponed, New Schedule ready, PMC Notifies

By: Syed Muhammad Yaseen

The Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) has officially announced delay in Mdcatt 2022. The announcement was made on PMC's official social media accounts and website a moments ago.

PMC has postponed Mdcatt 2022 in the wake of flood situation across the country. Also, new schedule of test dates has been released by PMC on its website this Wednesday.

Quetta voice was the first news website to update MDCAT aspirants regarding delay a few days ago. Pakistan Medical Commission had also uploaded new schedule of MDCAT 2022 in different cities of Pakistan. The MDCAT will be taken on different date in various parts of the country accordingly.

The Balochistan, Sindh and Federal Health departments had asked Pakistan Medical Commission to postpone MDCAT and NLE as recent floods wreck havoc across Pakistan.

Yesterday, the standing committee for National



Health Services had also advised Pakistan Medical Commission to postpone MDCAT and NLE for the year 2022 due to flood situation in the country.

Right now PMC has lost its constitutional status after the senate committee for Health passed PMDC 2022 bill. The health department is working over reestablishment of the Pakistan Medical and Dental College (PMDC) soon. However, NLE will not be taken from Pakistani students but the foreign medical graduates are compelled to take National Licensing Exam.

## President Arif Alvi visits Nowshera to review flood relief operations

NOWSHERA: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday visited the Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province to review the flood relief operations in affected areas.

According to details, the President was given a detailed briefing by Deputy Commissioner Nowshera Mir Raza Ozgan about rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations in the district.

The President was informed that about 25,000 flood victims

were accommodated in 100 relief camps in Nowshera district. Likewise, about 150,000 people were affected from floods in Nowshera and the KP government has made assistance amount doubled for flood victims. Speaking on the occasion, President Dr Arif Alvi said the recent flood has made colossal losses to public lives and properties and underlined the need for long-term planning to control devastation of floods in future. INP

# PM Shehbaz Sharif announces Rs10 bln grant for flood-hit Kpk

KANJU: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced Rs10 billion grant for the flood-affected people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) as flood relief assistance on Wednesday.

According to details, the prime minister made the announcement during a visit to Swat to review flood relief activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The relevant authorities apprised the prime minister of the losses and rescue and relief operations.

Addressing a gathering of flood-affected people in KPK's Kanju, PM Shehbaz Sharif said that the amount would be spent for the relief and rehabilitation of the flood-hit people of the province.

The federal government, National Disaster Management Authority and the provincial government, through close coordination, would ensure transparency and immediate disbursement in the affected areas.

The prime minister pointed out that the federal government had already announced Rs15 billion for Sindh province and Rs10 billion grants for Balochistan province respectively.

The premier opined that it was a collective responsibility of all the governments to work for the provision of relief to the flood-hit public. "I will continue visiting the affected areas till the last affected person is rehabilitated," he added.

He further said that the federal government had allocated an amount of Rs 28 billion which was being disbursed among the affectedes through NDMA and Benazir Income Support Programme.

He said every affected family was given a cash amount of R25,000 whereas per family was entitled to Rs1 million that had lost its near or dear



one. The prime minister while expressing his grief and pain over the large-scale tragedy said that more than 1,000 lives had been lost including 300 children.

He said the cash support extended by the federal government was no substitute for the loss of lives as the bereaved families would continue to mourn the death of their relatives for long, but it was the responsibility of the government to provide maximum comfort in this hour of grief.

PM Shehbaz Sharif added that the latest reports were showing further damages caused by widespread flash floods across the country, adding about 5000kms roads were damaged.

Meanwhile, the prime minister thanked the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and the Air Chief for the provision of air helicopters and assistance in the ongoing operations. He assured that by tomorrow, all the trapped tourists would be evacuated from these areas.

The prime minister also expressed his gratitude to friendly countries like Turkey, UAE, and others for providing relief goods. The UAE was continuously sending relief goods worth \$50 million through different flight operations.

About his visit to the areas, the prime minister said that today, he met with different people and tourists and witnessed the damages caused to hotels and other infrastructure.

Different hotels and buildings were constructed along the river course which caused the disaster, he said, adding that he would also undertake visits to other flood-affected areas of KPK. INP

## 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 Qudus 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 Lasbella.

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.

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 Khyber 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

### Vulnerability of Balochistan Pakistan to Climate Change

Syed Muhammad Qaseem



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-

trict of Balochistan. Punjab is also facing smog and heatwave as a result of climate change. Sometimes the density of smog becomes such high as the transportation system remains suspended even for days.



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

## The Socio-Economic Impacts of 2022 Floods in Balochistan

Syed Ahmed Safdar

Flood is one of the most devastating natural hazards throughout the globe. According to CREED-Data Base, from the 19th century till the present day thousands of people have lost their life due to flood disasters. Further, 4.5 million people were displaced, injured, and homeless.

Pakistan Vulnerable to Natural Disasters:

Pakistan is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters including floods. The 2010-11 floods adversely affected the economy of Pakistan. The geographical location of Balochistan is prone to many natural disasters, like drought floods, and earthquakes. The recent monsoon spells have adversely affected the rural communities of the province. The socio-economic development of the rural areas of Balochistan mainly



belongs to the agriculture sector. The agriculture sector is depending on the availability of the required amount of water. Balochistan loses huge amount of water due to no dams. Unfortunately, in the recent monsoon season, we have lost a huge amount of water due to the lack of proper reservoir and dam systems in the province. Dam and reservoirs can minimize the initial pressure of flood on one

side whereas; on the other hand, such storage of water can recharge the depleted groundwater table in those particular areas. Due to a lack of proper management and planning, we always face catastrophic events in terms of floods drought, etc. the relevant stockholders like PDMA, Agriculture Department, and Irrigation Department need to revisit their policies in terms of water storage to minimize the adverse

impact of flood and drought in the province.

The consequences of floods, both negative and positive, vary greatly depending on their location, duration, the extent of flooding, depth, and speed, as well as the vulnerability and value of the affected natural and constructed environments.

Floods impact both individuals and communities and have social, economic, and environmental consequences.

The environmental benefits of flooding can also help the economy through things such as increased fish production, recharge of groundwater resources, and maintenance of recreational environments.

We need to take action with a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach. If we invest \$10 in the pre-phase of a disaster so we can save \$100 in the post-phase of a disaster.

### 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.

### Learning from catastrophes

By Abdul Sattar

Monsoon rains and floods continue to wreak havoc across the country. More than 1,000 lives have been lost and over 1,500 people wounded in the calamity that saw the destruction of bridges, small dams, schools, hospitals besides the inundation of millions of acres of land.

The recent floods have not only exposed the flawed development models but also put a question mark over the tall claims of the ruling elite that pretends to be altruistic.

The heart-wrenching scenes of five young men making desperate appeals for help in a town of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KP) and the images of children swept away by merciless waves of floods in Balochistan have moved every sensitive person. The grief of those who saw their loved ones drowning in front of their eyes as they called authorities for help is unimaginable.

Such tragic incidents must have inflicted deep wounds in the hearts of those who lost their relatives. This tragic loss has become an integral part of their life, which will make them heartbroken every time they think about their loved ones.

shelters are also multiplying their misery. It seems that it will take years, or maybe decades, for these people to rebuild their shattered lives.

But far away from the grief and misery of these unfortunate people is a ruling class which is busy enjoying its carefree life. The 'champion of change', whose party is ruling four out of the six regions that have been devastated by floods and torrential rains, has nothing to do except repeating the foreign conspiracy allegations. His teams in Punjab, KP, Gilgit-Balistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) seem to have a hectic schedule that forces them to visit every place except the areas that are inundated because of the incessant downpours and overflowing rivers.

These people are defending the logic of the 'revolutionary leader', who unabashedly asserted that he would hold public gatherings even in the middle of war. The pious leader firmly believes that his struggle for real independence will immediately tame the furious waves of the River Indus, warding off the danger posed to Nowshera and parts of KP. Imran Khan has a dogged determination to prove that if a leader is clad in shalwar qameez, repeats the mantra of corruption and addresses mammoth public gatherings, the misery of flood-affected people would evaporate within no time. Such an approach will immensely help rebuild

destroyed houses, drain inundated land, repair damaged bridges and restore extirpated roads. Therefore, he thinks it is justified to squander billions of rupees on larger-than-life billboards, thousands of panaflex and giant screens to propagate the message of the modern emancipator.

These floods have also exposed the performance of the party that claims to be the champion of the general will. Its pathetic handling of the situation in Sindh has infuriated tens of thousands of people who are struggling to get relief. The way the party's feudal lords treated grief-stricken people has unleashed a torrent of criticism. Video clips of a politician distributing Rs50 among the affected have prompted many to criticize the party that has been ruling over a decade now.

In the last few days, we saw how angry mobs surrounded provincial ministers who went to flood-affected areas for photo sessions, questioning these modern barons over the lacklustre response of the provincial government. Instead of responding to these questions, some of these government's representatives misbehaved with the affectees.

Unfortunately, these members of the ruling elite, whether they are from the PML-N, the PPP or the PML-N, will continue fooling the people unless the people rise against them demanding a model of development that does not benefit just a few

companies, contractors and politicians but the vast majority of the country. From Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, all are trying to give the impression that they really care about the plight of the people, but, in reality, no politician is ready to take responsibility for the loss of over 1,000 lives.

Several reports suggest that the government knew about the severity of the rains. However, the measures it took were not enough to ward off the losses that have had devastating effects on the lives of millions of people.

Many argue that the ruling elite is responsible for the destruction and devastation caused by the floods and torrential rains. The ruling class failed to make concrete efforts to clear off waterways, which could have minimized losses to a great extent. In 2019 the government was informed that the existing waterways were so broad decades ago that one million cusecs water could easily pass through them but their size has shrunk now because of encroachment and unplanned development. Now only 100,000 cusecs of water can pass through these waterways. Rivers have been encroached upon by the builder mafia, and even sewerage drains have not been spared.

What has been done cannot be undone, but the government can at least identify the waterways that are occupied by various vested interests and

make efforts to clear the same so that future floods and rains do not turn out to be as devastating as the current ones. The timber mafia, whose greed for profit has also complicated the situation, should also be reined in.

As far as relief efforts are concerned, it is not the federal body or the provincial disaster management that should be handling these activities across the country. Instead, the local bodies should be tasked to deal with the situation. But unfortunately, our politicians have unjustified contempt for devolution of powers.

The PPP which takes credit for the 18th Amendment is not ready to transfer powers to districts, towns and union councils. In Sindh it has effectively defanged local government institutions, concentrating all powers in the hands of the provincial government.

Imran Khan had promised to devolve such powers, arguing that legislators should not be given any development funds at all as local governments were responsible for taking care of such development work, but he opened the gates of the national exchequer for elected parliamentarians, showing billions of rupees to carry out uplift projects.

The visits of Prime Minister Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari are commendable, but there is no point in squandering precious state resources on VIP movements, aerial visits and advertisement campaigns.

### Inequality and hunger

By Chuck Collins

Beginning on May 24, the World Economic Forum is gathering in Davos, Switzerland for an in-person meeting, discussing the global tax system and financial inclusion. Thanks to protests and new research, however, participants will not be able to avoid the elephant in the room; the surging inequality of wealth during the pandemic.

As the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and Inequality.org have documented over the last two years of a global pandemic, billionaire assets have surged while millions lost their lives and livelihoods.

A new report from Oxfam dramatizes how hundreds of millions of people around the world have slid further into poverty during this time period. In a detailed examination of the food and agriculture industry, Oxfam found that billionaires in that industry saw their wealth increase by \$382 billion during the pandemic. An emergency windfall tax on their wealth increase alone (to say nothing of their pre-pandemic billions) could end world hunger and double the incomes of 545 million small-scale farmers.

In January, an analysis by the Fight Inequality Alliance, Institute for Policy Studies, Oxfam, and the Patriotic Millionaires found that an annual wealth tax starting at just 2 percent for those

with more than \$5 million, 3 percent for those with over \$50 million, and up to 5 percent for billionaires could generate upwards of \$2.52 trillion a year. That's enough to lift 2.3 billion people out of poverty, fund vaccines for everyone in the world, and deliver universal health-care and social protections for all the citizens of low- and lower-middle-income countries.

A group of over 150 millionaires released a strong statement calling on Davos attendees to face the dangers of runaway wealth inequality and speak out in favor of national efforts to levy progressive income and wealth taxes on the ultra-wealthy. "The truth is that 'Davos' doesn't deserve the world's trust right now," the statement reads. "For all the countless hours spent talking about making the world a better place, the conference has produced little tangible value amidst a torrent of self-congratulations."

"Until participants acknowledge the simple, effective solution staring them in the face -- taxing the rich -- the people of the world will continue to see their so-called dedication to fixing the world's problems as little more than a performance."

The letter is signed by actor and activist Mark Ruffalo, as well as supporters of the In Tax We Trust movement including Abigail Disney, Morris Pearl, and Nick Hanauer. These millionaires delivered the In Tax We Trust

letter directly to the World Economic Forum offices in New York and Geneva, and attended pro-taxation demonstrations at the outskirts of the elite compound in Davos itself.

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Rains, flash floods: 39 children among 187 killed in Punjab

LAHORE: At least 187 people, including 39 children, have lost their lives in flash floods triggered by heavy rains in Punjab, says Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Wednesday.

The report further highlighted that almost 46,320 homes were either partially or completely damaged in the relentless downpours across the province. Rains and floods also caused death to over two lakh large animals. Over 15,592 people were living in the relief camps established by the provincial government. The PDMA Punjab

said the authority in concert with other government organisations is carrying out relief activities in the flood-ravaged areas. A day earlier, the United Nations (UN) issued a flash appeal for \$160 million to help Pakistan cope with catastrophic floods that have killed more than 1,100 people and affected 33 million people. "Pakistan is awash in suffering," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a video message for the launch of the appeal in Islamabad. INP



QUETTA: SSP Operations Abdul Haq Umrani wear flower garland to police inspector of city police station Muhammad Anwer Khokher during retirement ceremony at civil line .

IHC serves notice over Imran Khan's plea to abolish terror case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday served notices in a petition filed by PTI Chairman Imran Khan to abolish terrorism case against him for threatening a female judge and Islamabad police officials.

The SHO were made respondents in the petition. In the petition, Imran Khan noted that he has served as prime minister of the country and was the captain of Pakistan team that won the World Cup.

Imran Khan further said that he had asked for legal action against the three personalities, urging that the terrorism case against him should be declared illegal.

Miftah ismail again hints at allowing imports from India

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail has once again hinted at allowing import of food items from arch-rival India, saying that more than one international agency has sought approval to bring food items from the neighbouring country through land border.

In a message from his Twitter handle, Miftah Ismail said that more than one international agency have approached the government to allow them to bring food items from India through the land border for flood affectees.

"The [government] will take the decision to allow imports or not based on supply shortage position, after consulting its coalition partners [and] key stakeholders," he said.

On Monday, Ismail has hinted at importing vegetables and other edible items from India after recent floods destroyed crops across the country.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Miftah Ismail said that the government can consider importing vegetables and other edible items from India to facilitate people in wake of the destruction of standing crops in Pakistan due to recent floods.

On August 5, India's BJP government moved a bill in the upper house of the parliament (Rajaya Sabha) to remove Article 370 from the Indian constitution amid opposition members' protest.

It was later signed by Indian President Ram Nath Kovind, stripping the state of Kashmir off its special status and turning it into a Union Territory with the legislature. INP

No decision yet taken for tomato, onions import from India: Qamar

ISLAMABAD: Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar on Wednesday told the Senate committee on commerce that the government has not yet decided about import of onions and tomatoes from India.

The minister replied, "The vegetables will be imported through private companies from Iran and Afghanistan and the government will act as facilitator in it," Naveed Qamar said.

A meeting chaired by Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar at Federal Ministry of Commerce, reviewed availability of tomatoes and onions in the country.

The ministry of commerce has decided to import onions and tomatoes from Afghanistan and Iran, he said in a meeting of the Senate committee while replying a query of Senator Palwasha Khan.

"The decision with regard to import from India will be taken after consultation with stakeholders," minister said. "However, no permission granted for import from India till now."

The session decided to facilitate import of onions and tomatoes from Afghanistan and Iran to meet the demand of these vegetables in the country.

Palwasha Khan said that the finance minister has recently said that the private firms have recommended import of onions and tomatoes from India. "Whether the commerce ministry considering import of these vegetables from India," the senator questioned in a session of the Senate standing committee for commerce, presided over by Senator Zeeshan Khanzada.

"Flooding has wreaked havoc with the agriculture sector, which could result in food shortage from the next month," he said. "Flooding has damaged crops and new crops could not be cultivated owing to water standing on agricultural lands," minister further said.

On Tuesday, Imran Khan moved Islamabad High Court (IHC) for the dismissal of terrorism case registered for allegedly threatening IG Islamabad, DIG, and female magistrate and all three of them along with the

"No decision yet taken about import of tomatoes and onions from India,"

The Ministry of Commerce in a session on Tuesday decided to import onions and tomatoes from Afghanistan and Iran to control soaring prices in the country.

Earlier in the day, it was reported that the K-Electric will likely refund Rs3.47 per unit to consumers in electricity bills for July after Nepra's approval following less expense on fuel.



QUETTA: A view of drown house in flooded water at Dasht .

The court has granted seven days to PTI Chairman to submit his answer

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday directed the former Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan to resubmit his response within the next seven days in the contempt of court case against him for threatening a female judge.

While giving his arguments to the Chief Justice Athar Minallah, the Advocate General Jahangir Jadoon said that IHC has given its verdict on the torture case of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill. He said, "I can present the record of all Imran Khan's statements on it."

While Justice Mian Gul Hassan Aurangzeb said that contempt of court hearing could have completed today but because of this answer it cannot be completed. The Chief Justice added that the change will come after all institution will work according to the constitution.

Meanwhile, the CJ concluded saying, "All judicial proceedings will be kept transparent. It is necessary to follow the decisions of the Supreme Court on contempt of court cases."

After the hearing, the court ordered Imran Khan to re-submit his answer in

the court. While the court has granted seven days to PTI Chairman to submit his answer. The court was later adjourned till September 8.

Earlier, PTI chairman Imran Khan appeared before Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the contempt of court case after a show-cause notice.

While Justice Mian Gul Hassan Aurangzeb said that contempt of court hearing could have completed today but because of this answer it cannot be completed. The Chief Justice added that the change will come after all institution will work according to the constitution.

Meanwhile, the CJ concluded saying, "All judicial proceedings will be kept transparent. It is necessary to follow the decisions of the Supreme Court on contempt of court cases."

'Justice must be seen to be done' in Imran Khan's contempt of court case: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday said "justice must be seen to be done" in the contempt of court case being heard by the Islamabad High Court against former prime minister Imran Khan.

party after his lifetime disqualification on account of not receiving salary from his son with the help of Black's Law Dictionary, and sent to jail along with his daughter," she said in a series of tweets.

been given seven days time (to submit his reply in the contempt case) then Daniyal Aziz, Talal Chaudhry and Nihal Hashmi should also have been given such concession," she said, adding "if today's decision is right then the past verdicts (in the contempt of court cases) should also be corrected, and if those (the past ones) were correct then the justice should be seen to be done in the

Monsoon flooding death toll reaches 1162

ISLAMABAD: Flash floods triggered by heavy monsoon rains continue to wreak havoc across much of Pakistan as 36 more died in 24 hours, taking the death toll from calamity to 1162.

According to the National Disaster Management report, the heavy rains and flood have killed 249 people in Balochistan, 405 in Sindh, 187 in Punjab, 257 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 41 in Azad Kashmir and 22 in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The report added that 730483 cattle died and more than 1057000 houses have been damaged due to rains and floods across the country.

Furthermore, the floods have also caused great damage to the infrastructure and roads. Reportedly, 2328 kilometers of highways were affected in Sindh and 60 bridges were damaged. In KP, 1589 km roads were affected and 84 bridges were damaged. While in Gilgit-Baltistan, 16 kilometers of highways and 65 bridges were affected by the flood. INP

Indus super flood avoided for time being, thanks to rainfall pause

SUKKUR: Indus River has been in high flood at Sukkur, Guddu and Taunsa barrages while the threat of extremely high flood has been avoided for the time being on Wednesday, owing to pause in rainfall.

Flood water pressing protective dykes, while people of the katcha area are shifting to safer places.

Indus river has been in high flood at Taunsa Barrage with the water inflow and outflow measured 6,08,154 cusecs. The river has also been in high flood at Guddu Barrage with the water inflow and outflow measured 5,18,706 cusecs. At Sukkur Barrage water inflow and outflow has been measured 5,29,817 cusecs.

The river has been in medium flood in downstream at Kotri Barrage with inflow of water 3,79,923 cusecs, while outflow at the barrage has been 3,77,148 cusecs.

The water inflow and outflow in Indus at Chashma has been 4,88,015 cusecs, while at Jinnah Barrage of Kalabagh water inflow and discharge has been 3,03,579 cusecs, according to the water record.

Indus River water inflow and outflow has been 2,02,300 at Tarbela. The water level is returning to normal at Tarbela dam. Flood Forecasting Division said.

Kabul River has been in high flood. The water flow p.d.m in the river at Nowshera has dropped to 1,17,000 cusecs from 3,15,000 cusecs three days ago. INP



QUETTA: Activities of Pakistan patriotic youth hold protest rally at Manan Chowk.

Two Chinese planes carrying flood relief goods reach Karachi

KARACHI: Two Chinese planes carrying flood relief items amid devastating floods in the country reached Karachi on Wednesday, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) told.

According to a statement issued by a CAA spokesperson, two planes filled with flood-relief items reached the Jinnah International Airport Karachi on Wednesday.

The planes carry relief items such as blankets, tents and edibles, they added.

The statement read that China would send more planes filled with flood-relief items in the coming days. China, so far, has sent 4 planes carrying flood-relief items, they added.

The statement added that the items were received by the Pakistan Army and Foreign Ministry officials. China announced financial assistance of 100 million Yuan for Pakistan, affected by flash floods, which have left thousands marooned since mid-June. The financial assistance was announced in a message delivered by Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong to President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. In the message, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang have expressed grief and solidarity with the Pakistani leadership and people over human and financial losses caused by floods in the country.

China announced an assistance grant of 100 million Yuan, besides the dispatch of 25,000 tents and other assistance items. The first batch of relief aid containing 300 tents would arrive in Karachi today. The Chinese ambassador would hand over these articles to the Pakistani authorities. The statement

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QUETTA: BAP leader Senator Nassebullah Bazai addressing a press conference.

Advertisement for Marriyum Aurangzeb's legal services, including contact information and a list of services.

# Maryam promises rebuilding homes, compensation for losses to flood victims

RAJANPUR: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday promised to rebuild homes of the flood hit communities and compensate them against the losses they had suffered in the catastrophic floods triggered by torrential monsoon rains that turned into ferocious hill torrents, hitting Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan districts.

During her visit to Fazalpur city, the only urban area of Rajanpur submerged by the floods, the PML-N central leader sympathized with the flood victims including women and children and told them that the federal government would not leave them alone in the extremely difficult times.

Maryam said she realized the pain and agony inflicted by floods on the people of Rajanpur and was deeply saddened after witnessing homes destroyed in streets and Mohallahs of Fazaalpur.

The PML-N vice president said she was visiting flood hit areas on the instructions of his father, PML-N Supremo Muhammad Nawaz Sharif so that the flood hit people should not feel themselves alone.

"I am here to promise PML-N will leave no stone unturned in serving the people. These are testing times

that forced the people to settle in relief camps. But they must not worry. Federal government would not only rebuild your homes but also compensate against losses," she added.

Maryam said, she held in high esteem the unbreakable relationship of love and respect with the people, adding this relationship would stay alive forever.

She met with women availing shelter at a relief camp on a road near Daanish School Fazalpur, talked to them and hugged children there.

She praised the women for their courage of survival and said that relief operation was in progress while rehabilitation process would also begin soon to restore life on the landscape ravaged by floods.

She distributed tents, food items, medicines, blankets, and clothes among the affected people. Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly Sardar Sher Ali Gorchani thanked Maryam Nawaz Sharif for paying visit to the flood hit areas, adding it rekindled hopes among the affected people that they would soon be returning to normal life. INP



KOHIKISTAN: Commissioner Hazara Division and Deputy Commissioner Lower Indus Kohistan District briefing Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on the rescue and relief activities in the flood affected areas of Indus Kohistan District.

## IRA not be effective to "pull down" the inflation rate, says Pakistani Analyst

ISLAMABAD: It has now become "bitter" reality that passing and promulgating of numerous acts by the US government clearly demonstrates that it has been geared-up against China's immense corporate, energy and technological rise.

According to Gwadar Pro-Pakistani Analyst Mehmoood Ul Hassan Khan, Executive Director of the Center for South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) stated, most recently the US president Joe Biden has signed a new legislation namely "The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)" which includes so-called large investments in making health care and prescription drugs making that more affordable, fighting climate change and taxing wealthy corporations. The US Independent economists uphold that the IRA would not be effective to "pull down" the inflation rate. The international media has termed it a "slimmed-down" version of the Build Back Better bill, which aimed to make historic investments in the nation's social safety net.

On the other hand, the White House still believes that the IRA makes the largest investment in combating climate change in U.S. history, lowers the cost of prescription drugs and raises taxes on corporations. But international experts contradict its tall claims. The US president Biden asserted that the legislation would bring inflation relief to Americans. But one early study shows that in reality, the IRA likely would not reduce prices at all. In this regard, the Penn Wharton Budget Model (PWBMM), emphasized that the IRA will not have

any impact on inflation. Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), a federal agency that provides budget and economic information to Congress also reconfirms that the IRA will barely make a dent on inflation in the near term and could even nudge it upward.

It predicts that it will have a very small effect on inflation in 2022, and in 2023 it will change inflation somewhere between 0.1 percentage point lower and 0.1 percentage point higher than it is currently. Frankly speaking, the IRA demonstrates Washington's fraught yet isolationist mentality. It is another planned and articulated scheme of arrangements of the US government to contain the Chinese global superiority in terms of diverse productive channels, and integrated persuasions of green energies. Thus, the US IRA may ironically end up only inflating its runaway inflation, further disrupt the global industrial chain, and deter achieving climate goals. So chipping away the global chips and IRA would not yield any substantial economic good for the US government. The IRA followed the just passed CHIPS Act, which emphasizes how Washington felt it has been intimidated by China's rising tech prowess and its own inbuilt incompetence in maintaining its so-called supremacy in new-energy vehicle (NEV) technology amid a lingering tech war it has launched against the world's second-largest economy. It signals that the US is now "fleeing-away" from a fair and transparent international competition. INP

## China dispatches Y-20 aircraft to deliver humanitarian supplies to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: China's Air Force dispatched Y-20 aircraft to deliver humanitarian supplies to Pakistan, including 3,000 tents, to the government of Pakistan in a bid to help Pakistan manage rescue and relief operation in all flood-stricken areas in the country.

After Pakistan has been grappling with heavy rains and flash flood calamities causing humanitarian crisis including infrastructure destruction, victims' displacement, homelessness and deaths, China has come up with aid deliveries as a fulfillment of its brotherhood commitment with Pakistan and obligations as a responsible global power, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday.

People from different spheres of life have heaped praise for the gesture of China when it announced to provide relief and cash assistance to Pakistan affected by flash floods and property destruction, which have left thousands marooned since mid-June.

Zulekha Bibi, a flood victim in Balochistan said, "my husband works in a Chinese company and since the day the company knew that fact that our home collapsed due to torrential rain, we have been given another house to live with provision of daily home essentials." INP

## Floods: Imran Khan to visit Sindh province on Sept 05

KARACHI: Former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan will visit Sindh province on September 05 as the province remains most affected in the recent floods that devastated the entire country.

Head of PTI Sindh Ali Zaidi while announcing the visit said that Imran Khan will arrive in Sukkur on September 05. Khan has suspended his political campaigning to visit flood-affected areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and arranging a telethon to get pledges of Rs5 billion funds for the flood victims in the country.

Imran Khan on Monday held an international telethon to raise funds. INP

## Imran Khan to address public rally in Chishtian on Sept 07

CHISHTIAN: Former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan will attend a public gathering in Chishtian city of the Punjab province, resuming his campaigning after cancelling public rallies in Karachi and Peshawar following devastating floods in the country.

Imran Khan will be joining campaigning for by-election in PP-241 after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced to hold by elections on 11 constituencies vacated after resignations of the PTI MNAs.

Imran Khan is contesting on all seats as the candidate. PPP leader Aon Abbas visited the venue of public gathering on Wednesday along with the local PTI leaders and reviewed arrangements for the public rally.

Imran Khan has suspended his political campaigning to visit flood-affected areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and arranging a

telethon to get pledges of Rs5 billion funds for the flood victims in the country.

Imran Khan on Monday held an international telethon to raise funds from within the country and overseas Pakistanis for the flood victims. According to Senator Faisal Javed Khan, who moderated the event, the former prime minister collected over Rs5 billion in donations in 3 hours long flood telethon. Chief ministers of Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa — Pervaiz Elahi and Mahmood Khan — former premier's ex-assistant on social protection Sania Nishtar, celebrities, and other politicians joined Imran Khan's telethon.

Speaking during Live Telethon which was telecast by a number of TV channels, the PTI chief said entire Pakistan had been affected by the floods generated by back-to-back monsoon rains. He said more than 1000 people died due to devastating floods. INP

## Dadu: Floodwater from Balochistan enters Khairpur Nathan Shah

DADU: Leaving a trail of devastation behind, floodwater from Balochistan on Wednesday entered in Khairpur Nathan Shah after causing breach in the Main Nara Valley (MNV) Drain.

After overtopping the Indus Highway, the floodwater is heading towards Juhri and surrounding the town from all four sides. The citizens working day and night on the ring road to save the town.

An earlier report said that after breach in the MNV drain, the floodwater has entered in the Degree College, hospital and also ravaged around 100 houses in the New City Colony near the college in Juhri.

An increase in water in the MNV drain also posing threat to Dadu, the main town in the

district. Chief Minister of Sindh is expected to visit Dadu today, to inspect flooding situation in the area.

A spokesperson of Pakistan Navy has said that 253 people have been rescued with boats from Gozo village of Dadu district. In the late night rescue operation, rescued persons were shifted via helicopters to safer place.

Four dead bodies among five persons drowned in Sehwan, have been retrieved, according to the navy spokesman. Moreover, an evacuation operation has been underway at Meeran Maachhi and Raees Jamal Hassan Goth. Flood victims being provided medical facilities, ration items, food and other essential items, Pakistan Navy spokesman added. INP

## China Mobile offers free calling minutes in flood-hit areas

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G (CMPak), the subsidiary of China Mobile Communications Corporation, has started offering free calling minutes to its users in flood-affected areas of Pakistan.

"Zong understands the difficult times that the nation is going through and we are here to make sure that you remain connected with your loved ones; We are offering free Zong minutes daily, for flood-affected citizens," reads a statement of Zong 4G.

According to a Gwadar Pro's report, users can avail free minutes by dialing \*9090# from their mobile sets.

The Chinese cellular company announced the package when monsoon rains and floods damaged over one million houses in Pakistan, affecting 33,046,329 people.

At least 1162 people were killed and 3554 others injured during this year's monsoon season. CMPak envisions enabling a fully connected environment for Pakistanis by leveraging the technological edge in 4G LTE, whilst providing the most reliable and affordable products in the market.

On the technological front, CMPak draws heavily from the research and experience of China Mobile Communications Corporation, which is the largest telecom service provider in the world, thus enabling cutting-edge, state-of-the-art services to subscribers.

CMPak has the largest 4G subscriber base and the widest 4G coverage across the length and breadth of the country, providing stable, affordable, and reliable services to the customers.

At least 1162 people were killed and 3554 others injured during this year's monsoon season. CMPak envisions enabling a fully connected environment for Pakistanis by leveraging the technological edge in 4G LTE, whilst providing the most reliable and affordable products in the market. INP

## Rupee continues upward trend against dollar in interbank

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee continued to recover in the interbank market, extending its gains against the US dollar for the second consecutive session on Wednesday.

According to details, the local currency was trading at Rs 218.50 after gaining 1.60 against US dollar around 9:50am in interbank market. Meanwhile, the US dollar was being traded at Rs220 to Rs222 in open market.

A day earlier, the Pakistani rupee jumped by Rs1.80 against the US dollar in the interbank market after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) revived the much-awaited bailout programme.

Data shared by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) stated that the Pakistani rupee closed at Rs220.12 after gaining Rs1.80 against the US dollar, up 0.82 percent.

The rupee's recovery comes after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved the seventh and eighth reviews of Pakistan's Extended Fund Facility Programme (EFF).

The Fund in a press release announced that the executive board completed the combined seventh and eighth reviews of the "extended arrangement" under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Pakistan.

"The board's decision allows for an immediate disbursement of SDR 894 million (about \$1.1 billion), bringing total purchases for budget support under the arrangement to about US\$3.9 billion," the statement read. INP

## Pakistan reports six deaths, 227 covid-19 cases in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has recorded six-coronavirus related deaths and 227 fresh Covid-19 cases during the last 24 hours, National Institute of Health (NIH), says on Wednesday.

According to the statistics issued by National Institute of Health (NIH), a total of 15,475 Covid-19 diagnostic tests were conducted, of which 227 samples came back positive.

Meanwhile, six more patients succumbed to the coronavirus during the same period. Following the detection of new cases, the COVID-19 positivity ratio stood at 1.47 percent, moving slightly up from 1.34pc, recorded a day earlier.

The NIH, in the statement, said almost 115 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 30,581. INP

## Nepra approves Rs4.34 hike in electricity tariff

ISLAMABAD: At a time when people are already suffering on account of rising prices of essential items, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Wednesday approved another bombshell on them by approving Rs4.34 per unit increase in the electricity tariff.

The increase was announced under the head of monthly adjustment of July.

NEPRA officials said that due to the violation of merit order, the Authority had to pay over Rs7 billion extra.

Similarly, they added, the shortage of LNG put an additional burden of over Rs6 billion on the NEPRA which they ultimately had to pass on to the consumers. NEPRA officials said that due to the violation of merit order, the Authority had to pay over Rs7 billion extra. Similarly, they added, the shortage of LNG put an additional burden of over Rs6 billion on the NEPRA which they ultimately had to pass on to the consumers. It is worth-reminding here that the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) had requested for Rs4.69 per unit increase in the power tariff. INP



QUETTA: Activities of Government Teachers Association hold protest rally at Manan chowk.

## IHC orders removal of Azam Khan's name from Stop List

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday ordered the removal of the name of Azam Khan, former principal secretary to ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan, from the Stop List.

The IHC also directed Azam to appear before the parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) whenever summoned.

Earlier during the hearing of the petition filed by ex-principal secretary, IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Athar Minallah asked as to why the PAC had summoned Azam.

The petitioner's counsel replied that his client had been summoned to explain his position in Tayyaba Gull sexual harassment case.

The IHC CJ remarked that whenever a parliamentary body summons somebody, he or she should appear before it

out of respect. "And Azam made a mistake if he chose not to go there," he opined.

The assistant attorney general (AAG), on the occasion, said that it was on PAC directives that Azam's name had been put on the Stop List.

CJ Minallah remarked as how a parliamentary committee could give such instructions "When this court cannot do anything illegal, nobody else can," he stated emphatically.

He reminded that this court had earlier, in its observations, said that there was no law behind the Stop List. "After all Azam is a government servant. He is not going anywhere," he added.

The AAG told the court that the former principal secretary did not appear before the body despite the fact that he was summoned repeatedly. INP



SEHWAN: A view of drown house at Bajara.

## No let-up in skyrocketing prices of vegetables

ISLAMABAD: The prices of vegetables have gone skyrocketing in the country after a disruption in their supply on account of devastating floods originating from torrential rains, it has been reported on Wednesday.

It has been learnt that the shopkeepers are selling the vegetables at exorbitant prices—much higher than the official rates—as the demand for vegetables has become greater than its supply.

Moreover, the heavy rains and gushing floods have also destroyed the standing crops spread over hundreds of thousands of acres.

In various parts of the country, the prices of different vegetables have risen five times high, for one kilogram of onions is being sold at Rs400 to Rs480, tomatoes at Rs250 to Rs300, garlic and ginger at Rs400, capsicum at Rs350, fenugreek (Meithi) and cabbage at Rs350, ladyfinger at Rs130, tump at Rs120, peas at Rs270, ridged gourd (Tori) at Rs270, lemon (Chinese) at Rs200, Lemon (desi) at Rs200, spinach

at Rs85, first category potatoes at Rs100 and second category potatoes at Rs90.

People in different parts of the country have also held protest demonstrations against the unjust hike in vegetable prices amid floods in the country.

"It has become really difficult to afford two-time meals due to massive inflation," they said.

"The government should take immediate measures to combat this giant of inflation," they demanded.

The prices of vegetables and other edibles are likely to go further high in the days to come.

To tackle the shortage of vegetables in the market, the government has decided to import vegetables from neighbouring countries including Iran, Afghanistan and India.

Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said: "The government has decided to import duty-free vegetables and other edibles from India through the Wagah border crossing to minimise the negative effects of inflation on people." INP

## Preparation of China-Pakistan Int'l Industrial Academic Integration Alliance started

BEIJING: The preparatory work of China-Pakistan International Industrial Academic Integration Alliance has started, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN).

"In the next 3 to 5 years, we will cultivate 30,000-50,000 skillful youth in Pakistan", Muhammad Ammar, Secretary General, China-Pakistan International Industrial Academic Integration Alliance (Preparatory) said at a discussion panel. The discussion focused on the Exploration of China-Pakistan International Industrial-Education Integration Cooperation in Vocational Education, which is part of the China-Pakistan TVET Cooperation and Development Seminar organized by Tang International Education Group and hosted by the Pakistani Embassy in China. "These youth will serve the needs of CPEC construction", he added. In addition, China-Pakistan Vocational Education and Employment Research Center will be established under the Alliance, and

international vocational skill contests will be organized for skillful youth in Pakistan, as well as in SCO countries in the future. According to Sajid Baloch, Executive Director, National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTEC), in the future, a million manpower with high skills will be required in Pakistan, especially in the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and CPEC projects.

"Vocational and technical training is crucial for us to realize the national goals of enhanced productivity and export. It is high time that we invest in the workforce in Pakistan", he said. It is learned that via the alliance, Pakistan and China will join efforts in building advanced international professional standards, curriculum standards and digital curriculum resources, training teachers for vocational colleges in Pakistan, providing language and skills training for Pakistani youth, building China-Pakistan International College in Pakistan and China-Pakistan. INP