

# QUETTA VOICE

Email address: quettavoic@gmail.com

Thursday 29 September, 2022

Https:// www.quettavoic.com/

ABC Certified

Quettavoic



### PM, COAS congratulate Mohammed Bin Salman on being appointed KSA PM



### Resurgence of terrorism will not be tolerated: Army chief

## The killer is deeply ashamed of killing his brothers: Quetta Police

Syed Ali Shah Manan Mandokhail  
The killer is deeply ashamed of killing his three brothers in Quetta's Railway Society the other day. "The accused is feeling very embarrassed today", Abdullah Afridi, the Superintendent of Police (SP) CIA told Daily Quetta Voice. Police said the accused Qais Khan



killed his own three brothers on a very pity issue. Three young brothers identified as Zaryal Khan, Zarang Khan, and Saidal Khan were killed in a firing incident in Quetta's Railway Society. The victims were sons of well-known medical professional Dr. Nasir Ashezai. "The accused brother confessed to killing his own brothers on the same morning", Mr. Afridi mentioned. He said the accused is physiologically fine and faces no mental issues. As per the initial investigation, the accused revealed that the two elder brothers used to stop him on everything and this angered him. Qais Khan is a student of pre-medical in the Taamer e Nau College Quetta. "The accused was habitual of PUBG games and TikTok". A case was also registered against the accused and senior police officers been interrogating the accused. The horrific incident caused panic in this provincial capital and thousands of people expressed serious concern over the tragic incident. The victims were buried in Chaman, Pakistan's bordering city with Afghanistan. Thousands of people turned out to mourn the tragic incident.

## Ishaq Dar sworn in as federal finance minister

Dawood Ahmed  
ISLAMABAD: Ishaq Dar, the central leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N) took oath as a federal minister on Wednesday morning. President Dr. Arif Alvi took oath from Ishaq Dar. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other high level officials also attended the oath taking ceremony. Dar was nominated by PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif and PM Shehbaz as the finance minister during a meeting on Sunday. An official notification in this regard is expected to be issued soon.



## Age limit 43 years for government employment in Balochistan

News Desk  
The government of Balochistan has increased age limit for Government jobs. "The new age limit for Government employment will be 43 years in Balochistan", Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, Provincial Minister said. The decision was taken after approval in a cabinet meeting. Government is trying its level best to cope with unemployment in the province, Sar dar Khetran told Media. After increasing age limit in government employment many people will be able to apply for jobs and help in reducing unemployment from the province. The unemployed youth should apply more and more for jobs opportunities in various departments, he stated.



## Resurgence of terrorism will not be tolerated: Army chief

Rawalpindi: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Wednesday said that the resurgence of terrorism will not be tolerated and stressed that no stone should be left unturned in taking action against terrorists. The army chief made these remarks at the 251st Corps Commanders' Conference held at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi today. The commanders were briefed in detail about the external and internal security situation with a particular focus on the flood situation and ongoing relief efforts being undertaken by army formations across the country.



According to a press release issued by the military's media wing, Gen Bajwa expressed satisfaction over the operational preparedness of the formation and directed them to "maintain strict vigil to guard [the country] against any threat". "The forum undertook a comprehensive review of the security environment with special focus on situation along the borders, internal security and other professional matters of the army," the Inter-Services Public Relations' statement said. The COAS, it went on, commended formations for reaching out to people in distress and helping them mitigate their sufferings. He also praised army doctors and paramedics for the provision of emergency medical care to flood affectees, particularly children and women including measures to check the spread of diseases in flood-hit areas. "The COAS also appreciated army engineers (Frontier Works Organisation) for restoring accessibility of critical routes and communication infrastructure on an emergency basis," the ISPR said. The statement added that the army chief has directed formations to focus on relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and help restore routine life in flood-affected areas. Web Desk



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called on President Dr Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Indigenous newspapers to be defended: Balochistan Editors Forum

Manan Mandokhail  
QUETTA: Balochistan Editors Forum (BEF) has vowed to defend indigenous newspapers despite all odds. The BEF held an important meeting and expressed serious concern over the non-payment and reduction of advertisements in the regional newspapers. The members of the BEF demanded an immediate payment to the regional papers. The meeting also expressed serious concern over the low flow of advertisements to regional newspapers and urged the provincial government to issue special supplements so that the newspapers could overcome the prevailing financial crisis. The BEF meeting demanded that Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo and Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili take notice of the delayed payments to newspapers and the reduction in the flow of advertisements to the indigenous press.

## Armed forces continue relief, rescue operation in flood-affected area

RAWALPINDI: Armed forces including Pakistan Army, Navy and Air Force continue carrying out relief and rescue operations in flood-affected areas of the country. Pakistan Navy's four flood relief centres and 18 central collection points have collected and distributed over 1805 tonnes of food, 6553 tents, and 7,35,263 litres of mineral water among flood-affected people. According to the National Flood Relief Coordination Centre (NFRCC) at least 25,973 people have taken refuge in 22 Navy camps. At least 15,568 people have been rescued by 23 emergency response teams of the Pakistan Navy, the NFRCC told. The Emergency Response teams of the Pakistan Navy have 54 motorized boats, and 2 hover crafts, while two helicopters are assigned to rescue people in Sindh. The NFRCC told that a total of 479 people have been rescued via 70 flights of the Navy helicopter while 5333 ration bags were also distributed using it. Pakistan Navy also established 86 medical camps which have treated over 1,08,990 patients so far, the NFRCC told. While, Pakistan Air Force's C-130, MI-17, and AW-139 planes took 262 flights while Air Force helicopters took 1521 flights. Pakistan Airforce distributed 6583 tents and over 5,70,341 food packets. Teams distributed 3353 26 tonnes of food and 287,183-litre mineral water. Pakistan Air Force established 46 medical camps, treating over 72,228 patients. While 19,807 people have taken refuge in 20 campsites established by the Pakistan Airforce. Army Aviation helicopters have taken 625 flights for flood-relief operations rescuing 4,659 stranded people, the National Flood Response Coordination Center (NFRCC) said. INP

## Chinese nationals attacked in Karachi, one killed

From Our Correspondent  
KARACHI: A Chinese national was killed and two injured in an attack in Karachi's Sadar area on Wednesday afternoon. Police said the unknown accused opened fire inside a dental clinic and killed a Chinese citizen. Speaking at the scene of the crime, SSP South Asad Raza told reporters that one person was killed and two people were injured who were shifted to a hospital for treatment. He confirmed that the three were Chinese people. Raza said the attacker entered the clinic pretending to be a patient. In a press release issued afterwards, the police identified the victims as 25-year-old Ronild Raimond Chaw, 72-year-old Margrude and 74-year-old Richard. Police surgeon Dr. Summaiya Syed told media men that a man with bullet wounds was brought dead to the Dr. Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital. Dr. Syed said that two others — a man and a woman — were taken to the Jinnah Post-Graduate Medical Centre in an injured state. The police surgeon said that the condition of both the injured foreigners was critical as they have suffered bullet wounds in their abdomen.

## PM, COAS congratulate Mohammed Bin Salman on being appointed KSA PM

ISLAMABAD/RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Wednesday congratulated Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud on being appointed prime minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia's King and Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques on Tuesday issued a royal decree appointing Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as Prime Minister of the country, according to a Saudi Gazette report. PM Shehbaz Sharif in his tweet congratulated Mohammed bin Salman on being appointed PM of Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, COAS also extended his felicitations to MBS. According to DG ISPR tweet, COAS congratulated HRH Prime Mohammed Bin Salman for being appointed as PM and Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud for being appointed Def Min, KSA. INP

## Imran Khan and Maulana Sherani discuss political situation

Dawood Ahmed  
ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister and the Chief of Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI), Imran Khan and Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani, the Chief of his own faction of Jamiat ul Ulema e Islam (JUI) discussed the prevailing political situation in the country. Maulana Sherani called on the PTI Chief and discussed the unfolding events in the country, an insider of the meeting told Daily Quetta Voice. He said the two leaders thoroughly discussed the anti-government campaign and evolved a strategy to make it a success. Maulana Sherani's meeting with PTI Chief has come after recent video leaks that initiated a hot debate among the masses of the country. The Maulana had parted ways with the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) Chief Maulana Fazal ur, Rehman, a few years back over policy issues of the party, which enjoys overwhelming support in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces.

## Governor Balochistan and Resident coordinator UN discuss flood damages

Syed Muhammad Qaseem  
Acting Governor Balochistan, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali and Julien Harneis, Resident Coordinator of United Nations for Pakistan discussed the prevailing floods situation and damages. The meeting discussed the ongoing relief and rehabilitation activities of the flood-affected areas across the province. Provincial Minister for Food Department Engineer Zmarak Khan Achakzai, Provincial Advisor Gohram Bugti, Member Provincial Assembly Zainab Shahwani, and Parliamentary Secretary for Minorities Khalil George were also present at the meeting. Acting Governor Balochistan said that it is a matter of pleasure that both the incumbent government and the opposition parties are active in their respective areas regarding relief and rehabilitation activities, and making a transparent process of delivering relief goods to the flood victims at their doorstep. "Providing relief to the flood affectees is one of our main priorities", Mir Jamali stated. The current torrential rains followed by the flash floods caused large-scale damages and deaths across the province. The merciless flood waves damaged the electricity and gas systems in Balochistan. Quetta and other parts of the province remained deprived of electricity and gas for around 15 days, the acting Governor recalled. A committee consisting of representatives of all parliamentary political parties will be formed and apart from this, every member of the provincial assembly can also inform the Speaker Balochistan Assembly about the losses in the area, he told the UN Coordinator "Government is taking concrete steps to ensure transparency in the relief and reconstruction activities", Mr. Jamali said. Transfer of goods was a big challenge in the beginning as most of the areas were disconnected through a road connection. This problem was overcome by the concerned institutions with their untiring efforts, he informed.





## QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## Balochistan Education Sector Plan, Go beyond words

Much has been said about the Balochistan Education Sector Plan (BESP) 2020-25 on the official level and among the academia and international donor agencies. Undoubtedly, some officers of the education department and donor agencies deserve appreciation for preparing the Plan.

The estimated cost of the five years BESP is Rs. 72 billion as per the data shared with journalists during a function in this regard in Quetta the other day. Attractive banners, books, and brushes with the best paper quality were given to the participants of the function held at Quetta's luxury hotel. As usual, very few individuals bothered to read the information in bags given to them by organizers of the function.

The Secondary Education Department had prepared the BESP 2020-25 in collaboration with European Union, Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and UNICEF. Thanks to these organizations for extending support to the Balochistan government in improving the quality of education. Nevertheless, these international donor agencies should also go beyond words and ensure sustainable efforts to improve the state of education in Balochistan.

Most of the teachers, parents are unaware of BESP 2020-25. When educationists, academicians, bureaucrats, ministers, and representatives of donor agencies were addressing the BESP function, parents and teachers in remote remained unaware of the Plan. This daily asked some teachers and parents about the BESP 2020-25. They simply said, "What is this?"

Subsequently, the target group is unaware of the BESP 2020-25 and the multi-billion rupees spending on the Project. Most of the speakers spoke about the quality of education. In reality, speaking about the quality of education is like daydreaming in Balochistan, lagging behind other provinces of the country in terms of key social indicators.

Over 6,000 schools with one teacher in Balochistan. The education minister Naseebullah Marri lamented that 70,000 teachers and the quality still low. Palvasha Jalalzai, the education specialist of UNICEF put some critical questions about the one-teacher one-school, teachers training in Balochistan.

To be very precise, the government and donor agencies should come out of Quetta's only luxury hotel and mobile teachers, parents, political people, media, and religious scholars at the district level to improve the state of education in Balochistan.

## Our collective callousness

By Abdul Sattar

As millions of hapless people grapple with the effects of the devastating floods, the ruling elite appears to be more interested in settling political scores and sparring over inconsequential matters. The apocalyptic natural calamity has killed more than 1638 people besides wounding over 12,865 souls. The tumultuous wave of destruction has also caused heavy losses to our infrastructure – partially or completely damaged over 2,049,482 houses, 13074 kilometers of roads and 392 bridges besides killing over 1,103,800 livestock and submerging over 9 million acres of land.

The disaster that affected more than 33,046,329 people, including 11 million children, hitting 84 districts of the country, still continues to haunt millions of people who are facing a spectre of disease outbreak. The looming hunger and starvation are two other possible phenomena that haunt those badly affected by these floods. With more than 44 per cent malnourished children, there are fears that the country is going to face an epidemic of malnourishment as staple crops like wheat and rice have been destroyed on a

massive scale while millions of indebted peasants have further been pauperized by the devastation of farm lands.

The floods also affected the already crippling infrastructure of education. According to Save the Children, at least 18,590 schools were damaged or destroyed, dealing a blow to the education of 670,000 children. It is feared that the real number might be much higher than estimated. The global body for children's welfare notes: "With whole villages inundated, thousands of students across the country, who had been preparing for the start of the academic year, have found their schools completely submerged, with books, blackboards, chairs and tables floating downstream."

The country is already burdened with over 25 million out-of-school children and it is feared that the literacy level will witness a downward spiral because of the recent destruction. The situation is going to be worse in Sindh where nearly 16,000 schools were damaged or destroyed and around 5,500 schools are being used to house the displaced. This is the province where educa-

tion already lies on the bottom layer of priorities with more than 4000 schools either closed or non-functional for years.

With almost 10 per cent of the country's health facilities damaged or destroyed, Pakistan is also likely to face a catastrophic situation in the health sector. The country's health infrastructure had already been in shambles for years with the provincial and federal governments spending a very tiny percentage of their budgets on health. The World Health Organization notes that tens of thousands of pregnant women have lost access to health facilities and services for safe delivery of their babies, increasing the risk of medical complications as their options are limited to delivery at home. Those needing medical attention for existing conditions will face diminished access, while tens of thousands of people, including children, need psychosocial support and mental health services to cope with the enormous losses they are experiencing and destruction they are witnessing.

The situation is grim but even these heart-wrenching scenes of emaciated children or malnourished women

did not affect our ruling elite that is busy trading allegations against one another. Imran Khan, the self-proclaimed messiah for the poor, is still holding public rallies and gatherings, seizing this opportunity to lambast the government and his political rivals. The governments in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, GB and AJK are making hectic efforts – not to extend relief and succor to those affected by the devastating floods, but to appease their beloved leader who has been strutting around the country, spending billions of rupees on his political activities.

Amidst the devastation of these floods, the sheer indifference of the ruling alliance towards the people has also been exposed. Instead of coming up with a comprehensive plan to mitigate the hardships of the displaced, it is quarrelling over the portfolios of ministries and positions in government offices. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who made an historic number of foreign trips within a short span of time, was accused of taking a large entourage to New York, allegedly squandering public money. While the ruling elite wants to set all the standards of austerity for

the poor people by imposing unbearable taxes, it loves to inflate the size of the cabinet.

As if not enough, the elected representatives of the country expressed their love for the people by demanding to be exempted from toll tax on motorways because our impetuous parliamentarians clad in branded dresses and adorned with imported watches and necklaces cannot afford to pay this tax. Their altruistic efforts bore results and they were granted the exemption. Others did not want to be left out so they were allowed to import luxury cars.

This is all happening at a time when the country has already suffered a loss of more than \$30 billion because of the destruction caused to our infrastructure during the catastrophic floods. Our prime minister and his tedious acolytes are roaming about the world's capitals with a begging bowl asking international bodies to generously contribute to the funds that are meant to be spent on flood affected but ironically, from the prime minister to the foreign minister to Imran Khan to Maulana Fazl, none of them has contributed even a single penny.

## A capitalist supernova?

By John Smith

Excerpted: 'Are We Heading Towards a Capitalist Supernova?'

Global debt – of households, private firms and governments – reached a staggering \$305tn (244tn GBP) in 2021, up from \$83tn in 2000.

Furthermore, global debt now equals 355 per cent of global GDP, up from 120 per cent in 1980 and 230 per cent in 2000.

The events we are witnessing mirror the dynamic that kicked off our current phase of capitalism in the first place. In 2021, debtors of all types handed \$10.2tn – 12 per cent of global GDP – in interest payments to their creditors. In comparison, the annual income of the poorest 50 per cent of humanity is just 8.5 per cent of GDP.

Global debt has grown twice as fast as global GDP since 1980 and is accelerating, while global GDP growth is slowing and threatening to go into reverse.

While global debt has rocketed, global interest rates have been in almost continual decline since 1980. So low have interest rates fallen since the global financial crisis of 2008 that, by 2021, \$17tn of bonds were trading at negative interest rates, even before inflation is taken into account. That's \$7tn more than the figure that astounded Bill Gross in 2016, referenced at the beginning of this article.

As a result, interest on

debt, as a share of GDP, is well below its peak at the beginning of the neoliberal era. The Economist calculates, for instance, that 27 per cent of US GDP was swallowed by interest payments in 1989, but only 12 per cent of it in 2021, despite the massive growth in US debt.

But the world of ever-low interest rates has now come to an end. The decision of the US Federal Reserve on 15 June to hike interest rates by 0.75 per cent – the sharpest increase in nearly three decades, with the promise of more to come – sent shockwaves around the world and has wiped trillions of dollars off the values of stock and bond markets.

Any rise in interest rates means a huge shift of purchasing power from indebted households, firms and governments to their creditors. 'The Economist' calculates that a 2 per cent increase in US interest rates in 2021 would, by 2026, double the share of global GDP absorbed by interest payments.

Decades of ever-lower interest rates have inflated what Nouriel Roubini, one of the few economists to predict the 2007-8 financial crash, famously called "the mother of all asset bubbles", eventually leading to a bust, another massive financial crisis, and a rapid slide into recession."

However, a bubble is insubstantial and delicate, and bursts with

barely a sound. A far more appropriate and useful metaphor is that of a star, which is immense, and dies in a stupendous explosion. As Bill Gross, the 'bond king', tweeted in 2016, "Global yields lowest in 500 years of recorded history. \$10 trillion of negative rate bonds. This is a supernova that will explode one day."

What has forced the Fed to aggressively raise its interest rate is the dramatic reappearance of a most feared monster: inflation. The events we are witnessing mirror the dynamic that kicked off our current phase of capitalism in the first place.

The neoliberal era was inaugurated in October 1979 by a huge hike in US interest rates aimed at quelling entrenched and rampant inflation. The "Volcker shock", as it became known (after Paul Volcker, then head of the US Federal Reserve), was likened by journalist Naomi Klein to "a giant Taser gun fired from Washington, sending the developing world into convulsions... Higher interest payments on foreign debts... could only be met by taking on more loans. The debt spiral was born."

This hike in interest rates succeeded in killing the inflation monster, but at the cost of a sharp recession in imperialist countries and a devastating debt crisis throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America. The debt crisis immiserated

millions and forced these nationally independent countries to submit to the dictates of the "Washington Consensus": wholesale privatisation, austerity and removal of obstacles to cross-border flows of capital and commodities (but not of people).

Now the inflation monster has risen from the dead, prompting the Fed and other central banks to attempt to kill it again before it has had a chance to gain in strength. Thus the Bank for International Settlements, which provides banking services for the world's central banks, has called on them to "not be shy of inflicting short-term pain and even recessions to prevent any move to a persistently high-inflation world."

As a result, the debate has moved on from whether there will be a global recession to how severe it will be – and whether central banks really have the guts to carry out their threats and risk a global economic crash. Over the next 18 months we will find out.

Why did Bill Gross liken global bond markets to a star about to explode? What are the chances that his prediction may come to pass? What would such a cataclysmic event actually mean in practice?

A star is a production process, in which heavier elements are fused out of lighter elements, releasing huge amounts of energy. When the energy released by the fusion of lighter elements is insufficient to counter the gravity exerted by the growing mass of heavier elements, the star dies. It either ends its life as a burned-out cinder or, if it is big enough, in a supernova, an extremely violent implosion that incinerates anything in its vicinity and scatters debris throughout space.

Will the coming crash take the form of a brief recession, or a long and deep depression (as in the 1930s) or something many magnitudes worse? Capitalism is also a production process, and the energy that fires it is living labour, performed by workers and farmers who produce more wealth than they consume. The surplus is converted into capital – that is, self-expanding wealth, wealth that must either make profits or shrivel and die. Capital, whether in the form of stocks and shares, bonds, real estate or fine wines, is, in the words of Karl Marx, "dead labour which, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks."

As with a star, when the mass of accumulated capital exceeds the capacity of living labour to breathe life into it, the moment of crisis has arrived, and swathes of capital are destroyed in a financial crash. With the interest rate hikes, our moment of crisis has arrived. But will

we aren't stopping any time soon, we just might have more to offer. Mr Mohammad Ali Jinnah, eat your heart out.

Why are we slaves to formalities and to due process? Being a practising lawyer for the past three years, I have noticed that something that can be resolved in a month generally takes years due to following the 'correct procedure' which adheres to the 'laws' laid down by those who ruled us more than 100 years ago. Why is it that we're so rigid and inflexible that we will only go by the book? Why can't we just form a medical board of independent doctors and let them decide if Dua Zehra is of legal age to marry? Why is that court hearings go on for years and years until the claimants die?

Why is that we aren't utilising the wonders of science to decide a question as simple as decoding someone's age? But well, on the flip side, Dua Zehra's case is a massive win for the predators, the sick minded, the diabolical pedophiles and for everyone who wishes to go down the deepest pits of disgust and horror. Those who love to violate and fondle with no objection, the lonely souls with their emptiness fulfilled and the beings who crave the touch of young skin. No more do they

we aren't stopping any time soon, we just might have more to offer. Mr Mohammad Ali Jinnah, eat your heart out.

Why are we slaves to formalities and to due process? Being a practising lawyer for the past three years, I have noticed that something that can be resolved in a month generally takes years due to following the 'correct procedure' which adheres to the 'laws' laid down by those who ruled us more than 100 years ago. Why is it that we're so rigid and inflexible that we will only go by the book? Why can't we just form a medical board of independent doctors and let them decide if Dua Zehra is of legal age to marry? Why is that court hearings go on for years and years until the claimants die?

Why is that we aren't utilising the wonders of science to decide a question as simple as decoding someone's age? But well, on the flip side, Dua Zehra's case is a massive win for the predators, the sick minded, the diabolical pedophiles and for everyone who wishes to go down the deepest pits of disgust and horror. Those who love to violate and fondle with no objection, the lonely souls with their emptiness fulfilled and the beings who crave the touch of young skin. No more do they

## Playing with dolls

Zorain Nizamani

Congratulations! We have made history. You can now freely marry an under-aged girl and legally get away with it. Bonus points, you might get the court to rule in your favour too. Our forefathers fought wars just to see us encourage (and dare I say legalise) underage marriages. Let your wildest and darkest thoughts adorn your interior, revel in all the possibilities that can further be explored. What's next, pedophilia?

It evades all logic how the courts function despite an ossification test showing a Dua Zehra's bone age to be 16 or 17; it is unfathomable how the honorable judge has gone as far as to say that she is free to live with whoever she wants to. I mean now that we're at it, why not legalise forced conversions too?

But where does the problem lie though? How is it that we, as reasonable citizens, can tell something's wrong. Why can't our Lords figure that out too? Dua Zehra is 16 or 17 and she's been allowed to marry and live with her 'husband'. Read that as many times as you want and try making peace with it. This is the best we've managed in 75 years of our country's existence and

have to be left alone with their sanity, their primitive instinct does not require honing any more, because our system has allowed for you to marry a girl who is below 18. Yes, she can and will consent. No, you will not be questioned. We live in a free country.

And for all those who have the audacity to concur with the judgement of the court and those who have been abusing the rhetoric of 'let her live her life'. I ask you, imagine your underage daughter elopes, will you still adopt this rhetoric and let her 'live her life' or will you try and protect her because: a) she is incapable of giving consent; and b) child marriages are illegal. Don't be a hypocrite.

I haven't put forth my opinions here in almost a month but the judgement in Dua Zehra's case was an eye opener and it required being dissected. It was a testament to how we're flogging a dead horse. The system has failed and there is absolutely no way it will improve, unless it's reconstructed from the root. I am short on words on how Dua has been allowed to 'go wherever she wants', it just sets a massively dangerous precedent. Our children our calling out our name, they're screaming at the top of their lungs, can't you hear them?

## How to break a vicious cycle [Part – II]

By Ishrat Husain

It goes without saying that political stability is the sine qua non for any sustained effort to achieve rapid and inclusive growth. The main drivers of such growth would be small farm agriculture, SMEs and microenterprises, construction and low-cost housing, tourism, IT and IT enabled services, diversification and value addition in exports.

Thus, the agenda proposed for the short, medium and long term should have a continuous chain, linking and consolidating the gains from these sectors and stimulating inter-sectoral synergistic impulses over time. Continuity of these policies beyond the electoral cycle is an absolute must. There are multiple pathways to attain this kind of growth but the preferred route to be chosen is the one that expands domestic productive capacity to meet the higher aggregate demand associated with rising per capita incomes, the relatively high propensity to create productive jobs and support livelihoods, alleviate poverty, and reduce interpersonal and regional inequality. Tough political decisions would be required from time to time. The time horizons described are not discrete as they would have spillovers but are continuous, interwoven in a chain that leads to the ultimate goal.

Short-term Agenda 2022-24: The revival of non-inflationary, sustained and inclusive growth would span a much longer time period. What is presented in the following paragraphs is what can possibly be done in the next two-and-a-half-year time period with great concerted effort. We are fully aware that there will be elections in 2023 but the commitment of all political parties to this agenda is to be secured.

For this, first, raise the investment-to-GDP ratio by two percentage points every year, reaching 20 per cent by 2024. Public-sector investment along with public-private partnership should not only be stepped up but its quality and composition should be able to crowd in private sector investment. Bank credit-to-GDP ratio, particularly in the fixed investment component, has remained dismally low compared to our neighbouring countries and has to be doubled from the current level. Private equity, development finance institutions, IPOs, and debt capital markets have to play a crucial role in financing private investment. Second, increase productivity of small and medium sized farmers – particularly in wheat, sugar, cotton, oilseeds, livestock products and pulses – improve marketing infrastructure, confine the role of government to strategic reserves for managing

demand supply gap, and maintain price stability. Provision of improved seed, fertiliser, pesticides, small agricultural implements through targeted subsidies along with water resource use efficiency and credit to small farmers who constitute two third of the total farms can boost the national yields of crops. Veterinary services and artificial insemination would do the same for dairy and livestock. It is paradoxical that a country with the largest irrigation system has to import food items and cotton amounting to almost \$10 billion. The impressive results in rice and maize crops show that government intervention in markets is to be avoided. R&D in the public sector needs to be integrated and coordinated.

Third, continue focused attention on the construction and housing sector and tourism which would create jobs, induce activity in the allied industries, assist micro, small and medium enterprises and help low-income families in acquiring houses and expanding tourist facilities in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Makran Coast and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The domestic cement industry is not only expanding in response to demand within the country but also because of economies of scale it is able to export. The Pakistan Steel Mills

has to be made fully operational under private sector lease arrangement and expanded to three million ton capacity and, along with performance linked incentives to manufacture quality products, will reduce dependence on imports. The engineering goods industry has remained stunted and should be incentivized to meet the local industrial demand or compete in international markets.

Fourth, broaden the FBR and provincial tax bases to attain tax-to-GDP ratio of 15 per cent (provincial taxes contributing three per cent from one per cent at present) through automation, data integration and data analytics, harmonization, new surveys and valuation of properties, track and trace system, and minimizing interaction between taxpayer and tax collector; gradually bring down the ratio of indirect taxes from 60 per cent of the total to 50 per cent; expedite income tax and sales tax refunds on the lines of FASTER without any human intervention at any stage in the process. Urban property tax is a huge potential that can be tapped if the powers to assess and collect this tax is devolved to municipal corporations. Cities like Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Faisalabad can generate five to six times more than the present levels if they carry out cadastral surveys, revalue properties

annually and impose heavy penalties on non-utilization of plots. Taxes on the agriculture income of large landowners and revision of irrigation charges can prove to be a remunerative source of income for the provinces and also ensure efficient use of water resources that are getting scarce. The reliance on indirect taxes on goods and services is highly regressive and it needs to be replaced by direct taxes on income (irrespective of the source), property, capital gains, assets and inheritance.

Fifth, revamp state-owned enterprises (SOEs) through restructuring, capital market sales, sales to strategic investors, mergers, liquidation, management contracts, public-private partnership to improve overall economic efficiency and maximize the returns to the exchequer. All the heads of these enterprises have to be recruited through an open competitive process and the candidates selected on the basis of merit, compensated well but held accountable for the results. The ministry heading this can set the performance agreements but not interfere in day-to-day operations. A comprehensive plan and strategy is already in place that has classified the commercial SOEs in two parts – those to be retained in public ownership for strategic or public

## Public display of chutzpah

Imran Jan

Growing up in Charsadda, as a young student we liked to repeat a joke everytime we came across any man with a beard who would either drive his car carelessly or indulge in some ridiculous act. The joke was just four Pashto words but the story and history behind those words was common knowledge and so people understood the context everytime we uttered those words, which are Sheikh pa ghalata de. It translates literally as "the bearded one is in the wrong".

Attallah Tarar sports a beard and shaves his mustache. Muslim men do this keeping in line with the seriousness and depth of their faith. However, he has indulged in uncouth and irreligious behaviour. Fathers who may have asked their sons and daughters to keep watching and reading news so as to prepare for the CSS exam must have felt very uncomfortable watching this public display of an act, which is usually the stuff of adult entertainment.

There is another Charsadda joke. Whenever any bearded man indulges in some irreligious or immoral behaviour, the oft-repeated joke is that he is exempt from any repercussions because he holds the licence for being ridiculous and immoral, which is an indirect refer-

ence to his beard. It was a double-edged sword. One, anything the labeled pious did was right by default. Two, don't dare criticise the bearded ones as their self-righteous mindset is unstoppable and dangerous. Perhaps this second joke is more relevant here. Because we have kind of forgotten that the same Atta Tarar some weeks ago openly threatened anyone who may dare call him a lota.

Public display of disrespect or profanity toward any faith or God is regarded as blasphemous. The people who adhere to the faith that is targeted by the blasphemy feel humiliated and resentful. One could argue that faith is a sacred as well as a private matter because it is one human's connection and contract with his Creator. We can disagree with an act of blasphemy but we are not to judge someone's actions or validity of their faith because that work is reserved for our Creator.

An elected or a government official takes oath of office to protect a document where the rights of the people are enshrined. That is a contract between the official and the state as well as the people. Disgracing the Holy Book is wrong and immoral but that is for the Creator to punish not us because that is a violation of the relationship between man and his Creator. Disgracing the sacred document called the Constitution is

a violation of the contract made with the people. Even the Holy Book emphasises on the rights of the people more than on the rights our Creator has over us. It is called Huguooq-ul-ibaad i.e. the rights of the people.

The bearded spokesperson of the Punjab government has openly displayed filthy profanity for the very document, which enshrines the rights the people have over him as a government official. It is not the violation of a specific right but rather the wholesale mockery of whatever rights the people may think they have.

Perhaps, this public display of chutzpah is coming from a greater belief of impunity. This middle finger is not only a mockery of the supposedly sacred document but also an indication of massive support from those who are usually in the business of raising the finger as a third umpire. Speaking of which, there was a lot of noise when Imran Khan some years ago had said that the third umpire had raised his finger. Somehow, there is not much noise at this finger raising as if it is some sort of a halal finger.

The violation of the Constitution used to be benignly labeled as "Doctrine of Necessity". That is obsolete now because now our politicians just middle finger the Constitution. Ah, those good ol' days!



## China Cultural Center in Pakistan launched "Online Chinese Culture Talk"

ISLAMABAD: China Cultural Center in Pakistan launched a series of lectures on "Online Chinese Culture Talk".

The first lecture, "Living Transmission" by Yuan Li, researcher at Chinese National Academy of Arts, provided a new window for Pakistani citizens to learn more about the profound Chinese culture.

In his lecture Yuan Li gives an in-depth introduction to the preservation, protection, inheritance and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage in China, especially the important role that the "living inheritance" method of intangible

ble cultural heritage plays in the development of civilization.

In the long history, the Chinese nation has created a rich and splendid material and intangible cultural heritage. These tangible and intangible cultural heritages are historical witnesses of the development of Chinese civilization and cultural resources of great value.

There are twelve lectures in total which includes "Living Transmission" by Yuan Li, researcher at the Chinese National Academy of Arts, "Chinese language, char-

acters and culture" by Professor Shi Dingguo, professor at Beijing Language and Culture University, "Gallantry in Tenderness: The

Momentum and Spirit of Chinese Wushu" by professor Meng Tao, associate professor at Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, "Appreciation of Peking Opera Art" by Zhang Jianguo, "Chinese Literature and the World - a brief history on the Mergence of Foreign and Chinese Literature" by Lu Jiande, eminent scholar and research fellow in the Institute of Literature at CASS. Other lecture series include INP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs Federal Cabinet meeting.

## Ishaq Dar decides to reshuffle economic team

ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday decided to reshuffle the economic team.

Finance Minister sources privy to the matter said that major changes will be made in important positions in the FBR and the finance ministry, while the special assistant to the finance minister will also be reshuffled.

The Minister of State for Finance, Dr Aisha Ghaus Pasha is also likely to be sacked, and the Secretary to the Ministry of Finance, Hamid Yaqoob Shaikh will also be replaced, sources added. Earlier today, Ishaq Dar took oath as Finance

Minister amid economic crisis in the country.

According to detail, Dar returned to country nearly after five years on Monday and later took oath as member of the upper house of the parliament on Tuesday.

Dar, known for his preference for a stronger currency, had led the finance ministry three times in the past. During his last stint as finance chief from 2013 to 2017, he managed to keep the rupee stable. It was the most stable currency in Asia from 2014 to 2017, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

Talking to the media persons in Islamabad on Wednesday, Ishaq Dar said

stabilizing local currency and reducing inflation and interest rates are priorities of the government. He said we do not believe in mere verbal claims rather history is testimony of our economic performance.

Ishaq Dar expressed satisfaction over the appreciation of rupee over the last two days saying this has reduced our loans.

The Federal Minister said the country is currently faced with worst economic crisis because of mismanagement of previous government of PTI. He said it was because of the efforts of former Finance Minister Miftah Ismail that the country INP

## Armed men rob Rs10m cash from security company's van

HYDERABAD: In a mega heist armed robbers plundered 10 million rupees cash from a vehicle of a private security company.

According to SSP Amjad Sheikh, seven robbers looted Rs10 million from a cash van of a private company that was going to Moro from Karachi.

The incident occurred in the limits of Chalgiri police stations, the SSP said and added four of the company's cash vans were going to Moro from which one became out of order in the area.

The unidentified robbers reached the spot on motorcycles and car and looted the cash and fled away. SSP Amjad Sheikh said the staff of the private company has been taken into custody for interrogation in the heist.

The Forensic of the looted van is also being carried out. INP

## COPHC set to bring 50 more Chinese firms to Gwadar Free Zone: Official

ISLAMABAD: The China Overseas Ports Holding Co. (COPHC) is all set to bring 50 more Chinese companies to Gwadar Free Zone in a year or two, an official told Gwadar Pro.

The official said that the 60-acre Phase I of the Gwadar Free Zone (GFZ) had already attracted 38 Chinese and 12 Pakistani firms. The North Free Zone (Phase II of the GFZ) has also been fully developed and two Chinese firms have already started construction activities there. "We are all set to bring 50 more companies to the North Free Zone within a year or two", the official said. The Chinese companies coming to Phase II are large and prominent enterprises, which will give a big boost to industrialisation in Gwadar, he added. The official, however, highlighted the scarcity of water and electricity in the port city as an impediment to future development. COPHC is doing everything in its capacity to end the two major problems, he said. "We have already installed a desalination plant of 1 million gallons per day capacity, which we intend to enhance up to 5 million gallons per day in next 5-8 years. Also, we are ready to provide 5 megawatts of electricity from our 15MW thermal power plant to the residents of Gwadar", he said.

Meanwhile, the Balochistan government is spending Rs2.5 billion on a 1 million gallons per day desalination plant in the city. However, INP

## Increasing number of Pakistanis enrol on Chinese language courses: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Among the foreign languages, the Chinese language has become increasingly popular in Pakistan in recent years with more and more people enrolling with different language institutes across the country, reports WealthPK.

The increasing enrolment for the Chinese language courses is because many Pakistanis now travel frequently to China for business, employment, and education opportunities due to the friendly ties between Pakistan and China.

Talking to WealthPK, Prof Dr Fakhar-ul-Islam, Director of Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar said, "Many universities in Pakistan have established China Study Centres and many more are running Chinese language learning centres. A number of Pakistani universities have entered into agreements and partnerships with their Chinese counterparts."

The University of Peshawar has taken a lead by establishing the first ever China Study Centre (CSC) in the province. The centre aims to create linkages with China through research, learn-

ing, executing projects, and people-to-people contacts. The CSC seeks to make the University of Peshawar a rich source of knowledge of China," he said.

Dr Fakhar further said, "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has increased the scope of Chinese language in Pakistan. In order to explore CPEC opportunities for business and employment, people have begun to recognize the importance of learning the Chinese language."

Talking to WealthPK, Dr Zhang Wei, head of the Confucius Institute at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), said, "Among all the platforms for cultural interaction in Pakistan, Confucius institutes have attained a prominent position and are regarded as the finest at imparting knowledge of the Chinese language and culture. Our main objective is to strengthen relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries," he said.

Dr Zhang further said, "Chinese funding is helping to establish Confucius institutes in Pakistan.

Pakistan welcomes these institutes and programs in its various universities. Established on April 4, 2005, the Confucius Institute

NUML Islamabad has the distinction of being the oldest and first Confucius institute in the Muslim world. The number of students is increasing with the passage of time because of Chinese job opportunities.

"NUML Confucius Institute launched the BS Area Study China undergraduate program in 2019. It offers a wide variety of courses that provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the Chinese language, arts, and culture. These Confucius institutes also send students to China to gain a deeper understanding of the Chinese culture."

"Enthusiasm towards learning Chinese has been seen, as it is the gateway to opening new avenues for the common populace in Pakistan. The goal of China and Pakistan is to stabilize and develop in the region. There is no denying that CPEC, as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), INP

## Attack on Chinese nationals in Karachi claims one life

KARACHI: A Chinese national was killed while two others sustained injuries after an unidentified man attacked them inside a clinic in Saddar area of Karachi while posing as a patient.

According to SSP South Asad Raza, the attacker came while disguised as a patient and remained inside the clinic for a longer period.

"As soon as his turn came, he opened fire on the Chinese nationals inside the clinic," he said, adding that a Chinese cashier died on the spot while a doctor and his wife sustained injuries.

Both the deceased and injured are dual nationals, he said, adding that they have been shifted to a hospital for medico-legal

formalities and treatment respectively. The injured are said to be in critical conditions.

The police have also recovered seven spent casings of 9mm pistol and cordoned off the area to collect further evidence from the spot. This is not the first attack in Karachi on Chinese nationals and on April 26, four people including three Chinese nationals were killed in an explosion near Confucius Institute at University of Karachi. A CCTV footage of the incident showed an attacker running away soon after the attack with police saying that suspect ran away using the MA Jinnah Road. The authorities will be scrutinizing all CCTV cameras on the route to determine the escape path of the suspect.

The police have also recovered seven spent casings of 9mm pistol and cordoned off the area to collect further evidence from the spot. This is not the first attack in Karachi on Chinese nationals and on April 26, four people including three Chinese nationals were killed in an explosion near Confucius Institute at University of Karachi. A CCTV footage of the incident showed an attacker running away soon after the attack with police saying that suspect ran away using the MA Jinnah Road. The authorities will be scrutinizing all CCTV cameras on the route to determine the escape path of the suspect.

## China delivered 13,000 tents, 10,000 blankets to assist Pakistan's flood

BEIJING: China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) has so far delivered 13,000 tents, 10,000 blankets and 1,000 boxes of compressed food by air to help flood-hit people in Pakistan.

The follow-up materials have been shipped by sea in three batches, which will arrive in early October, an official of CIDCA said in a statement.

He informed that CIDCA will soon dispatch two separate teams to Pakistan to carry out medical rescue and guidance as well as disaster assessment in the flood hit areas.

"CIDCA connected Guangxi to send a medical team to carry out medical rescue and guidance, as well as disaster assessment team organized by the Ministry of Emergency Management," according to Director, CIDCA, Yang Meng. In addition, China appealed to the international community to provide more helps and works with relevant organizations to use the Global Development and South to South Cooperation Fund to provide more support, he added. He said, after the floods in Pakistan, the Chinese government immediately announced 100 million yuan of emergency humanitarian assistance, including 25,000 tents and other materials urgently needed. INP

## Old Bannu Road dualization, upgradation being completed: NHA

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority (NHA) is working on dualization and up-gradation project of 83 kilometer Old Bannu Road in

Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Media reports said the project was part of Indus Highway and the first package of the project, 40 kilometer Domail - Khurram portion was awarded to the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) at the bid price of Rs 7.132 billion. Its work started in February 2018 and so far about 59 per cent physical progress has been achieved mainly due to lack of funds availability, the official added. He said its second package the 35 km Khurram-Krapa portion costing Rs 5.927 billion was awarded to the FWO. Its work had started in February 2018 and so far about 58 per cent physical progress has been achieved. The third package of Old Bannu road, 8 kilometer Gaandi Chowk - Sarai Naurang section was awarded to M/s NCC-IKAN-HRPL joint venture at the bid price of Rs 0.718 billion. Work on the package also started in February 2018 and it has already been completed. He further said that the existing road was single carriageway which was being dualized and improved. He said the project would provide the heavy traffic movement on Indus Highway (N-55) with an alternate route thus sharing the traffic burden. INP



ISLAMABAD Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ayaz Sadiq called on resident of the ADB Masatsugu Asakawa.

## 4% internet subscribers in Pakistan likely to use 5G technology by 2025: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is planning to launch 5G technology in three big cities of the country in 2023. According to an official document of the Ministry of Information and Telecommunication (MOITT), a copy of which is available with WealthPK, the government has projected that by 2025, 4% of Pakistan's internet users can use 5G technology, while 65% of the connections will be enabled on 4G technology. Documents show that the Global System of Mobile Communications (GSMA) had projected that more than 50% of users will have a 4G connection in Pakistan by end of 2022. These projections are accurate, but remain three years behind the trajectory of the global average. Compared to the world average, the percentage of 4G connection in Pakistan is significantly smaller than the rest of the region, but is expected to grow at a faster pace. 5G is projected to pick up from 2023, but continue to account for a very small proportion of connections in the following years. Mobile broadband in Pakistan keeps growing, but still it has plenty of room for growth. Mobile subscription and penetration are increasing at a steady pace. As of August 2022, total mobile and mobile broadband (MBB) users reached 195 million and 123 million, respectively. Mobile and MBB penetration have reached 84% and 51%, respectively. The proportion of MBB subscribers in the total mobile subscribers is increasing over the past years. The GSMA has projected that 21% of

the global population can be connected to 5G technology, while 57% population can avail of 4G technology.

According to the latest research of GSMA, in 2019, 4G for the first time accounted for more than 50% of mobile connections globally. 82% of the population in low-middle income countries (LMICs) were covered by 4G, compared to 90% for 3G. It has taken the LMICs around seven years to reach more than 80% coverage for 4G, compared to 10 years for 3G. According to the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology (CAICT), as of 2020, 92 countries/regions released 5G development strategy/plan, conducted 5G spectrum auction, or decided 5G spectrum auction/allocation timetable. As many as 135 operators in 52 countries/regions have launched commercial 5G services. In the coming years, there will be more widespread deployment and adoption of the technology around the world, including in LMICs. The documents show that Pakistan has total MBB penetration (population using internet) of above 46% (including 3G penetration of 10% and 4G penetration of 36%), while the number for other benchmark countries (excluding the Philippines) is above 74%. The sharp contrast shows a usage gap, i.e., although a large proportion of the population is covered by MBB in Pakistan, less than half of them use these services. Access to connectivity, affordable devices, and content barriers. INP



ISLAMABAD Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ayaz Sadiq called on vice president Asian Development Bank Shixin Chen.

## Pakistan urges Taliban to stop terrorist groups from using Afghan territory for attacks against neighbours

UNITED NATIONS: Expressing "serious" concern over terrorism originating from Afghanistan, Pakistan Tuesday called on the Taliban to prevent the Afghan territory from being utilized for attacks by terrorist groups, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), against neighbours or any other country.

"In particular," Ambassador Munir Akram told the UN Security Council, "eliminating the threat posed by ISIL-K that is Da'esh, the TTP, ETIM (East Turkestan Islamic Movement) and IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan), as well as Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, is of vital importance for Pakistan." Speaking in the 15-member Council's debate on the situation in

Afghanistan, the Pakistani envoy said the recent rise in high profile targeted killings and bombings, including against the Russian embassy is a cause for "special concern."

"Should we fail to provide the necessary and continued long-term economic solutions to the Afghan people and to the authorities in Kabul, there is a risk of anti-Taliban groups, particularly ISIL-K (Da'esh) gaining further strength in the country," he warned.

"We expect the Taliban to prevent Afghanistan's territory from being utilized for terrorism against neighbours or any other country," Ambassador Akram, adding that Pakistan will support all sincere efforts to neutral-

ize and eliminate these terrorist groups while fully respecting Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

But, Ambassador Akram said, the role of spoilers — an apparent reference to India — who wish to aid and abet terrorism against Pakistan from Afghan soil must also be checked and the terrorist networks they have established must be eliminated in Afghanistan and the region, as Islamabad has a vital stake in peace and stability of the neighbouring country.

Pakistan, he said, would like to see an Afghanistan that is at peace with itself and the world, and which respects and nurtures all its citizens, without regard to gender, ethnicity and religion. INP

## Blinken defends Pakistan arms sales against Indian Criticism

WASHINGTON: US State Secretary Antony Blinken on Tuesday defended military sales to Pakistan after criticism from growing US partner India, which considers itself the target of Islamabad's F-16 planes.

Blinken met in the US capital with India's foreign minister a day after separate talks with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari.

The US-Pakistan alliance, born out of the Cold War, has frayed over Islamabad's relationship with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The top US diplomat defended a \$45 million F-

16 deals for Pakistan approved earlier in September, saying the package was for the maintenance of Pakistan's existing fleet.

The package does not include the sale of any new capabilities, weapons, or munitions and is aimed at the sustenance of Pakistan Air Force's F-16 programme.

"These are not new planes, new systems, new weapons. It's sustaining what they have," the US state secretary told a news conference with his Indian counterpart, S u b r a h m a n y a m Jaishankar. "Pakistan's programme

bolsters its capability to deal with terrorist threats emanating from Pakistan or from the region. It's in no one's interests that those threats be able to go forward with impunity, and so this capability that Pakistan has had can benefit all of us in dealing with terrorism," Blinken said. He added that the US had a "responsibility and an obligation to whomever we provide military equipment to make sure that it's maintained and sustained. That's our obligation." When asked to elaborate on the terrorism threats and the need for F-16s to counter them, Blinken said:

"There are clear terrorism threats that continue to emanate from Pakistan itself as well as from neighbouring countries. And whether it is TTP (Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan) that may be targeting Pakistan, whether it's ISIS-Khorasan, whether it's Al-Qaeda, I think the threats are clear, well-known, and we all have an interest in making sure that we have the means to deal with them. And that's what this is about." To another question about his discussion with FM Bilawal on improving ties between Pakistan and India, his advice to Pakistan in this

regard and the latter's response, Blinken said it would not be appropriate to "characterise Pakistan's response." "More broadly, we always encourage our friends to resolve their differences through diplomacy, through dialogue. That hasn't changed. It won't change. It would not be appropriate for me to characterise Pakistan's response, just as I wouldn't characterise our friend's response in a similar conversation," he said. Jaishankar did not criticise Blinken in public but on Sunday, speaking at a reception for the Indian community. INP



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ambassador designate to Syria Air Marshal (R) Shahid Akhter called on President Dr Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



# Another audio clip surfaces, purportedly of Imran talking about 'foreign conspiracy' cypher

ISLAMABAD: Following the release of a set of audio clippings between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other key decision-makers in the government only three days ago, another controversial audio leak surfaced on Wednesday, this time purportedly featuring former premier Imran Khan.

The clip making rounds on social media seemingly features a conversation between Imran and his former principal secretary, Azam Khan, about a cypher that the PTI chief has for long presented as evidence of 'a foreign conspiracy' to oust him from the top office.

In the audio clip, a voice, believed to be Imran's, is heard saying: "We only have to play on this. We don't have to name [any country]. We only have to play with this, that this date was [decided] before."

"The new thing that will emerge is that the letter..."

Here, the second voice, believed to be Azam, is heard, suggesting holding a meeting on the cypher. "See, if you recall, in that the ambassador has written in the end to [send] a demarche. Even if the demarche is not to be sent, as I have thought a lot about it at night — you said they raised it — I thought about how to cover all this. Let's hold a meeting with Shah Mahmood Qureshi (who was the foreign minister in Imran's government) and the foreign secretary. Shah Mahmood Qureshi will read out that letter and whatever he reads out will be converted into a copy. I will then make minutes [out of it and say] that the foreign secretary has prepared this." But its (cypher's) analysis will have to be conducted here. We will carry out the analysis and convert it into minutes as we want so that it becomes [part of] the office record."

He elaborates that the analysis would conclude that "it is a threat. It is called a threat in diplomatic language".

The man, believed to Azam, adds that "minutes are in my hands... we will draft the minutes".

Here, the person on the other end, purportedly Imran, is heard asking who would be called to the meeting. "Shah Mahmood, you, me and Sohail?"

Just these, the other person says. "We will do it tomorrow," the person believed to be Imran replies. In turn, the voice, supposedly belonging to Azam, is heard explaining that following this plan, "things will become a part of the record." Consider that they are the consulate for the state. When he will read it out, I will easily copy it and it will be on record that this has happened. Moreover, he suggests that "you (supposedly Imran) call the foreign secretary so that it doesn't remain political and becomes a part of the bureaucratic record". To this, the man believed to be Imran points out that an ambassador has written the cypher, implying that it should already be a part of the bureaucratic record since it has been written by an envoy.

"But we don't have a copy of it. How did they release it?" the person on the other end replies.

Journalist Mazhar Abbas, while speaking to a private TV channel mentioned that the conversation likely "recorded" when Imran was the prime minister. In this connection, he also mentioned other audio clips that have surfaced in recent days and linked those to the safety of the Prime Minister's Office. PTI leaders Fawad Chaudhry and Hammad Azhar addressed the latest leaks but did not confirm or deny its veracity. INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar as arrived at Finance Ministry to joint office after taking oath.

## Portable solar pumping system revolutionizes agriculture in Thal: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The agriculture sector has undergone a revolution thanks to high adoption rate of Portable Solar Pumping System (PSPS) among farmers in the Thal region.

With PSPS, the farmers can use sweet underground water for irrigation — which was previously impossible with diesel-operated pumps due to high per-acre irrigation cost of roughly Rs3,000 per irrigation. The farmers now have zero operating expenses for all irrigations, thanks to PSPS, reports WealthPK.

Khalid Jameel, Scientific Officer at the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), told WealthPK that due to the sandy soil texture in Thal, irrigation requires a significant amount of water.

The underground water is pumped through diesel- and electricity-powered tube wells to meet the demand for irrigation water. The farmers in Thal region are typically resource poor and struggle to cover the expenditures of operating and maintaining tube wells.

He said Rs4 to 5 lac is typically spent on diesel annually for irrigation. The PSPS has a hefty installation fee of 8 to 9 lacs, but this is a one-time cost after which there are no further irrigation costs.

Moreover, small farmers who are unable to pay the high initial installation cost of 8 to 9 lac rupees for a PSPS with 30 to 40 solar panels can also lower cost by reducing the number of panels.

Since PSPS eliminates the cost of diesel and electricity for irrigation, the farmers who have adopted it have seen significant increases in their

income. The PSPS has a payback time of two to three years and a life of roughly 30,000 years, Khalid added.

He explained that the production of sugarcane per acre improved noticeably from 900 to 1400 maunds per acre, and other crops experienced a similar trend. This is because lower diesel prices enable farmers to invest the money saved from irrigation into agricultural fertiliser. The farmers profit twice as much from increased crop yields; therefore, adoption is increasing in the Thal region.

According to Khalid, farmers in the Thal region report that many people have learned about PSPS through a variety of sources, including other farmers, YouTube videos produced by the NARC, and workshops they used to visit for their trolleys' maintenance. All of the farmers who participated in the poll conducted by the NARC said they had bought from manufacturers more than 1,000 trolleys in the Thal region.

The farmers also mentioned that they altered PSPS design to meet their demands. In the Thal region, the PSPS in a variety of designs, including those with hydraulic jacks, slide openings, umbrella openings, and wire openings, have been deployed. The PSPS adoption is significantly influenced by orientation. This results in an abrupt rise in the demand for PSPS. The farmers order the production of PSPS from local trolley manufacturers. They experimented with different PSPS designs before finally being able to alter the real design to meet the requirements of the nearby farmers. INP

## Accountability court serves notice to NAB over Ishaq Dar's plea

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad on Wednesday served notices to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) over newly appointed federal minister Ishaq Dar's plea seeking the cancellation of his arrest warrants in the assets beyond means case.

On December 11, 2017, the accountability had declared the PML-N leader a proclaimed offender in a NAB reference due to his continued absence from the proceedings. The national anti-graft watchdog accused Dar of possessing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The case was filed by NAB in light of the Supreme Court's July 28 verdict in the Panama Papers case.

At the outset of the hearing today, Senator Ishaq Dar surrendered himself before the accountability court and submitted a petition pleading for nullification of his arrest warrants.

At this, the court issued notice to the NAB on Dar's plea and ordered him to appear before the court on October 7.

"We will hear the application for cancellation of warrants along with assets' reference," the judge remarked and adjourned the hearing till October 7 (Friday). INP

## FM Bilawal extends his Washington visit by one day

WASHINGTON: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has extended his Washington visit by one more day, it was learnt on Wednesday.

According to the earlier schedule, Bilawal was supposed to conclude his visit to Washington by Sept 28 but suddenly his stay has been prolonged by one more day.

At the end of his visit, the foreign minister would hold an important press conference.

Sources said that FM Bilawal's stay has been extended in view of his engagements.

His meetings with the members of US Senate and Congress have also been scheduled.

During his talk at the Wilson Center yesterday, Foreign Minister Bilawal while highlighting the devastation caused by floods in Pakistan said the developing countries must be provided with sufficient means to adequately face the impact of climate change. He said the global problems could only be addressed through global solutions. "Pakistan is facing an apocalyptic crisis in the shape of devastating floods", he said and highlighted that catastrophic floods in Pakistan were proof that global warming was an existential threat facing the world today. He told the gathering that Pakistan contributed less than 1% to the global greenhouse gas emissions "yet we are one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change." Pakistan is seeking climate justice. We are a resilient nation and will rebuild better, greener using climate resilient infrastructure with the cooperation of our friends in the international community," he remarked.

To a question, Bilawal advised PTI Chairman Imran Khan to return to the National Assembly and give respect to INP democratic institutions. INP

## Pakistan reports 78 coronavirus cases, no death in 24 hours

LAHORE: Pakistan has reported no death in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of confirmed positive cases has surged to 1,572,488. The nationwide tally of fatalities stands at 30,612 on Wednesday.

According to the latest figures by the National Institute of Health (NIH), at least 78 persons were tested positive for COVID-19 across the country in the past 24 hours.

Pakistan has conducted 11,418 tests in the past 24 hours out of which 78 persons were tested positive for the disease. The COVID Positivity Ratio was recorded at 0.68 percent. INP

## US rejects India's concerns on F-16 deal with Pakistan

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday defended military sales to Pakistan after withering criticism from growing US partner India, which considers itself the target of Islamabad's F-16 planes.

Blinken met in the US capital with India's foreign minister a day after separate talks with his counterpart from Pakistan.

The top US diplomat defended a \$450 million F-16 deal for Pakistan approved earlier in September, saying the package was for maintenance of Pakistan's existing fleet.

"These are not new planes, new systems, new weapons. It's sustaining what they have," Blinken told a news conference with his Indian counter-

part, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

"Pakistan's program bolsters its capability to deal with terrorist threats emanating from the region. It's in no one's interests that those threats be able to go forward with impunity," Blinken said.

Jaishankar did not criticize Blinken in public. But on Sunday, speaking at a reception for the Indian community in the United States, Jaishankar said of the US position, "You're not fooling anybody."

"For someone to say, I'm doing this because it's for counter-terrorism, when you're talking of an aircraft like the capability of the F-16, everybody knows where they are deployed," he said, referring to the fleet's positioning against India. INP

## Islamabad: Red Zone sealed ahead of Kissan Ittehad protest

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has sealed the Red Zone ahead of the possible protest of Pakistan Kissan Ittehad (PKI) on Wednesday.

According to details, all routes leading to the Red Zone except that Margalla Road have been sealed. Ayub Chowk, Express Chowk and Nadra Chowk are closed, the traffic said and added that one lane is open from Serena Chowk for entry in Red Zone.

The police said that no one will be allowed to enter the Red Zone. Officials have been ordered to take strict action against anyone who tries to enter the Red Zone.

The government has

ordered the deployment of the Anti-Riots Force to ensure the security of the Red Zone.

The protesting farmers have been demanding to reduce the power tariff, regretting that the government had raised the electricity to Rs36 per unit.

The demonstrators have also demanded subsidies on fertilizers and diesel, while taxes on agricultural machinery and tractors should be abolished.

The farmers entered Islamabad on September 20, affecting the traffic system of the federal capital. Traffic jams were witnessed at Srinagar Highway, G-9, G-10 and Ninth Avenue. INP

## Indus river water level returns to normal at all barrages

LAHORE: The water flow in Indus River has returned to normal at all barrages after water in the mighty river dropped below the low flood category at Kotri Barrage.

According to the data shared by the Flood Forecasting Division on Wednesday, the water level in the river in upstream barrages has already returned to normal flow.

The inflow of water at Kotri Barrage has been measured 1,87,600 cusecs and outflow has been 1,56,800 cusecs.

Indus River has been normal at Tarbela reservoir with water inflow 70,000 cusecs and outflow 76,500 cusecs.



HYDERABAD: A gypsy woman cooking food for her children outside her makeshift hut on the greenbelt of Latifabad No.4.

## Political stability vital to steer country out of economic mess: Fazl

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) President and JUI chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said that political stability was indispensable to steer the country out of the economic crisis. Talking to private TV channel on Wednesday, he said "We are trying to get the nation out of the chaos of internal divide and take them to national unity so that the political and economic crises can be overcome."

Maulana Fazlur Rehman said he added that political stability in any country was the ladder of economic evolution and a strong base for national security. "The basic document for achieving political stability is the Constitution, which reflects the collective thinking of 22 million people of the country and has the status of a national charter," he pointed out. He said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had not

only weakened the country economically but also shattered the national unity through the politics of hatred and vengeance.

"By destroying our social values and political traditions, the PTI has polluted mutual respect, political tolerance and the morals of young generation," Fazlur Rehman deplored.

"Imran Niazi deliberately weakened the Parliament and made all the institutions including judiciary and election commission controversial," he added.

"We will ensure the restoration of the reputation of national institutions by ensuring the implementation of power-sharing formula in the light of the Constitution," he pledged.

"I hope that the PDM government will be able to put the nation back on its feet after the floods and the economic crisis," he expressed optimism. INP

## Water level continues receding at Kotri Barrage

KOTRI: The water level is constantly decreasing at Kotri Barrage on Wednesday.

According to the control room, the inflow of water at Kotri Barrage upstream has increased to 187,635 cusecs.

Whereas, the outflow of water at Kotri Barrage downstream hovers around 156,780 cusecs.

A decrease of 10,075 cusecs has been recorded in water flow at Kotri Barrage during the last 24 hours.

Water is being released into the four canals originating from Kotri Barrage. 6,350 cusecs of water are being discharged into KB Feeder and 1,330 cusecs into Akram Wah canal.

Similarly, 8,550 cusecs of water are being discharged into Old Phuleli canal and 14,625 cusecs into New Phuleli canal. INP

## Dar will face failure, snap election to be held

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League Pakistan (AMLP) leader Sheikh Rashid on Wednesday said that audio and video leaks will damage the politics of the current government.

Taking to Twitter, the former Interior Minister said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ishaq Dar will also face failure.

He also claimed that the snap election will be held. All decisions will be made between October 15 to November 15.

Rashid said that people who leak audios and videos have been trapped in it themselves. INP

## Sara Inam's funeral offered in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The body of Sara Inam, who had been murdered a few days ago by her husband Shah Nawaz Amir, son of senior journalist Ayaz Amir, has been handed over to her family and her Namaz-i-Janaza was offered in Islamabad after Zohr prayers.

The Islamabad police recorded the statements of Sara's brother and cousins who had come from Canada. After recording their statements, the police handed over the body to them.

They took the body of Sara to home from Polyclinic Hospital. Her funeral prayers were offered in Shahzad Town after Zohr prayers.

"Our sister has been murdered. We are still in a state of shock because of what happened to us," said Sara's brother. "We hope we will get justice," hoped Sara's cousin. INP

## IHC throws out petition against suspension of Adiala Jail staff

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday threw out the petition against the suspension of Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi staff, saying it was inadmissible for the hearing.

Speaking on the occasion, IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Athar Minallah said that the case did not fall in the court's jurisdiction. "This is a human rights issue; this is certainly a big issue," he remarked.

Addressing Ali Bukhari, the counsel for the petitioners, he said, "Allow me to tell what kind of treatment the jail staff metes out to the prisoners."

Concurring with the observation made by the CJ, the counsel said the fact was those who were involved in the inhuman treatment of prisoners were allowed to go scot-free, while those who were innocent were suspended. Justice Minallah

told him that on his orders, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) was working on the case.

Hardly 24 hours ago, Tuesday September 27, 2022, the IHC, while declaring Adiala Jail a detention camp, had ordered the National Commission for Human Rights to launch investigation into the alleged torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners in the jail. "The allegations levelled in the petition of a prisoner are, prima facie, not baseless," the court said.

"According to the confidential report, the Adiala Jail has been turned into a detention camp instead of being run according to the law," the court added.

"In the jail, prisoners are treated inhumanely, and there take place gross violations of human rights," the court stated. INP

## PAK Vs ENG: Security beefed up in Lahore for T201 matches

LAHORE: Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore Ghulam Mahmood Dogar on Wednesday reviewed security arrangements ahead of fifth T201 match between Pakistan and England at the Qaddafi Stadium.

Team England is currently in Lahore to play the remaining three matches of the 7-match T201 series against Pakistan.

Lahore police chief said they will ensure fool-proof security and a peaceful environment during the match. Security of the players, Qaddafi Stadium, and routes of the team will be beefed up. INP



ISLAMABAD: famous Egyptian Qari Mahmoud Shahat Anwar meet Jamiat Ulema-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence.

## Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf believes in the empowerment of institutions, CM KP

Peshawar: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has stated that incumbent provincial government has established a model of sustainable development in the province with the aim to make Khyber Pakhtunkhwa financially self-sustainable and enable it to contribute significantly to the national exchequer. In a statement issued from the Chief Minister's Secretariat, Mahmood Khan stated that Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf believes in the empowerment of institutions instead of depending on personalities adding that institutional empowerment is the only way to ensure sustainable development and the establishment of a welfare state. Due to long term planning, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has been set on the track of development which will make the province a role model for national development.

The Chief Minister reiterated that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government

has worked tirelessly for promotion of tourism as an industry which has made the province a tourist destination not only at national but international level. In order to exploit the natural resources available in the province, various initiatives have been undertaken in which the wheeling model deserves special attention. Provision of cheap electricity has made Khyber Pakhtunkhwa an attractive spot for national and international investors seeking establishment of small and large industrial units.

The Chief Minister maintained that despite various constraints and challenges, the provincial government has successfully completed the integration of erstwhile FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province which was a daunting task. However, the indifferent attitude of the current federal government has raised serious concerns over the intention regarding development of these areas. INP