

QUETTA VOICE

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British High Commissioner calls on COAS



Jam and JUI vow to give tough time to CM Bizenjo as ice melted

Age relaxation in Balochistan only for a year ?

Syed Ali Shah Analysis Age Relaxation by government

The Balochistan government issued a notification with regard to increasing the age limit for new candidates applying for government jobs a few days back. As per the notification, the government has given eight years extension in the age limit for fresh candidates.

Now candidates of 43 years of age can apply for government jobs in Balochistan, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, the Balochistan Minister for Communication and Works Department announced. However, this relaxation is only for one year.

Age relaxed from July 1st to 30th of June 2023, the notification mentions. This notification gives more questions than answers. The reason behind the age relaxation for government jobs is obvious i.e. ministers, advisers and parliamentary secretaries coupled with friendly opposition would merely adjust their supporters in government departments.

Thousands of jobs are lying vacant in Balochistan

Currently, thousands of vacancies are lying vacant in various departments. Jobless youth of the province are tired of submitting their documents in every department. Since appointments on merit have become rare in Balochistan, therefore, candidates with no political backing or less influence cannot get jobs.

The government has already empowered the departments to recruit employees rather than testing services. Based on track record, testing services are not ideal but they have proved to be far better than departments when it comes to merit and transparency in terms of the recruitment process.

Under the new notification, employees would only serve for 17 years



The question arises that why age relaxation for candidates is only for a year. If the government has clear intention of recruiting those who have tired of submitting documents for jobs, then the offer should not be for a limited period. The notification is controversial and debatable, when the retirement age is 60 years, then, fixing 43 years as the eligibility for applying for government jobs is beyond comprehension.

It means, the fresh recruited employees would only serve for 17 years and then their retirement

would approach fast. The government has to review its decision since the province need young energetic and educated manpower to run the affairs of the province.

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FIA books Imran, other PTI leaders in connection with prohibited funding case

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has booked former prime minister Imran Khan and other PTI leaders in connection with their party allegedly received prohibited funding, it emerged on Tuesday.

The case was filed by the state through FIA's Corporate Banking Circle in Islamabad. The first information report (FIR), a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, stated that Arif Masood Naqvi — the owner of the Wooton Cricket Limited — transferred "ill-gotten" money to a United Bank Limited (UBL) account registered under the name of the PTI.

"The purpose stated in the swift messages of the transactions is 'agreed transfer' to disguise the true nature, origin, location, movement and ownership of these funds," Arif Masood Naqvi is also the founder/owner of Abraaj Group, UAE, which collapsed in 2018. Arif Masood Naqvi lied about the performance of Abraaj's funds by inflating their value," the complaint added.

"Therefore, Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) imposed penalties on two Abraaj Group companies for carrying out un-authorised activities in Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and mis-using investors' money. The regulator imposed penalties amounting to \$299.30 million on Abraaj Investment Management Limited and Abraaj Capital respectively."

It further said that Naqvi was also facing trials in the United Kingdom and the United States for defrauding investors.

The complaint named Imran Khan, Sardar Azhar Tariq Khan, Saifullah Khan Nyazee, Syed Yunus Ali Raza, Aamer Mehmood Kiani, Tariq Rahim Sheikh, Tariq Shafi, Faisal Maqbool Shaikh, Hamid Zaman and Manzoor Ahmad Chaudhary as signatories/beneficiaries of the PTI account in question.

"PTI submitted an affidavit of Arif Masood Naqvi before the Election Commission of Pakistan stating therein that all the amounts collected in the accounts of WCL were submitted into PTI's account in Pakistan. This affidavit has been proved to be false/forged as two more transactions were also made from WCL to two different accounts in Pakistan in May 2013."

The FIR further said that 12 CTRs/STRs had to be reported by the UBL management to the authorities but they failed to do so. "Chaudhary Shahid Bashir, the operation manager of UBL's Jinnah Avenue branch in Islamabad, facilitated these suspicious/illegal transactions by not reporting the aforesaid illegalities to the concerned authorities and also allowed Internet Merchant Acquiring Agreement changing the title of the account to Naya Pakistan". Web Desk



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Nawabzada Gazin Marri booked in kidnapping case in Kohlu

Yousaf Marri

KOHLU: Former Home Minister Balochistan, Nawabzada Gazin Marri was booked in a kidnapping and robbery case in Kahan tehsil of district Kohlu. Nawab Jangaiz Marri, the former provincial minister for irrigation lodged a first information report (FIR) against his own brother at Kahan levies station.

Nawab Jangaiz Marri has also lodged an FIR against five colleagues of Nawabzada Gazin Marri. "Allegations are baseless and this is a political case", Nawabzada Gazin Marri told reporters at session court Kohlu. "My father late Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri had kept Changaiz Marri from all affairs", Gazin Marri claimed.



Session court Kohlu granted bail before arrest to the former home minister of Balochistan in the FIR. Attaullah Marri Advocate for Gazin Marri appeared before the court. Gazin Marri alleged that fake cases were already registered against him by what he claimed at the behest of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan and Senator Sarfaraz Bugti.

Noor Khan Khilji calls on PTI Chief Imran Khan

Dawood Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: Noor Khan Khilji, a tribal leader who recently joined the Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI) called on former prime minister Imran Khan on Tuesday. Former deputy speaker national assembly, Qasim Suri, former federal minister, Asad Umar and other party leaders were also present on the occasion.

PTI Chief welcomed Noor Khan Khilji for joining the party and expressed the hope that he would play an important role in strengthening the party in Balochistan. Mr. Khilji had announced the former ruling party the other day in Quetta along with fellow tribesmen.

In this regard, the PTI organized a mammoth public meeting in Quetta's Nawar Killi area.



Jam and JUI vow to give tough time to CM Bizenjo as ice melted

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Jamiat ul Ulema e Islam (JUI) and former Chief Minister Mir Qudus Bizenjo as the ice melted between the two on Monday night. Jam Kamal visited the residence of Maulana Abdul Wahid Wasey, the JUI Balochistan Chief and sought reconciliation.

"No issue this happens in politics", Maulana Wasey replied to the visiting former CM of Balochistan. Jam Kamal and former provincial ministers Saleem Khoso and Arif Jan Muhammad Hassani sought an apology over an incident inside the assembly premises on October 18, 2021. Maulana Abdul Wahid Siddiqui, the JUI F lawmaker was injured when an armored vehicle hit the gate of the Balochistan Assembly during a protest of opposition lawmakers against the Jam Kamal-led government.

"We would give a tough time to the present government", Maulana Wasey told reporters. The JUI F lawmakers and Jam Kamal held a separate meeting, which discussed all ways and means to mount pressure on the present government.

"We developed a consensus to launch a joint political struggle", Jam Kamal Khan

"We developed a consensus to launch a joint political struggle", Jam Kamal Khan said. He said the two parties were committed to improving governance and pressurizing the present setup to do more for the flood-affected people. In response to a question about



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JUI's key ally Balochistan National Party (BNP), Maulana Wasey said, "some members of BNP have an access to the bedroom of the CM". There was no immediate response from the BNP Mengal in this regard.

The two parties had supported Bizenjo in no confidence motion

The two key opposition parties including JUI and BNP had supported a no-confidence motion against the former CM Jam Kamal Khan in October last year. Since then, the two opposition parties were supporting the incumbent CM. However, differences developed as the incumbent CM Bizenjo rejected the charter of demand of the JUI F. The religious party wanted to be a coalition partner in the Bizenjo-led government. However, it wanted a lion's share.

British High Commissioner calls on COAS

RAWALPINDI: British High Commissioner, Dr. Christian Turner on Tuesday expressed his grief over the devastation caused by floods in Pakistan and offered sincere condolence to the families of the victims. The British High Commissioner called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa here at GHQ. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and regional security situation including bilateral cooperation in various fields were discussed, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). Talking to the British High Commissioner, the COAS said Pakistan valued the UK's balanced role in regional affairs and looked forward to enhance mutually beneficial relationship based on common interests. The dignitary appreciated Pakistan's efforts for regional stability and also pledged to play his role enhancing cooperation with Pakistan at all levels. INP

President for further cementing multisphere ties with Maldives

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday called for the need to further cement bilateral ties between Pakistan and Maldives in all fields of mutual interest, especially in the education, health and tourism sectors.

The president, talking to Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to the Maldives, Vice Admiral (r) Muhammad Fayyaz Gilani here, advised the envoy-designate to especially focus on establishing strategic ties with the Maldives in sectors such as trade, business and investment and people-to-people contacts. INP

Youth are valuable asset of country: Corps Commander Balochistan

News Desk

Corps Commander Balochistan Lieutenant General Asif Ghafoor said that youth is a valuable asset of the country. He urged the students to play a positive role in national unity and development and step forward for the future leadership of the country.

The Corps Commander Balochistan, Lieutenant General Asif Ghafoor visited the Turbat University Along with the Inspector General (IG) Frontier Corps (FC) South, Major General Kamal Anwar Chaudhry.

Corps Commander Balochistan visits Turbat University On the arrival at Turbat University Vice-Chancellor Professor Jan Muhammad, and the principal of Turbat Medical college Dr. Muhammad Afzal welcomed the commander.

Corps Commander Balochistan Lieutenant General Asif



Ghafoor said that the youth of Balochistan, especially the youth of Makran Division, is very talented and hardworking and they have to spend their energy on education. "Youth should take advantage of the opportunities available for their education", Corps Commander stated.

Balochistan has had and still has many problems. But in the recent past, there has been positive progress on almost every issue. In this regard, both the federal government and the province have done a lot of work.

Corps Commander Balochistan visited Turbat University The students of the medical college demanded registration of the college in the Pakistan Medical College (PMC). The commander promised that he would definitely implement it. He further said that educated youth play an important role in the development of the country.

Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Asif Ghafoor assured the students that all possible support will be provided in the construction and development of the university.

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Editor Asim Khan

Floods expose construction quality of dams in Balochistan

Flash floods unleashed by torrential rains exposed the construction quality of dams across Balochistan. Heavy rainfall wreaked havoc in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan recently. Floods swept away dozens of small delay and check dams in different parts of the province.

Over the years, the provincial and federal governments constructed hundreds of dams to check the wastage of rainy water. Successive governments merely celebrated the completion of projects rather than focusing on the construction quality of dams. Although, the dams and lakes constructed by British colonial rulers in different parts of Balochistan are still intact even after more than a century.

Breaching of dams puts human lives at peril. Breaching of dams not only failed to save rainy water rather it also put human lives at peril in Pishin, Barkhan, Lasbella, Kohlu, Killa Abdullah, Killa Saifullah and other districts of the province. Rains-related incidents have claimed 65 lives till the filing of this editorial. This is simply disastrous and a failure from all concerned quarters.

Flash floods also swept away poorly constructed roads and standing crops in various parts of the province. This all needs a thorough investigation. Irrigation and Communication Works (C&W) departments are known for commission and corruption.

Commission, corruption a common word in C&W and Irrigation departments

This is a good opportunity for those at the helm of affairs to make sure transparency in the utilization of funds by the two departments. Since word commission is an open secret in the two departments, the Chief Secretary of Balochistan should form a high-powered committee comprising committed and honest retired and serving officers to probe into the breaching of dams.

The quality of construction of roads in Quetta and all districts of Balochistan should also be probed to improve socio-economic conditions. The irony with Balochistan is that first the province has meager resources and second they too are ruthlessly used/ swallowed.

Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo and his coalition partners must go beyond words and launch an inquiry into the breaching of dams and damage to roads.

Drinking Water Quality Status And Its Sources Of Contamination

By Aryal Khan Panizai

Due to intimidating increase in population and rapid-fire industrialization, drinking water quality is being deteriorated day by day in Pakistan. This review sums up the issues of colorful exploration studies conducted for drinking water quality status of different areas of Pakistan by taking into account the physicochemical parcels of drinking water as well as the presence of colorful pathogenic microorganisms. About 20 of the whole population of Pakistan has access to safe drinking water.

The remaining 80 of population is forced to use unsafe drinking water due to the failure of safe and healthy drinking water sources. The primary source of impurity is sewerage (fecal) which is considerably discharged into drinking water system inventories. Secondary source of pollution is the disposal of poisonous chemicals from artificial backwaters, fungicides, and diseases from husbandry sources into the water bodies.

Anthropogenic conditioning beset waterborne conditions that constitute about 80 of all conditions and are responsible for 33 of deaths. This review highlights the drinking water quality, impurity sources, sanitation situation, and goods of unsafe drinking water on humans. There's immediate need to



take defensive measures and treatment technologies to overcome hygienic condition of drinking water inventories in different areas of Pakistan.

Drinking water is mainly taken from surface and underground aquifers near rivers and canals. Surface water quality is rapidly declining due to the addition of raw municipal and industrial wastewater as well as agricultural runoff to the water source. When river water flow is at its maximum, it contains a highly concentrated suspension. Most rivers are long and thin and do not support aquatic species.

It is clear that these waters are contaminated with faeces and need to be treated appropriately to remove the contaminants for human consumption. In Pakistan, four major cities use surface water; these are Islamabad, Karachi, Rawalpindi and Hyderabad. The main cause of

microbiological contamination is the mixing of the common sewer with the domestic water supply. In most rural areas of Pakistan, surface water is used for drinking after slow sand filtration, and chlorination is not performed at filtration stations. In most rural areas, there is no pre-treatment facility for water purification. All this deficiency is due to microbial contamination and poor water quality.

Sources of Contamination: Microbiological Contaminants:

In Pakistan, microbial pollution has been discovered as one of the serious problems in rural as well as urban areas. This is due to the leakage of pipe, pollution from sewage lines intrusion into drinking water supplies, and so forth.

Chemical Contaminants: Chemical pollutants that come from industries, soil sediments and agricultural

runoff, i.e. pesticides and fertilizers, enter water sources. In Pakistan, the use of fertilizers and pesticides is around 5.6 million tons and 70,000 tons respectively according to gross profit (GOP) figures.

These chemicals, usually insecticides, leach into groundwater by mixing with irrigation water and rainwater. Between 1988 and 2000, about 107 samples were taken from groundwater, and 31 samples showed clear pesticide contamination above the limits set by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO. Another significant problem for groundwater in Pakistan is higher salt concentration, which is mainly caused by irrigation activities, salt dissolution in soil, seawater intrusion and chemical industries. Salinity affects major areas of Balochistan, PK and Punjab.

Wastewater from industries and households has high levels of arsenic,

becoming a serious problem. In the major cities of Sindh and Punjab, about 16% of people were exposed to more than 50 ppm of arsenic. Fluoride concentrations above the permissible limit cause problems in the main regions of Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh. Dental fluorosis is common in Sindh, Punjab and KPK.

Floods Cause Major Damage to Drainage System: In Pakistan, floods have created serious environmental problems. They damage pipes and eventually cause sewage to overflow into water bodies. Severe flooding destroyed buildings and crops. All these substances can cause toxic chemicals and oils to be discharged into rivers, streams, lakes... and can lead to the death of aquatic organisms. Many chemical pollutants enter floodwaters in their path. Current severe floods (2010) and heavy rains have damaged 80% of Nowshera, destroying 40% of infrastructure. The total number of houses destroyed and damaged

Human Health Impact: Due to the poor sanitation system, treatment, and monitoring, drinking water quality deteriorates. The presence of toxic chemicals and bacteria in drinking water causes adverse effect on human health. Due to the fecal contamination, people have been suffering from waterborne diseases.

Disaster displacement

By Zahra Niazi

In Pakistan, at least 33 million people have been forced to leave their homes. They are not fleeing any conflicts, but they have been internally displaced by the effects of arguably the biggest global threat of the 21st century – climate change.

Since the beginning of Pakistan's deadly floods in mid-June, at least 7.9 million people have been displaced, which is appalling to say the least. Even this could be a conservative estimate given the colossal damage the floods have caused.

Many of these people have lost everything – their homes, sources of livelihood, and prized belongings. These internally displaced people now face an uncertain future as there is no specific national legislation or policy framework that can guarantee long-term protection and assistance to them.

This is regrettable as recent history in Pakistan is marked by a series of disaster-induced displacement crises. In 2010, massive floods displaced 11 million people, and another four million were displaced following the 2011 floods in

Sindh. A report published by Oxfam in 2019 revealed that the communities who permanently moved to Karachi from Badin, Thatta, and Sajawal after the 2010 floods were forced to settle on the outskirts of Karachi, where they lacked access to utilities. Nearly a decade on, they continue to live under poor and squalid conditions, which exemplifies the consequences of the lack of specific instruments that can offer long-term protection and assistance to people displaced by disasters.

In 2021, the IDMC reported that a third of all disaster-induced displacements in 2020 occurred in the South Asian region, with Pakistan recording the third-highest number of those displacements after India and Afghanistan. Additionally, the World Bank forecasts continued to stress the forthcoming crisis of climate change and internal displacement in South Asia. Hence, we were cognizant that disasters would continue to force millions to dislocate in Pakistan but did not grant legal recognition and rights to those dislocated during disasters or formulate comprehensive

policy frameworks to guide the national response in such situations.

At the international level, the rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are covered under the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. These principles serve to ensure that the rights of displacement-affected communities are not violated and guide national and international responses in such situations. However, it does not confer any obligation on the states, with national authorities having the primary duty to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to those in need in times of crisis. A number of states today have incorporated these principles into law or employed them as the basis for policy formulation. Some cases in point are Sri Lanka, Colombia, Georgia, Burundi, Armenia, Angola, Peru, Uganda, and the Philippines.

In Pakistan, however, a legal limbo with regard to the recognition of the rights of disaster-induced IDPs continues to exist. At the same time, no specific policy document

comprehensively addresses internal displacement or disaster-induced internal displacement specifically. Pakistan launched its first National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) in 2012 and its follow-up Framework for Implementation of Climate Change Policy (2014-2030) in 2014 – both of which remain silent about disaster-induced displacement.

In March 2022, the Ministry of Climate Change launched an updated version of the NCCP. However, as welcome as this development was, the policy pays cursory attention to displacement by mentioning 'increased climate change-induced migration' as one of Pakistan's vulnerabilities to climate change threats. It does not specify policies or actions to guide durable solutions, including the return, resettlement, or reintegration of those forced to dislocate due to calamities. This gap is also evident in the country's National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and the National Disaster Risk Management Framework.

One can now hope that the massive humanitarian crisis amid the devastating floods will be a catalyst

for reassessing how we want to move forward and shift away from the status quo. The necessity of implementing innovative and practical resilience-building and risk-reduction strategies, ideally through a community-led approach, is essential.

The government, through collaboration with provincial authorities and civil society, must now also begin work on developing an effective national framework to deal with and protect the rights of those already displaced amid the devastating floods.

This framework should serve as the basis for a more comprehensive policy guide in the long term to respond to displacement – whether due to sudden disasters or 'slow onset' impacts of climate change – to guarantee the rights and dignity of these vulnerable individuals and communities at all times. It is equally important to grant legal recognition to disaster-induced IDPs, which can effectively guarantee their rights. The crisis must serve as a long-forgotten reminder that we can no longer continue with the status quo.

Climate affairs

By Chloe Atkinson

Scientists have long clamored that human activity on Earth has led to the calamitous weather changes we are witnessing today. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has confirmed that climate change makes heatwaves hotter and more frequent. According to the research, greenhouse gas emissions have heated the planet by an estimated 1.2 degrees Celsius (2.16 degrees Fahrenheit) over the last two centuries.

The Nature journal published an article this month detailing what its authors say is proof that heatwaves in Europe have increased three-to-four times faster than in other northern mid-latitude areas such as the United States. The reason for this, according to the article, is due to the fast west-to-east air stream, or atmospheric circulation, which is carrying hot air across the northern atmosphere.

Most scientists appear to agree that temperatures will continue to rise unless humans cease adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Without a drastic change in the way mankind conducts its business, heatwaves are predicted to worsen. Tackling climate change should be a top priority for every country today. Heatwaves that occurred once every decade are now happen-

ing at three times that rate. The 2015 Paris Agreement and last year's Glasgow climate conference were intended to bring the issue to global attention and generate movement on the ground. But current climate policies are not sufficient to avoid the dangerous effects of global warming. More must be done.

Today, wildfires are raging in Spain, France, Greece, Portugal, Morocco and Italy. Over one thousand people have died so far and many thousands more have been evacuated from their homes out of concern for their safety. Climate change plays a significant role in the cause of wildfires since it increases the hot and dry tinderbox conditions that help fires start and then spread quickly. Less precipitation means dry land and vegetation. This means that when a fire starts, it burns faster and more intensely. Hot and dry conditions are a perfect recipe for a massive inferno.

However, it is important to note that not every fire is caused by climate change. Forest management programs, which deal with how forests are maintained specifically to prevent massive infernos, are often insufficient. In addition, it is often careless people who ignite fires through arson or simply by barbecuing. Human fire starters aside, they don't cause the actual heatwave. Individuals are not responsible necessarily but since mankind is col-

lectively composed of individuals, it does fall on each and every one of us to take steps to minimize our carbon footprint. There is a reason why famed reality star Kylie Jenner was slammed on social media for posting a photo of her private jet parked next to boyfriend Travis Scott's plane, asking "You wanna take mine or yours?" And she was slammed again for taking her jet in the end for what turned out to be a paltry 12-minute flight.

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Global energy security

By Maximilian Hess

Not since World War II has the threat to global energy security been as severe as it is today.

Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine and the consequent geo-economic war between the Kremlin and the West disrupted global gas markets at a scale unprecedented in recent history. The Kremlin's use of its power over energy markets as leverage – and Europe's efforts to wean itself off of Russian natural gas and avoid a massive shortage this winter – are triggering price hikes and rerouting flows around the world.

No one is left unaffected, even those who thought they had prepared for every eventuality. For example, Pakistan, which had secured several long-term natural gas import contracts to increase its energy security in recent years, has seen partners break those deals to send their gas to pay more. The coffers of both the developed and developing world are being drained. Meanwhile, the Kremlin is using the global energy crisis it created to sustain its economy in the face of severe international sanctions. Moreover, it is weaponising Europe's dependency on Russian natural gas to try and break Western resistance to its ambitions in Ukraine. Earlier this week, Moscow tried to tighten its squeeze on

Europe further, saying it plans to reduce gas supplies through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Germany to just 20 percent capacity.

In response, European Union energy ministers swiftly announced an agreement for the bloc's members to gut gas usage by 15 percent this winter. This was an attempt by Europe to show it would not give in to Russian pressure and abandon Ukraine in order to fill up its gas reserves. Such conflict-driven demand reduction, however, means that an already likely recession is now all but guaranteed. Following Gazprom's latest cuts, analysts already predict the EU will not be able to reach its own target of refilling gas storage to 80 percent capacity by winter. Now that Europe made it clear that it is finally – and perhaps much belatedly – ready to take the steps to cut its need for Russian gas at any cost, the Kremlin will do everything it can to inflict maximum pain on Europe in the short term, while the dependency remains.

A recent German poll found that at the moment, 58 percent of the population is supporting sanctions against Russia despite potential negative impacts for Germany. Russian President Vladimir Putin is working to bring that number down – down to the point that it becomes

untenable for Germany's leaders to push for policies to support Ukraine and help the West win its confrontation with Russia. The waning of public support for the sanctions regime in the face of economic difficulties is an equally significant risk for other European governments.

Europe's leaders are now facing the herculean task of simultaneously helping their industries survive on a reduced energy supply, supporting Ukraine's war effort and maintaining public support for the sanctions regime amid a cost-of-living crisis largely manufactured by Russia that seems to have no real end in sight.

Energy is perhaps the most consequential front in the ongoing geo-economic battle between Russia and the West, and thus Europe needs to strengthen its hand there first. After moving to address the demand side of the equation, now it needs to address the supply side of the problem to be able to shore up its economy to the furthest extent possible, and insulate public support for Kyiv and the sanctions regime against Russia.

There are some obvious steps that European governments can take – but have been reluctant to in fear of domestic backlash – to resolve the supply issue swiftly. The Netherlands, for

example, can pump billions of cubic metres of extra natural gas across Europe by increasing production at the Groningen gas field. Bewilderingly, however, it is still planning to take the entire operation offline next year over the risk of minor earthquakes in the surrounding area and some pushback from environmentalists. Germany can also increase its future capacity to supply energy simply by extending the lifespan of its nuclear power plants that are meant to come offline at the end of the year. The governing coalition said it is now considering this option, but the Greens – including Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock – continue to resist the move. The party's stance on this issue is somewhat understandable – after all, Germany's Green Party was in large part borne out of Germany's Cold War-era anti-nuclear movement.

Nevertheless, by blocking a relatively straightforward and low-risk solution to a major problem facing the nation, it risks failing the test of being a responsible government partner at a time of war, less than a year after its best-ever election result. Beyond increasing their own production capacity by any means possible, European nations should of course also work on forming new

partnerships with suppliers outside their region. The global gas crisis and its impacts are by no means limited to Europe. It is therefore imperative that Europe seeks to bring together the international community to coordinate global supply.

When the world last faced such a major energy crisis, the Allies had significant control over the world's oil supplies. British Petroleum and its predecessors, and the forefathers of the modern United States energy majors, controlled most of the Middle East's petroleum at the dawn of World War II. Britain established the Petroleum Warfare Department and the Petroleum Board – which brought together all allied energy firms, including US ones even before Pearl Harbor brought the US into the conflict directly – to coordinate supplies for the war. Today, ownership of global energy supplies is far more diversified. And while the US has pledged to use its role as a liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter to support Europe, a fire this June at its flagship liquefaction plant in Freeport, Texas has seen export capacity fall by some 17 percent. Thus addressing global gas shortages will require a coming together of key public and private players from across the world to develop a strategy for this winter.

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 healthcare 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."

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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Court orders to return Shahbaz Gill's personal belongings

ISLAMABAD: A Sessions Court in the federal capital ordered to return Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shahbaz Gill's personal belongings today.

The hearing of the session case against the PTI leader was held in Sessions Court Islamabad. The court ordered to return Shahbaz Gill's belongings before the closing of court today.

PTI leaders Shahbaz Gill and Raja Khurram Nawaz attended the

hearing. The court told Gill's lawyer to inform the court if the belongings are not returned by closing today.

Earlier on October 3, the federal government moved the Supreme Court (SC) seeking the cancellation of the PTI leader's bail.

According to details, Islamabad City Magistrate - on behalf of the federal government - filed an application in Supreme Court (SC) seeking the cancellation of Shahbaz

Gill. In the application, the federal government argued that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) did not evaluate the facts correctly. The PTI leader is accused of treason against the state, it added.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) accepted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shahbaz Gill's post-arrest bail plea in the session case registered against him. INP



QUETTA: President PPP Balochistan Chapter Changez Jamali addresses a press conference during the joining of political leader Engineer Abdul Hadi with PPP at Hazara Town.

ECP furious over non-appearance of Imran Khan, Asad and Fawad in contempt case

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) expressed its resentment over the non-appearance of former prime minister Imran Khan, Fawad Chaudhry, and Asad Umar before it in the contempt case.

PTI leaders including Imran Khan, Fawad Chaudhry and Asad Umar are facing contempt proceedings for allegedly speaking against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja. A four-member bench of the ECP headed by Sindh member Nisar Durrani heard the case in which PTI's lawyer Naveed Anjum showed up. At the outset of hearing, the Election Commission of Pakistan showed resentment over non-

presence of PTI chairman Imran Khan, Asad Umar and Fawad Chaudhry despite summons. Why don't we release arrest warrants for the accused? Sindh's member in ECP said. The member Balochistan observed that Sindh High Court only barred from a final decision against Asad Umar, there are no directions about others. Naveed Anjum pleaded with the ECP to give a fresh date on which Anwar Mansoor Khan will give arguments as he is busy in Islamabad today. The Balochistan member in the commission said the law has to be abided by all the citizens, the rights of Election Commission of Pakistan are ensured in the constitution of

Pakistan and no one can snub them, he added. Later, the hearing was adjourned until October 26. At the outset of hearing, the Election Commission of Pakistan showed resentment over non-appearance of PTI chairman Imran Khan, Asad Umar and Fawad Chaudhry despite summons. Why don't we release arrest warrants for the accused? Sindh's member in ECP said. The member Balochistan observed that Sindh High Court only barred from a final decision against Asad Umar, there are no directions about others. Naveed Anjum pleaded with the ECP to give a fresh date on which Anwar Mansoor Khan will give arguments as he is busy in Islamabad. INP

Chinese enterprises fully support Pakistan flood relief

ISLAMABAD: Ever since the severe and catastrophic floods have commenced in Pakistan, the All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises' Association (APCEA) has acted swiftly, and Chinese enterprises throughout Pakistan have responded readily and positively by collecting cash donations, donating tents and food, and repairing houses and other infrastructure to help the Pakistani people overcome the impacts of this disaster.

In the face of great disasters, China has always stood together with the fraternal people of Pakistan, and is concerned about the safety, well-being, and security of the people in the affected areas, and empathizes with the struggles faced by the Pakistanis in these times of crisis.

The Chinese government aptly and swiftly responded by donating 400 million RMB to the Pakistani side for flood relief. Under the guidance of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan, Chinese companies have carried forward the remarkable brotherly traditions of China

and Pakistan in helping each other and supporting each other, and have firmly fulfilled their social responsibilities in the face of the floods, sending help to the Pakistani side in times of crisis.

A large number of Chinese companies have donated an amount of almost Rs 260 million to the various flood relief funds and efforts in Pakistan.

To begin, on 26 August, APCEA donated 15.5 million rupees to National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) for the Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund 2022. The donation handing-over was witnessed by the Federal Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal, the Chinese Ambassador, Nong Rong, and the Chinese Minister Counsellor Mr. Xie Guoxiang. APCEA then proceeded with its vigor of helping the flood victims by launching a second round of donations.

China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd responded positively to the call and generously donated approximately US\$650,000, the

highest single donation of any Chinese company in Pakistan for flood relief.

State Grid responded positively to the Pakistani Embassy in China by donating US\$200,000. State Grid's investment project in Pakistan, Matiari-Lahore HVDC Transmission Project, allocated a special fund of 5 million PKR for special assistance to affected employees and food distribution to affected villagers around the project.

On 1 September, Metallurgical Corporation of China Ltd. donated US\$250,000 in cash to the Balochistan government in the name of the enterprise to support the flood relief in Balochistan. At the same time, Metallurgical Corporation of China Ltd. organized its staff to make donations, donating a total of about 2 tonnes of relief materials to the local victims and received a letter of thanks from the local government. OPPO donated Rs 10 million to the Al-Khidmat Foundation and set up flood relief camps at villages. INP



ISLAMABAD: PTI senior leaders Zulfi Bukhari talking to media.

Finance ministry sets strategy to stabilize rupee

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Finance has set a new strategy to keep the rupee stable, citing sources.

Reports said that the notices issued to eight major banks have helped to reduce the artificial hike in the rupee-dollar exchange rate.

"The cartelization of dollar by banks also being controlled," according to the finance ministry sources.

"The banks were exercising pressure over the State Bank of Pakistan for opening the LCs of inflated value," sources said. "Banks were demanding more dollars from the central bank for opening letters of credit of the traders."

According to sources, the finance minister and the Governor State Bank have made the NOC compulsory for opening of the letters of credit (LCs).

"The ministry has directed the State Bank to devise 'the dollar buying and selling policy,' sources said. "The policy will fix the limits of bank margins in buying and selling of the greenback."

"The exchange companies could keep a margin of up to two rupees in buying and selling of dollars," according to sources.

The government will keep the value of the dollar on the downside, despite decreased reserves and foreign payments, according to officials.

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PM Shehbaz Sharif to leave for Kazakhstan tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will participate in the 6th Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) being held in Astana, Kazakhstan on Wednesday.

According to details, the prime minister will be accompanied by Cabinet members and senior officials in the two days conference. He will also address the plenary meeting of CICA on Thursday.

PM Shehbaz Sharif will elaborate upon the significance of CICA as a unique forum for promoting interaction, understanding and collaboration amongst countries across Asia to address common challenges.

The Prime Minister will also highlight Pakistan's perspective on regional and global issues. On the sidelines of the Summit, he will hold bilateral meetings with the leaders of various CICA Member States aimed at fostering greater cooperation.

CICA is an intergovernmental process comprising 27 countries from all across Asia. Established in 1992, it focuses on promoting peace, security and socio-economic development in the Asian continent. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will participate in the 6th Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) being held in Astana, Kazakhstan from Wednesday. According to

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STUDENTS OF PAF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES CONTRIBUTE IN FLOOD RELIEF ACTIVITIES

While the recent monsoon rainfall and the emerging situation of national level floods demand great efforts and support for saving humanity, working shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistan Air Force personnel, students of PAF Schools and Colleges made indigenous efforts to bring cheers amongst the distressed children of flood affected areas.

The PAF students came together to raise funds on their own to buy treats which included chocolates, sweets and stationery items for the brothers and sisters in these testing times. More than 17000 packets comprising sweet treats were distributed in the flood affected areas which brought back the lost smiles on the faces of suffering children.

The activity is reflective of PAF's resolve of being the first responder to the nation's call wherein PAF has always stepped forward for conduct of relief activities to alleviate the sufferings of those affected by disasters and natural calamities. PR

Indus River's water declared unsafe for drinking

JAMSHORO: The Sindh Irrigation Department has declared water from Indus River as 'unsafe for drinking' and directed authorities to take safety precautions before supplying water.

Chief Engineer Kotri Barrage Haji Khan Jamali has penned down a letter to Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad, DC Jamshoro, MD Water and Sanitation Agency Vasa and other departments, declaring water of Indus River as 'unsafe for drinking'.

In the letter, Chief Engineer Kotri Barrage directed the authorities concerned to carry out complete treatment before supplying water to cities.

"The flood water being released from Lake Manchar is entering the Indus River", the letter stated, noting that the irrigation department and authorities provide river water to people for drinking. Declaring the water 'unhygienic', the irrigation department urged authorities to take safety precautions 'otherwise human lives may be at risk'. INP



SEOUL: Secretary Defence, Lt. Gen. (ret'd) Hamood Uz Zaman Khan and Rear Admiral Faisal Amin, Additional Secretary Defence with Korean Vice Minister Shin Boem-Chul during Mou signing ceremony held in Seoul.

PAKISTAN NAVY & PMSA SHIPS VISITS KUWAIT, IRAQ AND BAHRAIN

Islamabad: Pakistan Navy flotilla comprising Pakistan Navy Ship HAIBAT and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) Ship BASOL visited Kuwait, Iraq and Bahrain during overseas deployment.

On arrival at host countries, Pakistan Navy ships were received by senior representatives of Pakistani embassies and officials of host navies. The Mission Commander along with Commanding Officers of ships called on high level military leadership of the host countries. During the interactions, matters of mutual interest and cooperation in maritime security, ship building capability of Pakistan and training opportunities in PN including sea training were discussed. Mission Commander conveyed well wishes from Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan

Niazi for the people of host countries in general and host navies in particular.

The flag showing missions of PN ships included to explore various avenues of cooperation in domains of maritime security and operational interoperability. At harbour, cross ship visits by naval personnel and training facilities were exhibited for familiarization. The indigenous constructed PNS HAIBAT was showcased as a testimony to Pakistan's Ship construction capability. On completion of port calls, bilateral exercises between PN and navies of host countries were conducted to enhance naval cooperation and interoperability.

The port calls of PN and PMSA Ships to Kuwait, Iraq and Bahrain will provide opportunity to further enhance existing close diplomatic ties and cordial relations among friendly countries. INP

MMBL CFDO highlights the power of Fintech at the GITEX Global 2022

Islamabad: Pakistan's largest digital bank, Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited (MMBL)'s Chief Finance and Digital Officer (CFDO), Sardar Muhammad Abubakr shared his expertise on Fintech Surge: ESG & Society, Inclusion & the Environment at the GITEX GLOBAL 2022, held in the 2nd week of October at Dubai World Trade Centre. GITEX GLOBAL, the world's largest tech show, unifies the world's most influential ecosystems

advancing business, economy, society, and culture through the sheer power of innovation. MMBL is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and online services across seven countries. As part of its digital operator strategy, VEON is transforming people's lives, creating opportunities for greater digital inclusion, and driving economic growth across countries that are home to more than 8% of the world's population. During his address,

Sardar Abubakr stressed the need to recognize the huge strides Pakistan has made in digitalization. Dedicated to harnessing the power of technology, MMBL is at the forefront of digital innovation, making digital and financial solutions more inclusive, efficient, and affordable for everyone, especially women and Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs), two highly influential segments for increased economic development. The Bank's ever-growing partnerships

portfolio is a testament to the expansion we are doing for maximizing the outreach of our financial services. This year, Gitex Global is hosting more than 4,500 companies, thousands of exhibitors, and 100,000+ attendees from 170 countries, in addition to over 1000 industry leaders and subject experts from diverse fields as speakers. Building a bridge between technology and finance, Fintech Surge featured 100+ globally leading financial industry experts, entrepreneurs, innovators,

investors, and regulators. With over 40 million registered users, including 15+ million monthly active mobile wallets, MMBL remains committed to expanding access to financial services and bridging the financial gaps that persist in Pakistan. Abubakr underlined that the non-financial factors including environment, social, and governance are crucial to the sustainability of the fintech industry, therefore, these should be considered to initiate long-term growth with reduced risks. INP



DUBAI: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Syed Amin Ul Haque inaugurating Pakistan Pavilion at "Gitex Global 2022" in Dubai.

Malala Yousufzai arrives in Pakistan to visit flood-hit areas

KARACHI: Nobel laureate Malala Yousufzai on Tuesday landed in Karachi to visit the flood-hit areas of Sindh.

Twenty-four-year-old Malala, who holds the distinction of being the youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner in history, is being accompanied by her parents during the trip amid strict security.

This is the second time that the 2014 Nobel peace prize winner has visited Pakistan.

Malala, a Pashtun girl from Pakistan Swat Valley, got shot in the face by the Taliban when she was just 15 for refusing to waive off her right to education and has since resided in Birmingham where she was airlifted for treatment after the assassination attempt.

The shooting drew widespread international condemnation.

She has become an internationally recognised symbol of resistance to the Taliban's efforts of denying women education and other rights.

In 2014, Yousufzai became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17 in recognition of her efforts for children's rights. This is the second time that the 2014 Nobel peace prize winner has visited Pakistan. Malala, a Pashtun girl from Pakistan Swat Valley, got shot in the face by the Taliban when she was just 15 for refusing to waive off her right to education and has since resided in Birmingham where she was airlifted for treatment after the assassination attempt. The shooting drew widespread international condemnation. She has become an internationally recognised symbol of resistance to the Taliban's efforts of denying women education and other rights. INP



QUETTA: Balochistan's Parliamentary Secretary for Information Bushra Rind visiting stall during book Mela.

Court exempts PM Shehbaz from appearance in money laundering

LAHORE: Special court on Tuesday granted exemption from court appearance to prime minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif in a money laundering case.

PM Shehbaz Sharif and his son Hamza are facing a case of Rs16 billion in money laundering through fake companies.

At the start of today's hearing, PM Shehbaz Sharif's counsel submitted a plea seeking exemption from the court appearance, citing the engagement of the premier in the important matters of the country.

The counsel pleaded with the court to grant one-day exemption to PM Shehbaz Sharif from the court appearance, which was accepted by the court.

In the last hearing, PM Shehbaz told the court that he, in his capacity as the chief minister of Punjab for 20 years, made decisions that "hurt" his family's sugar business. INP

AT UN, Pakistan, speaking for G77/China, seeks emergency steps to offset

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the "Group of 77" (developing countries and China), Monday called for emergency measures to overcome the recent "shocks" to the world economy, including the coronavirus pandemic and the spike in commodities prices that have disproportionately impacted the poorest countries.

"The severe global economic shocks caused by COVID-19, geopolitical instability, market volatility, have raised the specter of the food, finance, debt crisis and created challenges to energy security and reversed progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the General Assembly Second Committee, which deals with economic and financial matters.

Speaking in a debate on Sustainable Development, he said that despite best efforts, developing nations are struggling to achieve notable progress on a wide range of goals and targets.

Pakistan is the current chairman of G77 and China, which now has 134 members and is the United Nations' biggest intergovernmental group of emerging countries.

The G77 chairman estimated the shortfall in financing for development at \$5 trillion, with developing countries suffering the most in this regard, even though they are disproportionately hit by the deleterious effects of climate change. Since these countries do not have the means. INP

ECP rejects govt's request to postpone by-elections for 90 days

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday quashed the federal government's request to postpone the by-elections for 90 days ahead of the expected Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) long march and said that by-elections will be held on Oct 16.

It is pertinent to mention that on Sunday, in its letter to the ECP, the interior ministry mentioned that the "party" could "besiege" Islamabad between October 12-17, and the date coincides with October 16 on which the by-elections are scheduled to be held.

In this regard, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja today, in which the Defense Secretary and Defense Secretary also participated.

During the meeting, it was decided that the by-elections will be held as per schedule - on October 16 - while it has also been decided to postpone the election

in Kurram's NA-45 due to the law and order situation.

According to the Election Commission, local body elections in all districts of Karachi Division will also be held as per the schedule, which is October 23.

The letter to ECP further stated that "This would require the maximum deployment of all available troops to maintain peace in the capital city," the letter read.

The letter also cited the losses incurred and the rise in diseases following the recent catastrophic floods as the reason for the postponement of by-polls.

The ministry mentioned wrote that most resources have been diverted toward relief and rehabilitation efforts across flood-hit areas in the country; therefore, it would put immense strain on government agencies, including the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps, Rangers, and other LEAs to utilise its resources and carry the extra work during election duties. INP

Indian envoy summoned to convey strong protest over custodial death of Altaf Ahmed Shah

ISLAMABAD: The Indian Charge d' Affaires (Cd'A) on Tuesday was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to convey Government of Pakistan's strong protest over the inhuman custodial death of Hurriyat leader Altaf Ahmed Shah, who had been imprisoned in the infamous Tihar Jail for the last five years.

It was deplored that despite Pakistan's expression of serious concerns over Altaf Ahmed Shah's sharply deteriorating health, as well as his daughter's letter addressed to the Indian Prime Minister apprising him of Shah's precarious health condition, the Indian government remained completely indifferent. It was demanded of the Indian government to immediately investigate the custodial death of Altaf Ahmed Shah and hold to account all those responsible for the brutality, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release. Pakistan has further demanded that the mortal remains of Altaf Ahmed Shah be promptly returned to his family so that a proper burial of the deceased in accordance with their wishes can be carried out. The spokesperson further said that the government of India not only failed to provide satisfactory medical care to Altaf Ahmed Shah who was suffering from renal cancer but also created inordinate delays in his hospitalization and essential diagnostic tests. Even more heart-wrenching was the fact that the Indian authorities remained adamant in denying Shah's family access to meet him while deliberately delaying the court hearing of his bail plea on humanitarian grounds. It was evident that Altaf Ahmed Shah

was victimized and punished because he was the son-in-law of revered Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani and a true representative of the Kashmiri people.

"His death is the consequence of the Indian government's willful and deliberate negligence, utter disregard for human rights and its systematic campaign to suppress and brutalize the Hurriyat leaders," it was added.

Recalling the condemnable custodial death of Hurriyat leader Ashraf Sehrai last year, after his victimization and arrest under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA), the Indian Cd'A was conveyed Pakistan's grave apprehensions regarding the ruthless treatment meted out to Hurriyat leaders including Muhammad Yasin Malik, Massarat Aalam Bhat, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Ahmad Khan, Aasiya Andrabi and several others who have been facing illegal detentions in fabricated cases.

"Equally concerning is the fact that many of these Hurriyat leaders including Muhammad Yasin Malik are suffering from chronic ailments and require urgent medical attention. It is also alarming that at least 4 Kashmiri political prisoners have died in Indian custody since 2019," the spokesperson said. "The Government of India has also been called upon to desist from unlawfully keeping the indigenous Kashmiri leadership hostage and denying them their fundamental human rights, immediately halt its state-sponsored terrorism in the IIOJK, release all political prisoners incarcerated on trumped-up charges. INP

Islamabad reports 73 new dengue cases

ISLAMABAD: Dengue fever cases continue to rise in Islamabad, as the federal capital has reported 73 fresh cases of infection during the past 24 hours.

According to District Health Officer (DHO) Islamabad, as many as 73 dengue cases were reported in Islamabad during the past 24 hours, taking the total number of infections to 3,242 in the current season.

While seven people have lost their lives to dengue in Islamabad, he added.

According to the statistics provided by the DHO Islamabad, 45 of the total 73 cases were reported in rural areas of the capital while the rest 28 were reported from urban premises.

The DHO further said 46 patients were admitted to the PIMS hospital Islamabad in the last 24 hours, 10 to the Federal General Hospital, and eight to the Holy Family Hospital. INP

Court reserves verdict in Fahad Malik murder case

ISLAMABAD: A local court reserved its verdict after six years in murder case of Barrister Fahad Malik.

Fahad Malik, a nephew of former Chairman Senate and PTI leader Mohammed Mian Soomro, was gunned down in Sector F-10 of Islamabad in August 2016.

District and Sessions Judge Ata Rabbani reserved decision after completion of arguments from lawyers of the two sides.

Advocate Akram Qureshi and Zain Qureshi represented the plaintiff and the murder victim.

Accused Raja Arshad, Raja Hashim and Noman Khokhar were nominated in the murder case. The defence lawyers and prosecutor have also concluded their contentions.

District and Sessions Judge Ata Rabbani will announce the verdict of Barrister Fahad Malik murder case on October 18.

Barrister Fahad Malik was murdered on Margalla Road in a densely populated area of Islamabad allegedly by accused Noman Khokhar, Raja Arshad and Raja Hashim, while discharging his legal duties as a lawyer, to reach a compromise between two parties.

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Pakistan railways to restore three express trains from Oct 20

LAHORE: Pakistan Railways on Tuesday decided to restore the operation of three express trains from Karachi.

A meeting chaired by Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique decided to restore operation of Millat Express, Allama Iqbal and Sukkur Express from Karachi.

The session expressed satisfaction over the occupancy rate, punctuality and cleanliness of trains.

The meeting also reviewed Thar Coal transportation project and compiled the details of the scheme.

It also discussed restoration of ML-I, II and III.

Earlier, Pakistan Railways had decided to restore passenger trains to Karachi from October 2, more than a month after being suspended on August 26 following flooding in Sindh that had disrupted the railway link with the province. INP

Local Thar-coal based electricity generation to jump to 1,320 MW in December

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Energy Khurram Dastgir Khan on Tuesday said that total electricity generation from local Thar coal would jump to 1,320 MW with addition of 330 MW by ThalNova Power Thar Ltd's Plant in December. Addressing a press conference here, the minister said that the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the other day, formally inaugurated 330 MW HUBCO Thar Coal Power Plant which increased the electricity generation to 990 MW from local Thar coal. He said the people had started getting dividends of projects launched by Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 2014. As many as 660 MW electricity had already been supplied to the National grid since 2019 through local Thar coal, he added.

The minister said that another 1,320 MW Shanghai Electric Thar Coal Power Project under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would start generation before the next summer which would help double electricity generation to 2640 MW.

He said Thar coal reserves was a blessing for the entire country, adding that as per initial estimate, the reserves stood 175 billion metric tons. The Thar coal reserves spread an area of over 100 square kilometers and had been divided into 13 blocks, he said. The minister said currently out of total 13 blocks, only two blocks were opened. Presently, three power plants with accumulative capacity of 990 MW had been operationalized on local Thar coal. INP



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guide First Lady Begum Samina Arif Alvi addressing to Girls Guides during celebration of International Day of the Girl at Pakistan Girl Guides Association National Headquarters.

Hina reaffirms Pakistan's support for UN peacekeeping

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for UN peacekeeping including the country's commitment to promoting gender perspective in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The minister of state, in a meeting with the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for UN Department of Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix here at Foreign Office, underscored Pakistan's unique role and contribution as one of the top troop-contributing countries over decades.

They exchanged views on further enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations through advancing political processes, ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers, and provision of adequate resources corresponding to the mandates.

The minister of state noted that the important work carried out by the UN Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was a symbol of the UN's commitment to the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, and recognition of the need for its peaceful resolution.

The USG appreciated Pakistan's leading role in UN peacekeeping and paid tribute to Pakistani peacekeepers who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving under the UN flag.

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KWB chief writes to Sindh IG against Karachi's tanker mafia selling unsanitary water

KARACHI: The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Karachi Water Board (KWB) has written a letter to Inspector General (IG) Sindh urging to stop the tanker mafia from selling unsanitary water in the city.

Talking to a private TV channel Syed Salahuddin Ahmed said that the tanker mafia is selling hazardous water collected from Sakran, Thatta, and Gharo. He said that the water tanker mafia is selling unsanitary water collected from outskirts areas of Karachi. He said that lower districts such as Keimari, Korangi and District South are deprived of water due to the puncturing of pipelines and stealing of water in the upper districts. There are no bypassing pipelines to provide water to the southern districts, he added. Salahuddin added that the KWB has formed a committee to identify illegal connections and present a report every 10 days. The action against such mafia should be across the board, without any biases towards politically influenced tanker owners, he added. INP

Planning Ministry employees demand increase in executive allowances

ISLAMABAD: The employees of Planning Ministry have staged a protest rally in Islamabad, demanding a 150 percent increase in their executive allowances.

According to details, the employees of Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives held a protest rally from Block-P to Block-Q against the Finance Ministry.

The protesters were carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans and their demands. They were demanding the implementation of 150pc increase in executive allowances. The ministry's affairs were disrupted due to the demonstration.

The protesters have threatened to boycott meetings of the ministry, Executive Committee of the National Economic Council and other platforms if their demands were not accepted.

The employees claimed that the finance division has flouted the orders of the federal cabinet, adding that the executive allowance was awarded only to a certain group of bureaucrats.

The finance division's notification is a malicious violation of the Cabinet's decision, the demonstrators said, adding that a protest would be stage on a daily basis for two hours from tomorrow.

The protesters have also threatened to boycott office work from Monday until the government fulfills their demands. They have also decided to move court against the Finance Division's notification. INP

Sindh gets back control of three Karachi hospitals

KARACHI: Sindh government has got back control of three Karachi hospitals from the federal government after three years.

According to details, the control of Jinnah Hospital, the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD), and the National Institute of Pediatrics Karachi (NICH) was handed over to the Sindh government due to the tireless efforts of provincial health minister Dr Azra Pechucho.

The federal government approved the request to transfer the control of three major hospitals in Karachi to the provincial government. After the approval of the federal government, Jinnah Hospital, NICVD, NICH Karachi will be given to the Sindh government on a 25-year lease. Sindh government will look after the administrative and financial affairs of the three major hospitals of Karachi. The control of hospitals was taken over by the federal government during Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's government. Under the lease agreement, the land of the three hospitals in Karachi will remain in the name of the federal. INP

Pakpattan: Sub-inspector martyred in police encounter

PAKPATTAN: Sub-inspector Sarwar Akram embraced martyrdom while two other police officials were injured during a police encounter in Pakpattan. According to details, dacoits were robbing citizens when a police party reached the spot. Fleeing robbers fired shots at police and during an exchange of fire, Sub-inspector Sarwar embraced martyrdom while a robber was also shot dead. INP



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan Labours Federation hold protest rally against price hike.