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Monday 12
December, 2022

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Tweets case: Sindh court remands Azam Swati in police custody for 3 days



Won't accept any PTI resignations unless sure they aren't given under pressure: NA speaker

Afghan forces fire rockets at Chaman leaving 6 dead 30 civilians injured

Sardar Muhammad Khondai
CHAMAN: At least six civilians were killed and 30 were injured when Afghan forces fired rockets into Pakistani territory on Sunday evening. An armed clash between Pakistani and Afghan forces erupted at the border on Sunday morning. Both sides used heavy weapons. However, in the evening, rockets fired by Afghan forces landed on the civilian population, which left five people dead and over two dozen injured. Dr. Abdul Malik Achakzai, the Medical Superintendent of Chaman hospital confirmed that five dead bodies of civilians were brought to the hospital.



and indiscriminate fire of heavy weapons including artillery/ mortar onto the civilian population in Chaman, Balochistan causing Shahadat of 6 x Civilians with another 17 x individuals being injured, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Sunday evening. Pakistani border troops have given a befitting albeit measured response against the uncalculated aggression but avoided targeting innocent civilians in the area, the military's media wing stated. Pakistan has also approached Afghan authorities in Kabul to highlight the severity of the situation and demanded strict action to obviate any such recurrence of the incident in the future. Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qaddus Bizenjo expressed serious concern over rocket attacks from the Afghan side at the Pak-Afghan border Chaman. In a state-

Afghan authorities asked to take strict action to avoid such incidents

The injured were rushed to the district headquarters hospital Chaman for medical treatment. An emergency was imposed in the hospital to provide medical treatment to those injured in the clashes. Parliamentary leader Awami National Party (ANP), Asghar Khan Achakzai, and other political and tribal elders reached the hospital.

ISPR says Afghan border forces attacked civilian population

Afghan Border Forces opened unprovoked

BA adopts resolution about Reko Diq amid opposition protest

Staff Reporter
QUETTA: Balochistan Assembly adopted a resolution about the Reko Diq project amid opposition parties' protest on Saturday. The house adopted a resolution entrusting excise and other taxation powers to the federal government. The resolution was tabled by the parliamentary secretary, Rubaba Buledi about the Reko Diq project.



This is an attempt to usurp the resources of Balochistan", Akhtar Hussain Langove

Component parties of the joint opposition including the Jamiat ul Ulema e Islam (JUI) and Balochistan National Party (Mengal) staged a walkout from the house. "This is an attempt to usurp the resources of Balochistan", Akhtar Hussain Langove, the opposition member from the Balochistan National Party (Mengal) said. Amid uproar in the house, the deputy speaker Balochistan Assembly, Sardar Babar Musakhail put the resolution for voting before the lawmakers.

Supreme Court of Pakistan declared the Reko Diq agreement legal

Since there were only three or four opposition members, consequently, the house adopted the resolution and delegated the taxation powers to the federal government. The passage of this resolution has come two days after the

Supreme Court of Pakistan declared the Reko Diq agreement legal. "SC judgment proved our principled stance about the Reko Diq project", Mir Qaddus Bizenjo, Chief Minister Balochistan said. Mir Qaddus said all political parties including the coalition partners and the opposition parties had supported the agreement with Barrick Gold Corporation (BGC).

lawmakers were not informed about the tabling of the resolution in the Balochistan Assembly session

"We oppose the passage of this resolution and it is an injustice to the people of Balochistan", Malik Naseer Shahwani, the parliamentary leader of the BNP Mengal in the Balochistan Assembly told reporters after the session. He said the lawmakers were not informed about the tabling of the resolution in the Balochistan Assembly session.



Islamabad: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Presided over the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet, virtually through Zoom.

Tweets case: Sindh court remands Azam Swati in police custody for 3 days

A judicial magistrate in Qambar remanded PTI Senator Azam Swati in police custody for three days on Sunday in two cases over his controversial tweets about senior military leaders. Swati was arrested over a "highly obnoxious campaign of intimidating tweets [...] against state institutions" by the Federal Investigation Agency on November 27 and has been in detention since and continues to face legal action. The FIA booked him under Section 20 of the Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016 (Peca), which deals with offences against the dignity of a person, while multiple first information reports (FIRs) were registered against him for using "derogatory language" and "provoking the people against the army" in Sindh and Balochistan as well. He was presented before the judicial magistrate in Sindh's Qambar city today in the two cases registered with Warah and Qambar police and sent on remand for three days. The development comes two days after the Balochistan High Court (BHC) ordered the quashing of all five FIRs initially registered against him in the province over his controversial tweets. But the same day, two new criminal complaints were lodged against the PTI senator in Balochistan's Bela and Winder for using "offensive language" against senior military officials, his lawyer Iqbal Shah told. Qambar Shahdadkot SSP Sadam Hussain Khaskheli told Dawn on Saturday that two cases were registered against Swati at Nasirabad and Warah police stations in the district. The FIR at the Nasirabad police station was registered on a complaint of Zameer Hussain Khoso under Sections 131 (abetting mutiny or attempting to seduce a soldier, sailor or airman from his duty), 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups), 504 (intentional insult with the intent to provoke breach of peace) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). Web Desk

Imran Khan imposed on state by 'planners': Khawaja Asif

Berating former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif claimed that the former did not rise to power suddenly, saying "planners" had decided to impose him on the state. Addressing the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) workers' convention in Sialkot Sunday, Asif said Khan always stabbed his friends in the back. Referring to Khan's criticism of the institutions, the defence minister said he "slams his benefactor from dawn to dusk". The deposed PM Imran Khan said that he made a mistake by granting the extension to General (ret) Qamar Javed Bajwa, but on the other hand, he offered the then-army chief an extension to his tenure for life. Imran Khan was brought to power under a plot, Asif said, adding that after

destroying the young generation, the PTI chief was demanding elections. Dubbing Khan an "experiment", the federal minister said that the former was launched in 2012-13 under an "agenda". "It was a wrong and disastrous experiment," he added. Referring to the alleged differences between the PTI and the PML-N over the dissolution of the assemblies, the minister challenged Khan to dissolve the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) assemblies. Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb said the PML-N government, in the past, brought development and progress to the country. Addressing PML-N workers' convention in Rawalpindi today, she said inflation in PML-N's past tenure remained 2.3%. She said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in his term as Chief Minister Punjab, served the public while on the other hand, the PTI government in Punjab destroyed the development of the province. The minister said PML-N leadership was targeted and victimized in fake criminal cases. She said all charges against the PML-N leadership have been proven wrong.

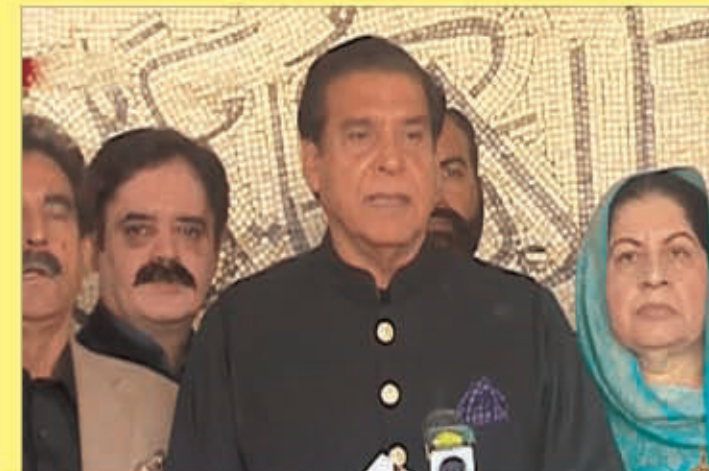
Imran talks threat of default, slams PDM govt's economic performance

PTI Chairman Imran Khan on Sunday assailed the PDM government for bringing the country to the cusp of default, and accused the media of turning a blind eye towards economic matters and instead focusing on the Toshakhana wristwatch, which he said was rightfully his to "sell or do whatever I want to with it". He made these remarks at a press conference in Lahore where he began by comparing his government's performance with that of the incumbent PDM setup, whom he blamed for the looming threat of default. "The reason for my media talk today is to make the people aware of the direction that our country is heading in," he said. "If we don't raise our voice then Pakistan will experience something it has never

of money abroad." Imran said that the ruling elite does not "care if the country defaults because their money is stashed abroad in the form of dollars". "But the circumstance of a default is worrying for the common man," he added. "A default will be a very big loss for Pakistan. No investment will come back into Pakistan. No overseas Pakistani will be willing to invest in Pakistan." He recalled that the dollar rate was Rs178 when he was ousted as the prime minister. "Today we can't even purchase a dollar for Rs250." The PTI chief claimed that when he came into power in 2018, he had inherited a fragile economy but had turned it around, only to see his work undone by the present setup. "When we got Pakistan [government] in 2018, we had the largest current account deficit," he said. "When our government was ousted, the GDP growth was at six per cent. These figures were usually only seen during the martial laws of Ayub, Zia and Musharraf. This was because [during their eras] we were receiving dollars from the US. They didn't make any dams but we made six dams, out of which two were massive. We launched the health card that was praised by foreign magazines. Our Ehsaas programme was internationally acknowledged. The billion tree tsunami was raised around the world. UK prime minister Boris Johnson mentioned my name and our climate change programme at the UN." Web Desk

Won't accept any PTI resignations unless sure they aren't given under pressure: NA speaker

National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said on Sunday he would not be accepting the resignations of any lawmakers from the PTI, which announced mass resignations from the lower house of parliament in April, unless he was sure they weren't tendered under any pressure. "The law dictates that even if a member says in my presence they want to resign but I have information that they are under pressure, I should not accept their resignation," he explained while speaking to the media in Lahore when asked about him approving the resignations of only select few PTI lawmakers. **Says he won't accept them if he knows lawmaker is under pressure** Ashraf alleged that even after the announcement of mass resignations, PTI lawmakers continued to occupy parliament lodges and avail perks given to MNAs. "And then they also send me messages not to accept their resignations. In this scenario [...] I will not de-seat any member until I am satisfied" that they were not resigning under pressure, he said. The speaker also clarified that he had accepted the resignations of those lawmakers who had issued statements in the media and on social media that they had vacated their seats willingly.



The PTI, which saw the ouster of its chief Imran Khan as the premier through a no-confidence vote in April, had announced it was resigning en masse from the NA just hours before then-opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif was to take oath as the country's new chief executive. Then-NA deputy speaker Qasim Suri, in the capacity of the house' acting speaker, had subsequently accepted the resignations of 123 PTI MNAs. However, the incumbent speaker later decided to verify the resignations and eventually accepted the resignations of just 11 lawmakers on July 27. The PTI had first challenged the move in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on August 1, contesting that it was "unsustainable". The IHC, however, had dismissed the petition on September 6 and declared that the acceptance of PTI lawmakers' resignations by Suri was unconstitutional. The party then approached the SC, praying it to set aside the IHC order, terming it "vague, cursory and against the law". A decision on the PTI's plea in the apex court is still pending. Meanwhile, de-seated PTI lawmakers claimed again approached the IHC in October, pleading that the NA speaker had treated their "en masse letters" as a resignation and recommended their de-notification to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). In a departure from their previous demand that their resignations be accepted forthwith, they moved the high court against the approval of their "resignations" by the NA speaker and ECP. Web Desk

The rising deaths of coal miners in Balochistan

Shocking incidents inside the coal mines of Balochistan are almost the order of the day. Worst poverty and unemployment force people to put their lives at peril while extracting coal from mines in Balochistan. At the cost of living, poverty-hit people from Shangla, Swat areas of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa, Toba Kakari area of Pishin, and people from southern Afghanistan work in killer coal mines of Balochistan.

At least six coal miners were killed after the mine was filled with methane gas in the Shahrag area of the Harnai district a few days ago. Rescue workers and fellow miners made hectic efforts to save their lives. But, they failed to do so. The officials merely issued condolence statements with no promise of taking action against the responsible people.

Sadly, such incidents make no headlines in the newspapers and tv channels

No action has been taken against the mine owner, contractor, and concerned people. The government has also not announced any compensation for the heirs of the victims. Sadly, such incidents make no headlines in the newspapers and tv channels. This is also one of the underlying reasons behind rampant incidents inside mines in Balochistan.

Hazardous working conditions have claimed thousands of precious human lives in Dukkai, Quetta, Sorange, Marwar, Chamalang, Bolan, Mach, and Harnai areas of Balochistan. Despite repeated appeals on behalf of human rights organizations and labor unions, the Balochistan government has not ensured improved safety conditions inside mines of the province.

Strange: 18 inspectors posted for 3000 mines

Around 60,000 miners have been working in over 3,000 coal mines in Balochistan. For more than 3,000 coal mines, the Balochistan mines and mineral department has appointed only 18 mine inspectors. Under the 1923 mines and mineral act Balochistan, coal miners cannot enter the mine without the inspection of the mine by an inspector.

Women, children, and aged people are not allowed to enter coal mines as per the 1923 mines act. The Balochistan government and mines owners must take steps to improve working conditions for the coal miners before it is already late.

The king's burden

By Mir Adnan Aziz

The 70-year reign of Queen Elizabeth II culminated with her transition at her beloved abode, the Balmoral Castle in the Scottish Highlands. Queen Elizabeth's death was mourned by many but also brought forth historical biases, bitterness and injustices associated with the British monarchy. It is an incontrovertible fact that British monarchs and royals actively participated, facilitated and profited from the slave trade and colonization for centuries.

In 'Late Victorian Holocausts', historian Mike Davis narrates how famines during the British rule find no place in the laudatory screeds of the British Empire. Davis asserts that taxes and changes in the Subcontinent's revenue system impacted farmers adversely and was a major factor leading to famines. There were 31 famines in 120 years of British rule compared with 17 in the 2,000 years preceding it. According to Davis, over 29 million people perished due to Britain's policies.

These policies were devised by the likes of British economist John Maynard Keynes, an avowed imperialist. In 1919, he authored 'The Economic Consequences of Peace', a scathing critique of the Versailles Peace Treaty. Keynes, along with Harry Dexter White, is also known as the intellectual father of the IMF and World Bank, the excruciating neo-colonial tools of today.

In 1943, the Keynesian policy had Churchill divert India's food stocks to Europe. In what gained notoriety as the Bengal Famine, British estimates put the resulting deaths at three million. Indian estimates say seven million perished. The surviving millions faced severe malnutrition and impoverishment. It remains one of the most horrific atrocities of British rule.

Bards of the Empire eulogize the imparting of civility and bettering lives in the Subcontinent; a land that boasted sophisticated civilizations thousands of years ago. Renowned economist Utsa Patnaik's research published by Columbia University Press draws on two centuries of detailed data. It reveals that from 1765 to 1938 the "bestowing and benevolent" colonists extracted a mind-boggling 45 trillion dollars from the Subcontinent. This was when the average annual salary in England was around 36 pounds.

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mented to less than 1 per cent. Belgian economist Paul Bairoch's detailed study of world economy in his book 'Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes' claims that the Subcontinent was the largest global economy for 1700 of the past 2000 years being those under British rule. This has also been substantiated by a study initiated by the Paris based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In 'Crimes against India', Stephen Knapp writes that in 1832 the then governor general William Bentinck initiated a plan to totally dismantle the Taj Mahal and ship it to Britain. Word from London said that there had been scant response to the envisaged auction of the marble pieces. This is how the fabled monument survived its fragmented journey to the capital city of the rapacious empire. London's Victoria and Albert Museum alone holds over 40,000 art items from the Subcontinent. This led to TV show host John Oliver saying that "all our greatest possessions are stolen" adding that "the entire British Museum is basically an active crime scene".

As the British initiated their scramble back

home, Queen Victoria's great grandson Lord Mountbatten tasked Cyril Radcliffe to draw the partition line. The dice were totally loaded against Pakistan due to the known Mountbatten, Edwina, Nehru friendship. The mindset of the empire can be well gauged from the fact that Radcliffe, a lawyer who had never been to India and was absolutely clueless about its geography, was given five weeks to complete the onerous task.

In a famous 1976 interview with veteran Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar in London, Radcliffe called his effort a "shoddy affair" that could have been handled better had he been given "two to three years". He told Nayar "I nearly gave you (India) Lahore but then I realized that Pakistan would not have any large city as I had already earmarked Calcutta for India". Among others, he gave Muslim majority Gurdaspur, a direct conduit to Jammu and Kashmir, to India. In 1948, this enabled India to occupy Kashmir which it brutalizes to this day.

The partition of Punjab and Bengal too was criminally biased. In a Daily Telegraph article of February 24, 1992, Christopher Beaumont, secretary of the Radcliffe Commission, confirmed that the frontiers had been

secretly redrawn to favor India. The "shoddy affair" proved to be a harrowing tragedy. Over 90,000 women were abducted, almost two million people perished and over 15 million were displaced. The scars were carried by generations, the resulting acrimony between Pakistan and India threatens the globe.

The year 1992 saw the end of the marriages of three of the late Queen's four children, including that of the present king and Lady Diana. A fire at Windsor Castle also caused damage to the tune of 60 million pounds. Queen Elizabeth famously dubbed the year as her "annus horribilis", Latin for "a horrible year". If these setbacks made the late Queen's year horrible, one can well imagine the sentiments left behind of the millions who suffered and perished at the hands of the British Empire.

Rudyard Kipling extolled the empire to civilize the half devil half child savages terming it the white man's burden. As the crown is placed on King Charles's head, the burden of history shall be far heavier and telling than the Kohinoor that adorns the royal crown; this shall be the King's burden. Known to have strong views on interfaith dialogue and other important issues.

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Demonetizing for growth

By Ammar Habib Khan

Currency in circulation makes up almost 20 per cent of Pakistan's GDP, increasing from eight per cent, only about a decade back. Explosive growth of money supply has led to too much cash in the economy chasing too few goods.

As supply of goods remained constrained - since that cash never worked to increase aggregate supply - it exerted pressure on the exchange rate resulting in depreciation of the Pak rupee over the years. A natural consequence of too much cash chasing too few goods is inflation, and we have been riding one wave of inflation after another without addressing the root. The root cause is the prevalence of too much cash in the system, and that needs to be sucked out.

It is a structural problem that is now out of control. The inability to address it may eventually lead to hyperinflation, while policymakers in Mississauga, London, and Islamabad will keep harping on about how conventional monetary economics does not work for us, as if we are situated on another planet. It works really well, and bouts of inflation as a consequence of growth in money supply are a testament to the same.

Demonetization is a radical way to solve

this problem, which comes with its own set of problems. Demonetization is often touted as a fix-all panacea for the bogeyman of corruption, but it does more than that. A strategy that demonetizes the largest currency note in circulation - Rs5000 - will massively reduce currency in circulation, as most of the same is denominated in currency notes of Rs5000.

This is how it can be played out. The central bank announces demonetization of the Rs5000 currency notes, and gives a hard deadline of six months for everyone to deposit the same in their respective bank accounts. But Pakistan has one of the lowest financial inclusion levels in the world, which would then require the central bank to enable every citizen of the country to have a bank account linked to their CNIC, just like we have in the case of National Tax Number. Each citizen can walk into any bank branch, or just use their mobile phone to open a bank account, and deposit their stash of Rs5000 currency notes in the same. Sounds simple, but it isn't.

This will send shockwaves across the informal economy, from the usual real-estate rent seekers, to traders, and wholesalers - the usual

coterie that tries to stay out of the tax net. There will be massive political opposition, but we can either fix structural issues, or pander to rent seekers. We have been doing the latter for the last seven decades, maybe we can actually try to fix structural problems for a change.

With every citizen having a bank account, it will be possible to deposit the demonetized currency notes in an orderly manner. Extra effort may be required in areas where prevalence of banks is low, and for the same purpose dedicated camps can be established to facilitate the same. Similar infrastructure is rolled out during elections, or natural disasters.

The technology infrastructure that enables efficiency and prompt payments already exists in the form of RAAST, which can allow payments to be done through the formal financial system. Similarly, all biometric data already exists with NADRA that can be used for opening up accounts. Effectively, the technology stack to accomplish demonetization exists at this time, and someone just needs to execute here.

As the demonetized currency notes are deposited in the banking system, the overall size of the formal finan-

cial system will start growing, which will reduce the equilibrium interest rate in the near term, pushing banks to actually start taking risk, and lending to the private sector. Demonetization will increase the available supply of capital that can be redirected towards productive capital and eventually push up aggregate supply.

However, this does not give a free passage to the government which continues to run fiscal deficits. As more capital comes into the system, there needs to be rationalization of the tax policy such that the capital remains in the system, and is not harassed out. Currently, the tax policy is structured such that it is more convenient and economically efficient to stay out of the formal financial system - and this needs to change through a more encompassing fiscal policy.

Demonetization will have a high social and political cost, and there will be unintended consequences. When India demonetized a few years back, there was massive social unrest, and its quarterly GDP took a one-time hit, but since then it continues to grow at high single-digit levels while payments have largely shifted to the digital medium. A conse-

quence of this is muted inflation, and mid single-digit interest rates that spur economic growth.

The cost of inaction, and not bringing money supply under control is much higher than any social or political cost. The technology exists to mitigate any potential risks, and to make the process easier for the citizens of the country. If price stability is a critical mandate for the central bank, then it must work towards this, rather than extending the year by which a hypothetical inflation target can be met without making much effort to address structural inefficiencies.

The country is at the stage of a monetary and economic cycle where any delays in addressing structural weaknesses are only going to make things worse, eventually leading to hyperinflation fueled by a mix of excessive debt burden, a fiscal squeeze, and a depreciating aggregate supply.

Demonetization is a radical step that may actually garner popular public support, but may not be supported by various rent-seeking interest groups. We can either make economic policy that serves the interests of the citizens of the country, or we can continue to benefit a few thousand vocal rent seekers.

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 - 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.

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."

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

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

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OIC Secretary-General lays wreath at J&K Monument in Muzaffarabad

MUZAFFARABAD: The Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Hissein Ibrahim Taha, today, laid a wreath at the Jammu and Kashmir Monument in Muzaffarabad, built in memory of the Kashmiri martyrs and their struggle.

Kashmir cause. This is the first country visit of the OIC Secretary-General, Hissein Ibrahim Taha, since assuming office in November 2021. The Muslim world body always raised voice against the Indian atrocities in IIOJK and supported the right to self-determination of Kashmiris as per UN resolutions.

adopted a joint action plan on Kashmir issue. Under the plan, the OIC countries agreed to raise the Kashmir dispute in their bilateral engagements with India and underscore respect for the fundamental human rights of the Kashmiri people, as well as lend support to monitor human rights violations in the IIOJK. On May 16, 2022, the OIC General Secretariat expressed deep concern over India's attempts to redraw the electoral boundaries of the IIOJK altering INP



LAHORE: Students throwing their caps in the air during 1st Convocation 2022 of Shaikh Khalifa Zayed Al-Nahyan Medical and Dental College.

ECC approves agenda items relating to Reko Diq Project

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) has approved two important agenda items related to Reko Diq project, paving the way for early start of the Reko Diq Project. The meeting of the committee was held on Sunday virtually with Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in the chair.

pute settlement with Tethyan Copper Company Pvt Limited in respect of Reko Diq Copper-Gold Project in Chagai district of Baluchistan. As per settlement terms, Government of Pakistan has to clear liabilities to Antofagasta PLC.

amounting to 8,519,314 dollars from the loan of 65 billion rupees already raised by the GHPL with the GoP guarantee. The ECC also considered and approved a proposal of Finance Division through a summary on funding plan of Government of Pakistan for share of Government of As per settlement terms, Government of Pakistan has to clear liabilities to Antofagasta PLC.

Being Shehbaz Sharif's son-in-law was my only fault, says Imran Ali Yusuf

LONDON: Imran Ali Yusuf, a son-in-law of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and the one who won the defamation case against Daily Mail, said on Sunday that the newspaper published fake news when there was a reign of oppression in Pakistan on Sunday.

of Shehbaz Sharif. If I had a connivance with him, why would he have been arrested," he pointed out. "When the inquiries against Ikram Naveed were initiated, his corruption was revealed. The credit of his arrest goes to Shehbaz Sharif," he stated. "Ikram Naveed bought properties from 40 to 41 builders. I was one of those who sold him properties. My only fault was that I was Shehbaz Sharif's son-in-law," he deplored.

relationship with Barrister Waheedur Rehman. I had a blind faith in him that he would fight my case on merit. Waheed asked for all the evidence before fighting the case and took the case after being satisfied," Imran Ali Yusuf claimed. "As soon as the case started, the Daily Mail started offering a settlement out of the court. We rejected three or four of their offers, but then agreed on some conditions," he added. "It was very painful to be falsely accused. The entire government of Imran Khan was looking for something against the Sharif family. He will have to answer to Allah for the pain he caused us," he averred.

Partly cloudy weather expected

ISLAMABAD: Partly cloudy weather expected in most parts of the country. Light rain light snow over hills is likely at isolated places in upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir. Foggy conditions are also likely over plain areas of Punjab and upper Sindh during morning hours.

forecast for Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, cloudy weather with chances of light rain and snow is in Srinagar, Leh, Pulwama, Anantnag, Shopian and Baramula while partly cloudy and foggy weather in Jammu during morning hours.

and Kashmir, said Met office on Sunday. It said that a shallow westerly wave is present over the western & upper parts of the country and likely to persist in upper parts during the next 36 hours. Meanwhile, partly cloudy/cold weather is also expected in most parts of the country tomorrow (Monday).



LAHORE: Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, Prof Tanveer Khalique giving a degree to student during 1st Convocation 2022 of Shaikh Khalifa Zayed Al-Nahyan Medical and Dental College in Provincial Capital.

CTD arrest honey-trapping gang from Korangi, led by woman

KARACHI: CTD investigation team arrested woman from Korangi leading a gang involved in honey trap on Sunday. An investigation team of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) arrested the ringleader of Shanno Gang in a raid in Korangi 2 1/2 duping citizens on telephone and abduct them to take money. In-charge CTD Chaudhry Safdar said.

getting heavy amounts from them," CTD official highlighting the modus operandi of the gang said. "The gang blackmailed a citizen and made him to cough up Rs. two lac initially," CTD official said. "The accused were arrested when they returned to receive remaining seven lac from their victim," he said.

rity guard, was called to Kashmir on September 24 and abducted for ransom, the mother of the abductee told police in her plea. "The gang blackmailed a citizen and made him to cough up Rs. two lac initially," CTD official said. "The accused were arrested when they returned to receive remaining seven lac from their victim," he said.

Smuggling crystal meth attempt foiled

KARACHI: The Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) on Sunday foiled an attempt to smuggle crystal meth to Australia and London via a local carrier company located in Korangi. An ANF spokesperson told that the total weight of the parcels was 27 kg, and the drug was soaked into clothes. The parcels were booked for London and Australia. Anti-Narcotic Force has filed a case against the smuggler under the anti-narcotics act and started an investigation into the matter.

11,000 candidates appear in KU entrance test for admission-2023

KARACHI: Over 11,000 candidates participated in the entrance test conducted for the admission to University of Karachi for the year 2023. The test was organized for admission in Doctor of Pharmacy, Doctor of Physical Therapy, BE, BS and Bed (Hons) program. Students and their parents were transported from the entrance gates to the examination centers through points buses. As many as 28 examination centers have been established in various departments of the University of Karachi for the entrance test.



PESHAWAR: A woman vendor is selling bangles alongside a road at Jinnah Park and waiting for customers in Provincial Capital.

TEVTA/MG JW Automobile signed agreement to reinforce local industry in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: TEVTA develop new education and training courses in electric vehicles. It can be predicted that the cooperation between both sides will be a win-win situation," added Zhang. With a century-long history, MG Automobile established a joint venture with local enterprise JW Group in September 2020 and started selling the HS CBU model in Pakistan in January 2021, becoming the market leader in the local market segment.

TEVTA is the largest vocational and technical education institution in Pakistan, with 450 training facilities and 150 permanent courses. The strategic cooperation between the two sides will inject fresh momentum into Pakistan's automotive development. On the occasion, Tarar lauded and thanked MG for bringing new high-tech products and new growth momentum to the Pakistani automotive industry.

inevitably contribute greatly to the development of automotive technology, vocational training and employment in Punjab and the country as a whole. Zhang said that the MG plant has been completed and has obtained the production qualification issued by the government, and will soon enter formal production, which requires a large number of skilled workers. He expressed his pleasure at reaching a strategic cooperation agreement with TEVTA at this juncture and receiving timely support in the recruitment of staff, which lays an important manpower foundation for the subsequent mass production of the plant.

Pak-China SEZ collaboration to boost Pakistan's economy: Chairman SEZA

ISLAMABAD: At the critical moment when Pakistan's economy is passing through an era of stagnation, SEZs are significant for shaping Pakistan's new 'industrial identity', under which Pakistan is supposed to stand side by side with Chinese companies to embark on contemporary economic projects.

The global experience suggests that SEZs are an important source for diversification of the economy, reduction in regional disparities, clustering of economic activities for complementarity generation with local industries, skill development of local labour force, transfer of technology and dissemination of know-how, attraction of local and foreign direct investment especially in the under-privileged regions, he said.

CPEC would be a lifetime opportunity for Pakistani companies to collaborate with Chinese companies for the development of export-oriented manufacturing sectors. It will also enable firms to cluster and tap the benefits of external economies, and will thus provide an opportunity to put domestic industries on a higher learning curve. He believes that SEZs under CPEC have the potential to enhance productivity, integrate Pakistan with global value chains and revive its manufacturing industry in the long run.

"The development of SEZs must be aimed at improving the overall business climate in the country. This can be done through improved infrastructure and trade facilitation to attract investment from foreign and domestic firms in the zones," he further mentioned, "it is also important to note that Pakistan has a weak legal regime, which is also a major hurdle to attract foreign investment in the country. In this regard, Pakistan can learn from

China to strengthen its security legislation." Over the past few decades, China has experienced the largest economic expansion of any country in history, largely as a result of its efforts to launch and develop SEZs. "China has made an incredible triumph in establishing SEZs to achieve remarkable economic growth. It is worth mentioning that China employed 30 million workforce in SEZs that have brought down inequalities and alleviated poverty," INP

Advertisement for a recruitment drive for the Government of Punjab, mentioning 173 positions and a deadline of 15-12-2022.

Govt should focus on innovative solutions to resolve housing shortage: Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Vision Group Abdul Aleem Khan has said that the government needs innovative and creative housing solutions to bridge the gap of rising housing shortage and stressed that the government should amend building byelaws to encourage innovative constructions as current building laws were a major hurdle in vertical growth, which is the future need of the country.

He said that the condition of real estate is the yardstick to judge the growth of a country as when real estate grows the country grows and when the real estate is in slump, it means that the economy is in trouble.

Abdul Aleem Khan stated this while addressing as Chief Guest at the Awards Distribution ceremony of the 1st International Housing EXPO 22 organized by Ministry of Housing & Works in collaboration with Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry at Jinnah Convention Centre, Islamabad from December 8-11, 2022, which ended on a high note.

The Chairman Vision Group said that Dubai has achieved historic development in the last 20 years by encouraging vertical growth in construction and said that Dubai should be the role model for Pakistan.

Aleem Khan said that Abu Dhabi, Sharja, Qatar etc. have achieved great economic growth by focusing on the construction industry and said that Pakistan needs a vision to promote the construction industry to revive its economy as this industry boosts the growth of roughly 100 allied industries. He appreciated the Ministry of Housing & Works and ICCI for organizing such a wonderful housing expo.

Speaking at the occasion, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Baktawari said that many big players of the housing and construction sector are developing good housing

projects and the purpose of organizing the Expo was to provide them a good platform to market their projects. He said that the Expo has also provided the people an excellent opportunity to see the housing products of latest trends that help them in building smart and energy efficient houses.

Ahsan Zafar Baktawari said that the Expo has come up with very good recommendations during breakout sessions to provide shelter to all and hoped that the government would consider implementing them to provide affordable housing options to low-income people. He thanked the platinum, diamond and gold partners and all the exhibitors for making the Expo a successful event. He also thanked the Ministry of Housing & Works for partnering with ICCI to organize the 1st International Housing Expo in these tough economic conditions.

Secretary Ministry of Housing & Works, Ifkhar Ali Shalhwani said that organizing the 1st International Housing Expo in the current difficult economic times was a great challenge and thanked ICCI for joining hands to make it a successful venture. He said that the housing and construction industry has a vital role in the development of the economy and vowed that this Expo would be made an annual feature of the Ministry.

The first exclusive award was given to Ch. Abdul Rauf, Chairman, Fair Group. From the platinum partners, the top five award recipients included Grana.com, Gandhara City, Star World, Star Marketing, Fair Deal Marketing. From diamond partners, the top five award recipients included Taj Residencia, Movida, KK Enterprises, Property Enclave and Crescent Lake Tower. From gold partners, the top five award recipients included AMS Group, Amar Builders, Gulberg Mall, R. Power, Chawla Aluminum. The awards were given to various other categories including exhibitors and universities. INP



RAWALPINDI: Members of Kashmir Community shouting slogans during protest in favor of their demands outside press club in the city.

Karachi citizens show solidarity with Pakistan Army

KARACHI: The citizens of Karachi have staged a large rally to show their solidarity with the Pakistan Army and admired its sacrifice rendered for defence and prosperity of the country.

According to details, hundreds of citizens staged a rally from Drigh Road to Kala Pull, expressing their solidarity with Pakistan Army and admiring the sacrifice rendered for defence and prosperity of the country.

The participants, carrying Pakistani flags and banners inscribed with solidarity slogans, and gave rich tributes to armed forces and chanted slogans in favour of Pakistan Army.

The speakers also, in their address, strongly condemned the handful of elements for making wrong statements against defence officials. "We are proud of our Army which has protected the borders of motherland and has given relief to the rest of people of country," they added. INP

Grenade attack on former minister Haji Javed's house in Peshawar

PESHAWAR: Unidentified men have hurled a hand grenade on former provincial minister Haji Javed's house in Peshawar.

Police told the media that a grenade was hurled by unidentified men on the rooftop of former minister Haji Javed's house in the Gulbahar neighbourhood of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) capital. The assailants managed to flee from the scene.

Fortunately, the grenade did not blow on the rooftop. The Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) was summoned to the scene whose personnel defused the grenade.

Police said a search operation was started in the area to arrest the culprits. INP

Rider killed after his bike falls off flyover in Lahore

LAHORE: A biker died in a roadside accident after his bike fell from a Muslim Town flyover while taking a turn towards Wahdat Road in Lahore on Sunday.

According to police, biker Samih's head hit the road badly which resulted his sudden death.

The deceased was a resident of Naqsha Stop. Police have shifted the body to the mortuary.

It is pertinent to mention here that the boundary wall of the flyover is too short and there is no protective grill installed on the boundary. INP

Imran Khan congrats Morocco for reaching FIFA WC semis

LAHORE: PTI Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan has congratulated Morocco soccer team for qualifying for the FIFA World Cup semi-finals.

"Congratulations to Morocco on their victory over Portugal to reach the Football World Cup semi-finals. First time an Arab, African and a Muslim team has reached a FIFA World Cup semi final. Wishing them success in the semi final and beyond," the former premier said in the tweet. INP

Polling continuing for local govt elections in Hab, Lasbela

HUB/LASBELA: The voting process is continuing for the local body elections in districts of Hab and Lasbela of Balochistan.

The polling started at 8am to continue till 5pm.

The authorities have set up 126 polling stations in the district, declared 32 polling stations most sensitive, and 63 sensitive in Hub district. There are 135,620 registered voters in the district in Lasbela, as many 130 polling stations have been established. There are 136,703 polling stations in the district. INP

Sindh police granted 3-day physical remand of Azam Swati

ISLAMABAD: The judicial magistrate in Qambar remanded PTI Senator Azam Swati in police custody for three days on Sunday.

Azam Swati is facing a number of cases after he posted objectionable statements against institutions on the social media site Twitter.

Police presented Swati before the judicial magistrate and civil judge and pleaded for physical remand of the PTI leader upon which the judicial magistrate granted three-day physical remand.

During the appearance before the court, strict security measures were adopted and capturing photos or videos was prohibited. PTI Senator Saif Ullah Abro and PTI lawyers were also present outside the court.

On December 9, the Balochistan High Court ordered the police to release PTI

Senator Azam Swati and quash all the five FIRs registered against him in the province.

Soon after the BHC release order, Swati was taken into custody by the Sindh police and flew to Karachi. The senator is also facing a number of cases in Sindh. Swati was arrested last month. It was the second time that the senator was taken into custody by the FIA in less than two months over controversial tweets about senior military leaders. PTI Senator Saif Ullah Abro and PTI lawyers were also present outside the court.

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Raja Pervaiz invites PTI back to Parliament

LAHORE: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has invited Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to return to Parliament, saying they cannot move forward by ignoring parliamentarians.

While speaking to the media in Lahore on Sunday, Raja Pervaiz appealed to the parties to return to the Parliament for the sake of economic stability because the solution to challenges facing the country lies there.

He cannot de-seat any member of the assembly until he is satisfied, therefore he asked the PTI members to come back to the assembly and participate.

He added the opposition is as important as the government in the assembly. "Being a speaker I would like that every assembly completes its tenure," he reiterated. Earlier Raja Pervaiz Ashraf inaugurated Benazir Shaheed Hall and office of the Pakistan Peoples Party Central Punjab Secretariat Incharge here at Model Town.

Ending his 4-year exile, PM's son Suleman returns Pakistan

ISLAMABAD/ LAHORE: Ending his four-year exile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's son Suleman Shehbaz has arrived in Pakistan in the wee hours of Sunday.

Prime Minister Shehbaz welcomed his son at the door of their house and garlanded him. Suleman touched his father's knees in respect and then the father and son embraced each other.

PML-N leader Atta Ullah Tarar was also present on the occasion. Suleman returned to Pakistan from Saudi Arabia via Saudi Airlines Flight SV 726 which landed at Islamabad Airport at 1:20am from where he flew to Lahore.

Suleman, who is facing money laundering charges, has got protective bail from the Islamabad High Court.

The Islamabad High Court has barred National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Federal

PPP Central Punjab General Secretary Syed Hassan Murtaza accompanied him.

The Speaker lauded Hassan Murtaza for his dedication, efforts and work for the beautification of PPP Punjab Secretariat and said that his services would be always remembered. Several party workers were also present on the occasion.

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Quetta: Students of Hara Public High School Quetta presenting a tableau on the occasion of annual ceremony.

NA Speaker for all political parties to get united for resolution of national issues

LAHORE: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Sunday urged all political parties to get united at a platform to resolve the issues being faced by the country.

Talking to media after having breakfast at the residence of Pakistan Peoples Party Central Punjab General Secretary Syed Hassan Murtaza here, he said that unity was the only way to move the country ahead.

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said that only parliament could provide solution to the problems of nation, adding that uncertainty developed in case of neglecting the parliament, so all members should come into the parliament to represent their constituencies.

He said the incumbent government should complete its constitutional tenure like the previous governments did. He said it was responsibility of all political parties to be united to tackle the challenges being faced by the country and the parliament was the only forum where solutions to the issues of the country could be discussed and finalized.

The Speaker said that like legislation, the implementation of laws was also responsibility of the parties. He said that stability was also important in the national politics. He said there were some rules and regulations for accepting the resignations in the assembly as the law said a resignation should not be accepted if it was presented in pressure.

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said that Imran Khan should participate in the legislation, if he wanted transparent

elections in the country. He said the opposition was equally important for the country, adding that assemblies should complete their constitutional tenure.

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International mountain day observed

ISLAMABAD: International Mountain Day was celebrated on Sunday across the globe to increase public awareness of the value of mountains to both life and climate.

The United Nations General Assembly established International Mountain Day to recognize the importance of mountains. Every year, this Day is observed with a specific theme and theme of this year is 'Women Move Mountains.'

Women play a key role in mountains' environmental protection and social and economic development. They are often the primary managers of mountain resources, guardians of biodiversity, keepers of traditional knowledge, custodians of local culture, and experts in traditional medicine.

In his message on the occasion, Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Khalid Khursheed said Gilgit Baltistan is gifted with uncountable natural resources including the world's highest Mountains and peaks. He said these mountains are not only the centre of attraction for tourists across the world but also a rich source of water. INP

AJK covered in blanket of snow

MUZAFFARABAD: Snow blanketed many valleys of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Sunday causing the temperature to plummet.

Rain and snow continued for a second consecutive day with the scenic Neelum Valley and its adjoining areas receiving intermittent rain on Saturday, due to which the intensity of cold increased.

In many areas of the autonomous region, the temperatures fell below the freezing point, forcing people to take out their warm clothes. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted that Muzaffarabad, the capital of AJK will receive snowfall at different times, while other upper areas may get light showers during the day. Rain and snow continued for a second consecutive day with the scenic Neelum Valley and its adjoining areas receiving intermittent rain on Saturday, due to which the intensity of cold increased. In many areas of the autonomous region, the temperatures fell below the freezing point.

Daraz, Visa collaborate to provide relief goods to 4,000 flood-hit families

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading online marketplace Daraz and global card payment service Visa pooled their resources to provide relief goods to 4,000 flood-hit families.

According to Gwadar Pro on Sunday, the e-commerce company said that "Daraz and Visa leveraged their long-term partnership by actively participating in flood relief efforts in Pakistan." The two companies pooled their resources to assist flood victims through the Daraz platform. As part of the collaboration, Visa allocated Rs 22 million to procure items from the Daraz marketplace. Daraz managed logistical operations to arrange items at the cost price from its seller network.

It handled the logistics quickly, ensuring that all procured items were gathered from respective warehouses and delivered on time, Daraz said.

In addition, Daraz worked with various humanitarian organisations, leading flood relief drives across Pakistan to distribute these items to over 4,000 families, it said.

Daraz is owned by China's Alibaba Group. The company operates in a number of South Asian countries.

Pakistan recently experienced severe flooding caused by heavy monsoon rains, which washed away villages and left millions in need of immediate life-saving assistance, as well as an increased risk of infections and drowning, Daraz said. INP



Quetta: Provincial President of Pakistan Muslim League Balochistan Jamal shah addressing the rally.

PTI all set to hold Karachi rallies to demands early elections

KARACHI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to hold rallies in Karachi to mount pressure on the incumbent government regarding the demand for transparent and early elections.

According to details, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has launched 'election karao mulk bacho (Hold elections and save country) movement in Karachi in a bid to mount pressure on the incumbent government.

In a statement, the party has also issued the schedule of rallies in Karachi.

Rallies will be held in all the constituencies of Karachi, starting from today Sunday, it added. The areas included Model Town, Manghopir, Mominabad, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Safara Chowrangi, Hyderi Market and Saddar.

The protests will be attended by party organizers, former members of national and provincial assembly. Candidates in the local government (LG) elections and workers will also be a part of the movement.

Health ministry to distribute Rs250mn among flood-affected polio workers

ISLAMABAD: The Health Ministry on Sunday decided to distribute Rs250 million among flood-affected polio workers.

Federal Health Minister Abdul Qadir Patel said that the workers continued relief activities despite the damage caused by the calamity. Around 33 million people got affected and polio workers also suffered heavy losses during the catastrophe with one third of the country under water, the federal minister added.

Abdul Qadir Patel said that according to the polio program, about 12,500 polio workers have been affected by the floods. "In this testing time, we cannot leave our workers alone and we should ensure maximum compensation to polio workers," the health minister said. Mr Patel said that majority of the

polio workers are in Sindh and Balochistan, many of their houses were either washed away in the floods or partially damaged.

On this occasion, Coordinator Polio Shahzad Baig said that we have more than 350,000 frontline staff and it was a difficult task to identify and compile the list of the workers affected by the flood.

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Mr Patel said that majority of the polio workers are in Sindh and Balochistan, many of their houses were either washed away in the floods or partially damaged. INP