

# QUETTA VOICE

Email address:  
dquettavoic@gmail.com

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**Opposition opposes Reko Diq bill from Balochistan Assembly**



**Clear evidence of India carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan: Rana Sanaullah**

## SC verdict about Reko Diq proves Balochistan Govt's principled stance: Bizenjo

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo termed the supreme court's judgment about the Reko Diq project as proof of his government's principled stance. Despite all odds, my government succeeded in protecting the rights of the people of Balochistan, Mr. Bizenjo told reporters at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Tuesday evening. Other provincial ministers were also present on the occasion.

"I cannot explain, which kinds of troubles we faced in striking a successful deal with the company", he said. This was for the first time in the history of Balochistan that all stakeholders including all political parties outside and inside the assembly were taken on board prior to the Reko Diq agreement.

**BGC to invest 8 billion USD in Reko Diq**

Chief Minister Balochistan's comments have come a day after the apex court endorsed the government's agreement with the Barrick Gold Corporation (BGC).

The Chief Minister said Reko Diq would bring an investment of more than 8 billion US dollars, which



will open new vistas of development and prosperity in the province and country. He reiterated that the company would provide direct 8000 jobs to the people of Balochistan and indirectly thousands of jobs would also be created after the functioning of the multi-billion dollar gold and copper project.

"Minerals are the future of Balochistan", he said. The CM said his government was committed to attracting national and foreign investment in Balochistan to promote the socio-economic conditions of the province.

**All political parties endorse the government's stance**

Chief Minister Balochistan said he met all key political leaders of Balochistan to develop consensus and seek guidance from them with regard to the agreement with BGC about the Reko Diq project. "This was not my personal decision rather all political parties", Mr. Bizenjo stated.

The CM also appreciated the efforts of former prime minister Imran Khan and Shaukat Tareen with regard to the success of the Reko Diq agreement. "This would be an injustice not to mention them", he added.

## Opposition opposes Reko Diq bill from Balochistan Assembly

Manan Mandokhail

QUETTA: Opposition lawmakers opposed the passage of the Reko Diq bill from the Balochistan Assembly. The session of the assembly resumed here with the deputy speaker Balochistan Assembly, Sardar Babar Musakhail in the chair. "This is an attempt to usurp the rights of the people of Balochistan", Muhammad Akbar Mengal, the Balochistan National Party (Mengal) said while speaking on a point of order on Tuesday evening. However, Balochistan Minister Noor Muhammad Dumar, who belongs to the ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) said the house had adopted the resolution in the presence of opposition lawmakers. He termed the Reko Diq agreement a historic agreement, which preserves the rights of the people of Balochistan.

**The debate comes three days after the passage of the resolution**

The debate in the assembly has come three days after the house adopted a resolution entrusting some taxation powers to the federal government in the Reko Diq project. "Rulers should stop exploiting the resources of Balochistan", Akbar Mengal stated. Although, Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Quddus Bizenjo claimed to have taken opposition lawmakers on board with regard to the tabling of the resolution in the assembly.

**CM Bizenjo claims to have convinced the opposition about the passage of the resolution**



The CM said the opposition's misunderstandings about the resolution have been removed and grievances addressed. However, Akbar Mengal claimed that the treasury members passed the bill in the darkness of night and deceived the people of Balochistan. Balochistan National Party (Awami) lawmaker and provincial minister of Agriculture, Asad Baloch strongly criticized prime minister Shehbaz Sharif and said that the latter was inaugurating motorways in Sindh and giving a cold shoulder to Balochistan. "We also demand a motorway in Balochistan", Mr. Baloch said. Due to a lack of quorum, the chair announced the adjourning of the Balochistan Assembly session.

### All Balochistan Lt. General Sarfraz Shaheed Football Tournament held in Loralai

Sports Desk

Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan (North) organized the All Balochistan General Sarfraz (Shaheed) Football Tournament at Loralai with the aim to promote sports culture in Balochistan. The tournament lasted for six weeks and a total of 54 teams participated, including teams from Islamabad, Multan, Chaman, Qila Saifullah, Zhob, and Quetta.



Club Islamabad and Afghan Hazara Club Chaman. During the final match, the players of both teams showed their best performance. All Balochistan Lt. General Sarfraz Shaheed Football Tournament held in Loralai. The winner and runner-up teams were

awarded cash prizes and trophies. A large number of fans from across the country including Islamabad, Multan, DG Khan, and Peshawar witnessed the match. Tribal elders and local dignitaries appreciated the efforts of FC for promoting sports culture in Balochistan.

### Customs Enforcement Quetta foiled attempts of currency smuggling

News Desk

In a single day Collectorate of Customs Enforcement Quetta, foiled three attempts of currency smuggling in huge amounts via the Chaman Friendship Gate.

The Customs staff posted at Friendship Gate Chaman in collaboration with Army unit AK 40 recovered an amount of Rs 1,590,000/- being illegally transferred, by a Pakistani citizen travelling from Afghanistan to Pakistan on Monday. A person has been arrested, FIR has been lodged and currency has been seized.

On the same day, two other joint operations were conducted. In one of the operations, the staff of the collectorate posted at Chaman in collaboration with



Army unit AK 40, posted at the FS gate recovered an amount of US \$ 1,03,400/-

being illegally transferred, by a Pakistani person travelling from Afghanistan to Pakistan. A person has been arrested, FIR has been lodged and currency has been seized.

In the other operation, a Pakistani citizen travelling from Afghanistan to Pakistan was carrying Rs. 20,15,000. The person has been arrested and a seizure has been made. On Tuesday last week Rs. 14,90,000 was seized from a passenger leaving for Afghanistan. The currency was seized and the person had been arrested.

On Saturday last week Customs staff in collaboration with the Army staff posted at Chaman Friendship Gate recovered Rs. 14,277 Mn from a passenger leaving for Afghanistan. The currency was seized, a passenger was arrested and FIR was lodged.

### Clear evidence of India carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan: Rana Sanaullah

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said on Tuesday that there was "clear evidence" of India carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan, adding that the government has decided to present the matter before the international community.

"We have decided to bring our stance before the world and unveil India's face of terrorism," he said in a press conference in Islamabad, flanked by Punjab Counter Terrorism Department Additional Inspector General Imran Mehmood.

"For decades, Pakistan has been burning in the fire of terrorism. Our mosques, imambar-gahs, important buildings, and gatherings have been targeted.

"Today, the matter that we are putting before you [...] we have evidence of India's involvement in it," Sanaullah said, referring to the Johar Town blast in Lahore last year.

In June 2021, a powerful blast near the residence of Jamaatud Dawa chief Hafiz Saeed in Johar Town had killed three people and injured 24 others, including a police constable.



Six-year-old Abdul Haq, his father Abdul Malik, 50, and a young passerby died in the explosion that left a four-foot-deep and eight-foot-wide crater on the road and damaged several houses and shops nearby.

Days after the incident, the then information minister Fawad Chaudhry and national security adviser Dr Moeed Yusuf told a press conference that the mastermind of the attack

was "an Indian citizen and he is associated with [Indian intelligence agency] RAW".

Earlier this year, Dawn reported that the Punjab CTD had claimed to have arrested the mastermind as well as the facilitator of the Johar Town bomb blast from Balochistan. They were identified as Samiul Haq and Uzair Akbar. In the press conference today, IG Mehmood briefed on the investigation of the blast and revealed that the authorities had reached the culprits.

"Basically, at 9am on June 23, 2021, a bomb blast was reported in Lahore's Johar Town. Three citizens were martyred and 22 were wounded in the blast. To date, no terrorist organisation has accepted responsibility for the attack," he said. The official recalled that the police had traced the suspect within 16 hours of the incident. "And within 24 hours we arrested three terrorists." The first character was Peter Paul David who was caught through [the details] of his vehicle. Sajjad Hussain, who was arrested alongside, was David's assistant," he said. web Desk

### Death toll in Afghan forces firing at Chaman border rises to 7

Sardar M.Khondai

CHAMAN: The death toll in the Afghan forces firing rose to 7 as another injured person succumbed to injuries on Monday evening. Dr Abdul Malik Achakzai, the Superintendent of Chaman civil hospital confirmed the death of the injured. Over two dozen civilians were injured when the Afghan forces fired rockets on the civilian population at Killi Sheikh Alam and other



villages located at the Afghan border. The Pakistani forces gave a befitting albeit measured response to avoid civilian casualties on the Afghan side, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a

statement. The condition of the three injured is serious to be serious in the trauma center of civil hospital Quetta. The martyred civilians were laid to rest in the presence of thousands of people at the border villages.

## QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

## Education of 386000 students at risk in Balochistan

The education of 3,86,000 students is at risk in flood-affected areas of Balochistan. Floods and heavy rainfall damaged around 3,000 government-run primary, middle and high schools across the province.

The damage to schools across Balochistan has affected the schooling of 3,86,000 students. This figure is as per the data shared by the Balochistan Secondary Education Department. Although, the independent sources put the number of students and damaged schools higher than what is being quoted by the officials.

Floods damaged this school in interior Balochistan: Photo provided by UNICEF. The out-of-school children ratio in Balochistan is already higher than in the rest of the country. The education department admits that still, over 1 million children are out of school in the province, lagging behind other provinces of Pakistan in all key social indicators.

Reconstruction of schools a major challenge for the government. The recent monsoon has further compounded the problems of students. The number of government-run primary, middle and high schools in Balochistan is over 15,000. The reconstruction of 3,000 damaged schools is a major challenge for the provincial government, which appears to be least bothered about the state of education in the province.

So far, the data is only shared at the departmental level. The government has not spoken about the reconstruction of damaged schools and resuming educational activities there. UNICEF has only established 22 temporary learning centers (TLCs) with over 2,000 enrollments. This is simply nothing as compared to the number of students deprived of education.

Govt, opposition solely focusing on PSDP. The provincial coalition government and the 'friendly' opposition have solely focused on their schemes in the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) 2022-23. They want to get the schemes completed and implemented by hook and crook and uttered not a single word about the reconstruction of damaged schools.

The reconstruction of schools and ensuring the availability of basic facilities would require billions of rupees. The lives of students should not be put at peril to study in damaged classrooms as anytime the damaged rooms and walls can collapse. So no risk should be taken in this regard.

The Balochistan government, UNICEF and other non-governmental organizations on national and international levels working for the promotion of education should take notice of the situation and ensure the reconstruction of damaged schools. Then, the students should be allowed to keep continue their stalled studies.

## Gender budgeting- a tool for gender removing inequalities

Mehfooz Ali Khan



Article 25 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan says that there will be no discrimination among the citizens on the basis of sex. It means that the rights of men and women shall be equal. Gender equality is a basic fundamental right in any self-respecting society. Do ground realities substantiate this assertion? Are there even playing grounds for both genders? If not, why it is so? And how can gender mainstreaming be achieved?

Gender Sensitive, Gender Responsive and Gender Aware budgeting.

There are many policy options to reduce this imbalance but budget is important as a policy and planning instrument

for governments that can be used for reaching the goal of Gender Equality. Gender Responsive, Gender Sensitive and Gender Aware budgeting in a country, region, or a province can create enabling environment to bring equality? The fundamental objective of gender budgeting refers to refining budget and related policies with a view to promoting gender equality as an integral part of human rights. Gender budgeting makes the gender-specific effects of budgets visible and raises awareness about their frequently implicit dimensions of discrimination against women.

Gender impacts of budgets and policies.

Gender budgeting thus identifies the gender-specific implications of public finance - which is usually presented as gender-neutral - and, in particular economic policies. Gender budgeting is therefore regarded as a core strategy for raising awareness and understanding of gender issues and the gender impacts of budgets and policies. When

we talk in the context of Balochistan, the first question that strikes us that, 'Is there any study ever conducted to find out the Gender Gaps? Did we undertake any post or pre-budget assessment of the annual budget on different segments of the society, especially women, who form almost 50% (48.76%, to be specific) of our national population? In Balochistan, this ratio

is 47.47%. If our budget is not Gender Sensitive, almost half the population is left out. In our set up women empowerment starts and ends with the provision of Sewing Machines, the opening of embroidery centers, or the holding of few cultural shows. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring revenues and expenditures is required in order to promote gender equality. As mentioned above female population in Balochistan is 47.4% and their needs are completely ignored at

all levels and they are hardly involved in the budgetary process. An analysis of PSDPs since 2013-14 till 2020-21 shows that there was not a single project in the years 2013-14 1st 2014-15, as if women did not exist or they were not worthy of any consideration. Then from 2015-16 to 2019-20, there were one to three projects and the total outlay ranged from 12% to 22%. It shows how much priority that 47.49% of the population gets in the province. Although the world over women is not categorized as a vulnerable group.

In Balochistan, they are not only vulnerable but also marginalized in the real sense of the world. A UN Report on Women said that compared to men, women have 26% fewer chances of employment, and around 75% of the women labor force works in unregulated sector of the economy. Why they are consid-

ered vulnerable because they are solely dependent on male counterparts both at home as well as at the workplace. Surprisingly there are no separate Rest Rooms (Washrooms) for ladies in Secretariat and directorates. For the entire female population, there is only one female park in Smugli Road and they have no recreational facilities whatsoever.

Women development department manned by male officers

There is a women's Development Department, mostly manned by male officers and workers, who are supposed to work for the welfare of female workers. They lack the capacity to formulate and implement plans for female uplift. Conditions outside the capital city are simply deplorable. Economic Development will remain an unrealized dream unless the government takes concrete steps through gender budgeting for Gender mainstreaming and using this untapped potential.

## Drinking Water Quality Status And Its Sources Of Contamination

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 beget 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.



Water quality:

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 (GDP) 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

By Aryal khan panizai

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.

## It's come full circle

By Faizaan Qayyum

With one foot on a banana peel, we are standing at an abyss. PM Shehbaz Sharif and the PML-N face mortal political and economic challenges, and the government has shown little resolve to confront them head-on. Domestic petroleum prices are up more than 40 per cent within the last few days, and energy prices have quickly followed suit.

It is morbidly satisfying that Shehbaz Sharif and the PML-N - of motorway, flyover, and underpass fame - should face rising fuel prices in their ultimate battle for political survival. For decades, our cities have facilitated private car owners at the expense of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. The Shehbaz Sharif model of urban development, albeit with different speeds of execution, pervades other political parties and leaders as well; large-scale gray infrastructure like signal free corridors, flyovers, underpasses, and ring roads with obscene levels of service have become the norm in cities around the country. Cities, from Islamabad to Turbat, have become sprawling sites of speculatively held vacant plots in shady housing schemes.

This is our real tragedy. Our current economic crisis is our own Frankenstein's monster staring right back at us. Consider these examples: Capital Smart City Islamabad is approximately 40 kilometres from Blue Area. DHA City Karachi is over 60kms from Frere Hall. These and other projects exclusively target car owners: only the most influential five per cent of our urban population.

So what to do when the most influential people's financial and residential interests move 50kms from the city's economic hubs? Build expressways, signal-free corridors, ring roads, Lyari Expressways, and Leh Expressways to coddle them. These projects help the elite bypass the city's congestion, often by taking a longer route. Sometimes flyovers and underpasses help address particular points of congestion in the city's road network. As these projects materialize, the richest few begin to travel more and more to reach their workplaces, meet friends, or for other everyday tasks. Because there's no public transit - and whatever transit exists is class incompatible - people drive, often in their sparkling new SUVs.

The same logic has unfortunately extended to inter-city travel. We have prioritized motorways and highways over railways. Our railways network has shrunk from over 8500kms of tracks in 1950s to around 7,800kms today. This has been accompanied by a drastic drop in the railways' share of traffic: while the service carried over 86 per cent of all freight traffic in the 1950s, its current share stands at a meager 4-6 per cent. Similarly, Pakistan Railways has gone from the single largest carrier of passenger traffic in the 1970s to carrying less than 10 per cent of all passengers today.

This drastic decline is not coincidental. According to one estimate, the state spent three times as much on intercity road infrastructure than it did on railways. The uniformed state's patronage of entities has combined with private car owners' interests to completely overpower socioeconomic efficiencies associated with rail travel. All these developments are brazen examples of elite capture. Only around 10 per cent of all urban households own cars, and yet all of our cities have seen massive infrastructural investments that favour private car travel.

## What is the cost of a protest?

By Nadeem Iqbal

Never has the constitutional right of assembly ever been put to the test till now. This has now changed. While the federal government wants to curb this right in the public interest, the Punjab government supports it. The fear is that the right to protest in Islamabad may be subjected to prior official permission.

A district administration can easily manage long marches or an assembly of people, but in the case of Islamabad, the highest and all-powerful constitutional bodies like the federal cabinet, Supreme Court, and high court are also involved in allowing or banning the activity.

And instead of getting guidance from the local district administration or traffic police, the citizens of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi tend to interpret off-screen arguments among contesting powers before sending their children to school or going to work. In this process, they also try to decode the body language of the personnel of law-enforcement agencies to see how they are going to deal with aggressive protesters.

In Pakistan, the right to assembly is also interpreted as the right to protest. There are no conditions on the freedom of assembly except that it has to be within the legal parameters and

should be undertaken without violating any laws. However, different court rulings have held that the right to protest is not absolute, and peaceful protesters cannot infringe on the fundamental rights of other citizens. Public functionaries thus have to ensure that the constitutional rights of every citizen are protected.

Maintaining public order is a crucial responsibility of the state and its functionaries, but preventing a protest from turning violent remains a challenge for them. Limitations on the right to assembly are enforced by a duty magistrate who can employ remedial measures if s/he considers that the protest may pose danger to human life, health, or safety, disturb public tranquility, or turn violent. As per the law, only a government functionary can initiate legal proceedings against violators.

At present, people in Islamabad are surrounded by unending uncertainty; they are not sure whether the recently resumed long march will lead to a 'dharma' (sit-in). Protests in Islamabad are unique as people from other cities hold demonstrations; there is limited to no participation by the locals.

To counter the PTI

long march, the federal cabinet approved a Rs410 million supplementary grant for the Ministry of Interior in October. This was in addition to the more than Rs200 million already allocated in the annual budget for similar purposes. Among the 33 ministries and divisions of the federal government, the interior division is the largest administrative unit. It has 237,821 civil armed forces (CAF), which comes out to be 42 per cent of the actual working strength of 565,082.

Rumours have it that PTI workers will come for a prolonged protest, equipped with gas masks, bed sheets, blankets, towels, additional clothing, small-size tents, sling-shots, marbles, and batons. It seems the protesters are set to fight law-enforcement personnel. To deal with any untoward situations, the government has deployed at least 13,086 personnel - 4,199 Islamabad police officials, 1,022 Sindh police officers, 4,265 FC personnel, and 3,600 Rangers - in different areas of the capital. The law-enforcement agencies have been provided with 567 teargas guns with 50,050 teargas shells, 500 12-bore guns with 37,300 rounds, 2,430 masks, 335 vehicles, 17 paper ball guns, 11,000 paper balls, 10,500 spray paint, and

26 megaphones to counter any violation made by troublemakers.

A big portion of this law-and-order maintenance is running cost. For example, food charges for 15,000 officials of the capital and other district police for five days is over 41 million. The per-day rent cost of one container is Rs25,000. There are reportedly 380 containers around the city. The more the sit-in is delayed, the more costly it will become.

This taxpayers' money can be spared if protests are peaceful, but disruption of public life does cost a lot. It is tough to quantify the total loss as, in addition to government functionaries and lawmakers, the judges' time in adjudicating protest-related matters also cost the exchequer.

According to one estimate, during 2012-2018, the total economic loss to the country because of protests in Islamabad was Rs1.5 billion. In 2018, while replying to Rana Sanaullah Khan (the incumbent interior minister), the then interior minister, Brig (r) Ijaz Shah, told the National Assembly that over the last seven years, the country's economy suffered an estimated loss of over Rs1.1 billion due to sit-ins and lockdowns held in Islamabad. This included the PTI-led 126-day-long sit-in in 2014 and the Faizabad

sit-in by the TLP in 2017. Although an attempt was made to get statistics from the provincial home departments, only Punjab shared the details of the loss, which came to around Rs400 million. However, the ministry did not share its calculations.

The objective of all the protests or rallies is to make headlines and remain in the news. Therefore, spin-doctors keep generating various media-friendly events and photo ops. Recent analysis of big protests shows that the main target of protesters is to restrict the movement of around 25,000 members of the federal core bureaucracy. This includes 13,222 staff of the secretariat in different ministries and 8,253 employees of the constitutional bodies like the PM Office, Supreme Court, Election Commission, parliament, and other attached departments including the FBR and PTV. These offices are located at the main Constitution Avenue, D-Chowk, which is located on the junction of Constitution Avenue and 2km-long Blue Area, is a target area of organizing high-impact rallies. But this area has already been declared a red zone where no protest can be held. Now, the federal government has extended this restriction.

## Preparing for the grind

By Humayun Gauhar

Watching events unfold over the last few weeks has been painful, primarily because Pakistan's priorities are all wrong.

We are glued to our phones and television screens, anxiously waiting for more chaos and drama. With all these distractions like long marches, conspiracy theories, and mindless mudslinging, we are losing sight of reality. And the reality is that Pakistan is on the verge of bankruptcy, closer than it has ever been before. The education system not only lacks structure, it is completely outdated, and the water shortage is extremely alarming. While we are caught up in this political tug-of-war, Pakistan is rapidly nose-diving. Instead of focusing on the political circus, let's discuss the most pressing issue Pakistan currently faces.

The first course of action should be to stabilize the economy. Thankfully, the government slashed the subsidy on petroleum products. This is not a long-term solution, but it needed to be done in order to regain stability. While Pakistan must continue to engage with the IMF, it is also important to plead their case smartly during negotiations. One could argue that this deal fails to take context into account. With the withdrawal of

American forces from Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine which has sent the global economy into a tailspin, the IMF should seek to take context into consideration, especially for third world countries. However, one has to be realistic. The IMF will continue to be harsh on Pakistan unless we show evidence that we are working towards restructuring our economy.

In order to become a globally competitive economy, Pakistan must introduce market-orientated reforms. There is so much talk about Pakistan's weak export performance. Upon examination, it is clear that the export market is subpar due to deep structural issues. Pakistan's exports have continually fallen behind its South Asian competitors since the early 1990s. Since 1990, Bangladesh's exports have increased 6.2 times compared to Pakistan's, measured in terms of exports per capita.

To strengthen the export market, the current and future leaderships have to make unpopular decisions and stick to them. Over the years, governments have continued to dole out large export subsidies without a shred of evidence that these subsidies have helped boost exports. Going forward, governments have no choice but to bite the bullet and say no to special interests. For

example, instituting a land tax and rationalizing agriculture to create efficient farming choices can be done. However, sticking to the policy and carrying through requires courage from the government, and support from the public. To achieve long-term economic stability, Pakistan must have the will to put the interests of the people ahead of the privileged few. That means taking bold decisions, like removing land subsidies and charging for excessive water use.

We also know that the economy cannot be restructured if political instability continues. Now more than ever, principles need to be put above petty political feuds. Pakistan must take a leaf out of Bangladesh's book, as it shows that you don't need complete, but just semi political stability and continuity to achieve economic growth. For that to happen, Pakistan needs to get past the first hurdle. Political tumult and confrontation has done nothing but create hardship and upset. The people have had enough.

Pakistan needs to prepare itself for a hard grind. With the steep rise in inflation, there is bound to be more social unrest around the corner. It is highly doubtful that the politicians will tone down their rhetoric and work together.

## Usman Buzdar withdraws bail plea in assets beyond means case

LAHORE: Former Punjab chief minister Usman Buzdar on Tuesday withdrew his petition from an accountability court for interim bail in a case of assets beyond known sources of income.

The PTI leader appeared before accountability court judge Sheikh Sajjad Ahmed after his bail expired in the case. He took back the petition after an investigator of the National Accountability Court (NAB) told the court that the former chief minister was not wanted to the

NAB anymore and no arrest warrants had been issued against him.

The NAB official added that the former chief minister would be informed before his arrest. In November last, the accountability court granted interim pre-arrest bail to the former chief minister in the case initiated by the NAB against him for holding assets beyond means. The anti-graft watchdog is already investigating a case related to misuse of authority in liquor licence case against the former chief minister. He is also facing

charges of illegal promotions in the Communication and Work Department and corruption in awarding contracts for key development projects in Punjab during his tenure as CM. The PTI leader appeared before accountability court judge Sheikh Sajjad Ahmed after his bail expired in the case. He took back the petition after an investigator of the National Accountability Court (NAB) told the court that the former chief minister was not wanted to the NAB anymore. INP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Mazhilis (Lower House) of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Koshanov Yerlan Zhakanovich along with his delegation called on President Dr Arif Alvi at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Contempt of court conviction: SC gives two days time for preparation against objection

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court (SC) has given two days time to the petitioner in contempt of court conviction matter for preparation against objection raised by SC registrar.

Justice Sardar Tariq Masood took up for hearing in-chamber appeal plea Tuesday. President SC Bar and others appeared on behalf of the petitioner advocate Rana Asif.

Justice Tariq Masood remarked this is order of court for conviction. How is the appeal maintainable without surrendering. If the accused does not surrender after court's decision then how will the appeal be liable to be entertained.

The counsel for the petitioner said court's precedents are there on this point. Give time for making preparations on this point.

The court while accepting the plea of the counsel adjourned the hearing of the case till December 15.

Earlier the registrar SC raised objection on the appeal plea filed by advocate Rana Asif seeking nullification of his conviction in contempt of court case and returned the petition.

Registrar SC raised objection the petitioner should surrender him before the respective authorities then his petition can be heard.

Advocate Rana Asif filed inter court appeal against the objections by registrar SC.

It is pertinent to mention here that Justice Shahzad Ahmad of Lahore High Court had awarded three months punishment to Rana Asif advocate on the matter of contempt of court.

Rana Asif has resorted to SC against court's decision.

Justice Tariq Masood remarked this is order of court for conviction. How is the appeal maintainable without surrendering. If the accused does not surrender after court's decision then how will the appeal be liable to be entertained.

The counsel for the petitioner said court's precedents are there on this point. Give time for making preparations on this point.

The court while accepting the plea of the counsel adjourned the hearing of the case till December 15.

Earlier the registrar SC raised objection on the appeal plea filed by advocate Rana Asif seeking nullification of his conviction in contempt of court case and returned the petition. INP

## China shares green power experience with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan's energy import bill exorbitantly touched \$27 billion, prime minister Shehbaz Sharif underlined the need for exploiting indigenous resources including hydel, solar, air and coal to produce cheap electricity.

According to Gwadar Pro, he stated that a 1,320MW project was initiated by Shanghai Electric at Thar to use indigenous coal for electricity production.

"The plants have been connected to the national grid and it was the fruit of the CPEC initiative," added Khurram Dastgir Khan, Federal Minister for Power.

Pakistan is suffering the impacts of the greenhouse effect, so green power generation is the trend. PM also reveals that the incumbent government has prepared a plan to generate 10,000 megawatts of electricity through solar energy.

"We know that Pakistan is rich in solar and wind resources," said Wang Haowei from Shanghai Electric, who is the business manager of Zhang Jiakou Green Power Project.

Shanghai Electric Group has a global pres-

ence in new energy and efficient clean energy industries. Its Zhang Jiakou Green Power Project is a part of the multi-energy integration and optimization demonstration project. It covers achieved 100% green power supply for all venues of the Beijing Winter Olympics.

"The installed capacity of the project is 150 MW wind power, 30 MW photovoltaic power and 10 MW energy storage," Wang Haowei told us that the project is characterized by the complementarity of various new energy generation systems.

"The feature of wind power generation systems is that their output at night is more than that during the day, while photovoltaic power generation systems have output during the day only. The energy storage system can adjust the volatility in the power generation process of the other two systems."

"Compared with traditional thermal power generation, the project can save 1.48 million tons of standard coal and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 3.69 million tons per year," he added.

Shanghai Electric is also actively cooperating with other Belt and Road countries in power generation system construction, bringing its advanced technology and equipment to more countries. Dubai 700 CSP and 250 MW PV project in Dubai can be a good example.

"This is the largest single-site concentrated solar power plant in the world, the CSP part is 700 MW in total, consisting of 100 MW CT unit and three 200 MW PT units; Photovoltaic 250 MW, which maximizes the site application," introduced Zhao Hui, project manager of Dubai 700 CSP and 250 MW PV project.

Concentrated solar power generation works by using mirrors and heat exchangers to collect the Sun's thermal energy and provide steam, and then generate power from steam with traditional turbo-generators.

"This power generation method not only can be as clean and renewable as photovoltaic power generation, but also has the safety and stability of thermal power generation," Zhao Hui added. INP

## PM inaugurates 306 kms Sukkur-Hyderabad M-6 project in Sukkur

SUKKAR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has said the government is working to promote public-private partnership for development projects to accelerate economic growth in the country.

He was speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony of 306 kms Sukkur-Hyderabad M-6 project in Sukkur on Tuesday. The Prime Minister said M-6 motorway project will be completed in thirty months and after its completion, the connectivity of North with South to be completed.

He said this project was unnecessarily delayed by the previous government.

Shehbaz Sharif said coalition government is committed to bring development and prosperity in all deprived areas of the country including Balochistan and Sindh.

Regarding rehabilitation work for flood-affected people, the Prime Minister reiterated his resolve to utilize all available resources for this purpose. He said Gwadar Port project will also be operationalized soon as develop-

ment of country is incomplete without progress in Balochistan. He said this project was unnecessarily delayed by the previous government.

Shehbaz Sharif said coalition government is committed to bring development and prosperity in all deprived areas of the country including Balochistan and Sindh.

Regarding rehabilitation work for flood-affected people, the Prime Minister reiterated his resolve to utilize all available resources for this purpose. INP

## Blind murder case solved, three held with arms

PESHAWAR: The Matni police solved a blind murder case of a youth and arrested three accused involved in the crime and recovered weapons here on Tuesday.

A youth Muhammad Asif was killed in the agricultural lands of Sheikh Nullah some two weeks earlier and Abdullah s/o Rahat Gul had lodged a complaint with police about murder of his nephew.

SHO Matni police, Imran Uddin investigated into the blind murder through different angles using the modern scientific techniques.

People having close links with the murdered youth were also included in the investigations.

The police at last managed to trace the culprits including a secondary teacher, his two students identified as Ahsanullah s/o Sardar Sher, Umair s/o Sultan Sher and Abdul Khaliq alias Noman s/o Baz Muhammad who in preliminary investigation admitted killing Asif over property dispute. Police also recovered weapons used in murder from possession of the nabbed culprits who were being investigated. INP

## Drug smuggling bid foiled, two held

PESHAWAR: The police foiled a bid to smuggling drugs and arrested two members of an organized gang here on Tuesday.

On a tip-off regarding narcotics smuggling, SHO Nasir Bagh along with his team started snap checking at Toutano Stop in Peshawar.

During snap checking, two members of a well organized drugs trafficking gang including Hazrat Umer s/o Muhammad Ayaz and Muhammad Mehraj s/o Faqeer Muhammad were apprehended with four kilogram hashish.

Police after registering various cases against the nabbed drug traffickers started investigation. INP

## Promotion of business activities to create job opportunities in KP: Governor

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali has said that promotion of business activities in the province will create job opportunities and will support the economy.

He stated this while talking to delegations of Chambers of Commerce of Bajur, Mardan and Khyber districts who held separate meetings with him in Peshawar on Tuesday.

Haji Ghulam Ali assured the delegations that the problems of the business community will be addressed on priority basis. INP



QUETTA: Activists of Government Teacher Association hold protest outside Balochistan Assembly.

## Majority consider lending to Pakistan a great risk: President PEW

Says bankrupting the country to keep a few thousands elite happy a irrationality.

LAHORE: President Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), Dr. Murtaza Mughal has said that it is now getting difficult for Pakistan to get loans as majority of the countries consider lending it as a great risk.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, he said that it was irresponsible to bankrupt the country to keep the few thousand elites happy.

Mr. Murtaza Mughal said that for decades, expenditure has been higher than income, while adequate taxes are not being collected, which creates gaps that are being filled by loans.

He said that no political government is sure of completing its term,

therefore as soon as it gets power, instead of taking drastic measures for economic recovery, it starts pleasing financiers and voters.

Policies are changed to appease capitalists who donate heavily to political parties, SROs are released frequently, competition for investors is eliminated and packages are announced to increase their profits, the President PEW added.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the promotion of the elite makes them richer but people are deprived of quality and cheap goods.

In addition, every new government announces unnecessary subsidies to please the voters, which burdens the exchequer and now the state of the economy has become so precarious that ques-

tions are being asked about its survival.

Decades of policies revolving around the elite have bled the country white and economic managers are running from pillar to post to avoid a default.

For the sake of its vote bank, the new government does not want to collect taxes from the businessmen, nor does it want to close the shops in the evening which can save billions of dollars.

At present, the rulers are not informing the people about the real state of the economy and assurances are being extended.

Tough decisions are not being taken out of fear of annoyance of voters. If tough decisions are taken, people will be angry, but if not, there will be a default, he warned. INP

## Summary of dissolving PA handed over to PTI chief, claims Aslam Iqbal

LAHORE: Punjab Senior Minister and leader Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Aslam Iqbal has claimed that Chief Minister Pervez Elahi has handed over the summary of dissolving assembly to PTI Chief Imran Khan.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, Aslam Iqbal said that assemblies will be dissolved in December.

Earlier, Chairman PTI Imran Khan said that Punjab Assembly will be dissolved in December and members have confirmed the dissolution of provincial assembly.

PTI chief presided over a consultation meeting held in Lahore and attended by members of assembly hailing from Bhakkar, Mianwali, Pakpattan and Sahiwal. Addressing the meeting, Imran Khan announced to dissolve Punjab Assembly before December 20, sources said. INP

## Will again go to people's court if assemblies dissolved: Moonis

GURJAT: Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q leader) and former federal minister Moonis Elahi has said that if he remains in the assemblies, he will serve the people and if the assemblies are dissolved, he will again go to the people's court.

"Politics is our family mission, Muslim League is the representative party of the people. Whenever we get an opportunity, we leave no stone unturned to serve the public."

Moonis quoted experts, saying: "The country has defaulted economically and the Shabbaz government failed to fix the economy."

The PML-Q leader said, "We were with Imran Khan yesterday, we are today, and we will be in the future."

Earlier, the younger Elahi said, "There is no conflict between the PTI and PML-Q on the dissolution of the Punjab Assembly and we have conveyed this message to the PTI chairman loud and clear: the assembly will be dissolved in the blink of an eye, if he can ensure elections in Punjab soon afterwards."

Moonis, the son of Punjab CM Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, said, "The decision to dissolve the Punjab Assembly should be prudent [and take into consideration] the prevailing ground realities." He said that this apprehension had been conveyed to Imran when CM Elahi, him and Hussain Elahi called on the former at his Zaman Park residence on Dec 1. INP



BANGKOK: NDMA Chairman Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik led the delegation participated in International Panel on Disaster Risk Reduction.

## ICRC holds National Summit on Empowerment of Women

Islamabad: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Pakistan along with the National Forum of Women with Disabilities (NFWWD) on Thursday organized the "National Summit for the Empowerment of Women with Disabilities", to assess the current situation of women with disabilities in Pakistan and highlight the challenges and opportunities for their growth.

Addressing the Summit, speakers said that in Pakistan, which is ranked 147 among 188 countries in the Gender Inequality Index, women with disabilities are a largely overlooked minority. The Summit brought together over 100 participants, including

representatives from government authorities as well as humanitarian and development organizations to chart a way forward on a more disability inclusive environment in the country. "A barrier-free environment is central in assisting women with disabilities reach their full potential and achieve autonomy," said Abia Akram, CEO NFWWD. She said that this cannot be done without including the voice of these women in mainstream gender and disability decision-making processes. "Immediate realization of efforts is required for inclusion of girls and women with disabilities in all walks of life in Pakistan," said Mohammad Iqbal, the advisor on disability

inclusion at the ICRC.

He said that this includes their engagement through advocacy, capacity building programs, and creating a space for their meaningful collaboration with the government multilateral agencies. The participants emphasized upon the needs for systematic efforts for the segregation of data to design inclusive policies and service delivery based on targeted individual and environmental requirements.

They also discussed prevalent challenges, shared best practices, and made recommendations for a way forward to enable full participation of women and girls with disabilities as well as ways to combat stigma and discrimination. Online



ISLAMABAD: Additional Secretary Education Saira taking oath from Students Council of Students of FG home Economics and Management Sciences College F11 during a ceremony.

## Goldwind launches solution factory for wind turbines in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Goldwind corporation, a Beijing-based multinational wind turbine manufacturer, launched the first-of-its-kind, solution factory in Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday.

The launching took place in the presence of a wide range of energy sector representatives and energy developers.

The Solution Factory aims to develop indigenous solutions for Pakistani wind power plants. The event was attended by Sindh

Minister for Energy, Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, as well as the Chinese Economic & Commercial Counselor to Pakistan, Yang Guangyuan.

Mirza Umer, Business Development Manager of Goldwind, introduced the company's portfolio and emphasized the need for this local technical solution center to reduce extensive shipping delays and costs for wind developers.

Umer also highlighted the aim of the Solution Factory to promote

localization, technology transfer, and capacity building of employees.

Mr. Yang Jianyong, Service Director of Goldwind for the MENA region, introduced the structure of the Solution Factory which will include a repair center and a training center to provide both technology and manpower for regional wind power plants. The CEO of Tapal Wind Energy, Adnaan Tapal, praised the performance of Goldwind's turbines and service team in

Pakistan.

Mr. Ma Xiaohui and Mr. Wu from Goldwind International affirmed the commitments of Goldwind towards the community and the local market.

Chinese Economic & Commercial Counselor to Pakistan, Mr. Yang Guangyuan, reiterated China's support for Pakistan's energy transition through the Belt & Road Initiative.

The Sindh Minister for Energy, Mr. Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, appreciated Goldwind's initia-

tive to expand their services in Pakistan and reminded the audience of extensive efforts by the Sindh govt. to engage the private sector.

He mentioned that Sindh was a frontrunner when it came to renewable energy. Mr. Sheikh also foresaw the launch of more wind projects in the Jhimpir corridor shortly as well as local manufacturing of solar plates and reaffirmed the province's commitment to moving towards a renewable future. INP

# Corruption couldn't be eradicated due to weaknesses in system: CJP

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial on Tuesday remarked that the corruption in the country couldn't be eradicated, despite the court decisions, due to the weaknesses in the system. The CJP gave these remarks during the hearing of a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan challenging amendments in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Ordinance.

The CJP remarked that no efforts had been ever made to remove the weaknesses in the system. It was the responsibility of the Parliament to introduce legislation for bringing betterment in the system and ensure implementation of it, he said.

The top court CJ remarked that IGs in provinces used to be changed after every five months while SHOs of police stations used to be replaced within three months.

The CJP remarked that the apex court had decided the Pakistan Steel Mills and Reko Diq cases in the past with good intentions. The government couldn't fix corruption in the projects due to weaknesses in the system, he said.

The chief justice remarked that the businesses of many people had been destroyed due to the misuse of NAB

law in the country. However, no one should be forgiven for committing corruption.

The CJP further said that the court couldn't find the relevant law which clarifies the point that whether an incomplete assembly could introduce legislation or not. More than a half assembly had boycotted the house as a political strategy, he observed.

He said that it was a good omen that there was free media in the country which was highlighting the truth. Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan remarked that the NAB amendments had benefited only a few people.

Whether the judiciary should just see this situation as a spectator, he asked, and observed that the NAB law was approved in haste without any debate.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked that there shouldn't be corruption in the system but who would take steps to curb it.

The judiciary had to interfere when the system was being destroyed, he said, adding that country's ranking in corruption would have gone down internationally after amendments in NAB law.

The bench questioned under what law it could terminate the NAB amendments on conflicts of interest INP



SUKKUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing the groundbreaking ceremony of Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway.

## FM desires enhanced Pak, Indonesia cooperation in diverse fields

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday stressed upon enhanced bilateral economic cooperation between Pakistan and Indonesia in diverse fields.

During an interview with an Indonesian TV channel, the foreign minister opined that there existed a large scope of cooperation between Pakistan and Indonesia.

He said that they had signed a memorandum of understanding for setting up a joint ministerial commission between the two countries, adding the economic and bilateral ties between the two countries had more potential which required to be unlocked.

Bilawal said the first and the second largest Muslim countries working together on any issues had big scope.

"I believe the sky is the limit and a lot can be changed," he said, adding that they were very keen to enhance the bilateral economic cooperation and people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

FM desires enhanced Pak, Indonesia cooperation in diverse fields

The foreign minister observed that both the countries had already been cooperating at multilateral fora including OIC, ASEAN, UN, G77 and other global bodies.

To a question, the foreign minister said that Pakistan had gained experience in combating terrorism and both the countries could learn from each other's experiences.

He further mentioned that roots of hatred, division, extremism and terrorism which also gave rise to Islamophobia internationally, were the other issues over which Indonesia and Pakistan should work together.

To a query about Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Bilawal said that Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar had recently visited Afghanistan with a delegation.

She held 'productive and meaningful engagements' with the Afghan interim government authorities over a host of issues and the most important issue of terrorism.

The foreign minister reiterated that they all wanted to see a peaceful, prosperous and progressive Afghanistan.

"No one wants Afghanistan to become a hotbed or launching pad of terrorists' attacks in the region or anywhere else. We are hopeful the one-year-old Afghan interim government will not only address the issue of terrorism, but also provide security because that's a fundamental prerequisite for peace and prosperity," he added.

He said Pakistan and Afghan were neighbours and would remain as neighbours.

Foreign Minister Bilawal said it was in Pakistan's interests that there should be peace in Afghanistan. When there would be a stable country; a prosperous country, they would not have to be worried about the massive exodus of refugees, terrorism and the associated threats.

It would also create economic opportunities for the people of Pakistan as well as for the Afghans, he added INP

## PAC organizes mushaira in honor of poet Neel Ahmed

RAWALPINDI: The Punjab Arts Council (PAC) in honour of well-known poet Neel Ahmed who came from Karachi organized a mushaira here on Tuesday.

Renowned poet and fiction writer, columnist Ms. Farkhunda Shamim presided over the mushaira. Nasir Ali Nasir performed the duties of host in the ceremony.

In here presidential speech, Ms. Farkhunda Shamim said that the establishment of the Punjab Tea House by Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed is a unique gift to poets. The Punjab Tea House will be a new chapter in the promotion of literature. In the end Ms. Farkhunda Shamim congratulated Waqar Ahmed Sahib, Anjum Salimi Sahib and Nasir Ali Nasir for completing 260 seats and showered them with lots of love and prayers.

Abdul Qadir Taban, Anjum Salimi, Zafar Iqbal Shaheen, Imran Aami, Aqeel Shah, Javed Jadoon, Zeeshan Haider, Ali Babar, Hasan Farooq, Zeeshan Murtaza, Atiq Ahmed, Intizar Syed, Muhammad Umar Khan, Allah Razi Rajput, Junaid Rajput and Nasir Ali Nasir presented their kalam and gets appreciation from the audience INP

## Several Sindh districts face hours-long power shutdown

JAMSHORO: Several districts in Sindh face power shutdown due to some technical fault in the Jamshoro power plant.

According to details, Electricity supply to Hyderabad, Tando Jam, Jamshoro, Tando Allahyar, Mirpurkhas, Badin, and Tando Muhammad Khan has been suspended after the 500KV Jamshoro power plant developed a technical error.

The Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) spokesperson while responding to the power blackout said that the power would be restored in a while. A 500KV transformer has tripped due to a technical fault in Jamshoro Grid Station, some grid stations and districts may face power outages for a while, he added. The National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) teams are working to resolve the technical problems INP

## Sulman Shehbaz gets protective bail in money laundering case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday granted 14-day protective bail to Sulman Shehbaz, the son of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in the money laundering case.

The case was heard by Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court Justice Aamer Farooq, Sulman Shehbaz appeared before the court along with his lawyers for bail. Talking to newsmen outside the IHC, the son of PM Shehbaz Sharif alleged that former prime minister Imran Khan's govt politically victimized him and his family. Sulman Shehbaz surrendered before the high court after he returned to Pakistan on Dec 11 after four-year of exile in London. Earlier this week, he barred the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and NAB from arresting him in the case, while hearing his petition for protective bail. It is worth mentioning here that

the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had written a letter to the UK government to hand over Sulman, who was wanted by the accountability watchdog under money laundering charges and the Telegraphic Transfer scandal. An accountability court in 2019 also issued non-bailable warrants for the arrest of Sulman Shehbaz in a money laundering case. Talking to newsmen outside the IHC, the son of PM Shehbaz Sharif alleged that former prime minister Imran Khan's govt politically victimized him and his family. Sulman Shehbaz surrendered before the high court after he returned to Pakistan on Dec 11 after four-year of exile in London. Earlier this week, he barred the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and NAB from arresting him in the case, while hearing his petition for protective bail INP



ISLAMABAD: Students of FG Home Economics and Management Sciences College FII pose for group photo after taking oath during ceremony of Students Council.

## Not only Imran Khan but we all are responsible for devastation of national economy: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister (PM) Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said not only Imran Khan but we all are responsible for the devastation of national economy.

"holding Imran Khan or some one else responsible for destruction of national economy is not correct. If national economy is fragile then we all are responsible for it, he said this while talking to a private TV channel here Tuesday.

He went on to say Imran Khan is incompetent. Baseless case was registered against Rana Sana Ullah. The court acquitted Rana Sana Ullah. Abandoning the national economy. He held that the steps were being taken to improve the national economy. We are facing multiple challenges including economy.

He stated Pakistan is not default technically. Economic matters have to be managed. Difficult decisions will have to be made in this respect.

Talking of Sulman Shahbaz he said Sulman Shahbaz is not in the politics. NAB had registered false case against him. Sulman Shahbaz went to UK during Imran Khan tenure. The erstwhile government should apologize. It should be admitted that they were misled. Online

## There is no need of election, country needs stability, not election: Khawja Saad Rafiq

LAHORE: Railway minister Khawja Saad Rafiq has said there is no need of election and the country needs stability not election.

"There is no need of election. Is making and dissolving assemblies a play. Dragging the army into the politics every time is not a good thing. Assemblies will not be dissolved, he said this while talking to media men outside the Accountability Court (AC) Lahore Tuesday.

He held the situation is different at present. No one is with Imran Khan now.

Federal minister said there is no need of election in the country at present. If something is needed, it is stability.

Money is needed for holding election, he held.

Addressing Imran Khan he said work on welfare oriented projects where there are your governments.

He remarked country was saved from becoming default. The institutions were devastated. Government has no money. We are trying to extinguish the fire in these 8 months.

Regarding NAB he said to his view NAB should be abolished and new institution of accountability should be formed. The sitting chairman is honest person.

He remarked Moonis Elahi is not my subject. Those who sided remain no more now. Nothing has not been done with Imran Khan so far and he is screaming. His long march has landed in nullah Leh.

He held the cases were registered against us in ridiculous way. It was very clear that cases were registered on the basis of political rivalry.

He remarked country was saved from becoming default. The institutions were devastated. Government has no money. We are trying to extinguish the fire in these 8 months.

Regarding NAB he said to his view NAB should be abolished and new institution of accountability should be formed INP

## SECP registers seven new Private Funds in 2022

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has registered seven (7) new private funds under the Private Funds Regulations during the calendar year 2022.

Given that the Private Funds industry for past many years had only five funds, the registrations of two Venture Capital (VC) funds, four Private Equity and Venture Capital (PE&VC) funds and the country's first alternative fund is a significant development. Incentivized by the consistent reform measures, a sharp growth has been witnessed during the past three years in the number of PFMCs from four to ten, leading to an increase in the number of players in the SECP regulated PF industry.

The new funds, worth approximately Rs. 13.6 billion are expected to be launched within the financial year ending June 30, 2023. Following the launch of these funds, the cumulative asset size of PF sector is expected to increase to PKR25.8 billion, from PKR12.287 billion as on September 30, 2022, indicating a growth of 110 percent.

The SECP conducted a 'Diagnostic Review of Pakistan's Private Funds Industry' and recommended measures to revitalize the sector. The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on the recommendation of SECP exempted the income of PE&VC funds from tax. In addition, the SBP has issued a clarification regarding its Prudential Regulations for Corporate/Commercial Banking for explicitly allowing banks to participate in PF units.

The SECP has also allowed insurance unit linked funds and equity sub-funds of pension funds to invest up to 5% of net assets in PF units. The implementation of several key recommendations of diagnostic study has led to record growth in new PF registrations and is expected to direct private capital to the sector.

The PF industry has potential to contribute significantly in energizing economic activity through providing non-traditional funding sources and managerial expertise to start-ups, SMEs, and financially troubled listed entities, generating jobs and increasing government revenues. The SECP is actively working to implement remaining diagnostic review recommendations to further rejuvenate the PF industry in Pakistan INP

## Persistent decrease in remittances alarming: President UBG

KARACHI: The President of United Business Group (UBG), the strongest representative organization of Pakistan's business community, Zubair Tufail while commenting on the current economic situation said that the country's economic, financial and financial crisis has scared everyone in the country.

He said that the manufacturing sector is facing difficulties in continuing the production process in the extremely unfavorable conditions and the current weakest economic scenario, the decrease in foreign exchange reserves is making it more difficult for Pakistan to pay its foreign debts. It is becoming more difficult to get dollars for imports, due to the impact of industrial processes, exports have also suffered. In these situations, the government should sit down with the stakeholders and make some viable policies so that the country's economy can stand on its strong feet in the future, he added.

Talking to UBG Karachi Region officials, Zubair Tufail said that the major source of dollar inflow from foreign countries is overseas Pakistanis who are strengthening the treasury by sending remittances every month but month by month. Decrease in remittances what is worrying is that in October 2022, 2 billion 2160 million dollars were sent by Pakistanis from foreign countries, which was 2210 million dollars less than in September 2022. There has also been a decrease in remittances.

The UBG President said that all the governments in Pakistan have burdened the country with loans from international financial institutions and friendly countries, on the country's ability to pay huge foreign debts. The concern expressed to some extent is correct and the ever-increasing concerns are creating frustration among exporters, importers INP

## FSC holds state responsible to protect rights of transgender children

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Shariat Court (FSC) on Tuesday held the state responsible to protect the rights of transgender children.

A full bench of the Federal Shariat Court comprising Honourable Chief Justice Dr Syed Muhammad Anwar and Justice Khadim Hussain Shaikh heard the petition regarding Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018.

Representatives from transgender community also attended the hearing. During the course of hearing a person from khawaja sira community showed concerns over worse situation of the community.

Justice Syed Muhammad Anwar inquired regarding the same from the representatives of Ministry of Human Rights, however, they could not provide a plausible explanation. He expressed his concern over the matter and was dissatisfied with their explanation.

He held that unfortunately, these children have abandoned by their own families, as a result whereof they are abused by the criminals and fall prey to pedophiles and other predators in our society, which is a scar on the face of this society. Similarly, the lives of same category of persons become more miserable as they turn old.

The FSC Chief Justice further remarked that Section 6(a) of the impugned Law bounds the Government and Ministry of Human Rights to ensure the rescue, protection and rehabilitation of transgender persons in addition to providing medical facilities, psychological care, counseling, etc.

The Hon'ble Bench further said that Allah Almighty has bestowed dignity on every human being and this is our believe as stated in the Holy Quran, even it has also been enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 INP

## LHC summons police chief in illegal detention case

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday summoned the city police chief in the case of illegal detention of three persons by police.

Earlier, a court bailiff recovered a father and his two sons from illegal custody of police and produced them before the court.

The high court bench issued contempt notices to Manawan and Batapur police stations officials over misstatement before the court.

The bench also summoned the CCPO Lahore in person in the next hearing of the case.

"It has become of Police to subject the citizens to excesses, while caring least about the fundamental human rights, their privacy and honour," court observed.

"Police don't hesitate or fear to speak false before courts. Such policemen have no right to remain

in the department," the judge said.

"If the excess proved these policemen will not be allowed to remain in the police job," court said. Earlier, it was pleaded to the court that the police conducted raid at home, arrested the father and his two sons and kept them in illegal detention.

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The high court bench issued contempt notices to Manawan and Batapur police stations officials over misstatement before the court. The bench also summoned the CCPO Lahore in person in the next hearing of the case.

"It has become of Police to subject the citizens to excesses, while caring least about the fundamental human rights, their privacy and honour," court observed INP

## Crackdown against smoke emitting vehicles continues

LAHORE: The City Traffic Police (CTP) continued its crackdown against without fitness certificate and smoke emitting vehicles in the provincial capital.

The CTP officials took action against heavy vehicles without fitness certificates and emitting smoke, said Chief Traffic Officer Dr Asad Malhi.

During one month, action was taken against 2,749 vehicles on above mentioned violations, he said and added that this year, tickets were issued to 57,000 vehicles for emitting smoke.

The CTO said that 10 CTP teams continued the crackdown at the entrance and exit points of the city, adding that action was also being taken against vehicles with mud and sand without tarpaulin.

Dr. Asad Malhi's said that traffic officials had been directed to further speed up action against

smoke-emitting vehicles while fines of Rs 2,000 each were being imposed on smoke-emitting vehicles.

The CTO said that harmful smoke from commercial and heavy vehicles was causing smog so it was needed to take precautionary measures for dealing with environmental pollution and dangerous effects of smog.

Dr Asad said that due to environmental pollution and smog, people could face breathing problems, nose and throat diseases, adding that a climate free from air pollution could help maintaining healthy society.



SUKKUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offering dua fater unveils the plaque of groundbreaking of Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway.