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Islamabad court sends Fawad on 14-day judicial remand



PM vows to implement NAP with 'full force' following Peshawar carnage

Peshawar bleeds: Suicide bombing claims 59 lives, 157 injured

News Desk

Twin suicide bombings claimed 59 lives at the Police Lines Peshawar on Monday. Police sources said two suicide bombers blew themselves up inside a mosque in the police line. The attack left 150 injured. The injured were rushed to Lady Reading's Hospital for medical treatment.

An emergency was imposed in the hospital

An emergency was imposed in the hospital to provide medical treatment to the injured by the blasts that rocked the Peshawar police lines area. Speaking to the media, Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar Muhammad Ijaz Khan said that the roof of the mosque collapsed after the blast. "A number of jawans are still stuck under the rubble and rescuers are trying to pull them out."

"The smell of explosives has been detected but it is too early to say anything substantial," he said.

Khan said between 300 to 400 police officials were present in the area at the time of the blast. "It is apparent that a security lapse occurred," the CCPO told the media. He added that the bodies and injured persons have been moved to the LRH. added Security sources said that a suicide bomber present in



first row of the Police Lines Mosque in Peshawar blew himself as soon as the prayers started.

It was learnt that more than 250 people were present in the mosque to offer 'Zohar' prayers when the blast took place

As a result of explosion, the front portion of the mosque caved in killing several and leaving dozens others injured.

Rescue teams rushed the scene soon after getting the information and started rescue activities.

Most of the bodies and injured were shifted to Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar.

Several among the wounded people succumbed to their wounds in hospital taking death toll to 34. As many as 161 people were stated to be under treatment at hospitals of which 34 were stated to be in critical condition and it was feared that death toll could rise further.

Following the bombing, the provincial health department declared an emergency in district Peshawar and asked all medical personnel to remain on duty. Law enforcement agencies cordoned off the attack site and started an initial investigation. ssss

Passengers bus tragedy: FIR registered against bus owners

From Our Correspondent

Police registered a first information report (FIR) against the owners of the passengers bus, which fell into a ravine and claimed 41



lives in Balochistan's Lasbela district.

The case was lodged on behalf of police against the two bus owners.

Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo had taken a notice of the incident and directed the police to lodge a case against the bus company owners for their negligence. The driver of the bus Saleem Shah also died in the deadly accident.

Initial investigation suggests that the driver of the bus lost the control and the bus fell into a ravine near Bela area of Lasbela district.

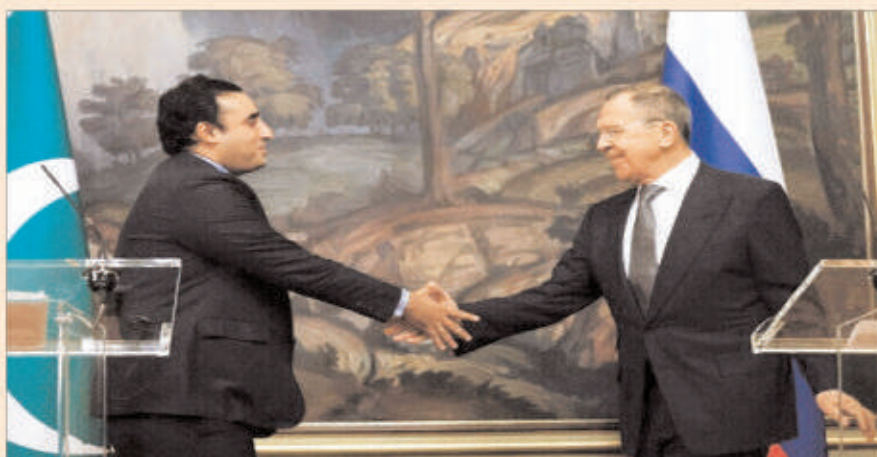
"Government has taken a notice and this incident would be properly probed", Chief Secretary Balochistan Aziz Uqaili said.

Bilawal urges 'diplomatic resolution' to Ukraine war in meeting with Russian counterpart

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday urged a diplomatic resolution to the Ukraine conflict, highlighting the consequential "economic impact" Pakistan and other developing countries were facing due to the ongoing war.

Foreign ministers discuss relations and "issues of mutual interest".

He was addressing a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov during his visit to Moscow. Bilawal reached Russia over the weekend for a two-day official visit. "We have a firm belief that all conflicts can be resolved peacefully and



there are no obstacles which diplomacy cannot surmount. Ukraine conflict is no exception. Developing countries like Pakistan are facing negative conse-

quences of the conflict in terms of economic impact," the foreign minister said.

Cooperation between two to continue in various fields: Russian FM

Bilawal expressed hope that the "strong tradition of diplomacy of Russia would help achieve the peaceful resolution of the conflict".

He said Pakistan considered Russia an important player in West, South, and Central Asia, adding that the country would keep up high-level contact with the Russian Federation.

Apprising media of the meeting, FM Bilawal said their "friendly" and

"detailed" discussion encompassed all aspects of bilateral relations and regional matters.

He shed light on how both countries were celebrating the 75th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations and that Pakistan desired to strengthen its cooperation with Russia in the fields of trade, security, defence, counter-terrorism, education, and people-to-people contacts. Bilawal spoke about the summit-level meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Samarkand as well as the 8th Inter-Government Commission held in Islamabad which focused on trade, economy, and energy cooperation. "We also discussed bilateral cooperation at multilateral fora including the United Nations and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)," he said. "Pakistan and Russia had good cooperation on Afghanistan and wanted to achieve common Web Desk

PPP serves legal notice to Imran over 'fabricated, scandalous' murder allegation against Zardari

The PPP on Monday served a legal notice on PTI Chairman Imran Khan and demanded an "unconditional apology" for "fabricated and scandalous remarks" allegation that PPP co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari was plotting his murder.

Last week, former prime minister Imran Khan, who is recovering at his Lahore residence following a gun attack on him near Wazirabad last year, had accused Zardari of being part of a conspiracy to "get rid of him".

He had alleged that after "two" failed attempts on his life, the four people — who he has previously claimed to have hatched a conspiracy to kill him — along with the PPP leader, have now prepared a "Plan C" to eliminate him.

The legal notice — a copy of which is available with Dawn.com — referred to Imran's Jan 27 video



address to party representatives wherein, according to the notice, he reportedly said: "Asif Zardari has paid his corruption money to a terrorist organisation being supported by facilitators of a powerful state agency to launch another attack on me."

It said the "baseless accusations of malicious and defamatory nature you have tried to defame our client nationally as well as internationally."

Moreover, it added, that "through your defamatory, libelous, scan-

dalous remarks and allegations of serious nature you have tried to create a link between our client and terrorist organisations blindly disregarding the fact that our client and his party has remained the victim of terrorism".

The notice, served through the PPP's legal counsel Farooq H. Naek, said former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, the wife of the complainant, was also assassinated by terrorists. "Furthermore in your statements you have stated that our client, through corruption money, is hatching a fresh plan to allegedly assassinate you despite the fact that our client has languished in prison for almost eight years in false, fabricated, trumped up and concocted cases including corruption cases and not one of which was proved against him and he was acquitted in all those cases honorably," the notice reads. Web Desk

PM vows to implement NAP with 'full force' following Peshawar carnage

Following the suicide attack in Peshawar, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he would ensure that "the National Action Plan (NAP) is implemented in full force" and with complete comprehensiveness. PM Sharif visited the Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) Monday evening to inquire about the injured in the deadly blast that took place at the mosque of Malik Saad Shaheed Police Lines during Zuhr prayers which also claimed at least 59 lives. The premier was



received by Army Chief General Asim Munir and then took rounds of different wards and met the injured. PM Shehbaz directed the hospital administration to provide the best medical facilities to all the injured. He was accompanied by Minister for Defence Khwaja

Muhammad Asif, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb.

A representative of the Lady Reading Hospital, where 157 injured people were brought after the attack, said the death toll in the explosion has reached 59.

In Peshawar, the Corps Commander Peshawar briefed the PM on the factors and motivations behind the rise in terrorism in Peshawar. The premier was shown the CCTV footage. Web Desk

Islamabad court sends Fawad on 14-day judicial remand

An Islamabad district and sessions court on Monday sent PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry on a 14-day judicial remand in a case over alleged incitement of violence against a constitutional institution — the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The former federal minister was taken into custody on January 25 after a first information report (FIR) against him was registered at Islamabad's Kohsar police station on a complaint by ECP Secretary Umar Hameed for allegedly threatening the ECP members and their families in a speech.

Fawad was produced in the court today upon expiry of a second two-day physical remand given to the police.

Following the hearing today, Judicial Magistrate Waqas Ahmed Raja sent Fawad to jail on a judicial remand, rejecting the prosecution's plea of extending his physical remand for a third time.

Faisal Chaudhry, Advocate Babar Awan, and Ali Bukhari were present in the courtroom as Fawad's legal counsels. ECP's lawyer Saad Hassan, State Prosecutor Adnan Ali, Investigation Officer (IO) Muhammad Ali and PTI leader Ali Nawaz were also in attendance.

Fawad was brought to the courtroom later in the afternoon after the case's hearing had been postponed till 3pm as the police cited road blockages in the capital as the reason for failing to present the PTI leader at 11:30am as originally scheduled.

While the state prosecutor asked for the extension of the PTI leader's physical remand — saying it still needed to obtain Fawad's "cell phone, laptop and other devices" — the ECP lawyer did not ask for the same.



When the hearing resumed at 3pm, the judge asked the state prosecutor to produce Fawad as per the time decided. Upon the lapse of the said time, Awan said a contempt case was warranted for failure to oblige with the decision.

The judge warned the state prosecutor of issuing a notice to the senior superintendent of police and the inspector general if the delay continued. Shortly after, the police reached court along with Fawad, upon which Faisal requested to have his client's handcuffs taken off, and the court accepted the plea.

At one point, Adnan requested the court to extend Fawad's physical remand. Upon this, the judge asked Adnan about the "importance of conducting a photogrammetric test" in the present case.

The prosecutor responded, "The purpose of a photogrammetric test is to identify one's actual personality." He further said he still required access to Fawad's electronic gadgets.

However, Hassan — the ECP lawyer — did not request an extension in the physical remand. He clarified, "We only had to conduct Fawad Chaudhry's photogrammetric test, which has been performed."

Meanwhile, Awan, while presenting his arguments on Fawad's behalf, said, "The prosecution has made a joke out of Fawad Chaudhry's case. Fawad is still standing by his statement."

Addressing the prosecution, he said, "I don't know who the prosecution wants to please. I don't know which laptop the prosecution wants to obtain." Web Desk

QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

Balochistan needs inclusive development

Balochistan, the country's resource-rich province is lagging behind all other provinces in terms of key social indicators including education, health, sanitation, clean drinking water etc. Mismanagement, injudicious distribution of development funds coupled with a lack of political commitments are the underlying reasons behind backwardness of the province.

Track record shows, successive governments have always launched politically motivated development schemes to please their influential supporters. Constituency, individual and political schemes always dominated the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) in every year's financial budget. Nexus among the Chief Minister's Secretariat, the Planning Development and Finance Department continue to deprive the constituencies of other lawmakers.

Opposition's constituencies were ignored. Opposition lawmakers constituencies remained ignored during last three-years of former chief minister, Jam Kamal Khan's government. Despite agitation in and outside the assembly, the opposition lawmakers were not able to force government to allocate funds for their constituencies.

This is irony of fate that the mandate of the lawmakers is to frame laws since the assemblies are called legislative assemblies. But legislators are least bothered about the legislation rather they take keen interest in construction of roads, buildings etc. That's why, provincial governments prefer not to hold local bodies elections rather decentralization of development projects.

Development deficit of Balochistan is likely to be Rs. 100b. Balochistan government announced to have allocated Rs. 172 bs for the PSDP during the financial year 2021-22. However, currently the government has more than Rs. 40bs as per the statement of ruling party's Spokesman Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetrat. The province has already spent Rs. 40bs and it has more than 40bs for the remaining year. It means the deficit is close to Rs. 100bs.

Chief Minister Qudus Bizenjo needs to put his house in order and introduce a strict financial policy to ensure completion of development projects. The government should ensure inclusive development and end the practice of exclusive development so that this backward province could come at par with other parts of the country. Action should match words now.

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 Responsive, Gender Sensitive 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. But the treatment they get in Pakistan, especially 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.

Another constitutional farce?

By Salman Akram

If those who claim direct access to the powers that be are to be believed, the country is set for another bout of 'wise men' deciding that the constitution of the country stands in the way of what they see as the national interest.

Several chiryas are circling about the plan to get the courts to suspend the constitutional requirement to hold elections within 90 days of the dissolution of an assembly. The caretaker setups in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are to continue, so they say, with the electorate denied its constitutional right to elect a representative government. An economic mess is to be turned into a constitutional farce. Yet again.

This is a loop we have been through several times. Each generation seems to throw up a bunch of powerful individuals, and sundry cheerleaders, with several lawyers, economists and journalists at the forefront, convinced - without evidence - of their wisdom and ability to steer the nation to glory only if they were to be freed of legal and constitutional restraints. While glory has remained elusive, what we have is an abandoned people whose voice was muffled through the decades but never entirely silenced.

Why the courts have colluded remains a mystery to this writer. At what point in life and at what station is the desire for 'advancement' satiated and fear of the unknown

overcome? Former CJ Nasim Hasan Shah's memoirs provide evidence of a hovering fear during the Bhutto Case that resulted in the deposed prime minister's execution by judicial verdict, but no elaboration.

As the Asghar Khan case ended in the Supreme Court in 2012, sixteen hesitant years after it was filed by my client the air marshal, the court admonished former COAS Aslam Beg and former DG ISI Asad Durrani for having violated their solemn oaths not to interfere in the political process and of having impeded the working of the constitution by acting to create a favoured and backed group of political hopefuls in the general elections of 1990.

During the hearing I was asked by the chief justice to read out aloud an affidavit filed by a retired brigadier who had served in the MI in 1990 and had distributed funds at the behest of General Durrani. The affidavit, consistent with the averments made earlier by General Durrani, declared that it was his view and of those higher than him that Benazir Bhutto had become a national security threat and her re-election could not be allowed. Hence the operation to plunder a nationalized bank in order to distribute funds to create a political bloc against the Mohtarma. As the court rose, one of the disgraced men mumbled under his breath, within my ear shot, 'I would do it again a hundred times.'

More than a decade later, the judgment in the Asghar Khan Case remains an impotent relic. Pleas that action be taken against the delinquents in accordance with the judgment of the highest court of the land remain unheard. Impunity has bred inevitable contempt for the constitutional process.

In his assiduously researched book 'The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy', Allen McGrath recreates the scene that accompanied the dissolution of the first Constituent Assembly on October 24, 1954 - three days before the finally agreed upon text of the Constitution that was drafted over seven tortuous years was to be tabled and approved. The high command had gathered around the ailing and nearly incapacitated governor general Ghulam Muhammad. The hapless prime minister Bogra was summoned to the governor general's residence. He was told of the fate of the assembly and ordered to carry on as the prime minister till further orders.

The next morning the liberal commentariat was cheerful. The Pakistan Times, then supposedly the last refuge of the left liberals, heralded with satisfaction the new order. Soon the One Unit was created through an order of the governor general. The eviceration of provincial identities in West Pakistan to 'balance' the numerical superiority of East Pakistan

was embraced by most as an act of stunning constitutional brilliance. Even the East Pakistani icon Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, who was to soon become yet another puppet prime minister, did not demur. Meanwhile, the Baloch leadership more than protested. An insurgency was kindled in unseen hills far from the centres of power.

Molvi Tamizuddin, the speaker of the demised assembly, was pretty much on his own when he approached the Sindh High Court to lodge his petition. The West Pakistani political and intellectual elite was firmly aligned behind the new 'ground reality'. Molvi Tamizuddin's counsel, the tireless English advocate of lost causes Pitt, who had represented Mandela, had to enter the country in disguise in order to avoid orders for his deportation on arrival. Molvi Tamizuddin's short-lived victory before the high court bench headed by CJ Constantine was to become merely the contextual backdrop to the now lamented - then hailed - judgment of the federal court headed by CJ Munir, Cornelius J dissenting, that stamped judicial approval over what was wrought in a murky room.

In the decade that followed, with a martial law approved by the Supreme Court as a successful revolution, much constitutional tinkering was done. The 1962 constitution given by the martial law

administrator to his subjects was originally without a fundamental rights chapter and denied universal adult suffrage. The people at large could not be trusted. The leading legal minds of the day who were the hired scribes of the text, some of our most venerated names, wrote articles saying that Islam did not recognize fundamental rights. The poet Jalib gave voice to the people's muffled disgust. Even the general had to buckle and fundamental rights were added at least to the text of the constitution. The lesson that should have been learnt was not: no general is omnipotent.

In his memoirs of a 'remarkable and long life' Between Dreams and Realities, Sartaj Aziz Sahib recalls the enthusiasm in the planning division in Islamabad where he worked as part of a team of world class economists led by Dr Mahbubul Haq through the Ayub era's Decade of Development. They thought they were putting Pakistan on the path of sustained development. It is clear that the constitutional farce played on the people and Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah was of no concern to the technocrats hard at work in their silo. Sartaj Sahib writes that when it all blew up in their faces, as the muffled voices became louder all across the two wings of the country, they were rather taken aback. Little had they realized that the country was heading towards.

A focal point

By John P Ruehl

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has sought to prove that Ukrainian forces still have the capability to hold back the Russian advance, and made a surprise visit to Bakhmut on December 20. On January 9, 2023, Zelenskyy declared that the defense of the nearby city of Soledar had led to the gain of "additional time and power for Ukraine." But the Ukrainian armed forces have had to divert "significant reinforcements" to the battle from other parts of the country since January, according to Britain's Ministry of Defense. And despite heavy Russian casualties, high Ukrainian casualties have also become a concern for Kyiv. Western and Ukrainian officials have often downplayed the strategic importance of Bakhmut, depicting it as a sinkhole for Russian forces that may result in a "Pyrrhic victory." Nonetheless, the phrase "hold Bakhmut" has become a Ukrainian rallying cry, and Zelenskyy's visit demonstrated the growing symbolic importance of controlling the city.

Bakhmut, however, does possess some strategic value. Few major settlements exist to its west until the Dnieper River, and the flatter and open terrain would make Ukrainian attempts to reinforce from this direction vulnerable to Russian surveillance and firepower. Ukraine also has relatively poor road infrastructure, and Bakhmut serves as a critical juncture of transport and communication lines for Ukrainian forces in the region, including strategic supply lines to the Ukrainian-controlled settlements of Siversk, Lyman, Sloviansk, and Kramatorsk. For Russia, seizing Bakhmut would allow it to disrupt these supply lines, as well as take pressure off the battle over Russia-controlled Kremmina, which Ukrainian forces have been fighting to recover. Bakhmut is therefore key to Russian attempts to consolidate and stabilize the Donbas, where Russia has fought since 2014 and initially made gains in 2022, before the Ukrainian counteroffensive in September. Taking or destroying key industrial centers in the Donbas region will also reduce Ukraine's industrial output, leading to its economy suffering further. Bakhmut stands out as the only major area where Russian forces are on the offensive, but the frontline has been relatively stable up until recently. Yet throughout January 2023, Russian forces have moved to the city's flank and made increasing gains in the nearby town of Soledar. After weeks of fighting, the Kremlin stated that Soledar had been captured on January 13, this

was later confirmed by the Institute for the Study of War and Ukrainian armed forces. Russian forces have enjoyed an advantage over Ukrainian forces in artillery numbers, and an early transition to a wartime economy by the Kremlin has further helped sustain months of relentless artillery strikes by it. Nonetheless, Russia has turned to countries like North Korea in recent months to obtain more artillery, and its artillery fire has decreased in recent days, according to US and Ukrainian officials.

But Ukraine's more limited artillery capabilities have also recently been threatened. Despite pleas for more 155-millimeter artillery rounds, Western manufacturers have struggled to supply an adequate quantity and ramp up production. This has forced the US to ask South Korea for artillery and Washington also secured hundreds of thousands of 155mm artillery shells for Ukraine from its stockpiles in Israel. Meanwhile, according to US defense officials, "A third of the roughly 350 Western-made howitzers donated to Kyiv are out of action at any given time." Western countries have now been focusing on delivering more advanced weapons to Ukraine, such as missile defense systems, tanks, and armored vehicles. Recent pledges by the UK and Canada to supply Ukraine.

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 new clients offering 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 cut 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 push-back from environmentalists. Germany can also increase its future capacity to supply energy simply by extending the lifespan of its nuclear power plants that are meant to come offline at the end of the year. The governing coalition said it is now considering this option, but the Greens - including Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock - continue to resist the move. The party's stance on this issue is somewhat understandable - after all, Germany's Green Party was in large part borne out of Germany's Cold War-era anti-nuclear movement. Nevertheless, by blocking a relatively straightforward and low-risk solution to a major problem facing the nation, it risks failing the test of being a responsible government partner at a time of war, less than a year after its best-ever election result. Beyond increasing their own production capacity by any means possible, European nations should of course also work on forming new

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

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

Inequality and hunger

By Chuck Collins

Beginning on May 24, the World Economic Forum is gathering in Davos, Switzerland for an in-person meeting, discussing the global tax system and financial inclusion. Thanks to protests and new research, however, participants will not be able to avoid the elephant in the room: the surging inequality of wealth during the pandemic. As the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and Inequality.org have documented over the last two years of a global pandemic, billionaire assets have surged while millions lost their lives and livelihoods. A new report from Oxfam dramatizes how hundreds of millions of people around the world have slid further into poverty during this time period. In a detailed examination of the food and agriculture industry, Oxfam found that billionaires in that industry saw their wealth increase by \$382 billion during the pandemic. An emergency windfall tax on their wealth increase alone (to say nothing of their pre-pandemic billions) could end world hunger and double the incomes of 545 million small-scale farmers.

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

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

A group of over 150 millionaires released a strong statement calling on Davos attendees to face the dangers of runaway wealth inequality and speak out in favor of national efforts to levy progressive income and wealth taxes on the ultra-wealthy. "The truth is that 'Davos' doesn't deserve the world's trust right now," the statement reads. "For all the countless hours spent talking about making the world a better place, the conference has produced little tangible value amidst a torrent of self-congratulations." "Until participants acknowledge the simple, effective solution staring them in the face - taxing the rich - the people of the world will continue to see their so-called dedication to fixing the world's problems as little more than a performance."

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.

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.

Chairman and members of Senate condemn Peshawar suicide attack

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and other members of the Upper House have strongly condemned the suicide attack in Peshawar police lines mosque.

In a joint condemnation statement on Monday they prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs and for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The Chairman and other Senators said that

the terrorists will never succeed in their nefarious designs. The determination of government, security agencies, people and Parliament against terrorism is unwavering. Such barbaric terrorist attacks cannot shake our resolve for a peaceful Pakistan.

They said that terrorists were trying to sabotage the development process in Pakistan through these sabotage activities, but Pakistani Nation was determined to root out this scourge of

terrorism. Deputy Chairman of Senate, Senator Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Leader of the House in Senate, Senator Ishaq Dar and Leader of the Opposition in Senate, Senator Dr. Shahzad Waseem strongly condemned the blast in Police Lines mosque, Peshawar and said that the terrorists will not succeed in their evil objectives. They said that entire nation was united against terrorism. INP



ALGIERS: Pakistani delegation led by Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Akram Durrani in group photo with Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council of Qatar Dr Hamda Bint Hassan Al Sulaiti on the side line of 17th session of (PUIC) in Algeria.

Sheikh Rashid's Lal Haveli sealed by ETPB

RAWALPINDI: The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Monday sealed Lal Haveli, the residence of Awami Muslim League head Sheikh Rashid.

According to the ETPB sources, six units of Lal Haveli had been sealed.

The ETPB also wrote to the authorities concerned for the confirmation of the registry of one of the units of Lal Haveli.

The decision of sealing or not sealing the unit will be made upon the confirmation of the registry by the authorities concerned.

"The state land had been under occupation for a long time," the ETPB authorities said.

A heavy contingent of Rawalpindi police had been deployed while the building was being sealed.

On Saturday last, a civil court in Rawalpindi had rejected Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid's petition challenging the Lal Haveli's evacuation orders.

Judge Naveed Akhtar had said that the court could not stop any department from taking action under the law.

The AML chief had argued in his petition that the evacuation of Lal Haveli was political victimisation as the case related to the property was already in litigation.

Sheikh Rashid prayed in his plea that the Evacuee Trust Property Board be stopped from taking action that, he alleged, was a part of "settling the score against him".

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authorities concerned. "The state land had been under occupation for a long time," the ETPB authorities said.

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Pakistan, Russia vow to intensify multi-directional relations

ISLAMABAD / MOSCOW: Pakistani and Russian Foreign Ministers had a joint press talk in Moscow on Monday, in which the two top diplomats vowed to intensify bilateral cooperation in areas of trade, economy, security, counter-terrorism, defence, as well as cultural, educational and people to people contacts.

Pakistan's foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari - who is on an official tour of Russia said in the joint presser that strengthening relations with Russia remains an important priority for Pakistan. He said we believe that Pak-Russia relations not

only serve our national interests, but also contribute to regional, global stability and security.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister said Pakistan views Russia as an important player in the West-South and Central Asia. He said Pakistan and Russia have good cooperation on Afghanistan and we aim to continue cooperation with Russia in realizing common goals of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said we discussed bilateral cooperation at multilateral fora and have firm belief that all conflicts can be resolved peacefully and there

are no obstacles, which diplomacy cannot surmount and the Ukrainian conflict is no exception. He said developing countries like Pakistan are facing negative consequences in terms of economic impact of this conflict. He expressed the confidence that the strong tradition of diplomacy of the Russian state will help achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

He thanked Sergey Lavrov for inviting him to visit Russia and reiterated Islamabad's commitment in deepening relations with Moscow.

Addressing the joint press conference, Online

Major reshuffle in Punjab Police, 10 high officials transferred

LAHORE: A major reshuffle in Punjab Police has been witnessed as 10 high officials were transferred on Monday.

According to details, Sohail Akhtar Sukhera has been appointed as DIG Investigation Lahore. He has replaced Athar Ismail who has been asked to report to Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD).

Zain Asim has been appointed SP Security Chief Minister Office while Abdul Wahab earlier serving on the post has been directed to report to IG Office.

Police Department said that SSP Rana Ayaz Saleem has been appointed CPO Gujranwala while former CPO Umer Salamat has been asked to report to Central Police Office.

AIG Development Punjab Mansoor ul Haq will serve as CPO Multan while Shakir Hussain Dawar earlier serving on the position has been directed to report to IG Office. SSP Law & Order Capt. (Retd) Ali Zia has been directed to report to Central Police Office. INP

PM condemns suicide attack inside mosque at police lines in Peshawar

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has strongly denounced the suicide attack inside a mosque at police lines in Peshawar. In a statement on Monday, he said targeting the mosque is a proof that the attackers have nothing to do with Islam.

Shehbaz Sharif said terrorists want to create fear by targeting those who are rendering the duty of defending Pakistan. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's firm commitment to root out terrorism. He said the entire nation and institutions are united and unified for the eradication of terrorism. He said the entire nation salutes its martyrs. Shehbaz Sharif said a comprehensive strategy will be adopted on the deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The center will cooperate in increasing the anti-terrorism capacity of the provinces. Shehbaz Sharif said the Interior Minister has been instructed to provide assistance in increasing the capacity of the counter-terrorism departments of the provinces, especially that of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Commiserating. INP



RAWALPINDI: A motorcyclist wearing plastic sheet to protect themselves from rain during heavy rain in morning hours at a road.

Zulfi Bukhari does not see signs of neutrality

Islamabad: Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) central leader Zulfi Bukhari believes that the arrest of Fawad Ch is a message to Imran Khan not from the government but from the establishment.

In an exclusive interview with VOA, he said that Fawad Chaudhry's arrest is a message to Tehreek-e-Insaaf.

He says this series of messages has been going on for the past nine months. However, according to him, this has not made a difference but has increased PTI's popularity.

Zulfi Bukhari hoped that the new Army Chief

General Asim Munir would change the course adopted with regard to PTI.

He says that establishment of institutions and Imran Khan based on popularity are huge realities and it is in the best interest of the country that both recognize each other.

He says that the establishment should not be neutral but should use its power to hold early elections.

The establishment in Pakistan has never been neutral. According to him, even in the current situation, they should not be neutral, he added.

PTI leader says that the current government cannot survive without the support of the establishment and the establishment should use its power for holding early general elections.

Zulfi Bukhari says that there is no way of stability in the country except general elections in the current situation.

He said that there has been some internal healing between the PTI and the US and despite Imran Khan's statements of US intervention, PTI's relations with Washington can improve again. The establishment in Pakistan. INP

Revival of China's tourism sends positive signal to Pakistan: PTDC

ISLAMABAD: The opening of China's tourism is a very positive sign for Pakistan. Pakistan has made extensive preparations to welcome Chinese visitors," said Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, Gwadar Pro reported it on Monday.

From January 8, 2023, China resumed outbound tourism after downgrading COVID-19 management measures from Class A to B.

According to the 2023 Spring Festival Travel Summary Report released by Ctrip, domestic and foreign travel orders of Chinese tourists increased by four times compared with the Spring Festival of last year. The popularity of Spring Festival tourism is only a start, and Chinese tourism market will see a remarkable recovery this year.

"International flights within the Asia-Pacific region will recover faster than intercontinental flights for other regions. We plan to gradually expand our international routes," said Qin Ye,

deputy general manager of Pudong Passenger Service Center of China Eastern Airlines.

"This year is the year of Pakistan-China Tourism Exchanges. We're completely focused on this. Pakistan has everything it takes to become one of the world's best travel destinations. The government of Pakistan also identified tourism as a key priority," said Ghulam Qadir, commercial counselor of the Embassy of Pakistan in China. He revealed that numerous tourism-related activities will be happening between the two neighbors in this year.

"Roadshows will be held with all of the cultural festivities, showcasing some of Pakistan's tourist attractions. We want our Chinese brothers and sisters to experience Pakistani cuisine and fashion from our trendy brands in Pakistan. We'll come up with a complete guidebook to facilitate travel from China to Pakistan, and vice versa." Ghulam added.

"We've seen new highways, highways, and side roads from south to east

to north, and improving the road network is critical for tourism promotion." Aftab ur Rehman Rana said.

He stressed the important role that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has played in transforming Pakistan's tourism.

"CPEC not only improved access to various business hubs and cities in Pakistan, but also facilitated access to various tourist sites.

With improved accessibility, there will be a slew of new developments in the coming years, including the establishment of tourism zones, new hotels, and tourist resorts along the CPEC routes."

Ghulam also noted that as CPEC enters its second phase of high-quality development, more partnerships, joint ventures, and travel are required. "CPEC is an excellent example of the two countries' friendship.



RAWALPINDI: A view of sealed Lal Haveli from Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), in the city.

Govt moves to end HEC autonomy, despite opposition from stakeholders

Islamabad: Despite the widespread opposition from the stakeholders of the higher education in the country, the federal government is moving ahead with the proposed amendments to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Ordinance, 2002, revealed the sources to this scribe.

The Cabinet Committee for the Disposal of Legislative Cases, which is finalizing the draft amendment bill, has sought the input from the Federal Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, disclosed well-placed sources privy to the matter. The sources further added that it will then be placed before the Cabinet, and subsequently the National Assembly, in order to become the law.

The Vice Chancellors' Committee and the

Association of Private Universities in Pakistan have already condemned the move by saying that the said amendments not only limit the autonomous role of the institution but also negate the basic principles of the federation.

The HEC was established as an autonomous national institution to regulate the affairs of public and private universities and colleges. The 1973 Rules of Business do treat higher education as a subject of the Education Ministry, but the Task Force on improvement of Higher Education in Pakistan that drafted the HEC Ordinance, 2002 recommended that "HEC should be governed and managed independently, associated with the Ministry of Education but not controlled by it," explained the sources. This is why the HEC was

given the status of the Federal Ministry, which was directly responsible to the Prime Minister Office, sources said.

The composition of the 18-member Commission, the HEC's apex body, ensured collaborative decision-making on higher education matters, including due representation from all the provinces as well as from the relevant government officials, higher education representatives and eminent persons. Moreover, the HEC Chairman and the members of the Commission were appointed for a period of four years, with the possibility of a second tenure. While the Chairman was to be appointed by the Prime Minister, the Executive Director and other HEC officials were to be appointed by the Commission. Online

So-called experts destroyed country's economy: PEW

ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Dr. Murtaza Mughal has said that the so-called economic experts impersonating as economic hitmen to fulfill their political agendas have destroyed the economy of the country.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said that for couple of years, the country has been under the control of plunderers and one economic hitman after another ruining the country's economy and there is no one to stop them.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that our representatives are traveling around the world for a billion dollars to hear denials from everywhere which is embarrassing. Political and other elite have more money in their foreign accounts than in Pakistan's exchequer, he added.

De further stated that the rulers have committed political suicide by expelling former Finance Minister Miftah Ismail otherwise the economic situation would have been stable.

The stubbornness of one person has stalled the IMF program for four

months since the expulsion of the former finance minister which has resulted in a loss of almost seven billion dollars, he maintained.

Miftah would have kept the IMF programme intact and the price of petrol and diesel would not have increased by 35 rupees per liter, which would bring another flood of inflation in the country, he observed.

The President PEW said that in a few days, the value of the rupee has been reduced by fifteen percent, which is a clear failure of the policy of the PML-N to stabilize the

rupee. The country is facing gross mismanagement of the ruling coalition and the situation has come to an extent that now onions are considered a luxury.

The government has not been able to do anything except change the NAB law. Overseas Pakistanis are not ready and are sending money through legal channels and they are preferring Hundi which is causing huge losses to the country while it will take time to restore their confidence, he noted.

Dr. Mughal recalled that the reluctance of the

former prime minister to strike the IMF deal and its decision to disregard the tenets of the agreement with the donor last year are said to be populist decisions that derailed the IMF programme that drove the country to the brink of sovereign default.

Compelled by the twin deficits, the incumbent government revived the IMF Programme and former finance minister Miftah Ismail tried to follow through on the deal by hiking fuel and energy rates. But, the incumbent Finance Minister avoided IMF's dictates. INP

TENDER NOTICE		
The On Farm Water Management Kalat invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2023 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates TSE-222301234673 Tender Fee Rs.5000/- Bid Security 2%		
S.NO	NAME OF WORKS	E/COST
1	FOR PROVISION OF OILSEEDS / PULSES SEEDS, FODDER / FORAGE SEED ALONG WITH LAND PREPARATION AND PROVISION OF FRUIT PLANTS, IN DISTRICT KALAT UNDER THE PROJECT NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR ENHANCING COMMAND AREA OF BARANI AREAS IN PAKISTAN (BALUCHISTAN COMPONENT) 2022-23 S.NO.29 [Z2019.1958]	19,250,000/-
Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 13,475,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-6 and above (Upto 25 million) In Relevant Category And Specialized Code is CE10(i) (General Civil Engineering Works). bidding firm must submit Income Tax Return of Taxation Year 2022. Bidding Firm must submit Audit Report / Audit Balance Sheet of FY 2019-20, 2020-21 & 2021-22. bidding Firm must submit Company's latest Bank Account Statement or Bank Credit Line Certificate. bidding firm must submit the Tender Fee in the Head of Account C03136 on Green Chailan duly verified by District Treasury. Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 5,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 15 February, 2023 during office hours on working days. Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 15 February, 2023 till 10:15 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 11:15 AM. Address: Kalat Phone no: 0844210274 Fax no: Email: sikandarhashmi313@gmail.com		
DEPUTY DIRECTOR AGRICULTURE ON FARM WATER MANAGEMENT KALAT		
PRQ No.2156/30-01-2023 www.dpr-gob.pk @dpr_gob dprgob @dprbalochistan		

PPP sends legal notice to Khan for accusing Zardari of conspiring to kill him

ISLAMABAD: Former president and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Monday sent Rs10 billion legal notice to former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan.

In the notice, sent by Farooq H. Naek and Associates acting on behalf of their client Asif Ali Zardari, it was stated that Imran in a public address which was widely reported across the world had accused Zardari of "false, fabricated and scandalous remarks/statements as well as leveled baseless allegations of serious nature" that he had paid his corruption money to a terrorist organization being supported by powerful state agency facilitators to launch another fatal attack on him.

The notice read that the baseless accusations were of malicious and defamatory nature that tried to defame Zardari nationally as well as internationally. "Through your defamatory, libelous, scandalous remarks and allegations of serious nature you have tried to create a link between our client and terrorist organizations blindly disregarding the fact that our client and his party has remained the victim of terrorism."

Further, it said that Zardari's wife, former prime minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was also assassinated by terrorists. "Furthermore in your statements you have stated that our client, through corruption money, is hatching a fresh plan to allegedly assassinate you despite the fact that our client has languished in prison for almost eight years in false, fabricated, trumped up and concocted cases including corruption cases and not one of

which was proved against him and he was acquitted in all those cases honorably." The notice termed Imran's statements as "made with mala fide intentions and ulterior motives to injure, harm, defame and disparage the reputation and name of our client who has made struggle and sacrifices for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan."

"Your baseless allegations against our client have also harmed the global reputation of Pakistan." The notice added that the serious allegations of paying terrorists and plotting his assassination were false, libelous, scandalous and without any proof and are vehemently denied.

Hence the same have been made with mala fide intentions in order to defame our client for ulterior motives and other reasons best known to you to explain in this regard. "That through your above said defamatory actions against our client, you have committed utterly unjustified and inexcusable defamation just to malign our client's reputation in Pakistan as well as in the world causing severe agony, mental stress and loss of reputation," the notice read.

It directed Imran to render an unconditional apology to Zardari "on television, print and social media, within 14 (fourteen) days from the receipt of this notice." Should Imran fail to do so, appropriate legal proceedings would be initiated against him including civil as well as criminal, before the competent courts of law in Pakistan and England. A suit for damages for Rs10 billion would be liable to be paid. INP



PESHAWAR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir, inquire about an injured victim at Lady Reading Hospital, after a mosque blast inside the police headquarters, in Provincial Capital.

Rise in petrol and diesel prices challenged at LHC

LAHORE: The increase in the petroleum products' prices was Monday challenged in the Lahore High Court (LHC).

A miscellaneous petition was filed by the Judicial Activism Panel against the rise in the prices of the petroleum products.

The petition stated that instead of reducing the prices of the petroleum products in the country, they were increased by Rs35.

"The prices of the petroleum products have not been reduced in accordance with the global market," it added.

It is to be noted here that the prices of petrol and diesel had been increased by Rs35 each per litre by the government on Sunday last. INP

Karachi police officer martyred in firing

KARACHI: A police officer was Monday martyred in firing by unidentified suspects in Karachi.

According to police, the incident took place near the mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam.

The martyred police officer was identified as 50-year-old Iqbal. His body was handed over to his family.

Woman among two dead in firing incidents

Two persons including a woman died in different incidents of firing in Karachi on Sunday night.

A burnt body of a woman was found in a garbage dump in Orangi Town No 12.

Meanwhile, the police and Rangers in a joint operation arrested Ghulam Abbas from Mehmood Abad, Azam Town.

The operation was carried out on a tip-off.

The accused had been involved in several incidents of robbery and street crime. INP

Local PTI leader gunned down near Lahore

LAHORE: A local leader along with his nephew was killed in Kala Shah Kaku area of Lahore on Monday.

PTI leader Sher Afzal alias Nikka Pehlwan was going to Lahore along with his nephew when his car came under the hail bullets fired by four armed men near Kala Shah Kaku. As a result, Sher Afzal and his nephew Arsalan died on the spot.

Rescue 1122 officials reached the venue and shifted their bodies to a local hospital. Police said that the assassins fled the scene after gunning down the uncle-nephew duo.

The law enforcers cordoned off the area and started collecting evidence from the crime scene.

On the other hand, taking notice of the incident, the Punjab IG police sought the report from Lahore CPO and ordered for immediate arrest of the killers. INP

Boat owner, 3 irrigation officers booked over Tanda Dam tragedy

KOHAT: The First Information Report (FIR) of boat tragedy at Kohat's Tanda Dam has been registered on Monday in which the boat owner and three officials of the irrigation department nominated.

According to the FIR, the accident occurred due to overloading of the boat.

At least 10 children had died on Sunday as a boat, carrying 25 to 30 passengers including madrasa students as well as the boatman, capsized in Tanda Dam.

The authorities managed to rescue six of the students, who were being treated at DHQ Hospital Kohat. INP

LHC moved against contesting election for multiple seats

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday removed objection over a petition, against contesting election in multiple constituencies.

Registrar Office of the high court had objected over the maintainability of the petition filed by a citizen Zahid Mehmood.

Justice Anwar Hussain while hearing plea against objection set aside it and directed to fix the petition for hearing.

"Politicians, contest election in more than one national or provincial constituencies. They hold one seat and surrender remaining seats," according to the petition.

"The election commission has to hold election again on these surrendered seats," petitioner said.

"This practice is the loss of resources and violation of the constitution of Pakistan," petitioner argued.

He pleaded to the court to impose ban on contesting elections on more than one seats at a time. "The court should order the government of Pakistan to legislate over the matter," he further pleaded.

Former premier Imran Khan will contest for all 33 vacant seats in National Assembly (NA) by-elections, scheduled to take place on March 16, party's senior vice-president Shah Mehmood Qureshi announced on Sunday.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had released the schedule for by-polls on these NA seats vacated by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MNAs.

The ECP has decided to hold by-polls on 33 NA seats on March 16, for which nomination papers can be received from February 6 to 8. INP

Election date: LHC seeks relay form Govt, Governor

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday sought a response from the federal government, Punjab governor and others on a PTI petition seeking immediate announcement of the election date for the provincial assembly.

The Punjab Assembly was dissolved constitutionally after Punjab Governor Baligh Ur Rehman excused himself from signing the summary, saying he could not become a part of the process.

According to details, Justice Jawad Hassan heard PTI leader Asad Umar's petition in which Governor Punjab Baligh Ur Rehman has been made respondent in the plea via his secretary.

At the outset of the hearing, the court showed resentment over the non-preparation of the government's lawyer in the case and asked how come he was unaware of the hearing of the case. The

case was fixed for hearing two days earlier at 4:30pm.

Later, the court adjourned the hearing of the case until February 3 and sought a response from the federal government, Punjab governor Balighur Rehman and others on the accoutement of the election date in Punjab. PTI's Secretary General Asad Umar filed the petition through barrister Ali Zafar, seeking direction for the Punjab governor to immediately announce the election date for the provincial Assembly in order to ensure that polls are held within 90 days of its dissolution. The plea contended that the governor of Punjab had been impleaded as a respondent since Article 105(3) of the Constitution requires him to appoint an election date to the provincial assembly not later than 90 days from the date of dissolution but he has failed to discharge that constitutional duty. INP

Sheikh Rasheed moves LHC against Lal Haveli's sealing

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad on Monday moved an application before the Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench against the sealing of Lal Haveli by the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB).

It was narrated in the application that the matter of Lal Haveli is already in a court of law so the sealing operation was "politically" motivated.

Advocate Sardar Raziq Khan, on behalf of the AML chief, while submitting the plea urged the court to hold an urgent hearing which was accepted.

The hearing will take place at 11am today.

Talking to reporters outside

the Lal Haveli, the seasoned politician, who is currently supporting PTI Chairman Imran Khan, said the discrimination had been shown because he was supporting the PTI. He alleged that Deputy Administrator ETPB Asif Khan was front man of interior minister Rana Sanaulah.

The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) sealed the Lal Haveli -- the residence of Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed -- in the wee hours of Monday. According to initial reports, the ETPB staff along with Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and police personnel reached the residence of Sheikh Rashid and sealed it. INP

Minister releases schedule of countrywide organizational visits of Maryam Nawaz

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has released the schedule of countrywide organizational visits of PML-N's Senior Vice President and Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz.

Maryam Nawaz will address the workers' convention in Bahawalpur on February 1 and the next day the organizational meeting of the party will be held in the city. In Multan, the convention will be held on 5th February and the organizational meeting on 6th February.

On 9th February, Maryam Nawaz will address a convention in Abbottabad which will be followed by the party's organizational meeting on 10th February. On 15th February, Maryam Nawaz will address a convention and public gathering in Dera Ghazi Khan and chair the party's organizational meeting the next day.

In Rawalpindi, the PML-N's workers' convention will be on 19th February and the organizational meeting on 20th February. On 23rd February, Maryam Nawaz will address the workers' convention in Sargodha and chair the party's organizational meeting the next day. In Sahiwal, the workers convention will be

held on the 27th February and the organizational meeting on 28th February. In Gujranwala, the workers convention will be held on the 3rd March which will be followed by the party's organizational meeting the next day.

In Sheikhpura, the convention will be held on the 7th March to be followed by the party's organizational meeting the next day. On the 11th March, the PML-N's convention will be held in Faisalabad. It will be followed by the party's organizational meeting the next day.

In Peshawar, the PML-N workers' convention will take place on the 15th March to be followed by the party's organizational meeting the next day. In Lahore Division, the PML-N will hold convention on the 19th March while the party's organizational meeting will be held the next day.

Maryam Nawaz will visit Quetta on 23rd March and address the workers' convention there. The next day the party's organizational meeting will be held in Quetta.

In Karachi, the PML-N will hold the workers' convention on the 27th March to be followed by the party's organizational meeting the next day. INP

FM arrives in Moscow for talks with Russian leadership

MOSCOW: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is in Moscow to hold talks with Russian leaders on the entire spectrum of bilateral relations.

On his arrival at Moscow airport, the Foreign Minister was received by senior officials of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Pakistan's ambassador to Russia Shafiq Ali Khan and officials of the embassy.

The foreign minister is on a two day visit to the Russian Federation at the invitation of his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov. The two foreign ministers are scheduled to meet today for official talks. INP

Progress not possible without peace: Sajid Turi

KURRAM: Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Sajid Hussain Turi has said progress of any region and country is not possible without peace and harmony.

Addressing a seminar in Kurram, he urged the tribal elders, elected representatives and political and social workers to play their role for promotion of peace and harmony.

Sajid Turi said negotiations are ongoing with various countries to create more and maximum employment opportunities for more Pakistani youth and skilled workers abroad. INP

Ex-CM Elahi's principal secretary booked in corruption case

LAHORE: The Punjab Anti-Corruption Establishment registered a case against the former principal secretary of ex-chief minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on corruption charges on Monday.

Accused Muhammad Khan Bhatti, the ex-principal secretary of former Punjab CM Elahi, could move to the anti-corruption court for his interim bail. A large contingent of police was deployed outside the court to arrest Bhatti. INP

Implementation on closure of markets, marriage halls start

Dera Ismail Khan: The district administration of DI Khan has started implementing the federal government's decision to close all markets, shopping malls and business centres at 8:30 pm and marriage halls at 10 pm in a bid to conserve energy.

In light of the Federal government decision regarding energy saving, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided to implement the same steps by issuing directives to traders and markets owner to close business well before at the notified time.

To ensure the implementation of the energy saving campaign, the dis-

trict administration last night carried out visits to marriage halls, restaurants and other different places of the city.

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Qaiser Khan, Assistant Commissioner Dera Farhan Ahmed along with AC Paharpur Muhammad Aneeq Anwar last night visited various Marriage Halls situated at Daraban road and Grid road.

During the inspection, the hall owners and management were asked to comply with the government orders of closing the programmes till 10:00 p.m. INP



PESHAWAR: Security personnel stands alert outside police headquarters after the blast in Provincial Capital.

Six shot dead over property dispute

JACOBABAD: At least six people were killed and seven others injured when armed men of one group attacked other over property dispute here on Monday.

Police said that Thaheem and Babar community residing in village Chantal Abad, Doda Pur police station in Jacobabad was in dispute over ownership of a plot.

Equipped with heavy and automated weapons, the members of Thaheem community attacked the opponents.

As a result of attack, six people including Nasrullah, Naseer Ahmed, Khameso Khan, Daim Khan, Sahib Khan and Sabil Babar were killed while Abdul Rahim, Hafeez, Ashraf and Muhammad Sadiq Babar among seven sustained bullet wounds.

The assailants fled the scene after killing people.

The bodies and injured were shifted to local hospital where the wounded people were referred to Chandka Hospital Larkana due to critical condition.

Heavy contingent of police cordoned off the area after the attack. A case was registered into the incident and raids were being conducted to arrest the attackers.

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Massive hike in POL prices to unleash new wave of inflation: ICCI

ISLAMABAD: Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) Faad Waheed has said that the government has made massive hike of Rs.35 per litre in one go in the prices of petrol and diesel that would unleash a new wave of high inflation for the common man and further increase the cost of doing business making our exports uncompetitive in the international markets.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said that a decline of 35 rupees in Pakistani currency against the US dollar and Rs35 per litre hike in the prices of petrol and diesel would create a ripple effect as it would badly squeeze the purchasing power of people, reduce growth of business activities making it more difficult to revive the dwindling economy.

Faad Waheed was of the view that the price of petrol has jumped to almost Rs.250/litre and diesel to around

Rs.263/litre taking these prices to the record highest level in the country's history. He said that this unprecedented hike in POL prices would multiply the energy cost and further increase the cost of doing business due to which trade and industrial activities would badly suffer.

He said that diesel is used in transportation and agricultural sectors while a big jump in its price would increase transportation cost of goods and agricultural products causing more inflation, especially for low-income people. Moreover, the hike in the price of petrol would also increase transport fares that would bring more misery to the already inflation-stricken people. The ICCI Acting President said that an artificial shortage of petrol and diesel was being created in the market as the oil marketing companies (OMCs) were not distributing them to the petrol pumps and this situation can cause unnecessary. INP



KARACHI: Activists of Swat Kohistan hold a protest in favor of their demands outside press club in Provincial Capital.