

QUETTA VOICE

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Search for survivors slows as Turkiye-Syria quake toll passes 35,000



ECC okays up to 124% gas tariff hike to unlock IMF loan

Balochistan to stop gas supply if center fails to pay dues: Minister

News Desk

Zmarak Achakzai the Finance Minister of Balochistan threatened to suspend the gas supply from Balochistan if the federal govt failed to pay the outstanding of the province. Speaking on point of order during the Balochistan Assembly session, which resumed with deputy speaker Babar Musakhail in the chair, the minister lashed out at the OGDCL and PPL for not paying dues of the Balochistan lawmakers from treasury and opposition spoke at length regarding the financial crises, Balochistan is currently facing.

"We want our constitutional share in the NFC"

"We want our constitutional share in the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award share", Achakzai demanded. Otherwise, he said that he would request Chief Minister



to deploy 200 Levies personnel to stop the gas supply to the rest of the country. We will not allow Islamabad to swallow our rights, the minister said.

Government Facing serious financial crises

Zmarak Achakzai mentioned that the province was facing serious financial crises currently and was not able to pay the salaries of its employees. He said despite having rich mineral and natural resources the province was facing serious financial crises. Lawmakers from the opposition also demanded of the federal govt to pay dues to Balochistan and address the province's financial crises.

Medicines supply to Balochistan's only cancer hospital stopped

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Medicines supply under the Balochistan Endowment Fund (BEF) to Balochistan's only cancer hospital was stopped, doctors and patients said. For the last two months, the hospital is not getting medicines under the BEF, Dr. Feroz Khan Achakzai, a senior doctor of the CENAR hospital Daily Quetta Voice.

100 cancer patients

Daily, over 100 cancer patients are coming and they go back in frustration without getting medicines, Mr. Achakzai said. The cancer disease continues to spread in Balochistan and it has claimed scores of precious human lives during the last few years. "I sold jewelry and everything to buy medicines for my ailing wife", Bahauddin 47, a white-bearded man from Balochistan's Dalbandin area told this scribe.

Dozens of cancer patients and their attendants were waiting outside the reception of the CENAR hospital to get the official medicines. However, the hospital administration informed that the stock of the medicines was finished two months back and there was not a single tablet.

"Registering more than 8000 new cancer patients"



"We are registering more than 8000 new cancer patients every year", Dr. Achakzai informed. He said that currently, more than 2,000 cancer patients were under treatment at the Bolan Medical Complex Hospital and the CENAR hospital.

The patients complain about costly cancer medicines. "I am spending more than Rs. 50,000 per month for my medicines", Hidayatullah, a young man with a bushy beard lamented. He said that he spent all his money and belongings to buy the costly cancer medicines to

save his life. In CENAR hospital, most of the patients belong to the downtrodden class since middle-class and elite-class people go to Karachi or the Shaukat Khanum memorial hospital in Lahore for medical treatment. "We have no money to go to Lahore and Karachi", Hidayatullah said.

Despite repeated attempts, Quetta Voice was not able to speak to the officials to get their point of view about stopping the medicines to the only cancer hospital of Balochistan.

ECC okays up to 124% gas tariff hike to unlock IMF loan

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet Monday approved up to 124% hike in the tariff of gas across the board for six months to implement a major prior condition set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for striking a staff-level agreement with Pakistan. The finance ministry, in a statement, said the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) tabled a summary on natural gas sale pricing for FY2023 and presented tariff proposals for all consumer categories in accordance with the Review of Estimated Revenue Requirement (RERR) for the fiscal year 2022-23. "The ECC after detailed discussion approved gas price revision proposal for domestic, commercial and power sectors for six months [January to June, 2023]," the statement mentioned.



Reforms in the energy sector and controlling the circular debt remained on top of the agenda during the talks held with the IMF mission that concluded 10-day parleys in Islamabad last Thursday. The IMF team left Islamabad without signing an agreement and asked Pakistan to take corrective measures. For households consuming up to 100 cubic metres of gas, the rate has been hiked by 16.6% to Rs350 per MMBTU, an increase of Rs50 per MMBTU. For domestic consumers who utilise 200 cubic metres, the rate has been increased by 32% to Rs730 per MMBTU. A 69% hike in tariff has been given go-ahead for consumers of up to 300 cubic metres of gas, and it will now cost them Rs1,250 per MMBTU. For domestic consumers utilising gas up to 400 cubic metres, the rate has been hiked by 99% to Rs2,200 per MMBTU. For households using more than 400

cubic metres of gas, the rate has been hiked by 124% to Rs3,277 per MMBTU. After a 28.6% hike, the gas price for commercial consumers has been increased from Rs 1,283 per MMBTU to Rs 1,650 per MMBTU. The price of gas for the power sector has been increased from Rs857 per MMBTU to Rs1,050 per MMBTU following an increase of 22.8%. For the export industry, after a 34% hike, the rate has been hiked up to Rs1,100 per MMBTU. The CNG sector will have to pay Rs1,800 per MMBTU following a hike of 31%. After an increase of 46%, the fertiliser sector will be provided gas at Rs1,500 per MMBTU. The cement sector will pay Rs1,500 per MMBTU following an increase of 17.46% in the gas price. Meanwhile, the cabinet committee also allowed the Ministry of Economic Affairs for signing. Web Desk

Following LHC order, ECP seeks meeting with Punjab governor to discuss election date

Days after the Lahore High Court directed the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to immediately announce the date for elections in Punjab, the electoral watchdog on Monday sought a meeting with the governor to consult him on the matter.

According to a handout released by the ECP, the commission has requested Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman to schedule a meeting on Feb 14 (Tuesday) to discuss the date for provincial elections.

The handout said that Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja presided over a meeting today — that included ECP Secretary Umer Hameed and other



senior officials and members — to discuss the "implementation" of the LHC order. The commission said it had written a letter to Rehman to suggest "an appropriate time" for tomorrow's meeting. It added that the electoral body had appointed the ECP secretary to head the discussions with the governor, along with ECP

Special Secretary Zafar Iqbal Hussain and Director General (Law) Mohammad Arshad. The designated ECP team would then brief the commission about the talks so that it could decide on the future strategy for conducting polls in the province. The Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies — where the PTI had governments — were dissolved on January 14 and January 18, respectively, in an attempt to pave the way for snap polls. On Jan 24, the ECP wrote letters to the principal secretaries of Punjab and KP governors, suggesting elections in Punjab between April 9 and 13, and in KP between April 15 and 17. Web Desk

A police officer martyred in a firing incident in Dukki Balochistan

Hussain Zarkoon

A police assistant sub-inspector was martyred in a firing incident in the Dukki district of Balochistan on Monday. Syed Saboor Agha, the District Police Officer Dukki said the armed accused opened fire and martyred a police ASI Muhammad Saleem in Dukki. He said policemen retaliated and the



attackers escaped from the spot. "This seems to be a robbery incident", Mr. Agha informed. He said the alleged robbers also left solar energy plates and their pistol.

"We are investigating the incident", the DPO said. Senior police officers and a huge contingent of the police reached the spot as an investigation into the incident went underway.

Search for survivors slows as Turkiye-Syria quake toll passes 35,000

Rescue teams began to wind down the search for survivors on Monday, a week after an earthquake devastated parts of Turkiye and Syria leaving more than 35,000 dead and millions in dire need of aid.

While the focus switched to helping desperate survivors who lack food and shelter, stories continue to emerge of people found alive in the rubble seven days after the 7.8-magnitude tremor.

On Monday, a 12-year-old boy named Kaan was pulled from the debris in southern Hatay, 182 hours after the fifth-deadliest earthquake of the 21st century, Turkish media reported.

However, experts warn hopes of finding people alive are dimming. The confirmed death toll stands at 35,224 as officials and medics said 31,643 people had died in Turkiye and at least 3,581 in Syria.

The United Nations said it expects the toll to rise far higher. The United Nations has decried the failure to ship desperately needed aid to war-torn regions of Syria and warned that the toll is set to rise even higher as experts caution that hopes for finding people alive dim with each passing day.

"Send any stuff you can because there are millions of people here and



they all need to be fed," Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu appealed to Turks late Sunday.

In Kahramanmaraş, close to the epicentre, 30,000 tents have been installed, 48,000 people are sheltering in schools and another 11,500 in sports halls, he said.

While hundreds of rescue teams were still working, efforts had ended in seven parts of the province, he added.

Survivors face a lack of water and poor sanitation. In southern Adiyaman an outbreak of scabies — a skin disease known to spread in crowded areas — is affecting adults, while children are suffering from diarrhoea, local media reported.

Hatice Goz, a volunteer psychologist in Turkiye's Hatay province, said she has been fielding "a barrage of calls" from frantic parents looking for missing children.

Quake could cost Turkiye up to \$84 billion. The quake has left a trail of destruction that could cost Ankara up to \$84.1 billion, a business group said, while a government official put the figure at more than \$50bn. Web Desk

QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

Reimagining Pakistan seminar in Quetta

Politicians, intelligentsia and members of the legal fraternity almost discussed all issues relating to the country and Balochistan at the first Reimagining Pakistan seminar.

Political pundits called it a gathering of political dissidents since most of the political figures have been sidelined by their own political parties.

The session was underway for 7 hours. Throughout the seven hours long sessions, Mr. Abbasi faced the brunt of stormy and aggressive speakers criticizing Islamabad for what they called stepmotherly treatment.

Miftah Ismail presented killings facts about the declining economic condition of the country and the socio-economic state of the people.

Mehfooz Ali Khan shared killing facts. Former Secretary of Finance Balochistan, Mehfooz Ali Khan shared killing facts about Islamabad's stepmotherly treatment towards Balochistan.

Young intellectual, Rafullah Kakar termed the undeclared MPA fund as a major speed breaker and political bribe before the political parties.

To be precise, it was an event that brought the high-ups who had served the country in the center and province to one forum and they all openly shared their experiences and knowledge to bring an end to the prevailing crisis.

Never before in recent decades has Pakistan been in such a state of crisis. Our economy, politics and society are in disarray.

About the economy, the question being asked is: 'will we soon default?' The combination of external debt, imports, and forex exchange reserves leave many wondering. Understandably, the focus at present is on survival.

But even when policymakers take a longer view of the economy, soundbites about GDP growth and IMF programmes replace vision and strategy. There is no deeper inquiry about what is best for the country.

Nor do we discuss how to use the IMF programme to strengthen the country's economic fundamentals and avoid future crises. Both agriculture and manufacturing are in decline, consequently plunging exports.

For years, the apparent object of our economic policy has been to survive the current economic crisis by piling debt on debt,

until the next one comes along. We continued to take on more debt from wherever it came, including at very high rates from the bond market. No one gave any thought to how it would be repaid.

Until a few years ago, the debate in Pakistan about economic growth centred on whether we are a security or a development state. That line of thought suggested that we may be spending too much on defence at the expense of the economy.

Our troubles are not for want of capital. They result from unimaginative policies. Post 9/11, the country was awash in foreign exchange. By 2008, we had spent it all and were back with the IMF with a sudden 40 per cent devaluation. There was

nothing to show for the money spent.

Much of the debt went into meeting imports and debt servicing needs. Two-thirds of our external debt has been spent on the budget and BoP, and only one-third on development.

Economic partners no longer take us at our word. In over a year, endless discussions with the IMF have borne little fruit. All commitments to the IMF are now 'prior action' because we have lost their trust.

The key question that needs to be asked by economic planners is where we want the economy to go from here. What kind of an economy Pakistan aims to have in five, ten or even fifty years.

Political capacity too is fragile. With elections in

a few months and the people dizzied by prices and taxes, the back and forth in the commitments made to the IMF shows the government's quandary. This is the cumulative effect of the inability of successive governments to offer a serious vision for the economy.

It is time to get serious. Bluster can no longer work as policy, nor as negotiating strategy. We must have a plan not just to exit the present crisis, but also to put the economy on a surer footing for the future.

We may like to weigh the pros and cons of seeking external debt relief. Both the IMF and G20 have established mechanisms for doing so. Decision-makers must decide on which is best. I do not recommend debt rescheduling, as that merely postpones servicing while increasing liability.

The money saved must go to paying back the remaining debt at a faster rate and investing to

By Humayun Akhtar Khan

increase the productivity of the private sector. Gradually, new debt should be for projects only, such that the economy essentially needs for growth and exports.

We have not seen prolonged periods of growth. The economy will not grow by targeting just a few firms or sectors. Overall demand must increase. For that, the income and purchasing power of the majority of our people must increase.

Even within the present constraints, we must find ways to increase private investment. They do not have to be in large industries alone. Entrepreneurship at all levels must grow, especially small and micro industries.

Small firms bring a lot of value. They are presently operating in an unhelpful governance climate. To facilitate their growth, they must have government support. An economy prospers when consumption and production increase. With proper help these small firms will boost production and increase purchasing power. They could sow the seeds of future large firms. Increasing income at the micro level would help growth in demand for the large industries.

The man behind our sedition law

"Power precedes liberty - ... liberty, from the very nature of things, is dependent upon power..." Thus wrote the English lawyer, judge, writer and philosopher, James Fitzjames Stephen in his book 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' (1873).

Stephen, a defender of old English liberalism, was a proponent of the concept of 'Ordered Liberty'. He was first a friend but later a critic of John Stuart Mill and his treatise 'On Liberty' (1859), a major source today for free speech advocacy.

Aside from his grim view of human nature and disdain for Mill's conception of individual liberty, Stephen believed in the inequality of men and women and believed that women, being the weaker sex, would not be able to enjoy the protection of men, if men and women were placed on the same legal and educational footing.

expanding democracy in England at the time. In 1867 the English electorate doubled, and all adults had the right to vote. He believed universal suffrage would achieve nothing because political power would not change its nature.

In 1867, Stephen was given the high-profile task to prosecute the governor of Jamaica, Edward Eyre, for wrongly ordering the court martial and execution of a Jamaican political rival and critic for involvement in the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865.

In 1869, Stephen went to India and drafted the Indian Evidence Act and reworked the draft of the Indian Contract Act, both inherited by Pakistan and effective to this day.

sedition. In short, Section 124A prohibits words or other conduct which causes hatred or contempt, or excites disaffection (disloyalty or feelings of enmity) towards the government.

Pakistan inherited the Indian Penal Code when it gained its independence. It was considered a masterpiece drafted primarily by the notable English jurist Thomas Babington Macaulay. The first draft of the penal code was completed in 1837 but was enacted in 1860 due to delays.

Macaulay had not included the law of sedition at the time of enactment of the Penal Code in 1860 - perhaps due to his libertarian sensibilities regarding oppressive state powers. He had also followed the lead of the US constitution and limited the offence of treason to levying war (against the state) only, as opposed to English criminal law where treason offences were expansive and included planning the sovereign's death and assisting enemies at war.

inserted all of the missing offences regarding treason and sedition by amendment (sections 121A, 124A, and 125 of the Penal Code). He showed surprise regarding the omissions by Macaulay and considered such offences to be "required in the circumstances".

In his book 'A History of the Criminal Law of England' (1883), Stephen strongly advocated for laws against sedition. He was clear that freedom of speech should be limited to protect against the spread of dangerous ideas that could incite violence or overthrow of the government. Stephen considered sedition to be an offence against internal public tranquility but not necessarily accompanied by or leading to open violence.

So why is it that the government could not be expected to tolerate words causing mere hatred, contempt, or disaffection short of incitement to violence? The simple reason is that sedition was seen as a preliminary step that could (but not necessarily would) lead to an actual rebellion. Seditious words were sufficient for the government to be offended, even in the absence of a risk of a rebellion, and

Ethics and politics

By S Qaisar Shareef

Last August, the FBI raided former US president Donald Trump's resort home in Florida.

They searched for and confiscated a large number of classified documents that were in the former president's possession and that he had refused to turn over to the National Archives as required.

This was followed by the expected reactions from both political parties - Republicans condemning the unprecedented raid on a former president's home and Democrats criticizing the former president's refusal to turn over the documents.

And now it has been revealed that lawyers have found classified documents marked "top secret" in offices used by Joe Biden while serving as vice president, as well as at his home. As expected, the political brouhaha has hit very high decibels. Both matters - Trump and Biden's possession of classified documents - are under investigation by the Department of Justice.

The Department of Justice having to investigate two presidents is quite unprecedented. It appears that in recent years adherence to laws or ethical

norms has become a disappearing commodity in US politics, as it has been in so many other countries.

Shortly after the conclusion of midterm elections last November, the country found out that George Santos, newly elected Republican Representative to the US Congress from New York, had lied about just every important aspect of his background. His education, work experience, his faith, and what his family has endured over generations were all fabricated.

Yet, the fact that the newly elected representative has fabricated his entire life story isn't the most shocking part of the story. What is truly shocking is that Santos' Republican Party led by the newly elected Speaker doesn't feel Mr Santos should have to resign. The Republican majority in the House of just four seats must be protected at all costs.

The last several years in American politics have shown that the super wealthy and super powerful may just be above the law, and that adherence to laws and norms of behavior are somewhat voluntary. In many cases there are simply no means of enforcing compliance.

This week Donald Trump's real-estate organization was fined \$1.6 million for tax fraud, the largest fine allowed by New York State law. Donald Trump has not been personally implicated, but his chief financial

officer has received a five-month prison sentence. Trump has brushed off the entire episode by simply calling it "politically motivated".

While these are clear acts of unethical behaviour, there are other examples of violation of laws and even the American constitution that have been allowed to slide. In 2016, then leader of the Republican majority in the Senate Mitch McConnell decided he would not allow then president Obama to fill a seat in the US Supreme Court that had become vacant. When Obama nominated a candidate to fill the seat, as stipulated by the Constitution, the Senate leader simply ignored it, leaving the Supreme Court one seat short for almost a year.

Article II, Section 2 of the US constitution states that the president shall appoint justices to the Supreme Court "with advice and consent of the Senate." Whether such "advice and consent" could include the right to simply refuse to consider a duly nominated justice is for legal scholars to argue.

Last but not least, the former president tried to overturn the results of the 2020 election by coming up with a twisted theory of election fraud. He wrongly asserted the vice president had powers to refuse to certify the results. Even his instigation of a riot that resulted in several deaths and the sacking of Capitol Hill in January 2021 has so far not resulted in any consequences for him.

Growing discontent

By Abdul Sattar

Interacting with people has always been one of the main components of the art of ruling. In India, the panchayat system in villages ensures that people from the ruling class regularly interact with the ruled.

In modern democracies like the UK, local parliamentarians invest their energies in schemes that appease their voters. They also prefer to meet their constituents by regularly visiting their constituencies and sparing some time for those who vote them into power.

In the past, Greek city states, including Athens, used to have a mechanism that could help them learn about people's sentiments. Even Sparta, which was dictatorial in nature, had drafted some principles that would enable them to have first-hand knowledge of people's feelings.

In Pakistan, there has been a lack of interaction between the ruling elite and the people. Many parliamentarians prefer to stay in federal and provincial capitals, enjoying luxuries of life in elite housing societies and upscale neighbourhoods. It is true that they show up at the funerals of some local notables in their constituencies, but mostly they remain away from their native towns and only bother to meet their voters at the time of elections.

These politicians do not have proper offices in their constituencies to meet their voters and

mentors when it comes to attending legislative sessions. Many ministers and advisers spend their time in different countries, attending various conferences or accompanying the prime minister as a member of the delegation.

Those who monitor parliamentary affairs often witness the anger of various committee members over the absence of ministers and advisers. It seems that members of our ruling elite are not only indifferent to the problems of their constituents, but are also accustomed to skipping the meetings held to discuss such problems. This indifference prompts them to come up with anti-people policies.

Their development schemes and social projects indicate that they cater to the needs of the select few. They seem to have less awareness about the issues being faced by the people.

For instance, since 1988, the country may have witnessed hundreds of development and infrastructure projects, and most of these projects were designed in a way that led to the demolition of numerous slums and low-income areas.

From the Lyari Expressway and Gujjar Nullah affectees and farmers around Ravi in Lahore to victims of the Mirani dam in Balochistan, millions of people have either been displaced or their livelihoods destroyed because of these projects. Due to anti-encroachment

drives, thousands of people lose their sources of employment every year. It is amusing that authorities never pay attention to elite schools or expensive hotels or thousands of private-property owners who encroach upon costly public land. The ruling elite still plans to launch such schemes that will largely affect the poor residents of various localities. We are yet to see if those who have encroached railways land will be evicted or not when the railway upgrade projects are carried out in the next few years.

But why do sections of our ruling elite demonstrate such nonchalance towards ordinary people? The answer lies in lack of interaction between the rulers and the ruled. There was a time when sections of the elite would send their siblings to low-cost schools, public universities and government colleges where rich people would get an opportunity to interact with students from different financial backgrounds. But with the rise of gated communities and ultra-modern housing societies, such interaction has come to an end.

Elite and posh neighbourhoods have their own schools and higher education institutions which are affiliated with foreign education institutions. Small markets and vendors outside these areas used to be one of the ways connecting the rich of the country to vegetable sellers or shopkeepers. With the rise of shopping malls, such

interaction is also over. Most factory owners in the past would visit their manufacturing plants, interacting with their employees. Now with the rise of modern technology, the owners can monitor workers through CCTV or any mobile application. The fall of trade unions, which used to protest against harsh working conditions or non-acceptance of their demands, has also reduced the need for capitalists to show up at factories and talk to workers.

Most politicians from the bottom layer of social stratification made it to parliament through student and trade union politics. Jehangir Badar, Iqbal Haider, Taj Haider, Mairaj Muhammad Khan and others were involved in either trade unions or student politics. Our ruling elite has weakened trade unions and banned student organizations deliberately.

Consequently, it has become almost impossible for a low-income person to participate in politics, and entering the Pakistani parliament has now become just a dream for ordinary people. It is no wonder then that an overwhelming majority of our lawmakers in provincial assemblies and parliament are millionaires and billionaires. And these people serve the same class.

If our politicians want to consolidate democratic traditions, they need to reconnect with the people and interact with them.

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 health-care and social protections for all the citizens of low- and lower-middle-income countries.

A group of over 150 millionaires released a strong statement calling on Davos attendees to face the dangers of runaway wealth inequality and speak out in favor of national efforts to levy progressive income and wealth taxes on the ultra-wealthy. "The truth is that 'Davos' doesn't deserve the world's trust right now," the statement reads. "For all the countless hours spent talking about making the world a better place, the conference has produced little tangible value amidst a torrent of self-congratulations."

"Until participants acknowledge the simple, effective solution staring them in the face - taxing the rich - the people of the world will continue to see their so-called dedication to fixing the world's problems as little more than a performance."

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

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

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Approval of Sheikh Rashid's nomination papers challenged

RAWALPINDI: The approval of the nomination papers of Awami Muslim League (AML) head Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has been challenged on Monday.

The approval of the nomination papers was challenged by Azmat Mubarak Advocate, a candidate of NA-62 constituency.

"There are serious allegations against Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. He has not fully disclosed his assets," Mubarak Advocate said in his plea.

"Criminal cases have been registered against Sheikh Rashid. He has not even provided documents of Lal Haveli so far," he added.

"The accused involved in criminal cases cannot contest elections. As to Sheikh Rashid, investigations were not carried out by the institutions on the instructions of the returning officer (RO)," he stated.

"Sheikh Rashid had resigned himself. Then on what basis is he contesting the election?" he questioned.

Mubarak Advocate vowed to approach the Election Tribunal and the high court if the application was rejected.

"The accused involved in criminal cases cannot contest elections. As to Sheikh Rashid, investigations were not carried out by the institutions on the instructions of the returning officer (RO)," he stated. "Sheikh Rashid had resigned himself. Then on what basis is he contesting the election?" he questioned.

Pak Elektron's sales, profits inch up in 9MCY22: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Sales of Pak Elektron Limited (PEL), the maker of home appliances, increased to Rs54 million in the first nine months of the calendar year 2022 (9MCY22), up 28% from Rs42 million netted over the corresponding period of 2021.

Despite rising import expenses brought on by uptick in global commodity prices and weaker local currency, the gross profit of the company increased 23% to Rs8.4 million in 9MCY22 from Rs6.8 million in 9MCY21.

The profit before taxation increased to Rs2.19 million in 9MCY22 from Rs1.85 million in 9MCY21.

The profit after taxation increased 9% to Rs1.49 million in 9MCY22 from Rs1.37 million in 9MCY21, reports WealthPK.

Home appliances division, which contributes 54.36% of the company's revenues

and has a market-competitive product line, is a significant revenue-generating segment. Despite the overall economic slowdown, the home appliances division grew its income by 3.96% year-over-year thanks to an effective nationwide sales and distribution network and customer-focused strategies.

Earnings growth analysis PEL's earnings per share have remained close to zero from 2018 to 2020. However, the EPS improved markedly in 2021.

The demand for the company's products started to recover in 2022, and the firm expects growth in its earnings in future.

Industry comparison Pakistan Cables Limited, EMCO Industries Limited, Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited and Hi-Tech Lubricants Limited are considered to be the competitors of Pak Elektron Limited.

PEL's price/earnings ratio (PE) remained at 5.4x, with a market capitalisation of over Rs9 billion.

Hi-Tech Lubricants Limited is the most overvalued company compared to its competitors, followed by Pak Elektron Limited.

Profitability PEL profitability is demonstrated by its net profit margin and gross profit margin. The net profit margin has remained quite depressed over the past years compared to the gross profit margin, which showed some healthy growth.

PEL was incorporated in Pakistan on March 3, 1956, as a public limited company under the now repealed Companies Act, 1913. The principal activity of the company is manufacturing and sale of electrical capital goods and domestic appliances. The company is organised into two divisions - power and appliances.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf addressing during seminar on "Empowering Women in Leadership" national Convention of Women Parliamentarians at Pakistan national Council of the Arts in Federal Capital.

60 suspects arrested in Nankana Sahib lynching case

LAHORE: The Nankana Sahib police arrested 60 suspects involved in the lynching of a man outside the police station on Saturday morning.

Several police teams launched a massive crackdown at the residences, business points, and other places to round up the suspects.

Sheikhupura Regional Police Officer (RPO) Babar Sarfraz Alpa said some 17 suspects/attackers have been nominated in the FIR.

He said the police were very clear in its action against the attackers whether they were from any religious organisation or a political party.

"Raids are underway for the arrest of others." Nankana Sahib District Police Officer (DPO) Asim Iftikhar told Dawn here on Sunday.

He said that the Warburton police lodged two first information reports, one against hundreds of suspects who attacked the police station and murdered Waris and the other for desecrating the Holy Quran.

He said that the police teams seized 923 video clips of the incident, and identified and arrested 60 of them, adding that the identification of more suspects was in process.

The forensic analysis of the

clips, mostly recorded with mobile phones, was also done.

According to the DPO, an 800-strong mob attacked the police station in order to illegally detain the man accused of blasphemy.

Mr Iftikhar said there were 50 police personnel who tried to save the man, but they were outnumbered.

He said that in response to an emergency call for reinforcement, several police personnel were on the way but the mob killed the man before their arrival. He said some 15 people arrested were members of a religious-cum-political party. Web Desk

Flour millers observe strike in Punjab

LAHORE: Flour millers in Punjab on Monday continued their strike in protest against raids of the Punjab food department for checking subsidised flour and wheat quota dispute.

However, Punjab Secretary Food Zaman Watto claimed uninterrupted wheat supply to the flour mills and availability of flour in the markets.

Flour millers had earlier announced strike across Punjab from Monday after having dispute with the provincial food department over wheat quota and raids on mills. The announcement was feared to create shortage of flour in Lahore and other cities of the province. Sources told that the

wheat quota of more than 100 mills had been suspended and that some mills in Lahore, Gujrat and Multan had already halted their operations.

According to Punjab Flour Mills Association (PFMA) president Iftikhar Matto, the millers want the food department to check the mills as per the defined standard operating procedures (SOPs). Punjab Food Secretary Zaman Watto, on the other hand, said no legal action was decided against the millers and that 80 per cent mills had lifted their quota of wheat. He claimed that majority of millers were against the strike. He, however, said the data of those, who were involved in four shortage

by inciting others for holding strike, was being gathered and was shared with the departments concerned.

Meanwhile, in a sign of a deepening rift between flour mills association and Punjab food secretary, Punjab Food Department has suspended wheat quota of 100 flour mills. Secretary Food Punjab Muhammad Zaman Wattoo said provincial government will not be blackmailed by anyone. He said the data of people was being collected who were instigating others to observe strike and create a short-age of flour in the market. Punjab Food Secretary said no decision had been taken against INP.



ISLAMABAD: Members National Assembly dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Syed Mohammad Ali Hosseini , and others cutting the cake during national day ceremony of Iran at a local hotel, in Federal Capital.

Govt has badly damaged reputation of green passport: Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former information minister Fawad Chaudhry stated on Monday the mindless policies of PML-N led federal government caused damage to the country which is currently reeling from economic and political crises. "This government has badly damaged the reputation of green passport," he said, adding that the current rulers were attempting to create hurdles in the way of PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

The PTI leader appeared before a district and sessions court to attend a hearing of the sedition case filed against him for inciting people against the members of the ECP and their families.

During the hearing, the

police investigators failed to submit the challenge in the case. To which, the PTI stalwart's lawyer Faisal Chaudhry requested the court to fix next hearing of the case after March 3 as by-elections on National Assembly seats are scheduled for March 16. Later, the session court adjourned the hearing till March 18.

Talking to media outside a court in the federal capital, the former minister said a sedition case had been formed against him, adding: "All my voters are traitors if I am the traitor". He said police could not submit a challenge in the sedition case.

Lashing out at the coalition governments, he said they had accepted PTI lawmakers' resignations but were not ready to hold elections. "PDM

leadership had lost its credibility and government officials could not face the public." "This government has damaged the reputation of green passport," he said, adding that the current rulers were attempting to create hurdles in the way of PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

He further said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was reluctant to implement a decision of the Lahore High Court (LHC) that polls in Punjab should be held within 90 days of the dissolution of the provincial assembly.

A case had been registered against Fawad Chaudhry in Islamabad's Kohsar police station on the application of ECP secretary, who blamed PTI leader for talking against INP.

Pink bus service to be launched in Hyderabad on Feb 18: Memon

KARACHI: After launching the country's 'first-ever' Pink Peoples Bus Service in Karachi, the Sindh government on Monday announced to introduce the service in Hyderabad.

Addressing a press conference in Karachi, Sindh information and archives minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon said the Pink Bus Service will be launched in Hyderabad on February 18. He said Pakistan is listed among the countries, which are providing separate transport services to women.

The Sindh minister also announced the expansion of Pink Bus Service's routes in Karachi from February 20. Memon terming the Peoples Bus Service, one of the best services in the world, said the expansion of routes of Pink Bus Service will facilitate the women commuters. Earlier, Sindh Transport Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon announced to launch pink taxi cab service for women in Karachi.

"The government has decided to launch tax services in Karachi under Sindh Mass Transit Authority," he said, adding that pink taxi service for women will be launched in the first phase. INP

Remittances dropped 11% to \$16 billion during the first seven months of current fiscal year

KARACHI: Workers' remittances to Pakistan fell to a 32-month low in January 2023, slipping below the \$2 billion mark, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The remittances recorded at \$1.89 billion, a decrease of 13% compared to the same month in the previous year and a drop of 10% compared to December 2022.

The low inflows have increased the country's reliance on foreign debt, which has already mounted beyond affordability. In the first seven months of the current fiscal year (July-January 2023), remittances dropped 11% to \$16 billion compared to \$18 billion in the same period last year.

The majority of remittances in January 2023 came from Saudi Arabia (\$407.6 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$269.2 million), the United Kingdom (\$330.4 million), and the United States (\$213.9 million). Experts believe the inflows will improve in the coming months after the devaluation of the rupee to around Rs270 against the US dollar in the interbank market. INP



KARACHI: Workers are busy in cleaning Nulla with the help of heavy machinery at Pak colony area in Provincial Capital.

Cyan Limited's returns spike, but profits plunge in 9MCY22: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Cyan Limited's returns increased 125% to Rs114 million in the first nine months of calendar year 2022 from Rs51 million over the corresponding period of 2021.

However, the company suffered loss-before-taxation of Rs320 million in 9MCY22 compared to profit-before-taxation of Rs547 million over the corresponding period of CY21, showing a negative growth of 158%.

Likewise, the firm's net loss stood at Rs292 million in 9MCY22, which was 164% down from a net profit of Rs457 million over the corresponding period of CY21, reports WealthPK.

By the end of the third quarter of CY22, the company had plans to change its strategy to

invest in high-yielding blue-chip firms with significant capacity for cash flow production. The company is rationalising its portfolio in order to minimise exposure from high beta securities and turn to dividend-paying value stocks. Additionally, the company is effectively controlling operating costs while optimising its leverage position.

The company is adjusting its investment portfolio strategy and rationalising bank leverage. The company may suffer further losses in the process, but once accomplished, it will have a low-beta portfolio that yields quite well. The earnings per share growth of the company remained strong from 2018 to 2020, but the growth trajectory

plunged in 2021 due to political and economic uncertainties.

Conversely, the earnings per share remained somewhat mixed from 2019 to 2021.

Industry Comparison Globe Residency REIT, MCB-Arif Habib Savings and Investments Limited, JS Investments Limited and Sindh Modaraba are regarded as rivals of Cyan Limited.

Investors use market capitalisation to determine the size of a firm, as it reflects the price investors are prepared to pay for a company's stock.

MCB-Arif Habib Savings and Investments Limited has the highest market capitalisation of Rs1.7 billion followed by Global Residency REIT's Rs1.5 billion. INP

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MCB-Arif Habib Savings and Investments Limited has the highest market capitalisation of Rs1.7 billion followed by Global Residency REIT's Rs1.5 billion. With a value of Rs1.3 billion, Cyan Limited has

the third-largest market capitalisation among its rivals.

Profitability The net profit margin peaked at 267.13% in 2018 before plunging to 39.05% in 2019. The net profit margin stood at 47.25% and 46.74% in 2020 and 2021.

Cyan Limited was incorporated in Pakistan on April 23, 1960 as a public limited company. The firm is a subsidiary of Dawood Corporation (Private) Limited. The company is engaged in making equity investments in companies with high growth potential. INP



LAHORE: A health worker administers polio vaccine drops to a child during a vaccination campaign in Provincial Capital.

Audio leaks: Shaukat Tarin booked in sedition case for 'derailing' IMF deal

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Monday booked former finance minister Shaukat Tarin in a sedition case pertaining to his alleged attempt to derail a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In August, a pair of audio leaks had surfaced in which a man, purportedly Tarin, was heard guiding Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab finance ministers, belonging to the PTI, to tell the coalition government in the Centre and



the IMF that they would not be able to commit to a provincial budget surplus in light of the monsoon floods that wrought havoc across Pakistan.

In a notice issued to Tarin in September, the FIA said an inquiry had been initiated against his alleged role on the basis of the audio leak.

Informed sources had told Dawn that the FIA, which completed a preliminary inquiry into Tarin's audio leaks, saw his leaked conver-

sations as "an attempt to disrupt" the IMF loan programme and funds, thereby causing harm to the national interest. It had subsequently approached the government with the request to initiate legal proceedings against the ex-finance czar.

On Sunday, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said that the government has given FIA permission to arrest Tarin.

The first information report (FIR), a copy of which is

available with Dawn.com, registered by the sub-inspector of FIA's cybercrime today, said that Tarin with "malafide intentions and ulterior motives" induced sitting provincial finance ministers of Punjab and KP — Taimur Jhagra and Mohsin Leghari.

It recalled that two phone call audio clips of the former finance minister with Leghari and Jhagra, which had gone viral, were thoroughly heard and analysed. "Shaukat Tarin clearly asked the finance min-

isters to write letters stating that their respective ministries will not return the surplus budget to the federal government, which will critically affect the then ongoing deals between the Government of Pakistan and IMF regarding the economic situation of the state," the complaint stated. It said that during the inquiry, Tarin was summoned and questioned regarding the alleged clips but he failed to provide satisfactory answers, Web Desk



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offering condolences to Turkish Ambassador in Pakistan Mehmet Paçacı over the loss of life and property in the recent earthquake in Turkiye, during his visit to the Embassy of Turkiye.

PSL-8: Three arrested for selling fake tickets in Multan

MULTAN: Police on Monday claimed to have arrested three accused of selling fake Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 8 tickets in Multan.

Multan's Mumtazabad police station took action against those selling fake tickets of PSL-8 and arrested three suspects during the operation.

Police say that 18 fake tickets, 2 LEDs, printers and other items have been recovered from the arrested accused.

It may be noted that the action-packed new season of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) is back to entertain cricket fans once again.

PSL season 8 will kick off in Multan with a grand opening ceremony followed by the curtain-raiser between defending champions Lahore Qalandars and Multan Sultans.

The Kings, on the other hand, will play their first match on February 14 against Babar Azam-led Peshawar Zalmi at National Bank Cricket Arena in Karachi. INP

Turkiye requests Pakistan to send surgical equipment, tents, dry fruits

ISLAMABAD: The Turkish government requested Pakistan to send surgical equipment, tents, blankets, and dry fruits for the quake victims, sources said.

The government of Pakistan National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) is in contact with the Turkish government through their ambassador in Pakistan.

Turkiye has appealed to Pakistan not to send medical teams and medicines at present. According to the Turkish government, medical teams from all over the world are arriving with medicines, so currently the victims need family tents, blankets and dry food due to the severe cold.

The Turkish government has appealed to Pakistan to send surgical equipments and medical devices. According to the Turkish government, earthquake victims need major and minor surgeries. As the number of surgeries increases, there is a shortage of surgical equipment and medical devices.

Sources say that Pakistan has agreed to send surgical equipments and medical devices to Turkiye and the first batch of the equipment will be sent this week via air.

Furthermore, it has been learned that Pakistan has decided to send aid to Turkiye via roads through National Logistic Cell. NLC trucks will enter Turkiye via Iran in seven days. INP

Baligh to take stakeholders into confidence on by-polls in 90 days

LAHORE: To follow the Lahore High Court (LHC) orders, Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman Monday decided to take stakeholders into confidence on the matter of conducting elections in 90 days.

The Governor of Punjab has called an important meeting to address the said matter on Tuesday, February 14 at the Governor's House in Lahore.

As per the channel report, the meeting was called in light of the order of the Lahore High Court regarding giving a date for elections in Punjab.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Secretary has also been invited by the Governor's House to the meeting to get some consultation on the date of the elections.

The report said Punjab Chief Secretary and IG Police Punjab will also participate in the February 14 meeting at Governor's House. INP

Powerful criminals must be held accountable for country's future: Imran Khan

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan said that Powerful criminals must be held accountable for country's future.

As per details, the PTI chief said that independent foreign policy defends the rights of people but in Pakistan, we make foreign policies for personal benefits.

He said Pakistan was indulged in the war on terror to please the US and 80,000 people lost their life as a result.

The former prime minister maintained that he tried to have better relations with Russia to get cheap wheat and oil but when he came back from the Russian visit the former Army chief asked him to condemn Russia for the Ukraine attack.

The PTI chairman Imran Khan said that the health card which was introduced in their tenure had one million health insurance. It was a protection for the poor people and the world applauded the initiative as well but unfortunately, the government rolled it back.

He further said that there is a rule of law in the west because they have true democracy which is for the benefit of their people. The state of Madinah made the people free spiritually. When the basic rights of people are given it helps to prosper society.

The current government don't want to hold elections and says that they don't have enough money but it's a contravention of the Constitution. INP

FIA books Shaukat Tarin in sedition case

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency on Monday booked former finance minister and PTI leader Shaukat Tarin in a sedition case under the PECA Act after completing investigations into an alleged video leak.

The FIA Cyber Wing filed the case under the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act after getting a nod from the government.

A day earlier, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah allowed the FIA to arrest the former finance minister after the agency sought the interior ministry's nod to detain him.

Tarin has been accused of sabotaging government's deal with the International Monetary Fund as has been revealed in a purported audio.

Besides Tarin, Taimur Saleem Jhagra and Mohsin Leghari have also been nominated in the case.

The case was registered under sections 124 and 505 on the complaint of Arshad Mehmood, s/o Ghulam Sarwar.

Last year, an audio tape was leaked in which a voice believed to be that of Tarin was advising the finance ministers of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to scupper the IMF deal by refusing to generate extra funds.

According to the FIA, Tarin failed to give satisfactory answer when questioned about the leaked audio tape.

The FIA also issued summons for Tarin asking him to participate in the process of investigation. INP

Two suspected robbers arrested after police encounter

KARACHI: Two suspected robbers were arrested in injured condition by police following an alleged encounter near Karachi's Bahadurabad area on Monday.

According to details, the police arrested two robbers in injured condition after an exchange of fire near Bahadurabad area of Karachi.

In a statement, the police said a patrolling team signalled suspected robbers — who were travelling on a motorcycle — to stop. Police gave them a chase while returning the fire. In the end, they arrested two suspected muggers in injured condition.

Illegal weapons, stolen mobile phones and a motorcycle were recovered from the possession of the arrested robbers, which were stolen and snatched from citizens.

Last month, two suspected street criminals were arrested in injured condition during a police encounter in Karachi's Shah Latif Town.

According to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Malir, Irfan Bahadur, a 'gun-fight' was held between the 'street criminals' and the police at Kachapaka Road in Shah Latif Town.

Two 'criminals' named Wajahat and Imran were arrested in injured condition after the exchange of fire with policemen. The police recovered three pistols, three mobile phones and a motorcycle which was later confiscated from the custody of the arrested 'criminals'.

The SSP said arrested 'criminals' were wanted by the police in cases of dacoities and street crimes in the area. INP



ISLAMABAD: Senator Nuzhat Aamir, Zuhra Fatmi and Farah Naz meet Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice-President and Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz.

KP's ophiolitic complex portal of precious metals: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The tribal areas of Pakistan have an abundance of base and precious metals, and their cohesive and non-stop mining can help the country overcome its socioeconomic insecurities, reports WealthPK.

Discussing with WealthPK the importance of framing the geological exploration activities in the ophiolitic complex (oceanic crust created in a mid-oceanic ridge) in Pakistan, Principal Geo-scientist in the Global Mining Company Islamabad, Muhammad Yaqoob Shah said, "Serious working to explore and use the earthen treasures of Pakistan can take it out of the vortex of economic crisis. The tribal areas in Pakistan are laden with a variety of precious minerals. i.e., copper, gold, silver, cobalt, nickel, etc. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province only, primary copper mineralisation can be seen mainly in Datta Khel, Shinkai, Manzar Khel, Madar Algada, Khaddar Khel, Spin Kamar, Shawal, Razin, Pre Ghar, Makin, Degan, Manra in South Waziristan, and Pai Khan in North Waziristan districts."

"The ophiolitic belt at the Pak-Afghan border in Waziristan district, covering an area of about 1127 sq. km, is rich in copper and many other precious minerals. The rock sequence in this belt mostly consists of sea bed environment including ultrabasic rocks; basaltic pillow lava; andesite; gabbro sheeted dykes; dacite along with their equivalents; i.e., diorite, granodiorite, etc. The sequence of sedimentary formations in this area is characterised according to the presence of pelagic sediments, i.e., limestone, jasperite, etc. Copper mineralisation in this area is strongly indicated by an on-the-ground associated stockwork of scattered gossans," he said.

Recalling memories, Yaqoob Shah said the defunct

authorities (1971-1996) — FATA Development Corporation, Governor Secretariat FATA, and FATA Development Authority (FDA), respectively — did exploratory work in the area.

"From identification to subsequent exploration of copper and other precious minerals, a multitude of activities was done, i.e., multi-scaled geological mapping, diversified sampling, geophysical surveying, etc. Through core drilling, 15 prospects of copper were demarked only in Shinkai. This area is still a subject of further exploration using techniques, i.e., induced polarisation, and added core drilling," he said.

"It is important to mention that the total area of core drilling consisted of 13,700 meters. From there, 37,000 samples were collected for chemical analysis, including 8,639 core samples, 2,856 hard rock samples on a grid pattern, and 37 geophysical sub-surface profiles. The results proved the existence of 8 million tons of copper-bearing ore. In the vicinities of Shinkai, only 27 million tons of ore were demonstrated. The average grades of minerals found in this ore were concluded as copper 0.8%, sulphur 10%, cobalt 0.11%, and silver having more than 1gm/ton, etc."

Yaqoob continued, "To reassess and verify the said findings, the services of a Chinese copper expert, Wang Zhitian, were sought. After his own field observations, he endorsed the accuracy and authenticity of the data generated by the PMDC. He also opined that more than 50 million tons of reserves could be projected by further geological exploration and core drilling in the vicinities of copper prospect in Shinkai. During the same period, about 36 previously drilled samples taken from Shinkai were reanalysed and the ratio of gold contents between 0.2-1.57 g/t was confirmed. At this stage, all the official activities got a sudden stop." INP

Consular Section of Chinese Embassy in Islamabad closed

ISLAMABAD: China has announced a temporary closure of the Consular Section of its Embassy in Islamabad from today (Monday, February 13, 2023) until further notice.

The China Embassy has issued a notice of Temporary Closure of the Consular Section on its website for the general public too.

The notice said, "Due to technical issues, the Consular Section of the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad will be temporarily closed from February 13, 2023, until further notice."

In case of emergency, please call 051-8496167 for questions about passport, travel documents, notarization and attestation. Applicants with other questions can also contact us at islamabad@cs.mfa.gov.cn." INP

OGRA notifies decline in LNG prices

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Monday has notified a reduction in prices of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for consumers of two public gas utilities — Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) — for February 2023.

According to details, the LNG price for SNGPL consumers has been reduced by \$0.61/mmbtu for February while for SSGC consumers the rate has been slashed by \$0.56/mmbtu.

After the reduction, the OGRA has fixed the LNG price at \$13.70/mmbtu for SNGPL consumers and \$14.31/mmbtu for SSGC consumers.

In January, the LNG price was \$13.95/mmbtu for the SNGPL consumers and \$14.51/mmbtu for the SSGC consumers. Earlier in January, OGRA approved a 74 per cent increase in the

prescribed prices of natural gas for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

According to details, the regulator allowed Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) to increase prices by up to 74.42 percent. It also allowed Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) to increase gas prices by 67.75 percent for the year 2022-23.

The oil and gas regulator approved increases of Rs406.28 and Rs469.28 per million British thermal units (mmbtu) for SNGPL and SSGC, respectively.

OGRA further said that the average gas price for SNGPL would reach Rs952.17 per unit from the existing rate of Rs545.89 per mmbtu, while that of SSGCL would reach Rs1,161 per unit from the current Rs692.63 per mmbtu.

Any revision as advised by the federal government shall be accordingly notified by OGRA. INP



KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA: Federal Minister Interior Rana Sanaullah visiting Diamer Bhasha Dam to assess overall security scenario at the project. Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen (Retd) Sajjad Ghani and National Coordinator NACTA Muhammad Tahir Rai also present.

China Study Center holds Art Exhibition on Pak, China friendship

ISLAMABAD: China Study Center, University of Peshawar is organizing three days Art Exhibition on the theme "PAKISTAN-CHINA ALL WEATHER FRIENDSHIP" focuses on China, Pakistan-China Friendship, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese Art and Cultural Heritage (buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, artifacts, traditions, language, calligraphy, culturally significant landscapes, and biodiversity) at China Study Center, University of Peshawar.

Students, Teachers, and artists across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are taking part in the Art Exhibition. A total of 50 art pieces were selected for the art competition by the organizers.

The Art Exhibition was inaugurated by Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani Secretary-General Pakistan China Friendship Association KP (PCFA) in the presence of Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study

Center, University of Peshawar, Dr. Fazlur-Rahman Associate Professor Department of Urban and Regional Planning, UoP and Dr. Nadir Ali Khan, Assistant Professor, UoP on February 13th, 2023. A large number of students, scholars, academia and teachers participated in the inauguration ceremony.

On the occasion Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani Secretary-General (PCFA-KP) said China Study Center, UoP is playing a vital role in bringing Pakistan and China closer. Through these kinds of healthy activities, people will be able to know more about China, its culture, history, and architecture etc.

He appreciated the efforts of Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study Center, University of Peshawar, and his team for organizing such important activities at CSC, UoP.

Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study Center, University of Peshawar on the occasion highlighted. INP

Justice Faez Isa lashes out at lawyers for observing strike

ISLAMABAD: Lashing out at lawyers for holding strike on their own will during hearing of a case against MS Punjab Industry Faisalabad, Supreme Court Justice Qazi Faez Isa remarked Monday that lawyers were violating code of conduct they had made themselves.

Two-member bench of the Supreme Court led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa heard the case.

The MS Punjab Industry Faisalabad is accused of stealing Rs67.8 million worth gas, Justice Faez Isa raised questions on lawyers strike and remarked that such judges should also be removed who, in their ruling, write that lawyers are on strike.

He further remarked that courts are following constitution and law.

"If everybody performs his own duty, country's system will work in a better way."

The Supreme Court was apprised of

trial court order wherein lawyers' strike was mentioned thrice. Justice Faez Isa was got infuriated over that.

"How can these lawyers observe strike? The licences of these lawyers should be revoked," Justice Isa remarked.

"The lawyers have made this code of conduct and they are themselves not following it. The judges who are writing on their order sheet that lawyers are on strike, should be removed," he observed.

"It has not been explained that why they are on strike, Justice Isa said.

"Should we pick the lawyers from their home now. Anybody goes on strike as and when he wishes so. Such a system to dispense justice should be abolished," observed Justice Isa.

"The whole system has become dysfunctional. Whole system of Pakistan runs on a technicality. We just follow law and constitution and God Almighty dispenses the real justice. INP