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Maryam Nawaz alleges PTI chief of depriving KP people of development



Speculation on social media regarding army chief visiting US 'baseless': ISPR

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves fall below \$3bn

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves held by the central bank decreased by \$170 million to \$2.9 billion in the week ending on February 3, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said on Thursday.

Pakistan finally 'reaches agreement' with IMF

The country is locked in nego-tiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to release

much-needed money under a stalled bailout programme.

A successful outcome with the IMF would also help to release money from other platforms that are looking for a greenlight from the lender. the lender. The SBP handout issued today

The SBP handout issued today said that the decrease was due to "external debt payments".

Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at \$5.6bn, bringing the country's total liquid foreign reserves to \$8.5bn.

Arif Habib Ltd calculated that

Arif Habib Ltd calculated that reserves were at their lowest since February 2014 and cover a little more than two weeks of

Matters between government and IMF were expected to be settled today,Dar

Earlier in the day, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that mat-ters between the government and the IMF were expected to be settled today



IMF's 9th review of its Extended Fund **Facility**

Cash-strapped Pakistan has been holding talks with

the IMF in a bid to unlock funds from a \$7 billion bailout designed to ward off an economic meltdown. The talks are meant to clear the IMF's 9th review of its Extended Fund Facility, aimed at helping countries with balance-of-payments crises. The lender had set

conditions several resuming the bailout, incl uding a market-determined exchange rate for the local currency and an easing of fuel subsidies. The central bank recently removed a cap on exchange rates and the go vernment raised fuel prices

First woman chairperson elected in Balochistan LGs elections

Sheikh Razzaq

For the first time in the history of local govern-ment elections, the first woman chairperson has been elected in Balochistan. Dr. Durroshum Ayesha Khan was elected as the chairperson Balochistan's Naseerabad Election Commission source say she was elected as chair-

she was elected as chair-person on union council 25 Naseerabad. "Undoubtedly, it is the first time in the history of local government elec-tions that a woman has been elected as chairper-son in Balochistan", Election Commission of Pakistan. Balochistan Pakistan, Balochistan chapter sources told this scribe on Thursday.

Dr. Durronsum Khan took oath as chairpeson of UC earlier

Earlier, Dr Durrosum Khan took oath and submitted nomination papers for the slot of chairperson of the union council Naseerabad However, no contestant appeared to contest the slot and subsequently she was elected unopposed

Parliam entary Law

Parliamentary Affairs Balochistan Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi, Sardar Behram Khan Buledi and other notables of the district were also present during the oath taking ceremony held at Dera Murad Jamali, the head-quarter of Naseerabad division.

She expressed the resolve to address education and health issues in the area

Talking to newly sworn-in councillors, Chairperson Durrosum Khan reiterated her resole to ensure the best medical, health

and sanitation facilities to the local population of her union council. She said that local government system is the basic unit in the democratic governments wherein the issues of the people are resolved by local government representatives on gross root

level.
"Parliamentary
Secretary Law and
Parliamentary Affairs,
Dr Rubaba is my role model in the politics and social work," she said, expressing her resolve to serve people of her constituency with same zeal and vigour. It merits mentioning here that newly-elect chairperson is health gradu-ate and passed Dars-e-Nizami from wifaqul

Speculation on social media regarding army chief visiting US 'baseless': ISPR

Inter-Services Relations (ISPR) Director General (DG) Major General Ahmed Sharif said on Thursday there was "baseless speculation on social media" that Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir was visiting the United States. In a statement on Twitter, the military's spokesperson said that the army chief was on an official visit to the United Kingdom from Feb 5 to Feb 10 in connection with the fifth Stabilisation

Conference



He added that the conference was a "bi-annual event for military to military cooperation

between the two countries' Senior Pakistan military

leadership has been participat-

ing in the event since 2016,' the ISPR DG said.

COAS Munir arrived in the UK on Sunday. At the time, Dawn reported that he would attend meetings on defencerelated issues, being held between February 5 and 9.

It was also reported that Gen Munir was in London to attend a conference at Wilton Park, an executive agency created by the UK Foreign Foreign

Commonwealth and Development Office to foster open dialogue between govern-

RO Dera Bugti convoy attacked, one levies man killed

The convoy of the Retaining Officer (RO) Dera Bugti was attacked by an unknown accused the Phelawagh area on Thursday According to the initial reports of the incident, one Levies per-sonnel was killed while three others were left

injured. Levies sources told that the injured were shifted to Dera Bugti Headquarters Hospital so that they can get timely treatment. "After first aid, the patients were shifted to Welfare Hospital Sui",



a senior administration official told Daily Quetta Voice. This incident has come on the eve of the election of chairmen and vice chairmen of municipal committees in Dera Bugti and other districts of Balochistan. Levies officials reached the spot as an investigation incident went underway. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for

اس مشکل کھڑی می

Account Title: Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Turkiye Earthquake Victims

> IBAN: PK18NBPA0001004182864740 Bank: National Bank of Pakistan

وزیر اعظم پاکستان کے قائم کردہ ریلیف فنڈ برائے متاثرین زلزلہ ترکیہ میں دل کھول کر امداد کریں

آل پاکستان نيوز پيپرز سوسائٹر



#PMReliefFundForTürkiye #PakStandsWithTürki

Bilawal welcomes Nong Rong's appointment as Chinese Assistant Minister

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has welcomed the Zardari has welcomed the appointment of former Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong as the Chinese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Speaking to Gwadar Pro, the FM said Ambassador Nong Rong played a great role in played a great role in bringing Pakistan and China even closer during his tenure as the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan. "I am sure Ambassador Nong Rong will perform exceptionally as the

Assistant of Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs. He is a really competent man," the FM mentioned Bilawal Bhutto said his interactions with Nong Rong were positive and produc-tive in the recent months.

The FM underlined that Pakistan and China were Iron Brothers and will continue to boost cooper-ation in all fields He highlighted the present government's commitment towards the China-Paki stan Economic Corridor stan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and completion of the CPEC projects on time Earlier, the State Council of China announced that Nong Rong, former Chinese ambassador to Pakistan, had been appointed had been appointed Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Nong Rong was previ-ously appointed Chinese ambassador to Pakistan in 2020. He held a farewell reception.INP

ments. Web Desk Cooperation among IPU states vital to promote peace, democracy: President

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday said that enhancing parliamentary cooperation among the member countries of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) holds key imporfor promoting democracy and tance sustainable development around the world.

While talking to the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Duarte Pacheco who called on him at President House, he reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to IPU's mission to work for peace, democracy, human



youth empower-and sustainable development through political dialogue and par-liamentary action.

President Alvi said that parliamentarians play a significant role in promoting international peace and conflict resolu-

tion. He emphasized that the world collectively needed to take steps to stop wars and bring peace to the world. He urged that parliamentarians of the world should work for global peace and prosperi-ty. The president briefed the visiting dignitary about the contribution made by Pakistan in the war against terror He said that Pakistan had lost thousands of people and security forces, besides suffering economic losses of over \$100 billion while fighting a long battle against terrorist ele-ments.INP

Maryam Nawaz alleges PTI chief of depriving KP people of development

Chief Organizer and Vice President Pakistan President Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Maryam Nawaz has alleged that Chairman PTI Imran Khan despite 10-year rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) failed to deliver and deprived the people of province of development. Addressing a massive workers' convention organized in Abbottabad on Thursday, she said that the former PTI government to protect its loot and plunders had closed down its own created Ehtasab Commission. Maryam Nawaz said that Bus Rapid Transit



(BRT) project was constructed on huge cost of Rs128 billion while on the same amount PML-N had constructed 4 metro bus projects. She blamed that during PTI's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, instead to make planta-tions under billion trees Affortration Project the Afforstration Project, the forests in the province were cut ruthlessly.Imran Khan had neither com-pleted 350 dams nor honoured his promise of pro-viding jobs to 10 million people, she said adding that unemployment were significantly increased in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the tenure of PTLINP

QUETTA VOICE Editor Asim Khan Destination of electables is PPP

in Balochistan nowadays

The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which failed to win a single seat during the general elections of 2018 in Balochistan is finally back. Electables, commonly called the ever-green and influential politicians have been joining the party for last more than a month. The seismic political shift in

ng the party for last more than a month. The seismic political shift in Balochistan is nothing new. Switching of loyalties and changing political parties normally take a place before every general election in the province, which covers half of the country in terms of area.

Winds of change blowing in Balochistan "Winds of change are blowing in Balochistan", is a commonly held notion in villages and cities of the province these days. Earlier this year, it was the Jamiat ul Ulema e Islam (F) with electables joining the religious party. However, PPP filled the vacuum. party. However, PPP filled the vacuum

Asif Zardari has no time to visit Balochistan because of crowds join-

ing the party
PPP supremo Asif Ali Zardari has no time to visit Balochistan to announce the joining of the electables because of the rush. The electables/evergreen politicians thronged the Bilawal House in Karachi and started joining the PPP and the party leaders preferred to receive them

Former federal minister Sardar Fateh Muhammad Muhammad Hassani, his son Umair Muhammad Hassani, Nawabzada Jamal Raisani, the son of Nawabzada Siraj Raisani, former Balochistan Minister, Tahir Mehmood Khan, Mir Mohyuddin Baloch, the former central leader of the Baloch Students Organization (BSO), Mir Fareed Raisani and others joined the party in Karachi. Three former provincial ministers including Mir Zahoor Buledi, Saleem Khan Khoso and Arif Jan Muhammad Hassani have already

Sardar Noor Ahmed Bangulzai also joined the PPP Sardar Noor Ahmed Bangulzai who is likely to contest elections against former Chief Minister Nawab Muhammad Aslam Raisani in Mastung has

As the ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) nears its permanent collapse, its leaders and workers have started joining other political parties. The BAP, which emerged as the largest parliamentary party prior to the 2018 general elections has practically collapsed since its incumbent CM Mir Quddus Bizenjo, and president Jam Kamal Khan are in contact with

other political parties for joining.

Despite ruling the province for five years, currently, none owns the party and gradually everyone parts ways with it.

Withering Public Institutions **Asghar Harifal**



EDITORIAL

The beleaguered pub-lic offices have come under a new wave of employee associations broadening the turf war The new rallying point is to assert the right for the coveted packages in wages given to the provincial secretariat. Guided by the tools employed by secretariat employees to secure bloated wages in comwith parison attached department, the number of associations has multiplied and the pre-existing ones have coalesced into a broader alliance.

have further They asserted to arrogate the positions of head of attached departments claimed by provincial secretariat employees. A few days back Balochistan Secretariat Employees Association announced its withdrawal from a grand

alliance employees' associations. The alliance was formed to put pressure on the government for demands they all shared, which included the rise in pay and allowances and to address the discrepan-

A growing number of employees adding public grievances

The growing number of employee associa-tions, in the name of their welfare, underscores the growing utility of forming pressure groups to protract spheres of influence. Taking a cue from the past, the growing trend will bring serious pres-sure on the frail institutional framework adding to public griev-

One of the phenomeengendered by growing pressure groups in the public, is written writ large that institutions have exponentially grown in size, while at the same time turned into pathetically ossified entities, foretelling their imminent fall. The eventuality

will not only bring about suffering for all employees associated with these institutions but it will also add to the flight of the public at large. The bloated oversize of public departments in association with their age-old calcified nature has turned them into a selfserving superstructure and lost relevance to the common man.

A department created for the general public turned into a service provider for employees only

A department created

for the service of the general public has turned into a service provider for their respective employees. All the offices at dis-trict, divisional or provincial levels have more affairs related to employees than that of the ones for whose welfare the same are creat-ed. The resources placed at the disposal of these institutions with the aim to alleviate the issues of citizens, are arrogated to themselves and have turned into a

bone of contention for members of the institutions. Speaking of personal experience of a department, with dis-trict and divisional level offices, it was noted that more than 90% of the correspondence made with that office was related to the personal affairs of the employees working in that department. It is the case with every public sector institution. Their raison d'etre is service unto

Element of powers keep their opponents at bay

The element of powers among employees' associations also include larger size, the larger the size, the more nuisance value to keep the oppo-nent at bay. At the provincial secretariat with the aim to enlarge its own size decades-old clerical staff positions are exponentially expanded leading to a 'one size fits structure. Despite specialization in every field turning into a norm, the public sector is stuck in an age-old management model. The information technology devel-

opment has turned the public sector structure into an obsolete entity. The manpower and the machine have found no compatibility. The only change in the last 75 years is that number of positions has shifted from one service group to another. Mutual bargaining among the service groups is termed reform in the system. A thirdbody assessment guided only by the public interest has never taken place. The resistance to cha nge has not only left the

public sector unworkable, the private sector has overtaken it in the market. When private sector services are required from the market, the public sector functionaries are found totally clueless about the trend in the market. Res ultantly, the public sector is uniformly characterized by sub-standard qua lity. The public sector has still not parted from the role, long performed by it but is now overtaken by t he private sector with b etter performance. A rol e swap from a player to a r egufator has still not tak e n place. The role of regul ator, which should have b een taken by the public s ector, is distasteful for it.

The author is a serving Balochistan Secretary for Archives and Culture

Time for an election

By Mosharraf Zaidi

The polycrisis in Pakistan rages on Urgent questions agitate the con-dition of the Pakistani. A sovereign default may not be imminent, but an exis-tential economic crisis has raged for months, perhaps years - depend-ing on who is measuring what. How long before economic difficulties cause major social unrest

The dissolution of the Punjab Assembly means that an already frayed federal compact could be tested more severely than at any stage since the 7th NFC Award and the 18th Amendment. How much dissonance provinces and across the federation can the existing system bear before subnational narratives and movements emerge as key variables in gover-

The terrorism of the TTP has surged in recent weeks. Can the country continue to send its soldiers and police personnel in harm's way without a coherent, politically feasible counter terrorism

strategy in place? Significant chunks of post disaster reconstruction remain pending from the 2005 earthquake and the 2010 floods. Will the reconstruction of the damage caused by the cli-mate change induced superfloods of 2022 fol-low a different trajectory?

Afghanistan is relatively stable after nearly four decades, but short periods of stability there have always produced long

periods of instability. Will the Taliban be able to sustain their control over Afghanistan's territory in a manner that eventually leads to the end of terrorist sanctuar-

ies in that country? Saudi Arabia is chang-ing rapidly, and for the better. Does the millenni-

al leadership of Pakistan's most vital strategic partner have the appetite to continue deal-ing with the dysfunction the dinosaurs of the Pakistani military and civilian elite?

China has responded to the domestic pressures that the strict Covid-19 lockdown in there had generated by opening up to travel. Suddenly there hope that economic growth forecasts could be revised upward. Will a once-again growing China revert to the pre-pandemic laissez faire infrastructure financing binge in countries like Pakistan?

There isn't an obvious right or wrong answer to any of these questions. Many of the determinants of these questions lie outside the jurisdiction of Yet there is one thing common to them all They are substantial questions. Can a weak and internally contradictory government, scared of its own shadow, try answer such questions?

Not even a little bit.

Pakistan has been aching for a free and fair election since 2018. The only way the country has any chance at tackling these questions is by conducting a truly free and fair election. Only a gov-ernment with a fresh mandate – even if such a mandate is conjured up through a coalition – can attempt to tackle these challenges. Absent the public's renewed confipublic's renewed confidence through an elec-tion, there is no version of Pakistan that will work

Of course, an election and a new mandate, even a thumping majority, do not guarantee that the resulting government will be able to tackle these questions capably. But they will be able to tackle them the way they want, the way the Pakistani wants. Since 2018, the decision of the military leadership to install a government of its own liking in Islamabad has meant that elected civil-ian leaders have neither the full agency to sink or swim on their own, nor the liability to be answerable for their decisions.

Imran Khan's populari-ty after losing the vote of no-confidence in 2022 is not easily explicable or replicable, but it is not entirely drawn from his charisma nor the appeal of Khan's lies about a global anti-Khan conspir global and-Khan conspir-acy. It is also not hinged on the anti-military tone that Khan adopted after being dumped by his once-upon-a-time patrons. What does explain some of Khan's appeal since 2022 is that he very clearly aligned all his weaknesses with the military leadership and all his strengths as his

own.
It seems unlikely that
the PML-N or PPP can
pull off such sophisticat-

ed and effective political messaging in the weeks and months to come - but there should no doubt about their attempts to do so in the not-too-distant future. Both PDM members will attempt to distance themselves from the cool shade of the military's bosom under which they currently reside. This is a manoeuvre both parties have honed over decades, and one that Khan has masterfully taken from under their noses. The military may have

gotten too used to having all power in Pakistan flow to it and through it. Things that feel good are easy to catch and hard to quit. Claims of the military being neutral or having dissociated from poli-tics were clearly greatly

exaggerated.
All of these factors make an early and immediate general election even more imperative. No one in Pakistan should be more keen for a free, fair and credible general election than the military – so it can rid itself of the stench of the post 2016 era and the mistakes of 2018, 2022 and everything before, during and after. But as ever there are vultures and parasites lined up from here to eternity, ready to argue against the most obvious way for-ward for the country. Three of the arguments merit dismantling, early and often.

The first and most frequent argument against an immediate election is the one used by many that are understandably con-

vinced that absent a PTI victory, Imran Khan will refuse to accept the out-come of any election. This is true and has been proven in 2013. But what happened in 2014 was more important. Khan camped out, kind of, at D Chowk - and he huffed and puffed as is his wont but he could not blow this house down. An eleclegitimate Nawaz Sharif survived the triple threat of Tahirul Qadri, Imran Khan and the invisible hand of Pakistani politics. Winners aren't whiners. Hold a free and fair election. The loser won't have the correction to the correction of the loser won't have the correction to the correction. the capacity to destabilize or undermine a real winner - just like 2014. Besides, if Khan is

not going to accept any-thing but a victory, then holding an election in October 2023 or holding it in April 2023 will make no difference. Hold the election. As soon as posmatters The second argument against an immediate announcement of elections is that the country and its economy aren't stable enough for an election. But this was true a year ago, and the economy has gotten worse since then. Yes, Shaukat Tarin lined the Finance Division with landmines,

minimum this represents careless handling of sensitive material.

norms has become a disap-pearing commodity in US politics, as it has been in so

ast 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 presi-dent, as well as at his home. As expected, the political brouhaha has hit very high decibels. Both - Trump Biden's possession of classified documents - are under investigation by the Department of Justice. Biden claims to not have any knowledge of such documents in his former office, while Trump had asserted his authority to keep whatever he wanted. "I could declassify whatever documents I wished' therefore everything I had was declassified, he has asserted. As for Biden, at a

The Department of Justice having to investi-gate two presidents is quite unprecedented. It appears that in recent years adher-

ence to laws or ethical

many other countries. Shortly after the conclu-

sion 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 experi-ence, his faith, and what his family has endured over generations were all fabricated. How he man-aged to lend \$700,000 to his campaign is under investigation for possible campaign finance viola-

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 shock-ing 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

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

Ethics and politics officer has received a fivemonth prison sentence. Trump has brushed off the entire episode by simply calling it "politically moti-

vated. 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 pres-ident Obama to fill a seat in the US Supreme Court that had become vacant. When Obama nominated a candidate to fill the seat, as stip-ulated by the Constitution, the Senate leader simply ignored it, leaving the Supreme Court one seat short for almost a year. Leader McConnell cited his constitutional right to

not give the presidential nominee a hearing 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 con-stituencies and sparing some time for those who vote them into power.

In the past, Greek city states, including Athens, used to have a mecha-nism that could help them learn about people's sen-timents. Even Sparta, which was dictatorial in nature, had crafted some principles that would enable them to have firsthand 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. provincial capitals, enjoying luxuries of life in elite housing societies and upscale neighbour-hoods. It is true that they show up at the funerals of some focal 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 constituencies to meet their voters and learn about their prob-lems. After becoming public representatives, they completely ignore their voters who come in droves to cast their votes and help them win.

Our prime ministers, who should be in the upper and lower houses of parliament to answer the questions of public representatives, find excuses to avoid these sessions. It is true that some former prime ministers did attend the ses-sions, but it is also a bitter truth that most of them frequently offer excuses to remain absent from such gatherings.

For instance, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif was criticized by a number of critics for giving less time to parlia-ment during 2013 and 2017. He reportedly attended 63 days during his tenure after which he disqualified. Nawaz's nephew Hamza Sharif attended only 31 sessions. His younger brother Shehbaz Sharif was criticized for skip-ping various sessions of the Punjab Assembly the Punjab Assembly despite being the leader of the house. During the same term,

the political rival of the Sharifs, Imran Khan, also had the lowest attendance in parliament. During the 2013-2018 term, he attended only 20 National

Assembly sessions out of the total of 465. Not only do prime min-isters and chief ministers love to ignore parliamen-tary sessions, but federal and provincial ministers also follow in the foot-steps of their political

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

Those who monitor

affairs

parliamentary

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 con-stituents, 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 proj-ects 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 Balochistan, millions of people have either been displaced or their liveli-hoods destroyed because of these projects. Due to anti-encroachment drives, thousands of peo-ple 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 local-ities. 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 demon-strate 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 ernment colleges where rich people would get an opportunity to interact with students from differ-ent financial backent grounds. 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 ven-dors outside these areas used to be one of the ways connecting the rich of the country to veg-etable 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 monigy, the workers can informed to 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

but Ishaq Dar is doing the

same. The economy can-not recover without diffi-

cult decisions that require

the electorate's mandate. The desperate retired

uncles arguing otherwise

as they salivate at the prospects of an unelected

cabal of technocrats tak-

ing over Pakistan.

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 rul-ing elite has weakened trade unions and banned

student organizations deliberately. Consequently, it has become almost impossible for a low-income per-son 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 wealth increase alone (to say nothing of their pre-pandemic billions) could end world hunger and double the incomes of 545 overwhelming majority of our lawmakers in provincial assemblies and parliament are million-aires 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

eginning on May 24, the W o r I d Economic Forum is gath-ering in Davos, Switzerland for an in-per-son meeting, discussing the global tax system and financial inclusion. Thanks to protests and new research, however, participants will not be participants will not be able to avoid the elephant in the room: the surging inequality of wealth dur-ing the pandemic.

As the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and Inequality org have docu-mented over the last two

mented 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

million small-scale farm-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 billion-aires could generate upwards of \$2.52 trillion a year. That's enough to life 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 lowand 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-congratuations." 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 prob-lems as little more than a

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

By Chuck Collins letter directly to the World Economic Forfum offices in New York and Geneva, and attended pro-taxation demonstrations at the out-

skirts of the elite com-pound 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 billion-aires 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 farm-

ers.
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 the strict 2 percent for these 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.

MGI playing key role to fulfill food requirements of Pakistan: Atif Akram

I S L A M A B A D : Business leader, Director Finance and Marketing Mujahid Group of Industries (MGI), Atif Akram Sheikha has said that Pakistan has become that Pakistan has become the third largest importer of cooking oil after China and India, and we feel proud as MGI is playing its positive role in fulfill-ing the food requirement of Pakistan.

He was speaking dur-

He was speaking during a ceremony organized on Thursday to celebrate the MGI's clinching of title of the country's largest importer of edible oil for the fifth year in a row. MGI is a leading industrial conglomerate with interests in edible oil, construction, steel, and other businesses.

Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as Chairman PVMA, VP of FPCCI and President ICCI said that we have been achieving this milestone because of the efforts of our dedicated team which is honest, loyal, and hardworking.

MGI staff deserves appreciation for provid-ing their best to the company and I am truly amazed at what these team members

collective efforts and want to thank them for their service, he added. Sheikh said that our

domestic production is unable to meet the demand therefore demand Pakistan has to rely heavily on imports to meet the gap between demand and supply which can be bridged if local cultivation of oilseeds is pro-moted. One of the biggest food imports for Pakistan has historically been palm oil which is one of the cheapest oils when it comes to cooking food in most countries INP

ISLAMABAD: Twenty new projects are on the way of com-pletion in 2023 and onward years as per their scheduled timeframes, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro

Defence University, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

on Thursday.

These projects entail desalination potable water plant, Gwadar
Free Zone North (Phase 11),
Gwadar Safe City Project, New
Gwadar International Airport,
three electricity projects,
Gwadar Smart Port City Master
Plan, Gwadar Tourism, Project Plan, Gwadar Tourism Project, New management model of Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI), State of Art Shipyard Project, Oil Refinery project, Green Gwadar Project, Pak-China Friendship Hospital, fisher community projects, Gwadar Port dredging

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber

President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Thursday said politicians need to first fill empty stomachs of starving people instead of focusing on filling jails.

In a statement issued here, he said that in the current alarming

said that in the current alarming situation, the agitation is being planned by the politicians who are responsible for the destruction of the economy.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the poster boy of the previous

the poster boy of the previous government delayed the deal

with the IMF until he was removed from office in April

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi in a group photo with senior Civil Servants

from Sri Lanka who are attending a two-week training programme at National

20 new projects in Gwadar

on the way of completion

project, Export-oriented projects, Fishing industry, Warehouse industry, and Gwadar Huafa Exhibition and Trading Center.

According to the report, over the last 10 years since CPEC set its foot in 2013, Gwadar outlook is changing gradually and constructively, getting over daunting challenges including poverty, civic issues, water, electricity, ty, civic issues, water, electricity, employment, infrastructure, agriculture and on top of them blue economy.

In the past Gwadar was in shamble and disarray. Later in

the course of 10 years, Gwadar has been making headway toward progress in a sustainable

Many development projects have been completed so far

Politicians need to fill empty stomachs

instead of jails: Shahid Rasheed

Hafeez Sheikh was dismissed and Hammad Azhar was given

the charge, after which a former

banker was given the portfolio of the Finance Ministry for the

The banker cum finance min-ister started a new crisis by

avoiding improving the econo-my and doling out packages to the billionaires, which did not

give the people anything, but the

growth rate became six percent. Foreign exchange reserves decreased by fifty percent, while

the value of the rupee decreased by seven percent due to the poli-

cies of the former government, he informed Mr. Butt said that those who came after him did

sake of artificial development.

during 2023: Report including Gwadar Port, Gwadar Free Zone South (Phase I), Eastbay Expressway, Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI), China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School, Fiber Optic, E-Custom system (WeBOC), Plant Tissue Culture Lab & Green House, livestock, women-led garment factory, Gwadar University and GDA-Indus Hospital.

On the back of these successes, more than 20 new projects are on the way of completion in

are on the way of completion in 2023 and onward years as per their scheduled timeframes.

become a tradition that every outgoing government leaves

not allow the new government to

function. Every new government has to knock on the door of the

IMF to survive, he said, adding that the PTI government has

shown the worst economic per-formance while PML-N also damaged the economy. PTI and PML-N boasted a six

percent growth rate during their tenure, but this growth rate had nothing to do with investment,

industry, and revenue. Rather, it was the result of

showering resources of the country on the elite. Until the

serious problems that do

The city's strategic location at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, coupled with its deep-sea port and modern infrastructure, makes it a hub for trade, trans-portation, and investment.INP

arrest five drug peddlers ISLAMABAD: The Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) in crack-

Saudi Arabia

assures full

support in

rehabilitation of flood victims

KARACHI: Saudi Arabia has assured the Sindh government its full support in rehabilitation of flood affectees in the province. The assurance was given by Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malkin a meeting with Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Shah in Karachi on Thursday. Syed Murad Ali Shah informed the visiting Ambassador that his government wants to construct homes with two rooms, a corridor, kitchen and washroom for affectees and said that revival of agriculture and irrigation sector is a big challenge.

a big challenge. He expressed the determination

that with the help of donors' con-ference the promise of rehabilita-tion of affectees will be fulfilled.

The Saudi Ambassador congratu-lated Sindh Chief Minister for

holding successful donors confer-ence and assured that Saudi Arabia will cooperate with the Sindh gov-

ernment in construction of homes for flood affectees.INP

ANF recovers huge

quantity of drugs,

downs against smugglers of con-traband items countrywide, arrested five drug peddlers and recov-ered a huge quantity of drugs from their possession. According to a spokesperson of the ANF, the force recovered 72 kg of hashish from the pick-up vehicle near Karachi Toll Plaza Super Highway and arrested two drug peddlers.INP

Pirzada demands PM to withdraw bill of enhancing punishment for disrespecting Ummahatul Momineen, Ahle-Bait, Sahaba

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada has demanded Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to withdraw the bill of enhancing punishment for disrespecting Ummahatul disrespecting Ummahatul Momineen, Ahle-Bait and Sahaba, unanimously passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan

In a letter addressed to the prime minister, the federal minister was of the view that the bill was aimed to dominate the majority over minority, therefore should be with-drawn INP

Pakistan needs to focus on localisation to achieve SDGs: WealthPK and transportation," she "Local She said that local gov-

ISLAMABAD: The policymakers and practi-tioners should focus on localisation to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), set by the United Nations, at the national level in Pakistan,

WealthPK reports.
According to develop-ment experts, local governments can play a vital role in the achievement enforcement They said that bodies could local enforce development pro-grammes in a befitting manner. Khursheed Romina

Alam, the Convener of National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, told WealthPK that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) must be pushed by "localising" SDGs as regional and local governments could play a vital role in that

regard This concept pertains to the empowerment of local governments that provide services such as food security, water sup-ply, sanitation, drainage and waste managements
The local governments
can also influence the quality and accessibility of national government-provided services such as welfare, health, education

ernments should develop and implement policies and regulations that sup-port the achievement of the SDGs. "This can include the development of local-level plans, pro-grammes and projects that are aligned with the SDGs. The policies should be designed to address the specific challenges and opportunities that exist in the local area and ensure that the SDGs are integrated into all aspects of local govern-ment activities, she

Khursheed Romina that adequate resources were key to achieving the SDGs. She said that local governments in Pakistan needed to allocate sufficient resources in their budgets

for SDG implementation. She said that local gov-ernments should prioritise and reallocate existing resources to support the implementation of the SDGs. The local govern-ment can also explore new and innovative financing mechanisms, such as partnerships with the private sector and international organisa-tions, to mobilise addi-tional resources for SDGs

governments need to adopt a proactive and holistic approach to achieve SDGs. Currently, no one at the local level is aware of SDGs. Comprehensive aware-ness and orientation campaigns and training should be launched for this purpose. The relevant people should be trained to get the knowledge and skills necessary for such planning," said Romina Khursheed. She said that the plan-

ning and development department should make it mandatory for local levels to do SDGs-based planning. No scheme should be approved with-out evidence that it contributed to priority areas as identified through SDGs planning, she

added Mian Rajan Sultan Peerzada, the President of the Association for Development of Local Governance said that collaboration between dif-ferent levels of govern-ment was essential for ensuring that the SDGs were implemented in a coordinated and consistent manner across Pakistan ADLG has been established as an alliance of the provincial local council associations of all



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi writes his comments in the visitors' book at the Turkish Embassy.

Pakistani girl has dialogue with Chinese astronaut on space science

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani girl has dia-logue with Chinese astronaut on space science, Gwadar Pro reported on

Thursday Aasiya Ismail, a 17year-old girl from Islamabad Model School for Girls, had the chance to express her thoughts and questions to Chinese astronaut and got reply on the ceremony of the return Pakistan's seeds from the Chinese space station held here at COM-

In her letter, Aasiya Ismail wrote, "I have been a student of science for almost ten years now Science is a discipline that is a form of art for She also asked mul-

tiple scientific questions regarding the Pakistan-China space breeding project and life in space. "I'm so happy to receive your letter and get

to know you are interest-ed in science", Liu Boming, a veteran astro-naut who has carried out manned mission twice and conducted China's first spacewalk, says in a video reply in which shares his space flight

experience.
In 2008, he, together with his colleagues Mr. Zhai Zhigang and Mr. Jing Haipeng, was sent to space. The shocking experience inspired him to improvise a line of poem, "overlooking the homeland, the same glob-al village, looking across the Sun and the Moon,

the same space city".

In 2021, he flied to space again, and became one of the first group of astronauts stationed in the Chinese Space Station The Shenzhou 12 manned space mission also sets many other China's firsts: the first long-term astro-

naut residence, the first autonomous manned rapid rendezvous and docking, the first comprehensive orbit verification of controlled bio-protection technology in the regenerative environ-

"Among them, the most memorable one to me is the extravehicular activity, which allowed me to see the earth from a larger and wider perspeche recalled vividly It was on this space trip that he realized his

biggest dream, to be part of China's first human-robotic arm combination, for which he had been working hard for 13 years from 42 to 55 years old. He also recommended the live broadcasting pro-gram Tiangong Classroom to Aasiya Ismail, which can answer many of her questions.INP

The cabinet approved 116 million rupees for the project. The cabinet approved the name of Imtiaz Ali Shah for appointment as managing director of the Sindh Energy Efficiency and Conservation Agency INP Constitution, law to be

Provincial minister Manzoor Wassan said that the project has been aimed at introducing changes in agri-culture keeping in view the climate change. "This, 3.4

billion project will be implemented in coordination

"The crop cultivation methods will be changed in view of the climate change," CM Murad Ali Shah said. "The objective will be to enhance per acre yield of crops and water conservation," the chief minister fur-

with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Sindh govt fixes wheat support price at Rs 100 per kg

followed in holding general elections: Kaira

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira has said that the Constitution and law will be fol-

lowed in holding general elections in the country.

Talking to a private news channel here on Thursday, he said the conduct and holding of elections was the primary and essential duty of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), particularly Article 218 (3) to ensure the holding of fair and free elections.

Qamar Zaman Kaira was of the view that the Election Commission would announce the date of hold-

ing general election after taking the provincial governments on board, so that the provinces can play their role

in the form of security and personnel.

Holding of elections on separate days would not only increase the election expenditures twofold but also make the task for law enforcement agencies (LEAs) difficult for providing foolproof security, he clarified. The Advisor to PM also said that conducting by-elec-

tions on vacant seats of Punjab and National Assembly on the same day would save money and ensure fool proof security because the police officers and teachers had to perform duties during the polls, adding that the same employees would be performing their duties in the census as well.INP



QUETTA: A vendor preparation traditional roasting chiken "Sajji" along roadside.

Pakistan climbs to 9th place in app download worldwide: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Pakista n recorded 3.5 billion downloads in CY2022, standing in ninth place in the world compared with the 12th position in 2021 when the downloads stood at 2.6 billion. As a result Pakistan is

As a result, Pakistan is by far the fastest-growing apps market, with downloads up 35.4%. That's almost three times higher than China's 12.9%, than China's 12.9%, which saw the second-

which saw the second-highest growth.

According to Insight data ai, a global tech research agency, Pakistanis spent 161.2 billion hours on mobile in 2022, up from 134.1 bil-lion hours the year-before. This part the counbefore. This put the country in the sixth place, the same as in 2021. Unsurprisingly, China tops this chart with a whopping 1.16 trillion hours, while India fol-lows behind at 655.6 bil-lion. The global mobile ad spending grew 14% to reach \$336 billion, driven by short video apps. Data.ai report said Instagram was the most downloaded app in 2022.

downloaded app in 2022. This finally ended TikTok's two-year reign, as the short-format video giant slipped to second place. Meanwhile, place. Meanwhile, Facebook came in third despite all the talk around its plateauing growth. It also led in terms of monthly active users, which is probably a better metric for a company its size. In fact, the next three biggest apps — WhatsApp, Instagram and Messenger — also belong to Meta.

According to the Pakistan Telecommuting Authority (PTA) data,

there are 4.9 billion Internet users worldwide, of which 3.2 billion (approximately 85% of the total) are from lowermiddle-income countries. The gender gap in Internet usage in these countries has been narrowing over the years. While the gap declined to 15% in 2020, it surprisingly widened to 16% in 2021. Pakistan is one country where gender gap in mobile Internet usage, although still substantial, has narrowed down, com-pared to India and Bangladesh, where it has Bangladesh, where it has widened According to the GSMA survey, Pakistan had an Internet usage cander gap of 38% in gender gap of 38% in 2021, which has since However, when it comes to using cases of Internet per week.INP

Panther Tyres Ltd milks hefty profits in 2QFY23: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Panth er Tyres Limited's (PTL) gross profit surged by 64% in the second quarter of the Fiscal Year 2022-23 compared to the first quarter (Jul to Sept) of the same year, WealthPK reports. In the second guar-

ter, a gross profit of Rs603 million was reported whereas a Rs367 million gross profit was reported in 1QFY23. The gross profit ratio moved to 12.54% in 2QFY23 from 8.19% reported in 1QFY23.

The company reported a 7% increase in revenue in 2QFY23. Sales of Rs4.8 billion were reported in 2QFY23 compared with sales of Rs4.4 billion recorded in 1QFY23.

Increased opera-tional and financial costs caused the company to bear a net loss of Rs267 million. In the second quarter of FY23, the PTL bounced back and ended the quarter with a net profit of Rs131

million For its shareholders, Panther Tyres Limited produced earnings of Rs0.78 per share in 2QFY23 whereas the company bore a loss of Rs1.59 per share in the first quarter of the

same fiscal year. Since 1983, company has been engaged mainly in the manufacture and sale of tyres and tubes and related products called automobile parts and accessories on the PSX With a market capitalisation of Rs2.9 billion, PTL is the fourth largest company

in its sector

Panther Limited - Profitability

Collective of two quarters of trade, the company's financial performance

6MFY23 dipped compared to the corresponding period of the last Fiscal Year 22.

The sales value declined to Rs9.3 billion in 6MFY23 compared to the sales of Rs9.4 billion made in 6MFY22. The gross profit shrank from Rs1 billion in 6MFY23 to Rs971 million in 6MFY22

The gross profit-tosales ratio 6MFY23 was reported to be 10.44% whereas the GP ratio for the corresponding period in FY22 was 11.02%.

The company reported a net loss of Rs135 million in the six months of the Fiscal Year 23. The net profit ratio of 2.74% dropped to minus 1.45%

The net loss brought a negative EPS value to the company shareholders. The company underwent a loss per share of Rs0.81 in 6MFY23.INP



KARACHI: Pakistani fishermen, who were released by the Indian government, are greeted by their family members as they arrive in the port

"Capacity Development of Agriculture extension services in Balochistan' seminar held

Islamabad: A two-day seminar 'Capacity Development of Agriculture extension services in Balochistan' was jointly conducted JICA, API & NARC.

jointly conducted JICA, API & NARC.

The 4-years project is jointly executed by JICA, API & NARC and Department of Agriculture Extension Balochistan. Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali was the chief guest. DG, National Agricultural Research Center, Dr. Shehzad Asad, Chief Advisor API/JICA, Mr. Kosuke Sawada, DG, (ARI) Balochistan, Dr. Muhammad Qasim Kakar, Representative DG, Agriculture Extension Balochistan Mr. Abdul Karim Jafar, besides a large number of Provincial Agriculture Officers and Field Assistants also participated in the program at the National Agricultural Research Center Islamabad.

Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali said that we are producing high quality crops in Balochistan province so training and research are very important to support the development of agriculture in the province.

Dr. Ali said that capacity building of agriculturists and farmers is crucial in elevating agriculture development in the province.

in the province.

Chairman PARC has expressed special thanks to Japanese Government for launching capacity building program in Pakistan. Dr. Ali said that the program to facilitate growers will ultimately contribute in improving the country's economy. He added that through improving the production of fruits & vegetables in Balochistan province, we can also boost the country's exports. Furthermore The Chairman said that PARC scientists can



HATTIAN: Students attend their class as sitting on snow outside Govt. Girls Primary School after the heavy snowfall in the area.

China opposed to defining entire China-U.S. relations by competition: FM spokesperson

BEIJING: China urged the United States to view China in an objective and rational way, follow a positive and practical China policy, and work with China to bring bilateral relations back on a track of stable and sound devel-

chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning made the remarks at a daily press briefing in response to a query about the Chinarelated comments in U.S. President Joe Biden's recent State of the Union address, according to XINHUA.

China has always believed that China-U.S. relations should not be a zero-sum game where one side outcompetes or thrives at the expense of the other, Mao said, adding that their respective success constitutes opporopment. Chinese

respective success constitutes opportunities rather than challenges to each other, and the world is big enough for the two countries to develop themselves and prosper together.

China will neither shy away nor be fearful of competition but is opposed to using competition to define the entire China-U.S. relations, smearing a certain country under the pretext of competition and restraining the legitimate development rights of other countries, even at the expense of globindustrial and supply chains, Mac

The spokesperson added that stable and sound China-U.S. relations are in line with the fundamental interests of the two peoples and also meet the common expectations of the interna-

tional community.
China will handle its ties with the United States based on the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, and at the same time, China will resolutely safeguard its sovereignty, security and development interests, Mao said. INP

SHC moved against 'disappearance' of PA secretary

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) has been moved against the disappearance of Punjab Assembly Secretary Muhammad Khan Bhatti Secretary Muhammad Khan Bhatti from Sindh's Matiari district. The plea against the 'disappearance' of the Punjab assembly secretary was moved by his son-in-law, Umer Iftikhar Bhatti. The applicant stated that PA secretary was 'picked' from Matiari on February 6. Fearing torture, Umer Iftikhar pleaded with the SHC to pass orders for the immediate recovery of orders for the immediate recovery of

his father-in-law.
Later, the SHC issued notices to the inspector general of police, DG Rangers Sindh and the interior ministry and sought a response from them within 10 days.

Earlier this week, sources within ikistan Muslim League-Quaid ML-Q) claimed that Punjab Pakistan (PML-Q) Assembly Secretary Muhammad Khan Bhatti had been arrested from

Matiari. Former Punjab chief minister (CM) Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has expressed concerns over the arrest, saying he fears that Bhatti may be subject to forcible disappearance. INP

One killed, one injured in collision of Inhar vehicle with a tree

AHMEDPUR: The driver of the Inhar department vehicle had died while the canal guard was seriously injured as a result of a collision of the vehicle with a tree while chasing the suspects of sand theft from Panjnad Canal in Tehsil Ahmedpur Sharqia of Bahawalpur district of Punjab on

Thursday.

The body of the deceased and the injured was shifted to the hospital in critical condition, sources said.

17 dead, several injured in bus-trail-er collision near KohatAccording to the sources, the suspects involved in sand theft were stealing sand from Panjand Canal INP

IAEA Chief to visit Pakistan next week: FO

ISLAMABAD: Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi will visit Pakistan next week from 15-16 February 2023. During his two-day visit, he will hold high level meetings including with the Foreign Secretary and undertake visits to Secretary and undertake visits to different institutions employing nuclear technology in the fields of health, agriculture, industry and

power generation.
Speaking at her weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has stated that IAEA Chief visit will provide an opportunity to Pakistan and the IAEA to explore avenues to advance cooperation in peaceful applications of nuclear technology for socio-eco-nomic development.

Responding a question she stated that Secretary General Asian Cooperation Dialogue Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana is in Pakistan and is having meetings with senior officials. She said dur-ing these meetings Pakistan has reaffirmed its desire for multilat-eralism and forging mutually ben-eficial relationship with all member states of Asian Cooperation Dialogue.

About the ongoing situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the spokesperson said India is carrying out an evic-tion drive in the occupied territory to dispossess the Kashmiris of their land. She said no such prac-tice can subdue the Kashmiri people and Pakistan will continue to support them in their just struggle for right to self-determination. In the recent years, in some states of India, bulldozers have been used to demolish properties of Muslims to terrorize them. Regrettably, that model is now being replicated in IIOJK. It is unfortunate that Indian authorities are using land as a weopon to intimidate the peo-ple of IIOJK, she added About the situation in Turkiye and Syria after the earthquake, the spokesperson said we are in con-tact with the officials there and so

Not liable to give date for elections, Punjab governor tells LHC

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman on Thursday told the Lahore High Court (LHC) that he was not liable to announce a date for the elections, arguing he has not dissolved the provincial assembly. The governor stated this in a reply to a petition filed by a citizen Munir Ahmed against him for not announcing the election date after the dissolution of the

assembly.
"It is emphatically denied that
the answering respondent No 1
was in any manner obligated to
appoint the date of elections when
he has never dissolved the appoint the date of elections when he has never dissolved the Assembly while acting on the so-called advice of the Chief Minister," the governor state in its eight-page reply to the LHC. He also rejected an impression that his move is creating any hur-

that his move is creating any hur-dles in the way of ECP to dis-charge its duties, calling the alle-

gations fallacious. "The content of the instant para are denied to be false, vexatious and completely unfounded. It is unfortunate that malafides have been attributed to the answering

been attributed to the answering respondent in complete disregard of the provisions of the Constitution," the governor said while pleading the court to dismissed the petition.

Meanwhile, LHC Justice Jawad Hassan also heard an identical plea filed by the Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) seeking the announcement of a date for elections in the province. The hearing announcement of a date for elec-tions in the province. The hearing was attended by when PTI lead-ers, including Asad Umar, Fawad Chaudhry, and PML-N leader Rana Mashood and others. Mr Chaudhry pleaded the court to decide the case tomorrow (Friday) as further delay would affect the 90-day.INP

Rain, thunderstorm with snowfall over hills expected

ISLAMABAD: Cloudy weather with rain-wind, thunderstorm, hailstorm snowfall over the hills is expected in north Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, upper and central Punjab.

Moderate to isolated heavy snow with rain is expected in Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Murree and Galliyat. Temperature of some major cities recorded. Islamabad and Peshawar ten

degree centigrade, Lahore and Quetta twelve, Karachi twenty, Gilgit six, Murree one and Muzaffarabad eight degree centi-

grade. According to Met Office forecast for Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, cloudy weather with chances of rainthunderstorm and snow is expect-ed in Srinagar, Jammu, Pulwama, Anantnag, Shopian and Baramula cloudy with chances of rain and

said that rain-wind and thunder-storm (with isolated hailstorm) is also expected in Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Mohmand INP

snow in Leh Temperatures recordsnow in Leh Temperatures recorded. Srinagar two degree centigrade, Jammu ten, Leh minus eight Pulwama, Anantnag and Baramula one and Shopian zero degree centigrade. The Provincial Meteorological Center on Thursday predicted rain, wind, and thunderstorm with snowfall over the hills in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa(KP). In KP moderate to isolated heavy rainfall snowfall is expected in Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Bajaur, Lower & Upper Dir, Bajaur, Malakand, Swat, Buner, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torghar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Kurram and Khyber districts, It

security personnel will be engaged in the digital census from February 27 to April 3 in the country INP

LAHORE: Sardar Naseem Khan, former mayor of Rawalpindi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

conduct such trainings in all provinces of the country.

DG, Agriculture Research Initiative, Dr. Muhammad Qasim kakar said that the people of Balochistan are thankful to JICA and the government of Japan and Pakistan Agricultural Research Council for arranging these trainings. Mr. Abdul Karim, DG Agriculture Extension Balochistan also expressed greetings to the government

It is not just a story of the Last 4 years but for over 70 years the people of JAPAN have been helping Pakistan. He said that if we want to sustain the success of this project then Agriculture Officers and field Assistants must impart acquired knowledge and the activities monitored by administrator.

He stressed on strengthening the research infrastructure in Balochistan. The trainees expressed that it was a great experience and we learnt a lot from the program. It was very informative and brushed up on our skills. Mr. Chingez, Field Assistant highlighted the challenges faced in agricultural sector of Balochistan. He mentioned that the training was very useful as it will help in bridging the knowledge gap in agriculture sector in province.

Furthest Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali distributed certificates to the Agriculture Officers and field assistants from Balochistan. At the end of the ceremony, DG NARC Dr. Shehzad Asad vote of thanks to the participants.INP

Seven petrol pumps sealed, Rs785,000 fine impose over hoarding: Musadik

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik has said that the government teams inspected more than 900 sites in two districts of Punjab last night, sealed seven petrol pumps, imposed fine amounting to Rs 785,000 and registered 21 first information reports (FIRs) over hoarding of fuel.

Addressing a news conference here on Thursday, he said, "The teams inspected 530 different sites in Sargodha District and 437 in Faisalabad. In one district fine amounting to Rs 230,000 was imposed besides sealing six petrol pumps, while in other district, a fine of Rs 53,000 was imposed after sealing a petrol pump. Almost 21 FIRs have also been registered.

Musadik Malik said that these outlets were not providing fuel despite sufficient stocks in their storage tanks.

The inspection teams were busy in visiting different sites across the country, during which they so far had shut down illegal storages operating in various areas including Shorkot, surrounding of Darbar Sultan Bahu, Machike Sheikhupura and eight warehouses in Vehari, he said. The state minister said, "The inspection will

continue unabated as per the warning given to the elements involved in hoarding the other day to shun the illegal practice, which is creating problems for the general public."

The minister assured that the inspection teams would not create any inconvenience for those who believed in fair play and followed rules & regulations in letter and spirit

LAHORE: Pakistan has reported no death in the last 24 hours by novel

coronavirus as the num-ber of confirmed positive cases surged to 1,576,444.

The nationwide tally of fatalities stood at 30,640

According to the latest figures issued by the National Institute of Health (NIH), at least 17

people were tested posi-tive for Covid across the

country in the past 24

4,782 tests in the past 24 hours, out of which 17

people were tested posi-tive. The Covid positivity ratio was recorded at 0.36 per cent.INP

Interior

ministry

refuses to

deploy Army,

Rangers

during

elections

Federal Interior Ministry

has declined to deploy army and rangers' person-nel at polling stations dur-

ing the elections for the vacant seats of national assembly and provinces.

The Election Commission of Pakistan

(ECP) has requested the

ministry for static deploy-ment of security person-nel outside the sensitive

nel outside the sensitive and most sensitive polling stations during the elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa besides the 64 national assembly's vacant seats. In reply to the ECP, the interior ministry made an apology for giving Army, Rangers, and FC personnel for general elections. The ministry cleared that it was not possible to

that it was not possible to appoint officials for elec-

tions in 64 constituencies

and provinces. However, it added that Punjab

Rangers will be present in

the second circle only for the by-elections of the

security officials are per-

forming their duties on the internal and external

borders of the country in view of the rising threat of terrorism. Moreover,

National Assembly Rajanpur. The ministry added that

ISLAMABAD:

Pakistan has conducted

on Thursday.

Regulatory Authority] to conduct an audit of the Oil Marketing Companies [regarding their storage capacity and maintaining the required reserves of petrol and diesel] and submit a report accordingly for further necessary action INP Solution to all problems facing

Pakistan reports 17 country possible only due to coronavirus decision of people: CJP cases in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial has remarked the solution to all problems facing the country is possible only due to the decision of the people.

The CJP gave these remarks while presiding over Supreme Court (SC) bench comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah during the hearing of Imran Khan petition against amendments in NAB laws here Thursday. Thursday.

Making mention of general election the CJP remarked the solution of all problems facing the country is possible only due to the decisions of people. The incumbent government has completed 8 months after it has come to power. Election Commission (EC) had said in its speaker ruling case it will be ready to hold general election in November 2022. The sitting parliament has been kept incomplete deliberately. The legislation being enacted in the present parliament is becoming controversial.

Makhdoom Ali Khan counsel for gov-

He reiterated a firm resolve of the government that it would not allow anyone to cause 'dry-out' at petrol pumps by creating an artificial shortage of petrol and diesel, as the country had sufficient stocks to meet petrol needs for 20 days and diesel

Musadik Malik said he had a conversation with

He reiterated that only a few elements were involved in the hoarding to make a quick buck, adding the law would take its course while deal-

The minister said he also held meetings with representatives of different Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) with the directives to ensure

a smooth supply of fuel from their depots to petrol pumps without any delay.

OMCs, dealers, transporters and depot owners, who were involved in hoarding or creating an artificial shortage, to immediately stop this ille-gal practice or get ready for the dire conse-

He said a warning had been issued to those

Answering a question, Musadik Malik said the overnment had asked the regulator [Oil and Gas

the head of Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association who assured the government that the body would not defend the hoarders and black sheep in its rank, if any

ing with them without any leniency.

ernment said court should remain cau-tious on article 184-3. If the court nulli-fies the legislation on any petition then

the standard will fall.

The CJP remarked the facts of this case are different. The head of the largest political party of the country has challenged amendments in NAB laws. There is intense political crisis in the country. PTI first pursued the strategy of quitting parliament. It could not become known why PTI decided to return to parliament again. Imran Khan is not a common citizen.INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Ishaq Dar addressing during conference on Road Safety for Parliamentarians A Global Perspective Pakistan 2023.

Sheikh Rashid's post-arrest bail plea rejected for second time

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad district and sessions court on Thursday rejected a second post-arrest bail plea filed by Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rashid after he challenged a judicial magistrate's dismissal of his previous petition for bail.

The Islamabad police had arrested the PTI loyalist on Feb 2 for allegedly making defamatory remarks against the PPP leadership after which the court remanded him to the police's custody for two

days.

Upon completion of his physical remand, an Islamabad court had on Feb 4 sent Rashid on 14-day judicial remand in the case filed at the city's Aabpara Police Station, rejecting the police request for an extension in his physical remand. The same day, Rashid filed a post-arrest bail petition in the court, which was rejected on Feb 6.

The AML chief is currently in the cus-tody of Murree police after they were

granted a one-day transit remand by an Islamabad sessions court yesterday. A case was filed against him in Murree on

Feb 3.

On Thursday's hearing was presided over by Additional Sessions Judge Tahir Abbas Supra while lawyers Sardar Abdul Raziq and Intizar Panjhota were representing Rashid. Following the rejection of Rashid's plea, his lawyers decided to approach the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to challenge the session court's verdict. They said they would file another bail plea in the IHC once they receive the detailed order of today's verdict. At the outset of the hearing, Rashid's lawyer Raziq read out the first Rashid's lawyer Raziq read out the first information report filed in the case: "Sheikh Rashid made the statement according to a planned conspiracy. He wants to create conflict between the PTI and the PPP. "Prior to the FIR, a notice was sent by the police, about which we found out through the media INP

Pakistan Petroleum's net profit soars 57% in 1QFY23: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD, :Pakistan Petroleum Limited's revenue from sales increased by 78% to Rs76.6 billion in the first quarter of the ongoing financial year 2022-23 (1QFY23) from Rs43.2 billion over the corresponding period of the

The gross profit of the company also showed massive growth of 82% and settled at Rs48.6 billion in 1QFY23 compared to Rs26.7 billion recorded in 1QFY22.

The company posted a net profit of Rs26.6 billion in IQFY23 compared to a profit of Rs17 billion over the corresponding period of FY22, showing a positive growth of 57% year-on-year, reports WealthPK.

Historical Ratio Analysis

The earnings per share (EPS) of the

The earnings per share (EPS) of the company demonstrated positive growth during recent years. During FY19, the EPS was Rs22.65, which decreased to Rs18.47 in FY20 and increased again to

Rs19.27 in FY21. The EPS then slightly

increased to Rs19.68 during FY22.

The price earnings growth (PEG) of the company also showed mixed trends as it increased to 1.61 in FY22 from 1.04 FY21. The net profit margin (NPM) of the company also showed growth in recent years. During FY19, the NPM was 37.61%, which decreased to 31.89% in FY20, and increased to 35.32% in FY21. However, NPM decreased in FY22 and stood at 26.48%.

The main drivers of profitability were a major increase in sales revenue and other income, but they were offset by increased taxation, exploration costs, other charges, payment of royalties and levies, as well as recognition of a part of the associated loss.Pakistan Petroleum imited was incorporated in Pakistan in 1950 with the main objective of con-ducting exploration, prospecting, development, and production of oil and natu-ral gas resources INP