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Pakistan will sign staff level agreement with IMF in next few days: Dar



290 women recruited in Balochistan police

Quetta court issues arrest warrants of PTI Chief **Imran Khan**

Manan Mandokhail

A local court in Quetta issued arrest warrants for Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan Thursday.

The judicial magistrate one Quetta issued the arrest war-rants of Imran Khan. Mr. Khan failed to appear before the court despite the issuance of a

FIR was registered at Bijli Road Police Station in Quetta this week

Police had registered a first information report (FIR) against the PTI Chief at the Bijli road police station. Police registered FIR against the PTI Chief on an application submitted by a citi-zen identified as Khalil Kakar. Mr. Kakar had accused Imran Khan of using foul language against state institutions and inciting hatred.

A police team already left for Lahore to arrest Imran Khan

A police team has already left for Lahore to arrest the PTI Chief Imran Khan in connection with the registration of the FIR in Quetta. So far, the team has not reached Zaman Park Lahore, the residence of the former pre-



Complainant alleges that PTI chief attempted to destroy peace

Similarly, FIRs were regis-tered against the PTI leaders Azam Khan Swati and Shehbaz Gill earlier. However, the Balochistan High Court (BHC) ordered the quashing of FIRs

against both PTI leaders and ordered that no multiple FIRs can be registered in one case

Former PM Imran Khan's speech

On March 5, an Islamabad police team sent to Lahore to arrest Imran for ski pping proceedings in the Toshakhana case returned empty-handed after the PTI chairman evaded the arrest in Zaman Park Lahore.

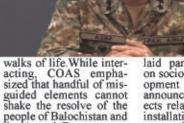
Shortly after the police returned, the PTI chief addressed his supporters at his Zaman Park residence where the contingent supported by the Lahore police had arrived to take him to the federal capital.

Eventually, the team decided to call off the "operation" since PTI leader Shibli Faraz, who is also Imran's chief of staff, informed that the PTI chairman was "not available". This news was widely discussed on social media platforms.

COAS emphasis on socio-economic development of **Balochistan**

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir visited Gwadar. According to the ISPR, he was briefed on prevailing security situa-tion, Formation's opera-tional preparedness CPEC security and efforts for ensuring a tional preparedness
CPEC security and
efforts for ensuring a
peaceful and secure environment.

The Army Chief appre-ciated the efforts of all ranks and urged to continue working with profes-sional commitment for the good of the people of Balochistan. He interact-ed with local notables, elected representatives and people from different



laid particular emphasis on socio-economic develannounced welfare projects related to education, installation of solar sys-tems, fisheries, water, health, sports and liveli-hood.INP

the Armed Forces, com-mitted towards ensuring peace and prosperity. He Speakers call for reconciliation in Balochistan

GWADARParticipants at a seminar held at the University of Gwadar here on Thursday stressed on the need for reconciliation process to address the issues faced by the people

of Balochistan.
Speaking at the seminar titled Reconciliation in Balochistan, they asked the militants and exiled leaders to come to the negotiating table and resolve issues through talks.The Speakers included Hussain Ashraf



of the National Party, Vice Chancellor of University

and Additional Zakir Baloch.PR

Harnai blast leaves one dead and 3 injured

Hanif Tareen

Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast left one person dead and three injured in Balochistan's Harnai dis-trict on Thursday morn-

Levies sources said a tractor was targeted through an IED in Nakis area of Harnai. The blast left one person dead and three person injured.

The injured were rushed to hospital for medical treatment and an emergency was declared in the hospital for medical treatment. The dead body was



handed over to the heirs after necessary medica procedures.Levies and FC personnel reached the spot and cordoned off the area for an investigation. Harnai is considered to be one of the sensitive districts of

290 women recruited in **Balochistan** police

Syed Muhammad Qaseem

QUETTA: The Balochistan police completed the recruit-ment of 290 women and 71 minorities to empower the women segment of society. Balochistan minority affairs minister, Khalil Goerge, Inspector General of Police Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, former speaker Balochistan Assembly Rahila Durrani, and other high-level police officers were also present on

ment of women to make sure



Women recruits after getting appointment orders: Photo Manan Mandokhail

centers

address their grievances IG Balochistan said that you have more responsibility than men and you will have to work hard to make your place in the police force.

Don't limit yourself to policing, but demonstrate your professional skills like an active policeman.

On this occasion, IG Balochistan encouraged the women police officers and

women police officers and ordered to give them a cash reward of Rs. 25,000. During the ceremony, IG Balochistan distributed posting orders to the new recruits, after which commemorative shields were presented to the guests at the end of the ceremony.

Pakistan will sign staff level agreement with IMF in next few days: Dar

I S L A M A B A D : Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has expressed the hope that Pakistan will sign staff level agreement with IMF in next few days. He was addressing a seminar on "Reviving stability through strengthening of Public Financial Management"

Islamabad on Thursday.
The Finance Minister
said in past only PML-N government completed IMF program successful-ly. He said process of preparing economic and fiscal frameworks for fis-cal year 2023-24 will

Ishaq Dar said given the challenges presented by the current economic situation the upcoming budget will be a step in taking the country out of the economic quagmire. He urged the participants to actively deliberate on major economic challenges and come up with policy recommendations and solutions for reviving

economy.

The Finance Minister said Pakistan faced similar economic challenges in the past but we took the



country out of the crisis. He said economic mismanagement in last few years has completely reversed the progress which country made in

Ishaq Dar said during 2016-17 Pakistan's econ-omy was ranked 24th in the world. He said imprudent policies of the last government pushed Pakistan into political crisis adding due to PTI's

policies foreign direct investment was reduced. The Finance Minister said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has recently announced austerity measures which will be adopted to control country expendi-tures. He said that the government will welcome any suggestions from all political parties for a charter of economy.INP

the occasion. The Balochistan police have launched the recruitaddress their issues on a pri-Naseerabad, ority basis. The Balochistan government has also decided Turbat, and other parts of Balochistan to ensure timely Quetta Karachi highway blocked

Abdullah Lehri

KALAT: The Quetta-Karachi highway was blocked at Kalat against unannounced and prolonged load shedding on Thursday morning. The growers and domestic consumers were protesting against prolonged hours of load shedding in the area.

Long queues of passengers buses, trucks and other small vehicles could be witnessed as a result of the blockade of the highway.

"Our standing crops destroyed because of load shedding", Muhammad Rasool, one of the emotionally charged protesters said. He said the growers community suffered huge financial losses as a result of the load shed-

ding.

The administration later came to the protesters and held successful negotiations and reopened the highway linking Balochistan



Ahsan launches citizen's guide to prevent gender based violence

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal Thursday launched Citizen's Guide to Prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV) under gender unit in ministry of planning to mark the International Women's Day.

If Pakistan is to be put on the path of rapid development, then we have to connect 100%

development, then we have to connect 100% of the population with the development process of the country, said the Minister while addressing to the participants. The Planning Minister has launched sever-

projects for women under its development budget, said a press release issued here. A gender unit is established in the Ministry so that development projects can be considered and reviewed with a gender perspective

The Minister highlighted that 50% of scholarship programs offered by the



Speaking to women at the opening cere-ony of Citizen Guide, Ahsan said that almost half of the Young Development

Fellows YDFs Program initiated under the Ministry of Planning are girls who have run the best campaign against gender discrimina-tion in universities across Pakistan. He mentioned that the campaign against

GBV by YDFs aimed to create awareness among female students on how they can pro-tect themselves against any form of violence. Similarly, Citizen Guide will also be helpful

for women in this regard.

The Minister further highlighted that Govt is going to start an Internship program soon in which equal opportunities will be provided to women and fresh graduate female students.

Similarly, the government is also starting an InnovationFund program, through which women entrepreneurs will be encouraged and provided funds to run their business so that they can become role models for other

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 Balochistan is nothing new. Switching of loyalties and changing political party and the property of the

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. 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 Bulédi, 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.

Why are men scared of women?

As has happened before, several attempts were made to prevent this vear's Aurat March from going ahead on March 8 -International Women's

Day.

The day is observed across the globe and the Aurat March – which brings together various organizations in an effort to give a voice to the complaints and pleas of women across the coun-try - is just one part of the women's movement in Pakistan. And yet district administrations in various cities have attempted to either prevent the march or cut it short on more than one occasion. The question is: why and what causes them to act in this manner?

Even though the march was allowed to proceed in Lahore after the organizers took their case to the court to contest the deputy commissioner orders of not giving an NOC, it was a struggle to make this happen. And on the day itself, it was a struggle in Islamabad — where the organizers say where the organizers say they were stopped and even 'lathi-charged' by the police. In Lahore too due to barriers and con-tainers placed on roads, people could not the venue of the march

In a strictly patriarchal society, men wish to retain as much control as they can over the other of the population -

women. The fact that women enjoy equal rights under the constitution makes no difference. Nor does the fact that they constitute half the country and play a part in its running. Yes, we have had symbolic examples of women leading the country, as in the case of Benazir Bhutto, but this is of course a rarity. The truth is that most women truth is that most women across Pakistan lead wretched lives as a result of either poverty or the attempts by men in a family to assert control over them by attempting to dictate where they go, what they wear, and how

The problem is not limited to families.
University administrations and even work-places have had dress codes for women or girl students in various forms over the years. In some cases, jeans or trousers have been banned, and in other cases, the dupatta or hijab is made mandatory It appears that men believe that only through these petty actions can they prove their superiorand hold over the female population.

The power of men stems from the structure of a society which is essentially run by men and households controlled by them because of the patriarchal setup that exists in the country Women have fought back and will continue to do

so, but more need to join them if they are to suc-

It is true that events such as the Aurat March help empower women and allow them to give voice to their feelings and thoughts. Perhaps this is the reason men in particular and some groups of women too insist that the placards raised on the occasion are objection-

Yes, the placards –
brought up by various
organizations and not
controlled by any central
organization of the march do raise issues which can be considered controversial including domestic violence, rape, the interpretation of gender, domestic duties and other issues. But they are serv-ing to ask ask why women are expected to act in a certain way in society and why similar restrictions are not placed on young men. But this should surely be acceptable in this day and age. The fact that it is not is alarming in itself. It says a great deal about our country and what it has society and what it has come to. We have in many ways regressed from the time in the 1950s when women were in so many ways freer to at least dress as they chose even if other rights were denied to them, as is

the case now. There is only one way of solving this problem permanently.

events such as marches on March 8 can help, more has to be done. In the first case, we need more women in parliament and to achieve this, political parties need to be persuaded to set aside certain percentage of tickets for women instead of relying on the flawed quota systems which usher in relatives of quota

onto

reserved for women. Even if this number begins at five per cent, it is better than nothing. From this point on, the number should grow. It is a positive step that the Election Commission of Pakistan now cracks down heavily on places where the turnout of women is under a certain percentage. But more needs to be done to empower women. And this can only happen when women who are in parliament and provincial assemblies and are able to speak out freely on the rights of women and all

Attempts to ban occasions such as the Aurat March suggest that men are scared of a society in which women hold equal power and carry equal weight in terms of decision-making and policy steps. Why should they have this fear? Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that men at present are the holders of power in the country.

that they should be able

It is this love for power which is demonstrated when a rape takes place or when small girls are sexually abused or gang-raped. It is wrong to say that lust or sexual frustration drives men to such actions. That is not the case. It is the need to exert power which leads to such crimes and to so much suffering for women, most of whom never speak out about the ordeal they have gone through because of societal taboos and their desire not to 'shame' their fami-

lies.
It is also true that men seem to believe that women wish to demonize them. For this reason, it was suggested at one point in parliament, at the time when Shaukat Aziz was prime minister, that a law on sexual harassment in the workplace would be misused by women to penalize men against whom they had any kind of grudge. The fact is that women rarely lie about harassment because it is embarrassing to them and they do not desire long and arduous conversa-tions or questioning about

In far too many cases, victims hide such incidents altogether because they do not want to be stopped from going to work by their families or because they simply find it too embarrassing to talk about the entire

The G20 conundrum

Amanat Ali Chaudhry

The meeting of foreign ministers belonging to the G20 countries, held in India, ended without producing a consensus statement. It is the second occasion in a span of two weeks when the G20 grouping displayed seemingly unbridgeable differences over the differences over the wording of the joint com-munique vis-a-vis the Russian-Ukraine imbroglio.

As expected, the meet-ings of foreign ministers and finance ministers and the chiefs of the central banks were dominated by the divergent positions on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. Despite host India's best efforts to bring the opposing par-ties around the Ball joint statement, China and Russia refused to budge from their position that from their position that the G20 forum could not be used for a discussion

on political matters.

The impasse led India to release the Chair's summary and outcome document which summed up the two days of talks and mentioned disagreements. The dis-cussions largely focused on the disruption of the global supply chains, the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on food, and energy prices and risks to financial stability as well as enhanced 'fragilities in the global economy.

The outcome statement also noted the differences in the positions of the participating countries on the Russia-Ukraine war but claimed to have made

progress. The highlight of the foreign ministers' moot was an unexpected and unplanned meeting between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavarov, on the sidelines of the main

The interaction lasted for 10 minutes and only served to reiterate the known positions of both the countries. Mr Blinken, however, invited Russia to rejoin the New Start nuclear treaty and urged Moscow to release an ex-US Marine from detention.

Speaking on the failure the G20 meeting to issue a joint commu-nique, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, stated, "There was a large number of issues where there was agreement: multilateral-ism, food and energy security, climate change, gender issues, global health, terrorism. There was a considerable meeting of minds. If we had a perfect meeting of minds, we could have had a collective statement, but divergences on Ukraine did come in the way."

While the Western nations and the US were

unequivocal in their condemnation of the war and held Moscow responsible for it, India adopted a neutral stance by refusing to term the Russian action as an act of aggression and called for a diplomatic solution. In recent months, New Delhi has sharply boost-ed its oil supplies from Russia by working Russia by working around the Western sanctions against Moscow.

The Japanese finance minister aptly described the state of G20 parleys amid escalating war when he said, "It's becoming difficult for the G20 to engage in a con-structive discussion structive discussion because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which is an act that shakes the foundations of the global

The disagreements also manifested themselves on debt restructuring for the distressed economies during an IMF meeting with the G17 countries on the sidelines of the finance ministers' moot. While IMF Managing Director Managing Director Kristalina Georgiev, talked of "a commitment to bridge differences for the benefit of countries," the fact remains that the meeting, which was an exercise in organizational conduct, merely scratched the surface of the globally explosive issue of debt without agreeing on any 'deliver-ables'.

blame appeared to be a preferred course of action among member states, developing coun-tries continue to be hit hard by the soaring debt levels and the accompa-nying difficulties for their

Finance Chinese Minister Liu Kun asked the world and IFIs to actively participate in the debt relief measures by taking a larger haircut. Å more detailed response was offered by the Chinese foreign ministry official who said, "China

takes the debt issue of developing countries seriously and supports relevant financial institutions to put forward solu-

"It is our consistent stance that multilateral financial institutions and commercial creditors, which hold the bulk of the debt of developing countries, should participate in the debt relief efforts," he added. Of late the Western

criticism of Beijing has mounted in view of China being one of the largest bilateral creditors whereby the US has emphasized that "we need to see credible and specific assurances that (China) will meet the IMF standard of debt Looking at the out-come of two ministerial

level interactions among the G20 countries, it becomes certain that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine ongoing Russia-Ukraine war is determining the state of the world and shaping the behaviour of states. The repeated fail-ure of the 620 to agree to a joint statement speaks to the wide gulf and deepening divisions that mark the present world order.While the agenda for multilateral organizations such as G20 contin-ues to become ambitious by the day, given that challenges such as cli-mate-induced and natural disasters are complicat-ing the state of the world, there is a disproportion-ate lack of determination and willingness on the part of the member countries to sort things out.

As the events playing

out at the two consecutive meetings of G20 in 2022 and 2023 indicated, the ability of world leaders to craft a consensus is on the decline. Rising geo-strategic tensions are sure to mark the conduct of multinational group-ings like the G20 in the months and years to come. Going forward, confrontation, not coop-eration, will likely shape the interaction and mode of engagement.

This presents an added challenge of relevance and effectiveness to multilateral bodies and organizations at a time when the Western proponents of globalization revert to the cocoon of nationalism. The sight of the international platforms serving as an arena of rivalry will further erode the already diminished trust of the world. Most experts predict

business-as-usual will become a new nor-mal, as the G20 will muddle through - with each meeting witnessing the playing out of conflicting positions. Consensus on global issues will be hard to come by. As progress on the expanded agenda gets impeded in such a scenario, there is a possibility that a trimmed agenda may become the focus of discussions, further nar-

rowing focus.

It reflects poorly on the quality of the global leadership to be able to sit across the table and navigate through the crises in a spirit of cooperation. With deepening schisms, the future looks increasingly bleak

Perfect gridlock By Murtaza Solangi

akistan gives a look of a per-fect gridlock today. The 11m on the old
coalition government led
by Prime Minister
Shehbaz Sharif and the
PTI led by sacked prime minister Imran Khan continue to pull in the oppo-site directions, tearing apart all state institutions

and leaving no middle

ground.

The usual arbiters, the judiciary and the estab-lishment, burdened by follies of their own past, are not able to mediate, put the fire out or suggest any solutions. The media too has become a victim of this extreme polarization, many of them wearing the slants of the war-ring camps. It feels like two fast trains, with failed brakes, speeding from opposite directions on the same track. Will there be a collision or will some-thing happen at the last minute to avoid the colli-

It is clear that the remnants of Project Imran are very much there in the system, despite the forabortion of the project. The controversial decision of the Supreme Court on the interpreta-tion of Article 63A of the constitution created a snowball effect leading to the dismantling of the nascent Hamza Shehbaz government and the election of Paraga Elaki as the tion of Pervez Elahi as the chief minister of Punjab

The controversial decision, termed as a rewriting of the constitution by many legal experts, paved the way for Imran Khan to force both the chief ministers of Punjab as well as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a pres-sure lever to force sure lever to force Islamabad to go for early elections.

With the IMF agree-ment still not inked, infla-tion touching the skies, interest rate at one of the highest levels ever, the economy slowing down, and unemployment and poverty skyrocketing, the coalition parties are unde-cided on how to go about early provincial elections in Punjab and Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa.

More than the early polls, they are worried about the fact that if the PTI sweeps these two provinces – with 80 per cent of the electorate the governments that will be formed there will be there for five years. Which would mean that, come October, they will have all the tools available at their disposal to rig the National rig the National Assembly elections in their favour, making it impossible for the Election Commission to hold free and fair elections as guaranteed under tution Imran Khan has tried to influence and engage the security establishment all the while maligning it almost on a daily basis. His recent outburst blaming key security officials for his murder conspiracy and extending an olive branch to the army chief at the same time will not have gone well. Meanwhile, he is to appear in dozens of court cases at different

cessfully using his alleged murder plot to avoid the judicial process and avoid a conviction so as to make himself avail-able for the next elec-Despite having enough legal, constitutional, eco-

nomic and security reasons to delay the provin-cial elections in Punjab and the Pakhtunkhwa, Khyber Islamabad government as well as the ECP have not advocated the case for holding all elections in October across Pakistan either in the courts or the courts of public opinion forcefully. The Islamabad government today is looking and acting like sleepwalkers, slowly walking towards elec-tions in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a

zombie-like state. It is crystal clear that amid an economic melt-down of biblical propor-tions, insurgency rising across Pakistan, the provincial elections and their results will act like a catalyst to ignite further political instability, affecting the upcoming instability, tions in October as well. This is a perfect gridlock created by decades-long flawed policies of the state and the miserable failure of Project Imran that was nurtured over that was nurtured over more than a decade.

Regardless of wins in the elections scheduled for the next month, the results will not be accepted by the losing party. The same goes for the elections due in October this year. No matter who wins the National Assembly

Who controls wealth?

By Dr Shahnaz Khan

The country's economic situation is deteriorating rapidly, and the only solution we hear is to go to either the IMF or friendly countries for

This situation has been in the making for decades, and it became more acute due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the current geopolitical situation. But Pakistan was on a shaky ground much before that. The focus of the government, the media and most economists is on the present, but no one is offering a long-term solution.
The economy, in its

essence, is a system of producing and distribut-ing wealth, and this is closely intertwined with the political system. Its overarching goal should be the wellbeing of people, ensuring equal access to resources and opportu-nities for all citizens regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender, etc.

If we want a more egalitarian society and desire to become a self-reliant, debt-free nation, we have to bring a paradigm shift in our thinking and approach - one that involves reorganizing the economy and politics. Some difficult questions have to be asked, no matter how disruptive to the current order they may

The fundamental question is who is controlling all means of generating wealth - or means of pro-duction - in Pakistan and

who makes decisions on how this wealth is distributed? In our country's context, the most impor-tant means of production Pakistan is nothing but a piece of land which is home to some 230 mil-

lion people. Land is not only the source of food, but it also contains gas, oil, precious metals/stones and other natural resources. Rivers flow on it. There are lakes and underground water. We build houses, infrastructure for public use, education institutions, hospitals, parks, etc on

In Pakistan, not only is land up for sale but its ownership too is concentrated in a few hands. It is used for speculation, a cheap and less risky way to become rich – which may increase GDP and look good on financial statements, but it actually hurts the country and the economy in the long run. Pakistan's colonial legacy has also imparted added power to land ownership, causing oppression and exploitation of people. If a powerful rich class is allowed to own as much land as it wants, what will happen to the rest of the

people? Then there are factories, large businesses, companies involved in imports/exports, banks, insurance companies, large media houses, even education institutions and healthcare facilities, and large transport- and con-struction-affiliated businesses. A small group of elite controls all these and

there is monopolization

and mafia-like behaviour in most sectors. This gives them the power to control political decisionmaking and the economy, which is a root cause of the dire situation we find ourselves in.

As long as this continues, there is no hope for long-term economic sta-bility, industrialization, freedom from debt or ending poverty. The first step in the right direction is the abolition of the remnants of the feudal system. Abolishing feudalism will free up not just the land but the people's potential - so cru-cial to progress. But it is only possible if there is a countrywide mass movement against it, as the land-owning class is quite powerful.

In urban settings, land mafias have to be dealt with. Some important questions are: should we continue to build posh luxury housing societies when housing shortage for middle- and lowerincome groups is reach-ing critical levels? Should people be allowed to own as many houses as they can buy or more than their needs? I believe there is a need for a comprehensive land policy taking into account food and other needs of peo-ple. Land should be treated as a strategic asset instead of a commodity to be bought and sold in the

The next question is the role of the state in the economy. For the past few decades, a neoliberal agenda has been imposed unchallenged by global capital through institutions like the IMF and the World Bank. The state's role has been eliminated from economic management except for interven-ing on behalf of capitalists, when they get in trouble. They tell us that markets are self-regulating, their actions are in the best interests of con-sumers, state regulations are bad for the economy as well as society, the state has no business in running businesses providing services to the public, and all stateowned enterprises should be privatized, etc. But in practice, this has been proven deadly for the poor, especially in poor countries. The lessons from other developing countries are

that without state interthat without state intervention, countries cannot achieve their goals. Even in developed countries, the state adopted this strategy in the initial stages of development. So, in Pakistan, the state will have to play an active role and control the commanding heights of commanding heights of the economy - areas which are strategic to the country's survival, secu-rity and progress. Some of these areas are heavy industry, energy sector, natural resources, educa-tion, healthcare, housing and transport.

Without industrializa-tion, Pakistan has no future. But this will not happen without the state's active intervention. The state will have to take control, guide, facilitate, regulate and monitor. It cannot be left to the private sector, which in Pakistan is used to living

on state subsidies and maintaining a privileged status. It has neither the capacity nor the will to set up what is needed. The sole purpose of private investors is to make profit, not to provide service to people or think about the country's progress.

The other areas crucial

for economic strength in the long run are human development - especially of the youth - role of women in the economy, and population control Economic experts and politicians who share their thoughts in the media give the impres-sion that the economy is just numbers, GDP, dollar price foreign reserves price, foreign reserves, exports, imports, etc. Hardly anyone talks about what needs to be done behind the scenes for sustainable economic growth.

ruling class on economy and politics.No nation

can progress by keeping

Human development with a special focus on young people, is the sin-gle most important factor put Pakistan on the road to economic self-sufficiency. This trans-lates into creating a world-class education system, which promotes not only technical skills aires in that industry saw their wealth increase by \$382 billion during the pandemic. An emergency windfall tax on their but also soft skills like critical thinking, innova-tion, problem solving, wealth increase alone (to say nothing of their pre-pandemic billions) could end world hunger and double the incomes of 545 tolerance, open-minded-ness, and debate and discussion to resolve differmillion small-scale farmences. This has not happened up till now because the empowered educated youth is a potential threat to the hegemony of the

Inequality and hunger By Chuck Collins

tiers of the court system involving civil and crimi-

nal matters. Imran is suc-

eginning on May 24, the W o r l d Economic Forum is gath-ering in Davos, Switzerland for an in-per-son meeting, discussing the global tax system and financial inclusion. 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 randem-

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-

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 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 lift 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 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

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

As the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and Inequality org have docu-

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 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-

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Sindh approves funds for anti-bandit operation in Katcha area

KARACHI: Sindh Cabinet on Thursday approved funds for mili-Sindh

approved funds for mili-tary-grade weapons to launch an anti-bandit operation in Katcha area, ARY News reported. Secretary home depart-ment and the I.G. Police Sindh in a briefing to the cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah, said that the police will require mili-tary-grade arms to launch tary-grade arms to launch an effective operation against bandits in Katcha area (riverine forest along the Indus River).

The cabinet session briefed that the January 05 session of the apex committee had rec-ommended procurement

of military-grade weapons, which requires 2.7 billion rupees funds. Provincial cabinet approved the funds and approved the funds and procurement of required arms. Sindh government will get NOC from the interior ministry after cabinet's approval.

Sindh cabinet decided to conduct joint operation.

to conduct joint operation against dacoits in katcha area, which will be participated by Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan police departments. "It will be a joint and pre-planned operation," Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah

Secretary home depart-ment and the I.G. Police Sindh in a briefing to the cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah, said that the police will require military-grade arms to launch an effective operation against bandits in Katcha area (riverine forest along

the Indus River).

The cabinet session was briefed that the January 05 session of the apex committee had rec-ommended procurement of .INP

Chitral people demand immediate completion of under construction roads

CHITRAL: The civil society, notable and public representatives on Thursday deplored sus-pension of construction work on the roads from Lowari Tunnel to Chitral, Chitral to Shandur, Ayun, Bomburit by the National Highway Authority (NHA) from last five

In a meeting held here with Deputy Commissioner Lower Chitral Muhammad Ali Khan here, they said that the work on the roads were started a year ago but was left uncompleted and from the last five months there was no

progress.
They presented a unanimous resolution to the DC and demanded that the work on these roads should be started immediately and the affected owners of the lands of the three projects should be compensated without any

It was demanded through the resolution that the NHA should work on these roads as per the SOPs and follow the rules to prevent dust and remove debris from the roads for the facilitation of the commuters as well as the local popula-

They further demanded initiation of construction of work on Darosh, Arundu, Sheshikoh roads and widening of Booni, Ower, Milkho, Trich road and construction of road leading to Chitral University besides paving of and these roads for a safe travel.

The resolution deplored inordinate delay in construction of Booni to Buzund, Torkho road, adding that the work on 32 km long road was in progress from last 14-year until now 50 per cent work could not be com-

Pleted.
They urged the Federal government to pursue approval of PC-1 of Chitral to Garm Chashman and Durra Pass road from

ECNEC. The resolution was presented by Israruddin Maulvi Al-Hilal, Chitral Chairman Development Moment (CDM) Waqas Ahmed Advocate, Inayatullah Aseer, Safdar Ali Kash, Sheikh Abdullah, Amir Muhammad and others.

The DC while addressing the people assured to take up the issue with appropriate forum. Later he inaugurated the new office of CDM, a nonpolitical and non-governmental voluntary organi-sation working for the construction of roads in Chitral.The speakers said that the people of Chitral demand promotion of tourism in the two dis-

tricts and provision of basic facilities including education and health to improve the living stan-dard of the people. In a meeting held here with Deputy with Deputy Commissioner Lower Chitral Muhammad Ali Khan here, they said that the work on the roads were started a year ago but was left uncompleted and from the last five months there was no

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ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Tanzania, Mr Siraj Ahmad Khan, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

PEMRA bans content on conduct of sitting judges

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) on Thursday forbade the broadcasting and re-broadcasting of content pertaining to the con-duct of sitting high court and Supreme Court judges on elec-tronic media with immediate

In the prohibition order, the regulator referred to previous directives wherein all licencees were directed to "refrain from telecasting any content against state institutions'

PEMRA noted that despite repeated directives, satellite television channels were "persistently discussing the con-duct of honorable judges of superior courts and orchestrating a vilification campaign through airing slanderous allegations".

The authority said airing any sort of content which prima facie referred to the conductor judges or was against the superior judiciary was a sheer vio-lation of the authority's laws and judgments of the apex

Pemra also gave a reference to Article 68 of the Constitution in its order. The law states: "No discussion shall take place in [Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament)] with respect to the conduct of any Judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court in the discharge of his duties."

"Therefore, the competent authority i.e. chairman PEMRA, in exercise of dele-gated powers of the authority vested in Section 27(a) of the

PEMRA Ordinance 2002 as amended by PEMRA (Amendment) Act 2007, pro-hibits broadcast/rebroadcast of any content pertaining to conduct of Honourable sitting judges of High Court and Supreme Court, in any manner, on electronic media (news bulletins, talks shows etc.), with immediate effect," the order said. The authority also direct-ed all satellite TV channels to ensure that an effective Time Delay Mechanism is put in place and an "impartial editori-al board" is constituted.

In case of non-compliance, the licence will be suspended under Section 30 of the PEMRA Ordinance, 2002 without any show cause notice in the public interest, the order said INP

LHC summons additional Chief Secretary in section 144 case

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday has summoned Punjab's additional chief secretary in PTI's plea chal-lenging section 144 in Lahore Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former federal minister Hammad Azhar challenged the imposition of section 144 in Lahore. The plea submitted by Sikandar Zulqarnain advocate stated that the additional chief secretary could not slap section 144 in the city, it is the prerogative of the

the city, it is the prerogative of the Lahore deputy commissioner.

Terming the imposition of section 144 as 'illegal' by the additional chief secretary, the LHC has been pleaded to nullify the orders. After the initial hearing on the plea, the Lahore High Court (LHC) has summoned the additional chief secretary to the court. Section 144 was imposed by the Punjab government on Wednesday for seven days in Lahore. "In the context of the prevailing overall

context of the prevailing overall security situation in the wake of the recent wave of terrorism and latest threat alerts, it has been nec-essary to impose Section 144 of Cr.P.C., 1898 on holding of all kinds of assemblies, gatherings, sits-in, rallies, processions, demonstrations, jalsas, dharnas, protests and such like other activities across the district Lahore to avert any untoward incident," the notification added issued by Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Shakeel Ahmed INP

Four men killed in two incidents

LARKANA:Two tribesmen were killed and two others, including a passerby, were injured when rival groups of Jatoi tribe traded fire in Panjani Jatoi village in the jurisdiction of Pirsher police station. In another incident, a man killed his younger brother over a matrimonial dispute and then took his own life. The deceased were identified as

Dur Mohammad and Kashif Lalani Jatoi and the injured were Mehar Jatoi and the passerby Hussain Jatoi, who were shifted to Chandka Medical College Hospital by police after the guns fell silent.

The bodies were handed over to relatives after completion of

The bodies were handed over to relatives after completion of medico-legal formalities and were buried in tensed conditions.

In another incident, Najamuddin Mugheri, 50, shot dead his younger brother at his home in Mehmoodabad Mugehri village, 30 kilometres from here in the jurisdiction of Wagan police station late on Tuesday night, over a tion late on Tuesday night, over a matrimonial dispute and later ended his own life with the same weapon, said police.INP

BISP registers over 0.4m households in NSER from flood affected districts country's capacity to cope with

ISLAMABAD: Income Support Program (BISP) has so far registered over 4,00,000 households in the recently launched dynamic National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) survey through its registration centers at Tehsil level

Tehsil level Around 1,70,000 households have been registered in the NSER from the flood-affected districts so that the losses incurred by the households can be estimated to provide assistance.

According to an official source, the launch of the first ever dynamic NSER in the history of Pakistan will enhance the

country's capacity to cope with disasters, pandemics and economic instability by adopting a more effective data collection mechanism for the poor households. The NSER is a landmark achievement and is linked with National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) for data collection as well as validation and can allow swift registration of six distinct types of informaof six distinct types of informa-tion for the registry which shall be validated through NADRA. The six different types include

registration of missed-out households, eligibility appeal cut-off for poor but ineligible households with widows or eld-

regular changes such as marital status, inclusion of new born, changes or correction in educaemployment information of household members, gauging information on households impacted by disasters and their re-registration, reassessment of ineligible households for last two years and reassessment of eligible or beneficiary households for last three years.

The registry provides registra-tion and information update opportunities to all citizens. Since this registry is linked with NADRA, only NADRA-authen-ticated information can be regis-tered or updated.INP



LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja launched the Spring Tree Plantation drive at National College of Arts in Provincial Capital.

Motorway Police to implement ITS on major motorways in two years

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) has planned to introduce Transport Intelligent System (ITS) on motorways M1, M2, M3, and M4 in the next two

Talking to APP here on Thursday, an official of NHMP said that the Motorway Police had signed an agreement with the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) through the National Highway Authority to implement the ITS on motorways various including M1, M2, M3, and M4 over the next two years. He said that with this new system, commuters would no longer be stopped unnecessarily on the motorway

He said that the Lahore-Sialkot motorway had adopted a completely humanless system and the road users on this motorway will not be stopped for challan payment but will be required to pay the challan along with the toll tax when they

exit the motorway The official informed that in developed coun-tries the ITS system was designed to send challans to offenders after they have left the road, but in Pakistan, there are several hurdles to overcome. For instance, he said one vehicle was often used by multiple family members, making it difficult to identify to the challan whom should be issued to. Additionally, he said

many people use unregistered vehicles with open letters, making it hard to enforce the ITS system and send challans to their homes. The implementation of the ITS system requires a strong database to ensure accurate and efficient enforcement, he maintained.

that He affirmed despite challenges, the ITS system marks a significant milestone in the NHMP's efforts to modernise its services. He stated that currently, road users can pay the 'challan' (ticket) along with the toll tax, and in the coming years, the ITS system was set to revolutionize the way challans are issued and enforced on Pakistan's national highways and motorways.INP

Islamabad for past two days to plead the court for Mr Khan's security, but Punjab police lodged a case against me over vandalism in Lahore INP **Govt forms** committee to probe Lahore clashes between police, PTI

Lahore protest

institutions on the guidelines of Mr Khan and PTI leaders including Farrukh Habib, Fawad Chaudhry,

Hammad Azhar, Mahmoodur Rasheed, Ijaz Chaudhry, and others. "Enraged protestors pelted stones at the police personnel", the report added. The FIR stated that PTI activists' vandalism

injured 13 police officials as well as six activists "They were shifted to Services hospital where injured Ali Bilal succumbed to his injuries", the

report added Taking to Twitter, PTI senior vice pres-

ident Fawad Chaudhry wrote, "I have been in

LAHORE: The Punjab government has formed an nquiry committee to ascertain facts into the incidents of police clashes with workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Lahore PTI Chairman Imran Khan said on Wednesday that one of its workers was killed after police launched a crackdown on those participating in the party's rally following the imposition of Section 144

workers

The party had planned to kick start its election campaign on Wednesday with a rally from Zaman Park to Data Darbar. However, it later put off the campaign until Saturday but dedicated the rally to judiciary.Before the start of the rally, the Punjab government imposed the Section 144 in Lahore for seven days with immediate effect, banning rallies processions and gatherings in the provincial capital due to security reasons. INP

Imran, PTI leaders booked over chaos in LAHORE: Punjab police on Thursday lodged a case against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan and other PTI leaders over creating chaos during PTI's protest in Punjab's capital. A First Information Report (FIR) lodged against Mr Khan stated that up to 400 people including armed men vandalised the venue and threatened the



QUETTA: Students participating a rally in connection with World Kidney Day.

IT parks to generate job opportunities, attract foreign exchange

ISLAMABAD: The tate-of-the-art Information Technology
Parks across the country
would generate job
opportunities for IT professionals, attract millions of dollars in precious foreign exchange, boost the IT industry and increase its exports after their completion. "Work on IT parks in

Karachi at the cost of Rs 41 billion and Islamabad IT park at the cost of Rs 13.72 billion is underway. At their completion, they would provide job oppor-tunities for 20000 and 15000 IT professionals respectively," said an official of the Ministry of Information Technology. "Karachi IT Park is the largest IT project of its kind in Pakistan, which

will benefit not only the citizens of Karachi but also the IT professionals and companies of Sindh and the rest of Pakistan," he added. The Establishment of

IT Park, Karachi was approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) in its meeting held on June 4, 2021, at a capital cost of USD 186.658 million including USD 158.416 million from Korean Exim Bank as a loan and PSDP local share of USD 28.242 million. The project shall be completed in June 2026.

The official of the Ministry of IT said tech-nology parks must comply with basic infrastructure requirements such as clean facilities and ample working space. However, tech parks were also equipped with the latest technology and telecom-munication facilities that make it easy to establish and manage a business.

The main objective of technology parks was to support the creation and development.

Agriculture University's issues to be resolved: Abdul Haleem Qasuria

DI KHAN: Caretaker provincial Minister for Abdul Agriculture Haleem Qasuria on Thursday vowed to play his role in resolving issues confronting the

Agriculture University. He said that Dera Ismail Khan had great agricultural potential and the initiatives like establishing Agriculture University

would lead to agriculture development in the The provincial minis-ter said that all quarters concerned including the Chief Minister and people of the area would be approached to sort out issues thwarting the establishment of the university, r transfer of assets. mainly

He expressed these views while visiting agriculture university which is presently being run at a rented building. Abdul Haleem Qasuria also assured that he would try hard to get the university shifted to a govern-ment-owned building

until its own building was constructed. Secretary, Governor, On this occasion,

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Masroor Elhi Babar briefed the Provincial Minister about various matters pertaining to the university and informed that both the campuses of the university were continuing their academic activities in the rented build-

ing.
The VC also apprised the provincial minister about the steps taken so far in the light of the decisions of the 52nd meeting Cabinet regarding the transfer assets between Gomal University and

Agricultural He said University. He said only Rs 4 million had been received out of the total Rs 1539 million sanctioned for the construction of the university which would be stretching over 1000

VC informed that the university had set up this food processing plant for the convenience of the people of the area. By which the people of the area could preserve fruits and vegetables at a very low cost.

Chancellor

Agriculture University Presented raisins, dry apples, bananas, tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables prepared through a food processplant of the University. The provincial minis-

ter also inspected the University's laboratories and appreciated its performance.

He also appreciated the services of the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Masroor Elhi Babar for the uplift of the University in a short time despite limited resources.INP

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL PROPOSALS TSE-222303264444 only electric bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required Request for proposal for selection of consultancy service invites on electric public procurements system (EPPS) from well reputed National firms service provider meeting with eligibility criteria, viz having registration with FBR for income tax and BRA and who are on active tax payers list (ATL) and or not blacklisted in any procuring agency or authority for preparation of hiring of "Preliminary and detail design of SUB/ Super Structural Components such as footing, columns, beams and slab in accordance with the Nature of soil as per site, Engineering Design of infrastructure Utility Services , Drainage ,Water Supply &Sewerage, Works and other required services, Generation of all Architectural & relevant Detailed structural working drawings of

structural members" for the mentioned below work.

HIRING OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR CONST: OF SHAHEED MIR ABDUL KHALIQ LANGAU BOYS MODEL SCHOOL KHALIQABAD.PSDP NO: 6283 (Z2021.0315 KALAT)

The Procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Baluchistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules, 2014 amended up to date. ELIGIBILITY OF BIDDERS: 01 Assignment of Similar Nature and Complexity. Turn Over of at least 3,00,000 PKR Amount in 3 Subsequent Previous years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. BRA Registration Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently Blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Procedure of Procurement: Bid Security: The Bid Security is 2% of estimated cost i-e Rs 8,23,786 required. The Financial Proposals shall be opened of those consultants whose technical proposal is considered and approved. The selection of consultants shall be made as per Evaluation Criteria method as mentioned in the "Date Sheet" of the "Request for Proposal" documents The incomplete request for proposal or received after due date mentioned above will not be considered. The RFP Documents can be downloaded from BPPRA Website. (www.bprra.gob.pk) Last Date of Bid Submission: The tender must be submitted latest of 28" March 2023 till 1.00AM. Tender Opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the below mention office at 02:00 AM Address: Committee Room Block No.7, First Floor Civil Secretariat Zarghoon Road, Quetta. Phone No. 9844-210327

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BUILDINGS CWPP&H DEPARTMENT

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IT skills helpful for women to explore emerging business trends: Samina Alvi

ISLAMABAD: Begum Samina Alvi on Wednesday urged women to explore the field of information technol-

ogy in view of its importance as the future of the economy.

Addressing the 30th convocation of Fazaia Bilquis College of Education for Women at PAF Base Nur Khan, she said universities in the country needed to focus on cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing and data analytics as the world needs skilled professionals in these disciplines.

Begum Alvi said more and more companies, businesses, governments, and private organizations had adopted IT tools in their daily business processes and added that in the future, even more companies would shift to digi-

She said expertise in IT could prove a golden opportunity for Pakistan, which was struggling to improve its

economy and enhance exports.

"By investing in the IT sector, equipping the youth, especially women with relevant skills, the country can amplify the volume of its exports and get out of the financial problems," she said.

Felicitating the graduates, she said their journey in the pursuit of education did not end but was an ongoing

process of learning with experiences.

She termed women an important part of the country and urged them to apply knowledge to the best of their



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal

Reforms being made in BISP to facilitate poor people: Kundi

MULTAN: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi has stated that reforms are being made in Benazir Income Support Program to facilitate maximum deserving people.

He expressed these views while talking to media persons after inaugurating Dynamic Registry Center under the BISP at Shujaabad area in Multan.

The Minister of State said about 8.9 million women are availing financial

million women are availing financial

assistance under this program.

He said taking into account the economic conditions of the people, the government has increased the quarterly instalment of BISP by 25 percent. After the increase, an instalment of 8750 rupees will be given to the deserving families every three months INP

Dry weather expected in most parts of country

ISLAMABD: Mainly dry weather is expected in most parts of the country, while day temperatures are likely to increase in plain areas.

Temperature of some major cities recorded on Thursday, Islamabad, twelve degree centigrade, Lahore sixteen, Karachi twenty-one, Peshawar thirteen, Quetta eight, Gilgit ten, Murree six and Muzaffarabad eleven degree centigrade.

degree centigrade.
According to Met Office forecast for Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, partly cloudy and dry weather is expected in Srinagar, Pulwama, Anantnag, Shopian and Baramula, cold and dry in Leh while dry in Jammu.

Temperatures recorded. Srinagar, Pulwama and Shopian five degree centigrade, Jammu seventeen, Leh minus four, Anantnag six and Baramula four degree centigrade.INP

Police complete preparations for grand operation in Zaman Park

LAHORE:Lahore police completed preparations for launching a grand operation in Zaman Park the residence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan It learnt that Police summoned additional contingents from all police stations at Mall Road Bridge flyover. Moreover, the contin-gents of the Dolphin Force and Police Response Unit (PRU) were also called at the flyover.

Earlier on Wednesday, Punjab police baton charged and teargassed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) work-ers during a rally in Lahore. A PTI worker namely Ali Bilal was allegedly

killed in the police action today. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has announced to lodge the First Information Report (FIR) against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and

other prominent The PTI leader said that the government also planned bloodshed in May and November and now they started the bloodshed from the Lahore rally.INP

Pakistan, UK agree to enhance bilateral trade ties

ISLAMABAD: Commerce Minister Syed Naveed Qamar has stated that economic stabilization and economic growth are the key priorities of gov-ernment Talking to Member of British Parliament and British Prime Minister's Trade Envoy, Mark Eastwood, who called on him in Islamabad, he expressed the confi-

dence that the country would achieve economic stability in near future.

Appreciating Mark Eastwood's efforts for enhancement of bilateral trade between Pakistan and the UK, Syed Naveed said Pakistan honors trustworthy relations between the two countries. He said there is a great potential for investors in the fields of education, health, energy, textile and other sectors. The British Trade envoy said Pakistan and the UK are enjoying durable, historical and cooperative relations which needs to be resilient through the enhancement INP

LHC reserves verdict on Imran's plea against Pemra ban on broadcasting his speeches

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday reserved its verdict on PTI chairman Imran Khan's plea against the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority's (Pemra) decision to bar all satellite TV channels from broadcasting his speeches and press talks.

channels from broadcasting his speeches and press talks.

On Sunday, the media regulator had slapped a ban on Imran's speeches and press talks with "immediate effect" after he had lashed out at former army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa for what he called "protecting incumbent rulers in their alleged corruption cases". Subsequently, the PTI chief approached the court. He argued that Pemra's order was "purely driven out of vengeance".

As the LHC took up the petition on Thursday, Justice Mirza asked how such a ban could be imposed on the head of a political party. "This is against freedom of speech," he remarked. However, Pemra's counsel argued that the matter should be heard by a full bench.

"I request the court that this is not its jurisdiction," the govern-ment lawyer also said. On the other hand, Imran's counsel con-tended that Pemra's ban on the

tended that Pemra's ban on the former prime minister's speeches and live talks was a violation of fundamental rights enshrined under the Constitution. He also requested that the court should set aside the authority's order.

In the petition, Imran named Pemra and the authority's director (operations, broadcast media) as respondents. The plea pointed out that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had set aside a similar prohibition order in the past.

hibition order in the past.

The petition said that Pemra had issued the order "in excess of the jurisdiction vested in it and with-out having regard to the constitu-tional rights guaranteed under Articles 19 and 19-A of the Constitution". It further contended that the authority was not empow-ered to issue a blanket prohibition order, which appears to be "in vio-lation of the principle of propor-tionality".INP

China's steady economic recovery opening new coop avenues for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: "China's econ- of geopolitical uncertainty. omy is staging a steady recovery, with marked improvement in consumer demand, market distribu-tion, industrial production and business expectations, and this momentum can help partner countries like Pakistan to explore new avenues of cooperation for further growth, especially in the manufac-turing sector," said Prof. Dr. Hassan Duad Butt, former project

director of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In an interview with China Economic Net, Dr. Hassan stated that China's rapid economic recovery after a decisive victory against Covid-19 is of immense importance for the world in gener-

Therefore, China's emphasis on economic stability, high-quality growth and sustainable development is a ray of hope for many countries, including Pakistan and other BRI countries, in this time In 2022, while overcoming major difficulties and challenges, the Chinese economy maintained stable performance on the whole, with GDP reaching more than RMB 121 trillion (USD 18 tril-

lion) and achieving 3% growth, a sign of strong resilience.

Dr. Hassan maintained that, "while the set GDP growth target of 5% in 2023 is the lowest in dozens of years, it still means sufficient economic activity to miti-gate some of the economic risks and challenges."The GDP growth target, along with other economic development goals set by the Chinese government, promises sufficient economic activity and stability through the continuity of policies. Hassan quoted the words of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang that "should be carried out in a more coordinated way to create synergy for high-quality develop-ment.INP

Three Chinese books launched in Urdu

ISLAMABAD: Three books authored by Chinese writers and translated by Pakistani translators were launched here by China-Pakistan Study Center (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI).According to Gwadar Pro, the books are "Beyond the Karakoram: A "Beyond the Karakoram: A Photographic Dialogue Between a Chinese and a Pakistani Scholar", "How the Chinese Communist Party Manages the Development Issue", and "Mao Zedong and Contemporary China". China's Charge d' Affaires to Pakistan Ms. Pang Chunxue said on the occasion that literature exchanges between China and Pakistan would play a construc-

Pakistan would play a constructive role in expanding people-to-people exchanges."These books translated into Urdu depict the commitments of both countries to understand each other," she said. Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood in

Pakistan's relations with China were the "cornerstone" of its for-

He highlighted the key features and growth trajectory of the Pakistan-China All-weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, the role of CPC in China's socio-economic development, and the importance of fur-ther strengthening the Public Diplomacy dimension of Pakistan-China relations through such events.Former Ambassador of Pakistan to China Naghmana Hashmi in her remarks stressed that history has always been important in understanding mod-em China. It is pertinent to seek the understanding of these philosophies that China follows in its journey towards

its journey towards prosperity. Honorary Director of the Belt and Road (BRI) and Regional Research Center Dr. Hassan Daud Butt and senator Dr. Musaddiq Malik also attended the event.INP

"Enhance your knowledge, excel in your profession, and use it for the betterment of society," she told the gathering of graduates.

Begum Alvi quoted the saying of the founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah that "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you".

Addressing the 30th convocation of Fazaia Bilquis College of Education for Women at PAF Base Nur Khan, she said universities in the country needed to focus on cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, and data analytics as the world needs skilled professionals in these disciplines.

Begum Alvi said more and more companies, businesses, governments, and private organizations had adopted IT tools in their daily business processes and added that in the future, even more companies would shift to digi-

tal means. She said expertise in IT could prove a golden opportunity for Pakistan, which was struggling to improve its

economy and enhance exports.

"By investing in the IT sector, equipping the youth, especially women with relevant skills, the country can amplify the volume of its exports and get out of the financial problems," she said.

Pakistan closely watching outcomes and futures strategy of China's Two Sessions

Islamabad: Pakistan being one of the close allies of China and a key partner in Belt and Road (BRI), is closely watching the outcomes and developments happening during the Two Sessions. Any significant change in China's socioeconomic, political and strate-

change in China's socioeconomic, political and strategic arena might have a direct impact on Pakistan's regional and global engagement, according to an article published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday.

Eyes are currently fixed on the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), as nearly 3000 NPC deputies and around 2000 CPPCC members gathered in Beijing to finalize China's national, regional, and global meaningful presence forward.

and global meaningful presence forward.

This year's "Lianghui" or "Two Sessions" are happening amidst a unique backdrop as China gradually opens up in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era.

Legislators from all corners of the country have con-

vened to deliberate on matters of national interest and review key government work reports that aim to pro-mote China's global engagement and economic progress.
As the world watches, the Two Sessions will show-

case China's whole process of people's democracy, highlighting its ability to build consensus and chart a path forward for the nation's future.

In October 2022, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) declared its commitment to advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through a path to modernization.

As the country embarks on this new journey of mod-

Govt does not seem in election mood: Rasheed

LAHORE: Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said it seemed that the government was not in the more of hold not in the mood of holding elections. In a series of tweets, the

In a series of tweets, the former interior minister welcomed the announcement of scheduled for polls in Punjab by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and hoped that they would not be delayed further. He said the government could the government could face contempt of court proceedings by delaying the elections as the Supreme Court had ruled polls must be held within 90 days of the dissolution of the assemblies.

He also hit out at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Ghulam Ali for not implementing the court orders, adding that the delaying tactics were spiracy. He claimed that political decisions would now be taken in courts in coming days.

The government was only running after its vested interests instead of brining political and economic stability in the country. He also lashed out at the interim government, saying it was only responsible for holding elections but it imposed elections but it imposed Section 144 the day election schedule was announced. He said one worker of the PTI was died during Lahore rally, adding that attempt to suppress the PTI proved damaging for the govern-ment.INP

Robber killed in encounter with police

PESHAWAR: University Town Police gunned down a robber in encounter while his accomplice managed to escape on

morning.

According to police, a police mobile team was patrolling in a locality on Canal Road when two robbers riding on a motor-cycle opened fire on them and police also retaliated in self-defense. During the exchange of fire one of the riding robbers was shot dead while the second managed to escape. Police have recovered a

Police have recovered a pistol and empty shells of cartridges and important evidence from the spot.

On receiving the information of the incident, police officers along with a heavy contingent of police rushed to the spot and further tightened checking.INP

The "Two Sessions" are the meetings where NPC and CPPCC gather to make crucial decisions regarding China's national progress having far-reaching implica-

tions.

There may be several other crucial appointments and confirmations, such as those of the Premier, State Council, Cabinet, and the CPPCC members. These decisions will set the tone for implementing China's domestic and international policies and will significantly impact China's future and global standing.

China has announced an official economic growth target of approximately 5% for 2023 as part of its efforts to reinvigorate the world's second-largest economy. In addition, the country will increase its defense budget by 7.2%, representing a slight uptick from the previous year. Despite the uncertain global economic outlook, China remains optimistic about the prospects of its economy this year. This confidence is significant as the Chinese government is bringing the targets forth as the Chinese government is bringing the targets forth for 2023 closer to achieving them. China represents the world's most promising market, with a middle-income population exceeding 400 million.Online

ernization in 2023, the unveiling of measures during the "two sessions" holds great significance not only for China but for other nations around the world deeply connected with China.

but will also impact global economic and political dynamics. As such, nations and international organizations will closely monitor the outcomes of the Two

These measures will not only shape China's future

Punjab CM orders inquiry into PTI worker's death

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has ordered an inquiry into the alleged murder of a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) worker Ali Bilal by reportedly police forture in

According to media reports, PTI activist Ali Bilal was allegedly killed on Wednesday during a PTI rally which was called to express solidarity with the judiciary and police crack downed over PTI activist to stop the rally. After the killing of a PTI worker, the Punjab government has instructed police foran ernment has instructed police foran

investigation into this case.

According to the statement of Mohsin
Naqvi, a private vehicle left the
deceased worker at the hospital. The

occupants of the vehicle are being searched with the help of Safe City cam-eras. He termed the allegation of police brutality as a deliberate lie.

The deceased worker was identified as Ali Bilal. According to Services Hospital, Ali Bilal was injured due to head and nose injuries. The cause of death has not yet been determined, nor have the facts about the killing been revealed. revealed.
PTI leader and former Minister of

State for Information Farrukh Habib accused the implementation of Section 144 in Lahore and the death of one worker during the alleged torture and roundup of PTI workers by the police.INP



ISLAMABAD: Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain visited FDE STEM makers spaces developed in colloboration with Robotmea in Islamabad Model School for Girls G-6/1-3.

Police claim arrests of 9,000 PSs

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar has said that police have arrested 9,000 proclaimed offenders (POs) wanted in dacoity, robbery, murder and kidnapping for ransom in the last 40 days. He said the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) conducted more than

200 intelligence-based operations, and arrested 47 terrorist and four militants were brought to justice. Dr Anwar said 22 hardened criminals who fired at the police during the confrontation met their end. He said that as 22 callous criminals who fired at police, were killed and among them, three suspects were those involved in four incidents of dacoity and rape of women.

He said that among the arrested people 1,400 proclaimed offenders were of A category. He added that with the help of Interpol, eight offenders were extra-dited to Pakistan from abroad in the last two weeks, while many others were being extradited in the coming days Up to 27 injured companions of

dacoits and robbers who were killed in multiple encounters with the police were taken to the hospital by the policemen. He said that one policeman was martyred while six others were injured in the exchange of fire with robbers, dacoits and criminals.

The IGP said the police arrested 400 criminals of 140 groups of dacoits, while more than 1,000 incidents of dacoity, robbery, banditry and theft were traced from these arrested accused. He said police still have been working

on 16,500 pending applications of rob-bery, dacoity and theft. He said 4,300 drug dealers were arrested and sent to ails and they will be given severe punshments.

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WAPDA plans to add over 10,000 MW hydel electricity by 2030

ISLAMABAD: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has embarked on an ambitious plan to double the share of low-cost, clean and green electricity to the installed capacity of the country by 2030.

Under the plan, an additional 10,000 megawatts (MW) would be added to the system during the said

added to the system during the said period, official sources told APP here.

With the addition of over 10,000 MW, the generation would touch 20,000 MW from the existing 9,500 MW, they said.

The additional 10,000 MW would

be added to the system through various ongoing mega projects like 4,500 MW Diamer Basha Dam, 4,200 MW Dasu Hydropower Project, 800 MW Mohmand Dam, 1,530 MW Tarbela 5th Extension and Kurram Tangi dam

etc projects, they said.

They said that the capacity of Mangla Power House was also being

enhanced through refurbishment and upon completion additional 300 MW would be available.

The said mega projects would not only add a handsome chunk of hydel electricity to the system but also store another 12 million acre-feet (MAF) of water for agriculture pur-

with the addition of over 10,000 MW, the generation would touch 20,000 MW from the existing 9,500 MW, they said. The additional 10,000 MW would be added to the system through various ongoing mega projects like 4,500 MW Diamer Basha Dam, 4,200 MW Dasu Hydropower Project, 800 MW Mohmand Dam, 1,530 MW Tarbela 5th Extension and Kurram Tangi dam etc projects, they said.They said that the capacity of Mangla Power House was also being enhanced through refurbishment and upon completion additional 300 MW would be available.INP



RAWALPINDI: First Lady Begum Samina Alvi in a group photo with the faculty and distinction-holder graduates at the 30th Convocation of the Fazaia Bilquis College of Education for Women Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Nur Khan.