

QUETTA VOICE

Email address:
dquettavoice@gmail.comTuesday 21
March, 2023
[https:// www.quettavoice.com/](https://www.quettavoice.com/)

ABC Certified





Quettavoice


Speed trackers in vehicles on Quetta Karachi highway to be installed soon



LHC emphasises need for Imran to appear in court for bail relief in terrorism cases

Agriculture livestock important for development of Balochistan: Kakar

Syed Muhammad Qaseem

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Kakar emphasized the importance of the agriculture and livestock sectors in the economic development of Balochistan. He expressed commitment to fully support agri-businesses, particularly by developing and strengthening the value chain in diverse sectors of the agriculture economy.

At a ceremony organized by Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP), the Governor distributed Matching Grants worth PKR 260 million to uplift the business potential of 117 small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including 26 women-led SMEs. The beneficiary SMEs are in ten districts across Balochistan. The grants, which ranged from PKR 0.5 to 30 million, were awarded based on a robust evaluation of the business plans shared by the SMEs.

Grasp project is a game-changer for the economic development of rural areas: Governor

The GRASP Project, which is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC) in partnership with Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO), was termed a game-changer for the economic development of rural areas in Balochistan by the Governor. He appreciated the contribution of EU, PPAF, and ITC and encouraged relevant line departments of the provincial government to allocate more funds to promote SMEs venturing into agri-businesses.

COO of PPAF, Mr. Nadir Gul Bareh, highlighted the organization's mission to serve underserved regions of the country and praised the GRASP Project for making a positive impact in the 10 districts of



Balochistan where it is being implemented. He added that "It is truly uplifting to witness the positive impact of this project on the most vulnerable areas, as it not only enables market growth but also generates

employment opportunities for the poorest communities. I am grateful to the European Union (EU) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) for their valuable investment in the region, which has improved access to

finance for agri-based SMEs and accelerated the trend of entrepreneurship in the less developed areas of the province. Their contribution is crucial in promoting economic development and improving the lives of the

underprivileged."

Grasp will bring a revolution in the agriculture sector of Balochistan: Jahanzeb Khan

GRASP provincial lead Balochistan, Jahanzeb Khan, termed GRASP a unique intervention that would bring positive change in the respective communities and usher a broader development of the province through a revolution in the agriculture sector.

Haji Noor Muhammad Dumar, Minister of Planning and Development, Government of Balochistan, while highlighting the significance of the GRASP project, noted that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) make up the bulk of businesses in Pakistan. These firms must grow and create jobs for the increasing workforce to achieve broad, sustainable economic growth.

Ms Roshan Khurshed Bharucha, former Chairperson of PPAF, remarked that the Matching Grants awarded to the SMEs are reflective of a strategic approach aimed at uplifting the SMEs through gender mainstreaming, policy shift, access to finance, networking, capacity building, and product improvement programs.

Shortlisting of the grantees was carried out in partnership with the UN agencies, including UN-ITC and UN-FAO, and PPAF, through leveraging their organizational resources to support the beneficiaries. Preference was given to progressive businesses which pitched innovative, smart, and competitive proposals. The project is governed by three steering committees: One at the national level led by the Government of Pakistan and two at the provincial level led by the governments of Balochistan and Sindh. Key stakeholders include producers, agricultural service providers, small and medium-sized enterprises, policymakers, and consumers

Dar says his Senate speech on Pakistan's nuclear programme being 'quoted out of context'

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said on Monday that his comments in the Senate on Pakistan's nuclear programme were being "quoted out of context", adding that the delay in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme was due to "technical reasons".

Last week, Dar told the upper house of Parliament that there would be "no compromise" on the country's nuclear and missile programme.

The remarks had come after Senator Raza Rabbani had raised some



questions on the reasons behind the delay in the agreement with the IMF, which would offer a critical lifeline to tame a balance-of-payments crisis.

The PPP leader lamented that the Senate had "neither before nor today been taken into confi-

dence on what are the conditionalities of the IMF". Describing the delay as extraordinary, Senator Rabbani sought to know if the delay was being made because of some sort of pressure on the country's nuclear programme or its strategic relationship with China or because an imperialist power wanted its presence in the region. In response, Dar assured that there would be no compromise on Pakistan's nuclear prowess and promised that the moment the staff-level agreement was reached, Web Desk

CJP Bandial visits newly constructed building of SC Quetta Registry

Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Chief Justice Supreme Court of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Umar Ata Bandial visited the newly constructed building of the apex court Quetta registry on Monday.

Chief Justice Umar Attabandial was welcomed by the judge of the Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, upon his arrival at the newly constructed building of the Quetta Registry.

On this occasion, the top judges of the country were presented a guard of honor by a



police force, after which Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail inspected

various parts of the building. He said that may Allah Almighty give us the opportunity to provide justice in

the true sense and let it be known that today for the first time in the new building of the Quetta Registry two benches of the Supreme Court are hearing the cases, Bench No. 1 Chief Justice Umar Attabandial and Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Bench No. 2 comprising Justice Yahya Khan Afridi and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail.

Both the Supreme Court benches have started regular hearings of cases in the newly constructed building of Quetta Registry.

LHC emphasises need for Imran to appear in court for bail relief in terrorism cases

The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday emphasised the need for PTI Chairman Imran Khan to appear in court as it took up the ex-premier's plea seeking protective bail in two terrorism cases registered against him in Islamabad following clashes at the Federal Judicial Complex (FJC) on Saturday. The first information reports (FIRs) registered at the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and the Golra police stations in the capital accused the PTI chief and party workers of being involved in attacking police and creating unrest outside the FJC in Islamabad during the hearing of the Toshakhana case on Saturday. The FIR invokes sections 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapon), 149



(every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object), 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions), 353 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 380 (theft in dwelling house,

etc), 395 (punishment for dacoity), 427 (mischief causing damage to the amount of fifty rupees), 435 (mischief by fire or explosive substance with intent to cause damage to amount of one hundred rupees or [in case of agricultural produce] ten rupees), 440 (mischief committed after preparation made for causing death or hurt), and 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) of the Pakistan Penal Code. The complaints alleged that PTI workers set vehicles on fire, and stole weapons and a wireless set from a police vehicle. PTI leaders Asad Umar, Asad Qaiser, Hamid Azhar, Ali Amin Gandapur, Ali Nawaz Awan, Murad Saeed, Shibli Faraz, Hasaan Khan Niazi, Omer Ayub Khan, Amjad Khan Niazi. Web Desk

Speed trackers in vehicles on Quetta Karachi highway to be installed soon

Syed M. Qaseem

QUETTA: Implementation of the Apex Committee's decision to install trackers in the transport vehicles on Quetta-Karachi highway has been started. This decision was made in the last meeting of the Apex Committee under the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo.

The owners and drivers of the passenger coaches, buses and wagons on the national highways in the province, especially on the Quetta-Karachi highway, were strictly directed to ensure installation of track-



ers to check the speed of vehicles. The decision to ban the carrying of petrol diesel and other flammable materials in these passenger vehicles was also made and the concerned authorities were strictly directed to implement it.

In this regard, the administration of all the districts across the

province has started checking the passenger vehicles on the highways passing through their areas and the speed of all vehicles is being checked. While, the presence of petrol, diesel or other flammable materials in the vehicles is also being monitored.

Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz

Uqaili directed all Commissioners, Deputy Commissioner and Provincial Transport Authority to check the speed of passenger vehicles on national highways and take legal actions who disobey the law.

In this regard, on the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Sohrab, the concerned police started checking the vehicles. Meanwhile, they stopped a passenger wagon carrying oil on the CPEC Zero Point National Highway and legal action was taken against the driver as per the law. An FIR was also registered against the driver who did not have valid vehicle documents.

PPP rejects Sindh local govt by-election schedule

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Monday rejected the by-election scheduled for Sindh's local body elections, drawing criticism from the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) which demanded the foreign minister "accept the reality".

Bilawal, while speaking at the ceremony for laying the foundation stone of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Cardiovascular Disease at Karachi's Korangi, recounted his government's efforts to upgrade healthcare facilities in Sindh.

JI slams FM Bilawal for rejecting by-polls schedule

Countering those who said that his party had done nothing for people in the province, Bilawal said: "We have made a network of hospitals across the province. This network of hospitals provides world-class healthcare free of cost."

Sindh's NICVD can compete against any hospital in India, US, or UK, he said.



The PPP chairman alleged that the "health card" being offered in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was nothing but a fraud.

"In the name of the health card, people's money was being given to private insurance companies instead of hospitals."

Furthermore, he said: "I appeal to a certain political party to leave behind its extremist ideologies and its politics of hate."

Bilawal advises Sindh to move SHC against schedule

Speaking on the matter of by-elections in the metropolis, he said that they were supposed to take place around a year ago.

"While the first phase was carried out time; however, seeing that PPP was winning the second phase, they delayed the second phase consistently, citing various excuses."

For the first time, PPP swept through the Hyderabad and Karachi divisions, the PPP chairman said. He said that the local body elections have been held but there are no representatives. If the elections were held on time, the elected representatives of the people would have been there to help them in the flood situation.

PPP chief says jiayala to become Karachi's next mayor

"Who is stopping people from having their representatives come to power?" he asked, adding, "We reject this joke of a schedule."

He requested the Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and Law Minister Murtaza Wahab to challenge the schedule in the Sindh High Court.

"These powers cannot tolerate the mayor of Karachi will be from PPP. However, soon the Karachi mayor will be a jiayala." INP

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Mystery shrouds fate of Quetta Green Bus scheme

QUETTA: The mystery continues to shroud the much-touted Quetta Green Bus scheme contrary to the claims of the Balochistan government. The Balochistan government under the former Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan had approved the project in the budget for the financial year 2020-21 to provide decent transportation to the masses.

The images and video of green buses parked at the warehouse of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) went viral on social media. Fear of transporters, the government has not been able to bring buses on roads to facilitate the masses, most people on social media claimed.

The previous government had not mentioned the method of operating the buses in the project, and a senior official of the CM Secretariat responded. "How many drivers would be hired, fuel, and who will operate", he said. These questions need to be answered, he added. The official requested anonymity.

"The former government pointed out no routes", the spokesman chief minister secretariat said

The campaign on social media prompted the spokesman chief minister's secretariat government of Balochistan to clarify its position and said the previous introduced the project without any proper feasibility report. "The former government pointed out no routes", the spokesman chief minister secretariat said.

Former Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan also took to social media network Twitter and said that the project was prepared and approved to provide decent transportation to the masses.

Sources within the transport department said the previous government had approved the Quetta Green Bus Project to provide decent transportation to the masses. Initially, the government proposed the purchase of 100 green buses to address the transportation issue of citizens, a well-placed official at the provincial transport department told this scribe.

4 buses each operate till Belili and Sariab from city

However, he explained after thorough deliberations, the government decided to purchase 8 buses to facilitate the masses. As per the pilot project, four buses would operate from Serena Chowk Quetta to Belili and Four buses would operate till Sariab Customs, the officer mentioned.

The spokesman CM Secretariat nevertheless mentioned that the buses arrived on June 29th and the secretary of transport was sending a summary to the chief minister for approval in this regard.

In scorching heat, all the buses have been parked at the PDMA's office in the Chashma Achozai area.

The transport officer informed that initially the transporters community had expressed reservations about the project. However, the transporters were convinced after a thorough discussion with officials, the officer concluded.

Pollution in the air

By Salman Danish

Every day, thousands of drivers are forced to idle needlessly on the roads of the federal capital in the name of 'security'.

Indeed, security in and of itself is important. But it needs to be balanced with the health and safety of citizens along with the consideration of the economic impacts the security measures implemented have on the country's already distressed economy.

It is a well-known and scientifically established fact that 'idling' wastes fuel, gives rise to greenhouse gas emissions and worsens local air quality with more pollutants which harm public health. An idling engine can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion.

An hour of automobile idling burns approximately one-fifth of a gallon of gas and releases nearly four pounds of CO2 into the air.

Excessive amounts of CO2 in the atmosphere can contribute to global warming. Only for adaptation measures to reduce carbon emissions from the transport sector, Pakistan needs billions of dollars a year. Can we really opt for adaptation at such a heavy cost? The answer is 'no'.

Idling, which contributes to toxic emissions in the air we breathe, is when a vehicle's engine is running when it is stationary for longer than 30 seconds. An idling car can fill up to 150 balloons with harmful emissions every minute. Switching off the engine can go a long way to improving air quality.

Previously, Islamabad had wide open roads with many alternate routes that could accommodate the vast tide of traffic during its well-defined morning and evening rush hour. Nowadays, there is rarely a time when

there is a congestion-free highway, main boulevard, or avenue. This — despite the many expansion projects and signal-free corridors — is a result of the ever-present and ever-expanding presence of the infamous police check posts.

This is not to say that check posts are in any way unnecessary or ineffective. The sad fact of their necessity is evident from the tragic incidents from the city's recent past. However, there is a need to recalibrate the relationship between citizens and law enforcement as well as to connect planners with day-to-day commuters to avoid incidents like the Faizabad check post speed bump fiasco which resulted in hundreds of thousands of hours of productivity being wasted due to ill-conceived planning as well as millions of rupees worth of petrol being wasted, not to mention the degradation of local

air quality from the sheer number of idling vehicles.

Even to the very day of writing, the lane separators affixed along with the speed bump have not been removed from the Faizabad check post and are a constant source of congestion and long traffic jams. This is not the only case, hundreds of such hurdles are seen in all big cities including Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, and a few more which cause congestion and fuel wastage, causing more otherwise avoidable carbon emission. Such a way of planning and implementation is neither suitable nor sustainable.

Another major source of such congestion — and thus, fuel wastage, pollution, and wastage of time — is the semi-permanent closure of the infamous D-Chowk. Instead, a massive onslaught of traffic is diverted towards Agha Khan Road via Atatürk

Avenue, both of which become choked due to the presence of yet another check post ahead of the city's big hotel.

Even if it is not feasible to reopen D-Chowk, there should be a consideration for planners and decision-makers to switch hats from a security state of mind to a citizen-friendly state of mind and provide alternative routes for the unfortunate souls who have to get to their offices and help keep the country afloat. As a bonus, alternate routes also make cities and communities resilient in times of crisis and emergency.

We must remember that security should not dominate our lives to such an extent that we forget to stop and take a moment to realize that it needs to be worth living as well. There needs to be a delicate balance among security, environment and economic stability.

Tales from the Mountains

By Jamil Akhtar

The northern areas of Pakistan are amongst the most beautiful parts of our planet. Here, nature can be witnessed in all its might and glory. The remoteness of this region has added to its mystique and aided in the conservation of the environment to some extent. But this isolation has also caused more hardships for the inhabitants of this land and has hindered its development.

UNDP has been very active in the northern parts of the country, including Chitral in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and the Gilgit Baltistan province. Its interventions have focused on the environment, disaster risk reduction, environmentally friendly tourism, empowering the people, and providing them with livelihoods.

The drastic changes in the climate are wreaking devastation on glaciers the world over and Pakistan is no exception. The melting glaciers create lakes that can overflow, and cause tremendous devastation to lives and property.

To prevent this from happening a project by the name of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF-I) was initiated a few years back by the Adaptation Fund. Now, with an investment of 36.9 million dollars by the Green Climate Fund, GLOF-II is being implemented across the two provinces.

In addition to climate change, the increase in the human population has also adversely affected the environment. To reverse the effects of deforestation, thousands of poplar and fruit-



bearing trees including cherry, apple, and apricot have been planted all over the northern areas.

These interventions have been managed through the Improvement of Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP) project (funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and Government of Italy), and the Pakistan Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme implemented through World

Wide Fund for Nature and Snow Leopard Foundation.

Improving the living conditions of the people has had primary importance in UNDP's efforts. The provision of clean drinking water is a very important aspect of these efforts. Numerous water treatment and purification plants and hydro-ram pumps have been installed and water supply schemes have been put into place in various villages.

These initiatives of CKNP and CCAM-II projects have been funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, the Government of Italy, and the Global Water Challenge (Coca Cola Foundation).

Tales from the Mountains.

The author is an international award-winning writer, and photographer, currently working as a consultant for UNDP Pakistan

Rekindling relations

By Maheen Shafeeq

After closed-door negotiations from March 6 to March 10 in Beijing, China, a joint trilateral statement by China, Saudi Arabia and Iran announced the rekindling of good neighbourly relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The agreement has stated Riyadh and Tehran's desire to resolve disagreements through dialogue and diplomacy, resuming diplomatic relations and reopening embassies within two months and adhering to the principle of the UN Charter of non-interference in internal matters of the state.

The two countries have agreed on a follow-up meeting to designate ambassadors and discuss enhancing bilateral relations. They have also identified roadmaps and timelines to rebuild their tattered relationship. And have settled on reimplementing the Security Cooperation Agreement of 2001 and the General Agreement for Cooperation in Fields of Economy, Trade, Investment, Technology, Science, Culture, Sports and Youth 1998. They have also pledged to enhance regional and international peace and stability. This development is a turning of a new page in their bilateral relations.

Relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran became tense during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Links were further degraded due to a series of events that amplified the ideological fissure

between the two countries, such as the 2003 overthrow of Saddam Hussein, a Sunni Arab leader, the rise of proxies due to the Arab Spring in 2011 and alleged Iranian support for the rebel group Houthis in Yemen, the Hezbollah in Lebanon and President Bashar al-Assad of Syria.

Relations between the two countries soured to the point of slacking diplomatic ties in 2016 due to several violent attacks on the Saudi embassy in Tehran. The Saudis expelled Iranian diplomats and asked them to close the embassy within 48 hours. This was as a watershed moment that further invigorated ideological and regional tensions.

The recent agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran aims to reduce decades of high distrust and tensions. Restoring ties could become a bedrock to ease support and funding for violence in the region. It could be a way for the Saudi government to end the conflict in Yemen and for Iran to dial down the backing of militant groups.

China has claimed to have no selfish interest in the rapprochement. This highlights the fact that China intends to refrain from developing a regional security or political footprint. However, China will partner with and support development and peace in the Middle East. This shows that the Chinese strategy has a somewhat divergent (from the US) tactic of scaling its imprint in the Middle East.

China wants sufficient

peace to expand its economic corridor in the region, including building roads, ports, bridges and tunnels. Iran and Saudi Arabia are members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which aims to enhance infrastructure.

Beijing sees its expansion plans as a possibility only if violent clashes in the region were blanketed by peaceful relations between the region's two major powers: Saudi Arabia and Iran. The agreement will support China's aims to connect the new Silk Road, which starts from China to the Central Asian States, passes through Iran and leads to Europe. The Maritime Silk Route, passing through the Persian Gulf, also needs to ensure the security and stability of the region. The deal will serve the economic and development interests of China and the region.

Beijing is invested in having uninterrupted routes and capital to import energy from the Middle East. Iran and China have signed a 'comprehensive strategic partnership' to improve investment and cooperation in fossil fuel, renewable energy and security of energy supply and demand, including transportation security to China. The restoration of ties will assist the isolated and sanctioned Iran reintegrate into the energy market. This will also be a significant effort to revive the Iranian economy and its currency that sunk to a new low of 600,000 against the dollar at the end.

Life after abrogation of IIOJK's autonomy

In 2019, BJP revoked the special status of then Jammu and Kashmir, and illegally integrated it with India. I was studying in India at the time while my family was in Kashmir. Due to the communication blockade, I was not able to connect with them for a very long time. I still remember how difficult it was for me to live far from home and not hearing back from my family. The history of India, Pakistan and Kashmir may be intertwined but such stories remain at the very heart of it.

It all started after partition. The British did not divide the princely states since they were ruled by princes. In fact, they never had proper control over these states to begin with. To solve this issue, India created the 'Instrument of Accession' that allowed the princely states to accede to India. Most of the princely states acceded except Jammu and Kashmir. The region was different from other princely states as it was Muslim majority by population, most of whom wanted to accede to Pakistan but was ruled by a Hindu king named Maharaja Hari Singh. The king

neither acceded to India nor Pakistan and decided to remain independent. After doing so, Pakistan tried to enter its territory to take control. In order to defend his state, the Maharaja asked India for military help but India only agreed to help if Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India. The Maharaja signed the 'Instrument of Accession' on 26th October, 1947. This day is considered as a 'Black Day' for the Kashmiris.

Resultantly, the war led to the division of the state into two regions. Around one-third of the territory was taken by Pakistan and the rest acceded to India. Later in 1962, China took the Aksai-Chin area of Jammu and Kashmir thereby making it a tripolar dispute between India, Pakistan and China.

Since the accession of Jammu and Kashmir was not acceptable by the people, the Indian government gave it special status. In the Presidential order of 1954, Article 370 and 35(a) were drafted in the Constitution of India to guarantee this special status. Article 370 was drafted in

Part XXI of the Indian Constitution with the title of "Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions." It guaranteed special status and power to Jammu and Kashmir to have their separate Constitution, a state flag, and autonomy of internal administration, defence and communication. Article 35(a) of the Indian Constitution, allowed the state legislature of Jammu and Kashmir to define their people as the states "permanent residents." All the residents had a state subject or a resident proof which gave them fundamental rights, citizenship, right to own and buy a property in the state. As a result of this article, anyone outside the region couldn't purchase property in the state. On 31st October 2019, the parliament of India gave the order of reorganising Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories — Jammu and Kashmir was one and Ladakh was the other.

In their 2019 election manifesto, BJP promised to remove the Articles 370 and 35(a) to end terrorism and integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India. Many scholars claim that the removal

of these Articles happened with the intention to change the demography of the region.

Since the removal of these articles, the legislative framework of the region has started to change. For example, in colleges 50% of seats are reserved just for Indians. Such changes have angered the locals as they feel neglected in their own land. Post 2019, the Indian government claims that everything is 'normal' in the region and since then large number of Indians have started visiting. However, despite the changes, insurgency still exists. Almost every day we hear about encounters and attacks in various parts of the region. The vicious cycle still continues. Since the accession of Jammu and Kashmir was not acceptable by the people, the Indian government gave it special status. In the Presidential order of 1954, Article 370 and 35(a) were drafted in the Constitution of India to guarantee this special status. Article 370 was drafted in

guaranteed special status and power to Jammu and Kashmir to have their separate Constitution, a state flag, and autonomy of internal administration, defence and communication. Article 35(a) of the Indian Constitution, allowed the state legislature of Jammu and Kashmir to define their people as the states "permanent residents." All the residents had a state subject or a resident proof which gave them fundamental rights, citizenship, right to own and buy a property in the state. As a result of this article, anyone outside the region couldn't purchase property in the state. On 31st October 2019, the parliament of India gave the order of reorganising Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories — Jammu and Kashmir was one and Ladakh was the other.

In their 2019 election manifesto, BJP promised to remove the Articles 370 and 35(a) to end terrorism and integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India. Many scholars claim that the removal of these Articles happened with the intention to change the demography of the region.

Double standard?

By S Qaisar Shareef

On January 24, Twitter took down links to a two-part BBC documentary titled 'India: the Modi Question', at the behest of the Indian government. The documentary presented the role Narendra Modi — the then chief minister of Gujarat — played in the 2002 massacres in his state. About 2000 people, mostly Muslims, were reportedly killed.

Coming from the BBC, it was a well-researched production. YouTube also quickly followed suit, making it difficult — though not impossible — to access the films. The BBC documentary tracks "Mr Modi's career-long efforts to demonize India's 200 million-odd Muslim" minority, reported 'The Economist'.

It appears that Elon Musk's free speech absolutism only goes so far. The BBC is not exactly known to be some extremist fringe outfit, and yet it was effectively silenced with cooperation from US social media sites. Just a few days later, BBC offices in India were raided by Indian tax authorities, pursuing alleged tax law violations — an often-used tactic to silence unwanted opposition. "After silencing critics at home, Narendra Modi goes after foreign media", read the headline from a recent editorial, also in 'The Economist'.

In a similar move in 2020, Amnesty International, a highly respected human rights organization, was forced to close its operations in

India after its bank accounts were frozen. While media and civil rights organizations critical of autocratic governments often find themselves under pressure from authorities, such actions are hardly expected from democracies, certainly not one that is often held up as sharing values of freedom and free speech with the democratic nations of the West.

Yet, it is the total silence and lack of criticism by the world's leading democracies including the US that raises disturbing questions. Do democratic countries really operate with a double standard when it comes to adhering to principles of civil rights and free speech?

As we reach the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, opposition to Russian actions continues to be loudly led by the US and our Western allies. "This is a fight between democracy and autocracy," US President Biden has often said. It is estimated that this year Ukraine has received well-deserved and sorely needed military aid close to \$100 billion.

A February 24 vote in the UN General Assembly called on Russia to immediately withdraw from all occupied territories in Ukraine. While the vote was nonbinding, it forced every UN member country to take a stand on this unjust and cruel war.

And once again many large countries such as India, South Africa, China, Pakistan and others abstained from voting

against Russia. In all, 39 countries abstained or voted against the resolution. Over the past year, countries representing over half the world's population have been reluctant to openly condemn the Russian invasion.

People in the US often ask the question: why would any of these countries refrain from condemning open aggression against a UN member country?

The answers, of course, are complex. Countries are trying to look out for their economic interests or are compelled out of necessity to not antagonize Russia as the country has vast amounts of oil, gas and grains to sell. But a deeper answer could be that there is a feeling among many of seeing a double standard at play. Many wars and calamities have been barely noticed, but a war in Europe is expected to get sympathy from across the world.

While atrocities committed by the Russian forces in Ukraine are condemned — as they should be and as has been documented by organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International — reports by these same organizations about human rights violations against Palestinians living under occupation have been largely ignored. This war, one hopes, will end in the not-too-distant future and the suffering of the Ukrainian people will ease.

The people and the government of Ukraine will receive much-needed assistance to rebuild their shattered country.

Ahsan requests SC to take notice of violence & ransacking at Judicial Complex

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has requested the Supreme Court (SC) to take notice of the violence and ransacking at the Judicial Complex in Islamabad by the PTI crooks. He viewed that democratic leaders always practice dialogue rather than resorting to violence.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Monday, he said PTI Chief Imran Khan has been disseminating hate and creating chaos in the country. He

said PTI villains attacked institutions including judiciary and security forces in Islamabad and Lahore. Ahsan Iqbal requested the Supreme Court to take notice of the violence and ransacking at the Judicial Complex in Islamabad by the PTI crooks.

He said Imran Khan wants bloodshed and anarchy in the country and is responsible for prevailing economic situation. He said a conspiracy is being hatched to destabilize the state through attacking the

state institutions. The Minister said strict action will be taken against those who took law into their hands in Lahore and attacked police and other law enforcing agencies. Replying to a question pertaining to the deal with International Monetary Fund, he said Imran Khan sabotaged inking deal with the IMF, but due to the hectic efforts of the incumbent government, a good news in this connection will be shared with the nation soon. INP

New wheat varieties: Chinese help to ensure food security

ISLAMABAD: Considering the increasing population in Pakistan, it is important to introduce new wheat varieties to ensure food security. In this regard, China's support to introduce climate-resilient wheat varieties will help Pakistan reduce food insecurity.

Talking to WealthPK, Prof Muhammad Arif of the Department of Agronomy, Agriculture University, Peshawar, viewed China's support in producing climate-resilient seeds as a positive development.

According to the global Climate Risk Index, Pakistan stands at 5th position with respect to the climate vulnerability of countries. It has been projected that Pakistan may lose 50% of wheat yield if the current trend of rise in temperature continues until 2040.

Climatic changes can also cause economic losses to 80% of the farmers engaged in wheat production. The last 50 years' data on climate-change variables casts doubts on the country's ability to cope with climate change.

Prof Arif said Pakistan-China joint wheat laboratory at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad,

will help Pakistani scientists learn technical expertise from Chinese experts on biotechnology. China has made phenomenal progress in wheat production through research techniques that make wheat seeds resistant to temperature, humidity, precipitation, and drought. It has maintained a grain output of more than 650 million tonnes yearly for the last eight years.

He commended China's smart breeding techniques to protect wheat yields from severe climatic conditions in its homeland. The Chinese research in the agriculture sector and biotechnology has no parallel in the world, he added.

About 40% of the total agricultural land in Pakistan constitutes wheat crops. Prof Arif argued that different agro-ecological zones in Pakistan take the effect of climate change in a different manner. To secure climate resilience in wheat production, the Chinese support in the development of climate-resilient seeds through different breeding techniques in the lab will reduce the burden of food imports.

Pakistan is likely to miss the target of wheat production this year. Against the target of 28.4 million tonnes, it may land at 26.7 million tonnes. Currently, Pakistan is importing wheat from Russia at \$327 per metric tonne after the Economic Co-ordination Committee's approval. Cooperation between these two countries in the agriculture sector will shield Pakistan from dependency on other countries, he hoped.

According to the global Climate Risk Index, Pakistan stands at 5th position with respect to the climate vulnerability of countries. It has been projected that Pakistan may lose 50% of wheat yield if the current trend of rise in temperature continues until 2040.

Climatic changes can also cause economic losses to 80% of the farmers engaged in wheat production. The last 50 years' data on climate-change variables casts doubts on the country's ability to cope with climate change.

Prof Arif said Pakistan-China joint wheat laboratory at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, will help Pakistani. INP



KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi distributing cash prize among winner of the National Level competition of National Idea Bank 2022.

Image Pakistan reaps net profit of Rs102.6m in 6MFY23: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Image Pakistan Limited's revenue from sales increased by 63% to Rs830.8 million in the first six months of the ongoing Financial Year 2022-23 (6MFY23) from Rs508.7 million in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal.

Similarly, the gross profit increased by 51% to Rs358.3 million in 6MFY23 from the gross profit of Rs236.8 million recorded in 6MFY22.

The company posted a net profit of Rs102.6 million in the first six months of the Fiscal Year 2022-23, 218% up from the profit of Rs32 million in the corresponding period of the previous year, reports WealthPK.

Performance in 2021-22: The company's gross sales increased by 72% year over year for the Fiscal Year 2022 to Rs1.7 billion from Rs1 billion in FY21.

The gross profit increased by 69% from Rs442 million in FY21 to Rs744.8 million in FY22.

The profit before tax increased to Rs172 million in FY22 from Rs155 million in FY21.

WealthPK reports that the profit after tax climbed to Rs208 million in FY22, up from Rs115 million in FY21, representing a tremendous 81% year-over-year growth.

The company's earnings per share (EPS) was Rs2.02 in FY21; however, it soared to Rs2.37 in FY22.

About the company: Image Pakistan Limited, formerly Tri-Star Polyester Limited, was incorporated in Pakistan as a public limited company on November 14, 1990 under the Companies Ordinance, 1984 (Repealed with the enactment of the Companies Act, 2017 on May 30, 2017).

The principal activity of the company is the manufacture and sale of embroidered fabric and ready-to-wear garments and polyester filament yarn. INP

Punjab CM announces to form JIT to probe Zaman Park clashes

LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab chief minister (CM) Mohsin Naqvi on Monday announced to form Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to probe the terror incidents that took place during the Zaman Park operation.

Punjab caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi, during a press conference, said the JIT will be notified today by the provincial government to probe the 'terror' incidents.

He claimed that pictures of 'terrorists' staying in Zaman Park are available with them and went on to say his government will ensure the writ of the statement at any cost.

"I have given a 'free hand' to the police to establish the writ of the state in the province." The Punjab CM said he had been asking the law enforcement agencies to hold back but will no longer do so.

Naqvi said he will also write to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to inform it about whatever is happening in Punjab except for politics.

The police force is likely to conduct another 'grand operation' at residence of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in Lahore's Zaman Park. INP

IHC summons record of FIRs registered against Imran

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday summoned a record of FIRs registered against the former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan in the federal capital IHC Chief Justice, Amir Farooq took up the petition of Imran Khan seeking a record of FIRs registered against him. Faisal Farid advocate appeared before the court to represent Imran Khan.

At the outset of the hearing, Faisal Farid pleaded with the court to summon record of the FIRs registered against the PTI chief, citing some of the FIRs were kept secret by the interior ministry. "You should know the FIR is not a sealed document," IHC CJ said while responding to the arguments of the complainant's counsel. FIR is a public document after which the person is summoned police for investigation, Justice Farooq remarked. On the request of Imran Khan's counsel, the IHC issued summons to the interior secretary, IG police and the FIA and sought record of the cases lodged against the complainant. INP

PTI tehsil Nazim among seven killed in Abbottabad car shooting

ABBOTTABAD: At least seven persons including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) tehsil nazim Atif Munisif Khan were killed after unidentified assailants opened fire at a vehicle in Abbottabad on Monday.

PTI Tehsil Nazim Havelian Atif Munisif Khan along with six others killed in a horrific car firing incident in Abbottabad. Overall eight persons were present in the car which caught fire after heavy firing.

The bodies present in the vehicle were completely burnt. District Police Officer (DPO) Umar Tufail told the media that the attack was apparently carried out by

unidentified men due to personal enmity.

DPO Umar Tufail said that the firing incident took place near Havelian and people are confirming the presence of the tehsil nazim in the vehicle. He added that the vehicle caught fire due to heavy firing resorted to by the attackers.

Earlier in the month, two security guards of Mir Sardar Khan, son of PTI member of Balochistan Assembly Yar Muhammad Rind, were killed in an improvised explosive device (IED) attack targeting the former's convoy in Nosham area of the province.

In a statement, Fahad Shah

Assistant Commissioner of Dhadar area - said that unidentified miscreants planted an improvised explosive device (IED) at Nosham road which exploded when Mir Sardar Khan's convoy was passing through the area.

As a result of the powerful explosion, two security guards of PTI MPAs lost their lives and another sustained injuries. Meanwhile, Mir Sardar Khan remained unhurt in the blast, the assistant commissioner added.

Upon receiving the information, the police and rescue teams reached the spot and shifted the deceased and injured to Civil Hospital. INP



ISLAMABAD: Secretary EAD and dr Kazim Niaz and Young Ye Director Asian Development Bank hold National workshop on Potential CAREC-wide trade agreement.

Green energy key to reducing power woes: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Enabling renewable energy projects under the RE policy will not only reduce Pakistan's reliance on imported fuel but also help bring in foreign investment.

Thirteen projects of wind and solar energy (650-megawatt) worth \$600 million are presently awaiting final approval from the energy ministry. These projects have been developed under the RE policy 2006 and approved by the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) and National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA).

Talking to WealthPK, energy expert Mustafa Abdullah said in the current energy crisis and economic situation, these projects will help recover the energy shortfall on fast-track basis by adding a cheaper

source of electricity for the end consumer.

He said currently, the cost of electricity in Gwadar was around Rs25 per unit whereas the production of energy through renewable sources will cost Rs11 per unit. He said opting for power generation through the RE energy sources instead of importing energy or fuel from neighbouring countries could cost less to the government.

Currently, Makran Division is being supplied electricity through Iran. Under the agreement, 200MW power is to be provided, but most of the time, it is just 10 to 15 megawatts," he added.

He opined that technological innovation and the urgent global imperative to decrease greenhouse gas emissions had prompted a worldwide shift from using conventional fuel to opting for

renewable energy sources and Pakistan was no exception.

"The present government's commitment to take the country towards solarization is evident, as the government has launched multiple initiatives under the 10,000-megawatt project," he added.

Additionally, at present, wind and solar energy power generation are the cheapest forms available to the government to generate electricity.

According to the Sustainable Policy Institute (SDPI), renewables contribute about 4% of total power sector generation in Pakistan to the national grid, while wind alone contributes more than two-thirds of renewable energy. The energy generated from solar and wind jumped from almost zero in 2011 to 4,320 GWh in 2021. INP

198 PTI supporters arrested for attacking police in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad police said on Monday that it has arrested 198 PTI supporters for allegedly attacking law enforcement personnel and causing chaos in the capital city on March 18.

Hours-long clashes were reported between PTI workers and the capital police on Saturday after former prime minister Imran Khan arrived at the Federal Judicial Complex to attend a hearing in the Toshakhana case.

During the violent confrontation, a contingent of law enforcers and PTI supporters used anti-riot gear against each other with teargas used from both sides to push the opposing side back.

In a series of tweets on Monday the Islamabad police said that 198 PTI protesters involved in arson and vandalism had been arrested, while raids were being conducted to nab others. INP

INTERNSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

Information Department Govt. of Balochistan is pleased to announce Paid Internships for a period of 03 Months only. **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Applicants must hold a Master's/Bachelor's (4 Years) degree in Computer Sciences/Information Technology/ Mass Communication/ Public Relations, or Journalism.
- Candidates must not be older than 28 years of age to apply for these internships.
- Applicants can apply online only through the official portal <http://idip.balochistan.gov.pk/register.php>
- The internship period is for (03) Three months.
- MS Office, Social Media use and Computer Proficiency is must.
- A stipend will be paid during internship period.
- Only Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for test and interviews.
- Applicants must apply within 15 days of this Advertisement.

INFORMATION DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF BALOCHISTAN

PRQ No.2977/17-3-2023

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr_gob

TENDER NOTICE

The Director General Health Services invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items.

Tender Fee Rs.1000. Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required. TSE-222303275221

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1.	Furniture & Fixtures (Total Item(s) Count: 18)	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 24,000,000 in Previous 3. Turn over of at least 20,000,000 PKR in 2 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. The firm must be Manufacturer of Furniture & Fixture. Anti-termite warranty of two year after supply of Furniture's to the Concerned. Station or District. Bidder shall be bound to provide samples on demand of procurement committee. Must agree to serve the Contract within 60 Days After Issuing of Supply Order Form. Firm must have manufacturing License through Government Department firm must have audit report of last 3 years from the Chartered Accountant firm. Firm must have tax returns of last 3 years **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 03 April, 2023 till 09:30 AM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 10:30 AM on **EPPS System Address:** DG Health Services Quetta **Phone no:** 0819211349 **Email:** dghealthbalochistan@gmail.com

DIRECTOR GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES BALOCHISTAN QUETTA

PRQ No.2959/17-3-2023

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr_gob



ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor Quaid-E-Azam University Prof. Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar called on Rana Tanveer Hussain Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training.

Ruet-e-Hilal Committee to meet Wednesday for Ramazan moon sighting

ISLAMABAD: The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday (March 22, 2023) for sighting the Ramazan moon.

The weather department has said there are strong chances of a Ramadan moon sighting on March 22, (29 Shaban 1444).

The weather department has predicted that the Ramadan moon's birth will take place on March 21 at 10:23 PM.

It has further said that

in the event of the holy month of Ramadan of the complete 30 days, then it will conclude on April 21 (Friday) and Eid-ul-Fitr will be celebrated on Saturday, April 22, 2023.

Sources in the Ministry of Religious Affairs disclosed that there were chances that the Ruet-e-Hilal Committee's meeting would be held in Islamabad under the chairmanship of Chairman Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad.

Besides that, there will also be meetings of Zonal

Ruet-e-Hilal Committees across the country.

And, the main committee will decide on the sighting of the moon in the light of eyewitness accounts from across the country. On the other hand, Ministry of Religious Affairs Secretary Aftab Akbar Durrani has expressed the hope that this time there will be no controversy over Ramazan and Eid-ul-Fitr moon sighting in the country, reported 24NewsHD TV channel on Sunday. INP

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Director Electricity (North), Energy Department, Government of Balochistan invites sealed tenders from interested contractors/firms based on composite scheduled rates 2018 On percentage rates for the work mentioned below with the Bid Security of 2% of estimated cost/offered rate in shape of Bank Guarantee or Deposit at Call. The non-refundable Tender fee deposited in head of account C03870 through Green Bank Challan in any National Bank of Pakistan located within Balochistan Province.

Bid Security 2%, Tender Fee Rs.500/- for each work.

S.No	Name of Work	E/ Cost
1.	INSTALLATION OF LED STREET LIGHTS AT MUSA COLONY, KHILJI COLONY, BAREACABAD, SARYAB MILL, KILI ALI ZAI, KILI SHAMOZAI, PACKAGE-4 UNDER PSDP 1983 Z2022-1774 (2022-23) TSE-222303278023	40.00
2.	INSTALLATION OF LED STREET LIGHTS AT MUSA COLONY, KHILJI COLONY, BAREACABAD, SARYAB MILL, KILI ALI ZAI, KILI SHAMOZAI, PACKAGE-II UNDER PSDP 1984 Z2022-1777 (2022-23) TSE-222303278033	40.00

The procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Rules, 2014. **Eligibility:** Presence in active tax payer list. The bidding firms must not be black listed by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Registration with Balochistan Revenue Authority. The bidder must complete one assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of Rs 20,000,000/- of at least 3 subsequent Years showing Financial Capacity of the firm. Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council C-5 and above and specialized Code is EE-04 **Procedure of Procurement:** Single Stage - Two Envelope Procedure. **Bid Security:** The bid must accompany bid security in the form of Bank guarantee/Deposit at call of 2% specified above in the name of Undersigned from a scheduled Bank **Tender Documents:** Tender documents can be obtained from the office of undersigned 500 PKR **Issuance of tender documents** From the date of publication of NIT in Newspapers till 7th April, 2023 during office Hours, on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The bid must be submitted latest by 7th April, 2023 at 11:00 A.M **Tender opening Time** All tenders shall be opened on the same day at 12:00 P.M in the office of undersigned. **Address:** Director General Electricity, Energy Department, Government of Balochistan, H # 108, Shah Nawaz Kurd Street, Saryab Road, Quetta **Tel#** 081-2442007 & Fax 081-2452756

DIRECTOR ELECTRICITY (NORTH) ENERGY DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF BALOCHISTAN

PRQ No.2995/20-03-2023

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr_gob

Pervaiz Elahi meets Imran Khan, condemns police operation at Zaman Park

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi held a meeting on Monday with party chairman Imran Khan, condemning the police operation at former prime minister's residence in Lahore's Zaman Park.

During the meeting, the two political leaders discussed country's political situation and judicial matters and condemned the 'brutal police operation' at PTI Chairman's residence.

Speaking on the occasion, Pervaiz Elahi castigated police for 'breaking the gate of Imran Khan's house', saying that use of rubber bullets and tear gases were an 'unfortunate act'.

"The police violated the sanctity of veils and walls by forcibly entering the house," he said, terming the operation 'illegal'.

Meanwhile, the PTI chief lambasted the government for 'illegal actions', saying that the incumbent rulers were afraid of elections.

A day earlier, the Punjab police raided Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime



ISLAMABAD: Faith Kemal Ebiclioglu Chairman Dawlance along with delegation calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Gold prices decrease in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The price of gold witnessed a drop again after the Pakistani rupee's effort to be strong against the US dollar in the local market on Monday.

The price of 24-karat of pure gold declined by Rs21.00 per tola to reach Rs2,07,300 per tola in the Pakistani yellow metal bazaar.

The All-Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association (APSGJA) shows the price of 10 grams of 24 Karats gold dropped by Rs858 to settle at Rs1,77,726 per 10 grams.

In the international market, the commodity price also decreased by \$7 to reach \$1,982 per ounce.INP

China, PMA to share medical knowledge

LAHORE: China will share the current development and social uplift of China in medicine, financial growth, and progress with Pakistan.

For this purpose, both countries have named the two sister organizations of the medical fraternity "The Chinese Medical Association and Pakistan Medical Association" as key focal persons.

Chinese Consul General in Lahore His Excellency Mr Zhao Shiren announced this during a meeting with a delegation of PMA Lahore in his office.

Chinese delegation was led by Consul General and assisted by Director Political Department Mr Du Yue.

PMA delegation was led by Prof. Dr. Ashraf Nizami, President along with Prof. Dr. Shahid Malik, General Secretary and Vice President Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood Khan.

President PMA extended honorary membership of PMA Lahore and pinned the brooch to H.E. Mr Zhao Shiren and presented album of 3rd Pak-China MedCong held in November 2022 in Lahore.

Shields of twenty (20) Chinese scientists and professors were also presented. A book titled "China Model of Development: Lesson for Pakistan" written by former ambassador Syed Hassan Javid and translated in Urdu by Dr Sher Shah syed was also presented to the Consul General.

The meeting was held in a warm and friendly atmosphere. After detailed discussion and deliberations His Excellency Zhao Shiren was pleased to agree and declare following policy decisions:

Facilitation will be provided to PMA regarding visa application to China, at Chinese Consulate, Lahore.

Sino Pak medical tourism for patient treatment and capacity building of professionals will be geared up under the Pak-China Medical Corridor.

Chinese Consulate General in Lahore appreciated the proposal of establishing "Pak-China Hospital" raised by PMA. INP

NAB summons Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi in Toshakhana case

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has summoned PTI Chairman Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi to appear before its investigation team on Tuesday (March 21) in connection with Toshakhana case.

This was the second call-up notice to the former prime minister who opted to ignore the first one.

Imran Khan has been asked to appear before the investigation team in the NAB Rawalpindi office.

A NAB team visited Imran Khan's residence in Zaman Park of Lahore on Monday to serve the call-up notice on Bushra Bibi.

The former first lady has been summoned by the NAB to appear before it on March 21 in connection with Toshakhana case.

Another NAB team led by Head Constable Muhammad Shafi visited Zaman Park to deliver court summons in connection with foreign funding case.

The NAB team earlier contacted PTI leadership for delivery of notice for hearing of the case in the accountability court on March 21.INP

How does Imran Khan get instant relief from courts, ask PDM leaders

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) leaders have raised questions over the 'instant relief' Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan gets from courts, with coalition parties mulling options to ban the party, source said on Monday.

The PDM leaders expressed their reservations during a meeting of coalition parties - chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad.

Sources said that the Pakistan Democratic Movement mulled over options to ban PTI following its clashes with police at Islamabad judicial complex and Zaman Park.

However, sources claimed, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and another political party opposed the option to ban PTI.

During the meeting, the majority of participants were of the view that they should not be blackmailed from Imran Khan's statement: "We should not be afraid of such statement, as PTI was exposing

itself," sources said quoting the PDM leaders.

Moreover, majority of the PDM leaders opined that elections on national and provincial assemblies should be held 'at the same time'.

Sources claimed some political leaders raised questions over the 'instant relief' Imran Khan gets from courts, saying that the former premier gets bail whatever he does.

Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif had summoned a session of the heads of the coalition parties of the federal government to discuss the current political situation.

A day earlier, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) top leadership, Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz, held a two-hour-long meeting to discuss the country's current political situation.

Sources said that Maryam Nawaz arrived at PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif's residence at Jati Umrah. Party supremo Nawaz Sharif participated in the meeting via video link.INP

198 PTI workers held in Islamabad for attacking police, vandalism

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have arrested as many as 198 workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for attacking police and vandalising public property on Monday.

Islamabad police had registered cases at Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and Golra police stations over violent incidents by the PTI workers. At least 58 police officials were injured due to stone pelting and vandalism by the PTI workers during protests. Four vehicles and 25 motorcycles of police were burnt while nine police vehicles were vandalised. "All the miscreants involved in the violent acts will be brought to justice," the police vowed. Arrested PTI workers produced in Lahore ATCs as many as 102 PTI workers arrested during the Zaman Park police operation have been produced in an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore. The

duty judge had granted one-day physical remand of these workers. Police will request further physical remand of the accused. Strict security arrangements were ensured during the production of the accused. Shibli Faraz appears in Islamabad ATC on wheelchair. PTI leader Shibli Faraz Monday appeared in an anti-terrorism court in Islamabad on a wheelchair. A case had been registered against Shibli Faraz under terrorism provisions. Shibli Faraz appeared in the court of judge Raja Jawad Abbas. PTI leaders interim bail approved. An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad approved the interim bail of PTI leaders including Asad Umar, Raja Khuram, Ali Nawaz, Murad Saeed, Shehzad Waseem and Zulfi Bukhari in the case of attack on judicial complex and damage to public property during Imran Khan's court appearance. INP

PAKISTAN NAVY SHIP NASR REACHES TURKIYE AFTER COMPLETING RELIEF MISSION AT SYRIA

Islamabad: Pakistan Navy Ship NASR, deployed on international Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) mission reached Mersin, Turkey after completing relief mission in Syria. The ship will provide relief goods weighing approx. 200 tons to Turkish Officials for distribution amongst victims of earthquake. Second shipment of relief goods is scheduled to reach Mersin onboard Pakistan Navy Ship MOAWIN on 23 Mar.

Upon arrival at port Mersin Turkey, PN ship was received by Governor of Mersin, Turkish government representatives, Ambassador of Pakistan to Turkey and Turkish Naval officials. During meetings with officials, onboard PNS NASR, Mission Commander expressed condolences on behalf of Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral

Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi and people of Pakistan and extended all out support in the time of need. Earlier during stay at port Latakia of Syria from 13-19 Mar, the ship disembarked huge quantity of relief goods comprising winterized camps, blankets, warm cloths, ration, medicines and generators. The Mission Commander Syrian Naval Forces and Coastal Defence Maj General Mohsin Essa at Syrian Naval Headquarters and matters related to naval collaboration and ongoing rehabilitation efforts were discussed. Various social and relief activities including cross ship visit, ration distribution and visit to local school were carried out by Mission Commander and Commanding officer of the ship. PN medical teams established medical camp. PR



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf taking oath of Rawalpindi Union of Journalist (RUJ) in Parliament house.

minister Imran Khan's Zaman Park residence.

As per details, the police have arrested more than 13 PTI workers in the anti-encroachment operation at Zaman Park Lahore and one police constable was also injured in retaliation from the PTI workers. Heavy infantry of anti-encroachment squad and police took part in the operation.

The police closed the road leading to Imran Khan's residence from Sundar Das Road for traffic and uprooted the tents from the road.

In a statement, the police officials said that PTI chairman Imran Khan's Zaman Park residence was raided after Anti-terrorism Court administrative judge issued a search warrant.

Police claimed they arrived at Zaman Park with a search warrant. Despite the search, warrant police were not allowed to search that's why the police personnel had to enter Zaman Park.

They further added that a lady officer was leading when the police personnel were entering PTI chief Imran Khan's residence. INP

Darts Association promote the darts game in the province of Balochistan, Muhammad Ishaque Jamali

QUETTA: Muhammad Ishaque Jamali, Secretary, Sports and Youth Affairs Department, has said that the inclusion of darts discipline as a honorary game in 34th National Games, supposed to be held in Quetta, has been raised before the competent committee of 34th National Games, adding that Sports and Youth Affairs Department would extend maximum assistance to Balochistan Darts Association for promotion of darts game in the province. These views were expressed by him while addressing the function held after the Inter districts darts championship held CGS colony Hall Satellite Town, Quetta under "First Balochistan Games, 2023". Jamali said that about 3000 players of 40 different disciplines of sports from different divisions of the province, including Quetta, Naseerabad, Mekan, Zhob, Sibi and Loralai, were participating in the second and last phase of "First Balochistan Games, 2023". Semi final and final competitions of darts events were played by the darts players from Pishin, Chaman, Ziarat, Quetta and Mastung district. Moreover, exhibition match of

darts game was also played between Secretary, Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Government of Balochistan, Muhammad Ishaque Jamali and Director General, Balochistan Sports Board, Dura Baloch which was won by Muhammad Ishaque Jamali by 3-1 points. Secretary, Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Muhammad Ishaque Jamali distributed medals amongst winning and runner up teams of darts event. On the occasion, Muhammad Asif Langove, Assistant Director, Sports, Balochistan, Muhammad Ibrahim Khan Nurzai, President, Balochistan Darts Association, Rehmatullah Khan Nurzai, President, Balochistan Mix Martial Arts Association, Prince Bari Khan, President, Balochistan Free Fighting Association, Mustafa Khan Achakzai, General Secretary, Balochistan Darts Association, Raees Saddam Khan, Treasurer, Balochistan Darts Association, Abdul Rehman, General Secretary, Balochistan Archery Association, Tribal elders, representatives of civil society and large number of players of different disciplines of sports were also present. PR

Nisab-i-Zakat for bank accounts fixed at Rs103,159

ISLAMABAD: The government has fixed Nisab for Zakat deduction from saving and profit and loss sharing bank accounts for the current lunar year at Rs103,159.

The Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Security has issued notification for 1443-44 Hijri for deduction of 2.5 per cent Zakat from accounts having minimum of Rs103,159 in balance on the first day of Ramadan.

The first day of the holy month of Ramadan is likely to fall on March 23 or 24 (subject to the moon sighting) for deduction of Zakat.

Zakat will be deducted from saving, profit and loss-sharing and other similar bank accounts on the first day of Ramadan, which has been notified as the 'deduction date'.

No deduction of Zakat at source shall be made in case of the Current Accounts, or the amount in the account will be less than the value fixed by the ministry.

The Nisab has been announced after consultation with concerned departments and institutions, according to the ministry's notification. INP

Japan provides additional \$5.38m to strengthen weather forecasting

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan decided to increase the amount of a grant aid for "the Project for Installation of Weather Surveillance Radar in Multan" from 2,042 billion Japanese Yen (equivalent to around 14.99 million USD) to 2.8 billion Japanese Yen (equivalent to around 20.57 million USD).

The original Notes to this effect were signed and exchanged between two governments on 31 August 2018. Responding to the request from the Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, this time, the Government of Japan decided to provide additional amount of 760 million Japanese Yen (equivalent to around 5.58 million USD) for this project.

The Notes to this effect for provision of additional amount were signed and exchanged between Mr. ITO Takeshi, Charge d' Affaires, Interim of Japan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Dr. Kazim INP

Petrol price to go down by Rs100, says Musadik

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Division Dr Musadik Malik has said that the poor people of the country will get cheaper petrol as the government has decided to cut the POL prices for low-income group of society.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, the state minister said that the difference between the petrol prices for the low-income group and the rich would be Rs100/litre.

He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ordered to implement this decision immediately. We will implement the 'cheap petrol' decision within six weeks.

He said that the motorcyclists would be provided cheap petrol while people having big cars would buy petrol at higher rates.

He said that he told the prime minister that we had two countries in Pakistan:

one for the poor and the other for the rich. He said that PM Shehbaz and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif instructed him that "if that is the case then you should stand by the poor".

He said that the government has separated the tariff for the rich and the poor. "Our leadership has lowered the gas tariff for the poor people by four times since January. We also respect the rich. But they will have to pay four times more. And we will utilize this money to provide gas to the poor," he added.

The minister said that like gas tariff, PM Shehbaz and Nawaz Sharif also asked him to separate the petrol rates for the poor and the rich.

He said that yesterday media reported that the petrol price for the low income groups would be lowered by Rs50/litre. But later, the premier ordered to slash it by Rs100, he added. INP



ISLAMABAD: Asmaa Resmouki, President International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, at Finance Division.

PTI did not run any campaign against army chief: Fawad Chaudhry

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice President Fawad Chaudhry said on Monday that his political party did not run any campaign against the army chief.

Fawad Chaudhry, while talking to the journalists today, said that PTI respects the army chief and it did not run any campaign against him. He said that the country cannot bear the consequences of ethnic riots.

He asked the caretaker Punjab chief minister Mohsin Naqvi to give his statements carefully instead of playing with the fire.

He said that Naqvi should give balanced statements and refrain from supporting the violence. Chaudhry added that the chief minister should stop spreading hatred against a specific community.

Reacting to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's statement, he said that the premier's statement is an attempt to create

distance between the army and the nation. "PTI has neither run any campaign against the army chief nor is planning to do it. PTI respects the army chief."

The PTI vice president said that Imran Khan thinks if the military becomes weak then it will also make the country weaker. He expressed hopes to bring politics to normalcy.

Condemning the arrest of Imran Khan's focal person, Fawad Chaudhry said that Hassan Niazi was taken into custody along with his lawyer. He criticised that lawyers are illegally being taken into custody which is a condemnable act. He demanded the authorities immediately release Hassan Niazi and other PTI workers.

Fawad Chaudhry said that they are deliberating on taking legal action against the operations and crackdowns which are tantamount to contempt of court. INP

Bhakkar Police reach DI Khan to arrest PTI's Gandapur

BHAKKAR: Bhakkar police Monday evening reached Dera Ismail Khan to arrest Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Amin Gandapur.

The former federal minister Gandapur is trying to get a pre-arrest bail from the court before any raid by the police at his hidden location in DI Khan.

According to the sources, the Bhakkar police have decided to arrest PTI Chairman Imran Khan's bold aide Ali Amin Gandapur in any case.

And, for this purpose, personnel were called from all the police stations across the district while protective equipments are also being provided to the personnel in the police line, the sources said.

Earlier today, Bhakkar police registered a case on terrorism charges against PTI leader and former minister Ali Amin Gandapur for creating rumour and resorting to fire at a police post.

According to police, a drunk Gandapur and his guards were signalled to stop at the post on Sunday night but

they resorted to firing and fled away.

Police launched a chase and detained four guards of Gandapur and also impounded their vehicle.

After registering the case under ATA7 and other sections, the Bhakkar police have decided to contact Dera Ismail Khan police for the arrest of the accused. Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Amin Gandapur and his gunmen fired shots at policemen after the former went berserk over being stopped for checking at the Dajal checkpoint in Bhakkar district. According to the Bhakkar district police officer (DPO), the policemen narrowly escaped the shots fired at them indiscriminately. Ali Amin Gandapur fled the scene after firing shots at the policemen. He was on his way to Dera Ismail Khan when the incident took place near Bandri. "At the checkpoint on the border of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Punjab, all the vehicles have to be checked before entry," the DPO said. INP