

QUETTA VOICE

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Saturday 15 April, 2023

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FIA arrests accused involved in harassing young girls in Quetta



3 children killed in an IED blast in Chaman

Why equipment non functional in Balochistan hospitals ?

SYED ALI SHAH ANALYSIS

In Balochistan's government-run hospitals, expensive equipment can always be found non-functional. In the province's largest government-run hospital, the Bolan Medical Complex Hospital (BMCH), the angiography and angioplasty machines are out of order for the last two and half years. This is nothing new in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. Now patients and their attendants are mentally prepared for this. Expensive machines including CT-Scan, MRI, angiography, etc can always be found out of order in BMCH and civil hospitals. District headquarters hospitals, basic health units, and rural health centers paint a bleak picture when it comes to health facilities and services.



poor patients and their attendants are the worst sufferers of the non-functional expensive machines. The doctors and the para-medics are the beneficiaries of this.

Patients the worst sufferers of out order machines

If the machines are out of order, the patients have no option other than to conduct the tests and procedures in private hospitals and clinics. Balochistan Health Minister, Syed Ehsan Shah told this daily that there are reports that doctors and paramedics deliberately make these expensive machines out of order. Senior doctors rejected the minister's claim and held the latter responsible for all the mess in the health department.

In this blame game between doctors and the minister, the common man is the worst sufferer. The provincial government in general and the health department in particular should make the machines functional since it is their core responsibility.

This daily's report about out of order machines fell on deaf ears

This daily recently reported a news item regarding the non-functional angiography and angioplasty machines. Nevertheless, the provincial high-ups including the Chief Secretary, Secretary of Health, and other concerned officials preferred not to take notice. The report rather fell on deaf ears.

Coordinators case: Govt fails to submit details in Balochistan High Court

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Balochistan government failed to submit details of coordinators to the Chief Minister in the Balochistan High Court (BHC). A division bench of the BHC comprising the Chief Justice (CJ), Mr. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, and Mr. Justice Muhammad Amir Rana heard the case regarding the appointment of around 30 coordinators to CM Balochistan.



The court had directed the provincial government to submit details about the coordinators and spokesman to the CM Balochistan earlier this month. However, the Advocate General failed to submit details about the coordinators.

In his remarks, the CJ BHC, Mr. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan said the government should tell the court if it is not in a position to submit details about coordinators.

The government must submit details about the coordinators to the CM Balochistan in the next hearing of the case, the top judge of the province ordered.

Hearing adjourned till Monday

The hearing of the case was adjourned till Monday. Sadiq Khilji Advocate, a Quetta-based lawyer had challenged the appointment of around 30 coordinators to the CM Balochistan. Mr. Khilji pleaded in his constitutional petition that the government appointed coordinators to please political and tribal personalities.

FIA arrests accused involved in harassing young girls in Quetta

Staff Reporter

QUETTA: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested an accused involved in sexually harassing young girls on Friday. FIA Cyber Crime Circle Quetta arrested the accused of sexually harassing young girls from Quetta using modern resources, seized the mobile phone and sent it for forensics.



The accused was threatening young girls for hacking their mobile

According to the spokesman, the accused called the victim girls and threatened them in the name of mobile hacking, demanding indecent photos, the accused was also blackmailing the victim girls for giving them objectionable material. A case has been registered and further investigation has been started against the accused.

3 children killed in an IED blast in Chaman

Sardar M.Khondai

CHAMAN: At least three children were killed when an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded in Chaman, Pakistan's bordering city with Afghanistan. Police sources said the IED went off at an abandoned mud-walled house in the Rehman Kahol area of Chaman. They said two brothers identified as Abdul Qudus and Matullah were killed on the spot.



The third child succumbed to injuries

Whereas, the third child identified as Bashir Ahmed succumbed to injuries on way to the hospital

from Chaman to Quetta. A bomb disposal squad was called into the area to conduct a complete sweeping of the entire area. The motive behind the incident could not be ascertained. Police and senior administration officials reached the spot as an investigation into the incident went underway. This incident has come a few days after a pen bomb severely injured a student inside a madrasah (seminary) in the Saranan area of the Pishin district.

NA passes resolution upholding parliament's prerogative of legislation

The National Assembly (NA) on Friday passed a resolution declaring that parliament's prerogative of legislation could not be usurped or interfered with. The resolution moved by PPP MNA Ali Musa Gilani also referred to a Supreme Court order, wherein the apex court, in an "anticipatory injunction", barred the government from enforcing a proposed law targeting the suo motu powers of the chief justice of Pakistan. The order — issued by an eight-member bench including Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial a day ago — said its decision would "prevent imminent apprehended danger that is irreparable" as soon as the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill 2023 becomes an act of parliament. The bill was initially passed by both houses of parliament and sent to the president for his assent. However, the president had sent it back, saying that the proposed law travelled "beyond the competence of parliament". On Monday, the bill was passed by a joint sitting of parliament with certain amendments, amid a noisy protest from PTI lawmakers. As per the Constitution, the bill will be sent to the president once again for his assent, and if he does not sign it within ten days, assent will be deemed to have been granted. However, with the SC's order, the implementation of the law that will



subsequently come into effect has been halted. The resolution passed in the NA today said: "This house strongly rejects the aggressive attempt of the Supreme Court of Pakistan to abrogate the unquestioned constitutional authority of the parliament to make legislation and unequivocally clarifies that this authority cannot be abrogated nor interfered with." It added that the House regretted that a state organ had "openly violated" the Constitution on an occasion marking its golden jubilee. The resolution expressed "serious concern" that the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill 2023 was fixed for hearing before a "controversial and unilateral eight-member bench" of the SC even before it was enacted Web Desk.

Drinking Water Quality Status And Its Sources Of Contamination

By Aaryal Khan panizai

Being a serious problem in the major cities of Sindh and Punjab, about 16% of people were exposed to more than 50 ppm of arsenic. Fluoride concentrations above the permissible limit cause problems in the main regions of Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh. Dental fluorosis is common in Sindh, Punjab and KP.



Floods Cause Major Damage to Drainage System: In Pakistan, floods have created serious environmental problems. They have eroded banks and eventually cause sewage to overflow from waste bodies. Severe flooding destroyed buildings and crops. All these substances can cause toxic chemicals and oils to be discharged into rivers, streams, lakes, and can flow into the sea. These organisms. Many chemical pollutants enter floodwaters from agricultural runoff. Severe rains have damaged 80% of the roads and destroyed 40% of infrastructure. The total number of houses destroyed in Pakistan is 1.5 million. Due to the poor sanitation, poor water treatment, monitoring, drinking water quality deteriorates. The presence of toxic chemicals in drinking water causes adverse effect on human health. In Pakistan, people have been suffering from waterborne diseases.

Flaws in the Balochistan census

Editor Asim Khan

Flaws have been witnessed in the seventh census underway in Pakistan's Balochistan province. The census is underway amid reservations and apprehensions expressed by the Baloch and Pashtoon nationalist political parties.

The census staff is yet to reach the people living in urban parts of the province. What to speak about the remote areas of the province, which covers 84% of the country in terms of area and houses only 6% population of entire Pakistan.

Census staff is yet to reach the population in Balochistan. Specific law and order situations, rugged mountains, long distances, plains, and administrative issues make it difficult to make sure proper and accurate counting of all individuals in Balochistan.

As per the 2017 national census, Balochistan makes hardly 6% population of the entire country. Indeed, this is equal to salt in the flour. It is ironic fate if this remote population is not counted properly during the census of 2023.

Census also a sensitive topic in Balochistan. Like in some cities of Pakistan, census/enumeration is also considered to be one of the sensitive topics in Balochistan. Almost all political parties are skeptical about the process of the current enumeration/census.

The Baloch nationalist parties are concerned about the inclusion of Afghan refugees in the census process and fear that this would bring a demographic change in Balochistan. Similarly, the Pashtoon nationalist parties fear that their (ethnic Pashtuns) population should not be ignored under the garb of Afghan refugees.

Balochistan makes up only 6% population of the entire country. The resource-rich province of Balochistan has a nominal representation in the parliament with only 19 members of the national assembly out of a total of 342.

The province has no say in the formation of the federal government, and distribution of developmental funds under the federal government program (PSPD). Even its (Balochistan) meager share of 6% percent in services is swallowed by Islamabad through fake domiciles.

Balochistan is lagging behind all other provinces in terms of key social indicators including education, health and clean drinking water supply. Nevertheless, its own funds are not utilized in a transparent way because of the worst governance.

To be precise, all political parties should put their heads together and bury the head and count the tail with political consent that a fair and transparent census should be conducted before it is already late.

Due to intimidating increase in population and rapid-fire industrialization, drinking water quality is being deteriorated day by day in Pakistan. This review sums up the issues of colorful exploration studies conducted for drinking water quality status of different areas of Pakistan. The remaining 80 of population is forced to use unsafe drinking water due to the failure of safe and healthy drinking water sources. The primary source of impurity is sewerage effluent that is considerably discharged into drinking water system mainly through the disposal of poisonous wastes from agricultural backwaters, fungicides, and discards from husbandry sources into the water bodies.

Antropogenic conditions began to create conditions that constitute about 80 of all conditions and are responsible for 83 percent of the pollution. This highlights the drinking water quality, impurity sources, sanitation situation, and goods of unsafe drinking water on humans. There's immediate need to take defensive measures and treatment technologies to overcome the condition of drinking water inventories in different areas of Pakistan.

Water quality: Drinking water is mainly taken from surface and underground aquifers near rivers and canals. Surface water quality is rapidly declining due to the addition of raw municipal and industrial wastewater as well as agricultural runoff to the water source. When river water flow is at its maximum, it contains highly concentrated suspended matter. Most rivers are not support aquatic species. It is clear that these waters are contaminated with faces and need to be treated appropriately to avoid the health risks for human consumption. In Pakistan, four major cities use surface water, these are Islamabad, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Hyderabad.

The main cause of microbiological contamination is the mixing of the common sewer with the domestic water supply. In most rural areas of Pakistan, the water used for drinking after slow sand filtration, and disinfection is not performed at filtration stations. In most rural areas, there is no pre-treatment facility for water purification. All this deficiency is due to microbial contamination and poor water quality.

Sources of Contamination: Microbiological Contaminants: In Pakistan, microbial pollution has been discovered as one of the serious problems in rural as well as urban areas. This is due to the leakage of pipe, pollution from sewage lines, intrusion into drinking water supplies, and so forth.

Chemical Contaminants: Karachi: Chemical pollutants that come from industries, soil sediments and agricultural

Our domestic violence dilemma and inflation

By Eman Omar

Against the backdrop of Pakistan's chaotic political climate that depicts the nation's political leaders playing a game of musical chairs while exhibiting a sense of misplaced bravado - Pakistani women desperately seek for solutions to a disturbing spike in domestic violence cases.

The police have diverted their focus towards defusing riots that break out in defence of political groups who routinely criticize the law and order. It is clear that addressing gender-based crimes is not their top priority.

The lack of interest displayed by the police in registering FIRs of domestic violence is a major reason why women are wary of approaching them. When women gather the police, they are turned away and instructed to reconcile with their abusers. They are told that the incident is a 'personal matter and beating' is part and parcel of marriage.

The NCHR brief also highlighted that domestic violence greatly increased during the Covid-19 lockdowns. Over 10,000-11,000 cases recorded by Aurat Foundation, SDDO and NADRA.

Coupled with this socio-economic barriers also create hurdles between women and their journey to justice. The fear of being cut-off economically deters

women from separating themselves from their abusers (UN Women, 2019). Additionally, the stigma attached to being a divorced woman in Pakistan makes women vulnerable to being ostracized by society, including experiencing social isolation by families and friends. In many cases, they have to suffer physical, emotional and verbal abuse from their families.

Not all is bleak though. Pakistan guarantees women protection against domestic violence including mental, physical and sexual abuse through legislation specifically tailored to women. The Punjab Protection of Women of Violence Act was passed in 2016 but is yet to be fully implemented across the province for six years - till 2022. Sindh and Hyderabad, Pakistan have similar legislation in force. The two provinces, unlike Punjab, have not implemented the law for six years.

Despite the law being enacted in Sindh six years ago, only two cases have been prosecuted under it so far. These acts also highlight that the law is not responsible for creating awareness among vulnerable groups and other stakeholders. The lack of judicial protection to women has led to a need for community-led initiatives. One such organization that helps victims of domestic violence is 'She-Her Foundation'. It is a non-profit organization that provides legal services to underprivileged women and minorities who are at the receiving end of domestic violence and are unaware of the laws that exist to protect them.

In a documentary for BBC Urdu titled 'Domestic Violence: Why will the police not register an FIR?', the CEO of She-Her Foundation, Aminah Qadir, highlighted the different types of domestic violence that is prevalent in households, forced abortions, sexual harassment, and abuse, etc. This violence is not perpetuated only by their intimate partners but also by family members such as parents or in-laws. She-her advocates that the state and civil society must join forces to introduce reforms within the public sector. This includes hiring female officers to register domestic violence cases, sensitizing police to register offences - even between spouses. Such steps will empower victims to report more fearlessly. Inflation for March 2023 clocked in at 35 percent, which is amongst the highest ever recorded. The more vulnerable segments, inflation is close to 50 percent, as food and essential items are far from resolved. In 2020, efforts were placed to pass an act to provide legal services to victims of domestic violence in Islamabad. The bill was met with extreme resistance from the Council of Islamic Ideology that deemed it to be un-Islamic. Objections were raised and it was said that the religion allows a woman to be lightly beaten.

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extensive devastation during World War II. Macroeconomic and infrastructure capacities were severely damaged with major cities and towns being hit by air raids. Japan was left with a massive debt, widespread unemployment and a crippled economy. The unity of Japan's citizens has been identified as the primary contributor to the country's remarkable post-war recovery. Truth be told, Pakistan has adhered to endless policy errors in critical areas during the period when the country actively adhered to an IMF supported program. This has led to Pakistan having 212 state-owned enterprises (SOEs) operating in all key sectors of the economy. The public sector employs 33 million people. The country is divided into two parts: the commercial arena is public, while the rest is private. The country faces a massive debt crisis, with 85 SOEs spanning power, oil and gas, infrastructure, transport and communication, manufacturing, mining and engineering. The industrial estate development, and wholesale, retail and consumer goods. The story continues with 44 non-commercial SOEs (Section 42) and further 83 companies of the commercial SOEs. In my view privatization of SOEs at a fair price can make a

Governance failure and inflation

By Anmar Habib Khan

As a citizen, I am dismayed by the rampant inflation that has become a daily reality for most Pakistanis. The government's failure to control inflation is a clear sign of governance failure. The government has borrowed heavily from abroad, leading to a massive foreign debt. This has led to a sharp increase in inflation, which is now reaching 35 percent. The government has also failed to implement effective monetary policies, leading to a loss of confidence in the Pakistani Rupee. The government has also failed to address the underlying causes of inflation, such as the excessive printing of money and the lack of fiscal discipline.

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Time to unite A chronic state of policy errors

By Dr Farrukh Saleem

Human history bears witness to the fact that countries thrive when their citizens work in harmony towards a common goal. Collaboration and solidarity are key ingredients to achieving success and prosperity. In the last century, we have seen numerous examples of countries achieving great things through unity and cooperation. Here are a few notable instances:

At the time of independence, Pakistan faced extreme economic and social challenges. The new nation had no industries or infrastructure, and our agriculture sector was underdeveloped. But we were united. In the 1960s, the Green Revolution transformed Pakistan's agriculture. In the mid-1960s began the Decade of Industrialization. We had two cement plants in 1947, now we have 25. We had three textile mills in 1947, now we have 650. We did not have any cycle manufacturing plant in 1947, now we have 15. We have Sohrab, PECO and Eagle. We did not have a car assembly in 1947, now we have Toyota, Honda, Suzuki, Renault, Nissan, Proton, Kia, and Hyundai. Pakistan did not have any paper

Political conflicts have destroyed the infrastructure and trade, caused a significant decline in oil production plus skyrocketing inflation. Venezuela boasts some of the world's largest oil reserves. However, political polarization has led to a severe economic crisis marked by hyperinflation, widespread food shortages, and a significant reduction in oil production.

Yemen: Political divisions have led to food and fuel shortages, economic crisis, and a significant reduction in oil production. Yemen: Political divisions have led to food and fuel shortages, economic crisis, and a significant reduction in oil production.

Lebanon: Lebanon has a rich array of natural, human, intellectual, cultural, technological and financial resources. With a history of past achievements, we have the potential to succeed. However, political divisions have led to a severe economic crisis marked by hyperinflation, widespread food shortages, and a significant reduction in oil production.

Rwanda: In the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, which saw 500,000 deaths, the citizens of Rwanda came together to rebuild their country and reconcile with each other. Rwanda is now one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa with an average annual growth rate of around 8 percent.

Yugoslavia: The political divisions in Yugoslavia played a significant role in the country's economic collapse. Syria: The political divisions in Syria have had a devastating impact on the country's economy. Citizens came together

extensive devastation during World War II. Macroeconomic and infrastructure capacities were severely damaged with major cities and towns being hit by air raids. Japan was left with a massive debt, widespread unemployment and a crippled economy. The unity of Japan's citizens has been identified as the primary contributor to the country's remarkable post-war recovery.

Truth be told, Pakistan has adhered to endless policy errors in critical areas during the period when the country actively adhered to an IMF supported program. This has led to Pakistan having 212 state-owned enterprises (SOEs) operating in all key sectors of the economy. The public sector employs 33 million people. The country is divided into two parts: the commercial arena is public, while the rest is private.

The country faces a massive debt crisis, with 85 SOEs spanning power, oil and gas, infrastructure, transport and communication, manufacturing, mining and engineering. The industrial estate development, and wholesale, retail and consumer goods. The story continues with 44 non-commercial SOEs (Section 42) and further 83 companies of the commercial SOEs.

In my view privatization of SOEs at a fair price can make a significant contribution to the country's economic growth. The government should focus on reducing the foreign debt, controlling inflation, and implementing effective monetary policies. The government should also address the underlying causes of inflation, such as the excessive printing of money and the lack of fiscal discipline.

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A chronic state of policy errors

By Dr Khagan Hassan Najeeb

Pakistan is the only country in the world that has a chronic state of policy errors. The government has borrowed heavily from abroad, leading to a massive foreign debt. This has led to a sharp increase in inflation, which is now reaching 35 percent. The government has also failed to implement effective monetary policies, leading to a loss of confidence in the Pakistani Rupee. The government has also failed to address the underlying causes of inflation, such as the excessive printing of money and the lack of fiscal discipline.

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National Task Force on Artificial Intelligence formed for national development

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday formed a 15-member National Task Force (NTF) on Artificial Intelligence (AI) aimed at achieving the required goals of national development.

The NTF would comprise experts in artificial intelligence as well as establishing the NTF as government and private sectors.

The Planning Minister emphasized the importance of artificial intelligence for progress in the near future saying, "It (AI) will bring transformative changes in the way we live, work, learn, and govern."

Bridging digital divide critical to steady development: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan needs to bridge the digital divide by ensuring equal access to digital technologies across the population segments to achieve steady development, according to an economic expert.

Prof Shujaat said the internet usage is being measured using two factors, namely the number of people using mobile technologies and the number of people using the internet in the country.

"In Pakistan, the percentage of mobile and internet usage is the lowest in South Asia. At the moment, 82% of the population is using mobile phones, but unfortunately, the percentage of people using the internet on these devices is only 20%," he added.

"When we talk about factors contributing to inequality, we see one of the reasons for this is digital divide," Prof Shujaat Farooq, Assistant Professor at Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) said.

"Pakistan must ensure easier access to technology across different population segments. Digital divide across populations not only results in unequal access to information, but can also exclude those segments from greater prospects of economic growth," he pointed out.

Prof Shujaat said, "if we look at the internet usage over the period of the last 20 years, it has been one of the most revolutionary technologies that change the future and fate of mankind and has also impacted the economies and cultures."

Internet penetration over the years has increased. Internet is a basic human need. If we increase the penetration

of internet in the society by 1%, it will have a positive impact on the GDP by 0.5%, he said.

"Access to seamless internet has been a challenge. In smaller towns and far-flung areas, especially in interior Sindh, Southern Punjab, there are no good quality 3G or 4G services because the cellular companies don't invest in these areas," the official said.



QUETTA: People offering Namaz-e-Jumma (Friday Prayer) during holy fast-month of Ramadan.

'Decentralisation' can help implement Pakistan's climate agenda: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The departments of planning and development need to integrate climate change actions into its policies and annual developments. These climate policies should be implemented by provincial and local governments through decentralization for better outcomes, said WealthPK.

Climate change has become a major issue for several provincial governments in recent years. A provincial consensus on environmental protection can help overcome institutional obstacles and accelerate environmental action.

Pakistan has consistently been ranked among the 10 most vulnerable countries by the Global Climate Risk Index for the past 20 years, due to increasing weather events that caused a great deal of damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and the economy of the country.

"Pakistan has consistently been ranked among the 10 most vulnerable countries by the Global Climate Risk Index for the past 20 years, due to increasing weather events that caused a great deal of damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and the economy of the country."

By integrating climate concerns with other national policies, Pakistan revised its National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) in 2021. INP

The report added that there is also a clear gap between policy direction and implementation mechanisms. The Ministry of Climate Change is responsible for making national climate change policies. It can have a greater impact on outcomes if its capabilities and resources are improved.

According to the ADB, such devastating shocks are becoming more likely, and they are having negative impacts on Pakistan's people and their livelihoods, as well as on ecosystems and the economy, worsening

included in BISP program. She asked them to get themselves registered at tehsil offices of BISP.

Commenting on prevailing political situation in the country, Special Assistant on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim said that the government should believe in dialogue for a way forward. He said continuation of Pakistan is supreme and it should be followed.

Addressing a news conference under the patronage of Assistant on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundli in Islamabad, today, she said nine million families are part of Kafalat program. She said stipend under BISP has been increased from 7000 to 8750 rupees.

Shazia Marri said seventy billion rupees were disbursed among 2.8 million flood affected families of the country.

He said PPP has formed a special committee for dialogue with the government members. He expressed hope that opposition would come forward for table talks. INP

BISP budget increased to Rs400b: Shazia Marri

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Poverty Eradication Shazia Marri has stated that budget of Benazir Income Support Programme program has been increased from 235 to 400 billion rupees.

She said due to imprudent policies of PTI government, poor and middle class people are suffering from the price hike.

She said families availing Benazir Taleem Waaz have increased from 2.6 million to 7.1 million. She said Benazir Nashonuma has also expanded all across Pakistan and 474 facilitation centers have been set up across Pakistan in this regard.

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PKR continues to recover against USD

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee continued to recover against the US dollar in the interbank market. According to the State Bank of Pakistan, the local unit recovered Rs6.6 against the USD to close at 284.40. The US dollar closed at Rs284.91 the other day.

Currency dealers believe the market increased on a report about a \$1 billion commitment by the UAE. INP

Over 1.6m free flour bags distributed in Bahawalpur district

BAHAWALPUR: Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jajja visited Drying Station Bahawalpur to review the arrangements for the free flour distribution to eligible persons.

He inspected the counter for special persons, the medical camp, and the seating area for visitors. Deputy Commissioner reviewed the performance of the staff at the screening counters.

Three more POs extradited from abroad

LAHORE: The Punjab police with the help of Interpol arrested three more proclaimed offenders from Muscat, Oman, while Shahbaz and brought them to Pakistan.

A spokesperson for the Punjab Police said that the Ghosoor Abbas Naqvi wanted by Bhalwal police in a murder case was arrested from Muscat in a mystery flight.

The three suspects were arrested with the help and cooperation of the Interpol and further legal action is underway against them. Inspector General of Punjab Police said that the police officers to pursue more proclaimed offenders who had escaped Pakistan. INP

TENDER NOTICE: The DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TREASURIES & ACCOUNT invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items.

China, Pakistan work together for Art preservation

BEIJING: China, Pakistan will be working together for Art preservation through latest technology, China Economic and Trade Office in Islamabad said.

For centuries, artisans in Pakistan have been creating beautiful works of art in the form of stonecraft. However, over the years, many of these works have been lost or damaged, and it is difficult for Pakistani artisans to preserve this ancient art.

Dr. Mahmood ul-Hasan, a senior official, Department of Archaeology and Museums Islamabad told CEN that his team has been working in Gandhara art and applying similar methods to Pakistani stonecrafts. Pakistan can ensure that these beautiful works are preserved for generations to come.

Last days of Ramadan: Islamabad police chalk out plans to tackle traffic

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police (ICP) has chalked out a comprehensive plan to ensure a smooth flow of traffic during the last days of Ramadan when markets and shopping centers will be thronged for Eid shopping.

The meeting discussed the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Akbar Nasir Khan, Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanver chaired a special meeting at traffic police headquarters to look into parking and traffic-related issues outside main markets and shopping centers during Ramadan.

The meeting was also attended by SP (Traffic) Ch. Abid Hussain, all DSPs and other officials who reviewed all traffic-related arrangements for the convenience of citizens, particularly during last

Ashra of Ramadan. Traffic arrangements were finalized by Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanver after consultation with heads of various zones and ITP's sections.

It was decided to deploy additional police personnel around the main markets and shopping plazas in the federal capital to ensure convenience for the citizens and keep flow of traffic normal during the holy month of Ramadan.

The meeting decided to make the traffic congestion unit more effective and functional. It was directed to improve traffic management by providing all possible traffic facilities to the citizens.

Karachi to get 'textile park' for facilitating SMEs: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Commerce has proposed to establish an Integrated Textile and Garment Park (ITGP) in Karachi to facilitate small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The main objective of the project is to provide infrastructure facilities to SMEs in textile and garment sector and setting up their units, according to a report of the Ministry of Commerce.

The ITGP would also facilitate and train SMEs in medium and small scale and social standards of international business environment, the report said.

The total cost of the project is estimated at Rs1,842 billion, and it would be completed in three years.

BEFORE THE JUDGE BANKING COURT BALUCHISTAN AT DISTRICT COURT/KACHERIY SHARA-E-IOBAL QUETTA. National Bank of Pakistan through its Manager, Manan Chowdhry Bhanu Quetta. Plaintiff

Pakistani rupee hammers US dollar on IMF hope

ISLAMABAD: On the hope that the country will be able to secure the IMF tranche soon, the Pakistani rupee maintained its upward trajectory as the local unit gained 91 paises against the US dollar on Friday. As per the data received from the money market, the US dollar slid by 51 paises and was exchanged at Rs284 during early interbank trade.

Yesterday, the Pakistani rupee dealt a heavy blow to the US dollar in the interbank and was appreciated by Rs171.

For the last three trading sessions, the rupee is surging against the US dollar. The appreciation might be attributed to the good vibes coming from the International Monetary Fund.

Delivering a speech at the annual meeting of the IMF and the World Bank in Washington on Thursday, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva has expressed the hope that Pakistan will successfully complete the current loan programme and not face the same situation as Sri Lanka and Ghana.

Georgieva said that they are working hard together with the Pakistani authorities, and the country should create such a political framework that avoids economic risks. "We want Pakistan to move towards sustainable economic development. We want assurance of financial support."

Since early February, Pakistan has been negotiating with the IMF to revive the bailout programme to secure \$1.1 billion tranche.

The IMF requires friendly nations to fulfill their pledges to fund Pakistan before finalizing the \$6.5 billion bailout programme which led to a delay in talks between Pakistan and the IMF to resume the programme.

According to some reports, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is likely to provide a written guarantee for \$1 billion in financing this week as the matters have been finalized for the financing.

During IMF/World Bank Spring meetings via Zoom with IMF Deputy Managing Director Antoine Monteiro Monteiro, Federal Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar said that all prior actions for the 9th Review under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) have already been completed and the government is fully committed to fulfilling its obligations as agreed with the IMF.

Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha, SAPM on Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Mr. Tariq Mahmood, SAPM attended the meeting virtually from Islamabad. Whereas the Ambassador of Pakistan to the USA Mr. Masood Ahmad Khan, Governor SBP Mr. Jamil Ahmad, Secretary of Finance, and Secretary EAD attended in person in Washington DC.

On Wednesday, Jihad Azour, Director of IMF, Middle East and Central Asia Department (MCD) said that the Staff Level Agreement (SLA) will be signed soon followed by the Board's approval.

Cash-strapped Pakistan is in dire need of funding to avoid default risk. Country's foreign exchange reserves are drying up swiftly. INP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif attends a session of the National Assembly at Parliament House in Islamabad.

Govt approves release of funds for parliamentarians' schemes

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has approved the release of funds for parliamentarians' schemes.

As per details, the PDM coalition government has spent Rs 50 billion on parliamentarians schemes till March 2023.

The funds for the parliamentarians schemes have been approved and Rs 90 billion are allocated for these schemes in the current fiscal year 2022-23.

The government is also providing Rs 500 million to the Members of the National Assembly who voted in the motion of no-confidence.

Furthermore, Rs 70 billion was allocated for parliamentarians schemes in the budget but it is Rs 50 billion, Rs 87 billion and then Rs 90 billion INP

Four largest banks show strong performance in FY22: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange's so-called Commercial Banks 100-billion Group, consisting of Meezan Bank Limited (MBL), Muslim Commercial Bank Limited (MCB), United Bank Limited (UBL) and Habib Bank Limited (HBL), has announced its financial results for the calendar year 2022.

According to the results, HBL stood out with the highest revenue of Rs152.1 billion, while MCB led with the highest earnings per share (EPS) of Rs27.63. MBL led in the profit-after-tax (PAT) with Rs45 billion, and UBL maintained a strong position with Rs103.2 billion in revenue and a respectable PAT margin of 31.07%, reports WealthPK.

The group collectively reported revenues of Rs464 billion, with HBL leading with Rs152 billion. MBL followed with Rs121 billion, UBL with Rs103 billion and MCB with Rs87 billion.

The group's profit-before-tax (PBT) amounted to Rs299 billion, with MBL securing the top spot with Rs88 billion, followed by MCB with Rs71 billion, UBL with Rs68 billion and HBL with Rs71 billion.

The group's PAT amounted to Rs140 billion, with MBL leading with Rs45 billion, followed by MCB with Rs32 billion, UBL with Rs23 billion, and HBL with Rs30 billion. The PAT margin ranged from 20.29% for HBL to 37.57% for MCB.

The group's EPS was highest for MCB at Rs27.63, followed by UBL at Rs26.19, MBL at Rs25.15, and HBL at Rs21.04.

These banks are among the largest and most reputable financial institutions in the country, offering a wide range of banking and financial services to businesses and individuals. The group is committed to providing innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs of their clients and to drive growth and prosperity in the Pakistani economy. INP

IGP ordered to allow Shahbaz Gill to travel abroad

LAHORE: Lahore High Court (LHC) has ordered the IGP Punjab and DG FIA to immediately implement the orders to provide a passport to IGP leader Shahbaz Gill to travel abroad.

As per details, the LHC heard the case pertaining to allowing Shahbaz Gill to travel abroad.

The Chief Justice Lahore High Court summoned the IGP Punjab and DG FIA on the next hearing, April 17.

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shahbaz Gill moved Lahore High Court (LHC) against Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), seeking the removal of his name from the exit control list (ECL) INP.

FM Bilawal lauds UN development system's role in helping flood-hit

UNITED NATIONS: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has praised the United Nations development system, especially its Resident Coordinator's office in Islamabad, and for their crucial role in supporting Pakistan's national disaster response and recovery from the "dire situation" left behind by last August's devastating floods.

The Resident Coordinator's Office was our go-to place for coordinating UN response to catastrophic floods," he said in a video message to a roundtable discussion held at UN Headquarters in New York on the case study regarding the "coordinated and comprehensive response to Pakistan's floods in 2022".

The foreign minister said the Resident Coordinator's role "significantly streamlined coordination effort for the Government, and ensured smooth exchange of information among all partners on the country's emergency situation."

He expressed his appreciation to the Resident Coordinator, Julian Harries, and his able team for helping Pakistan to launch the flood appeal in a timely manner and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for his extraordinary support and his solidarity with Pakistan, in the wake of the floods. "The Resident Coordinator played a central role in closely coordinating the organization of the international relief and recovery assistance, especially through timely communication with the federal and provincial departments, multilateral agencies, and bilateral donors."

FM Bilawal said that ensured timely identification of relief needs and the sources and modalities to meet these needs. INP

Sikh pilgrims lauds arrangements for Baisakhi festival

ATTOCK: Sikh pilgrims came across the world on Friday have expressed their profound satisfaction over the extra ordinary boarding lodging arrangements besides lauding the modern facilities provided by the Government of Pakistan at their Baisakhi festival in Gurdwara Panja Sahb Hassanabadi.

The Sikh pilgrims hailing from Toronto Brampton city of Canada, District Ferozepur, Amritsar, Sialkot while talking to media said the government of Pakistan for making fool-proof security, travel in Air conditioned coaches, the pilgrims and transportation arrangements in air conditioned marquees on the occasion. They told that they were feeling safe and comfortable while staying at their homes.

They added that the protocol granted by the Government of Pakistan has proved that the well behaviour of their Pakistani brethren will always be remembered.

A lady devotee from Sialkot while paying glowing tributes upon the teachings of their spiritual leader Baba Nanak while never losing a word of kind of oppression, she said that her children were afraid of when coming to Pakistan who had performed their all religious rituals in free atmosphere.

They would come again in Pakistan to celebrate their festivities of Baisakhi festival. The pilgrims said that Wi-Fi facility inside the Gurdwara Panja Sahb was very important so that they could view their loved ones and communicate with them. The Sikh pilgrims also took out a palanquin procession and celebrated their religious (Nagar Kirtan) in full atmosphere. Gurdwara Panja Sahb by singing songs. The Sikh pilgrims on their return from Vail and Kanjhar, said that they have got peace of mind by going to Baba Vail Kandahar and the wish they had brought from Vail had been fulfilled, the devotees added.

On this occasion, the Regional Police Officer Rawalpindi, Syed Khuram Ali accompanied by District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan, SVP Investigation, Attock, Iqbalwan Muhammad Jameel, ASP Sundus Ishaq, DSP Syed Kazim Shah visited Gurdwara Panja Sahb to review the security arrangements and instructed their security staff on duty to perform their duties. INP

Sherry Rehman stands among 100 most influential people in the world

KARACHI: The famous American Time Magazine has included Pakistan's Environment Minister Sherry Rehman among the 100 most influential people in the world for the year 2023.

Sherry Rehman is ranked sixth in the category of leaders in the list of 100 most influential people in the world of 2023 released by Time magazine.

The message on the journal's website states that Pakistan's share in global carbon emissions is very small, but last year, one-third of Pakistan was submerged in floods due to the environmental crisis.

According to Time magazine, in November, Sherry Rehman became the voice of the flood victims who lost everything due to the natural disaster at the COP27 meeting held in Egypt.

A message on the American Journal's website said through passionate speeches and tireless engagement and negotiation at the COP27 meeting, Sherry Rehman convinced delegates that this injustice must end.

The message added that COP27 concluded with the historic decision that the international community agreed for the first time to establish a Damage and Disasters Fund for countries facing natural disasters. According to Time magazine, this is a big step towards environmental justice, but there is still a lot of work to be done, we will need more figures like Sherry Rehman. INP

Samarkand motif endorses Pakistan's stance on Afghan soil being used by militant groups

ISLAMABAD: The Fourth Ministerial Conference of Afghanistan's Neighboring Countries held in Samarkand on Thursday pointed out that the presence of terrorist groups in Afghanistan continued to pose threats to regional peace – a stance Pakistan has long maintained.

"The Parties pointed out that all terrorist groups, namely the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Taliban, the Eastern Islamic Movement (EIM), the Tehreek-e-Islami Pakistan (TIP), the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), Jundallah, Jaish ul-Adl, Jama'at Ansarullah, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and other terrorist organizations based in Afghanistan continue to pose a serious threat to regional and global security," according to the declaration of the neighboring countries meeting.

Recently, in its report, Radio Free Europe also said that after the United States pulled out its troops from Afghanistan, it behind military equipment and weapons worth \$7 billion which later boosted the military capabilities of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and Baloch separatist groups.

According to the report, the US left behind weapons and equipment including firearms, communications gear, and even armored vehicles which gave the militants a "vast war chest."

Attended by the foreign ministers and senior officials of China, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the neighboring countries' meeting noted that the terrorism-related security situation in Afghanistan was still severe and reaffirmed their determination to enhance cooperation on counter-terrorism and security among neighboring countries and to develop a united front against terrorism.

Pakistan always maintained that the success of any regional or international effort to mitigate the current situation of Afghanistan will remain subject to IAG's seriousness for ensuring that Afghan soil is not used against any other country.

Since the Taliban takeover, Pakistan also called for the establishment of an inclusive political structure, the adoption of moderate and fair foreign policies, and the safeguarding of the rights of all Afghans, including ethnic groups, women and children.

The Afghan authorities would also have to take visible steps to ensure that Afghanistan would never again serve as a breeding ground, safe haven or source of proliferation for terrorism.

Terrorism is a common enemy and peace and stability is a collective responsibility. Any action by IAG to rein in anti-Pakistan elements and not let Afghan soil against Pakistan would strengthen brotherly relations between the two countries," a security analyst said.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar, who also addressed the meeting said, "We also believe that more needs to be done to eradicate the foothold of terrorist organizations from Afghanistan, without distinction and in a concerted and uniform manner. Greater cooperation and coordination with the interim Afghan Government remains critical. We look forward to working closely with the neighbouring states and the international community to ensure the menace of terrorism continued to blight the lives of Afghan people on a daily basis and the threat posed by terrorist organizations to the neighbouring states and the region, had accentuated. INP

Long Eid holidays' decision to hurt business: PRGMEA

KARACHI: The Ready-made Textiles and Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) Central Chairman, Mubashir Naseer Butt has expressed the government's decision of extending Eid holidays on Eid and said the move would hurt the business and reduce \$2.5 billion of rupees in exports.

In a press release the Chief Minister Punjab and Chairman of the meeting, extension of five holidays on Eidul Fitr, which is believed to be detrimental to the country's economy, is not connected with the world for almost a week, and it will impact the economy of billions.

The PRGMEA Central Chief said that due to closure of the transport services will be problem to transfer the finished goods to one or two other places, as the long five-day holidays would cut-off the flow of commercial goods from the world, causing a loss of billions of rupees in external trade.

He observed that the national economy is already in distress and can't afford such a luxury. INP

Pakistan highly values its relations with Indonesia: Muqam

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political and Public Affairs, National Heritage and Culture, Engr Amir Muqam on Friday said that Pakistan attached great values to its relations with Indonesia, which were governed by mutual respect and cooperation.

Engr Amir Muqam expressed these views during his meeting with Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Mubandawarman, who called on him at his office in Islamabad, says a press release issued by the government.

Adviser to Prime Minister Engr Amir Muqam conveyed that Pakistan attached great value to its relations with Indonesia, which were governed by mutual respect and cooperation and expressed that Pakistan and Indonesia had maintained deep and cordial relations which had historical roots.

He said Pakistan was looking forward to further strengthen bilateral relations with Indonesian cultural heritage via-vice regular exchanges.

Ambassador Adam Mulawarman Tugjo acknowledged the existing bilateral relations and cooperation in the field of cultural heritage between the two countries and desired to understand the perspective of Pakistan on progressive basis. He invited Engr Amir Muqam to visit Indonesia, which was his first as the adviser to the Prime Minister. INP

17 anti-social elements arrested

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of Senior Superintendent of Police, Operations Rawalpindi, Capt. Muhammad Amir Khan conducted raids in different areas and arrested 17 anti-social elements including five Proclaimed Offenders (POs) and eight for possessing illegal weapons besides recovering five 30 bore pistols, two Kalashnikovs and ammunition from their possession.

According to a police spokesman, Sadiqabad and Taxila police conducted raids and arrested five POs namely Muhammad Nazakat, Jibrin Ashraf, Fahid, Naqash and Jahanzab and wanted in different cases.

Waris Khan, Nasserabad, Rawal and Chontra police held eight accused namely Abdul Wahid, Rameez, Rashid, Numan, Bilal, Sakhir Khan, Arif and recovered five 30 bore pistols, two Kalashnikovs and ammunition from their possession. INP

Sindh Govt launches 2nd route electric bus service in Karachi

KARACHI: The Sindh government on Friday launched the second route of the electric bus service in Karachi under its Peoples Bus Service programme.

The new route No. 2 of the EV bus service will start from Baharia Town and end at Malir Halt via M9 Toll Plaza, Nagai, University Avenue, Malir Cantt, Tank Chowk, Model Colony.

Initially, 13 electric buses will run on this route.

Earlier, in a tweet, the PPP leader said, "Sindh government under the direction of party's leadership and CM Sindh is going to start new routes of buses for the people of Karachi. Three new routes will start in current month of Ramadan. The public can use new fleet of EV buses." It is pertinent to mention here that, this year in January the government launched the first route of electric bus service. The buses on route 1 run between Karachi Airport and Seaview.

The first route started from Seaview starts from Tank Chowk near Jinnah Avenue to pass through Airport, Sharea Faisal, TTC, Korang Road, Khayaban-e-Ittehad to reach Clock Tower at Seaview.

Last week Sindh Information and Transport Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon disclosed that on the directives of Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah the proposal to increase the fares of the Peoples Bus Service, which is operating in Karachi and other parts of the province has been deferred twice for the benefit of the people.

The transport minister told the media that the proposal to increase the fares of the Peoples Bus Service was presented twice in the meeting of the provincial cabinet but it was deferred on the directives of the CM.

Memon said the CM has given directions to the transport minister to ensure the welfare of the people of the province to the maximum possible extent amid the phenomenon of inflation in the prices of essential products. INP

Govt asked to set up payment gateways to facilitate freelancers: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan needs to formulate a policy to provide ease of currency exchange to freelancers, says a report.

"A national money exchange hub is necessary to provide freelancers with the ease of converting their foreign currency into the Pakistani rupee," states Zohab Lashari, a freelancer and coordinator of student support mentor in another reputed American FBA company, and Pakistan's largest e-commerce trading and training platform.

He said the establishment of local market hubs for dollar exchange was the need of the hour. "Enablers helps freelancers provide their services to foreign companies or individuals. These freelancers remit their earnings using different channels, these channels are used as exchangers to convert foreign currencies, mostly in dollars, into Pakistani rupees. These channels are used as per the preference of the client. We can't bind them to use any specific payment channel. However, the foreign exchange channel, also called merchants, usually deduct large amounts as fees or taxes. And when we further exchange the dollars, it's according to the market's open market rates, but this is because we do not have any proper platform to get our own dollars directly," explained Zohab Lashari.

He went on to say that they had to hire a third party to purchase dollars. "Our issue is purchasing dollars and converting our own currency into dollars. Sometimes we get it done through the money changers, but it is too costly as we have to pay Rs25 to Rs30 above and over the existing dollar rate. This is because we need as per the market's open market rates, but this is because we do not have any proper platform to get our own dollars directly," he further explained.

Lashari noted that official exchange channels operated under the policy of the State Bank would help them get our hard-earned money with ease. INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security Shazia Marri addressing a press conference.