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### Polio-free Pakistan prime goal of govt, committed to achieve targets: PM



### Ecstatic PTI supporters celebrate top court's decision to release Imran Khan

## Apex court declares Imran arrest 'unlawful' orders immediate release

## Balochistan Minister Mobeen Khilji, Qasam Suri booked for inciting violence

Dawood Ahmed:

ISLAMABAD The Supreme Court (SC) on Thursday evening declared the arrest of the former prime minister Imran Khan 'unlawful' and ordered his immediate release. The apex court also directed him to appear before the Islamabad High Court (IHC) tomorrow (Friday).

The top court said that the PTI chief would be kept at the Police Lines Guest House but would not be considered a prisoner, and directed the Islamabad police chief to ensure the ex-premier's security.

### Govt would have to guarantee Imran's security: Umar Ata Bandial

"The government would have to guarantee Imran's security," Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial directed.

The orders were issued as a three-judge bench comprising the CJP, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Athar Minalah resumed hearing Imran's plea against his arrest. Earlier in the day, the court had directed the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to present Imran before the court.



Subsequently, the PTI chief was presented in court amid tight security a little after 5:45pm. A reporter present at the scene said that the former prime minister was taken inside the SC via the judges' gate. When the authorities presented the PTI chief before the three-member bench at around 5:40pm — an hour later than ordered — the hearing resumed and there was a short exchange of words between Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial and Khan and then the order was issued. PTI — which has been on a rampage for the last two days

and its protests have led to clashes with the police across the country, resulting in the death of several — welcomed the decision, with the government unhappy with the development.

The three-member bench — headed by CJP Bandial and comprising Justice Athar Minalah and Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar — issued the verdict on PTI's petition challenging Khan's arrest.

The petition was filed after the capital's high court declared his arrest legal on May 9 (the day he was arrested), despite expressing dissatisfaction over the manner of the arrest.

"It is good seeing you," CJP Bandial told Khan when he was presented before the three-member bench, and also asked him to "condemn" the violent protests that took place as a result of the arrest.

### 'I just want free and fair elections'

In response, the PTI chief, through the media present in the courtroom, forwarded a message to his supporters that they should refrain from dam-

aging public and private property. "I don't want any less in the country nor do I wish for people to get incited. I just want free and fair elections," the PTI chief told the court, pleading with the court that despite his responding to the National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) notices, he was arrested.

In response to the court's question about whether he knew what was going on in Pakistan, Khan — who became the first prime minister to be ousted from office through a no-confidence vote in April last year — said his mobile phone was taken away and he was unaware about.

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA/Balochistan Minister, Mobeen

Daily Quetta Voice, the Bilji Road Police Station nominated former deputy speaker Qasam Suri and



Khilji and former deputy speaker national assembly, Qasam Suri were booked for inciting violence in the province. Violent clashes between police and the supporters of the PTI left one party worker dead and over two dozens injured. Police officials were also among the injured.

According to a first information report (FIR) obtained by the

Balochistan Minister, Mobeen Khilji for inciting violence in the province.

Police also conducted late night raids at the houses of PTI workers and leaders and arrested more than 70 workers in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. The arrested PTI workers were shifted to various police stations in the province.

## 8th day rescue operation underway for recovery of trapped miners in Dukki

Husain Zarkoon

DUKKI: For the last 8th consecutive day, rescue operation has been underway for the recovery of trapped coal miners in Balochistan's Dukki districts on Thursday. Two coal miners were trapped inside a coal mine in Balochistan's Dukki mines area eight days back.

"Rescue operation is still underway for the recovery of trapped miners," Syed Saboor Agha, the District Police Officer (DPO) said. He said rescue workers were making hectic efforts to recover the trapped miners.



### "Chances of their lives seem to be bleak", Mr. Agha said

### CM Balochistan is yet to take notice of the tragedy

"Chances of their lives seem to be bleak," Mr. Agha said. Scores of fellow coal miners and relatives of the trapped miners were also present on the spot of the incident. "Balochistan government should provide trained rescue workers", Nazir Muhammad, one of the relatives of the trapped miners said. He said the rescue workers present on the spot were not properly trained to save human lives.

The family members of the trapped miners have become physiological patients because of the ongoing trauma. "So far, the CM has not even taken a notice of the incident," Nazir Muhammad lamented.

Poor working conditions inside the coal mines of Balochistan have claimed scores of precious human lives in Quetta and other parts of the province. Hazardous working conditions are yet to be improved despite repeated appeals by rights groups and labour associations.

### Polio-free Pakistan prime goal of govt, committed to achieve targets: PM

ISLAMABAD Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that polio-free Pakistan is prime goal of the government and it is committed to achieve the targets in this regard.

Speaking during a meeting with a delegation of Rotary Foundation, headed by Chairman of International PolioPlus Committee Michael McGovern which called on him here on Thursday, the PM said that he would continue to personally monitor the efforts for elimination of polio from the country.

Premier Shehbaz Sharif highly appreciated the services of the Rotary Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for the polio-free Pakistan.

The government was ensuring the security of polio workers, he informed the delegation.

The prime minister appreciated



the Rotary International for the development of a housing project for the victims of 2022 floods.

He instructed the authorities concerned to devise a comprehensive strategy for the upcoming polio vaccination drive.

Premier Shehbaz Sharif was

told that this year, the Rotary International and other partner organisations had allocated \$15 million for anti-polio drives.

Appraising the prime minister of the current status of anti-polio campaigns, the relevant authorities told that a special drive would be launched in Southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The prime minister instructed the law enforcement agencies to ensure foolproof security for the polio workers.

He also directed the officers of the Ministry of National Health to make full preparations for the success of upcoming polio vaccination drive.

The officer bearers of Rotary International, including Azz Memon, Faiz Kidwai, Adnan Rohela and officers of the relevant ministries attended the meeting INP

### Ecstatic PTI supporters celebrate top court's decision to release Imran Khan

Elated supporters of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) poured into the streets soon after the Supreme Court's verdict to release party chairman Imran Khan in the Al-Qadir Trust case.

The apex court on Tuesday announced that the former prime minister's arrest was "illegal" and directed authorities to release him "immediately". Soon after that, the supporters and party workers championed the court's decision.



Ex-special assistant to the prime minister on youth affairs Usman

Dar called on the party supporters to take to the streets to express soli-

darity and gratitude to the top court.

"All Pakistanis, wherever they are, should come out to express solidarity and gratitude to the Supreme Court in their respective areas," the PTI leader tweeted.

PTI leader Imran Ismail was also overjoyed at the SC's verdict. "Imran Khan released by Supreme Court Pakistan zindabad," he wrote on the popular microblogging site Web Desk.

## Imran arrested under law, those responsible for violence should be accountable: Bilawal

KARACHI PPP Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said on Thursday that his party does not celebrate the arrest of any politician or distribute sweets. What has happened in the last couple of days is a dark moment in history. Addressing a press conference here at Bilawal House, the PPP chief said his party was always against the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), and ideologically believed it should be shut down.

"But the PTI kept defending the NAB for as long as PPP opposed it," he stressed. From 2008-13, Bilawal said, it was part of the Charter of Democracy to shut down the NAB, but Imran Khan started a 'save-NAB' campaign.

"When Nawaz Sharif came to power, we asked them again as opposition and adopted the stance that the NAB law should be amended and reformed, but to no avail," he lamented.

Today, he said, all the allied parties in the government have the same stance that NAB should be shut down.

"And when we reformed the NAB law and made amendments, Imran Khan was the first beneficiary," he commented.

The foreign minister remarked that the allegations against Imran Khan are severe.



"When the UK's National Crime Agency wanted to return Pakistan's 190 million pounds, the then prime minister Imran Khan abused his office, deceived the cabinet and in a sealed envelope, got it approved from the cabinet to store the amount elsewhere," Bilawal claimed.

He then went on to challenge the then cabinet members to reject this claim that they did not approve any such thing.

"The cabinet gave it to Malik Riaz to repay his fine to the Supreme Court. The allegations are severe," he insisted.

Imran Khan was arrested in accordance with the law and the Constitution in corruption cases. He claimed that all the violence perpetrated after the arrest was pre-planned and they respond with guns, stones and weapons.

"There are very few such examples in history. First, the TTP attacked the GHQ and then PTI. After the BLA vandalized Jinnah House in Balochistan, the PTI arrested Jinnah House in Lahore," he asserted. Throughout Pakistan's history, no political party has responded to a 14-day remand with terrorism, Bilawal maintained. He added that when the PPP founder was hanged the party didn't attack any property or when Benazir Bhutto was assassinated, the PPP responded politically and democratically Web Desk.



# Indus Waters ready under the aegis of the Paris Agreement: Part - 1

Editor Asim Khan

## Destination of electables is PPP in Balochistan nowadays

The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which failed to win a single seat during the general elections of 2018 in Balochistan is finally back. Electables, commonly called the ever-green and influential politicians have been joining the party for last more than a month. The seismic political shift in Balochistan is nothing new. Switching of loyalties and changing political parties normally take a place before every general election in the province, which covers half of the country's term of area.

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

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

Former federal minister Sardar Fateh Muhammad Muhammad Hassani, his son-in-law Mir Masoom Khan Nawabzada, former Balochistan Minister, Mir Mahmood Khan, Mir Mohyuddin Baloch, the former central leader of the Baloch Students Organization (BSO), Mir Fared Raisani and others joined the party in Karachi. Other provincial ministers Mir Zahoor Buledi, Saleem Khan Khoso and Arif Jan Muhammad Hassani have already joined the party.

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

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

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

Shafiq Kakahel

Pakistan's rejection of the Indian government's call for negotiations – on modifying the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) – made on January 25 2023, by the Indus Commission was fully justified. The treaty, comprising twelve short articles and eight long annexes elaborating the key features of the agreement, had been finalized over nearly six years of painstaking negotiations backed by competent Indian and Pakistani experts and hydrologists, commissioned by the World Bank. The IWT's crown is the dispute settlement mechanism consisting of bilateral talks and third party arbitration.

The IWT defines the rights of the two parties over the rivers of the Indus Basin which is not covered by ambiguity or any other flaw. This explains why experts taking part in the Indus Basin discussions and issues related to the Indus River Basin have invariably insisted on the IWT as the basis for exploring arrangements to build up on, not renegotiate it.

It is indeed unfortunate that discussions between India and Pakistan through the Indus Commission on the one hand and the G20 ministers' meeting in Moscow on the other, have not seriously and supports relevant financial institutions to put forward solutions on the Indus Basin. It is our consistent stance that multilateral financial institutions and commercial creditors, which hold the bulk of the debt of many developing countries, should participate in the debt relief effort.

Of late the Western criticism of Beijing has mounted in view of the fact that the G20 is a multilateral body and organizations at a time when the Western proponents of globalization revert to the cocoon of protectionism. The sight of the international platform serving as an arena of rivalry will further erode trust among the G20 countries. It is most experts predict that the current meeting will become a normal, as the G20 will continue to witness the playing out of conflicting positions.

Most experts predict that the current meeting will become a normal, as the G20 will continue to witness the playing out of conflicting positions. The repeated failure of the G20 to agree to a joint declaration is a preferred course of action among the member while the agenda for multilateral organizations is the abolition of the state. The repeated failure of the G20 to agree to a joint declaration is a preferred course of action among the member while the agenda for multilateral organizations is the abolition of the state.

As the blame game gets underway, the preferred course of action among the member while the agenda for multilateral organizations is the abolition of the state. The repeated failure of the G20 to agree to a joint declaration is a preferred course of action among the member while the agenda for multilateral organizations is the abolition of the state.

Pakistan's prior consent before building the power plants in the Indus River Basin has been fully respected. The Indus Water Treaty (IWT) – the most authoritative body for assessing the risks and measures to address them – has documented the sound effects of global warming on the quantity and quality of fresh water, including in the Indus Basin which is fed by the highly climate vulnerable glaciers and monsoon rains.

The Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) has also compiled reports on the negative consequences of climate change on Pakistan's water, food, energy, and health security. The report, titled 'Indus Basin: Climate Change and the Indus Basin', was published by ICIMOD in collaboration with the Indus Basin Commission. The report highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to address the challenges posed by climate change in the Indus Basin.

As noted in the earlier parts of this essay, India's insistence on the IWT as the basis for exploring arrangements to build up on, not renegotiate it. It is indeed unfortunate that discussions between India and Pakistan through the Indus Commission on the one hand and the G20 ministers' meeting in Moscow on the other, have not seriously and supports relevant financial institutions to put forward solutions on the Indus Basin.

## Perfect gridlock

Pakistan gives a look of a perfect gridlock today. The 11-member coalition government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the opposition led by Prime Minister Imran Khan continue to pull in the opposite directions. The coalition parties are unable to agree on a common platform. The government is facing a perfect gridlock. The opposition is also unable to present a coherent alternative. The situation is a perfect gridlock.

The judicial arbiters, the judiciary and the establishment, burdened by a heavy load of cases, are not able to mediate, put the fire out or suggest any solution. The opposition is also unable to present a coherent alternative. The situation is a perfect gridlock.

It is clear that the remnants of Project Imran are very much there in the system. The opposition is also unable to present a coherent alternative. The situation is a perfect gridlock.

Amanat Ali Chaudhry

The meeting of foreign ministers belonging to the G20 countries, held in India, ended without producing a consensus statement. It is the second occasion in a span of two weeks when the G20 meeting failed to produce a consensus statement.

The interaction lasted for 10 minutes. It served to reiterate the already known positions of both the countries. Mr. Blinken, however, invited Russia to rejoin the New Start nuclear treaty from detention.

The meeting was held in Moscow. The meeting was held in Moscow. The meeting was held in Moscow. The meeting was held in Moscow. The meeting was held in Moscow.

progress. The highlight of the meeting was an unopposed and unplanned meeting between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, on the sidelines of the main event.

The disagreements also manifested themselves on debt restructuring for the distressed economies during an IMF meeting with the G17 countries on the sidelines of the finance ministers' meeting. While IMF Managing Director Kristin Lagarde talked of a "commitment to bridge differences for the benefit of countries,"

As the blame game gets underway, the preferred course of action among the member while the agenda for multilateral organizations is the abolition of the state. The repeated failure of the G20 to agree to a joint declaration is a preferred course of action among the member while the agenda for multilateral organizations is the abolition of the state.

## Who controls wealth?

By Dr Shahnaz Khan

who makes decisions on how their wealth is distributed in their country's context, the most important means of production rapidly, and the solution we hear is to go to either the IMF or the World Bank for money.

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

The economy, in its essence, is a system of producing and distributing wealth, and this is closely intertwined with the political system. The ownership of the means of production is the key to the economic system. The ownership of the means of production is the key to the economic system.

## Reviewing Pakistan's climate action

By Shafiq Kakahel

It is gratifying to see that the national economy, human security, and environment are all interconnected.

Four climate change governance institutions, operating at the national level, are involved in the assessment, policy formulation, and implementation of these blueprints has been uneven, though. The provincial governments say they lack the financial and human capacity to implement climate change related policies.

Let's see how Pakistan fares vis-a-vis the aforementioned criteria. High-level political commitment is the first prerequisite, noted by the IPCC. One, a political commitment by the national leadership is essential for the success of the international community to address the climate crisis and its ramifications for Pakistan. The discourse on climate change in the long run are human development – especially of the youth role of women in the economy, and population control. Economic experts and policy-makers should integrate their thoughts in the media give the impression of a united front. The current discourse on climate change is fragmented and lacks a clear vision.

## Climate change action

It is gratifying to see that the national economy, human security, and environment are all interconnected. The discourse on climate change in the long run are human development – especially of the youth role of women in the economy, and population control.

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Center, Washington DC, in collaboration with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Islamabad and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi. The report of the dialogue was titled 'Connecting the Dots: An Indus Basin Roadmap for Cross-Border Water Research, Data Sharing, and Policy Coordination' published by the SIMSON Center and SDPI in February 2023.

Two discussions convened by the Delhi-based Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR) and the Islamabad-based Jinnah Institute for Dialogue, titled 'Indus River Basin: Common Concerns and the Roadmap for Resolution', was edited by Prof Shakil Roshni and published by CDR in March 2023. The report of the dialogue, 'Indus River Basin: Common Concerns and the Roadmap for Resolution', was edited by Prof Shakil Roshni and published by CDR in March 2023.

Three, discussions organized by the DC-based Atlantic Council of the United States in cooperation with Indian and Pakistani politicians and organizations. The report of the dialogue, 'Indus River Basin: Common Concerns and the Roadmap for Resolution', was edited by Prof Shakil Roshni and published by CDR in March 2023.

Four, joint monitoring of the satellite-based remote sensing capacity, to generate and disseminate non-polarized, reliable data on glacial melting trends. Two, study to probe the reasons for the diminishing snow cover in the Himalayas in India, resulting in reduced water flowing into Pakistan's rivers. Three, readiness for, and management of, climate-induced extreme events, including with scientific agencies and institutions in the U.S., China, and Europe.

Despite having enough satellite-based remote sensing capacity, to generate and disseminate non-polarized, reliable data on glacial melting trends. Two, study to probe the reasons for the diminishing snow cover in the Himalayas in India, resulting in reduced water flowing into Pakistan's rivers.

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# Seven killed as violent protests continue over Imran Khan's arrest

**PESHAWAR/LAHOOR** EISLAMABAD: At least seven people were killed and hundreds were injured in the violent protests being led by the anti-Imran Khan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters across the country against the arrest of party chief Imran Khan.

Violent protests against the arrest of former premier Imran Khan continued in Kyber Paktunkhwa, Punjab, Islamabad and other parts of the country for the third consecutive day on Thursday claiming seven lives.

According to the KP police spokesperson, seven people were killed in clashes between the protesters and police while over 100 people also injured. The injured were taken to the hospital by police officers, he said.

The deaths were reported in Peshawar, Kohat, and Dir, said police spokesperson.

The Peshawar police claimed that two superintendents of police, one superintendent and one police officer, four station house officers and four constables suffered injuries during violence in Peshawar.

Peshawar on the boy of violent protesters Wednesday

attacked the Radio Pakistan building in Peshawar. Director General of Radio Pakistan, Tahir Hussain, said media that the building of the state media in Peshawar was attacked by protesters who were wrecked havoc in the newsroom and various other sections of the radio station. The protesters entered the building and set fire to the furniture inside, he said adding that mob also attacked the staff at the office. Violent protesters in the building INP

# ATC disposes of Elahi's bail plea over non-appearance in police attack case

**LAHORE**—An anti-terrorism court in Lahore on Thursday disposed of a bail petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Parvez Elahi in a case related to attack on police officials.

Judge Ijaz Ahmed Butt issued the verdict stating that it was compulsory for the petitioner to appear before the court to get interim bail. He also rejected a petition seeking exemption from appearance for Mr Elahi in the case.

Last month, a case was registered against the PTI leader and others in Lahore's Ghaltai Market Police Station for attacking police officials with stones, banners and petrol bombs when a raid was conducted on the PTI offices at his house to arrest him. The case was registered on the complaint of an official in the Punjab's Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, Section 234, and others.

The FIR said that 40-50 people present inside the residence of Mr Elahi hurled stones and resorted to violence. It also said that petrol bombs were also thrown at the police in order to facilitate the PTI president to escape from the scene INP

# Chinese Company ensures safe drinking water for Islamabad Students

**ISLAMABAD**—Chinese environmental technology company, Zhongke Runlan Environmental Technology (Beijing) Co. Ltd. in collaboration with international organizations, has donated reverse osmosis (RO) water treatment equipment to Islamabad Model College for Girls in Pakistan to address the school's water quality challenges.

Last month, a team of engineers from the company arrived in Pakistan to provide technical guidance and install the equipment at the school, according to China Economic Net (CEN).

According to Runlan, under the framework of China's "Belt and Road" initiative and in line with the principles of green development, Chinese companies are actively contributing to global sustainable development by sharing China's clean energy equipment, technology, and services with the world.

Upon their arrival in Pakistan, the team of technicians promptly ventured to the site to carry out water sample testing. Startling results emerged from their assessments. "After our testing, we found that the electrical conductivity of the water sample reached 2330TDS/cm, indicating a high concentration of harmful ion impurities far exceeding international standards," stated a representative from Islamabad Model College for Girls.

Pakistan is one of the countries facing severe water pollution issues, particularly when it comes to drinking water. In certain regions, due to adverse natural conditions and improper utilization of water resources, the groundwater contains a high concentration of harmful substances, rendering it unsuitable for consumption.

This directly poses a threat to the drinking water safety of local residents. Islamabad Model College for Girls, located in the rural area of Islamabad, is one such school grappling with this issue.

The school lacks proper water filtration equipment, forcing some children to bring their own drinking water from home every day. Unfortunately, not all children have access to clean water facilities at home.

The team started their interaction with the school staff by explaining the basic theoretical knowledge about the RO reverse osmosis water treatment equipment. They then proceeded to demonstrate the specific writing steps and testing procedures to be followed by the school. After undergoing treatment with the RO reverse osmosis water purification equipment, the electrical conductivity of the water samples decreased to 42TDS/cm, meeting international standards.

"We are delighted to see children are now drinking safe and reliable water, this matters the most," representative of the UN expressed to the reporter. Information in this article comes from third party providers. This website does not provide explicit or implied warranty for such information and is not liable for any losses directly or indirectly caused by using such information INP

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**QUETTA:** PTI Women Wing Balochistan President Munawar Baloch addressing a press conference.

# Rupee hits record low of 299 against US dollars amid violent clashes

**KARACHI:** Pakistani rupee plunged to record low of 299 against the US dollar amid political turmoil in the wake of clashes that broke out in the country following the arrests of PTI Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan.

As per details, the local unit fell by Rs8.78, or 3.02% against the dollar on Thursday trading at 299 in the interbank market at 1:17pm.

The new rate is just Re1 away from the much-anticipated rate of Rs300 per dollar.

The rupee depreciation has piled up foreign debt without taking new external loans, making imports further expensive for Pakistan, which faced a six-decade high inflation reading at 36.4% in April 2023.

Financial pundits believe that the rupee has been depreciating due to political and social unrest caused after the arrest of PTI Chairman Imran Khan INP



**ISLAMABAD:** Shazia Marri, Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety & Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairperson of the International Parliamentary Convention on "My Constitution Guarantee My Freedom" in the National Assembly.

# Pak-Oman enjoy deep ties based on brotherhood, socio-economic interests: Speaker NA

**ISLAMABAD**—National Assembly Speaker (NA) Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that Pakistan and Oman enjoy deep bilateral relations based on shared values of brotherhood and socio-economic interests.

This was stated by him while talking to Deputy Chairman State Council of Oman Sheikh Dr. Al-Khatib bin Ghalib bin Ali Al-Hinai leading a parliamentary delegation from Oman which on an official visit in Pakistan to attend International Convention organized by National Assembly Secretary in connection with Golden Jubilee celebration of Constitution.

He appreciated the Oman people and government for hosting a large number of Pakistani INP

# Syria's re-entry into the Arab League indicates shifting sands in the Middle East

**ISLAMABAD:** Syria's re-entry into the Arab League indicates shifting sands in the Middle East, says an article carried by the Middle East Monitor.

"We will not walk away to leave a vacuum to be filled by China, Russia or Iran... The United States is not going anywhere," bragged President Joe Biden during his visit to the Middle East last July while trying to rattle the apprehensions about his apparently "disengagement" policy towards this region.

But the shifting sands of the Middle East tell a different story now.

Despite Washington's intense pressure, the majority of the Arab League members have endorsed Syria's return to the group after 12 years.

This is the second major setback for American diplomacy in the last two months, the

China-mediated Iranian bid to de-escalate the war was the first lethal blow to the already waning influence of the US in the Middle East. Both events corroborated the emerging realities in the Middle East where the US is finding itself increasingly isolated.

It is time for the United States to wake up and smell the coffee. It is no longer tenable for the US to cling to its outdated notions of hegemony and ignore the shifting darts in global power fabric.

The Biden administration needs to face the new reality and shake off the delusions of the past. It is no longer a question of if, but when the United States will compete for influence in the Middle East.

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# China Pakistan Strategic Dialogue significant to the region

**ISLAMABAD:** In a new push to achieve new heights in strategic partnership, the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and China co-chaired the fourth round of the Pakistan-China Foreign Minister's Strategic Dialogue in Islamabad on May 06.

The dialogue marks a significant milestone in the history of the All-Weather Strategic Partnership between the two countries and holds significance for the region, according to an article carried by Gwadar Pro on Thursday.

Taking place during the first visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Pakistan since assuming office last year, this biennial dialogue serves as a platform for both countries to address regional and global challenges through a collaborative approach in a diverse range of areas of mutual interests.

The Strategic Dialogue underlines the mutual commitment of China and Pakistan to sustain their strategic partnership amidst the growing global turbulence.

The year 2023 has been a busy and proactive year for Pakistan and China as both countries continue to engage in multiple diplomatic and security-related consultations.

These multifaceted connections are the ways for the senior leadership to discuss bilateral regional, and global issues and to seek a consensus on responses to mutual threats and agendas. Strategic dialogue frameworks like these offer the foundation for deepening political, economic, security, and military cooperation, ultimately enhancing understanding and harmonious responses to shared challenges.

Pakistan is grappling with diverse internal and external challenges that pose a significant threat to the stability and progress of the country. With a population of nearly 230 million people, the nation faces severe political and socio-economic crises, compounded by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastating floods triggered by global climate change in 2022 to overcome these challenges. Pakistan desperately needs international support and assistance INP

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# Pakistan's deepening political crisis douses hopes for IMF relief

LONDON/KARACHI: The political crisis engulfing Pakistan is eroding hopes that the South Asian country can get its much needed programme with the International Monetary Fund back on track soon and escape a full-blown debt crunch, analysts said.

Deadly clashes between supporters of Imran Khan and police spread across the country after Pakistan's anti-corruption agency, arrested the former prime minister on Tuesday.

The rupture in Pakistan's fragile politics comes as the 230-million-population nation prepares to hold tightly fought elections in the autumn while facing its worst economic crisis in decades, with dwindling reserves and a stalled \$6.3 billion IMF programme that is expiring in June and scarce other financing sources in sight.

"With protesters on the streets, the IMF will be even more wary about restarting the loan deal," said Gareth Leather, senior economist for Emerging Asia at Capital Economics.

The turmoil since Khan was ousted just over a year ago has scarred the country's economy and markets. Pakistan's rupee has lost nearly 50% over the past 12 months. The main stock index has suffered a double-digit decline over the same period.

On Wednesday, the rupee tumbled some 2% to a fresh record low of 290 to the dollar. The country's international bonds, already in deeply distressed territory as of little as 32 cents, dropped more than 1 cent in the dollar on the day.

While noisy politics generating volatility was nothing new for Pakistan and its investors, they "really complained" the discussion with the IMF," said Cathy Hepworth, head of emerging market debt at PGIM Fixed Income, which holds Pakistan bonds.

"It just delays and complicates decisions." Time is ticking down. Nearly 100 days have passed since the last IMF staff level mission to Pakistan and the two sides have yet to strike a preliminary deal - a key step to secure the next funding tranche. That is the longest such period in the last 200 years.

Meanwhile foreign exchange reserves at \$4.45 billion cover barely a month's worth of imports. JPMorgan analyst Milo Gunasinghe said little relief was in sight while the IMF programme remained stalled.

"The latest developments likely dampen any prospect of a political breakthrough across both sides," Milo said. "The IMF is increasingly pessimistic about the outlook for the country from the IMF's perspective, and the IMF's 'stall shock' due to delays in the IMF talks, while the central bank hiked its key interest rate to a record 21% to fight double-digit inflation.

As a local government bond auction on Wednesday, Pakistan was able to raise only 63 billion rupees (\$225 million) against a target of 100 billion rupees with the cut-off yield rising to nearly 20% for three-year maturities.

The nuclear-armed nation faces the risk of a default unless it receives massive support. The gross public debt-to-GDP ratio stands at 73.3%.

"The IMF has the capacity and the flexibility to help member countries in a variety of political circumstances," said Reza Baqir, former central bank governor of Pakistan and global head of sovereign advisory services at Alvarez and Marsal.

"It is usually up to the country to present a credible plan of policies and financing that, in the face of political uncertainty, will credibly address the members' balance of payment problems." IMF



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Rotary Foundation led by Mike McGovern, Chair International Polio Plus Committee, calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in Federal Capital.

## Punjab CM Naqvi boosts morale of policemen on duty in Lahore

LAHORE: Punjab caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi Thursday visited the policemen on duty in Lahore to boost their morale.

Punjab Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Awar and Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamanya accompanied him.

The caretaker chief minister praised the dedication of the policemen He also appreciated the determination and courage of the policemen.

It is to be noted here that violent protests had broken out in Lahore city after the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Fawad Chaudhry. Several policemen had sustained injuries in the protests INP

## Speakers of Int'l Golden Jubilee Convention emphasize importance of Constitution, stress promoting social justice

ISLAMABAD: Speakers including political leaders, parliamentarians and experts on Thursday emphasized the importance of Pakistan's Constitution in establishing democracy, protecting minority rights and promoting social justice at the International Parliamentary Convention being organized by National Assembly Secretariat in connection with Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

They stressed the role of parliament as the people's representative body and the need to protect constitutional freedoms and international laws which means for resolving disputes. Discussions included the need to learn from past mistakes, and to promote teachings of Islam, which encourage tolerance and non-discrimination. The session focused on threats to the constitution, including its suspension and abrogation, and the impact of emergency rules on democracy and the rule of law.

It was discussed ways to navigate and overcome crises that threaten democracy, such as national security threats, social unrest, and political and economic instability, and the role of constitutional principles and institutions in promoting resilience and stability during times of crisis.

Senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Mohsin Shah Nawaz Ranjha stated that the Constitution of Pakistan is the bedrock of the country and that it should be protected and strengthened in the age of Crises: Navigating Challenges," in the International Convention as part of Pakistan's Golden Jubilee of the Constitution, he also highlighted that parliamentary discussions assist in comprehending the Constitution INP

## President condemns "violent" protests, urges to remain peaceful

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi strongly condemning the "violent" protests after arrest of Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan in Islamabad. He urged the people to remain peaceful and to resolve their grievances through democratic means.

"I have conveyed my concerns to the political and military leadership and am hopeful that the situation can improve. I strongly appeal to all citizens of the country to remain peaceful and to resolve their grievances through democratic means," President Alvi said in a letter addressed to the PM on Imran Khan's arrest, he said. "Please do ensure that constitutional rights of Imran Khan are not violated and his life is fully secured." Alvi said. The Prime Minister is obliged under the Constitution and Rules of Business, 1973 to keep me informed about the current state of affairs in the country. He wrote: "Your attention is drawn towards the arrest of Mr. Imran Khan on 9th May, 2023 from the premises of Islamabad High Court, the manner in which it was done and the consequences thereof. I and the people of Pakistan were shocked to see the video material which reflected the manner in which a former Prime Minister who is a popular leader and head of a political party substantially supported by the people of Pakistan was being treated. I was forcibly entered the office where Mr. Imran Khan was seated while his biometrics were under process, inside the building of Islamabad High Court."

"The clumsy hubris in which his arrest was carried out has tarnished the image of Pakistan in the international community, and the enemies of Pakistan are taking full advantage of the situation. Pakistan as a country having little respect for rights of its citizens."

All kind of incident should not happen with anybody, and the justification that such episodes have happened before does not make them 'right' today. The already tottering economy is badly affected and polarization in society is further exacerbated due to such ill-conceived and unwarranted incidents as above. Of course, he has a large number of followers who were emotionally triggered after watching such scenes of his arrest and dragging of their leader by the security officials despite his injured leg due to an assassination attempt on him.

"The incident which reflects such scenes of his arrest and dragging of their leader by the security officials despite his injured leg due to an assassination attempt on him."

The event led to attacks by mobs on public assets including buildings of the Armed Forces. I believe that the people have a right to protest but they should remain peaceful and within the bounds of the law." INP

## Islamabad police hint at more arrests of PTI leaders

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police on Thursday hinted at more arrests of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders following the violent protests and vandalism after Imran Khan's arrest in the Akhbar Trust case.

According to Islamabad police spokesperson, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Asad Umar, Farhat Ishtiaq, Jamshed Iqbal Cheema, Musarrat Cheema, Falak Naz Chitrali and Malik Bukhari have been arrested for "provoking people for violent protests."

The arrests were made in accordance with the law, the spokesperson added. Warning the PTI leaders to avoid spreading chaos, the Islamabad police hinted at more arrests in the future.

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) vice chairman and former Foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi was taken into custody by police in Islamabad.

Qureshi's arrest was an addition to the list as several PTI leaders including former Government Minister Farhat Ishtiaq, Chief Executive Officer Musarrat Cheema, PTI secretary general Asad Umar and PTI Vice President Fawad Chaudhry were already apprehended by police INP.

## Pakistan to release 500 Indian prisoners, who completed jail term

KARACHI: Pakistani authorities have decided to release 500 Indian prisoners, 499 of them fishermen, who completed their jail terms.

Indian prisoners will be released from jails in phases. Two hundred prisoners will be released from Malir District Jail today and will be sent to Lahore. Edfn Foundation will facilitate travel of the released Indian prisoners to Lahore by train which will be handed over to Indian authorities at the Wagah border on Friday (tomorrow).

Another batch of 200 Indian fishermen will be released from Karachi jails on June 02 for repatriation to India.

The fishermen and up to 200 Indian prisoners will be released from jails on July 03 for repatriation to their home country.

The fishermen and up to 200 Indian prisoners will be released from jails of two neighboring countries after being arrested for allegedly violating the maritime border of Pakistan and India.

Pakistan and India regularly arrest each other's fishermen for violating the maritime boundary, which is poorly marked. INP

## 1,380 miscreants involved in attack on 14 buildings arrested in Punjab

LAHORE: Punjab police arrested more than 1,380 miscreants involved in riots and violent activities across the province since the last day. The police spokesperson issued a statement on Thursday, saying that 1,380 miscreants were arrested in connection with the attack on policemen and 14 government buildings.

The police spokesperson said they arrested more than 435 miscreants for the violation of the law. He said the miscreants seriously injured more than 145 police officers and personnel during violent acts while more than 60 vehicles of the police and government departments were destroyed and set on fire. He said the police helped to help of video footage, and CCTV recordings, the miscreants are being identified and arrested.

The spokesperson said all the criminal records of miscreants and law breakers are being entered into their character cards to ensure that they would not be able to get a visa to foreign countries from various run stations. USman Awar visited the Services Hospital in the few hours of the morning and met with the police officers and personnel who were injured due to stone hitting and violence during the protests. INP

## Event organized to pay tributes to nursing community on Int'l Nursing Day

ISLAMABAD: In connection with International Nurses Day to be observed on Friday (May 12) a colorful event was organized in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) on Thursday to pay tribute to the nursing community for their invaluable services to the humanity.

Dr Akbar Niazi Teaching Hospital, Islamabad, the Government General Hospital (IGMH) and Islamabad Nursing College (INC) jointly organized the ceremony.

Addressing the participants, Chairman of the institution Dr Ghulam Akbar Khan Niazi and Managing Director Yasir Khan said this day is a day of celebration to recognize the services of nurses in our beloved country and across the globe. They said without their tireless hard work, health sector cannot be improved.

Principal IMDC Prof Dr Sved Irfan Ahmed, Executive Director ANTH Col (Keta) Dr Ghulam Mujtaba Abbasi, Director Officer Areef Nayazi and Chief Nursing Officer Rifaqat Farzana along with other top management officials were also present on this occasion.

They acknowledged and appreciated nursing profession, commending their unwavering commitment to provide exceptional care to the patients.

A large number of students and nurses in a grand display of talents presented tableaux and performances on national songs. A cake cutting ceremony was also held on this occasion. The Chairman and Managing Director distributed awards and certificates among nurses who made significant and measurable contributions in care giving. INP

## PTI's Farrukh Habib says nation looking towards CJP

FAISALABAD: PTI central leader Farrukh Habib said that the whole nation was looking towards Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial to take action against the cruelty being meted out to party leaders.

He said that Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Ejaz Chaudhry, Musarrat Jamshed Cheema, and Malik Bukhari were abducted from Gilgit-Baltistan House in Islamabad. "Basic human rights have disappeared in Pakistan," Habib said.

It was worth to mention here that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) prominent leaders Asad Umar and Fawad Chaudhry, have been placed under house arrest on the premises of the Islamabad administration stated that the PTI leaders Asad Umar and Fawad Chaudhry has been detained for 15 days under MPO.

Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance (MPO), 1969 - Powers to arrest and detain - Premises of the law to ensure law and order for Public safety, PTI Secretary General Asad Umar was detained within the premises of Islamabad High Court, while PTI Vice President Fawad Chaudhry was arrested outside the Supreme Court building. Meanwhile Fawad Chaudhry was present in the Supreme Court's building since 12:00 noon to avoid his arrest. He was immediately arrested by police after he stepped out of the SC premises late Wednesday night.

While conducting a press conference, Fawad Chaudhry said it would be the first time in history that a lawyer is being arrested. "Politics have divided the legal fraternity and all sections in Pakistan are facing the same challenge." INP

## Karnataka Polls: Congress to win 122-140 seats, BJP 62-80 Seats, predicts survey

BENGALURU: The Congress is set to return to power in Indian state of Karnataka with a clear majority, securing 122-140 seats in the state, according to an exit poll.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which ran a high-voltage campaign in the southern state, is likely to finish second with 62-80 seats, the India Today-ANIS My India exit poll showed.

Karnataka recorded a voter turnout of over 66 per cent in the electronic voting machines, according to the Election Commission.

After high-pitch campaigns and the end of intense voting in Karnataka, the fate of over 2,600 candidates in Karnataka is locked in the electronic voting machines. Counting of votes for all 224 seats in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly will take place on May 13 and the outcome is likely to be an indicator of voter sentiment ahead of national elections expected to be held next year.

According to exit polls, Congress is the single largest party. There is no question of coalition with any other party, especially Janata Dal (Secular), says Congress leader Jagadish Shettar.

Most of the exit polls show Congress ahead of the BJP and JD(S) may play the role of kingmaker in case of a hung verdict which is unlikely if exit polls are to be believed.

The Chhannika exit poll predicts Congress to get 120 seats while BJP will be able to register a win in 92 seats. JD(S) is set to bag 12 seats, it said.

India TV-CNN exit polls gave the Congress 110-120 seats and the BJP 80-90 seats. They predicted 20-24 seats for the JD (S).

Times Now-ETG exit poll gave Congress 113 seats and the BJP 85 and JD(S) 23 INP

PESHAWAR: IGP Akhtar Hayat Gandapur talking to the media at the police hospital.

## At UN, Pakistan slams India's decision to hold G20 meetings in Kashmir

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has strongly protested India's decision to hold Group of 20 meetings in the UN-recognized disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir later this month, and urged New Delhi not to misuse its position as chair of the body of world's largest economies to "advance their own national agenda."

"These stage-managed events are designed to project a false normalcy in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, Ambassador Munir Akram told an ambassadorial-level meeting of the Group of 77, which now has 134 members and is the United Nations' biggest intergovernmental group of emerging countries. India currently holds the rotating year-to-host a leaders' summit in New Delhi in early September. Wednesday's meeting was convened to hear from India's UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, who is the agenda of a series of meetings leading up to the summit, which included G20 and Youth 20 meetings in Srinagar and in Leh, in the neighboring region of Ladakh.

"In this context," Islamabad Akram said, "Pakistan is obliged to register its strong protest at India's decision to hold one or more G-20 meetings in the UN-recognized disputed territory of Jammu & Kashmir, which India occupies in contravention of UN Security Council resolutions and where the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people and other fundamental rights, are being suppressed by an occupation force of 90,000 Indian troops. The Pakistani envoy reminded delegates of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, having asked India for access to Indian-occupied Jammu & Kashmir to investigate reports of gross violations of human rights." Instead of inviting G-20 delegations," Ambassador Akram added, "India should accede to the request of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the dozen or more human rights' Special Rapporteurs, and invite them to occupied Kashmir, provide them unhindered access to the territory and its people and thus enable them to observe the violation of human rights and the oppression in Indian INP

## Barter trade system holds key importance to boost trade volume: Naved Qamar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Sved Naveed Qamar has emphasized the significance of the barter trade system for enhancing trade volume.

He was speaking during a Pakistan-Ethiopia business Forum organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI) at its auditorium on Thursday to inaugurate the visit of an Ethiopian delegation to Islamabad. The minister for commerce and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Sisyayana Araya were Chief Guest, Minister of State for Innovation & Technology Fuzia Amin and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

On the occasion, Sved Naveed Qamar said that barter is a potential market for foreign stores and urged that the Ethiopian business delegation should explore Pakistan for IVEs and investment. He said that Pakistan's Look Africa policy would cover the whole of Africa to improve business relations with it. He said that Pakistan is going to launch a B2B Barter Trade Policy and Ethiopian entrepreneurs should take advantage of it to improve trade with Pakistan. He stressed that private sectors of both countries should finalize business contracts to sign business deals. He stressed that the embassies of both countries should focus on easy business relations with both countries. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Misganu Arega said that Ethiopia attaches great importance to strengthening business relations with Pakistan. He said that Ethiopia is the fastest growing economy in Africa and India is also present on the occasion. He emphasized that Pakistani investors should explore his country for investment. He said that the direct flights of Ethiopian airline with Pakistan would contribute to improve B2B and B2P relations between both countries. He said that the delegation has found Pakistan a heaven for commercial and manufacturing activities INP



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaz Ashraf addressing the closing plenary session building inclusive and equal Societies Challenges and Opportunities of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Constitution of Pakistan.