

QUETTA VOICE

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PTI deserters meet Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Adiala jail in bid to 'convince' him to quit party



Petrol price slashed by Rs8 per litre

2 million families to benefit from health card in Balochistan

Manan Mandokhail
QUETTA—Over 2 million families would benefit and avail free medical treatment from the newly introduced health card in Balochistan. The Balochistan health department signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with a private insurance company to make sure the implementation of the much-awaited health card in the province.
"This is revolution in health sector", Balochistan health minister Syed Ehsan Shah told a crowded press conference. Secretary health Balochistan, Asfandyar Khan, Chairman Balochistan Revenue Authority (BRA), Noor ul Haq Baloch, program manager health card, Asadullah Khan Kakar and other officials were also present on the occasion.



tion center would also be established in every hospital on the panel.
Health card an important social security program: Noor ul Haq Baloch
He emphasized that the media should play a role in highlighting this historic event. Chairman BRA Noor Haq Baloch said in his speech that health card is a very important social security program. Before this, assistance is being provided to the patients from the Balochistan Endowment Fund with 8 billion rupees. Mr. Baloch informed.

Health Sector a top priority of present government: Minister

Syed Ehsan Shah said that the agreement with State Life regarding Health Card is welcome and a positive stride towards improving health facilities. He said that the health sector is the top priority of the government. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has specially directed that the early issuance of Health Card should be given first priority.
The Provincial Health Minister fur-

ther said that every resident of Balochistan, whether he is living in a hut or in rocky buildings or coastal areas, will benefit from this program. They will get free treatment facilities up to 10 lakh rupees, he mentioned. He reiterated the commitment that a formal health card would be launched within 2 months and a formal informa-

Health card to be a game changer: Asfandyar Khan

He said that the people of remote areas will benefit from the health card program. Chairman State Life Shaib Javed Hussain expressed his views and said that State Life will provide real time service. The agreement with the Balochistan government is a matter of pride for State Life. Health Secretary Asfandyar Khan said that the health card will prove to be a game changer in the health sector. All possible support will be provided in this regard. CEO Balochistan Health Card Program Asadullah Kakar welcomed the guests and said that the Universal Health Coverage Program is a unique program provided to every citizen in Balochistan.

When Quetta razed to ground within 30 seconds 88 years ago

Syed Ali Shah
Quetta, Pakistan's southwestern city was razed to ground within 30 seconds when a powerful earthquake struck 88 years ago. The deadliest earthquake of 1935 still haunts the people.
Strong tremors jolted this mountain-ringed city between 2:33 to 3:40 am when people were in their deep sleep on May 31st 1935. The earthquake was recorded 7.7 on the Richter scale. It was Chittan fault located in the South West of the city that destroyed the city. Chittan and Chaman fault pose a serious threat to Quetta and parts of northern and central Balochistan.



It took weeks and months for the rescue workers to retrieve the dead bodies buried beneath the rubbles of the houses. The earthquake destroyed main commercial center of the city.

British rulers declared emergency after the deadliest earthquake of 1935

The English colonial rulers declared an emergency in the aftermath of the deadliest earthquake, which claimed more than 30,000 lives. Rescue workers and military personnel were moved from Bombay to Quetta in passenger trains to assist in the rescue efforts. Local tribesmen from neighboring Pishin, Mastung and other areas also rushed towards the city to participate in the rescue operation.

Specific building code was introduced for Quetta
The British rulers introduced a specific building code for Quetta in view of the looming danger of earthquakes. For sometime, the building code was implemented in latter and spirit. However, that is no more than the case when it comes to the implementation of the building code in the city.

Over 700 building constructed in violation of building code
As per the statistics of the metropolitan corporation Quetta, around 700 buildings have been constructed in the city in violation of building code. Substandard materials are also being used in construction, which can cause more human losses in the case of any future earthquakes. Experts have warned that there is ticking bomb beneath Quetta and precautionary measures need to be adopted to ensure quality construction and implementation of building code to avoid human losses in the case of any natural calamity.

PTI deserters meet Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Adiala jail in bid to 'convince' him to quit party

In a bid to change, what sources claimed, the loyalty of detained Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi — who according to Chairman Imran Khan will lead the party in case of his disqualification — the party's key deserters met him in Adiala jail on Wednesday.
A delegation of PTI defectors comprising the party's bigwigs Fawad Chaudhry, Imran Ismail, Mahmood Muzvi and Aamir Kiani met Qureshi in the prison and tried to convince him to part ways with the deposed prime minister, who was removed from office via a vote of no-confidence in April last year.



the well-placed sources confirmed. Addressing a press conference following a meeting with detained PTI leader, Fawad — once a close aide of Khan — said that 250 million people could not be left at the mercy of component parties of the Pakistan Democratic Web Desk

Petrol price slashed by Rs8 per litre

The federal government reduced the prices of petroleum products Wednesday by up to Rs8 per litre.
The decision was announced by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in a televised address. The price of petrol has been reduced to Rs262 per litre after a cut of Rs8. Meanwhile, the new price of diesel will be Rs253 per litre after being reduced by Rs5.
The prices will come into effect at 12am tonight and will remain unchanged



for the next fortnight.
The government's announcement comes as it faces increased pressure due to rising petrol prices which had reached a record of Rs282 per litre earlier this year — and inflation, which is currently the highest in the region.
"The recent decline in global oil prices has provided some relief, but the government is still facing difficulty in keeping prices down as the rupee depreciates," Web Desk

Timely delivery of justice vital to prevent worsening of disputes: President

QUETTA: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that timely delivery of justice especially in minor cases holds key importance to prevent worsening of disputes and avoiding bloodshed.
Addressing a seminar in the provincial capital Quetta on Wednesday, he said the federal and provincial ombudsmen had their key role in the promotion of public service and good governance.
Dr Arif Alvi said that as a member of National Assembly (NA) in 2017, he proactively worked for passing a bill related to alternate dispute resolution to reduce the burden on the mainstream judiciary.
He pointed out, "When physical interaction was not possible owing to security issues, the executives including himself must have arranged online setups such as "Zoom meetings" to ensure direct communication with the common people to guarantee timely justice delivery.



Last night, he said, "He disposed of 10 cases of the federal ombudsman and normally he disposes of the cases of appeals in just a few hours."

Stressed to raise awareness about the role of the ombudsman, President Alvi

He also directed for removal of obstacles in the way of interaction between government officials and the common people. He said, "Islam teaches people to show patience and forgiveness to promote peace and harmony in society."

"No nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam."
Referring to the living standards of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the His companions, the president also asked the country's executives to follow them and adopt the living standard of the common man.
Speaking about the importance of woman's rights and their participation in society, the president said, "Islam is the first religion that emphasized to provide an inheritance to women and in Quran it has been emphasized with clarity."
Normally in our society, he said women of a family withdrew their inheritance rights in favour of their brothers which happened often under pressure. However, he said it rarely happened that men of a family withdrew their inheritance right in favour of their sisters. INP

Pakistan has got Plan B in case IMF deal not reached: Minister

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Ghous Pasha has said that the statement of IMF mission chief Nathan Porter is unusual as the global lender does not discuss the domestic political issues.

Talking to media on Wednesday, Ms Pasha said that the International Monetary Fund has not officially discussed such thing. She was of the view that the IMF does not have the mandate to interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan.

According to a report, IMF mission chief for Pakistan Nathan Porter said on Tuesday that the IMF remained in touch with the government in Pakistan in order to pave the way for a board meeting before a financial review expires at the end of June.

Porter said that broadly speaking, "overcoming the present economic and financial challenges would require sustained policy efforts and reforms for Pakistan to regain strong and inclusive private-led growth."

While the IMF does not comment on domestic politics, the IMF official said it hopes "a peaceful way forward is found in line with the Constitution and the rule of law," referring to Pakistan's political instability.

Ms Pasha said that the IMF programme is ending on June 30, adding that no discussion have been held regarding extension of the current programme.

Pasha had signed the current 30-month \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility in July 2019. The IMF,

however, extended the programme by nine months to June 30, 2023 and its size was also increased to \$6.5 billion.

Over the past almost four years, the programme has been derailed at least four times, including on two occasions during the tenure of the current coalition government.

"The coalition government has failed to timely complete the programme reviews and \$2.6 billion still remains undrawn because of disagreement on the ninth review, which also delayed the completion of 10th and 11th reviews."

Pakistan has implemented almost all prior actions as demanded by the IMF but still the global lender is delaying the start of the programme for the ninth review.

The staff-level agreement has been delayed since November, with more than 100 days gone since the last staff-level mission to Pakistan, the longest such delay since at least 2008.

"If the deal with the IMF is not reached, the Ministry of Finance is not sitting with its eyes closed. Plan B is always there. However, our goal is the IMF programme," the state minister said resolutely.

Ms Pasha said that the delay in the loan programme is not in the interest of both Pakistan and the IMF. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured the managing director of the IMF that Pakistan would implement all the conditions of the IMF and complete the programme, she added.

The minister of state for finance hoped that the staff level agreement would be reached with the IMF before the new budget which would be presented on June 9 INP.



LAHORE: Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik calls on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore.

School teacher among three killed in Quetta

QUETTA: Three persons including a school teacher were killed in three separate incidents in the provincial capital, police said on Wednesday.

According to media reports, a person was killed in Ferrozabad area when unidentified assailants opened fire at him, the deceased has been identified as Inam Rabhani, a teacher of Government Boys Middle School. In another incident a person was shot dead as a result of firing near telephone exchange at Saryab road.

While in another case, an exchange of fire took place after a bitter conflict in Zarghounah area of Acher Okk killing a man and injuring two others. Police said that all the deceased and injured have been shifted to hospital for medical aid and treatment.

Police reportedly have started investigation into the matter and decided to control the soaring crime rate in the city. Police have vowed to arrest the culprits and bring them to justice INP.

Pakistan rupee off to a flying start against US dollar

ISLAMABAD: After Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's phone call to IMF chief, the Pakistani rupee started Wednesday on a strong footing with an appreciation of 55 paise against the US dollar in the interbank market.

According to the data collected from forex dealers, the local currency went up by 55 paise against the greenback and was currently being traded at Rs284.80.

On Tuesday, the Pakistani rupee had registered a marginal improvement against the US dollar, appreciating by 0.02% in the interbank market. At close, the currency settled at 285.35, an increase of seven paise.

In a key development, Nathan Porter, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mission Chief to Pakistan, said the multilateral lender continued its engagement with the Pakistani authorities - focusing on the restoration of foreign exchange reserves and the functioning, the passage of a fiscal year 2024 budget consistent with programme goals, and adequate financing to pave the way for a Board meeting before the current programme expires at the end of June.

Porter said that overcoming the present economic and financial challenges would require sustained policy efforts and reforms for Pakistan to regain strong and inclusive private-led growth.

In a related development, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had contacted IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and sought her help in completing the ninth review in order to revive the derailed \$6.5 billion bailout package to avert off imminent default.

PM Shehbaz directed the finance ministry to share budget details with the International Monetary Fund. The prime minister informed the IMF chief that Pakistan has fulfilled all the conditions agreed in February, so now the staff level agreement should be announced INP.

Three injured for resisting robbery attempt in Jhang

JHANG: Bandit injured three persons for resisting robbery in Jhang district, police confirmed on Wednesday.

According to the media reports, Police said that the incident occurred in Chak-460 when a robber tried to loot some citizens and they retaliated during the attempt. The firing incident the suspect opened fire on the citizens and in retaliated three persons were injured.

The suspect after the incident tried to hide in the fields to evade arrest but was ultimately caught after the search by citizens and police. Police said that legal action according to the rules enacted in criminal code will be taken against the suspect and no leniency will be shown INP.

PIA posts Rs38 bln loss in first quarter of 2023

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Wednesday released its financial results, revealing a loss of Rs 38 billion in the first quarter of the year 2023.

According to the report, PIA's losses for Q1 2023 hit 61 per cent higher compared to the same period in 2022, posing a worsening financial situation of the National flag carrier. Meanwhile, the airline's revenue for the first three months of the current year is recorded at Rs 61 billion. The depreciation of the Pakistani Rupee against US dollars is one of the primary factors which contribute to PIA's financial woes.

The depreciation of the Pakistani rupee against the US dollar results in a loss of Rs2.2 billion in PIA's finances, while the increase in the oil prices and interest rates further added the financial expenses have surged from Rs15 billion to Rs53 billion, mainly due to the administrative incompetence.

The financial report highlighted that the PIA's operating expenses have surged from Rs15 billion to Rs53 billion, mainly due to the administrative incompetence INP.

Armed attack on shop leaves four injured in Multan

MULTAN: Rivals opened fire on a shop incited by others, injuring four people in Multan, police confirmed on Wednesday.

An incident occurred on a shop situated in Ghanta Ghar chowk of Multan when rivals opened indiscriminate firing on the shop instantly after the incident at scene. The injured were left four people injured who were transported to Nishtar Hospital for medical aid.

The police upon being informed about the incident reached the crime scene and started quizzing the witnesses. Police further added that they have initiated the investigation regarding this incident and steps are underway to arrest the culprits soon INP.

Pakistan, Italy to jointly tackle climate change

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Italy have agreed to set up a joint framework to tackle climate change and cooperation in water management.

According to the official statement, the agreement was reached at the 5th meeting of the "Pakistan-Italy Joint Economic Commission" in Rome, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome.

Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman represented Pakistan side while the Italian delegation was led by Italy's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Maria Tripodi.

The two sides hailed the establishment of an Italian Trade Agency office in Islamabad next week. The event was also attended by businessmen from Pakistan and Italy.

Speaking on the occasion, Senator Sherry Rehman said it was a pleasure to co-chair the 5th meeting of the Pakistan-Italy JEC in Rome with the deputy minister.

"We are building a common framework with Italy to tackle climate change and improve water management."

The event concluded with the signing of an important Roadmap for Cooperation, covering climate change, trade and investment, heritage, culture, agriculture, higher education, technical cooperation and technology transfer in reference areas INP.

After citizens, robbers start attacks on police in Karachi

KARACHI: Robbers, who have been looting the citizens of Karachi now have started to target police as well, as several incidents of attacks on police recorded from Tuesday night to early Wednesday, Police told.

According to media reports, a policeman was injured after an armed attack on him in Nazimabad No 1 area. The injured policeman was identified as Shadman, and was currently posted in Investigation department in Shershah. On the other hand, robbers snatched service rifle from the police but they could not be arrested as yet. Police also started quizzing their colleague as how he lost his service weapon. Despite the attacks the police continue to crack down on the criminal elements of the society and arrested two suspects from Gulistan-e-Johar's Block-6. The suspects were arrested after an exchange of fire that left one of the suspect injured. The arrested suspects were identified as Kashan and Umar, who are either accomplices of the suspected fled the scene INP.

Audio leaks case: Justice Isa-led commission objects to larger bench as SC adjourns hearing till next week

The government-constituted judicial commission led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa probing the veracity of recent audio leaks - on Wednesday raised objections to the five-judge bench hearing the case against the former finance minister as the apex court adjourns the proceedings in the Umar Tix next week.

The federal coalition had formed the commission on May 20 under Section 3 of the Pakistan Commission of Inquiry Act 1973. Led by senior puisne judge Justice Isa, the commission also comprises Balochistan High Court Chief Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghani and Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Aamer Farooq.

Last week, the top court, while hearing a set of four petitions against the appointment of the commission, restrained the panel from going ahead with its task.

The reserved verdict was issued by a five-member bench comprising CJP Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Muneer Akhtar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed. "I am sorry to say that efforts have been made regrettably, may be unknowingly, to draw a wedge between the judges of the court," CJP Bandial had said. Subsequently, the government-appointed commission decided to proceed with its duties on hold until the SC decided the petitions challenging its formation. A day earlier, the government had filed an appeal in the apex court seeking the reconstitution of the five-member bench hearing the case. The government asked CJP Bandial, Justice Ahsan, and Justice Akhtar to distance themselves from the bench since "rules of natural justice" demanded that the "adjudicator should be impartial" and that the code of conduct for judges of the Supreme Court and high courts "lays down the parameters of the conduct as expected and becoming of the judge to discharge their duties in accordance with their oath and constitutional obligations." Web Desk.



Former finance minister Salman Shah and other officials.

HEC announces DAAD scholarships for studies in Germany

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has announced the German assistance organization Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) has announced scholarships for students to pursue a Master's degree in the Development-Related Postgraduate Courses (EPOS).

Under the Development-Related Postgraduate Courses (EPOS) programme, foreign graduates from development and newly industrialised countries from all disciplines and with at least two years professional experience have the opportunity to take a postgraduate or Master's degree at a state or state-recognised German university, the HEC statement read on Twitter.

Pakistani graduates with at least two years of professional experience can apply for the programme and must also possess a Bachelor's degree in a relevant subject normally in a four-year-long course.

Candidates can prove their motivation is development-related and be expected to take on social responsibility and initiate and support processes of change in their personal and professional environment after their training/scholarship.

DAAD mentioned on their website.

Students can find more details of the scholarship programme on DAAD's website INP.

LHC moved for Khadija Shah's release

LAHORE: A plea has been moved in the Lahore High Court (LHC) for the release of Pakistani Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporter and 'prime suspect' in the Jinnah House attack case.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Punjab High Court (PHC) former finance minister Salman Shah and fashion designer Khadija Shah in the Jinnah House attack case on May 09. The granddaughters of the former chief of army staff, late Asif Nawaz Janjua is currently in Central Jail for an identification parade. After reviewing the records, the ATC judge that the accused should be sent to jail for an identification parade. After reviewing the records, the ATC judge approved seven-day judicial remand of Khadija Shah and sent her to jail for an identification parade INP.



LAHORE: Advisor to PM for Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs, Qamar uz Zaman Kaira calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Chinese investors exploring investment opportunities in Punjab

LAHORE: Chinese companies have shown their interest in investing in different sectors in Punjab including steel, agrochemicals, spinning machinery, chicken farms, meat and processing factories, etc. In this regard, according to Gwadar Pro, different delegations visited the Punjab Chamber of Commerce and Trade (PBCT) and discussed different investment opportunities with Pakistani officials. A delegation comprising six members from China led by Cheng Xiaoning, Vice-President, Pakistan Shandong (China) Chamber of Commerce visited PBCT to explore investment potential in Punjab for establishing warehouses of steel products, the establishment of chicken farms and meat processing factory and opportunities of petrochemical related industry. The head of the China Desk shared the investment infrastructure and SEZ framework of Punjab and assured full support and facilitation of PBCT at each step to establish a footprint in Punjab.

Heer a nine-member Chinese delegation also visited PBCT to have a briefing on investment opportunities in Punjab. Instead of any relief to be led by Wang Zihai, the former President of Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Investment (PCJCI) and Honorary Investment Counsellor of Pakistan in China.

"The Chinese delegation sought to explore investment opportunities in various sectors," reads an official statement of PBCT.

Some Chinese delegates have shown interest in the manufacturing of steel, aluminum, and plastic doors in Punjab, according to PBCT, adding that others were interested in pesticides, agrochemicals and petrochemicals.

The Chinese investors also showed interest to make investments in fiber aramid products, solid tires, and spinning machinery INP.

Rise in flour prices, shrinking roti size matter of concern: Shahid Rasheed

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt has expressed grave concern over the surge in flour price and shrinking size of roti being sold on tandoors and hotels.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, he suggested that if the private sector was allowed to import cheap wheat, it will reduce the price of flour in the market, providing relief to the masses facing mercurial inflation.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that food items are up to 70 percent cheaper in India and neighboring countries. He said that the government can substantially reduce food inflation and provide relief to the people by allowing the private sector to import wheat, and the ban should be imposed again when inflation is controlled in the country, he maintained.

The business leader demanded that the government should import food from India to overcome the food security problem and end all taxes until the country's agricultural production situation improves and returns to normalcy.

He said that since the Russian attack on Ukraine, European and other countries have been imposing sanctions on Russia, providing financial support and military hardware to Ukraine, but at the same time, they are also doing business with Russia. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that due to record inflation in the country, millions of people have given up one meal and other important issues like health and education on the back burner.

The prices of food items are increasing, he observed. During the last few months, the people, the rulers remain stubborn, which is unfortunate, he said. He said that the government has spent one billion dollars on the import of wheat and 818 million dollars on the import of pulses, but the price of these items could not be reduced in the market because the mafia is controlling the whole system INP.



LAHORE: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi in a group photo with course participants during 52nd Pakistan Navy Staff Course Convocation ceremony held at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), Lahore.

