

QUETTA VOICE


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Quettavoice

**Balochistan Govt
cancels all allotments
of bird hunting areas**
**Man and woman
murdered in the name of
'honor' in Mastung**

CM Bizenjo announces boycott of federal budget session

Balochistan budget 2023-24: employees salaries to be increased

Manan Mandokhail
Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo announced the boycott of federal budget for the financial year 2023-24. "No senator and member of national assembly should attend the budget session," Mr. Bizenjo who is also the president of the ruling Balochistan National Party (BAP) said.

This decision on behalf of the CM has come two days after his boycott of national economic council meeting. Mr. Bizenjo also sacked the senior minister Balochistan, Noor Muhammad Dumar for participating in the NEC meeting the other day in Islamabad.

Balochistan facing serious financial crisis: CM Bizenjo

He said, "today Balochistan is facing serious financial problems." The main reason for these problems is the non-cooperation of the federal government, he added.

Despite repeated contacts and reminders, we are not being given our constitutional right, the federal government makes promises and assurances, but they are not implemented, the



Chief Minister claimed.

**Rs.45 billions
dues
against PPL**

"PPL has not been paying our dues for many years, which have reached more than 45 billion rupees," he said. The irony is that without any agreement from Balochistan, PPL's operation is going on in the Sui gas field, Mr. Bizenjo lamented.

The administrative authority of PPL Company is with the Federal Government, he said, the

federal government is neither interested nor willing to play its role in paying the dues of PPL.

NHA fails to reconstruct bridges: CM Balochistan

Eight bridges of the highway connecting Karachi with Quetta and Central Asia were swept away in the flood, even after a year, vehicles are passing through alternative dirt roads. A year ago, the Prime

Minister laid the foundation stone of the Chaman-Karachi highway in a ceremony held at the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

The Prime Minister announced that this project will be completed in 18 months, unfortunately, even 20% of this project has not been completed yet, the Chief Minister complained. Our demand is that the new NFC award should be done immediately, which is also a constitutional requirement. According to the new census, due to the lack of a new NFC award, Balochistan is losing more than ten billion annually.

Quetta Voice Special Report

The Balochistan government has decided to increase the salaries of employees and create new vacancies to overcome the issue of increasing unemployment in the province. This was revealed by Zamarak Khan Achakzai, the Balochistan finance minister while talking to the Daily Quetta Voice in an exclusive interview.

"Definitely, we are going to increase the salaries of employees," Mr. Achakzai said, preferring not to disclose the percent of the increase. He said the Balochistan government was looking at the federal government with regard to increasing salaries of the employees.



Rs.55 bs dues against PPL: Zamarak Achakzai

When asked about Balochistan's financial issues, Mr. Achakzai stated that there were outstanding of a total of Rs 55 billion against the Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL). "Islamabad is least bothered about the financial crisis of Balochistan," he lamented.

Zamarak Achakzai said despite repeated appeals and requests, the PPL and the federal government were reluctant to release Balochistan's dues. He said the Balochistan chief minister, Mir Qudus Bizenjo has taken a principled stance with regard to the province's financial crisis.

Priority given to education and health sectors in the budget

Regarding the budget priorities, Zamarak Achakzai stated that the government has given priority to the health and education sector in the budget. "Our priorities are pro people," he asserted.

Zamarak's anger against the federal government has come after the CM Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo announced boycott of the federal budget session as protest against Islamabad.

PES 2023: Industry takes hammering, contracts by 3pc

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar presented the economic survey for the fiscal year 2023 at a press conference in Islamabad on Thursday, which notably showed that the country's industrial sector contracted by around three per cent.

Before presenting his government's economic performance for the year, the minister went on a diatribe explaining the difficult condition in which the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) had inherited the economy.

He claimed that he had left Pakistan in a strong economic position in 2017, when he last served as the finance minister under PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, saying that his topmost priority at this stage was ensuring macroeconomic stability.

Dar said he had previously championed a 3Es framework, adding that it was now being expanded to a 5Es framework focusing on exports, equity, empowerment, environment and energy.

These are our five driving areas and we have made our roadmap for the next year based off them."



According to documents shared by the minister, Pakistan achieved Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 0.29pc for the outgoing fiscal year, missing the target of 5pc by a wide margin.

This pitiful growth came on the back of 1.55pc, -2.94pc, and 0.86pc growth in the Agriculture, Industry, and Services sectors respectively, all three missing their targets comprehensively.

Most notable was the 2.94pc contraction in industrial sector, against a target of 7.1pc growth.

The finance minister said the government's aim was to take the "back" to the path of progress where the country had reached in 2017.

Dar said the government's focus was on achieving macroeconomic stability along with moving on a "resilient and inclusive growth trajectory", adding that it should be sustainable without redistribution of resources and wealth.

If we do all this then investor confidence will build up, market nervousness will improve and perceptions about Pakistan will also become better."

Inflation According to documents shared by the minister, Pakistan registered inflation of 28.2pc in the nine-month period from July 2022 to March 2023, against 11pc in the same period last year.

The government had targeted inflation at 11.5pc for FY2023, missing its target significantly because of a sharp depreciation of the rupee and global supply shocks resulting in price increases.

According to the economic survey, inflation at 28.2pc was the highest recorded yet with the previous high at 17pc in FY 2008-09.

"The increase in inflation was broad-based with all categories recording higher inflation except for communication services," the survey reads, adding that across product categories, inflation for transportation, given its direct link to fuel prices, registered a sharp increase of 52.8pc against 19.4pc during July-April FY22.

"Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuel have all recorded an increase of 13.6pc as against 11pc during the same period last year. Web Desk.

Balochistan Govt cancels all allotments of bird hunting areas

Staff Reporter

QUETTA The Balochistan government cancelled all allotments of bird hunting areas on Thursday. Allotment and cancellation of areas under the 18th amendment is the power of the provincial government, an official handout issued here said.

"We will fully defend our right and authority," Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo said. The government has constitutional and legal protection by using this power, the Chief Minister mentioned.

Govt's decision cannot be challenged in any legal forum

Mr. Bizenjo stated that government's decision cannot be challenged in any legal forum. Trophy hunting will also be banned, he mentioned. There is no need for arm money and



relationships at the cost of the lives of innocent birds and animals, he noted. Perhaps, the CM was referring to some influential people of Balochistan allowing and supporting people from wealthy countries for hunting in various parts of Balochistan.

Balochistan famous for hunting of houbara bustard

If anyone is confused about the government's decision, he should contact the Department of Forests and Wildlife, the Chief Minister suggested.

Balochistan is famous for wildlife and famous tourist points. Every year, high level government officials and members of the royal families from Gulf States visit different parts of Balochistan for hunting of houbara bustard. The rampant hunting has been widely criticized by the environmentalists and activists working for the preservation of the nature.

Man and woman murdered in the name of 'honor' in Mastung

From Our Correspondent

MASTUNG In the name of 'honor', a woman and a man were killed by her husband and brother-in-law in Mastung district of Balochistan on Thursday. The accused opened an indiscriminate firing and killed the man and woman inside a house.

According to the details, the police formed teams to arrest the husband and brother-in-law of the victim. Police also reached the spot as an investigation into the incident went underway.

According to initial reports, the victim's husband and brother-in-law shot dead a man and woman in the name of 'honor'. After receiving the information about the incident, Superintendent of Police, Mohammad Rashid Zehri personally reached the



spot and started taking steps to ensure the immediate arrest of the accused.

The dead bodies were shifted to Ghous Baksh Raisani Memorial Hospital.

Jahangir Tareen launches Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party with PTI defectors by his side

Jahangir Khan Tareen, once a close aide of the PTI chief, on Thursday launched a new party, the Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP).

The former PTI leader made the announcement during a press conference in Lahore with several other PTI defectors — including those who left in the aftermath of the May 9 incidents — by his side. He was flanked by another one-time confidant of the PTI chief, Aleem Khan, and several others, including Imran Ismail, Ali Zaidi, Fayyaz Hassan Chohan and Amir Mehmood Kayani, who recently severed ties with PTI amid a state crackdown on it.

Tareen said on the occasion that the country was going through "delicate times"

Elaborating on the need to form a new party, he said he had joined politics for just one purpose — to contribute to the country's progress.

"During my long journey in politics, I got the opportunity to meet and work with several people. I learned a lot from this experience," he said,



adding that he was never a "traditional politician".

He said he had joined the PTI as he was certain that through the party's platform, "we will be able to implement all those reforms that Pakistan needed and still need."

"And for this reason, we worked day and night to make the PTI a full-fledged political force. People you see sitting here today, all of them were a part of this struggle," he added. "We infused the party with newfound passion and enthusiasm after the 2013 elections."

Tareen said "several facts" would surface in the coming days which would show "to what extent we went to make the party stable."

"We ensured that PTI turns into such a political force that it does not just win whenever elections are held but it also is in a position to initiate reforms in the country," he said.

Tareen said reforms were the PTI's basic manifesto. "To which we we all had come together. But, he added, unfortunately, the matters did not go the way we expected and people were disappointed."

He said the PTI's manifesto was to improve the economy and relations with other countries and most importantly, ensure accountability.

These were the slogans on the basis of which the party was formed and people voted for the PTI, he said, regretting that these objectives could not be achieved. Web Desk.

Barter trade reality

By Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Usman Rana

Why equipment non-functional in Balochistan hospitals?

In Balochistan's government-run hospitals, expensive equipment can always be found non-functional. In the province's largest government-run hospital, the Bolnisi 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 centres paint a bleak picture when it comes to health facilities and services.

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.

It is crystal clear that deserving and 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 the

Pakistan's economy is under immense pressure due to low foreign reserves, falling currency, political unrest, and stagnation. The GDP growth forecast has dropped to 0.9 per cent from 2.0 per cent for 2022-23. Slowdowns in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors all negatively impacted the country's total growth, with estimations placing the growth of those sectors at 1.5 per cent, -2.34 per cent, and 0.86 per cent, respectively, stated by the National Accounts Committee. Pakistan's current \$6.5 billion IMF programme was disrupted, and the seventh revival effort failed to bear fruit. To keep heading towards macroeconomic stability, the government needs help in formulating its economic policy.

In response, the government of Pakistan has recently announced a barter trading arrangement with Iran, Afghanistan, and Russia, allowing qualifying Pakistani firms to trade goods for services, raw materials or foreign currencies. This also intends to have a similar kind of arrangement with China. Before we take any side – China or the US – we must comprehend dollarization, its origins, and its implications for the economy.

be slower. Russia is aggressively launching new measures with the US in the agricultural, industrial, commerce and transactions, but China is reluctant to do so for several reasons. The government of Russia is being compelled to explore new avenues to get paid for its exports and imports. In 2022, authorities and enterprises tried converting to transactions using the national currency, engaging in barter deals, and the payment in cash, and using various other systems. However, they were still looking for a comprehensive solution. Since it is now about the evident efforts are being redirected towards cryptocurrencies and payments in rupees, the indicators of the Russian economy will become increasingly dependent on the Russian currency. As a result of the divergent objectives of the two nations, the relationship between them will continue to deteriorate, and Russia may see both its foreign reserve holdings and problems in its payment to other countries. The learn from these two nations' trade ambitions and the need for economic and foreign strategy to fit its unique circumstances.

After the end of the relationship with China and the US has been well-managed. So, Pakistan is not in a place to choose a side now because we are still dealing with the consequences of the recent visit of former prime minister Imran Khan to Russia. At this crucial time of stagnation in the nation's history, those in positions of power are being called upon to make astute economic and foreign policy decisions so that we can prevent Pakistan from becoming entangled in the war between China and the US. Policymakers need to understand that the trade volume with our neighbouring countries is too small, approximately less than \$5 billion per annum, compared to the Western trade partners. Barter trade agreements have the potential to strengthen the reliance on the US dollar. However, complete dollarization is not achievable through this means. Before engaging in barter trade, Pakistan needs to broaden and diversify its export base, improve its infrastructure, strengthen its transportation network and ports and construct a robust legal structure that is both more dependable and more cost-effective. The result in lower production costs for products destined for export, increasing the country's competitiveness in global markets.

To overcome stagnation, the State Bank of Pakistan needs to implement a series of monetary policy by reducing the money supply and raising interest rates to curb inflation in the short term. At the same time, the government needs to implement an expansionary fiscal policy by reducing spending and expanding the tax base to combat unemployment and the deficit in infrastructure, human capital, public works, and other such projects.

In addition, the SBP must create its digital currency, as major central banks worldwide are actively exploring new currency systems. It is also extremely important for the government and the SBP to keep public opinion on their side, as the current situation is not an ultimate source of the government's power and in the long run, it enjoys. Considering this, the SBP must convey the reasons for its reasoning, behind its infrastructure strengthening, the support, mainly since the fiscal policy, construct a robust legal structure that is both more dependable and more cost-effective. The result in lower production costs for products destined for export, increasing the country's competitiveness in global markets.

The fall of the pie picker? After the polls?

By Kamila Hyat

Let us be clear about one thing: Imran Khan as a sportsman and cricketer is a formidable figure and quite naturally a hero for millions. These fans existed in Pakistan and abroad. His leadership style – a mix of aggression and clever strategies in some places and inspired others and turned him into a major hero in the country. It was this identification as a winner – and as a leader – which helped Imran begin his political success. Of course, there were many other factors behind the events which brought him to power in 2018, and he himself has accepted his links with state institutions this time. Unfortunately for Pakistan – indeed tragically for the country – Imran's style of leadership did not work in politics. His aggression turned into something so much less than what was rarely seen before.

From politicians we need diplomacy, and an alliance, and a vision to think beyond the single idea of corruption in a corrupt opposition. It appears that Imran and his team did not have these skills. He was eventually a corrupt politician. We have historically seen many a cult figures in other parts of the world. We had the Moonies cult in Korea, Reverend Jim Jones – who led his hundreds of followers to Guyana and ordered them to drink

'Kool-Aid' laced with poisonous substance which killed 900 or so innocent children – and other well-known cult leaders like Charles Manson and his 'family' which engaged in murder and other heinous events in the late 1960s. Pakistan has over the years had great politicians – it would be a disservice to compare Imran here in the country. They include barter figures such as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who spent 27 years of his life in jail but remained firm on his ideology. His son Wali Khan followed essentially in the same tradition, spending a long period of time in jail. In Balochistan, Abdul Samad Khan was a prominent figure in the early period of the Ayub Khan regime in jail. However, he did not change his views or ideology. There are other figures such as GM Syed who spent a significant part of his life in jail, but he did not change his views or ideology. There are other figures such as GM Syed who spent a significant part of his life in jail, but he did not change his views or ideology. There are other figures such as GM Syed who spent a significant part of his life in jail, but he did not change his views or ideology.

There are those who ask whether the May 9 events can be justified. Even some who had a personal vendetta against him who knew people who participated, have condemned the assault on the parliament building, the burning of an ambulance and the killing of innocent people. There are those who ask whether the May 9 events can be justified. Even some who had a personal vendetta against him who knew people who participated, have condemned the assault on the parliament building, the burning of an ambulance and the killing of innocent people. There are those who ask whether the May 9 events can be justified. Even some who had a personal vendetta against him who knew people who participated, have condemned the assault on the parliament building, the burning of an ambulance and the killing of innocent people.

after year and decade after decade. There are still too much movement and consensus in the chessboard to determine precisely what has to happen next and how. But we know that the Chinese and Russian presidents announced their support for the relationship with China and the US has been well-managed. So, Pakistan is not in a place to choose a side now because we are still dealing with the consequences of the recent visit of former prime minister Imran Khan to Russia. At this crucial time of stagnation in the nation's history, those in positions of power are being called upon to make astute economic and foreign policy decisions so that we can prevent Pakistan from becoming entangled in the war between China and the US.

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again exposed the political reality of a state that remains out of tune with its very own grassroots. The attack on the parliament by employees of food outlets in the busy 'Gol' market, the use of the unmarked sector F-7 was meant to violently seize back a table and chairs occupied by the opposition. Instead, the attack vividly highlighted the sorry state of the state and its ruling class, who will face unprecedented odds in overseeing a return to relative normalcy.

And that's where the challenge lies. Pakistan's multiple crises will stare the next government right in its face, and the government must reach the heart of the capital with the broad masses of the public left badly exposed.

It is an outcome that has forced the government to grow neglect of the state's responsibility towards the broad spectrum of its citizens. It is considered a relatively manageable outcome. The government's failure to assert itself through clanking back space and no responsibility to date that has presented a convincing plan to reform the political system, a complicated country to govern.

Clearly highlighting the challenges that the country's next government will face, a security crisis, an administrative and policing system badly broken, the government's failure to assert itself through clanking back space and no responsibility to date that has presented a convincing plan to reform the political system, a complicated country to govern.

Financial inequality breeds contempt The false narrative around SOEs

By Iftekhhar A Khan

Our society essentially stands divided into two main classes. The elite class comprises the top bureaucrats both civil and military, business tycoons and politicians. The lower two classes – the middle class and the poor – are the multiplying poor class, which lives below the poverty line. Instead of reducing the poverty, the government's policy is rapidly escalating.

The politicians – in every government that comes to power by winning the election – promise to uplift the lives of the poor. Their campaigning slogans assure the wretched living from hand to mouth that their pathetic living conditions will improve, and they will get health and education.

The severe disparity between the rich and the poor proves the fact that wealth is unevenly distributed. It is not the suffering segments of society unhappy and angry against the system which creates hostility as a nation. However, when the change comes in the state of poverty and illiteracy if we single-mindedly follow the path of the nations that have progressed within a few years from being poor to world countries, we must not hesitate to privatize them because of political pressure. Consequently, every taxpayer has to bear the burden of the loss-making behemoths. Could

Singapore allow its vibrant country to suffer from such recurring loss for years? Never. The PSM hasn't produced a single policy since 2013 but its employees are paid hundreds of millions in salaries.

The 'most important' feature of the magic formula for taking rapid growth in the world country to a first world country, is honesty. It means zero tolerance for corruption. Singapore's prime minister, under whose government the country progressed, carried out accountability from top to bottom.

The politicians in every government that comes to power by winning the election – promise to uplift the lives of the poor. Their campaigning slogans assure the wretched living from hand to mouth that their pathetic living conditions will improve, and they will get health and education.

So organized is the Singaporean government that it decided to reduce the population of domestic cats that had started multiplying in the parks and on roads. The group director of wildlife management at the National Parks Board ordered that crows nests be pulled down, set up traps and remove the crows. We have a wild growth of birds of prey to protect the birds. The group director of wildlife management at the National Parks Board ordered that crows nests be pulled down, set up traps and remove the crows. We have a wild growth of birds of prey to protect the birds.

third-world countries to some of the leading ones in the world. Singapore is a glaring example. Singapore was typically a third-world country like ours but without any inherent resources that it had. It has had a turnaround came in the late 1960s when Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping for this activity, Singapore was typically a third-world country like ours but without any inherent resources that it had. It has had a turnaround came in the late 1960s when Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping for this activity.

So what's going on here? Why do our economic managers wish to peddle state companies when they should be fighting our real problems, which are poverty, illiteracy, child malnutrition and unemployment. You might think it's because selling 'loss-making' state companies makes them look like tough-minded people caring for the nation's deficits. That's a sure part of the answer. But the real reason is ideological. It's their false belief that

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Pakistan's new budget is crucial to securing IMF board review: official

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan stands to secure one board review under the current bailout package of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) if measures in its budget, set to be unveiled on Friday, meet the lender's expectations, a fund official said.

The statement from a senior Fund official comes ahead of the country's budget announcement scheduled for tomorrow (Friday). Today, the National Economic Survey, which assesses the state of the economy in the outgoing fiscal year, will also be unveiled.

The IMF programme runs out this month with \$2.5 billion in funds, under three prior reviews, and to be released, as the country struggles to strike a deal with the lender while battling record inflation, fiscal imbalances and low reserves.

The funds are crucial for Pakistan to avert a balance of payments crisis, and most analysts believe that even after the expiry of the current programme, Pakistan will have to seek a bailout in the upcoming fiscal to avert defaulting on debt obligations.

A general election is due by November, which the government will be hoping will end turmoil arising from a protest campaign former premier Imran Khan has led since he was ousted last year.



ISLAMABAD: Economic Team led by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in Federal Capital.

Qureshi, PTI chairman meeting ends in fiasco

LAHORE: A much anticipated meeting between the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and vice chief Shah Mahmood Qureshi at Zaman Park in Lahore on Wednesday ended without issuance of a "joint statement".

Qureshi, who was released after almost a month's detention the other day, remained with the party chief for an hour and left in haste without addressing media despite promise of a press conference after the meeting.

According to insiders, Qureshi and the PTI chief had a one on one meeting, behind closed doors. The PTI social media uploaded only one picture of the leaders on the party website.

There were rumours before the meeting that they would discuss future course of action in case the party chairman was disqualified.

Insiders claimed that there were heated exchanges between the two leaders also during the meeting after which the vice chairman left hurriedly without press talk. INP

200 Afghans arrested in Islamabad in fresh crackdown

ISLAMABAD: In view of the involvement of some Afghan nationals in May 9 riots, police and other law-enforcement agencies (LEAs) in Islamabad have rounded up 200 Afghans living in different parts of the federal capital in the last few days in a crackdown, ordered by the interior ministry, it was learnt on Thursday.

Sources in the police said that cases against Afghan nationals had been registered under the Foreign Act.

Moreover, they disclosed, audit of all Afghan settlements in the federal capital had begun and the report would be submitted to the interior ministry.

They explained that the LEAs had even approached the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) in order to know the exact number of Afghans living in different parts of the country. INP

Massive raid at Multan international Airport

MULTAN: An Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) authorities on Thursday conducted a massive raid and seized 986 grams of hashish from a passenger's bag at Multan international Airport.

The accused, a resident of North Waziristan, was leaving for Dubai, ANF spokesmen said.

The ANF spokesmen said that in another raid the drug smuggling from Britain to Pakistan was also foiled.

The authorities recovered 50 grams of drugs from a parcel in a private courier office in Rawalpindi that was meant to send to Jhelum. The drugs were hiding in the bags INP

IRSA releases 168,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 168,400 cusecs of water from various run stations with inflow of 185,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1420.30 feet and was 28.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,392 feet.

Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 66,400 cusecs and 63,600 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1134.70 feet, which was 84.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 54,200 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 86,000, 82,000, 61,500 and 22,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 35,400 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 10,400 cusecs were released INP

US dollar extends its winning streak against Pakistani rupee

ISLAMABAD: The US dollar extended its winning streak on Thursday as it was appreciated by another 12 paise against the Pakistani rupee in interbank business.

According to the information extracted from forex dealers, the greenback scored a gain of 12 paise against the local currency and was currently being exchanged for Rs287.

On Wednesday, the Pakistani rupee registered loss for the fourth theme in a row, depreciating by 0.11% against the US dollar in the interbank market. At close, the currency settled at 286.88, a decline of 32 paise.

However, in the open-market rupee witnessed significant improvement against the US dollar on Wednesday, which was quoted in the range of 297-300 in the open market.

In a key development, Pakistani authorities are now hopeful of making a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) before they unveil the budget on June 9 (Friday), said the Ministry of Finance in an emailed response to questions from Bloomberg.

The ministry said Pakistan has lined up \$4 billion in external financing and hopes to obtain a deal with the lender before it unveils its budget on Friday.

Separately, the National Economic Council (NEC) had approved Rs1,150 billion federal development budget and set an estimated 3.5% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth target for the next financial year 2023-24.

The NEC proposed the Annual Development Plan (ADP) for the upcoming fiscal year (2023-24) with a total outlay of Rs2,709 trillion INP

World Oceans Day being observed today

ISLAMABAD: The World Oceans Day is being observed around the globe today. This year the theme of the day is "Planet Ocean: Tides are Changing".

which is aimed at protecting oceans and taking steps to maintain the balance of ecosystems. Pakistan Navy has re-voiced its commitment to prevent and redress the damages to the oceans.

In a message on the occasion of World Oceans Day, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi underscored the need to find new and innovative solutions to deal with the increasing threats to the oceans.

He said Pakistan Navy is playing all out role in promoting safe and sustainable use of marine resources.

PML-N leader suggest govt to replace economic team

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader and chairman NA's standing committee on finance Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Thursday advised his party leadership to replace the current economic team.

In an exclusive interview with a private TV channel, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh urged the government to change its economic team as Pakistan is on the verge of default.

"IMF is continuously denying staff level agreement," Qaiser said and added if we keep on fighting each other, the economy cannot be revived.

In commenting on Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, the PML-N leader said Dar has not attended a single meeting of the standing committee from last year.

"Problem with Ishaq Dar is that he does not consult," Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh further said Pakistan's real issue is increasing inflation. Joint efforts are needed to steer the country out of the crisis, he added.

Opposing the ban on political parties, the PML-N leader said democratic norms should be promoted within the parties.

This is not democracy that a party will be ruled by son or daughter after father, he was quoted as saying.

In an exclusive interview with a private TV channel, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh urged the government to change its economic team as Pakistan is on the verge of default.

"IMF is continuously denying staff level agreement," Qaiser said and added if we keep on fighting each other, the economy cannot be revived INP



RAWALPINDI: A view of the health camp along the roadside at Gawal Mandi area as install by rescue by 1122 for the conveniences in City.

Passing a budget for fiscal year 2024 that meets programme objectives is key to paving the way for a final review under the current bailout, the IMF's resident representative for Pakistan, Esther Perez Ruiz said.

"The focus of discussions over the FY24 budget is to balance the need to strengthen debt sustainability prospects while creating space to increase social spending," she told a foreign news agency on Thursday.

More such spending would defray the impact of inflationary pressures on Pakistan's most vulnerable, Ruiz added. But it needs more progress to identify spending and revenue-generating measures in order to achieve this.

The SBP reserves can cover imports for about a month. Inflation surged to 37.97pc in May, a record for the second consecutive month and the highest rate in South Asia.

With the general election looming, some analysts believe the government will announce vote-winning measures on Friday, even if the promises have to be scaled back later.

Fahad Rauf, head of research at Ismail Iqbal Securities, said he expected a pay rise for government employees and a package for the agriculture sector, with more of a burden being placed on an already narrow tax base, and a few, if any, meaningful steps to broaden it INP

Balochistan should get priority in large-scale olive cultivation: Expert

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan province should be the first place to start large-scale cultivation of olive trees in Pakistan, said a renowned expert.

"Olive Cultivation should be followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and then the Punjab province. In a conversation with WealthPK, Dr Marchetti said, Intergovernmental Project Coordinator for Olive Culture, said that over the past few years, olive cultivation in Pakistan was carried out on ad-hoc basis.

The expert said it is very important to start olive cultivation in such a way that the needs of development are prioritised.

"Olive Cultivation is an Italian olive oil value chain mechanism working under the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation to support olive cultivation in Pakistan."

"Ad-hoc plantation of olive is not undesirable per se. However, it must be realised that when the government intervenes to increase the production of olives in the country, it should do so in a phased manner," he emphasised.

Dr Marchetti said that in Pakistan the cultivation of olives was not carried out according to the stipulations of research and data. He said that over the past many years, the federal and provincial governments had spent a lot of resources in pushing for plantation of olives.

"Intervention of this kind never helps as agricultural input needs to be concentrated in such areas."

Pervez Khattak mulls forming 'new political party'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Pervez Khattak has recently resigned from the president of the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter over the May 9 violent protest, has decided to form a new political party.

Sources said PTI deserter Khattak is expected to join the new political setup led by senior politician Pervaiz Khattak.

A development budget of Rs126 billion for Punjab is expected to be proposed in the meeting, as well as Rs268 billion for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Rs617 billion for Sindh and Rs248 billion for Balochistan.

An increase of 20% and 15% in the pension of government employees is also likely to be proposed, the sources said.

The cabinet meeting agenda also includes approval for Rs1,800 billion for defence, according to the sources.

The revenue target for the Federal Board of Revenue will be raised to be Rs9,200 billion and non-tax revenue Rs2,800 billion INP

Pakistan Railways to launch massive crackdown on encroachers in Karachi

KARACHI: The Karachi division of Pakistan Railways has announced that an anti-encroachment operation will soon be initiated to tackle the issue of illegal construction.

Sources indicate that the grand operation will involve the assistance of the police, rangers, and district administration.

Additionally, Nasir Khalil has been specially assigned to the Karachi division for this operation INP

ANF recovers 37 kg drugs in four operations; arrests two

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in their ongoing operations against drug smugglers conducted raids in different areas and managed to recover over 37 kg of drugs besides netting two accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman.

He informed that in an operation at a private courier company office here, ANF recovered 50 grams of weed, being sent to the UK. The parcel was recovered by a courier employee of Jhelum in an operation at Multan Airport, 986 grams of hashish were recovered from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger, a resident of North Waziristan, going through flight no PK-221 INP

Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training Islamabad REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Islamabad, intends to invite proposals from qualified/licensed/registered entities for the set-up of CPD Center under a project "National Institute of Excellence in Teacher Training (NIETE).

NIETE aims to revolutionize the way teachers are trained and developed in Islamabad Capital Territory. This landmark initiative seeks to establish a state-of-the-art institute dedicated to enhancing the skills, knowledge, and professional competencies of educators. The institute will serve as a hub for research, innovation, and continuous professional development, ensuring a high-quality education for future generations. CPD center will continue monitor the performance of teachers trained under this initiative.

The first phase of the project will include the onboarding of all public-sector primary school teachers of Federal Directorate of Education on a training program to serve as a model for future digital Continuous Professional Development activities across Pakistan.

The eligible Bidders may download the Bidding Document in English at no cost from M/o FE&PT and PPRA websites. Bidders opting to download the Bidding Documents from the website, shall inform the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Islamabad, in writing at the address given below failing which the Ministry shall not be responsible if they do not receive clarifications and amendments, if any from the Ministry.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Ministry of Federal Education and inquire about the bidding document during office hours [i.e. 08:00 to 16:00 hours] at the address given below. Bidding will be conducted through the "SINGLE STAGE-TWO ENVELOPE".

Bids must be delivered to the address below before 11:30 a.m. on 23rd June 2023. Electronic bidding is not permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened on same date at 12:00 pm.

Detailed RFP document can be downloaded from www.mofept.org.pk and www.ppra.gov.pk.

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