

QUETTA VOICE

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1783 girls schools have no washroom facility in Balochistan: Ministers

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: In Balochistan, 1783 girls' schools have no washroom facility. This was revealed by the caretaker Balochistan education minister, Qadir Bakhs Baloch while addressing a press conference at Quetta Press Club on Friday evening.

Balochistan Caretaker Information Minister, Jan Achakzai, and caretaker health minister, Amir Muhammad Jozegai addressed a joint press conference and highlighted investment potential, health and education issues of the province. They spoke at length and vowed to lay the right foundation of the system within a few months to improve the governance and functioning of government departments.

“Overall, 5716 government-run schools have no toilet facility”

“Overall, 5716 government-run schools have no toilet facility”, the caretaker education minister revealed. He termed this one of the underlying reasons behind the poor literacy rate and declining standard of education in Balochistan.

Mr. Baloch painted a very bleak picture of the education department and vowed to bring reforms in a short span of time in terms of improving the quality of education. The education minister further revealed that a single teacher for 4,000 schools across the province. “We are trying to deploy a second teacher for each school to make sure the

presence of teachers”, he informed.

A smart/model school to be established in each district: Baloch

In response to a question, the education minister admitted that still there were thousands of non-functional/ghost schools across Balochistan with thousands of ghost teachers. He said most of the teachers were performing their duties in urban centers and they were reluctant to perform their duties in the rural and far-flung areas of Balochistan.

He, however, announced that a model/smart school would be established in every district within a few months to impart quality education to students. “Poor and marginalized students should be provided quality education”, he said.

Health Card to be launched this month: Dr. Jozegai

Speaking on the occasion, Balochistan health minister, Dr. Amir Muhammad Jozegai informed that the much-awaited health card would be launched this month. He said over 2 million families across Balochistan would be provided free health cards to avail quality health treatment. “We are committed to improving health services for the common man”, Dr. Jozegai said.



Speakers call for an end to gender based violence in Pakistan

QUETTA: Ministry of Human Rights held an awareness-raising & sensitization events on women rights & Gender-Based Violence (GBV) for the local communities of Quetta. The objective of the event was to enhance the understanding of communities regarding the rights of women and GBV, its negative impact on society and ways in which it can be addressed through community-based measures and the role of Ministry of Human Rights in addressing these issues.

The event focused on areas like women's rights,

The event focused on areas like women's rights, pro-women laws, institutional, rehabilitation, referral & other protective measures in place for the survivors of GBV.

More than 145 participants from various communities including women, students, transgender, civil society representatives, lawyers, education officers, health officials, district administration officers and media participated in the session. Ms. Ambreen Gul and Ms. Rubina Zehri from Women Development Department, Quetta said that violence isn't only physical, there are other kinds of Violence as well, like Economic and Psychological violence.

ence.

Women should be given due rights

Mr. Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Director-IC, Ministry of Human Rights explained in detail the laws for protection against GBV, their sections, offences and punishments. He said that women constitute more than half of the population of Pakistan. Economic, physical and psychological violence prevents them from joining the formal or informal economy which not only causes harm to the victims and their families but also hinders the economic progress of the nation as a whole.

Ms. Fauzia Shaheen, Baluchistan Commission on the Status of Women and Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb NCHR, Member Baluchistan explained various laws in Baluchistan related to women's rights and GBV.

Mr. Alahaddin Khilji, Resident Director/Arat Foundation explained in detail the facilities/remedies available for women survivors, punishment for perpetrators and other GBV related issues in Quetta.

Press Release

Bilawal demands polls on time and in accordance with Constitution

KARACHI: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Friday demanded elections “as soon as possible” and within the constitutional limit of 90 days.

The ECP has ruled out elections this year

The ECP has ruled out elections this year, while the 90-day limit for holding polls following the dissolution of the National Assembly (NA), as mandated under Article 224 of the Constitution, ends on November 9.

It reasons its decision to push elections beyond November 9 on the basis of the notification of results of the new digital 2023 census and Section 17(2) of the Elections Act, which states: “The commission shall delimit constituencies after every census is officially published.”

Speaking to the media in Karachi, the former foreign minister said that the people of the country were facing three major issues at the moment — inflation, unemployment and poverty.

“The PPP's stance is that we don't have a political enemy or a political opponent. Our fight is against poverty, unemployment and inflation”, he said. Bilawal said that the PPP had always helped the people of the country and given aid to the impoverished. “Through its performance, the PPP

has always proven that it does people-friendly politics and governance. And that is why the PPP still says that elections should be held as soon as possible, according to the Constitution and within 90 days so that we can win the polls and serve the people of the country and take them out of these difficult economic times.

PPP stands for democracy

During his media talk, the PPP chairman was also asked about the recent statement by Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) emir Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who headed the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), wherein he claimed that general elections would have been held by now if the PPP had not gone back on its words.

Talking to journalists in Lahore, the JUI-F chief had said that all component parties of the PDM had agreed to hold elections early last year but the PPP went back on its promise and then all parties decided to bring the no-confidence motion against the then-prime minister Imran Khan.

In his response, Bilawal said that the maulana was a senior politician, adding that he did not wish to go into much detail about the statement made by the PDM chief. News Desk



SC rejects PDM's objections to bench hearing pleas against audio leaks commission

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Friday rejected the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government's plea objecting to the bench hearing petitions challenging the audio leaks commission.

Announcing the reserved judgement, Justice Ijazul Ahsan said the objections raised were “an attack on the judiciary”.

The five-member like-minded larger bench

The five-member like-minded larger bench of the apex court, led by CJP Bandial, has charged the PDM government with delaying the court proceedings as well as non-implementation of its orders about the holding of Punjab Assembly elections.

The court has faced all such actions of the federal government with tolerance, forbearance and restraint. However, it goes without saying that any refusal to implement a final and therefore binding judgement of the court can be visited with consequences laid down in the Constitution. The former coalition government had raised objections over

the presence of Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Muneeb Akhtar on the bench hearing the case.

On May 26, the apex court stayed the proceedings

On May 26, the apex court stayed the proceedings of the commission led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa and included Baluchistan High Court Chief Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Aamer Farooq.

A five-judge SC bench, which apart from the three judges, included Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Wajed issued the order while hearing four petitions filed by PTI Chairman Imran Khan, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Abdul Zuber as well as others against the inquiry commission. In the written order, the SC stated that the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Awan had raised objections over the presence of three judges included in the bench citing “conflict of interest”. News Desk



PIDE Roundtable meeting on Fixing the Fiscal Policy

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) Macro Policy Lab on Thursday hosted the "Fixing Fiscal Policy" Round Table Conference. The event addressed the persistent challenge of fiscal discipline in Pakistan and sought to chart a visionary path for the nation's fiscal policy.

Distinguished participants included senior economists, researchers, and fiscal experts from various institutions across the country, such as the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, P&D Baluchistan, QAU, SZABIST, the US Embassy, ADIMA, P&D Punjab, IHL, NUST, and COMSATS. In his introductory remarks, Dr. Nasir Iqbal, Associate Prof. and Chief of Macro-Policy Lab, PIDE said that the Round Table Conference, "Fixing Fiscal Policy," aims to unite policymakers

and thought leaders to foster collaboration and develop local solutions in the fiscal framework of Pakistan.

By bringing together academia and policymakers, we seek to chart a visionary path of fiscal policy in Pakistan for the future, transcending from short-term approaches and firefighting. In his opening remarks speaking at the occasion, Dr. Nadeem ul Haque, VC PIDE said that three things need to be focused on for the fixation of fiscal policy. Firstly, the role of the government is crucial in ensuring effective fiscal management. Secondly, taxation and expenditure must be carried out in a transparent manner with accountability. This includes how to collect taxes, how to spend them, and where to allocate funds. Lastly, debt management is also an important aspect that requires attention. Dr.

Ashfaq Hasan Khan, Principal of the School of Social Sciences & Humanities, NUST while speaking at the roundtable meeting said that to address economic challenges, it is important to immediately reset the role of the government from being an active player to a facilitator. This would involve eliminating the current regulation-based regime and transitioning towards a rule-based economy. The use of a regulatory guideline would help in the elimination of unnecessary No Objection Certificates (NOCs).

A rule-based approach, coupled with monitoring and evaluation, would ensure a more efficient and effective economic system. In the first session titled "Role of Government and Economic Stagnation" while presenting the detailed presentation Muhammad Shah Najib, Research Fellow, PIDE

said that Interest Payments account for a significant portion of the targeted tax revenue, amounting to 77.5%.

The total federal liabilities, including Interest Payments, Pensions, and Grants to provinces, stand at PKR 9512 billion. These liabilities exceed the targeted tax revenue, indicating a lack of a sufficient revenue base to support the functioning of the civil government, development expenditure

As a result, all development expenditure is entirely financed through debt. The remuneration of civil servants involves a basic salary and significant monetary and non-monetary benefits they provide.

The total reward is significantly higher than the base reward stated in the contract. However, the cost to the government for senior civil servants is much higher than the benefits they provide.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah chairing a meeting regarding revival plan of cultural and literary heritage.

Eradication of polio in Punjab with cooperation of WHO near: Dr. Jamal

RAWALPINDI (INP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health and Population Welfare, Dr. Jamal Nasir has said that with the support of World Health Organization (WHO), the eradication of polio in Punjab province is near and WHO has a key role in the anti-polio campaign in Pakistan.

He was speaking after inaugurating the field office of the anti-polio campaign along WHO representative in Pakistan. Dr. Palitha Mahipala in the District Health Authority Rawalpindi.

During the event, it was informed that the population of Rawalpindi district is 6.2 million, of which 1.01 million are children. The last case of polio was reported in Rawalpindi district in 2010, while a special anti-polio campaign

was launched in August after polio virus was found in environmental samples.

Dr. Jamal Nasir said that the establishment of Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) field office in District Health Authority Rawalpindi will further strengthen the anti-polio campaign. He said that this week, the anti-polio campaign has been specially launched in two districts of Punjab, Lahore and Rawalpindi, and this campaign has been launched in the context of deteriorating environmental patterns in Lahore and Rawalpindi.

The provincial minister said that the aim of the campaign is to stop the spread of the virus and the campaign has been named Event Response during which 787 thousand children will be vaccinated. He said that

the government is determined to eradicate polio and all resources will be utilized for a polio-free Pakistan.

He said that no negligence will be tolerated in the anti-polio campaign. Dr. Palitha Mahipala said on this occasion that the purpose of establishing PEI field office in District Health Authority Rawalpindi is to make Pakistan polio free with the support of WHO. He said that due to the exemplary actions of WHO, it will help to eradicate polio worldwide.

Coordinator Provincial Minister Primary and Secondary Health Punjab Dr. Ansar Ishaq, CEO District Health Authority Rawalpindi Dr. Jaz Ahmed, DHO Dr. Ehsan Ghani, Coordinator WHO District Rawalpindi Dr. Shamaila and others were also present on this occasion.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary health Iftikhar Ali Shahwani chaired high level meeting regarding Global Health Security Summit.



ISLAMABAD: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, and the Muslim World League's Regional Director in Pakistan, Saad bin Masoud Al-Harthi, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Awan-e-Sadr.

Issues of business community to be addressed on priority basis: Kakar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday assured that the government will address all issues faced by the business community on priority basis.

He made the assurance while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) led by its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawani which called on him here and presented their proposals to revive the economy. Anwar ul-Haq Kakar welcomed the proposals of the CCI delegation and assured the implementation of feasible proposals among them.

The caretaker prime minister said that soon after assuming the office of PM, he started holding meetings with the business community so that they can help to solve their problems. He said that despite the current economic conditions, the government will further stabilize the country's economy. He said that the process of reforms in

the electricity sector is going on rapidly and strong action will be taken against the power theft.

The caretaker prime minister said that consultation with all the stakeholders is necessary to solve the country's problems and issued instructions to the Ministry of Commerce to start consultation with the Chambers of commerce across the country to get the input of the business community for revival of economy. He directed the concerned authorities to submit an early report regarding the expansion of the scope of port of sales of FBR. He said that the performance of commercial attaches posted in Pakistani embassies will be improved.

He stressed that the operation against smuggling should be improved and the government will further stabilize the country's economy. He said that the process of reforms in

neighboring countries have also welcomed the operation against smuggling. He said that the government will further stabilize the country's economy. He said that the process of reforms in

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Over 446,000 children vaccinated against polio in high-risk areas

RAWALPINDI (INP): Head of anti-polio drive, Punjab Khizar Iqbal has said that the week-long anti-polio case response campaign, which began in the four high-risk towns of the district successfully entered into its 4th day on Thursday.

Under the drive, he said, over 446,000 children have so far administered the polio vaccine while the set target to cover 741,579 children would be achieved by September 10.

He informed that 6,000 polio workers were participating in the drive to cover 130 Union Council children in the district. Khizar said the purpose for launching the special drive was the presence of poliovirus. From environmental samples collected from the Sarac Kala area of Tehsil Taxila and Safdarabad, Rawalpindi.

He added the campaign was being run in the areas of Rawalpindi City, Rawalpindi Cantonment, Taxila, and Rawalpindi Kumb.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf visited the press gallery to witness the ongoing election of the Parliamentary Reporters Association in Parliament house.

US, Chinese and Russian officials gather at Southeast Asia summit

JAKARTA (INP): US Vice President Kamala Harris, Chinese premier Li Qiang and Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov attended an East Asia summit in Indonesia on Thursday, offering an opportunity for direct, high-level diplomacy between the three superpowers.

The meeting brought Washington and Beijing into contact a day after Premier Li Qiang warned major powers must manage their differences to avoid a "new Cold War," ahead of the G20 summit in New Delhi this week where Chinese President Xi Jinping will be absent.

Interactions between the officials from the world's top two economies will be closely watched as they seek to control tensions that risk flaring anew over issues ranging from Taiwan ties with Moscow and the competition for influence in the Pacific. Task, the leaders of East Asia Summit, to make this a forum for us

to strengthen cooperation and not sharpen rivalries." Indonesian President Joko Widodo said in opening remarks.

Harris and Li held their own separate talks with Southeast Asian leaders on Wednesday, where the US second-in-command discussed "upholding international law in the South China Sea", a statement from her office said, the disputed waterway where Chinese claims have angered several Southeast Asian nations.

Thursday's 18-nation summit is the first time top US and Russian officials have sat around the same table in almost two months, after US and European officials condemned Lavrov at a July ministerial meeting over Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

It comes as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced \$1 billion in new assistance to Ukraine in a surprise visit to Kyiv on Wednesday.

TENDER NOTICE

The DHO Dera Allah Yar, Jaffarabad invites bids from eligible bidders for supply of following items. TSE No.2248/BS/49151. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. Tender Fee Rs. 1000/-

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Medicine & related items (Total Item(s)/Count: 63)	2%

Note: The Remaining Terms & Conditions shall Remain Same.

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Eligibility Criteria for bidders may be seen in the Bidding Documents. Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the undersigned 1,000 PKR issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 20 September, 2023 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The tenders must be submitted latest by 20 September, 2023 at 10:00 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the undersigned at 11:00 AM. The bidders who have downloaded Bidding Documents) before 05 September, 2023 are required to download the amended Bidding Documents). The Other terms and conditions shall remain same. Address: Jaffarabad Phone no: 063851041 Email: thpops@jaffarabad7@gmail.com

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Supreme Court throws out govt's objections to 5-judge bench hearing audio commission case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has set aside all the objections raised by the government against the members of the five-judge bench hearing the audio commission case. Justice Ijazul Ahsan pronounced the reserved decision on Friday which declared the objections "an attack on the independence of judiciary".

The SC five-member larger bench had earlier reserved its decision on the government's objections.

The government had objected to the inclusion of the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan, and Justice Muneer Akhtar in the bench.

Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed are also part of the larger bench. The government constituted an audio leaks inquiry commission under the chairmanship of Justice Qazi Faez Isa to probe the veracity of the audio leaks involving judges. However, the SC five-member larger bench stopped the commission from functioning.

Subsequently, the Justice Isa-led commission, in a concise statement submitted to the SC, had also objected to the five-member bench.

It said judges were required to not allow their "personal interest to influence their 'official conduct' or 'official decisions'".

The response stated that one of the alleged audio leaks concerned the CJP's mother-in-law and Justice Akhtar was also mentioned during the conversation.

The federal coalition had formed the commission on May 20 under Section 3 of the Pakistan Commission of Inquiry Act 2017.

Karachi faces shortage of 1500 public buses: WB report

KARACHI (INP): Karachi—Pakistan's largest city is grappling with a severe shortage of passenger buses as just over 1,000 buses are currently operational in the port city, World Bank report showed. This startling revelation was made by officials from the Sindh government's transport department during a briefing to Caretaker Finance, Planning, and Development Minister Muhammad Younus Dugha on Karachi transport problems. According to the report, presented before the interim transport minister, a total of 15,000 buses are needed for the comprehensive transport system of Karachi while currently only 1029 buses are operational on city roads including 240 buses of People's Bus Service, 100 buses of BRT, and 689 id buses operated by private sector.



KARACHI: Commander Karachi Rear Admiral Muhammad Sakem presents salute after laying wreath at Mazar-e-Quaid on Commemoration of 58th anniversary of 'Navy Day'.

Pakistan and China sign MoU for addressing climate change

BEIJING (INP): In a major step jointly working on environment protection, Pakistan and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) titled "Provision of Goods Under South-South Cooperation for Addressing Climate Change". Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Mo-in-ul-Haque, and Zhao Yingmin, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China signed the MoU at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) recently. Under the MoU, according to Gwadar Pro on Friday, China would support Pakistan through the provision of 5,000 sets of Solar Home Systems; a set of Integrated Meteorological Observation Station; and a set of Integrated Cloud-based Early Warning Systems.

In addition, China would offer capacity-building programs for the officials of the Government of Pakistan.

The MoU would complement Pakistan's efforts to promote renewable energy and enhance its disaster management capabilities, especially in

the areas of early warning, forecasting, monitoring, and disaster preparedness response systems. While signing the MoU, Ambassador Mo-in-ul-Haque thanked the Chinese side and commended the ongoing collaboration between China and Pakistan to tackle the common challenge of climate change. In this regard, he highly appreciated the Global Development Initiative (GDI), which aimed to strengthen partnerships between developing countries for the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the efforts to promote climate action. He also recalled the 'timely' Chinese support to Pakistan following the climate-induced floods of 2021.

The Government of Pakistan commends China's continued efforts to deepen South-South Cooperation on climate change through practical cooperation. In November last year, Pakistan and China signed an MoU through which Pakistan became the first partner country of GDI, which lists climate change as a key area of cooperation.



QUETTA: Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George talking to media.

Four factories sealed over environmental violations in Hyderabad

KARACHI (INP): A technical team of the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) on Friday sealed four factories in the SITE area, Hyderabad, over environmental violations. According to SEPA Director General (DG) Naem Ahmed Mughal, a factory manufacturing plastic shopping bags in Moro was sealed. The administrator of the private hospitals of Shaheed Benazirabad was given a warning for not complying with the environmental laws. All four factories were sealed for environmental violations," SEPA DG Naem Ahmed Mughal said.

A factory producing oil from poultry waste, two warehouses, and a steel mill were sealed under the Environmental Protection Order. All these factories were violating the Environment Act 2014, and they were issued warnings many times. They were also issued notices and given chances of personal hearing. "The factories will not be allowed to operate until full compliance with environmental laws," the SEPA DG said.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar Ul Haq Kaker chairs the 5th Apex Committee meeting of Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Agriculture University of China recruiting talent from Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The research group of Prof. Dr. He Cheng at China Agriculture University (CAU), Beijing is offering PhD and post-doctoral positions to Pakistani candidates in "Control of major livestock disease in Pakistan using China-aid technologies of key veterinary vaccines and diagnostic assay".

The project aims to develop and promote key vaccines and diagnostic technologies by using cell fermentations and molecular biology techniques, in order to control major livestock diseases and contribute to animal products export to international markets. A Chinese Professor at

College of Veterinary Medicine, CAU told Gwadar Pro that Pakistan and China are leading more than 50 collaborative projects in agriculture and animal husbandry.

However, the livestock sector does not contribute to GDP with its full strength and still needs a lot of improvement.

He said that this is basically due to the challenges of devastating diseases faced by Pakistan such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Brucellosis, Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Avian Influenza, Salmonellosis and currently new emerging Lumpy skin disease (LSD).

Sindh gov't all set to launch crackdown against street criminals

KARACHI (INP): The Caretaker Home Minister Sindh Friday announced to initiate a crackdown against criminals and drug peddlers from Monday.

The caretaker home minister Sindh — Harris Nawaz — stated that a crackdown against the street criminals and drug peddlers will be started from next week, adding that the Police and Rangers will be deployed on the streets to protect the citizens of Karachi. "Wherever extortionists and drug dealers are found in these areas, we will take decisive action against them," Nawaz maintained, following the announcement of the crackdown.

Mild earthquake shakes Zhob

ZHOB (INP): Mild earthquake tremors were felt in Zhob district of Balochistan on Friday.

The intensity of the earthquake was 3.0 on the Richter scale.

The depth of the earthquake was 27 kilometers below the surface.

The epicentre of the earthquake was 70 kilometers southeast of Zhob district.

Islamabad court sends Pervaiz Elahi to Adiala Jail on judicial remand

ISLAMABAD (INP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad Friday rejected the prosecution's request to grant a further 10-day physical remand of former Punjab chief minister Pervaiz Elahi and sent him to Adiala Jail on judicial remand in connection with a case relating to ransacking of Judicial Complex, reported 24NewsHD TV channel. Pervaiz Elahi was produced before the court of ATC judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain upon the completion of his two-day physical remand. The court pronounced the verdict after the completion of arguments by both parties in the case. Police on Tuesday last had rearrested Pervaiz Elahi hours after the Islamabad High Court (IHC) suspended his detention and ordered his release.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Communications, Railways and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar meeting with US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome.

Politicians engaged in blame game on sugar crisis: President PEW

LAHORE (INP): President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Dr. Murtaza Mughal said on Friday that leading politicians from different political parties are trading accusations on the sugar crisis which has engulfed the whole country.

In a statement issued here, he said, "This blame game is a fixed match as all the stakeholders have benefited from the crisis in which the poor masses lost billions of rupees."

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that now the rhetoric was being used to deceive the public, which was insufficient to convince the masses struggling amid runaway inflation.

Like all the mafias in the country, the sugar mafia also enjoys influence in the corridors of power, he added.

He further stated that they have agents in political, bureaucratic, and all other important circles, and if any action was ever taken against them, they get immediate relief.

For many decades, the statements of controlling the sugar mafia have been made

frequently, but these rhetorical politicians give them an opportunity to skin masses in which bureaucratic and other institutions fully cooperate with the mafia, he observed.

In every crisis, billions of rupees are extracted from the pockets of the people and distributed among the white-collar criminals.

Murtaza Mughal recalled that in 2021, the Competition Commission of Pakistan raided the office of the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA), seized the records, conducted a detailed investigation, and imposed a fine of Rs 44 billion. The fine has not been received until today because the courts have issued a stay order.

This type of delay has negative effects on the economy and the public while encouraging cartels, he said, adding that the strict measures taken by the army chief are commendable, due to which the price of sugar has come down.

The President PEW said that now sugar was available at 190 rupees per kg in Lahore and 220 rupees per kg in Quetta.

Weekly inflation in Pakistan soars to 26.32 pc; PBS

ISLAMABAD (INP): The report issued by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Friday stated that weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.96 percent during the week ended on September 7.

The PBS data stated that the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 279.87 points as compared to 277.21 points during the past week.

During the week, out of 51 items, the prices of 32 items increased, 05 items decreased and 14 items remained stable.

As per details, the items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) basis, included chicken (3.20%), cooking oil 5 liters (1.03%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.47%), tea packet (0.43%) and vegetable ghee 1 kg (0.14%). The items which recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (wow) basis, included tomatoes (17.00%), pulse masoor (10.87%), sugar (6.73%), garlic (4.66%), gar (3.62%), pulse moong (3.55%), onions.