

QUETTA VOICE

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2 civilians martyred, 1 injured in unprovoked firing by Afghan sentry on pedestrians at Chaman border: ISPR

Sardar Muhammad Khondai:

An Afghan sentry employed at Friend Ship Gate of Chaman Border Crossing along Pakistan-Afghanistan Border in Balochistan Province opened unprovoked and indiscriminate firing at pedestrians moving from Pakistan to Afghanistan, the military's wing media said on Wednesday evening.

The incident occurred at the outbound gate located on the zero line. Resultantly, two innocent Pakistani citizens including a 12-year-old child embraced Shahadat, while another child was injured, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

Pakistan troops exercised extreme restraint

Own troops exercised extreme restraint and avoided any exchange of fire in the presence of innocent passengers to avoid collateral damage. Dead bodies of the deceased have been



shifted to DHO Hospital Chaman and the injured child, who was immediately evacuated by security forces, is under treatment.

Afghan authorities asked for such an irresponsible approach

Afghan authorities have been approached to inquire about the reason for such irresponsible and reckless acts, apprehend and hand over the culprit to Pakistani authorities. IAC is also expected to exercise control over its troops and impart discipline to act responsibly in order to avoid the recurrence of such incidents in the future.

Pakistan remains committed to contributing towards peace, prosperity and development through positive and constructive bilateral relations, however, such unpleasant occurrences have the potential to harm the sincere intent and purpose.

Legal Action Against Former Balochistan Ministers for Failure to Return Official Vehicles

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has decided to take legal action against the former provincial ministers, advisers, and parliamentary secretaries for their failure to return official vehicles.

The government has decided to register cases against the former lawmakers who failed to return official vehicles, a well-placed official at the Balochistan Home and tribal affairs department. The official requested anonymity since he was not authorized to speak to the media.

100 official vehicles missing

The former lawmakers have yet to return around 100 vehicles for the last more than two months. Despite repeated notices and requests, the former lawmakers are reluctant to return the official vehicles.

The Balochistan Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) issued repeated letters to the former ministers, parliamentary secretar-

ies, and advisers in this regard. The former lawmakers have been misusing official vehicles for the last more than two months, another officer of the S&GAD revealed.

Legal action being taken against former ministers

"We will take legal action against the former ministers", Jan Achakzai, the caretaker information minister in Balochistan said. He said the home department and police have been instructed to lodge first information reports (FIRs) against former ministers to mount pressure on them to return official vehicles.

"We urge the former ministers to return official vehicles", Mr. Achakzai said. He said the provincial government was trying to solve the issue of missing vehicles amicably and trying to convince the former lawmakers to return vehicles.



Former allies step up rhetoric as JUI-F calls PPP's demand for timely polls 'excuse' to avoid elections

NEWS DESK: The Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam (JUI-F) on Wednesday stepped up the rhetoric and called out former ally PPP for its narrative of timely polls, saying that the party's demand was actually "an excuse to run away from elections".

The statement, issued by JUI-F spokesperson Aslam Ghauri, comes two days after PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhatto-Zardari criticised the former for endorsing a delay in polls.

After publicly criticising the PML-N multiple times over the past few weeks for allegedly accepting a delay in general elections beyond three months, Bilawal had taken exception to a statement issued by JUI-F chief Manzilana Fazfar Rehman, wherein he had questioned the possibility of elections in the winter season.

In an address in Karachi on Monday, the former foreign minister had said: "One [PML-N] says that fresh delimitation is crucial for the next elections and the other [JUI-F] questions the possibility of polls in January and February due to harsh winter. The people of Pakistan now should know and identify all those who are running away from elections."

"Let me be very clear, we won't sit idly. We will keep raising our voice for timely elections," the PPP chief had added.

In response to Bilawal today, the JUI-F spokesperson said the PPP "should bring forth its real agenda and cease targeting its coalition partners".

"Why this haste? May Allah bless Bilawal with



long life; eventually, he will become the prime minister," he stated, claiming that the PPP was able to secure a seat from Larkana in the 2018 elections due to a "level playing field".

"Supported the census because saw a potential advantage in it," the statement said.

It added that the "ruckus" over early polls was "actually an excuse to escape from elections".

"This irritability over demanding a level playing field and raising concerns over weather conditions is astonishing," the JUI-F spokesperson said. He added that the JUI-F had begun its election campaign

and advised the PPP to do the same to prevent any complaints in the future regarding insufficient time.

These political skirmishes come as the country has entered the pre-election mode. Earlier this month, the Election Commission of Pakistan announced that general elections would be held in January next year but did not provide a date. In the run-up to polls, political parties have begun preparation for their electoral campaigns.

In a crucial development leading up to the elections, the ECP released a preliminary report last week outlining the delimitation of constituencies based on the 2023 digital census. PPP only solution to country's crises: Sharjeel Separately, in a media talk in Peshawar earlier in the day, PPP leader Sharjeel Inam Memon said his party was the only solution to Pakistan's crises.

"Pakistan needs PPP - Pakistan needs Bilawal sahab," he said. Memon claimed that, unlike other political parties, the PPP did not have a selfish agenda and genuinely wanted to work for the well-being of the public. In this regard, he recalled development projects initiated during his party's tenure and lauded Bilawal's performance as the former minister.

The PPP leader further demanded that elections should immediately be held in the country. "The public should be given the right to use their mandate and elect a political party which should then steer the country out of crises," he added.

Quetta Roads Clogged as 24,000 Unpermitted Rickshaws Swarm Streets

Manan Mandokhail:

QUETTA: In Balochistan's provincial capital, over 24,000 rickshaws have been operating for the last few years. Roads are clogged as more than 24,000 rickshaws run without official permission, commonly called the 'permit'.

A drive is scheduled to be launched against illegal vehicles, rickshaws and motorcycles on the directives of caretaker Excise and Taxation Minister, Prince Ahmed Ali. Mr. Ali chaired a high-level meeting the other day and reviewed all arrangements for the crackdown in this regard.

Only 16,000 legal rickshaws

This was revealed by the Secretary of Excise and Taxation, Syed Zafar Ali Bukhari while talking to reporters on Wednesday. He said the number of rickshaws running on roads and streets of Quetta is over 40,000 and only 16,000 of them had the official permits.

Crackdown from Oct 11

The Secretary's comments have come after issues of worst traffic jams in the provincial capital. Excise Department with the help of the police decided to launch a campaign against unregistered vehicles and rickshaws from Oc-



A rickshaw on the road of Quetta: Photo Farooq Khan

tober 11 this month, Syed Zafar Bukhari announced.

Thousands of illegal motorcycles

Mr. Bukhari informed thousands of motorcycles are also on the streets of Quetta, he said that unregistered rickshaws and motorcycles are the main cause of accidents and traffic jams in the city. "We have decided to take legal action against owners of illegal rickshaws and vehicles", he mentioned.

Thousands of NCP vehicles in Quetta

Vehicles, rickshaws and motorcycles will be stopped throughout the city on October 11 to address the issue of traffic jams and ensure the implementation of the law, Syed Zafar Bukhari stated.

Quetta City is also facing the issue of non-custom paid vehicles. Scores of non-custom paid vehicles roam on the roads of the provincial capital for the last few years. So far no considerable action has been taken against the influential owners of vehicles.

EDITORIAL

Editor: Asim Khan

Shelterless schools in Balochistan and CM Ali Mardan Domki

Editorial:

Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Domki announcement about the construction of buildings for shelterless schools appears to be a positive stride. As per the statistics of the education department, the number of shelterless schools across the province is more than 2,000. However, independent sources put the number much higher than what is being quoted by the department. The CM needs to translate his words into action in terms of the construction of buildings and boundary walls for the government-run schools. Although, the construction of buildings has not been reflected in the public sector development program (PSDP) for the current financial year. However, the government can evolve a strategy and mechanism to include all shelterless schools in the forthcoming budget.

UNICEF, EU should go beyond inaugural sessions

Mr. Ali Mardan Domki made this announcement while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Balochistan Education Support Program (BESP). Representatives of the European Union and UNICEF were also in attendance. As far as UNICEF and EU are concerned, they have to go beyond inaugural sessions and take steps for the promotion of the education sector.

Yes, first is the responsibility of the government of Balochistan to make sure provision of education to all children under Article 25-A of the Constitution. But UNICEF and EU should not be confined to a private hotel or their heavily-guarded offices. It has almost become a tradition that once in a year these organizations hold such seminars.

8,188 schools have no toilet facility

According to the statistics of the education department, 8,188 schools have no toilet facility. This is a matter of serious concern. The number of government-run primaries, middle and high schools across Balochistan is more than 15,000. Statistics show that 11,755 schools have no toilet facility. The water and nearly 8,000 schools have no boundary walls. It is good to see representatives from the UNICEF and EU discussing education in Quetta. But still, a lot needs to be done.

Their attractive signboards and banners should match their performance on the ground. As far as the government is concerned, it must announce an emergency to make sure the enrollment of more than 1 million children in schools and improve the state of facilities in schools.

Climate Tides and Raising Injustices: The Climate-Gender Violence Nexus in Balochistan

Chandni Kakar:

Throughout history, crisis situations, be they wars, natural disasters, or extreme economic downturns, inevitably unmask the ugly face of social inequality. Among the different types of inequality, gender-based violence (GBV), often considered a shadow pandemic, regrettably seizes these crisis situations as a breeding ground, weaving emotions of fear and uncertainty. Strikingly, in the windswept terrains of Balochistan, a menacing overlap of climate change and GBV rises like a monstrous specter, particularly in the flood-prone areas.

Catastrophic Climate Events and GBV-Mysterious Puppets on the Same String

Here's the curious case: aggravated climate change, leading to increased flood events and a rising tide of GBV are not isolated in-

stances of social trauma but deeply intermingled phenomena in Balochistan.

Official reports show a disturbing trend of 157 cases of domestic violence were reported in Balochistan in 2022, with 35 individuals being killed on the pretext of Karo Kari, half of whom were women, and 40 women becoming victims of sexual abuse.

Before this, in 2021, the number of reported cases of domestic violence was 127, with 30 women being victims of sexual violence.

In 2021, according to the Balochistan Gender-Based-Violence Case Management System, close to 3726 cases of GBV were reported. The following year, in 2022, this figure swelled to 4082, illustrating a staggering increase of nearly 9%. Digging deeper reveals an uncanny coincidence. An upward

trend in extreme climate events in the same timeline correlates with the rise, painting a chilling picture. This correlation isn't incidental but consequential, a nexus amplified by the common environmental changes and socio-economic fallout they induce.

Climate Change in Balochistan: More Than Just an Environmental Issue

Climate change in Balochistan isn't calming down, like a seemingly ceaseless sandstorm blotting out ways of life. In July 2022, unprecedented torrential rains in Quetta led to flooding, causing deaths, damaged infrastructure, and homeless families.

Similarly, in Naserabad, the faces of the victims of the flooding were brutal. The consistent harsh climate rattles the socio-economic bal-

ance, where women, due to systemic patriarchy and gender biases, bear the heavy toll. Societal roles designate farming, household work, and gathering water and firewood as feminine duties, all of which become perilous with fluctuating climatic conditions.

Recent Case: An Appalling Tale from Naserabad

Consider the heart-wrenching drama that unfolded in Naserabad. Amidst the devastating floods, several women and girls reported being victims of horrific violence when they went out to collect clean water or seek shelter. A specific case that sounds like a cruel joke from a seventeen-year-old girl who, seeking refuge during the floods, was brutally raped in a tent.

The Future: Deciphering the Complex Jigsaw Puzzle

Climate change comes not just with roaring winds but also with silent whispers of rising injustice against vulnerable sections of society.

So, how do the convoluted cogs of climate change and GBV work in unison? A deeper scrutiny suggests, that with rising environmental instability, women are forced into vulnerable situations, escalating GBV rates.

Additionally, the diversion of resources and law enforcement focus to disaster relief further aggravates these incidences.

The growing climate crisis in Balochistan is more than an environmental problem.

It is a socio-economic menace, a catalyst for gender-based violence, and a glaring testament to the intricate relationship between humanity and Mother Earth. A multi-faceted approach that intertwines climate strategy with gender justice is the need of the hour. The time is ripe to refine our needs.

Climate change comes not just with roaring winds but also with silent whispers of rising injustice against vulnerable sections of society.

Life on the brink

By Rafia Zakaria:

In June of this year, the Pakistani government had issued two tenders to buy LNG on the international market but didn't receive any bids.

Pakistan's devaluing currency and lack of foreign exchange, coupled with the political turmoil plaguing the country, has apparently made it a bad risk. This means what it always means, which is that there is likely to be an even worse-than-usual shortage of gas in the country as it makes its way towards the winter months.

One way to cushion the perpetual bad news is to present the bad news first so that even slight improvements can be touted as successes. In the spirit of that kind of spin, I am happy to report that in July of this year, a bidder, the commodities trader Trafigura,

Although there are no reports to indicate a deal, a buoyed caretaker government issued two new tenders for LNG recently. It expects to receive bids because of the slight improvement of the economic condition

post the IMF agreement. When things have been hopeless for so long, even a tiny glimmer of misery is worth celebrating.

And there is a chance that things in the future will not be quite as bad as this summer has been. Even though some respite came over the month of September, and is now at an all-time high of 31.4 per cent, some respite came this past weekend in the lowering of petrol and diesel prices. Prior to this, prices had reached a record high and would likely have remained at that level had it not been for a decrease in global oil prices.

Together, the hope for gas supplies and the reduction in petrol prices may point to a less miserable road ahead. Inflation, according to the Ministry of Finance, will likely continue to be high, but if you do have a place to live, despite the price of being inflated, you might be able to cook inside it, and if you have a job, it may become marginally easier to commute to office and back. Given the way things have been, this almost seems like a vast

improvement to a lot of people.

High inflation is not always a bad thing, going by the sectors that have seen an increase in inflation, tobacco is one of the goods whose price has increased hugely.

Given that tobacco consumption is the single most devastating health problem — everything from breathing problems to cancer — for so much of the population, one hopes that this increase will force some of those who are addicted to tobacco, to give up the habit altogether. It is not a pretty way to quit smoking, but quitting is quitting and whatever the reason, those who can no longer pay for cigarettes will reap the benefits of a decision that is being foisted on them by an economy gone bad.

More guerrilla tactics may be required to deal with other inflated prices. The cost of recreation and leisure in Pakistan (whatever this category must refer to) has also increased.

One of the reasons why economists who study inflation have found that inflated prices kill civilisations is be-

cause the cultural underpinnings that hold them together come under tremendous pressure during times like these. The fact that the cost of restaurants and hotels has also gone up means that simple pleasures like going out to eat with one's family and friends have slipped out of the reach of many people.

There will have to be creative solutions to fill in this gap. The hope in what has always been a frustrating fact of Pakistani life. As the weather gets ready to turn colder, the resplendent nuptials of the elite class will begin to take place without any abridgement of their characteristically indulgent displays of wealth.

There is opportunity here for those looking for an evening out and some excellent people watching to boot. Crashing these events, especially the ones that are hosting nearly 1,000 people, can provide nice evening entertainment without a price tag. If anyone asks, the truth must be told: Inflation has not touched the hosts and so they must pardon the uninvited guests.

By Aisha Khan:

THE IPCC A6 Synthesis Report, which draws together the scientific body's work over the past eight years, stresses that even under a very low emissions scenario, global warming is likely to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century, increasing the risk of food insecurity, extreme weather and continued sea level rise. In the past few decades, communities are already experiencing landslides, flash floods, storm surges, wildfires, droughts and the drying up of springs among other disruptions caused by climate change.

The conversations and meetings this year leading up to COP28 so far have not met the hope for either a fair or safe world. From the Bonn talks in May to the UN Climate Summit in September, the emphasis has remained on the need to do more, without any draft treaty that they would achieve the elusive target of decarbonising the economy through deep, immediate cuts in emissions.

Environmental ministers from G20 nations, representing countries

that account for 80pc of GHG emissions failed to agree on ways to curb emissions, and other crucial matters at the Delhi Summit. The lack of consensus after years of talks over climate-induced disasters and repeated calls for action sends a strong signal of what to expect from the critical COP negotiations.

The second meeting of the High-Level Panel of Experts under the auspices of the UNGA of the recently concluded SDG Summit marks the start of the decade for 2030. The mismatch between actions and transformative shifts needed to avert the climate crisis and absence of some of the big emitters do not lend hope for any more of the accelerator agenda. The SDG theme of peace and security for the year has failed to avert the pessimism, deepening misgivings about multilateral processes and fair outcomes.

The recently published first global stocktake synthesis report, which is a culmination of data collection from scientists, technocrats and business people, recognises the role of the

Paris Agreement in driving near-universal climate actions, but falls short in projecting the grim reality. It urges the need for prioritising the phasing out of fossil fuels and working with all levels of government to scale up tried and tested solutions while investing in new, innovative technologies. All eyes will now be on Dubai to see how the presidency leverages the stocktake to course correct and transition to a safer trajectory with a rapid response plan. As always, finance will dominate the negotiations, and the issues of drastic cuts in emissions, doubling adaptation finance and operationalising the loss and damage fund along with the need for reform in the global financial architecture will be key determinants in setting the future agenda. So far, all the climate reports have one thing in common. All serve as a wake-up call for moving past statements, advisories and prose that use climate as a glossary to list horrors, areas or high-line threats that are already being experienced by people, but fail to provide timely solutions.

The pivot shift from Paris to Dubai comes at a time when much has changed since the 2015 Paris Agreement. The need for keeping temperatures below 1.5°C, capping emissions by 2025, reducing GHGs by 2030 to stay within the safe threshold of planetary boundaries, and the high costs for mitigation and adaptation, the war in Ukraine and the changing geopolitical landscape are all new elements that have added greater urgency to finding solutions. While the cost of making transformative changes may be high, the price of inaction will come with a greater cost to human life, plunging millions into poverty and deepening despair.

The stocktake 2023 is not merely about assessing where countries stand in the fight against climate change. It is also about using current trends to anticipate the risks to human security and making a call on how we see humanity. If all lives matter, then negotiators must rise to fight the battle lines and engage with the intent of de-risking climate security.

A surge in terrorist attacks

By Zahid Hussain:

THE bloodbath in Mastung last week was yet another grim reminder of the relentless rise of militant violence that is threatening national security.

The suicide attack on a Rabial Awwal congregation in the Balochistan town left almost 60 people dead. At least five people were killed in a targeted attack in KP on the same day, swelling the number of fatalities.

It was one of the bloodiest days of the current year that has already recorded the highest number of casualties among security forces in the past eight years. Terrorist attacks have become almost a daily affair. The return of terrorism presents a most serious challenge to a nation mired in multiple crises. The spate of killings across the country demonstrates the expanding capacity of militant groups to carry out increasingly audacious operations.

While the administration silently watches the situation drift toward anarchy, armed men carry out their deadly attacks with impunity. The pattern and scale of violence indicate that the

militants are better armed than before and well organised.

A report recently released by the Islamabad-based Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) reveals a staggering 57 per cent escalation in militant violence nationwide over the last quarter.

It's an extremely alarming situation, raising questions regarding our counterterrorism strategy that appears to be faltering as militants of all stripes continue to operate. The latest wave of violence highlights the inability of the security agencies to deal with the rising militant threat.

Almost 1,100 people, including 386 security personnel, lost their lives to militant violence in the first nine months of the year, according to the CRSS report. The report notes that the number of fatalities from terrorist attacks this year has increased, with KP and Balochistan having suffered 92pc of all fatalities since the beginning of the year.

While a reinvigorated peace-talk-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has reportedly been involved in most of the terrorist attacks, more worrisome is the growing presence

and activities of the Islamic State-Khorasan group. Several recent militant raids have been traced to the group. Although no one has claimed responsibility, the suicide attack in Mastung last Friday bears all the hallmarks of an IS-K attack.

It is not for the first time that Mastung, which has become the main centre of extremist sectarian groups, has been targeted by militant outlaws, as well as transnational militant groups. In 2017, a suicide bomber struck the convoy of a JUI-F leader, Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, who was then deputy chairman of the provincial government.

Many madrassahs in the region have become the focus of the outlawed Lashkar-e-Jhangvi which has now reportedly taken up the banner of IS-K. The latest attack on the Rabial Awwal procession indicates the growing influence of the hard-line Salafist version of Islam that has its origins in the Middle East. There has also been a marked rise in IS-K activities in KP. In the past three months, the terror group has claimed several attacks in the province.

were later arrested and taken to Guantanamo by American forces. It was the first time that an Ashura procession was attacked by militants here, lending a new and dangerous dimension to sectarian terror in the province.

Over the years, Mastung, located some 50 kilometres from Quetta, has become the main centre of extremist sectarian groups. The latest attacks mark an escalation in attacks on rival Sunni groups. In 2017, a suicide bomber struck the convoy of a JUI-F leader, Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, who was then deputy chairman of the provincial government.

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Western diplomats, including the newly lightened minds at the

Open-ended conflict

By Mahir Ali:

EARLY last month, US State Department, have been aware since at least the 1990s that Nato's eastward expansion was a red line for Moscow. Mikhail Gorbachev was verbally promised it wouldn't occur, and regretted not insisting on a written assurance. Even Boris Yeltsin, effectively a US puppet, bristled at Nato's ambitions. By the time Putin replaced him in 1999-2000, key Eastern European states had already switched their satellite status from ex-Soviet to American via NATO membership, and the Baltic republics followed.

Until then, any Western politician who hinted at any kind of provocation behind Russia's military overreach risked being labelled an enemy of Vladimir Putin. The unreasonably hawkish Stoltenberg obviously forgot this, and he went on to remind his audience how Moscow's wings to Finland and, potentially, Sweden, appeared as a threat to a suitable riposte to a belligerent dictator.

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Education in nation-building is as essential as foundation stone: Mushaaf

ISLAMABAD (INP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaaf Hussain Mullick on Wednesday made it clear that the role of education in nation-building is as essential as the foundation stone and our young generation through education can play a significant role in the uplift and development of the country.

"We can create awareness about human rights only through education," she added. The SAPM made these remarks while speaking as a chief guest at a ceremony titled the Millennium Education One World Campus, E-11/4 Islamabad hosted by Student Council Investment Ceremony and High Achievers Awards 2023 aimed at encouraging young individuals to

regularise the student body and become responsible citizens. She said that it was next to impossible to enslave educated people; hence the Indian notorious fascist government was making all-out efforts to deprive the people of education through various coercive tactics. Mushaaf stated that the occupation authorities were well aware of the power of education that a war-like situation was created and a curfew was placed in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) under a well-conceived plan so that parents could not send their children to educational institutions because of fear of their detention and torture at the hands of brutal Indian forces. Enlightening the Millennials about progressive education, she said education is not

only the name of getting marks but also the name of improving the abilities of the students. Mushaaf encouraged the learners to work hard and put their best efforts towards their respective clubs and societies. Highlighting the role of education in breaking the shackles of slavery, the SAPM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment said that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan laid the foundation stone of the Aligarh College which became the focal point of the Muslim activities during the Pakistan movement that eventually led to creation of Pakistan.

Similarly, Mushaaf shed light on the role played by Allama Muhammad Iqbal's poetry in awakening the youth, who she said offered immense hope to the young because his imagery of the dawn to

come is emphatic, adding that Iqbal emphasized the youth.

"See your present in the light of the past," Iqbal's message was very clear; he meant that the "New Dawn" could only come from the modern youth who are capable of overthrowing the shackles of external materialism and reawakening their inner fire," she added.

Therefore, Mushaaf underlined that it was high time to focus on education for the progress and prosperity of the country. The SAPM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment said: "We are proud of our children who have made Pakistan famous in 'OA' levels. During the ceremony, Mushaaf, CEO of Roots Millennium Schools, Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq, Sabina Zakir Director of Communications, Community,



WHO Pakistan Mission Head is receiving shield from Federal Minister of National Health Service Regulation and Coordination on the occasion of "Mera Sehat Card" App launching Ceremony. Minister Health Balochistan is also present on October 04, 2023.

Rs.283.4m fine imposed on 2320 electricity thieves, 2239 booked, 1749 arrested in 27 days: FESCO

FAISALABAD (INP): Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) claimed to have imposed a fine of Rs.283.4 million on 2320 electricity thieves caught during 27 days of anti-power-theft campaign in FESCO region. FESCO spokesman Fahir Sheikh said here on Wednesday that FESCO had launched a vigorous anti-theft drive on special direction of Minister of Energy (Power Division) and during 27 days of this campaign the anti-theft teams of the company caught 2320 power pilferers from its eight districts. The company had imposed a total fine of Rs.283.4 mil-

lion on the pilferers under the head of detection units of 6.453 million in addition to getting Rs.112.6 million recovered from the district. FESCO had also got cases registered against 2239 accused whereas the police had arrested 1749 electricity thieves so far, he added.

Giving further details, he said that the FESCO teams continued checking of power pilferage round the clock and caught 49 electricity thieves during last 24 hours who were stealing electricity through various modes including direct supply. The company had imposed a fine

of more than Rs.4 million in the electricity thieves in respect of more than 85,000 detection units. He said that in Faisalabad district up till now, 820 electricity thieves were caught and handed down with a fine of more than Rs. He said that 218 electricity thieves were caught in Jhang district so far and fined more than 800,000 detection units amounting to more than Rs.34.8 million. Similarly, 254 electricity thieves were caught from Bhakkar and handed down with a fine of 755,000 detection units amounting to Rs.33.2 million. In Chinot district, 277 elec-

tricity thieves were handed down with more than 800,000 detection units amounting to Rs.26.9 million. Meanwhile, more than 173,000 detection units amounting to Rs.9.1 million was imposed on 66 electricity thieves caught from Khushab district. In Mianwali district, 254 electricity thieves were caught and more than 527,000 detection units amounting to Rs.25.1 million were imposed on them as fine. In Sargodha district, 252 electricity thieves were caught and fined with more than 620,000 detection units amounting to more than Rs.29.4 million.

Pakistan to launch 5G mobile services in August 2024

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan is gearing up to launch 5G mobile phone connectivity in August 2024, according to the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication.

According to media report, this announcement comes as a response to the growing demand for faster and more advanced telecommunications services.

The ministry has unveiled a comprehensive business plan for the launch of 5G ser-

vices in the country. The plan includes hiring an international consultant to provide guidance for the project, forming an Inter-Ministerial Advisory Committee to shape the future of 5G in Pakistan, and developing an auction policy and business plan.

The government will also take inspiration from successful models in countries like Bangladesh for the spectrum auction process. Importantly, the plan emphasizes that spectrum allocation will

not be granted to any single operator without a competitive process to ensure fairness and promote a competitive environment.

Before the auction of the coveted 600 MHz spectrum, the business plan outlines the need for substantial reforms in the telecom sector. This includes addressing ongoing court cases related to spectrum allocation and creating incentives for telecom operators to participate actively in the auction.

To further encour-

age the expansion of 5G services, the business plan includes provisions for facilitating the opening of Letter of Credits (LC) and laying fiber optic cables.

The launch of 5G services in Pakistan is a pivotal moment in technological advancement. It is expected to revolutionize the way people communicate and consume content. 5G will also enable new and innovative applications in areas such as healthcare, education, and transportation.



HYDERABAD: Activists of hala naka hold a protest against the police at hala naka.



HYDERABAD: Additional Secretary IG Finance Department Sinda Gulam Murtaza is listening to the issues from Sheikh Sallian Open mouth Shabbaz Hall.

SC resumes hearing pleas challenging law limiting CJP's powers

ISLAMABAD (INP): A full court headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has resumed hearing a set of petitions challenging the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023. The proceedings are being streamed live on television. The Act requires the formation of benches on constitutional matters of public importance by a committee of three senior judges of the court. In a pre-emptive move, the Supreme Court—then led by former CJP Umar Ata Bandial— in April had barred the government from implementing the bill seeking to curtail the chief justice of Pakistan's powers once it became a law.

On the very first day of assuming charge as the chief justice, CJP had ordered the hearing to be live streamed and had implicitly vacated the April 13 suspension of the

enforcement of the Supreme Court (Practice & Procedure) Act, 2023. Last week, the Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) had pleaded before the apex court that the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023 was aimed at promoting the independence of judiciary, the rule of law, and the right to access to justice and fair trial. The party, represented by its counsel Zahid F. Ebrahimi, said SC rules provided that the legislature could determine the practice and procedure of the court in relation to the constitution of benches, in particular, Parliament has the right to enact the subject legislation and has done so strictly in accordance with the law and the Constitution, the response said.

Meanwhile, the government had argued that if the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023

was sustained, verdicts handed down by benches constituted before enactment of the law would be saved as past and closed transactions. At the outset of Tuesday hearing, CJP Isa said that the law affected the chief justice and the two senior most judges of the apex court. "On one hand, the CJP's powers, if not being limited, are being reduced. On the other, the same powers are being distributed among senior judges," he said. Justice Isa said that the law would also apply to future chief justices and senior justices of the apex court. He said that he should not be a part of the bench hearing the case, please but because it affected all judges, it was deemed fit that a full court preside over the case. Addressing the lawyers gathered, he urged them to talk about points that were relevant to the case.

"We want to try to conclude [the case] today," he said as he highlighted the backlog of cases in the SC. He said that if the lawyers wished to make additional arguments, they could submit a detailed response to the court. Starting his arguments, lawyer Ikrum Chaudhry read out the opening paragraph of the Act. He argued that the paragraph indicated that the law was being enacted for a "certain or a specific purpose".

However, CJP Isa interjected and asked whether the law stated this or the lawyer was implying this. "Let's not put words in a statute which don't exist. If that is your impression, then say so," he remarked. The lawyer then went on to Section 3 of the Act, which states that a committee of judges would constitute a bench to hear matters of public importance.



Commissioner Quetta Division, Hamza Shafqaat addressed a press conference. He announced that action would be taken against illegal immigrants as per the policy of government. He also hinted a crackdown against illegal rickshaws in the provincial capital.

Stability linked with transparent elections, ECP must announce date: Siraj

LAHORE (INP): Ameer Jamshed Khan, Chairman of Siraj-ul-Haq linking the stability to the conduct of transparent elections has urged the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to announce the date for the national vote. Addressing a press conference at Mansoorah on Wednesday, he asserted that the caretaker government lacks the authority to make decisions on matters of policy, adding the issues in electricity and gas tariffs were outside their jurisdiction,

placing an undue burden on the government.

Siraj-ul-Haq stated that theJI would persist in its protest movement aimed at safeguarding the rights of the people and would stage a sit-in in front of the Governor's House in Karachi on October 6. Prior to this, he chaired a meeting of the central leadership, which discussed theJI's preparations for the upcoming general elections and other challenges confronting the nation. He informed journalists that theJI had already nomi-

nated candidates for 80 percent of the seats in both the national and provincial assemblies.

In response to a query, theJI chief argued that those who had repeatedly held power in the country for years had failed to bring about any meaningful change. Instead, he contended that the former rulers bore direct responsibility for the current crises facing the nation. Addressing another question, he stressed the allocation of substantial development funds for specific con-

stitutions as a form of vote-buying, vowing to raise the issue with the ECP. He stressed the importance of institutions maintaining their apolitical stance and adhering to the constitution, emphasizing that the upcoming election must prioritize transparency over superficial appearances. Siraj called for a forensic audit of Independent Power Producer (IPP) agreements, citing massive payments to private companies in the form of capacity charges.

Senate Body reprimands NHA over delay in Pindi-Kharian Motorway project

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senate Standing Committee on Communications has reprimanded the National Highway Authority (NHA) over delay in Pindi-Kharian Motorway project and gave ruling that if project exceeds Rs5 billion, the issues would be sent to National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and cases would be registered against the concerned officers.

The meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Communications was held at Parliament Lodges Islamabad on Wednesday under the chair of Senator Prince Ahmed Umar Ahmadzai.

The committee was informed that a 70 kilometer long Kharian-Sialkot Motorway project was estimated to be completed at cost of Rs43 billion. ECNEC ap-

proved the project in 2021 and half of the project's land acquisition has been completed.

The Punjab government has not issued the NOC for construction of bridge on River Chenab due to which the project was delayed, we were forced to change the route and 34 percent work on project has been completed, the committee was informed. The Senate Body

was further informed that the feasibility of the P i n d i - K h a r i a n Motorway has been completed. PC-1 has been approved. The pre-bid meeting for the PP mode project has also been held. Techno Metrocon and the Chinese consortium are the top bidders and ZKB are also in the list. Two tunnels will also be built in the 117 km long motorway.

Tragic Loss: Two Security Personnel Sacrifice Lives in Chaghi Blast

Riaz Baloch:

In a tragic incident, two security personnel were martyred and another three got injured in a bomb blast on Wednesday evening.

Leaves sources said the terrorist incident took a place in the Chaghi bazar of Balochistan province. Three security personnel were injured in the attack.

Vehicle targeted through an IED

Miscrants targeted the forces vehicle through an improvised explosive device (IED) in Chaghi bazar.

The injured were rushed to hospital for medical treatment and emergency was declared in the hospital to provide medical treatment to injured.



Pakistani rupee's bull-run against US dollar continues in interbank market

ISLAMABAD (INP): The bull-run of Pakistani rupee against the US dollar has entered the 29th successive day in the interbank market on Wednesday.

According to the data received from the forex traders, the local currency soared by another Rs1.07 against the green-

back and was currently exchanging hands at Rs284.65 in the interbank market. On Tuesday, the Pakistani rupee had maintained its upward trajectory against the US dollar, gaining 0.36% in the interbank market. At close, the rupee had settled at Rs285.72 after an increase of

Rs1.04.

In a key development, Pakistan's headline inflation clocked in at 31.4% on a year-on-year basis in September, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), significantly higher than the reading in August when it stood at 27.4%.



HYDERABAD: DSP Waheed Mullah Latifabad speaking at a press conference at police station Latifabad.

Manchester United suffers another blow as defeated by Galatasaray at home

LONDON (INP): Manchester United's suffers another loss at home against Galatasaray by chaotic 3-2 and have lost their opening two Champions League matches for the first time.

Manchester United season was spiraling out of control and manager Erik ten Hag appears powerless to stop the rot. It should be mentioned here that this was United's sixth defeat in 10 matches in all competitions this season, with positive pre-season vibes now a distant memory.

Ten Hag appeared to be steering United in the right direction when he ended a six-year trophy drought last season and led them to a third-place finish in the Premier League.

Now the Dutchman, in his second season at Old Trafford, is under growing scrutiny for the first time as he scrambles for solutions.

Ten Hag's men badly needed a victory on Tuesday after losing their Champions League opener against Bayern Munich and faced a Turkish side who had never won in England before.

United led twice, courtesy of impressive goals from new forward Rasmus Hojlund, but Galatasaray took advantage of some calamitous defending, sealing the win when Mauro Icardi dinked the ball over the error-prone Andre Onana.

Ten Hag says there are "no excuses" for his side's dismal performances but is not worried about losing his job.

"Last season brilliant, ter-

rific, more than we could expect," he said.

"We also knew in this project there would be common gaps. At this moment we are in a very difficult period as everyone can see but we come out together, we are fighting together."

The question is, what does the Dutchman, besieged by problems on and off the pitch, do to halt the steep decline?

New goalkeeper Onana has become the symbol of the team's defensive woes but he is merely one malfunctioning unit in an underperforming machine.

The Cameroon international, who played under Ten Hag at Ajax, made a costly gift at Bayern last month and made another horrendous mistake on Tuesday as Manchester United imploded.

Onana was bought to replace the long-serving David de Gea, with his passing range considered one of his greatest strengths.

But his error count is mounting. On Tuesday, he passed to Dries Mertens of Galatasaray. Casemiro's attempt to rescue the situation but brought a red card and a penalty, which Icardi missed.

Ten Hag appears to be sticking with his number one, signed in a deal worth up to £47 million (\$57 million), giving him a vote of confidence.

"We already have seen in games his great capabilities, also his personality after he made mistakes," he said. "He will

bounce back."

United have conceded 18 goals in 10 matches this season, their highest tally after 10 games of a campaign since 1966/67.

In mitigation, they are grappling with a crippling injury crisis in defence — Diego Dalot is the only fit senior full-back and central defender Lisandro Martinez has been ruled out for another extended spell.

Hojlund was the one bright spark on Tuesday, scoring a powerful header and putting Manchester United 2-1 ahead after an electric burst of pace.

But fellow striker Marcus Rashford looks a pale shadow of the rampaging forward who scored 30 goals last season. He has managed one so far this term.

Ten Hag has also had to deal with off-field distractions including a spat with Jadon Sancho, who has been banished from the first-team squad.

Brazilian winger Antony returned as a substitute against Galatasaray following a leave of absence to deal with allegations of domestic abuse against him.

Everything is taking place against a backdrop of continuing uncertainty over the ownership of the club, nearly a year after the unpopular Glazers said they were considering a sale.

Despite the appalling results, there is no evidence that Ten Hag's job is under immediate threat.

But ultimately he will know the buck stops with him as attention turns to Saturday's home match with Brentford.



ISLAMABAD: Geir Thomas Tonstol, Country Director International Labour Organization (ILO), calls on the Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik.

Provision of FIA challan copies to Imran, Qureshi deferred; cipher case put off till Oct 9

ISLAMABAD (INP): The special court has adjourned the hearing of the cipher case against PTI Chairman Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi till October 9.

The court did not provide the copies of the FIA challan to the accused today and they would be given the copies at the next hearing. The court rejected the request made by the lawyers of the accused who sought a halt to the trial proceedings on the grounds that the Islamabad High Court is currently hearing Imran's bail application in the cipher case and that the high court has reserved its verdict on the plea challenging the in-camera proceedings of the case. However, the special court judge ruled that the Islamabad High Court had not passed any stay order, therefore his court could not stop the proceedings of the case. The FIA prosecutor requested for an in-camera hearing, beseeching the court to keep the public out of the case.

The judge, however, remarked that there is no public as the court is already holding an in-camera hearing. Earlier, the special court judge reached Adiala Jail to hold the trial of former premier Imran Khan and former foreign minister

Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the cipher leaking case. It was the first hearing of the cipher trial in the Adiala Jail after the transfer of PTI Chairman Imran Khan to this prison. Before that, the hearings of the case were held at Attock Jail.

Special Court Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqamain heard the case. The PTI lawyers and FIA prosecutors also reached the jail. Twelve PTI lawyers were allowed to enter the prison facility to attend the trial proceedings. It was expected that the PTI chairman and vice chairman Qureshi would be provided copies of the FIA challan which was submitted to the court last week. The PTI lawyers were supposed to file miscellaneous applications to stop the distribution of copies of challan to the accused. In case of distribution of challan copy, one-week time would be fixed for the indictment of Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi. Outside Adiala Jail, security arrangements were tight and security was on high alert. The FIA has declared both Imran and Qureshi "principal accused" in the case, requesting the court to hold a trial of the duo. The investigation agency invoked in the challan sections 5 and 9 of

the Official Secrets Act which may lead to the death sentence, or two to 14 years' imprisonment, if proved.

Yesterday, the Ministry of Law and Justice said that it had no objection to holding (former premier and PTI Chairman Imran Khan's trial in the cipher case at Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi where he has been incarcerated these days.

The ministry issued a notification in this regard after an inquiry was sent to it by the special judge regarding the venue of the trial. Earlier on Tuesday, Special Judge of Official Secrets Act Court Abul Hasnat Zulqamain wrote a letter to the Ministry of Law and Justice seeking its opinion on whether the hearing on the cipher case tomorrow would be held in Adiala Jail or the judicial complex. "Is there any security concern to bring the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman to the court?" the text of the letter read. "The PTI chairman is an important personality and the head of a political party. His security will have to be taken into consideration by the court," it added. "If there are no security concerns, the case will be heard in the judicial complex," it stated.



ISLAMABAD: Finalists teams pose for a group photo with Cristina Von Sperling Afridi, Chairperson KKAFF during the 2-day Under-18 Community Girls Volleyball Tournament organized by Right To Play at Pakistan Sports Complex.

BISP chairman emphasis equipping beneficiaries with technical education

NOWSHERA (INP): Dr Muhammad Amjad Saqib, Chairman of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) here Wednesday said that equipping children of the beneficiaries with technical education and vocational training was imperative for their economic empowerment, poverty alleviation and social change in society.

He said all initiatives of BISP were aimed at providing much-needed financial support to disadvantaged people and enabled them to make easy access to essential resources and opportunities for socioeconomic and education development besides nourishment of their children.

He said BISP's Kafalat, Taleemi Wazafi, children Naushnuma and other programs were launched by the government to alleviate poverty and ensure the dignity and self-respect of the downtrodden.

BISP Chairman expressed these views while talking to beneficiaries and media during his visit to BISP centres at Risalpur and Nowshera here. Director General BISP KP,

Zohra Aslam and other senior officials briefed him about various initiatives, the process of registration, institutional reform and the disbursement of payment procedure.

Chairman Dr Amjad Saqib said that over 9.3 million families including 64,000 families in the Nowshera district were benefiting from the program continued in all districts of KP.

He said Taleemi Wazafi program was an important initiative started to help students of beneficiaries to get a quality education without financial constraint and contribute to the country's development process.

He directed BISP authorities to select students of FA/FSc of the beneficiaries for online training courses in information technology and other technologies so that they could contribute to their families on the financial front besides providing employment to others.

Dr Amjad Saqib directed BISP Nowshera authorities to prepare a list of 10 talented students of FA/FSc for online IT and other vocational courses and submit it to BISP Head-

quarters for speedy implementation.

He said that a society can move on the road to progress and prosperity only when the people and state work together for socioeconomic and education empowerment of underprivileged people and bring them to par with the developed segment of society.

He said BISP carried authentic verified data of the poor families and urged the philanthropists to come forward and generously contribute to their economic well-being.

Besides ensuring maximum facilities and transparency in the disbursement of the payment, he directed the staff to concentrate on the education of beneficiaries such as the significance of plantation, technology, cleanliness and other socioeconomic issues imperative for social change in society.

Dr Amjad Saqib reiterated that transparency was the hallmark of BISP and warned strict action against any staffer or agent found guilty of corrupt practices or irregularity in the payment procedure.



HYDERABAD: Youngster playing cricket match at Kotri Indus River.