

QUETTA VOICE

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Bloodied Coal: Miners Pay the Price in Balochistan

Syed Ali Shah Analysis:

DUKKI: The air in Dukk, Balochistan, hangs heavy with grief. Three coal miners, nameless in the face of statistics, lie cold, their lungs choked by the very earth that sustained them. Methane gas, their silent enemy, claimed them in the bowels of a neglected mine, another grim chapter in the ongoing saga of Balochistan's mining tragedies.

Broken Widows And Orphans Left Behind

It wasn't a surprise, just another predictable verse in a familiar dirge.

Build-up of methane, outdated equipment, inadequate ventilation – these are not mere technicalities;

they are the grim realities etched on the faces of widows and orphans left behind.

Mine Owners Prioritize Profits Over Human Lives

This isn't just an accident, it's a consequence, a bloody bill for years of apathy and greed. Contractors and mine owners, their pockets lined with black gold, turn a blind eye to safety norms, prioritizing profit over human lives.

The Mines Act Balochistan, a mere whisper on paper, gathers dust in the face of unchecked avarice.

The government, the supposed custodian of lives, stands accused of abysmal negligence. Its regulatory teeth are dulled by corruption and indifference. Inspections become formalities, reports gather dust, and miners descend into the earth, not as workers, but as sacrificial lambs.

A Broken System

Dukk's tragedy isn't an isolated incident, it's a microcosm of Balochistan's mining woes.

Quetta, Hamai, Mach – each region bears the scars of similar tragedies, each miner's death a monument to a broken system.

The human cost is incalculable. Families shattered, dreams extinguished, futures choked by the dust of despair.

Children become the breadwinners, innocence traded for picks and shovels in the endless struggle for survival.

Responsible Must Be Accountable

But amidst the darkness, embers of hope flicker.

Remember Names Of Miners Who Lost Lives



A coalminer holds his colleague affected by methane gas in Balochistan's Dukk district

The cries of the bereaved, the outrage of activists, the demands for justice – these are the sparks that can ignite change.

We, the collective conscience, must hold the powerful accountable. We must demand stricter regulations, enforced with an iron fist.

We must invest in technology, training, and proper equipment. We must honor the miners not just in death, but in life, by guaranteeing them the right to return home, not in body bags, but with heads held high, dignity intact.

Dukk's darkness must not shroud our vision. Let this tragedy be the catalyst, the turning point in the fight for the safety and dignity of Balochistan's miners.

Let their extinguished lamps become beacons, guiding us towards a future where every descent into the earth is not a gamble with death, but a promise of a safe return.

Remember their names, not just as statistics, but as human beings who deserved better. Remember their sacrifice, not with platitudes, but with action.

Let Dukk's darkness be the spark that ignites the flame of change.

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8000 CCTV Cameras To Be Installed on Feb 8 in Balochistan

Manan Mandokhail:



QUETTA: The Balochistan government has taken a significant step towards ensuring the integrity of the upcoming general elections in the province by deciding to install 8,000 CCTV cameras. This decision, made during a high-level meeting chaired by Caretaker Chief Minister Mr. Ali Mardan Khan Domki at the CM Secretariat in Quetta, reflects the commitment to a transparent and impartial electoral process.

The meeting, attended by provincial administrative secretaries, divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, and senior police officials, focused on enhancing security measures at sensitive polling stations across Balochistan. The approved installation of CCTV cameras at these key locations aims to closely monitor and safeguard the electoral proceedings, fostering an environment of fairness.

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inaccessible areas. Additionally, provisions for heavy machinery in districts prone to snowfall, such as Zarat and other cold regions, were discussed to ensure logistical challenges are effectively managed.

Conducive Atmosphere Exists For Elections: CM

Caretaker Chief Minister Domki underscored the urgency of immediate action on proposed measures to address the shortage of security personnel. He emphasized the importance of creating a conducive environment that addresses concerns raised by candidates and citizens. Administrative officers were urged to formulate comprehensive plans tailored to regional conditions, with a primary focus on restoring peace and security.

Continuing coordination among law enforcement agencies was emphasized, with the Caretaker Chief Minister highlighting proactive steps being taken daily to resolve challenges. Emphasizing the commitment to a peaceful election process, officials were directed to address concerns promptly, fostering an environment where voters can cast their ballots without fear.

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Gwadar International Airport: Transforming Pakistan's Landscape

From Our Correspondent:

GWADAR: Gwadar, the strategic coastal city of Balochistan, is on the cusp of becoming a catalyst for Pakistan's development with the imminent completion of its second-largest international airport. As of March 2019, the ambitious airport project, with a budget of \$246 million, has entered its final stages, marking a significant milestone in the economic collaboration between Pakistan and China.

Airport Symbolizes Strong Economic Ties Between Pakistan And China

The Gwadar International Airport is envisioned as a revolutionary initiative that symbolizes the strong economic ties between the two nations. Constructed to meet international standards, this modern facility is set to operate 24/7, accommodating both small and large aircraft. The airport boasts the capacity to handle over three hundred and fifty passengers simultaneously, with parking facilities capable of accommodating up to five large 380A planes concurrently.



Gwadar As A Key Player In Global Air Travel

The collaborative efforts of both Chinese and Pakistani engineers underscore the commitment to the timely and high-quality completion of this transformative project. Their joint expertise is ensuring that the airport will not only meet but exceed global standards, positioning Gwadar as a key player in international air travel. This strategic development aligns with the broader goals of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), reinforcing the Paks-China friendship through infrastructural advancements. The Gwadar International Airport is not just a transportation hub; it is a symbol of progress.

'4 survivors' after Russian jet crashes in Afghan mountains



News Desk: Four people survived and two are unaccounted for after a Russian plane crashed in mountainous northeastern Afghanistan, the air transport agency Rosavtatsia said on Sunday.

The Fokker 10 business jet was believed to be carrying six people on a hospital flight from India to Uzbekistan and Russia before communication was lost on Saturday evening. "Of the six people on board the aircraft, tentatively, four are alive. They have various injuries. The fate of two people is being clarified," Rosavtatsia said, citing the Russian embassy in Afghanistan. The RIA Novosti news agency said two passengers were Russians, one who was seriously ill, and the other her husband who had paid for the flight. The two-engine plane was built by France's Dassault in 1978 and owned by a company called Athletic Group and a private individual. A provincial government official in Afghanistan told AFP the aircraft came down in Badkshsan province, which borders China, Tajikistan and Pakistan. The area of the crash is eight hours by road from the provincial capital Faizabad, said Zabiullah Amir, head of the provincial information department. Russian investigators announced the opening of a probe into the cause of the crash. The mighty Hindu Kush mountain range cuts through the province, which is home to Afghanistan's highest peak, Mount Noshaq, at 7,492 metres (24,580 feet) tall.

NP Leaders Akram Dashti, Lala Rasheed Unharmed In Turbat Attack

From Our Correspondent:

TURBAT: Unidentified assailants targeted the convoy of National Party candidate and former minister Lala Rasheed, along with Senator Kheda Akram Dashti, in the Dasht Khadan area.

The assailants opened fire on the convoy, specifically targeting Lala Rasheed and Senator Dashti.

Fortunately, the advanced bulletproof technology of their vehicle thwarted the attack, with the bullets striking the front glass but causing no injuries.

The incident occurred amidst heightened tensions in the area, as this comes shortly after the unfortunate attack on former Senator Aslam Bilidi, a candidate of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz in the National Assembly. Bilidi sustained injuries in an attack that took place in Turbat.

In response to the latest



incident, local authorities and security forces swiftly reached the scene, initiating a thorough investigation into the matter.

The motive behind the attack remains unclear, and efforts are underway to identify and apprehend the perpetrators responsible for this brazen act of violence against political figures.

2 Killed In Dhadar District Kachhi Attack

From Our Correspondent:

BOLAN: In a shocking incident, two lives were cut short by unidentified assailants in the Dhadar area, sending shockwaves through the community.

The victims, identified as Jafar Khan Kalui and Hazar Khan Kahri residents of Naari, fell victim to the indiscriminate firing. The incident has plunged the locality into a state of panic and fear.

The bodies of the deceased have been swiftly transported to Civil Hospital Dhadar, where authorities are working diligently to unravel the circum-



stances surrounding this tragic event. Dr. Saifullah Marri, the Medical Superintendent, confirmed the identities of the victims and expressed deep condolences to their families.

Law enforcement agencies are actively involved in the investigation, seeking to uncover the motives behind this senseless act of violence. The community is urged to remain vigilant and cooperate with authorities during this challenging time.

As the residents grapple with the aftermath of this unfortunate incident, there is a

growing demand for increased security measures in the area to prevent further acts of violence.

The local authorities are urged to address the concerns of the community promptly and ensure the safety and well-being of the residents.

This heartbreaking incident serves as a somber reminder of the need for collective efforts to maintain peace and security within our communities.

The community stands united in grief, and support for the affected families is pouring in from all quarters.

Iran, Pakistan flights resume amid easing tensions

KARACHI (INP): In a sign of improving relations between Iran and Pakistan, commercial flights between the two countries have resumed after a brief hiatus.

According to aviation sources, Iran's Mahan Airlines flight arrived in Lahore on Sunday, carrying more than 100 passengers.

The flight landed at Lahore Airport from Tehran, sources said.

Flights between the two countries were suspended due to Pakistan-Iran tensions over border security and regional issues.

The resumption of flights is expected to boost trade, tourism, and people-to-people contacts between the

two neighboring countries.

On Friday, Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Jafar Abbas Jilani, had a telephone conversation with his Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

The two ministers discussed the recent developments in the region and the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Jilani briefed Abdollahian on Pakistan's position and reiterated that the defence of national security and sovereignty was the most important for Pakistan.

He said that the red lines regarding Pakistan's security were clear and that Pakistan would not allow any violation of its

territorial integrity. He also expressed Pakistan's desire to resolve the issues through dialogue and peaceful means.

Both sides agreed to reduce the recent tension and to enhance cooperation and coordination between the two countries.

The rare military actions in the porous border region of Baluchistan - shared between the two countries - further stoked regional tensions already enflamed by the Israel-Hamas war. Iran carried out a missile and drone attack on what it called "terrorist" targets in Pakistan on Tuesday

night, with Pakistan in turn striking militant targets inside Iran on Thursday.

Pakistan recalled its ambassador from Tehran and said Iran's envoy - on a visit home - was blocked from returning to Islamabad.

The United Nations and the United States appealed for restraint, while China offered to mediate.

Tehran and Islamabad both said they hit their own domestic militants sheltering on foreign territory. A collective death toll of 11 - mostly women and children - was reported from both sides of the border that bisects an arid region where militant movements have simmered for decades.



JAMAICA: Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi are participating in the meeting in Kingstons.

Need to boost industrialization, exports by lowering production cost: Anjum Nisar

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has called for promoting industrialization and enhancing exports through lowering cost of production, paying early re-

turns to solve liquidity crunch and relaxing import policy for industrial raw material. In a statement issued on Sunday, the former president FPCCI and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said that business's community was facing tough challenges because of limited business. In this context, he sought attention of the government for formulation of regional, provincial and central level task force and formulation of sector wise regional policies which would help the government address the problems confronted by exporters.

He suggested that One Window Operation should be introduced for replacing the lengthy procedures that involve interaction of manufacturers with various agencies. The government agencies were harassing the textile industry every day. Social Security, EOBI and other taxes should be merged and deducted at the source.

Mian Anjum Nisar asked the government to appreciate the role of industry for its potential to harvest maximum benefits, providing mass employment to the job-

less population of the country. He also sought government's attention for formulating aggressive marketing plan and hurdle-free policies as well as urgent decisions in favour of exports while taking on board major stakeholders.

He called for concerted efforts for exploring new markets both traditional and non-traditional in order to introduce home made products. He urged the government to announce favorable policies and allow duty-free import of raw material and accessories. This move will help attract investors and help in setting up new industries which will create wide opportunities for employment.

We direly need a stimulus economic plan coupled with relief package by the government to maximize production, the business leader said and also emphasized the need for seeking technical knowhow from China and other countries for the sake of innovation, and improvement of products. The BMP Chairman said the sustainable solution to Pakistan's problems lies in reforms, as we can see very large inefficiencies in tax collection. So, the tax compliance must be improved and tax base be broadened. This cannot be achieved with a single policy change, but by a systemic approach, he added.

He observed the government preferred direct taxation to meet revenue shortfall as opposed to resorting to increasing indirect taxes because direct taxes tend to be more progressive in nature, therefore, the burden on the lower income strata of the population is lesser. He emphasized that concentrating on import substitution is imperative to narrow import bills and certain imported products such as oil are of a fixed nature, therefore, the government needs to enhance focus on import substitution industries, such as chemicals, agriculture and steel are potential industries. Mian Anjum Nisar said that undertaking structural reforms require political will. He said that enacting structural reforms, such as improvement in tax collection system, bureaucracy and ease of doing business requires major political will and strict implementation of policies, he added.

He urged the government to solve their problems on a priority basis in consultation with the traders. The BMP's mission was to create a stable economy and prosperous business community, he added. The BMP Chairman also called for promoting industrialization and enhancing exports through lowering the cost of production, paying early refunds to solve liquidity crunch and relaxing import policy for industrial raw material. He said the

business community was facing problems like unannounced load shedding, parking, departmental procedures, overbilling and expensive electricity and gas in the markets. He asked the government to appreciate the role of trade, industry and exporters, providing mass employment to the jobless population of the country.

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The BMP chairman stressed the need for reforms, with a keen focus on value-addition for a sustainable economic growth, recommending the government to raise exports to double digit of the GDP, as Pakistan's exports have bounced back after winning dispute. Mian Anjum Nisar stressed that focus should be on promoting exports and restricting imports alongside making domestic industry more competitive and subsequently expand its export market. He said that exports of goods and services are an injection into the circular flow of income leading to a rise in aggregate demand and an expansion of output, helping raise per capita.

In all, it has covered just over 10 miles (17 kilometers) and reached altitudes of up to 79 feet (24 meters). Its longevity has proved remarkable, particularly considering that it must survive glacially cold Martian nights, kept warm by the solar panels that recharge its batteries during daylight hours. Working with Perseverance, it has acted as an aerial scout to assist its wheeled companion in searching for possible signs of ancient microbial life. The mini rotorcraft,



QUETTA: PTI candidate for PB-39, Noor Khan Khilji leading a rally. Photo Daily Quetta Voice

Pakistan snatch 42-run win over New Zealand in fifth T20

WELLINGTON: Pakistan's spinners ran through New Zealand to pick up a consolation 42-run win in the fifth and final Twenty20 international on Sunday and avoid a series clean sweep.

The tourists lost the five-match series 4-1 but it ended on a positive note as they dismissed the Black Caps for a paltry 32 in defence of 134-8. Part-time offspinner Ifrikhar Ahmed produced career-best figures of 3-24 as a weakened New Zealand batting lineup struggled against the turning ball and were skittled for their eighth-lowest T20 total.

Only opener Finn Allen (22) and Glenn Phillips (26) passed 20 as

lasters claimed the best eight wickets for 39 runs in comfortably their best bowling display of the series.

Left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz (2-18) was effective with the new ball, removing Rachin Ravindra and Will Young cheaply, while Shaheen Shah Afridi, coming to cheer at the end of his maiden series as captain, taking 2-20.

New Zealand were missing three of their first-choice batters: Kane Williamson (knee injury), Devon Conway (Covid-19) and Daryl Mitchell (rested).

Earlier, it appeared the home side had done enough to push for a clean sweep when they restricted Pakistan's bat-

ters with another disciplined bowling display. Seamers Tim Southee, Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson all claimed two scalps, along with spinner Ish Sodhi. Southee (2-19), the highest wicket-taker in T20 cricket, dismissed debutant Haseebullah Khan in the opening over and returned in 13th over to remove the dangerous Fakhar Zaman, who had raced to 32 off 16 balls.

Top scorer Mohammad Rizwan departed soon afterwards for 38 off 38, ultimately consigning Pakistan to the lowest first-innings score by either team in the series.

Shaheen Shah Afridi said it was "very important" his team avoided a whitewash series loss to New Zealand. He said the series was primarily seen as a chance to build towards the T20 World Cup in June but it would have been a setback to lose five from five.

"Today's game was very important for us. We needed that as a unit to step forward," Shaheen said. "In the first four games, there were a lot of collapses, as a fielding unit, as a batting unit, but I think today we played as a team and we needed that win."

"It's not easy for any team to come here. And I think our mind is on the World Cup. We're just checking out every spot for every player and giving chances to youngsters."

factor was so irritated with Pakistan that it was closing its operations. Dr Murtaza Mughal warned that a public health crisis was already in the making, while the departure of the US-based multinational company may result in a catastrophic crisis.

In such a situation, the authorities have remained unconcerned, which was surprising, he said, adding that the unbridled bureaucracy has forced twenty-two multinational companies to leave the country in a few years, which merits an investigation.

Expulsion of pharma industry foreign investors must be stopped: President PEW

ISLAMABAD (INP): President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), Dr. Murtaza Mughal has said that forced expulsion of foreign investors from the country should be stopped at once as it was hurting the masses and investment climate. In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said that over two dozen pharmaceutical companies have left Pakistan over the last few years. With the closure of the European and sure of the remaining companies, many medicines, including life-saving medicines, will become scarce, he added.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the scarcity of medicine always leads to smuggling, and patients end up paying double or triple the price for drugs in the black market.

It was an open fact that the product quality of the local pharma industry was not what it should be, he said and added that their exports were also limited to a few African countries, while they were kept from entering the country in the world, with almost 26% of adult patients having the condition.

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facturer was so irritated with Pakistan that it was closing its operations. Dr Murtaza Mughal warned that a public health crisis was already in the making, while the departure of the US-based multinational company may result in a catastrophic crisis.

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ZIARAT: Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Dr. Ameer Muhammad Khan Jogezi is currently visiting the District Headquarters Hospital in Ziarat.

NASA regains contact with mini-helicopter on Mars

WASHINGTON, D. C. (INP): NASA has re-established contact with its tiny helicopter on Mars, the US space agency said Saturday, after an unexpected outage prompted by commanding the hard-working craft had finally met its end.

Ingenium, a drone about 1.6 feet (0.5 meters) tall, arrived on Mars in 2021 aboard the rover Perseverance and became the first motorized craft to fly autonomously on another planet. Data from the helicopter are transmitted via Perseverance back to Earth, but communications were suddenly lost during a test flight on Thursday. Ingenium's 72nd lift-off on Mars.

"Good news today,"

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) wrote on X, formerly Twitter, late Saturday. The agency said that contact had finally been made with the helicopter by commanding Perseverance to "perform long-duration listening sessions for Ingenium's signal."

The team is reviewing the new data to better understand the unexpected comms dropout during Flight 72," it added. NASA previously said that Ingenium had attained an altitude of 40 feet (12 meters) on Flight 72, which was a "quick pop-up vertical flight to check out the helicopter's systems following an unplanned early landing during its

previous flight." But during its descent, "communications between the helicopter and rover terminated early, prior to touchdown," the agency said. JPL had noted on Friday that Perseverance was temporarily "out of line-of-sight with Ingenium, but the team could consider driving closer for a visual inspection."

In a response to a post on X asking if Ingenium would be able to fly again, JPL said Saturday that "the team needs to assess the new data before that can be determined." NASA has lost contact with the helicopter before, including for an agonizing two months last year. The mini rotorcraft,

which weighs just four pounds (1.8 kilograms), has far exceeded its original goal of undertaking five flights over 30 days on the red planet.

In all, it has covered just over 10 miles (17 kilometers) and reached altitudes of up to 79 feet (24 meters). Its longevity has proved remarkable, particularly considering that it must survive glacially cold Martian nights, kept warm by the solar panels that recharge its batteries during daylight hours.

Working with Perseverance, it has acted as an aerial scout to assist its wheeled companion in searching for possible signs of ancient microbial life. The mini rotorcraft,



Quetta. Workers busy preparing Election 2024 posters on Mekangi Road.

Justice continues to elude Gaw Kadal massacre victims

ISLAMABAD (INP) Justice continues to elude the victims of Gaw Kadal massacre victims in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) despite the passage of 34 years.

A report released by Kashmir Media Service, today, said that over 50 people were martyred in Gaw Kadal area of Srinagar on January 21 in 1990 when Indian troops had resorted to indiscriminate firing on peaceful demonstrators who were protesting against the molestation of several women by troops, the previous night.

Indian troops had committed scores of brutal massacres since 1989 in IOJK, it said, adding that over 96,287 Kashmiris had fallen to the Indian bullets in the past 35 years and that the memories of Gaw Kadal like bloodbaths were still fresh in the minds of Kashmiris.

The report pointed out that the aim of continuing massacres was to instill fear among the people of Kashmir, adding that the large-scale killings of the Kashmiris were also meant to change the demography of the territory by turning its Muslim majority status into a minority.

The Gaw Kadal and other massacres are a reminder of the criminal face of the occupation troops, the report depicted and added that the RSS-backed Indian regime had planned to carry out more Gaw Kadal-like carnages in the occupied territory. It lamented that the Hindutva-inspired Modi had broken all records of atrocities in the occupied territory.

However, the report said, wanted killings would not cease the Kashmiris from pursuing their struggle for right to self-determination and they would not rest till achieving

freedom from Indian yoke.

The report urged the international rights bodies to probe massacres committed by Indian troops in IOJK.

The world must play its role to punish culprits of Gaw Kadal and other massacres in the territory, adding that the killing fields of Kashmir was a challenge to the so-called civilized world.

Meanwhile, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK), including Convener Mehmood Ahmad Saghar, General Secretary Sheikh Abdul Muteen, Intiyaz Wani, Shameem Shawl, Javed Ahmed Butt, Syed Ajiz Rehmani, Syed Gulshan Ahmed, Muhammad Sultan Butt, Altaf Ahmad Butt and Mushtaq Ahmad Butt, have paid glowing tributes to the martyrs of Gaw Kadal massacre on their 34 martyrdom anniversary.



QUETTA: Independent candidate for PB-42, Mudassar Siddique, is addressing the workers following the inauguration ceremony of the election office.

Pakistan's economy: what to expect for 2024, bright prospects of Sino-Pak partnership

ISLAMABAD (INP) In 2023, Pakistan returned from the verge of debt default. Amid the turbulence of surging inflation and budget deficit, we see that due to some corrective measures such as government fiscal reforms and cost cut, economy started getting back to stability. What can we expect for 2024? To answer this question, China Economic Net (CEN) had an interview with Dr. Abd Qayyum Suleri, executive director of Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan and member of the Pakistan Climate Change Council for some insights. "I'm optimistic that Pakistan's economic situation will start to improve in calendar year 2024. The elections will bring the much needed certainty. The resolve from all mainstream political parties that they will go to the IMF for the next program if they get a chance to form a government will ensure much-needed fiscal discipline and policy consistency. It will also help in shoring up Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves. This in turn will improve Pakistan's creditworthiness, too", he said. In its latest report "Global Economic Prospects -- January 2024", the World Bank projected Pakistan's economic growth at 1.7 percent for the ongoing fiscal year 2023-24 and 2.4 percent in FY2024-25, an inspiring recovery from -0.2 percent in the previous fiscal year. According to Dr. Suleri, two external factors can affect Pakistan's economic performance in 2024. One is global energy prices, which are dependent on the geopolitical tensions. "If the Ukraine-Russia tension remains, or if the situation in the Middle East gets worse, that would have an impact on the

prices, which would have impact on our economic outlook", he said. The second important factor is climate change. A bad monsoon or El Niño may weigh against the agriculture sector.

"If the two external factors remain favourable, then I am quite optimistic that securing a modest GDP growth will not be difficult", he said.

"After taking IMF program, we saw that in September 2023, the value of PKR versus USD got a shot up to almost 350 in the open market. There were problems of energy, misuse of trade subsidies, hoarding and panic around currency, etc. That's where SIFC came to action. After corrections were given, we saw the value of PKR against USD come back to 285. We saw a major crackdown on energy cheating. We saw the control on misuse of Afghan transit trade agreement. With administrative actions put into place, things can be smooth", he said.

A prominent challenge for Pakistan within sight is the transition to a greener economy.

For long, it was seen that going green would have a negative impact on growth. That hypothesis is no longer valid. Now, countries, aware that the cost of protection is high, have to go green. "But the cost of transition is high. So at the multilateral level, we should keep talking about climate justice and the historical responsibility of advanced economies", he said.

He shared that SDPI, as a founding member of the Beijing Initiative for Belt and Road Green Development, has been promoting awareness as well as capabilities. "China has been stressing green Belt and Road cooperation, which provides opportunities for Pakistan to learn", he said.

people who all over the country have long been annoyed by paying for the mismanagement, incompetence, and corruption in the electricity, gas, and oil sectors. Electricity, gas, and oil were constantly being stolen across the country, but effective action has never been initiated against the thieves, which causes the institutions and the masses to suffer, he observed. He further stated that the government allows institutions to raise the price to deal with the problem of theft and losses, which increases the pressure on the people.



QUETTA: General Secretary of Muslim League(N) Balochistan, Jamal Shah Kakar, and PB-43 candidate Naseem-ur-Rehman are addressing a corner meeting at Joint Road.

LESCO disconnects 394 illegal power connections

LAHORE (INP) The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) detected and took action against 394 cases of electricity theft across its operational circles, covering five districts: Lahore, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Kasur, and Okara.

This accomplishment was reported on the 132nd day of LESCO's rigorous anti-power theft campaign.

According to a LESCO spokesperson, FIR applications were submitted against all 394 identified electricity thieves, with 140 cases already implemented and registered at respective police stations.

Law enforcement agencies have apprehended 13 individuals involved in these power theft activities.

Notably, the crackdown extended beyond residential consumers, revealing the involvement of large commercial consumers in electricity theft.

All such connections were promptly disconnected, including

five commercial, one industrial, four agricultural, and 384 domestic connections.

The accused individuals collectively faced charges for a total of 321,484 pilfered units, amounting to a detection bill of Rs10,930 million.

Shedding light on specific cases, the spokesperson highlighted instances where detection bills worth Rs92,456, Rs201,456, Rs210,000, and Rs185,000 were charged to electricity thieves in various areas.

During the 132 days of the anti-power theft campaign, LESCO uncovered power pilferage on 45,301 connections.

A total of 45,048 FIR applications were submitted, resulting in 42,481 registered cases and the arrest of 17,195 individuals. LESCO has charged a cumulative total of 66,182,780 detection units, equivalent to Rs2,571,786,313, to all power pilferers.

Further investigations by LESCO in various sub-divisions revealed 59 power pilferers in the

Defence East Division and 40 in the Lakhhan Sharif area.

The Defence East Division operation exposed individuals stealing electricity through wire hooking, tampering with metres, and direct tapping into the main supply line.

In the Bedian Road Sub-Division, eight accused were caught stealing electricity, while the Airport Road operation led to the identification of 11 electricity thieves.

Additionally, LESCO teams uncovered 40 power pilferers in the Lakhhan Sharif Scheme area, resulting in the arrest of four individuals. All illegal connections were promptly disconnected, and FIR applications were filed with the respective police stations. In total, 55,442 units were charged to the accused in the form of detection bills.

LESCO's relentless efforts to combat power theft underscore its commitment to ensuring fair and lawful electricity distribution across its operational regions.

Policy of constant hike in power, gas, fuel tariffs proved fruitless: Shahid Rasheed

ISLAMABAD (INP) Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt has said that the policy of continuous increases in the tariffs of electricity and gas and endless price hikes in the price of fuel has proved to be unproductive.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said that the experience failed to reduce circular debt and help resolve other problems but compromised the quality of life of most people. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that because of uncontrolled inflation, most

people were struggling to bring food to the table while ignoring important matters like health and education. It has become difficult for the majority to fulfil the need for food as inflation continues to increase, breaking all previous records, he maintained. The business leader warned that if the situation remains the same, there will be no middle class in the country. Monthly income has become insufficient for many people who were looking for other sources of income to deal with inflation, but only some were fortunate enough, he added. Shahid Rasheed said



QUETTA: Pakistan People's Party General Secretary and NA-263 candidate, Razi Khan, is addressing the media during a press conference.

Attack on PTI, PPP election offices leaves several injured in Karachi

KARACHI (INP) Tensions soared in Karachi as the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) accused the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) of orchestrating attacks on their respective offices. The clashes resulted in injuries to several political workers from both parties.

According to media reports, the incident unfolded at the electoral office of PTI candidate Arsan Khalid in Constituency NA-248 of the National Assembly. Over ten individuals, including Arsan Khalid, were reportedly injured in the attack.

PTI's spokesperson laid blame on MQM workers, alleging that the assault was orchestrated by them. The wounded party workers were swiftly transported to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital and Jinnah

Hospital for medical attention. In response, PTI supporters staged a protest at Liaquat Ali Khan Chowk against the incident.

Simultaneously, in the vicinity of Hyderabad Town, within the limits of PS-250 and PS-129, an attack was reported on the Pakistan Peoples Party's office. Four party workers sustained injuries in this assault. Khawaja Sahi Mansoor claimed that MQM workers were behind the attack. Four PPP workers, injured in the incident, have lodged complaints against the assailants.

Just days earlier, during a rally following an organizational meeting in Karachi, unknown assailants opened fire, injuring two individuals. The incident occurred after Pakistan Peoples Party's candidate Agha Rafiullah concluded the

gathering. Agha Rafiullah remained unharmed during the incident, and the police are currently investigating the case.

Meanwhile, in the provincial capital of Lahore, an explosive attack targeted the electoral office of a Pakistan Peoples Party candidate in Constituency PP-162. Police have initiated an inquiry into the petrol bomb attack. The complainant, Mirza Abbas Khokhar's son, alleged that unknown individuals threw petrol-filled bottles, setting fire to the office.

The assailants reportedly stole valuable items, including 30 chairs and a generator worth around 1.5 million rupees.

These incidents highlight the escalating political tensions and security concerns as the election season intensifies across the country.



QUETTA: PML-N leader and NA-264 candidate, Haji Araz Muhammad Bareeh, is addressing the media during a press conference.