

# QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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dquettavoice@gmail.com

## Govt to ban PTI, seek Article 6 proceedings against Imran, others

Continued on page 4



Information Minister Atta Tarar speaking during a press conference in Islamabad

### PPP Leader Pledges Support for Dalbandin Press Club

**Riaz Baloch:** CHAGHI: PPP Provincial Council Member and District Vice Chairman Mir Asfandyar Khan Yar Muhammad Zai, accompanied by senior PPP leader Mir Shah Nawaz Raisani and tribal elders, met with journalists at Dalbandin Press Club. PPP leader praised the journalists for their constructive criticism and impartial reporting, which he said fosters positive change in the area.

He acknowledged the challenges faced by the press club and promised to seek approval from the MPA.

Senator, and Chief Minister of Balochistan for its modernization.

Dalbandin Press Club leaders Riaz Hussain Baloch, Ali Haider Azim, Mohammad Bakhsh Baloch, and Farooq Syahpad thanked PPP leader for his visit and support.

highlighting the club's reliance on community contributions to operate.

### CM Bugti Briefs President Zardari About Balochistan's Development

**Dawood Ahmed:** ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, met with President Asif Ali Zardari at the President's House to discuss the province's overall situation and ongoing development projects.

The Chief Minister highlighted various public welfare initiatives and stressed the importance of their timely completion.

Balochistan Ministers including Mir Ali Madad Jattak,

Mir Zahoor Buledi, Sardar Sarfaraz Chakar Domki and others were also present on the occasion.

President Zardari emphasized the need for early completion of these projects to ensure the development and prosperity of Balochistan. He specifically mentioned the Kachhi Canal project, urging the provincial government to take effective measures for its swift completion with government support. The meeting underscored the commitment of both leaders to enhancing Balochistan's infrastructure and improving the quality of life for its residents.



### Mehmood Achakzai Acquitted In Land Grabbing Case

Manan Mandokhail:

**QUETTA:** The Chairman of Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) and head of the opposition alliance, Mahmood Khan Achakzai, has been acquitted by the Balochistan High Court in a land grabbing case.

A division bench of the BHC comprising Mr. Justice Ejaz Swati and Mr. Justice Amir Nawaz Rana ordered the acquittal of Achakzai in the land grabbing case.

The court closed the FIR filed against him, which included charges of interference in government affairs and land grabbing.

The FIR was registered by Quetta police and district administration following threats to raid Achakzai's house during the presidential elections in March this year.

The case was successfully defended by Kamran Murtaza Advocate and Habibullah Nasir Advocate on behalf of Achakzai.

Police and district administration had conducted a raid at the residence of Achakzai earlier this year and accused him of interfering in the government affairs and land grabbing. One of his personal guards was also arrested by the police.

### Balochistan on High Alert for Monsoon: PDMA Issues Red Alert in 17 Districts

Staff Reporter:

**QUETTA:** The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has declared a high alert in 17 districts of Balochistan as the region braces for the monsoon season. The administration has been placed on red alert to manage potential emergencies effectively.

#### Key Details:

**High Alert Districts:** PDMA Balochistan has identified 17 districts at high risk during the monsoon season.

and all relevant departments have been briefed on their responsibilities.

**Safe Locations:** Deputy Commissioners in the high alert districts have been instructed to compile a list of safe places for evacuation if necessary.

**Flood-Prone Areas:** Naserabad division faces threats from Harnai's floodwaters, while Zhob and Sherani are at risk of flash floods.

**NGO Involvement:** Local NGOs have been notified



**Relief Measures:** Jahanzab Khan, Director General of PDMA Balochistan, confirmed that relief materials have been dispatched to all affected districts.

An emergency plan has been meticulously prepared,

to remain on standby to assist in emergency situations during the monsoon rains.

DG PDMA Balochistan emphasizes the importance of preparedness and swift response to mitigate the impact of monsoon-related disasters.

### Police 'arrest' Imran over several May 9 cases

**LAHORE/ISLAMABAD:** As the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) secured an eight-day remand of former prime minister Imran Khan in a fresh Toshakhana case, Lahore police have also 'arrested' him in connection with a dozen cases, including the attack on the Corps Commander House, lodged against the PTI founder over the May 9 riots.

Sources say the ex-PM would not be moved to Lahore for interrogation due to the security risks involved, but will appear before an anti-terrorism court in Lahore via video link today (Monday), where police are expected to seek his remand.

A 13-member team of the Lahore police's investigation wing visited Adiala Jail on Saturday to quiz the former prime minister regarding the violence which started on May 9 after his arrest from the Islamabad High Court.

Sources said the PTI leader refused to meet the Lahore police team when they tried to gain access to him to interrogate him about the May 9 cases, in which he was nominated on various offences, including charges of provoking the public against the state.

Lahore Investigation DG Zeeshan Asghar told Dawn that the police arrested the PTI founder as he was the prime suspect in the 12 cases registered at various police stations in the city.

Another senior officer told Dawn that the investigation police arrested the PTI founder in 12 out of the total 16 cases registered by the Lahore police over the May 9 attacks. A 13-member police team, including at least 12 investigating officers (IOs), went to Adiala jail over the weekend. Although prison authorities apprised the PTI founder about the purpose of their visit, Mr Khan refused to meet them. An official said the team stayed at Adiala jail and sent several messages to Mr Khan, but to no avail.

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### Security forces foil terrorist attack in Bannu: state media

**NEWS DESK:** Security forces foiled a terrorist attack in the Bannu cantonment area on Monday, Radio Pakistan reported. Per the report, terrorists attempted to enter the high-security cantonment area by detonating an explosive-laden vehicle on the road linking the outer wall of the cantonment with the supply depot.

"Security forces foiled the terrorists' attempt by taking timely action [...] and have started a clearance operation," the report said.

Area locals told Dawn.com that they heard two explosions near the cantonment at about 4:40am, followed by the sound of gunshots. They said houses and shops located near the site of the explosions were damaged follow-

BY Tahir Khan



ing the blasts, adding that casualties are feared.

While the government has yet to release the details of casualties, a spokesperson for the government hospitals in Bannu, Muhammad Numan, told Dawn.com that eight people were left wounded in the attack. "Nabeed Bibi, 55, who was injured due to firing, was shifted to Peshawar," he said, adding that

others with minor injuries were discharged after treatment.

"Three women were injured due to firing while fragments from the blast also landed in their homes," he added.

Other people who sustained injuries included Sawera Bibi, 25, Bakawar Bibi, 26, Jamila Bibi, 30, Sunbul, 9, Maria, 5, Esa, 3, and Anwar Ali, 9. Pakistan has witnessed an uptick in terror activities in the past year, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan after the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) ended its ceasefire with the government in November 2022. Last week, Islamabad once again ruled out the possibility of any talks with the TTP and reiterated that Kabul must act against terrorists operating on its soil.



Gaza civil defence says 15 killed in Israel strike on Gaza school. Page 3

## Solarization Project: A Beacon of Hope for Balochistan's Agriculture

Editor: Asim Khan

### Editorial:

In a significant stride towards sustainable development, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has launched a visionary project to solarize nearly 28,000 agricultural tube wells in Balochistan. This initiative, executed in collaboration between the federal and Balochistan governments, marks a pivotal moment in the province's agricultural landscape. By transitioning electric tube wells to solar power, the project ensures a consistent and sustainable water supply for farmers, heralding a new era of agricultural productivity and economic growth.

The \$5 billion rupee project, with 70% financing from the federal government and 30% from the Balochistan government, is not just a testament to intergovernmental cooperation but also a commitment to merit-based development. Prime Minister Sharif has set an ambitious three-month deadline for the completion of the solarization process, emphasizing the urgency and importance of this initiative.

Solar-powered tube wells promise a reliable water supply throughout the day, addressing the long-standing issue of limited electricity availability, which has previously restricted water access to a mere 2 to 6 hours per day despite substantial federal subsidies. This transformation will significantly enhance agricultural productivity, expand arable land, and ultimately improve the livelihoods of Balochistan's farmers.

During the signing ceremony in Quetta, Prime Minister Sharif highlighted the environmental and economic advantages of solar energy, reaffirming the government's dedication to promoting renewable energy sources nationwide. This project underscores the federal government's unwavering support for Balochistan's development, showcasing a model of cooperation and commitment to addressing the province's unique challenges.

Moreover, the Prime Minister's announcement of additional initiatives, including substantial quotas for Balochistan students in vocational training programs in China and the establishment of Danish schools in the province, reflects a comprehensive approach to uplift Balochistan. By investing in education and skill development, the government aims to empower the youth, fostering a generation capable of driving the province's future growth and prosperity.

Addressing Balochistan's provincial cabinet, Prime Minister Sharif called for collective efforts to alleviate deprivation and promote the province's development. His message was clear: the path to progress lies in merit-based initiatives and inclusive development strategies that leave no one behind.

The solarization project is more than just an infrastructure upgrade; it is a beacon of hope for Balochistan's agricultural sector. It represents a commitment to sustainable practices, economic empowerment, and the promotion of merit in developmental endeavors. As the project unfolds, it promises to pave the way for a brighter future for the province's farmers and youth, setting a precedent for other regions to follow.

In conclusion, the solarization of agricultural tube wells in Balochistan is a landmark initiative that embodies the principles of merit, sustainability, and collaboration. It is a shining example of how targeted, well-planned interventions can drive significant positive change, offering hope and prosperity to those who need it most.

## Befits the bill

By Shahbaz Sharif:

UTILITY bills will not decrease, and natural gas outages and electricity loadshedding will continue until we hold ourselves and all state and government companies accountable. The right questions, policies, and priorities will make Pakistan sustainable. We can't rob the coming generations of their future.

Not a day passes without a new savour appearing on the horizon, promising the moon. A fifty of snake oil salesmen is peddling to pay or not to pay electricity bills as the existential question. A speeder is making bids for K-Electric through video shorts. All that stands between long-suffering Karachiites and an affordable and reliable power supply is for someone to tell him how power companies are acquired, he complains.

Many an adviser to the Ministry of Finance can regale you with stories of others willing to pay the entire national debt if the ministry is-

sues them a letter of support. The surest way of getting rid of these bleeding-heart patriots is to ask them to deposit a letter of guarantee worth only a million dollars.

Returning to the latest superhero to the rescue, after you get schemes and agendas to waste to ask, 'Really? K-Electric? The same entity that Shanghai Electric could not buy?' He would buy it and run it like a soup kitchen.

We are not asking the right questions about power woes.

A legislator's speech is also making the rounds. The MNA raves and rants about 'bias' against Sindh, which causes 18-hour power outages. The legislator is also livid at the buck being passed to the masses for electricity theft and non-payment of bills. Such bravado is possible because we are all accomplices in allowing the situation to come to this.

Who does not know of rural electrification schemes for sparsely populated

areas across the country incurring infrastructure costs running into hundreds of millions, line losses, and theft? Rural areas have as much right to essential amenities as anyone in the country, but how come everyone plays along as if free lunches exist? These schemes are meant at getting votes. The constituencies believe they elect their representatives to get subsidised, if not free, electricity, teaching jobs, transfers and postings, and to sort out matters with the local police.

To cut to the chase, we behave silly because it suits us. We have not asked the questions that we should have, for instance, 'why does my village have to get electricity from the national grid?' Why can't we have localised solutions like run-of-river, small hydro generation, and renewables like wind and solar energy be used?

Why should K-Electric be allowed to keep its generation plants idle and demand the national grid provide cheaper hydro units

Syed Ali Shah:

### Solarization in Balochistan: A Boon or a Looming Crisis?

A significant stride towards sustainable development, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has launched a visionary project to solarize nearly 28,000 agricultural tube wells in Balochistan. While this initiative marks a pivotal moment in the province's agricultural landscape, it raises two critical challenges that must be addressed.

First, Balochistan is prone to natural calamities and is already bearing the brunt of climate change and global warming. If the growers' community is not protected through solar panels 24/7, the underground water table could deplete rapidly, posing a severe threat. Has our government analyzed this potential risk? In the past, subsidies on agricultural tube wells have caused depleting water tables in Quetta and other parts

By Tariq Afghan:

The illegal cutting and commercial exploitation of glaciers within the regions of Dir, Chitral, Swat, Shangha, Kaghan, Naran, and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa pose a significant threat to the ecological and climatic stability of the province. These activities are in direct violation of the environmental protection statutes and regulations governing KP.

With over 7,000 known glaciers, Pakistan forms the largest mass of ice outside the polar regions. Northern Pakistan, crisscrossed by the Karakoram, Himalayan, and Hindu Kush mountain ranges, is a landscape carved out of ice and rock. These glaciers provide much-needed irrigation water to the region, acting as the lifeblood of civilisation in the north. Local communities have developed intricate systems of canals to utilise glacier meltwater for crop irrigation.

However, climate change has profoundly affected Pakistan, leading to rapidly rising temperatures and melting snow, which cause massive flooding, devastating villages and leading to frequent drownings.

Like many alpine areas worldwide, glaciers in Pakistan are receding. Ironically, despite Pakistan's obligations under international environmental agreements, acting as the lifeblood of civilisation in the north, local communities have developed intricate systems of canals to utilise glacier meltwater for crop irrigation.

## Expecting too much

By Shahid Kardar:

THE provinces have become the favourite punching bag of Islamabad donors and commentators. They are being chastised for failing to generate adequate resources to fund their constitutional responsibilities and provide social and economic services, such as law and order, education, health, water and sanitation, etc. This article examines the fairness of this criticism without getting into the merits of the last NFC Award that has given the provinces close to 60 per cent of the national divisible revenue pool.

The revenue-raising capacity of the provinces is somewhat limited because of the taxation powers in the Constitution. The structure of GST in VAT mode. This is not to suggest that the provinces have done enough to generate revenue. Historically, they

haven't been sufficiently aggressive in collecting taxes on incomes derived from agriculture (AT) — income tax was being levied by also treating land rented out as agricultural income — or to make urban property tax more progressive and robust. However, they have made a significant effort in recent years to mobilise additional revenues by widening their base of GST on services. As for AT, there are outlandish claims about what can be generated from the crop sector as well as exaggerated estimates of the size of the livestock sector.

Over the years, Islamabad has pre-empted and exploited the revenue base of the provinces that everyone wants them to exploit — motor vehicles, real estate and services. It has levied a variety of taxes without taxes

on motor vehicles and property — in the latter also a capital gains tax — a tax on 'deemed income' and now even excise duty.

Similarly, it has narrowed down provincial options to exploit the potential of GST on services. For instance, by what twisted logic can Islamabad levy GST on the distribution of electricity, gas, etc. treating them as goods, and impose excise duties on financial services in lieu of GST that the provinces could have levied, and have conceptually bizarre legislation that empowers it to levy GST on retail outlets by treating them as selling goods whereas all they are doing is adding value as a service by selling finished goods? These entities are providing services — which are treated as services under the national income accounts — and GST on services

is a provincial tax under the Constitution.

The federal demand that the provinces raise more revenues is somewhat bizarre.

There is certainly an issue at the provincial level over the revenue collecting authorities: one agency collects GST on services, one collects property tax and one levies the vehicle tax and one levies property transfers and collects stamp duty.

Resultantly, taxpayers have to contend with different authorities for different taxes. This multiplicity of revenue collecting agencies is adversely affecting administrative and economic efficiency, leading to higher transaction and operational costs, the unnecessary duplication of functions and databases, and inconsistent legal and other treatment of similar taxes. Such an arrangement has raised the cost

of compliance for taxpayers, causing increased aggravation.

What is, however, worrying is that instead of correcting these anomalies in tax structures, Islamabad, compelled by the IMF, are intent on consolidating and strengthening existing systems, or to generate, by hook or by crook, more revenues to plug some magical number of the budget deficit. So much for the refrain that tax reforms are being studiously implemented.

The demand that the provinces should raise more revenues is also somewhat bizarre when examined against the political economy fallout of related decisions were they to heed such advice. Why on earth would anyone work more or increase a tax — and resultantly provoke the ire of its

constituents — to muster additional resources, which it would be required to save for the province's development spend? For this year, the provinces are required to produce surpluses in excess of Rs 1.5 billion. Why would they accede to such a ridiculous demand to generate surplus employment and spend? For KP, it may be even more politically peculiar to do so, with federal government funds for hydel profits, and the local economy struggling to function in an increasingly debilitating environment.

Furthermore, the biggest share of provincial expenditures goes to salaries and pensions. Whereas Islamabad is itself bloated and continues to show little serious intent to right-size its workforce it has this year revised salaries by 25% and pensions by 15%, demanding bel-

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Moreover, the Prime Minister's announcement of additional initiatives, including substantial quotas for Balochistan students in vocational training programs in China and the

## Protecting KP's glaciers

of Gilgit-Baltistan, need to pass glacier protection and preservation laws immediately to stop further depletion of these critical natural resources.

The unauthorised cutting of glaciers constitutes a clear violation of environmental protection laws and regulations in force within KP.

These actions require immediate enforcement and enforcement of the relevant legal penalties against the perpetrators.

The depletion of glaciers disrupts the fragile ecological balance, affecting local flora and fauna. The loss of these glaciers undermines efforts to preserve biodiversity and protect endangered species within these regions. Glaciers play an essential role in regulating Earth's climate by reflecting solar radiation and maintaining the global temperature.

The Convention on Biological Diversity promotes the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

Article 8 of the CBD emphasises in-situ conservation, including protecting ecosystems and natural habitats, such as glaciers in their natural surroundings.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification addresses land degradation and desertification, including protecting water sources and glaciers that contribute to regional hydrological stability. Articles 10 and 11 of the UNCCD focus on national action

plans and strategies to combat desertification and promote sustainable land management practices.

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plans and strategies to combat desertification and promote sustainable land management practices. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 SDGs, several of which are relevant to glacier protection. SDG 13 (climate action) asks countries to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, which includes the preservation of glaciers. SDG 15 (life on land) promotes the sustainable management of forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and stopping biodiversity loss, indirectly supporting glacier conservation.

The authorities need to protect these precious reserves of glaciers and conduct a comprehensive investigation into illegal glacier-cutting activities, identifying and prosecuting those responsible in accordance with the law. They must strictly enforce existing environmental protection laws and regulations to prevent further illegal exploitation of glaciers.

Furthermore, promoting and supporting sustainable practices that ensure the conservation and protection of glaciers for future generations is crucial. Both the KP and federal governments are under obligation to pass laws for the protection and preservation of glaciers.

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### LHC CJ sends recommendation to form larger bench on phone tapping plea to CJ

LAHORE (INP) Justice Farooq Haider of the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday forwarded his recommendation to LHC Chief Justice (CJ) Miss Aalia Neelum to form a larger bench on the petition filed against the federal government's decision to give an intelligence agency the power to tap phone calls of politicians and others.

Naming the federal government, the Interior Ministry, the Ministry for Informa-

tion Technology and others as respondents, the Judicial Activism Panel, in its petition, said the government's decision was not only against the constitution but also against the court's verdict. "Before tapping phone calls, it is necessary to seek permission from a court," the petitioner said, adding.

"The government does not have the authority to allow any agency to do so until and unless the court grants permission for that."

It was in fact, the petitioner argued, not only the breach of country's laws, but also of international laws.

"Therefore, it is prayed to the court to declare the government's decision null and void."

Four days ago, the federal government's decision to allow the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency to tap phone calls was challenged in the Lahore High Court.

On July 9, the government authorized the ISI to tap phone calls on the grounds that it was necessary for national security and crime prevention.

The authorization was given under Section 54 of the Pakistan Telecommunication Act.

As per the notification issued by the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication, at least an officer of grade 18 will be appointed for this task.



QUETTA: Provincial Health Minister Balochistan Sardarzada Mir Faisal Khan Jamali is inaugurating the Trauma Center Triage Unit at Civil Hospital.

### After assassination attempt, Trump and Biden seek calm, unity

WASHINGTON (INP) Donald Trump arrived on Sunday in Milwaukee, where he will be formally nominated as the Republican presidential candidate later this week after surviving an assassination attempt that has aggravated an already bitter U.S. political divide.

US President Joe Biden, a Democrat, ordered a review of how a 20-year-old man with an AR-15-style rifle got close enough to shoot at Trump from a rooftop on Saturday. Trump, a former president, has lifetime protection by the U.S. Secret Service.

Trump, 78, was holding a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania - a key state in the Nov 5 election - when shots rang out, hitting his right ear and leaving his face streaked with blood. His campaign said he was doing well.

"That reality is just setting in," Trump told the Washington Examiner on Sunday. "I rarely look away from the crowd. Had I not done that in that moment, well, we would not be talking today, would we?"

"One person in the crowd was killed and two others wounded before Secret Service agents fatally shot the suspect. Trump is due to accept his party's formal nomination at the Republican National Convention with a speech on Thursday. He pumped his fist in the air several times as he descended the stairs from his plane after arriving in Milwaukee.

"This is a chance to bring the whole country, even the whole world, together. The speech will be a lot different, a lot different than it would've been two days ago," Trump told the Washington Examiner.

"There is no place in America for this kind of violence, for any violence, for any violence, for any violence. No exceptions. We can't allow this violence to be normalized," he said. "The political rhetoric in this country has gotten very heated. It's time to cool it down." Biden and Trump spoke to each other on Saturday night after the shooting. First Lady Jill Biden also spoke with former First Lady Melania Trump on Sunday afternoon.

The FBI said there were no known threats to the Republican convention - which kicks off on Monday - or anyone attending, while the Secret Service said they do not anticipate any changes to the security plan.

The convention will feature televised speeches by rising Republican stars and Trump's choice for a yet-to-be-announced vice presidential running mate, while highlighting the party's stance on such topics as abortion, immigration and the economy.

The FBI identified Thomas Matthew Crooks of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, as the suspect and said the shooting was being investigated as an attempted assassination.

FBI officials said on Sunday that the shooter acted alone. The agency said it had yet to identify an ideology linked to the suspect or any indications of mental health issues or found any threatening language on the suspect's social media accounts. Crooks was a registered Republican, according to state voter records, and donated \$15 to a Democratic political action committee when he was 17. At the time of the shooting he was employed as a dietary aide at a nursing home. The Bethel Park Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center said Crooks performed his job without concern and his background check was clean.

The gun - an AR-style-5.56 calibre rifle - had been legally bought, FBI officials said, adding they believed it had been purchased by the suspect's father. The officials said "a suspicious device" was found in the suspect's vehicle, which was inspected by bomb technicians.

### Police 'arrest' Imran over several May 9 cases

Eventually, the team mentioned the arrest of Imran Khan in 12 cases and returned to the provincial capital.

Out of the dozen cases registered against the former premier, police officials said that two in particular, which pertained to the attacks on the residence of the Lahore corps commander and the Askari Tower, were the focus of police high-ups.

A police official said the corps commander house attack was being probed by a joint investigation team (JIT) led by DIG Investigation Zeeshan Asghar, whereas the Askari Tower case was investigated by SSP Investigations Dr Anoosh Masood Chaudhry. Other cases, including the attack on Shadman police station, were being investigated by divisional SPs.

The FIRs were registered against Mr Khan over his alleged involvement in the attack on a police station in Shadman, military installations, government properties and officials.

The FIRs were registered with the Sarwar Road, Gulberg, Race Course, Naserabad, Shadman, and other police stations of Lahore.

Separately, an accountability court in Islamabad handed custody of Mr Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi to NAB authorities on physical remand for eight days in the new Toshakhana case.

The decision was announced by Islamabad Accountability Court Judge Muhammad Ali Warrach on a NAB plea. They will be produced in the court on July 22.

It is worth mentioning that on Saturday Mr Khan and his wife were acquitted in the Iddat case but they could not be released as authorities issued fresh orders to arrest him.

Meanwhile, PTI activist Sanam Javed was also rearrested by Islamabad police after she was released by a court.

On Sunday, Magistrate Malik Imran discharged Sanam Javed from an FIA case but she was arrested by the capital city's police, her lawyer Mian Ashfaq said.

Earlier, Ms Javed told the media that she was released after an "illegal detention" which continued for over a year.

Ms Javed said her stance is the same as it was 14 months back and will remain firm in her stance.

The Islamabad police is yet to confirm or deny the PTI activist's arrest.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development Bakht Muhammad Kakar is listening to people's problems in his office.



QUETTA: former provincial minister Mir Abdul Karim Noshirwani meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandokhail.

### Gaza civil defence says 15 killed in Israel strike on Gaza school

GAZA STRIP (INP) The civil defence agency in Hamas-run Gaza said Sunday that 15 people were killed in a strike on a school sheltering war displaced where the Israeli military said it had targeted "terrorists".

The strike on the UNRWA Abu Araban site in central Gaza's Nuseirat camp was the fifth on a school-turned-shelter in eight days.

The Abu Araban school was housing "thousands of displaced people," civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told, adding that most of the dead were women and children. Schools in Nuseirat were the tar-

get for two of the earlier school strikes as Israel keeps up its offensive against Hamas Palestinian militants who triggered the war with their October 7 attack on Israel.

The Israeli military said its air force "struck a number of terrorists who were operating in the area of UNRWA's Abu Araban school sheltering war displaced where the Israeli military said it had targeted 'terrorists'."

The following day, four people died in a strike on the church-run Holy Family building in Nuseirat, in the territory's north, according to the Civil Defence agency.

On Monday, Israeli hit Nuseirat school, again saying it was targeting "terrorists".

The next day, a hospital source said at least 29 people died in a strike at the entrance to Al-Awda school in the Khan Yunis area,

southern Gaza. Israel Hamas uses schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure for military purposes. Hamas denies the accusation. France and Germany on Wednesday called for an investigation into the school strikes.

After the Al-Jawri strike, UNRWA spokesperson Juliette Touma told that when the war began "we closed the schools and they became shelters." UNRWA is the main relief agency in Gaza but more than half, or 190, of its facilities have been hit - "some more than once" - in the military response to the October 7 Hamas attacks, she said.

### Cement dealers go on nationwide strike against taxes

ISLAMABAD (INP) Cement dealers in Pakistan begin their nationwide strike on Monday for an indefinite period against higher withholding tax on cement in the federal budget 2024-25.

The government has increased the withholding tax to 2.5 percent for non-filers under Section 236H of the Finance Act 2024 which has made the cement business unsustainable given the current market condi-

tion besides the new turnover taxes imposed on dealers and retailers.

All Pakistan Cement Dealers Chairman Sajid Chaudhry highlighted concerns that taxes and PoS measures have badly distributed their business. He criticized the requirement for Point of Sale machines, arguing that such demands are impractical for many dealers and retailers, who lack the necessary resources and education.

The association urged the government to intervene, suggesting a presumptive tax regime as a solution. They warned that failure to address these issues could force many businesses to shut down, worsen unemployment, and hurt the economy.

The federal government in budget 2024-25 has also imposed a higher FED on cement to Rs4 per kg compared to Rs2 in the previous fiscal year.

Meanwhile, the exports of cement witnessed an increase of 40.46 percent during the first eleven months of the financial year 2023-24, as against the exports of the corresponding months of last year. The cement exports from the country were recorded at US \$236.797 million during July-May (2023-24) against US \$168.583 million during July-May (2022-23), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).



LORALAI: Deputy Commissioner Meeran Baloch presiding over the meeting regarding shifting of agricultural tube wells to solar energy.

### Brazil slams 'endless massacre' in Gaza after bombings

BRASILIA (INP) The government of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Sunday denounced Israeli strikes on southern Gaza, urging the world not to "remain silent in the face of this endless massacre."

"The most recent bombing in the Gaza Strip, which claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent people, is unacceptable," read a statement from the presidency.

The health ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip said at least 92 people were killed and 300 wounded in a Saturday strike on Al-Mawasi, an Israeli-designated "safe zone" on the Mediterranean coast. The civil defence agency said another 20 were killed in an Israeli strike on a makeshift mosque at Al-Shati refugee camp in the territory's north.

On Sunday, 15 were killed in a Gaza school sheltering those displaced by the war, according to the civil defence agency.

"It is appalling that they continue to collectively punish the Pal-

estinian people. Tens of thousands have already died in successive attacks since last year, many of them in delimited humanitarian zones that should be protected," said the statement.

"We, the political leaders of the democratic world, cannot remain silent in the face of this endless massacre."

Hamas on Sunday decided to withdraw from Gaza ceasefire negotiations in the wake of the bombings. Brazil in May withdrew its ambas-

sador from Israel over the conflict, ratcheting up tensions after he earlier accused the country's government of genocide.

Israel reacted furiously, declaring the Brazilian leader persona non grata.

Militants also took 252 hostages, 116 of whom remain in Gaza, including 42 the army says are dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 38,584 people in Gaza, mostly civilians, according to the territory's health ministry.

## Govt to ban PTI, seek Article 6 proceedings against Imran, others

ISLAMABAD: In its latest attempt to suppress the PTI, the federal government on Monday announced that it has decided to ban the party and seek Article 6 proceedings against its founder Imran Khan, ex-president Dr Arif Alvi, and former NA deputy speaker, Qasim Suri.

The move appears to be an attempt to prevent incarcerated former prime minister Khan's PTI from becoming the single largest party in the National Assembly.

The announcement was made on the heels of relief given to the PTI by the top court in the reserved seats case as well as to the party chief in the Iddat case. It has yet to be determined what impact the planned ban would have on the top court's decision on reserved seats as well as the PTI-affiliated lawmakers.

Speaking during a press conference in Islamabad, Information Minister Ata Tarar said that if the country is to move in a forward direction, it cannot do so with PTI's existence.

"In view of the foreign funding case, May 9 riots, and the cipher episode as well as the resolution passed in the US, we believe that there is very credible evidence present to have the PTI banned," he said.

"We are going to impose a ban on PTI and we believe that Article 17 of the Constitution gives the government the right to ban political parties, and this matter will be referred to the Supreme Court."

Article 17(2) of the Constitution states that "every citizen, not being in the service of Pakistan, shall have the right to form or be a member of a political party, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan."

It further adds that "such law shall provide that where the Federal Government declares that any political party has been formed or is operating in a manner prejudicial to the sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, the Federal Gov-

ernment shall, within fifteen days of such declaration, refer the matter to the Supreme Court whose decision on such reference shall be final." The information minister added that whether it was the foreign funding case, the riots of May 9, or the manipulation of the cipher saga, in which the former Pakistani ambassador to the US, Asad Majeed—who authored the cipher—clarified that there was "no threat", the PTI continued decrying that the country was in danger. "You tried to damage the country's diplomatic relations for the sake of your political interests and went on to get a resolution passed against Pakistan in the US," he said. "Article 6 reference to be moved against Arif Alvi, Imran Khan, and Qasim Suri" to further tighten the noose around the PTI. Tarar said that the government had decided to file a reference against former president Khan, founder PTI eligible for seats reserved for women and minorities.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafaqat talking to the media in his office.

## Maryam Nawaz vows to make Punjab's youth skilled

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz shared her vision to make every young citizen of Punjab skilled for financial independence.

Sharing her message on World Youth Skills Day, she emphasised the pivotal role of youth for a sustainable future as skilled youth was an investment and asset, she described.

CM stressed the need to abreast youth with skills and capabilities required in a rapidly-changing world.

Maryam Nawaz said the Punjab government was dedicated to providing resources of vocational training to youth.

Punjab CM highlighted the importance of information and communication Technology (ICT) roles in the global job market.

She announced to increase students enrolment by 40,000 gradually for Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVTA) under CM Skills Development Initiative.

She stated that middle tech, matric tech and intermediate tech were being introduced for students interested in IT. Every year, on July 15th World Youth Skills Day is being observed across the world including Pakistan.

In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly designated World Youth Skills Day to highlight the need to prepare young people for employment, fulfilling work and entrepreneurship. This year, the theme, "Youth Skills for Peace and Development," highlights the role of youth in peacebuilding

and sustainable development. Pakistan ranks 5th among the 195 countries in the young populace. Around 64 pc of population is below the age of 30 and young people between age 15 to 29 constitute 36 pc of population.

However, with inadequate financial resources and lack of career counselling, young people have no access to quality education.

Young people are not taught practical based, market-driven skills and education in the universities that lead to unemployment and poverty.

Youth bulge can become boon instead of bane if youth are equipped with the latest technology that not only improves the standard of living, but the in-fact progress of the country.

## Karachi's BRT Green, Orange lines suspended

KARACHI (INP): In order to ensure security, Karachi's Green and Orange lines will remain suspended during 8, 9 and 10 Muharram, reported on Monday.

As per the announcement, both BRTs will resume services from July 18.

Meanwhile, Peoples Bus Service also announced the suspension of its operations on specific routes during 9 and 10 Muharram.

A day earlier, the city's traffic police issued a traffic management plan for processions on the 8th, 9th and 10th of Muharram.

According to the traffic plan issued, on 8th Muharram, a procession will start from Nishtar Park and end at

Hussainian Iranian Imambargah in Kharadar. Muhammad Ali (MA) Jinnah Road will remain closed from Gurumandir to Tower due to security concerns.

The procession will go through Nishtar Park, Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto Road, Mehfil-i-Shah-i-Khurasan, MA Jinnah Road (point a), Mansfield Street, Preedy Street, Tibet Chowk, MA Jinnah Road (point b), Baba-e-Urdu, Bara Imam.

Nishtar Road, Altaf Hussain Road, Bolton Market, MA Jinnah Road (point c), Nawaz Mahabat Khanjee Road, Bombay Bazaar, Kharadar Police Station to Hussainian Iranian Imambargah.

On 9th Muharram (Tuesday), a procession will be taken out from Martin Road Imambargah, Liaquatabad at 9am. It will reach Nishtar Park at 12pm, where a Majlis will be held.

Afterwards, the procession will be taken out from Nishtar Park for Hussainian Iranian Imambargah, Kharadar, via Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto Road, Mehfil-i-Shah-i-Khurasan, MA Jinnah Road (point a),

Mansfield Street, Preedy Street, Tibet Chowk, MA Jinnah Road (point b), Bolton Market, Bombay Bazaar, Kharadar, Nawaz Mahabat Khanjee Road and then to Hussainian Iranian Imambargah.



NASEERABAD: Assistant Commissioner Ajmal Khan Mandokhail reviewing the water supply in the water channel of the Industries Water Supply Scheme.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador-designate of Cambodia, Mr. Chea Sok, presenting his diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Reserved seats: Govt decides to file review petition against SC verdict

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has decided to file a review petition against the Supreme Court (SC) on Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC)

appeal, declaring Imran Khan-founded PTI eligible for seats reserved for women and minorities.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Federal Information Minister Ata Tarar said that the government and coalition parties have decided to file review

petition against the Supreme Court verdict, questioning whether those granted relief were present in court and whether the Constitution should not be implemented.

He said that the petition will also ask whether the election act 2017 sections be declared void and whether the Parliament hold the authority to interpret and amend the Constitution or not.

The minister emphasized that the government has a strong constitutional position on the matter and patience shown by government is being taken as weakness.

The presser came after a

13-member bench of the top court, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, ruled that the PTI is eligible for the allocation of reserved seats, dealing a major setback to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ruling coalition.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 majority verdict, setting aside the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) order wherein it had upheld the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying the reserved seats to the SIC.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Jamal Mandokhail, Justice Naem Afghan, Justice Yahya Afridi, and Justice Ameenuddin Khan opposed the majority decision.

The reserved seats issue came to limelight after over 80 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed independent candidates emerged victorious in the February 8 elections.

The SIC then approached the ECP on February 21 seeking allocation of reserved seats. However, the PTI suffered

body, citing the party's failure to submit its list of candidates, denied allocating the reserved seats to the SIC via its 4-1 majority verdict on March 4.

The election commission distributed the reserved seats for women and minorities among other political parties.

The PTI-backed SIC had approached the court after the ECP refused to allocate the reserved seats due to the party's failure to submit its list of candidates before the deadline. The Peshawar High Court (PHC) upheld the ECP's decision, leading the SIC to appeal to the Supreme Court.

In the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly – according to a notification, the ECP allocated one reserved seat each to Jamiat Ulema-Islam Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

In Sindh Assembly – allocated reserved seat for women to Muttahid Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and PPP. PPP's Samia Aftal and MQM-P's Fozia Hameed elected on reserved seats.

## Govt providing equal development opportunities to youth: PM

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said the government is providing the youth with modern education, equal development

opportunities and professional training to help them compete with the world.

In his message on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day, he said the initiative of

sending youth for professional training not only

in the field of information technology but also one thousand for modern agriculture in China is a reiteration of the commitment. In this regard, not only

women but also youth belonging to backward areas are being given special priority.

The Prime Minister said

technical institutes.

reforms in institutions under the NAYITCC. He said the government is ensuring provision of market based skills and professional training to thousands of youth through these technical institutes.



QUETTA: Various delegations are meeting with Provincial Minister PHE Sardar Abdul Rahman Khetran.

## Sher Afzal Marwat's non-bailable arrest warrant issued

RAWALPINDI (INP): A Rawalpindi civil court has issued a non-bailable arrest warrant for former PTI leader Sher Afzal Marwat in a case related to

illegal constructions. As per details the warrant was issued in response to a complaint filed by the Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) regarding unauthorized building

activities near the Thalian Motorway Interchange. The court ordered to arrest Sher Afzal Marwat and present him before the court on July 30.

The RDA had registered a case against Marwat for constructing buildings without permission, violating development regulations. The allegations against Marwat include building structures on a plot without obtaining the necessary approvals, in violation of the RDA's bylaws.

On July 13, the party suspended the basic party membership of Sher Afzal Marwat on directives of PTI founder Imran Khan, over "violation of discipline and

policies". Sher Afzal Marwat's membership was suspended after he failed to satisfy the party leadership against show-cause notices issued to him.

An inquiry committee was formed after the PTI founder had authorised the party leadership to take action against those who violated the policy. Sher Afzal

Marwat has been suspended due to his consistent violation of party discipline and damaging statements against the leadership, a notification issued by PTI

Secretary-General Omar Ayub read. The notification added that Sher Afzal Marwat's actions

caused harm to the party and its leadership, and he has been unable to provide satisfactory explanations for his behavior.

Earlier, the PTI issued a show-cause notice to Sher Afzal Marwat for making irresponsible statements. The notice was issued by PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan and asked Marwat to explain his statements within three days, which have been deemed damaging to the party's reputation.

The notice states that such statements are against the party's discipline and violate the clear instructions of the party's founder, Imran Khan, who has emphasized the importance of responsible behavior.

Marwat was warned that failure to respond or provide a satisfactory explanation may lead to further disciplinary action.

The notification added that Sher Afzal Marwat's actions