

PPP to raise uneven CCI composition issue with PML-N, says Khursheed Shah

The PPP would raise the issue of Council of Common Interests (CCI) composition with the PML-N, party leader Khursheed Shah has said which got unbalanced with the inclusion of Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar who belongs to the ruling party. (Details on Page 8)



Govt increases petrol price by nearly Rs10

The federal government on Sunday increased the price of petrol by Rs9.66 per litre for the next fortnight in line with a surge in international crude prices. However, the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) has been slashed by Rs3.32 per litre. The new fuel prices will be effective from April 1, the Finance Division said in a statement. "The price of Petrol (Motor Gasoline) has increased in the international market during the last fortnight, while the price of HSD has marginally declined," it added.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Itikaf

ISLAMABAD: People along with their belongings waiting for a security check at the grand Faisal Mosque on Sunday, to start Itikaf during the holy month of Ramazan in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Itikaf 2024

Muslims to Perform Itikaf in Pakistan

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: On the twentieth day of Ramazan, millions of Muslims around the world, including those in Pakistan, will have the honor of performing Itikaf.

For Muslims who wish to practice "Itikaf" (meditative seclusion) starting today during the final 10 days of the holy month of Ramazan, several Masajid around Muslim nations, including Faisal Masjid, have prepared significant accommodations.

Itikaf is a period starting from the 20th of Ramazan when dedicated faithful seclude in the masjid for ten days in search of Lailatul Qadr (Night of Majesty) and for seeking the forgiveness of

Almighty Allah by abandoning their routine business.

During this period these worshippers would not go out of the masjid for worldly purposes, except for essential needs. They devote their whole time to reading the Holy Quran, and Zikar besides engaging in prayers seeking forgiveness and blessings of Allah.

Itikaf is a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and carries a multitude of blessings of Allah Almighty.

A large number of women have joined the Faisal Masjid set up in Islamabad. Separate arrangements have been made for them.

The people sitting in Itikaf will complete Itikaf as soon as the Eid moon is visible.

Pakistan desires to work with US for achieving shared goal of peace, PM Shehbaz tells Biden

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In response to United States President Joe Biden's letter, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that Pakistan attached high importance to its ties with the US.

Both countries had been working together on various significant initiatives in energy, climate change, agriculture, health and education sectors, the premier said in response to the US president on Sunday.

The cooperation between the two countries on the energy sector and Green Alliance framework was welcoming, the



PM Office Media Wing quoted the prime minister as saying in

a press release.

The premier further wrote that "Pakistan desired to work with the US for the achievement of shared goals of global peace and stability and regional progress and prosperity."

On Friday, the US president a letter to PM Shehbaz and assured Islamabad of continued support from Washington as the country tackles global and regional challenges.

After promising support on a host of issues, Biden also underscored the need to protect human rights.

"The enduring partnership between our nations remains critical to ensuring the security of our people — and people around the world — and the United States will continue to stand with Pakistan to tackle the most pressing global and regional challenges of our time," President Biden wrote immediately after opening the letter with "Dear Mr. Prime Minister."

Biden indicated that the United States was also ready to support Pakistan on health, economic growth, energy and education.

Xi's article on putting people first to be published



Xinhua

BEIJING: An article by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, on putting the people first will be published on Monday.

The article by Xi, also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, will be published in this year's seventh issue of the Qiushi Journal, a flagship magazine of the CPC Central Committee.

It is a collection of excerpts from Xi's relevant discourses between November 2012 and December 2023.

The article stresses that the people are the creators of history and true heroes, highlighting the original aspiration and mission of Chinese Communists to pursue happiness for the Chinese people and rejuvenation for the Chinese nation.

Standing on the people's side represents the fundamental political stance of the CPC, and it is what distinguishes a Marxist political party from other political parties, says the article, adding that everything the Party does is to realize, safeguard, and advance the fundamental interests of the greatest possible majority of the people.

The article lauds the people as the decisive force in building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and emphasizes a people-centered development philosophy.

It is important to ensure that the gains of modernization benefit all the people fairly, says the article, calling for more notable and substantive progress in promoting common prosperity for all.

ECP finalises arrangements for Senate elections on April 2

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has finalised all preparations for conducting nationwide Senate elections, the upper house of the bicameral parliament, on April 2.

Polling will be held in the National Assembly and all four provincial assemblies from 9 AM to 4 PM.

Ballot papers in four different colors have been printed for the Senate elections. White papers will be used for general seats, green for technocrat seats, pink for women, and yellow for minority seats.

Additionally, the transportation of election materials to returning officers has been completed.

PTI leader convey condolences on Peshawar attack on Chinese engineers

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Former Interior Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shehryar Khan Afridi on Sunday called on Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) of Chinese Embassy, Mr Shi Yuanqiang, and conveyed condolences over the loss of precious lives in recent terrorist attack on Chinese engineers on his own behalf and also conveyed a message of sympathy of the party chief and former prime minister Imran Khan.

Mr Yang Nuo, Minister Counselor, Chinese Embassy, was also present on the occasion.

Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), Mr Shi Yuanqiang, expressed gratitude to the PTI chief Imran Khan and party leader for visiting the Embassy and offering condolences with the victim families and the people of China and Pakistan.

He said that China highly values the efforts of Pakistani government



and its people in providing support and protection to the Chinese workers and companies. The Chinese side urged the Pakistani side to conduct speedy and thorough investigations into the attack and severely punish the perpetrators and take all necessary measures to protect the safety of Chinese citizens, institutions and projects in Pakistan.

He said that China and Pakistan are iron-friends and the terrorist attacks would only strengthen the resolve of China and Pakistan to deepen their friendly cooperation and promote balanced and sustainable development of Pakistan. During the meeting, Mr Afridi

said that China and Pakistan enjoy an iron-brothers and this bond would further cement by each passing day. He said that neither terrorism nor conspiracies can dent the trust and brotherhood between China and Pakistan and rather these acts only strengthen the resolve of the people and governments of both countries to fight the menace of terrorism.

Shehryar Khan Afridi said that poverty is a major issue and especially people in Pakistan, Afghanistan bordering areas are left behind the developed areas. Due to the rampant poverty and lack of infrastructure and employment opportunities in bordering areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces, he said the terrorists mislead public and manage to attack Pakistani security forces and Chinese installations.

Afridi prayed for the departed souls and expressed sympathy with the victim families and also registered his condolences at the condolence book kept at the Embassy.

No proposal to increase Cj term to 3 years, clarifies Tarar



City Desk

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar has refuted claims about a proposal to increase the chief justice's term of office to three years.

Speaking to Geo News on Saturday, Tarar said that no such proposal has been tabled or is under consideration.

He said that the speculation on social media about any such decision is 'baseless'.

Continued on Page 8

IHC judges' letter: Over 300 lawyers call on SC to hear matter under Article 184(3)

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Over 300 lawyers, belonging to different bar associations, urged the Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan to hear Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges' allegations of interference by intelligence agencies in judicial functions under Article 184(3) of the Constitution.

Six serving judges of Islamabad High Court (IHC) penned a letter to Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), urging it to

submit a judicial certificate to review matter of "interference of intelligence agencies with judicial functions".

IHC top judges — including Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Baqir Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir, and Justice Salman Rafat Iftiaz — penned the letter to SJC in the aftermath of Supreme Court's March 22 judgement on Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui's dismissal case.



Pope Francis, in Easter address, calls for Gaza ceasefire

Reuters

Pope Francis called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the release of all Israeli hostages in an Easter Sunday address that marked the most important day on the Christian calendar by deploring the suffering caused by wars.

The pontiff presided over Mass in a packed and flower-bedecked St Peter's Square, and then delivered his "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and the world) blessing and message from the central balcony of St Peter's Basilica.

Francis, 87, has been in poor health in recent weeks, forcing him on repeated occasions to limit his public speaking and cancel engagements as he did on Good Friday, skipping at short notice a procession at Rome's Colosseum.

However, he took part in other Holy Week events leading up to Easter, and appeared in relatively good spirits on Sunday. Easter cele-

brates the day in which the faithful believe Jesus rose from the dead.

After the service, Francis took to his open-topped popemobile to greet crowds in the square and the avenue connecting St Peter's to the River Tiber. The Vatican said about 60,000 people had turned up.

Month of Ramazan is the month of mercy, blessings, sacrifice and forgiveness: Gillani

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani has said that the month of Ramazan is the month of mercy, blessings, sacrifice and forgiveness. In this holy month we should help the poor and needy People. Iftar Dinner Organized by Syed Zeigam Gillani and Syed Madani Gillani in Union Council Muhammad Pur Ghota. while addressing the dignitaries of NA 148 PP Constituency 214, in which Sajjada Nashin Darbar Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed Makhdoom Syed Abul Hasan Gilani and former MPA Syed Ahmed Mujtaba Gilani, candidate of NA 148 Syed Ali Qasim Gilani also took special part in the ceremony while dignitaries of the constituency, friends and People's Party Workers participat-



ed. Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and Syed Ali Qasim Gilani while addressing the ceremony, thanked the people of

the area for their support in the election and said that the people of the constituency should use all their abil-

ities for the development and prosperity of the people. Providing employment, education and good health to the unemployed youth the development projects will be brought to completion. While on this occasion, Malik Manzoor Damra, Syed Liaquat Shah, Shamail Abbas Naqvi, Pir Ali Hasnain Shah are watching Baba's work. Syed Sajjad Shah, Arshad Matt, Sarfraz Khor, Asghar Shah Naqvi. Malik Rafiq Sandila. Malik Aslam Dogar. Babal Khan. Fayaz Jakhri, Fakhr Abbas Jakhri, Naveed Biplah, Mumtaz Balooh, Owais Biplah, Mumtaz Biplah. Ali Pirzada Bhutta, Akram, Ayaz Mehshedi, Younis Nandla, Mahboob Sun, Salahuddin Pirzada, Malik Ashfaq Nandla, Rab Nawaz Goga Wasir, Allah Nawaz Wasir, Bilal Makki, Tariq Anjum. Nadeem Wasir. Later others also participated

Teachers play an important Role in the Development of Pakistan: Osama Bashir

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Regional Director of Punjab Group of Colleges Prof. Osama Bashir Qureshi has said that teachers play an important role in the development of Pakistan. It is this teacher, thanks to whom the best engineers, doctors, soldiers, pilots, lawyers, journalists, scientists are performing their services in IT and other fields. and in the world are making the name of Pakistan bright and the nations who respect their teachers have progressed. Teachers should also do justice to their profession because it is a prophetic profession. We are very fortunate that Allah Almighty has made us teachers. He expressed these views while breaking the fast in honor of the teachers yesterday. Addressing the dinner and awarding ceremony of medals and certificates in recognition of his services, he said, adding that only a good teacher who understands the psychology of a child and turns him into a diamond from a stone holds great positions. Individuals are also thanks to a good teacher. The teachers said on this occasion that we are proud we are an educator and we are doing our services in the largest educational institution of Pakistan. Vice Principal Prof. Subhan Khan Shahrwani, Prof. Saima are present in the ceremony. Fayyaz, Prof. Nazia, Prof. Shazia, Prof. Saima Zafar and hundreds of other teachers participated. Medals and certificates were given at the end in recognition of their excellent services.



Police to ensure foolproof security on 21st Ramazan Day of Ali: DPO

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: On the occasion of 21st Ramazan Mubarak Day of Ali (A. S), foolproof security arrangements are complete for the meetings and processions held across the district, a total of 8 processions and 15 meetings are being organized across the district. A plan has been prepared to ensure security arrangements on the spot. According to the details, 8 processions are being held in Attock district on the occasion of the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Ali (AS) on 21st Ramazan, in which 1 of A category, 1 of B category, 5 processions of 2 and C category are included, apart from this, 15 majalis are also being organized across the district, more than 350 police officers and men will perform their duties on the processions and majalis, DPO has said that all issued instructions to the police officers to ensure security duty on the roofs of the buildings coming along the procession routes as per the SOP, all the police officers and jawans should perform their duties alertly so that no untoward incident takes place, DPO Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan said that a plan has been prepared to ensure security arrangements on the occasion of Hazrat Ali's Martyrdom Day, traffic police officers should park vehicles at a distance of 400 to 500 meters from the place of processions and assemblies and divert traffic. Pass through the road so that there is no traffic jam.

Suspect involved in murder during robbery killed by police during encounter

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Attock Police killed a suspect in an encounter on Saturday who allegedly shot dead a woman during a robbery incident in Mohalla Meerabad in Hazro town on 26 March. The suspect was identified as Farooq Khan shot dead Sajida Bibi the 55 years old wife of a US citizen of Pakistan origin was shot dead for resisting during a domestic robbery in Mohalla Meerabad in the Hazro town of Attock on 26 March evening when she was alone at her house. The suspect fled with looted booty including cash and gold ornaments worth Rs 2.50 million. According to the Police spokesman, through human and digital intelligence, police traced the suspect identified as Farooq Khan and acting on a tip off, the police raided near Chach interchange on Islamabad-Peshawar motorway in the early hours of Saturday. Police spokesman claimed that the suspect, who along with his two other unknown accused, opened fire on the police party. Later on when firing was stopped during search of the area Farooq was found dead.

Wana police seized 38 lakh 129 pairs tires handed over to customs officials



Correspondent

WANA: District Police Officer South Waziristan Lower Farman Ullah told media on Sunday that the issue of confiscation of two vehicles full of non-custom paid tires was amicably resolved with the tire owners. According to the report, after the protest of the tire owners, negotiations with the district administration and police through local political leaders were successful after four days. DPO South Waziristan Lower Farman Ullah has said that the police have dispatched vehicles to send 129 pairs of tires to Customs Headquarters Dera Ismail Khan, DPO said while the total value of the tires is 38 lakh rupees. DPO Farman Ullah added that two pick-up vehicles full of non-custom paid tires were taken into custody by the police in the Karab Kot area two weeks ago. It may be remembered that a few days ago, tire owners had protested on Wana Azamwarsak Road against the seizure of tires. Police fired in the air to disperse the protesters, in which one person was slightly injured. On this occasion, the police took action against the protesters and detained six people who were transferred to the City Police Station. This is very important here, among the arrested persons, district President of PPP Aman Ullah Khan, ANP leader Khan Muhammad and Chief Malik Tariq Wazir, besides three shopkeepers were also in jail, which later released them.

Substandard

ISLAMABAD: A view of decayed onions at Sabzi Mandi in the Federal Capital. Hoarders and Profiteers marketing sub-standard and decayed onions in Rawalpindi's markets. Profiteers and hoarders have sold onions at exorbitant prices to ordinary citizens during the holy month of Ramazan. Onion was stored in large quantities, it can be seen that the onion has rotted due to storage. Due to this hoarding, the prices of onions remain beyond the reach of the common man throughout the month of Ramazan. However, the concerned government bodies, institutions are not being mobilized to control the price hike and sub standard edibles being provided to citizens.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

April 1st is not April Fools: Zahoor Dharija

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: April 1st is not April Fools, but will celebrate April Flowers and send a message to the world to keep rivers clean from pollution. These views were expressed by Sirakistan National Council Chairman Zahoor Ahmed Dharija and Sirakistan National Council Central President Dr. Maqbool Hasan Gillani while addressing the consultation meeting. Sharif Khan Lashari, Haji Eid Ahmed Dharija, Pathane Khan, Syed Ghulam Ali Shah, Maqbool Kharl, Sobia Malik, Rubina Bukhari, Afzal Ahmed, Pinal Syal and others participated in the meeting. Zahoor Dhari-

ja said that the ceremony of offering flowers to the river will be held at Nayab Housing Scheme Multan near Sikandar Nahar Bridge Langriyal near Patan Mauza Hamrot of Chenab River. Poets will recite their words with the expression of intellectuals. He said that every year April 1st is celebrated as April Flower by the Saraiki parties and various organizations of Saraiki Wasib, in western countries this day is celebrated as April Fool meaning lies, while in Wasib this day is celebrated. Celebrated as a symbol of truth, one of its aims is the hatred of lies and the truth. There is love.

Zahoor Dharija said that today the

people of Wasib sprinkle flowers in the rivers and offer flowers instead of dirt in the river. Professor Dr. Maqbool Hasan Gilani said in his speech that April is derived from the Latin word Aprilis or Aprire, which means the blooming of flowers, the blooming of buds, the ancient Roman people worshiped the god on the arrival of spring and people on April 1st. In order to please the gods, people used to perform outrageous acts and lie. "It gradually became April Fools," he said. Professor Maqbool Hasan Gilani said that many accidents have happened in the world due to April fools, many people have died due to heart failure due to fake news, besides many people

have lost their business. Commercial loss also has to be incurred. He said that Bahadur Shah Zafar was in the custody of the British, in the morning he presented a big plate which was covered with a silk cloth and said, "Here is your breakfast."

Bahadur Shah Zafar took the plate. When the cloth was removed from it, he was overwhelmed because the head of his son was presented on the plate. Seeing this scene, Bahadur Shah Zafar fainted with grief, while the British began to celebrate the joys of April fool's Day. What is needed today is that we reject the false and corrupt ideology of the West and spread the truth of Wasib throughout the world.

Spanish archeologists visit Makli Necropolis, Shah Jahan Mosque

Kamran Khamiso Khowaja

THATTA: Member delegation of Spanish archeologists visited historical sites of Thatta on Sunday. They visited the historical Makli Necropolis and the Shah Jahan Mosque that was established in the 17th century in Thatta city by Mughal emperor Shah-Jahan. The visit was followed by a seminar where provincial minister for Culture Syed Zulfikar Ali Shah, spanish archeologists, MPA Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi, MNA Sadiq Ali Memon among others. Addressing the seminar noted archeologist M. Thyman, who led the delegation said that Makli Necropolis and other archeological sites of Sindh always offered a lot to work adding that soon that would commence a detailed research on the Makli necropolis and other sites of Sindh. He praised the hospitality and collaboration extended by the provin-



cial government. Provincial minister for culture and Archaeology Zulfikar Shah said that most of the archeologists were professors at Madrest Colstherly University of Spain with an especial interest in the field of archeology. He further said that if Moen-Jo-Daro airport was made functional the oppor-

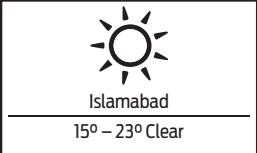
tunities of tourism would enhance in Sindh.

"I have asked the team of archeologists to visit Bhmphore and other historical sites of Sindh"; the minister said adding that such visits would portray a positive image of Pakistan to the world. Briefing the historical signif-

icance of Makli Khalid, Chchear said that the necropolis had been placed in the ranks of world heritage sites in 1985 since then tourists from across the world had been visiting the site to write articles and research papers.

He further mentioned that the culture department was highly concerned about preservation and maintenance of the site in a way to keep its historical status intact.

The team of archaeologists interacted with local historians to seek in-depth knowledge about the mausoleums of different rulers particularly Jam-Nizamuddin the ruler of Samma dynasty. The archaeologists took snaps of the mausoleums from different angles and noted key points regarding the history of Makli that would be made part of their research articles. The visit of the delegation started from Moen-Jo-Daro and culminated at Makli necropolis.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 4:32 am
Zohr 12:12 pm
Asr 4:41 pm
Maghrib 6:28 pm
Isha 7:52 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance 115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry 117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi 5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
MH 561116
Cantt Hospital 9270907-11
DHQ 5556311-4
RGH 9290301-7
Holy Family 9290322-7
PIMS 9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation 9209224
Potohar Town 9209224
Rawal Town 5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316
Wapda Islamabad 9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint 119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank
Rawalpindi 0331-5022125

Raja Saqib returns to his homeland after Umrah

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/ ISLAMABAD: Central Chief Organizer of Muslim Conference, Raja Saqib Majeed, returned to his homeland after attaining the blessing of Umrah. On returning Islamabad airport, President Women Wing All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference District Muzaffarabad Fiza Sajid Raja, Soheb Awan, Raja Sajid Hussain, Syed Yasir Gilani, Chaudhry Mubasher Latif, Sikandar Majeed Raja, Sohail Gujjar, Ayaz Ahmed, Sarkhil. Majeed Raja and other workers were given a grand welcome and garlands of flowers Raja Saqib Majeed was congratulated on attaining the blessing of Umrah. On this occasion, RAJah Saqib Majeed, Central Chief Organizer of Muslim Conference, deeply thanked Ms Fiza Sajid Raja and other wellcomers.

Travelogue 'Europe Tere Roop Hazar' gaining acceptance in the literary circles

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: In Pakistan, where other genres of literature have gained acceptance, there has been a lot of progress in the field of travelogue, due to which the readership of the book has also increased. Other writers played an important role in the promotion and development of Safar Nama.

Well-known child specialist and travel writer Dr. Zulfikar Ali Rana's first travelogue of Europe Tere Roop Hazar has been published and is gaining acceptance in the literary circles. Along with important historical buildings, our religion is also mentioned.

Our values and culture are also based on social principles, but in Europe and other countries, the element of these



values is very prominent. They also used to compare things and attitudes of people These values and traditions have also been reflected in Hain Europe Tere Roop Hazar.

The simplicity of the language and a unique narrative have highlighted the element of curiosity and interest in this travelogue for the reader.

This travelogue has been published in a very sophisticated and beautiful way by WarthaOpinions of well-known writers Ata-ul-Haq Qasmi Farrukh Sohail Goindi, Prof. Naseem Shahid and Muhammad Azhar Saleem Majuka have also been included in the travelogue, who have described this travelogue as a welcome addition. It has been created by renowned artist Imran Shuwal

Solidarity with Palestine

ISLAMABAD: The Save Gaza campaign movement under the auspices of Civil Society is staging a sit-in at D Chowk in the Federal Capital on Sunday.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Police officers and officials involved in alleged drug trafficking

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: In Faisalabad region, 62 officials are busy supporting drug dealers, despite the report of the surveillance branch, no action could be taken against the corrupt police employees.

Faisalabad: Police officers and employees are alleged drug dealers

The surveillance report in Faisalabad revealed the names of 62 officials in the region who started backing

Despite the drug dealing police officers and the corrupt police supporting the drug dealers

No action could be taken against the employees, according to the details of the surveillance branch of the Punjab Police across the province

A report has been prepared from various districts of the country in which drug peddlers are supported

According to the report, the details of the police officers and personnel have been given in Lahore, Sheikhpura, Gujranwala,

324 police personnel in Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Sahiwal, Multan, DG Khan, Bahawalpur and Faisalabad.

62 police officers are involved in this work in Faisalabad Division, who are supporting the drug dealers

The lowest is 4 in Hain Jhang, 19 in Chiniot, 10 in Toba Tek Singh and the highest in District Faisalabad.

According to the report, 29 police officers and employees are included in this list

Saadari, not Sargodha Road, Mansoorabad Police Station, Millat Town Police Station, Lund Police Station or Nawala.

Khar Diranwala, Ghulamabad, Razaabad, Thakkar Yuwala, Mamum Kanjan, Police Station Sadar Jardanwala, People's Colony, Madina.

Town and Sandalbar police officers work to facilitate drug peddling and drug peddlers

Police from constable to inspector rank are among those who are supporting drug dealers

The names of the officers are included in this report, giving full details that 29 policemen in Faisalabad

A police officer in Jhang is assisting the drug dealers. While there is

3 are directly selling drugs themselves 18 police officers in

Chiniot to drug dealers

There are facilitators and 1 is selling drugs himself 10 police officers are drug dealers in Toba Tek Singh

The names and ballot numbers of these police employees and officers are also written in the report but

City Police Officer Ali Zia is not aware of the matter. Spokesman Faisalabad Police Inspector Shahid says that Faisal

No such report was received in Abad hence no action was taken while on the other hand DPO

Jhang Rashid Hidayat has started an inquiry by suspending four officials Sajid Gulzar, Zafar and Adnan on the basis of this report, but the Faisalabad police are refusing to accept this report.

CBD Punjab Drives Urban Evolution with Major Progress in Walton Road Up gradation and Flyovers



PNP

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), continues to spearhead significant advancements in urban infrastructure with major progress achieved in its ongoing projects, particularly the Walton Road Upgradation and Walton Railway Crossing Flyovers initiatives. CEO CBD Punjab, Imran Amin, recently chaired a comprehensive project review meeting, underscoring the authority's commitment to timely and impactful urban development.

During the meeting, CEO CBD Punjab, Imran Amin was briefed on the substantial developments within the Walton Road Upgradation and Walton Railway Crossing Flyovers projects. Executive Director Technical, Riaz Hussain; Director Project Management, Asif Iqbal; Director Architecture and Planning, Sameer Aftab Sial; Director Construction, Asif Babar; alongside officials from NESPAK and NLC, attended the meeting.

Significant milestones were highlighted during the review session. For the major Ishaq Shaheed Flyover, all six piers and two abutment walls have been completed, with shuttering and steel fixing currently underway, alongside ongoing concrete pouring said project is a part of Walton Road Upgradation. Progress on the remodeling of ADA Nullah is equally notable, with 70% of steel fixing completed and roadwork initiated. Furthermore, significant strides have been made in the construction of Walton Railway Crossing Flyovers, with asphalt completed up to the MSC wall slope and the completion of girders for one section.

While expressing his views CEO CBD Punjab, Imran Amin, said, "These projects are integral to enhancing connectivity within the city while addressing critical issues such as traffic congestion and sewerage management. CBD Punjab remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering these projects within the stipulated timeframe."

As CBD Punjab continues to make significant headway in its urban development endeavors, stakeholders and residents can anticipate a more efficient and interconnected urban landscape that enhances the quality of life for all.

Islamabad Capital Police host farewell for outgoing SP

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Capital police hosted farewell for the outgoing Superintendent of Police (SP) Islamabad Chaudhary Abid Hussain who retired from his services after serving the force, a public relations officer said.

He said that the farewell ceremony was attended by CPO Safe City/ Traffic Shoab Khurram Janbaz and Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Sarfraz Virk as chief guest, while senior police officers and officials were also present on the occasion.

The CPO Safe City/ Traffic conveyed good wishes to the retiring SP and said that retirement is part of the service as the one who joins the service has to retire one day.

He asked the serving police officials to do their best to earn respect for the department. He was of the view that public service could earn a good name for the officials and the department.

He recognized the services rendered by Chaudhary Abid Hussain and added that the department in return gave him respect and honor. He presented a police shield and flower bouquet to SP Chaudhary Abid Hussain and also expressed best wishes for his future endeavors.

SP Chaudhary Abid Hussain joined Islamabad Capital Police as a probationer ASI and served on various posts. Recently he was working as SP Traffic where he served till retirement.

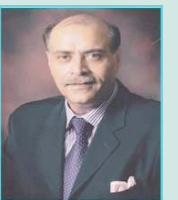
Seed mafia a formidable threat to agriculture: Malik

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The seed mafia selling substandard wheat and cotton seeds has emerged as a formidable threat to the agricultural sector particularly in areas reliant on this staple crops.

Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association (PHHSA) Chairman Shahzad Ali Malik stated this while talking to a farmers' delegation led by Muhammad Hussain Dohla here Sunday. Malik added, "These nefarious actors exploit the vulnerability of farmers by peddling inferior quality seeds masquerading as genuine agricultural inputs. With deceptive tactics, they undermine the integrity of the agricultural supply chain, wreaking havoc on crop yields and causing substantial financial losses estimated in billions of rupees."

He was of the view that in order to combat this menace and revitalize the agricultural sector, concerted efforts are imperative to stamp out the seed mafia and promote the adoption of high-quality, certified seeds for all crops.



Bilawal Bhutto, AJK PM & other top politicians pay final respects to Azad Kashmir Speaker's sister



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Bilawal Bhutto Ch Anwar-ul-Haq Federal Minister Sardar Yousuf Ex PM Sardar Attique Farooq Haider ApHC leader Yousuf Naseem Shah and other condoled AJK Speaker sister's Speaker death.

The funeral prayer of the sister of Speaker Legislative Assembly Senior Parliamentarian Chaudhry Latif Akbar was held in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir, yesterday at 12:30 in the Chhatar High Court Ground under the leadership of religious scholar Maulana Qazi Ibrahim Chishti and later in

her native village Sanwan. At three o'clock, she was buried in her native cemetery. The party's central deputy information secretary Shaukat Javed Mir performed the duties of the union. People's Party Azad Kashmir President Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, Former Federal Minister Member National Assembly Sardar Muhammad Yusuf, Chief Justice Sadaqat Hussain Raja, Hurriyat Conference Leader Syed Yusuf Naseem, Ministers Sardar Javed Ayub, Syed Bazal Ali Naqvi, Javed Iqbal Badhanvi, Nisar Ansar Abdali, Former Justices Chaudhry Ibrahim Zia, Mustafa Mughal, Chaudhry Pervez Ashraf,

Mayor Syed Sikandar Gilani, Sahibzada Zulfikar Ali, Sardar Shakkor Siddiqui, Sardar Raffakat Abbasi, Syed Tasadeq Gardizi, Chief Editor of Jammu and Kashmir Daily Aamir Mehboob, Chairman Red Crescent.

Ijaz Riza, Jehan Gir Mughal, Sardar Mubarak Haider, Syed Majaz Hussain Shah, Shaukat Rathore, Mir Mush-taq, Zulfikar Wani Khurshid Kayani, Raja Waheed Akhtar, Waleed Ekhlabani, Chaudhry Ilyas, Aftab Anjum, Abdul Qayyum Qamar, Chaudhry Shafiqat, Parvez Mughal and hundreds of others. Meanwhile, while condoling the death of Chaudhry Latif Akbar's

wife, Chairman of Pakistan People's Party, Member of National Assembly, former Federal Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, expressed deep grief and condolences to the deceased and extended patience to the bereaved.

He prayed for the grant and expressed sympathy with his heirs including Chaudhry Latif Akbar, while President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood, Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haque, former Prime Ministers Chaudhry Abdul Majeed Sardar Muhammad Yaqub Khan, Raja Muhammad Farooq Haid-

er Khan, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, Sardar Atiq Ahmad Khan, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan Niazi Leader of Opposition Khawaja Farooq Ahmad Peoples Party Azad Kashmir President Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin Muslim League-N President Shah Ghulam Qadir Governors of the four provinces Chief Ministers National and Provincial Assemblies Senate Members Federal and Independent Leaders of all schools of thought, including ministers of Kashmir governments, chief justices, military leaders, electronic print media and lawyers, students, businessmen, scholars, expressed their con-

dolences to Speaker Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar on the death of his wife and prayed for forgiveness.

Speaker Legislative Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar expressed his gratitude to those who expressed their condolences in this time of sorrow from occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan across the country and abroad. They went to the residences of Shaukat Line and Sanwan Speaker Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar and expressed their condolences and raised their hands in the presence of Allah Almighty for the elevation of the deceased.

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‘Beyond Interference: Redefining the Scope of Judicial Protection’

Chief Justice Qazi Faez Esa, nearing the end of his tenure, chose not to address the complaint filed by six serving judges through the Supreme Judicial Council or by convening a full court of the Supreme Court. Instead, he passed it onto the civilian government, which many perceive as being under the complete influence of the powerful establishment. This decision has been viewed as a missed opportunity to restore judicial independence from the alleged overwhelming control exerted by the establishment, which is often equated with the state itself. This control extends to all facets of governance, including the parliament, governments, cabinets, electoral processes, judicial proceedings, and foreign policy decisions, as well as the management of trade, business, investment, agriculture, and livestock.

The analyst and jurists believe that the TORs assigned to the commission lack specificity and urgency in addressing the issue of unlawful interference. While they include provisions for investigating interference and recommending action, they may not adequately address the need for proactive measures to prevent future interference or hold accountable those responsible.

elements within the establishment undermines the judiciary's independence. The bench sought guidance from the Supreme Judicial Council on defensive measures to safeguard against such unlawful interference and ensure the judiciary's autonomy to dispense justice impartially and transparently.

recommendations should empower the judiciary to maintain its independence and integrity in the face of external pressures.

Thirdly, the Commission must address the challenge of fixing responsibility on unlawful elements within the state security apparatus, even in the absence of concrete evidence and witnesses. Given the sophisticated techniques employed by these elements to conceal their activities, the Commission should explore innovative strategies for holding them accountable.

Fourthly, the Commission should propose the enactment of new legislation and regulations aimed at establishing dedicated security forces tasked with protecting the lower and higher judiciary from unlawful interference, whether originating from within state institutions or external non-state actors.

Lastly, the Commission should recommend mechanisms to ensure the implementation of court decisions and prevent their violation or frustration through selective administrative, legal, or illegal means. These measures should reinforce the rule of law and uphold the authority of judicial decisions in the face of external pressures.

The proposed Terms of Reference (TORs) present a comprehensive and proactive approach to addressing the issue of unlawful interference with the judiciary. They prioritize acknowledging the existing problem and recommending concrete measures to safeguard judicial independence and integrity. By focusing on empowering the judiciary to respond effectively, holding accountable those responsible for interference, and proposing legislative reforms, the proposed TORs offer a robust framework for addressing the challenges at hand.

The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former MD, SRBC



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

The Chief Justice's decision to avoid addressing the complaint prompted over 300 members of the legal fraternity to stage a protest before the Supreme Court today (31.03.2024), urging the Court to take responsibility for adjudicating the matter under Article 184(3) of the Constitution. They argued that any government-led commission would lack the necessary independence and authority to properly investigate the claims.

The terms of reference assigned to the commission are notable for their focus on investigating direct involvement of officials in judicial interference and recommending appropriate action against implicated agencies, departments, or state institutions based on evidence uncovered. However, the absence of mention regarding indirect involvement suggests a potential gap in the scope of the inquiry. Additionally, the commission's starting assumption that no interference has occurred places the burden of proof on the six judges, who

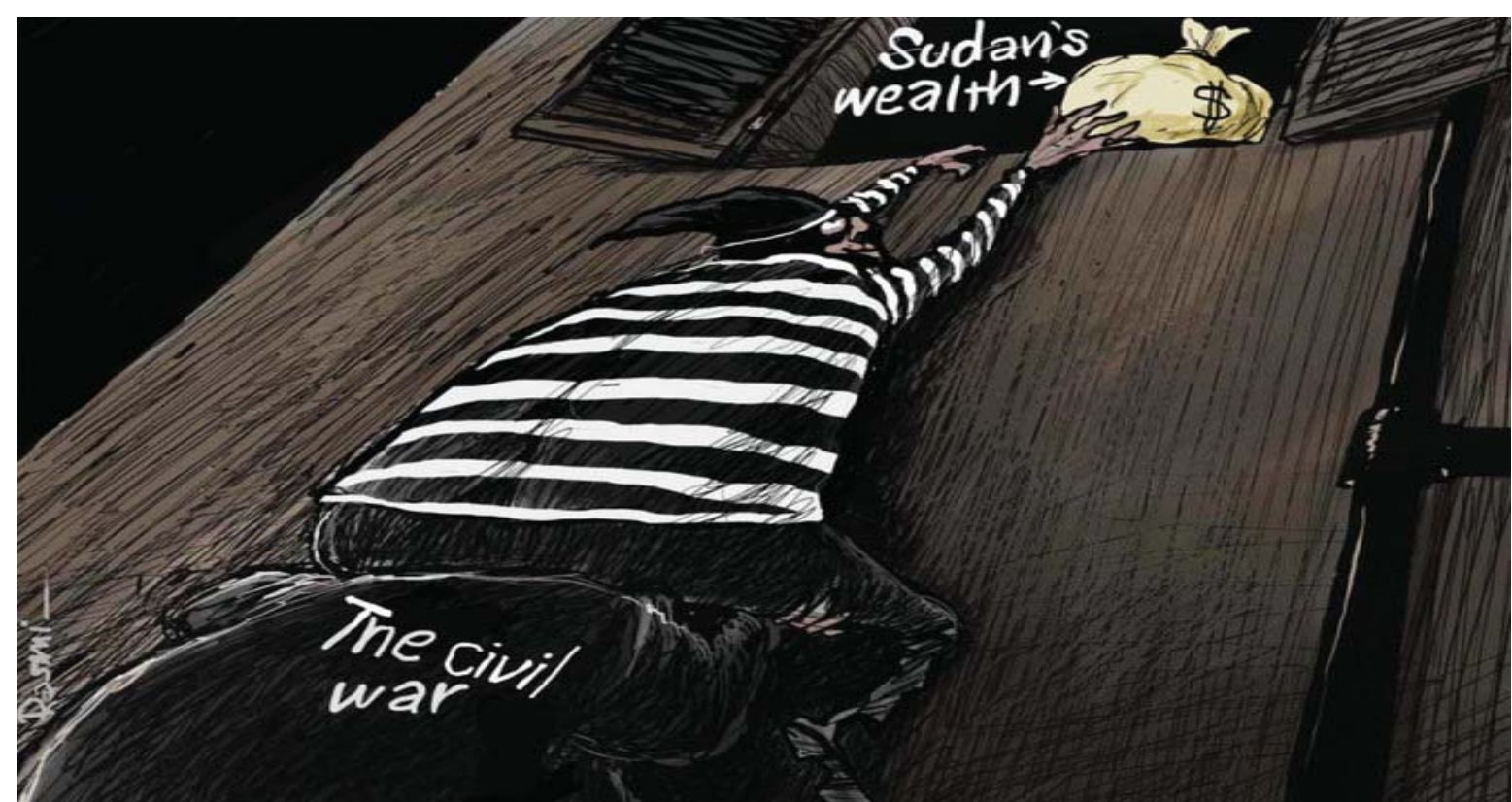
Rejecting the Terms of Reference (TORs), analysts and jurists argue the letter written by the six judges transcends mere complaints or allegations. Instead, it resembles a decision by a six-member high court bench. After conducting investigations, gathering facts, and recording witness testimonies, the bench unequivocally declared the unlawful elements within the country's prime spying agency and the establishment guilty of blatant and brute interference in judicial matters.

The bench highlighted that the unlawful elements within the establishment use coercive tactics, including intimidation, blackmail, and eavesdropping, to influence bench formations and court decisions aligning with their political and administrative agendas. Furthermore, by openly defying or frustrating court orders that contradict their objectives, the unlawful

intimidate the judiciary, undermining its independence and impartiality therefore cannot be legally termed as executive. As such, they should not be regarded as lawful actors but as unlawful elements seeking to subvert the rule of law through coercion and intimidation tactics.

Henceforth, the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Commission should reflect a proactive approach, beginning with the acknowledgment that unlawful interference with the judiciary has already been substantiated. The Commission should then focus on recommending measures to safeguard the judiciary from undue, unlawful, and blatant interference perpetrated by rogue elements within state security institutions.

Secondly, the Commission should provide practical and actionable recommendations regarding how the lower and higher judiciary can respond effectively to such unlawful interference. These recom-



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashfaq Al-Awcat)

Pak Army's Significant Contribution to Education in AJK - I

The military has long been acknowledged for its role in defending nations and safeguarding their interests. However, beyond its traditional security functions, the military also wields significant influence in shaping societies through its involvement in the education sector. From providing access to quality education in underserved areas to cultivating discipline and leadership skills among students, the military's contribution to education is diverse and impactful. One of the primary ways in which the military contributes to the education sector is through the establishment of schools and educational institutions, particularly in remote or conflict-affected regions where educational access is limited.

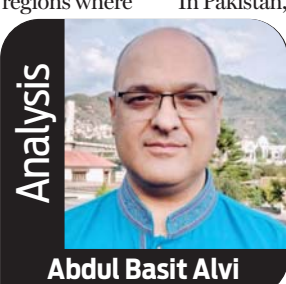
Furthermore, the military can serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for students, particularly those hailing from marginalized or disadvantaged backgrounds. Through initiatives like career guidance, mentorship, and scholarship opportunities, the military provides students with avenues for success and upward mobility, empowering them to pursue their academic and career aspirations. Alongside its direct involvement in education, the military supports educational initiatives and outreach programs, partnering with schools and universities to offer scholarships, internships, and educational resources to students interested in military or related fields.

Nestled in the scenic Himalayan and Karakoram mountain ranges, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) boasts a vibrant culture and resilient population. However, like many regions worldwide, AJK grapples with significant challenges in its education sector, particularly concerning children.

To be continued

In Pakistan, where obstacles such as poverty, regional disparities, and security concerns often impede access to quality education, the Pakistan Army emerges as a significant catalyst for positive change in the education sector. Through a variety of initiatives aimed at widening access, enhancing quality, and promoting community development, the Pakistan Army plays a pivotal role in shaping the nation's future by investing in its most valuable asset: its youth.

One of the most noteworthy contributions of the Pakistan Army to the education sector is its establishment of a network of schools and colleges across the country, particularly in remote and underserved areas. These institutions, known as Army Public Schools and Colleges (APSACS), offer high-quality education to students from various backgrounds, including the children of military personnel and civilians. With an emphasis on academic excellence, character development, and extracurricular activities, APSACS are renowned for nurturing well-rounded indi-



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

viduals equipped with the skills and values necessary for success in life. Additionally, the Pakistan Army has initiated numerous efforts to improve educational infrastructure and resources in conflict-affected, disaster-prone, or socio-economically disadvantaged areas. Through initiatives such as the Army Public Schools and Colleges System (APSCS) and the Army Welfare Trust (AWT), the military has constructed schools, libraries, and vocational training centers, providing communities with essential educational facilities and opportunities for skills development. Moreover, the Pakistan Army is actively engaged in enhancing the quality of education through initiatives focused on teacher training, curriculum development, and educational technology. By investing in the professional development of teachers and educators, the military aims to raise teaching standards and pedagogical practices, ensuring that students receive a high-quality education aligned with international standards. Furthermore, the Pakistan Army plays a crucial role in promoting education as a catalyst for community development and social cohesion. Through outreach programs, scholarships, and youth engagement initiatives, the military empowers students from marginalized and disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome barriers to education and pursue their academic and career aspirations. By fostering a culture of learning and empowerment, the Pakistan Army contributes to building resilient communities and fostering national unity.

Coalition Payoffs - I

The political theorists have been critical of absolute parliamentary majorities. For Aristotle, majoritarian democracy, where a political majority of many operates the governance, is a deviant constitution as it produces 'a defective and perverted forms' of majoritarianism. Similarly, Arend Lijphart emphasizes on consociational democracy where a consensus is developed for sharing power between the elites of divided political cultures.

In parliamentary regimes, the executive obtains its mandate from the parliament, which also enjoys a constitutional power of dismissing the executive, at any time, through a no-confidence vote. When no single party enjoys an absolute majority, it leads to the formation of a multiparty coalition government in parliamentary democracies. The norm of coalition government is practiced in West European political cultures where a proportional representation system is practiced for accommodating ethno-regional and socio-political cleavages in the central legislatures. In the United Kingdom, Cameron-Clegg coalition, a coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, was the first coalition government of the UK since the caretaker ministry of Churchill in 1945. In India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee led coalition government successfully completed its five-year term between the years 1999 and 2004.

Secondly, it recorded an unprecedented rise of a political response to anti-democratic forces in the country. Thirdly, the emergence of a constantly evolving and increasingly competitive political landscape has indicated a decoupling of conventional status quo politics. And, fourthly, this split parliamentary mandate has produced a hung parliament which necessitated parties to form a coalition government. Such a fragmented mandate confirmed that a coalition government was, both necessity and out of choice, an option to continue parliamentary governance in Pakistan.

To be continued

The PML-N led a minority government, which now controls parliamentary majority, would form a coalition for next five-year term. However, the formation of a coalition, consisting of two ideologically different parties, PML-N and PPP, warns of an emergence of a toxic binary competition between the two parties. The new multiparty coalition format resembles 'personal interests driven shiftings' rather than a permanent and stable coalition necessary to bring economic and political stability in the country.

To be continued



Analysis

Dilawar Hussain

This power sharing format combined with the politics of patronage has reduced the chances of a political accountability of government policies by the parliament.

The representation paradox emerged out of the Polls, 2024 has potentially put in question the involved politicians' political integrity and complexity of this parliamentary coalition. Firstly, a skeptical result of the Polls has produced a perceived democratic legitimacy deficit of this coalition as the parties in coalition are trying to barter for more share in power than they have achieved in the Polls. Secondly, the pre-Polls manifestos have mostly become irrelevant since a multiparty coalition government reduces the chances of implementing conflicting policy positions.

To be continued

France, Jordan, Egypt FMs call for 'permanent' Gaza ceasefire

AFP

The French, Egyptian and Jordanian foreign ministers called Saturday for an "immediate and permanent ceasefire" in Gaza and the release of all hostages held by Palestinian group Hamas.

Speaking at a joint press conference in Cairo, France's top diplomat Stéphane Sejourne said his government would put forward a draft resolution at the UN Security Council setting out a "political" settlement of the war.

He said the text would include "all the criteria for a two-state solution" of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the peace blueprint long championed by the international community but opposed by the Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

On Monday, the Security Council adopted a resolution demanding an "immediate ceasefire" in Hamas-run Gaza, where the health ministry says the death toll has reached 32,705, most of them women and children.

The war started when Hamas launched an unprecedented attack on Israel on October 7, which resulted in about 1,160 deaths in Israel, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

The International Court of Justice ordered Israel on Thursday to "ensure urgent humanitarian assistance" reaches civilians in Gaza, saying "famine has set in" after more than five months of fighting.

But "international law no longer has any impact on the ground when it comes to Israel," Jordanian Foreign



Minister Ayman Safadi told the Cairo news conference.

"The real disaster is the international community's inability to prevent" the humanitarian catastrophe, Safadi said.

Alluding to the presence of far-right ministers in the Israeli government, he said the failure to provide sufficient aid was a "political decision by an extremist government which has decided to use starvation as a weapon."

The three ministers renewed their governments' support for the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA, which has faced a funding crisis since Israel alleged that a dozen of its 13,000 Gaza staff were implicated in the October 7 attack.

"Israel is not only starving Palestinians, but wants to kill the only entity capable of standing in the way of a famine," Safadi said.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Gaza "can endure no more destruction and humanitarian suffering", and called on Israel to open its land crossings with the Gaza Strip to humanitarian aid.

Nearly all aid into the territory has trickled through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, where world leaders and the United Nations have accused Israel of impeding deliveries.

Israeli colonists attack, injure a Palestinian Shepherd south of Hebron



Wafa

HEBRON: Israeli colonists today attacked a Palestinian shepherd west of the town of Dura, south of Hebron, and threatened to shoot and kill him, according to local sources.

Sources said that colonists from the Israeli colony of Negohot; built illegally on Dura's land, attacked and beat up a shepherd while he was grazing his sheep, which necessitated his transfer to the hospital for medical treatment. The shepherd sustained cuts and bruises throughout his body.

According to sources, colonists threatened the Shepherd to shoot and kill him if he continued to graze his sheep in the area.

Farmers and shepherds in southern Hebron, including the Masfer Yatta area, are subjected to daily harassment, attacks and forced expulsion from the grazing pastures.

Russia demands Ukraine hand over head of security service

Reuters

MOSCOW: Russia is demanding that Ukraine hand over all persons connected with terrorist acts committed in Russia, including the head of the country's SBU Security Service, the foreign ministry said on Sunday.



"Russia has turned over to Ukrainian authorities its demands... for the immediate arrest and extradition of all those connected to the terrorist acts in question," a ministry statement said, after listing several violent incidents in the country.

The ministry statement said those to be handed over included SBU head Vasyl Maliuk, who has acknowledged his service was behind attacks on the bridge linking Crimea to the Russian mainland since the Kremlin's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

British Museum probed over concealed Ethiopian artefacts held for 150 years

The British Museum is under a microscope as the Information Commissioner began investigations of claims that the Museum has stigmatised the public view of its collection of Ethiopian holy relics that has been kept from the eyes of the public for more than a century and a half, The Guardian reported.

Comprising 11 wooden and stone tabot that, according to the museum, had been stolen by the British forces upon their victory at the Battle of Maqdala in 1868, the sacred items have never been utilized during the museum exhibits. To them, it is relegated such holiness that the museum's curators and trustees are not afforded the privilege to handle the exhibits for testing or examination.

The same calls for the return of the found artefacts to Ethiopia have been prolonged over many years. In 2019, Ethiopia's culture minister proposed this idea at a museum visit, for instance.

Complainants have escalated the issue by registering a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which argues that the museum did not provide all the information they needed about the deliberations related to the tablets in response to a freedom of information (FOI) request.

"Returning Heritage," an entity concerned with cultural repatriation, gave the FOI inquiry in August 2023. Moreover, advocates for transparency argue that the museum failed to give detailed information, with some parts missing or overly censored. A Returning Heritage-sanctioned museum review verified and affirmed the prior decision.

The knowledge that a section of the British Museum Act 1963 providing for the prohibition on object disposal has presently expired has provoked the Returning Heritage group to demand that the relics be returned. These exclusions permit for goods as "inappropriate to be kept" to be surrendered.

This stubborn issue has been gaining traction recently with Westminster Abbey teasingly signalling its agreement, though not without doubt, to render back a single tabot which has been kept in the cathedral altar for years. Nevertheless, this museum is silent about this issue, as they do not communicate anything regarding this investigation.

CPEC - A business-friendly regime for sustainable growth

Bureau Report

QUETTA: With Pak-China Economic Corridor (CPEC) entering second phase, the local people expect rise of pro-business regime with hopes of making the multi-billion CPEC, a vehicle for sustainable development.

Now even the local people and among those who once used to resist this project, start thinking it as a game changing project that once completed would definitely have dividends for the local people.

Even the past critic and now an MPA from the port city of Gawadar, Hidayat-ur-Rehman also hope for making CPEC project, a vehicle for reinvigorating province's economy.

Overall economic recession coupled with other issues affected the pace of the project that caused rise of Rights movement led by an ordinary fisherman Hidayat-ur-Rehman who rose to fame and finally got elected MPA from Gawadar.

"The local people, fearing to becoming minority resisted the project while those at the helm of affairs believed once completed, the local population will be main beneficiary of the project," Hidayat-ur-Rehman remarked. "The present government has given us a promising hope that CPEC will improve life of common Balochistan inhabitants."

Getting fame from rigid stance on CPEC and elected MPA from Gawadar, Hidayat-ur-Rehman when questioned on his approach, replied, "I am not against CPEC but the discrimination. When a project worth billions is launched in Gawadar, it should also benefit local people."

"I have no objection, if Chinese government, its companies and our government continues with CPEC. The only demand I present is to ensure that rights of local people are not compro-



mised," he argued. "If local population is deprived of basic civic amenities like education, health, drinking water, uninterrupted power, vocational training and jobs, then why people of Gawadar will not raise voice for their rights."

Launched back in 2006, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that has significantly impacted Pakistan over past one and half decade. It is a framework of regional connectivity which will not only benefit China and Pakistan but Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republic and the region.

Since onset, the multi-billion dollar CPEC project witnessed ups and down due to internally changing political scenario as well as external interference and hatching of conspiracies by hostile forces to derail the project and make it controversial.

"The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represents a watershed moment for Balochistan, offering unprecedented opportunities for development and integration into global economy," Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti informed APP.

"Balochistan's role in CPEC, particularly through the development of

Gwadar Port, is central to our vision for province's future," the Chief Minister said. "This project is not just about infrastructure; it's about opening doors to international trade, creating jobs and fostering economic activities to transform socio-economic landscape of Balochistan."

Terming uplift of Gwadar as top priority of his government, Chief Minister Bugti said, "we are committed to ensuring that CPEC becomes a vehicle for sustainable development, ameliorate lot of our people and respect for our natural and cultural heritage."

"The challenges we face are significant, but opportunities presented by CPEC give us reasons for optimism," CM Balochistan Bugti remarked. "Our administration is dedicated to making Balochistan a model of inclusive development, where every citizen can benefit from the province's natural wealth and strategic position," the Chief Minister said. "We are engaging with local community, civil society and our partners in China to ensure that development under CPEC is equitable and sustainable."

Meanwhile, officials of Ministry of Planning Development and Special

Initiatives also expressed belief that CPEC would prove to be a journey towards economic regionalization in this globalized world. It is also a hope of better future of our people and those in this region.

Chairman Standing Committee on Petroleum Senator Mohammad Abdul Qadir was also optimistic about the success of CPEC projects and will of the government for its early completion. "PML-N is known for pro-development and business friendly initiatives and hence they own CPEC. I foresee CPEC flourishing and becoming center of attention in coming days," the Senator said and stressed setting up industrial zones.

"Establishing industrial zones is important and the government is keenly working on their development," Abdul Qadir said. "With functioning of foreign industries, the local industry will also flourish making the government save billions of rupees in terms of transportation."

He also underlined the need for provision of power, water and security to make the CPEC a success. The escalation of pace on CPEC projects, making locals beneficiary of project's outcome and enhancement of co-operation by win-win model will definitely result in well-connected, integrated region of shared destiny, harmony and development.

The journey is complex, but our resolve is unwavering. Together, we, with the support of our Chinese friends and hard work of our people, can lay a foundation for a vibrant and economically strong Balochistan.

If the new set up diligently pursue commitments of the government made to its international partners and forge ahead on a journey to progress, then the days will not be far off that Balochistan stands tall and proud on the world stage.

Modernizing hosiery industry to boost exports

Iftikhar Ahmed

As Pakistan's industrial sector witnessed an overall decline in recent years, reorganizing and modernizing this sector would be an uphill task for the new government.

With two seasoned politicians in the driving seats as President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the business community hopes for revolutionary steps to make local industry compatible with international standards for capturing more markets. Due to the volatile situation in the country during the past half decade and rising input expenditures, many small industrialists were reluctant to invest more in the textile sector, especially the hosiery industry. Businessmen are continuing with old and obsolete machinery although it costs them much than the latest

technology making their products incompatible with goods being sold in the international market.

"Most of our machinery is old and tromped, causing heavy energy wastage besides other inefficiencies in our overall production process," remarked Mian Abdur Rasheed, a veteran industrialist. "As they use old motors, their energy cost jumps up due to wastage of energy. Even then they prefer to pay high cost in energy bills."

When asked about the reasons behind this tendency, he said that these industrialists witnessed uncertain situations in recent years and were reluctant to invest more to replace their old motors.

"Therefore, we expect the new government to direct its departments to focus on these issues and provide owners free consultation to improve their efficiency and control energy wastage," he stated.

"Although individually these

are small units, yet collectively they are contributing a sizable share in local economy employing thousands of workers," he said adding, "Therefore, they should be facilitated and guided to benefit from modern technologies to enhance their profitability."

As the hosiery sector can be segregated into local and export units, Jinnah Colony Faisalabad, Islam Nagar, Gulistan Colony, Haji Abad, Guru Nanak Pura have emerged as a hub of small hosiery units for local consumption while the major export units are housed in Millat Town, Jaranwala-Khurrianwala Industrial Belt, Value-Added City, Allama Iqbal Industrial Estate and Small Industrial Estate near Nalka Kohala.

When contacted different local hosiery owners, their problems felt identical as also faced by the overall industrial sector like the high cost of doing business and non-availability of cheaper raw mate-

rials like fine counts of yarn consumed by hosiery units.

"We think the uncertainty prevailed in the country in the recent past and high energy tariff were the major causes to hamper the growth of the hosiery industry to a desired level," remarked the spokesman of Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers Association (PHMA) North Zone.

He said hosiery is a value-added sector playing a major role in enhancing national exports and earning precious foreign exchange for the country. But, prices of electricity, gas and oil products constrain them from growing and re-investment to install state-of-the-art units.

"High mark-up rate and non-availability of raw material are other issues confronting this sector and needed to be addressed on war footing to save this industry," he added. Since Pakistan's major export portion is related to the textile

sector, its hosiery is an integral part of the value-added sector. But, simply taking the instance of Faisalabad - a home to the hosiery industry - our value added sector could not grow as desired.

"Pakistan is bestowed with valuable natural resources and a unique geo-political situation. However, we lack sustainable and industry supported policies," said Khawaja Muhammad Amjad, a member of Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturing Association (PHMA).

"The government must play its role to introduce business friendly policies in industrial and agriculture sector - the main raw material producing sector for industries." He proposed the use of modern technology as well as less taxation, cheaper energy and inputs, and ease of doing business for enhancing overall production and revenue.

"We can achieve sustainable growth by introducing favora-

ble policies and thereon emerge as major players in the world markets."

Vice Chairman of Pakistan Textile Exporters Association, Muhammad Idrees suggested to working on lean manufacturing processes and advancement in sustainable textiles.

"We must take diverse steps in productivity, efficiency, eco-friendly quality control systems and social ethics." Technical experts believe in a broader collaboration among stakeholders like technical institutions, industrialists and policymakers for the revival of industry.

"Such a collaboration among institutes like Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions (NTUF) with academia, community, industry and government can make an impact through knowledge-based textiles," underscored Engineer Prof. Dr Yasir Nawab Dean Faculty of School of Engineering and Technology

at National Textile University. "We have launched a skill efficiency and proficiency program for training of industries professionals," he said. "We are looking towards industrialists for technology transfer and up-scaling their ability to boost our economy through exporting value-added products to international markets."

These experts recommended that the new government should realign its policies to transform Pakistan from a net-importing to a net-exporting country and cited that although it is a tough decision yet an imperative for the revival of our industrial sector.

They believed in incentivizing the industrial sector for sustainable growth, enhancing exports, generating more revenue for debt retirement, creating much-needed job opportunities for the burgeoning population, and above all achieving the ultimate target of a stable national economy.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
67,005.10	67,142.12
Day's High	Day's Low
67,307.63	66,822.42
Index Value	Change
6,194,884,662	-137.02
Percentage	Time
-0.2%	29 Mar, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,952.62	+20.64
Percentage	Time
+0.26%	28 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,807.37	+47.29
Percentage	Time
+0.12%	28 Mar, 5:20 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
40,369.44	+201.37
Percentage	Time
-0.50%	29 Mar, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.7	184.5
Bahrain Dinar	747.61	755.61
Canadian Dollar	204.25	206.45
China Yuan	38.74	39.14
Danish Krone	40.3	40.7
Euro	301.45	304.45
Hong Kong Dollar	35.55	35.9
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.94
Kuwaiti Dinar	910.14	919.14
Malaysian Ringgit	59.25	59.85
New Zealand \$	170.56	172.56
Norwegians Krone	26.19	26.49
Omani Riyal	721.86	729.86
Qatari Riyal	76.57	77.27
Saudi Riyal	73.65	74.4
Singapore Dollar	206	208
Swedish Korona	26.89	27.19
Swiss Franc	313.78	316.28
Thai Bhat	7.76	7.91
U.A.E Dirham	75.4	76.15
UK Pound Sterling	353.5	357
US Dollar	278.1	280.85

Pakistan cannot solve its energy crisis without Iranian gas

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Dr Muhammad Hanif Mughal, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, said on Sunday that Pakistan has not found a solution to its energy crisis during the last few decades and cannot resolve the energy problem without importing gas from Iran.

He said that opposition from the United States to the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project and threats of penalties are both deplorable. He added that it would be in Pakistan's best interest to strengthen its relations with Iran and overcome different challenges by joining hands.

In a statement issued today, Dr. Hanif Mughal said that if gas is not taken from Iran, there may be a fine of eighteen billion dollars, which Pakistan cannot pay in the current economic situation.



Under these circumstances, he said the continued opposition to the gas pipeline by the United States is reprehensible and without justification.

Many countries, including China, India, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Italy, Greece, Iraq, and Turkey, buy oil and gas from Iran on which the US remains silent.

However, Pakistan is not allowed to do so and is threatened with sanctions, which is tantamount to double standards and hostility towards Pakistan.

He said that recently, the United States again opposed the gas pipeline project and warned Pakistan of its serious consequences. He said that Pakistan should explain the importance of the pipeline because, without cheap gas, the country's economy is constantly affected.

One billion cubic feet of gas per day can be

brought to Pakistan through the Iran pipeline, changing Pakistan's energy landscape and improving relations between the two countries, he underlined.

He stressed that given Iran's abundant gas resources and our pressing need, there is no justification for delay and that a policy centered on prioritizing relations with neighbors is imperative.

Many banks fear that their involvement in financing the IP project would result in significant hurdles and will invite US wrath.

Some experts believe that such projects cannot be completed due to economic weaknesses and continued reliance on the IMF.

He said Pakistan and Iran should work together to solve the common challenge and increase air and trade links. It is essential to open banking channels to increase trade.

Hard work

CHINIOT: A vendor repairing electric fans a head of hot weather, in the city.



Photo: Online

BMP asks DISCOs to address electricity theft, line losses issue

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Emphasizing the urgent need to address line losses and electricity theft, the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has cited its detrimental effects on the national economy and stressed the need for overhauling the power sector through some drastic measures as the total cost of inefficiencies in the power sector is constantly escalating.

The FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar encouraged the Discos to leverage technology and innovation

in their efforts to eradicate power theft, as the objective should be to curtail indiscriminate power outages, especially to consumers who diligently pay their bills. He asked the government that that all obstacles hindering efforts to prevent electricity theft must be removed, warning that employees and officers involved in such illegal activities should be dealt with firmly and decisively.

He also demanded that there should be no political interference in the campaign against electricity theft. He stressed that decisions should be made based on merit, ensuring a transparent and impartial approach.

Pakistan, Canada pledge to explore economic prospects, skillful manpower



PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan and Canada have reaffirmed their commitment to remain constructively engaged to further reinforce bilateral relations, as there were a number of sectors that had a huge potential for cooperation, especially the export of skillful manpower to improve the national economy.

These views were discussed in a tripartite meeting of the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF), Punjab Board of Investment & Trade (PBIT) and Member Parliament of the House of Commons of Canada Ms. Salma Zahid, held here today, to discuss various trade opportunities between Pakistan and Canada with major focus on export of skilled labour force from Pakistan.

Salma Zahid, who is

also the Member Standing Committee of Immigration and Citizenship of Canada, has recently been awarded with the Pakistan civil award of 'Sitara-e-Quaid-e-Azam' for her remarkable services to enhance bilateral relations between the two countries.

The Member Parliament of the Canadian House of Commons emphasized Pakistan's deep appreciation for its relationship with Canada and its commitment to fostering enduring and multifaceted bilateral relations. She stressed the importance of increasing trade between the two nations and called for closer collaboration among business communities. Promoting bilateral cooperation across public, commercial, and parliamentary spheres was highlighted as pivotal to strengthening the Pakistan-Canada partnership.

Pakistan enjoys all potential to become true business partner of Libya: Envoy

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Libyan Ambassador to Pakistan Moamer Z. O. AbdalMotalb has said that Libya and Pakistan are bound by bonds of brotherhood, strong relations, common goals and a promising future for a diversified and stable strategic partnership. He said that there is a strong need to join forces in joint efforts to create an investment environment to pave the way for broader partnership in all fields to alleviate the difficulties and expand actual work opportunities between the two brotherly countries. This has been stated by the Ambassador while talking to President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari who called on him along with a delegation.

The sides discussed strengthening the distinguished bilateral relations between the State of Libya and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The envoy also congratulated the leadership of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry for its tangible engagements and aspirations to advance trade and development and explore economic goals.



On his part President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that relations between Pakistan and Libya always remained friendly and bonded as both the countries share similar religious identities, cultural links, particularly their Islamic heritage. President ICCI went on to say that ICCI

on its part was passionate to play its role in exploring the investment opportunities between the two countries for the benefit of the business community and the people. On this occasion Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, Senior Vice President ICCI Faad Waheed, and former President ICCI Ejaz Abbasi were also present.

Demand for Peshawari Chappal rises as Eid nears

PNP

PESHAWAR: If someone is thinking that buying traditional footwear on this Eid would be easy compared to clothes. They should think twice as inflation has also affected the rates of Peshawari chappal.

For many, such sandals are the best option with shalwar kameez. Aaj News went to Karachi's Nazimabad market to speak to shop owners and handcrafts to know what's different this season. The answer was inflation. Peshawari Chappal are divided into two types: Band Chappal and Panjadar Chappal. Band Chappal are usually worn in winter while Panjadar Chappal is the pick for summer.

One of the shop owners told us that he still had the same rate as the last, but he also complained about the impact of inflation on the materials used in its making.

Another one said that the rate has doubled as compared to last year, citing high costs of materials.

India's cheapest source of food, tech, raw materials, medicines, and chemicals

PPA

Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), said on Sunday that Pakistan is suffering from extremely high inflation and that opening trade with India would help ease the burden on the general public.

He stated that the trade suspension has caused a great deal of suffering for the people of Pakistan, and now we should provide them some respite by opening up trade with the neighboring country.

In a statement that was released here today, Shahid Rasheed Butt stated that India is the best source for the most cost-effective supply of food, technology, raw materials, medications, and chemicals and that this fact should not be neglect-

ed for political objectives.

He stated that it has been four and a half years since the suspension of trade with India. Still, there has been no change in India's position regarding the situation throughout this time.

We cannot expect India to change its stance if we halt commerce for an additional ten years; therefore, we must terminate this unjust policy to provide some relief to the people.

India's total export value is close to five hundred billion dollars, and a trade of a few billion dollars with Pakistan would not bother the country. However, he said it is of utmost importance for Pakistan to obtain inexpensive food and other supplies from its neighbor.

Pakistan may jack up the imports of refined petroleum products from



India if trade ties are restored, as mineral fuels, oils, and distilled products now constitute the single largest category of Indian exports.

Similarly, the number of smartphones exported from India yearly has significantly increased, which

may help Pakistan. India is now the world's largest producer of mobile phones after China, as it sold mobile phones worth \$11 billion overseas last fiscal year.

According to Shahid Rashid Butt, the current method of conducting business with India involves going through Dubai and Singapore, which is a costly process. On the other hand, direct trade between the two nations will reduce business expenses, ultimately benefiting consumers.

He asserted that India should disregard past issues and completely eliminate the tariff and non-tariff barriers imposed on Pakistani exports. This is due to the fact that the potential for bilateral trade between the two nations is greater than twenty billion dollars, which may be utilized.

FBR achieves monthly as well as 9-month target despite issuance of unprecedented refunds

PPA

ISLAMABAD: At the end of the third quarter of current financial year, FBR has collected Rs. 6,710 billion against an assigned target of Rs. 6,707 billion for the first nine months whereas refunds amounting to Rs. 369 billion were issued as compared to Rs. 254 billion issued during the same period last year. FBR continues to register 30% growth in revenue collection as compared to the first nine months of previous financial year.

GDP drops to 1% as LSM shows -0.52% growth in Q2

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has pointed out that the GDP growth has stood at one percent in the second quarter of the current fiscal year, as the LSM has registered a negative 0.52 percent growth, leading to drop in overall the GDP growth of the country.

PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that the decline in LSM may have been due to a massive slash in the credit to the private sector, as the credit to the private sector during July-Jan 2024 plummeted 41 percent to Rs180.7 billion from Rs393.6 billion for the

same period a year before mainly due to high markup rate.

The PIAF chairman said that business friendly policies must be adopted as other neighboring countries of the region are giving to trade and industry. The amount specified in trade policy should be utilised for the promotion of exports by giving incentives to the trade and industry and by exploring new markets, he suggested. He said that the high cost of doing business has proved to be dangerous for Pakistan's industry, discouraging investment both in capacity and capability, calling for lessening the burden of heavy taxes on the power sector.

Govt Jinnah College 3rd Consecutive Victory in Inter College T-20 Ramazan Cup



Sports Desk

KARACHI: Government Jinnah College 3rd Consecutive Victory in the Inter College Ramazan T-20 Cup Match after beating Happy Palace Green College by 9 Wickets at Eid Gah Ground Nazimabad. Happy Palace Green College 97/7 in allotted 20 overs. Muhammad Dilwar

Malik 47 5x4, Umer Sultan 17. Naeem Gil (sla) 3/11.

Government Jinnah College 109/1 in 12.2 overs. Muhammad Dawood 51 1x4 5x6, Rizwan Khan 40 4x4 1x6. After end of the Match. Cricket Organizer S. A. Faheem and Coach Tahir Mehmood give the Player of the Match Cash award Rs.5000/= to Naeem Gul on this occa-

sion Nawaid Al Amin also present.

In another Match Government Pakistan Shipowners College thrilling 1 wicket victory against Government College Asifabad. Government College Asifabad 87 all out in 15.3 overs. Ishaq 18, Dawood Rizwan 16. Azmat ullah 2/8, Noor Zaman 2/16, Muhammad Sarim 2/16. Government Pakistan Shipown-

ers College 88/9 in 19.5 overs. Saifullah 15. Azhar Hussain (ob) 4/8, Inam ul Haq 2/25. After the end of the Match Muhammad Tariq Hafeez treasurer RCAA Zone One gives away Player of the Match Cash award of Rs.5000/= to Noor Zaman on this occasion Arif Waheed, Mohtashim Ali, Afzal Qureshi and Dr Arif Hafeez also present.

Babar Azam appointed T20I, ODI skipper

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Stylish batsman Babar Azam returned as skipper of the national T20I and ODI teams after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) selection committee unanimously picked him for the job on Sunday.

In a post on social media platform X (known as Tweeter), PCB announced that Babar Azam has been appointed as white ball captain. Babar Azam was unceremoniously stripped of the captaincy role in November last year after team's poor show at the ICC ODI World Cup in India, and he was replaced by fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi as T20I captain by the then Chairman Zaka Ashraf. Opening batter Shah Masood was handed reins of the test side after Babar decided to step down as red-ball captain as well.

Babar's removal as captain had received flak from the cricketing circles then and the PCB chairman's powers to appoint a captain also came



under the scanner. In a revolutionary decision, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi had announced in March to do away with his powers to appoint a captain and handed the power to the five member election committee comprising former test cricketers-

Mohammad Yousaf, Wahab Riaz, Abdul Razzaq, Asad Shafiq and data analyst Bilal Afzal. Babar Azam was first appointed captain of the national T20I side in 2019 and assigned the ODI and red ball captaincy role in 2020.

Luis Suarez on target as Inter Miami draw with New York City FC

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Luis Suarez bagged his fifth goal of the season as Inter Miami were held to a 1-1 draw against New York City FC in Major League Soccer (MLS) on Saturday.

Former Barcelona and Liverpool star Suarez glanced in a Julian Gressel free kick in the 15th minute to fire Miami into the lead at the Chase Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.

But Miami's hopes of securing all three points were thwarted by a dogged New York performance, which got its reward when Costa Rica international Alonso Martinez equalised on 34 minutes.

Miami, thrashed 4-0 against New York Red Bulls in their last outing, created a string of clear chances after the City leveler but were frustrated by a superb performance from goalkeeper Matthew Freese.



Sri Lanka rule Bangladesh with 531, but Mendis misses rare feat

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Bangladesh were 55-1 in their first innings at stumps on the second day of the second Test after bowling Sri Lanka out for 531 in Chittagong on Sunday.

Opener Zakir Hasan was unbeaten on 28 alongside nightwatchman Tajjul Islam on 0 after Lahiru Kumara bowled Mahmudul Hasan Joy for 21.

Sri Lanka made a record 531 runs in their first innings, which was the highest score in Test cricket without any batsman scoring a century.

Meanwhile, Kamindu Mendis narrowly missed the feat of a third Test century in consecutive innings.

The left-handed batter

remained not out on 92 as last man Asitha Fernando was run out for a duck, leaving him eight short of what would have made him only the fourth Sri Lankan to score three centuries in consecutive innings.

Mendis, who scored 102 and 164 in the first Test, struck Tajjul Islam for two sixes in an over to come close to the feat.

But Fernando fell short of his crease in a desperate attempt to change the strike.

Apart from Mendis, who was playing only his third Test, Dhananjaya de Silva (70), Dinesh Chandimal (59), Kusal Mendis (93), Dimuth Karunaratne (86) and Nishan Madhushka (57) also scored a fifty each.

Follow us on our Official



WhatsApp channel

Shakib Al Hasan finished with 3-110 as Sri Lanka made Bangladesh toil for nearly two days after electing to bat first. Sri Lanka resumed the second day

with 314-4.

De Silva, like Mendis, who also scored 102 and 108 in the first Test, raised the prospect of scoring 300 on the trot before he was dismissed in the post-lunch

session.

Chandimal was the only batsman to be dismissed in the first session, edging Shakib behind the stumps after making 59 runs.

Khaled Ahmed trapped De Silva leg before in the first over after the lunch break.

Khaled could have taken another wicket in his next if Prabath Jayasuriya was not comically dropped by three slip fielders on six.

Mendis was declared caught behind on 35 off Mehidy Hasan Miraz, but the decision was reversed after review.

Shakib hit Jayasuriya plumb in front to end his 65-run seventh wicket stand with Mendis, who was dropped by Hasan Mahmud on 60 at deep square leg.

Raphinha helps Barcelona edge Las Palmas to close gap with leaders Real Madrid



A Sports

BARCELONA: Brazilian winger Raphinha steered Barcelona to a 1-0 victory over Las Palmas during the La Liga 2023-24 clash here at Estadi Olímpic Lluís Companys on Saturday.

The Catalans closed the gap with La Liga leaders Real Madrid with a difference of five points after sinking 12th-ranked Las Palmas.

Raphinha earned the advantage for Barcelona in the 19th minute however the goal was overruled due to offside.

Despite not getting a breakthrough, the home side dominated throughout the first half and kept challenging Las Palmas' defence. Watch La Liga 2023/24 Live on ARY ZAP

Meanwhile, Las Palmas' struggles doubled in the 24th minute as their goalkeeper, Alvaro Valles received a red card in the 24th minute for taking out Raphinha who was headed towards an open net.

The first half ended without any goals, but Barcelona continued to create chances. Eventually, Joao Felix passed the ball over the defenders to Raphinha, who headed it past the goalkeeper and scored the match-winner.

Notably, Barcelona are unbeaten in 11 games since their coach Xavi Hernandez said that he would leave at the end of the season and their recent form has given them some faint hope of retaining their title.

Follow us on our Official WhatsApp channel Leaders Real Madrid will face Athletic Bilbao on Sunday at the Santiago Bernabeu, aiming to restore their eight-point advantage on the Catalans in second.

"They're three important points, we know they will be important at the end of the season," Raphinha told Movistar.

"We'll keep fighting until the end and we won't give up until the league is over."

Bayern Munich's title hopes in tatters after 2-0 loss to Dortmund

Sports Desk



MUNICH: Bayern Munich's Bundesliga title hopes all but evaporated after a 2-0 home loss to Borussia Dortmund on Saturday left them 13 points behind leaders Bayer Leverkusen with seven games remaining.

Bayern, winners of the previous 11 league crowns, were inefficient in attack and their first shot on goal came late in the second half, with usually deadly striker Harry Kane having earlier missed their best chances.

For Dortmund, it was their first league win in Munich in 10 years and the Ruhr valley club tightened their hold on fourth place that leads to next season's Champions League group stage.

Asked whether the title race was now essentially over, Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel, who will leave at the end of the season, said: "Obviously, yes."

"After today's game there is no more need to count points. How many is it now? Congratulations to Leverkusen."

"We are very disappointed because we felt we did not bring the necessary passion to win the game. It was too little from us when it came to the basics."

Dortmund scored with their first chance in the 10th minute after a mistake by Thomas Mueller and a superb through ball for Karim Adeyemi from Julian Brandt.

Adeyemi, battling for a spot in hosts Germany's Euro 2024 squad, completed the quick break with a fine finish to beat goalkeeper Sven Ulreich.

The Bayern keeper, stepping in for the injured Manuel Neuer, repeatedly came to the rescue in the second half but was beaten again in the 83rd by Julian Ryerson's powerful low drive.

The Bavarians came close through Kane, who saw a header sail narrowly wide and another shot stopped by Mats Hummels.

With disappointed Bayern fans leaving the stadium before the end, the England striker - the league's record signing at 100 million euros (\$107.93 million) - had the ball in the net in the 89th only for his header to be disallowed for offside.

Bayern, who face Arsenal in the Champions League quarter-finals next month, stay on 60 points, while Leverkusen, 2-1 winners over Hoffenheim, have 73. Dortmund are fourth on 53, three ahead of RB Leipzig who were held 0-0 by lowly Mainz.

Collins tops Rybakina to claim Miami Open in farewell season

Sports Desk

MIAMI: American Danielle Collins overcame fourth seed Elena Rybakina to win the final of the Miami Open 7-5 6-3 on Saturday and claim the title on home soil in her farewell season.

Collins won nearly 75 per cent of her first-serve points while claiming three of her seven break points on the way to victory in just over two hours after a stunning second set that left the crowd, including former Miami champion Andre Agassi breathless.

"This is my first WTA 1000 (title) and I worked so hard, it has taken me a bit longer than a lot of the other players," said 30-year-old Collins of her triumph.

"This whole week has been tough-I have played against some

of the best players in the world, including being out here and sharing the court with Elena in the final," Collins said.

"Thank you to the fans. I've played a lot of tennis and in a few finals, but nothing compares close to this."

Collins, who said in January she would retire from tennis at the end of the season, was the surprise winner at the East Coast tournament, going one step further than her performance at the 2022 Australian Open when she reached the final.

She joins Martina Navratilova, Chris Evert, three-time champion Venus Williams, eight-time winner Serena Williams and Sloane Stephens as the sixth American woman to claim the crown.

The unseeded American relied on her strength to hold the lead at the start, converting break points against Rybakina, who kept leveling the score, before closing out the opening set with a stunning cross-court backhand winner on the hour mark.

Rybakina refused to go quietly after her opponent took a 2-0 lead in the second set and worked her way back, capitalising on unforced errors to draw level at 3-3.

However, the American regained the advantage after saving three break points to take the seventh game with the former Wimbledon champion unable to recover.

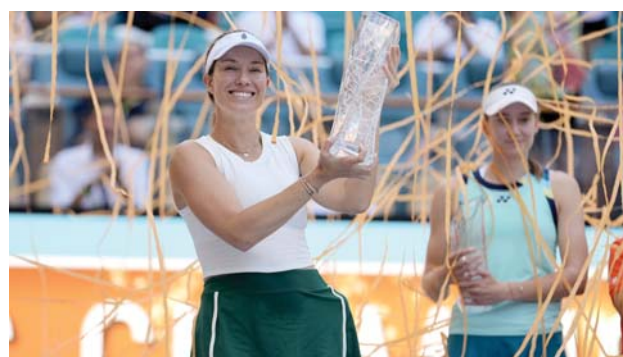
Rybakina, who lost last year's Miami final to Petra Kvitova, missed Indian Wells this month with a gastrointestinal problem.

She returned to the courts and put in a superb run, beating Belarusian Victoria Azarenka in three sets in the semi-finals, but admitting she did not expect to fight for the title.

"We didn't expect coming here to be in the final, to be honest, but it was a great two weeks. A lot of tough matches and great battles," the 24-year-old said.

Collins said she has achieved the goal she set herself for her final season on the WTA Tour by winning her first Masters 1000 title.

"I have always wanted to win every tournament that I have signed up for, but I do think that because it is my last year, I really wanted to try to win a Masters 1000 this year," Collins told reporters after winning the third



WTA title of her career.

"That's really important to me. That's something that I talked a lot about with everybody close to me. I really wanted to make a push to be able to bring out my best tennis."

"I'm so glad that I have been able to figure out some of the physical things I have needed to

do to peak at the right time and to feel like I'm ready to go. I certainly did that this tournament, but it has been a goal. So I got to tick it off the list."

Asked if she was reconsidering those plans, Collins said: "No, I'm not."

"I feel like all of these ques-

tions are coming from such a good place, because I feel like a lot of people would like to continue seeing me play well.

"But like I said, I have some health challenges, and with those health challenges, it makes things for me away from the court a little more difficult. I hope everyone can respect that. It's a very emotional and personal thing."

Collins, who is from Florida, thanked the home crowd for their vocal support throughout the match, saying: "It was just such a happy day for me on the court."

"Whether I won or lost, having the crowd support, I have never gotten to experience anything like it... It literally felt like I was playing in front of thousands of my best friends, I just-yeah, I'll never forget it."

Alert

LAHORE: A policeman stands alert on the occasion of Easter at the Sacred Heart Church in the provincial capital.



Photo: Online

PPP to raise uneven CCI composition issue with PML-N, says Khursheed Shah

Exclusive Interview with Senior Leader PPP Khursheed Shah—Aaj Exclusive with Tariq Chaudhry

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The PPP would raise the issue of Council of Common Interests (CCI) composition with the PML-N, party leader Khursheed Shah has said which got unbalanced with the inclusion of Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar who belongs to the ruling party.

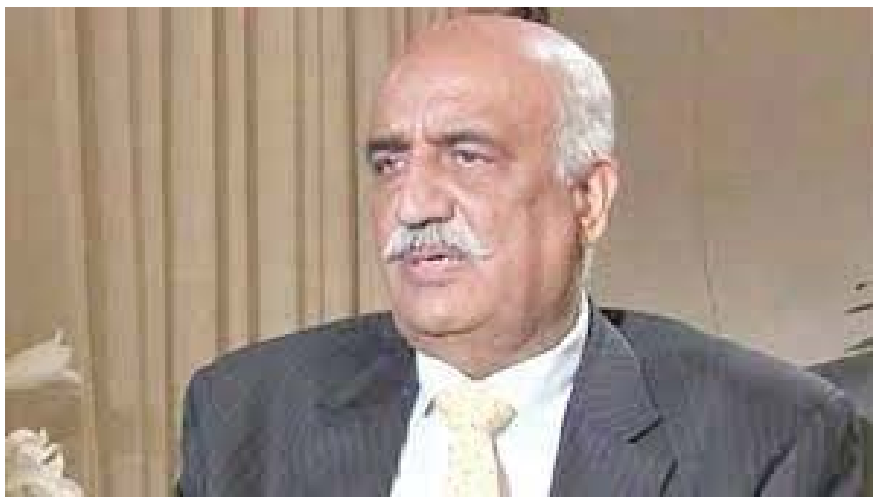
"Such discussions are not made public, but kept confidential," the PPP leader said in an interview with Aaj Exclusive with Tariq Chaudhry aired on Sunday. "We will discuss it and this issue will be raised."

He was responding to a query related to the constitutional body. Earlier this week, the CCI formation shocked many people when Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb was excluded and FM Dar was included.

The newly constituted council includes the premier, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Minister of States and Frontier Regions Amir Muqam, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti.

Although Dar's inclusion follows the past developments where Aurangzeb was excluded from the Economic Coordination Committee composition only to re-enter a day after, it also shows the PML-N has a majority in a platform deciding policy matters.

According to the Constitu-



tion, the CCI is responsible for formulating and regulating policies concerning matters included in the federal legislative list and exercising supervision and control over related institutions.

At least three ministers in the CCI belong to other parties. In the past, many experts have called for revising the forum composition to make it true representative of the provinces. They have also urged opposition leaders' inclusion in the body.

Khursheed was of the view that the PPP would have their seats based on majority and the party has dealt with such matters in the past.

Seeking relief to pay off loans

When asked, the PPP leader replied that no government has been ousted due to the electricity prices in the past. He admitted that the inflation rate was high.

He went on to add that the government should not take loans as the country has ample food baskets to feed its people.

The PPP leader wondered about the reasons for not improving the economy.

Khursheed was of the view that parliamentarians should be heard to have a solution to the economic issues as only the august House can "find a way through these loans and can appeal to the world through parliament to stop this and seek relief for 10 years.

The PPP leader mentioned former president and military dictator General (ret) Musharraf's period who sought 10-year relief to pay off Paris loans.

"We had many ways to improve the economy. Unfortunately, we did not avail them. There is a way, we can appeal to the world that the loans should be frozen for 10 years. We have to pay a \$24 billion to \$25 billion loan in two years. We can spend this to improve our economy and should not waste it. You can return it better way in 10 years. In these years, no

one has taken parliament into confidence."

He clarified that there were no such plans to welcome former caretaker prime minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar into their fold and elect him as a senator. Khursheed added that Yousaf Raza Gilani's name was final.

He added that the party decided to not award the ticket to veteran leader Raza Rabbani, saying that the former Senate chairman speaks well and presents legal arguments. "No there is no such thing as resentment with Rabbani."

'Ladla'

When asked who is 'ladla' – a term used for politicians close to the establishment, Khursheed said: "Today's ladla is Parliament. Who has a majority in Parliament is ladla. You are speaking about someone else. It was then who was ladla. Now Parliament is ladla because the majority is with the PPP and PML-N. Ladla of establishment and

judiciary should be majority number of parliamentarians."

He rejected the impression that the PPP was suited for such a title as the party did not win many seats in Punjab.

"As far as Maulana Fazlur Rehman is concerned, he has not won seats in Sindh in the past. Rigging should be investigated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as 90% of votes went against him in the province."

He added that the PPP was also responsible as the party also has a constitutional position. "Those who support will also take ownership."

According to Khursheed, the party has been offered ministries by the government. He added that names for governor would be decided after Senate elections. "We have offered N-league the Sindh and Balochistan governor posts."

While responding to a question on the judicial meddling claims by judges, he asked why those jurists did not speak against the alleged matter over the two years.

He was of the view that former chief justice of Pakistan Tassaduq Hussain Jilani was a better person to lead the inquiry commission.

He agreed with the host when he raised the issue of dacoits in the border regions of Punjab and Sindh. The PPP leader vowed to resolve the issue in a month.

Khursheed said that the party's participation in Punjab elections should be appreciated as they were not given many opportunities in the past. "Now we will have a chance we will move forward."

President felicitates Christian community on Easter

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday felicitated the Christian community on observance of Easter. The president said that the Constitution of Pakistan guaranteed constitutional rights to all religious communities. The president, in a message, said that all the communities enjoyed religious, political, social and economic rights in Pakistan.

"The Christian community is a precious asset for Pakistan," he said, adding that Easter was an occasion that brought a message of hope, affection and prosperity, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Appreciating the Christian community's contributions for the national progress, he further observed that the Christian community had always played their role in the progress and prosperity of the



country.

The president reaffirmed that Pakistan was committed to protection of the rights of all communities and would ensure all steps for their prosperity. For the country's progress and prosperity, entire nation including minorities would have to collectively work together, he added.

PM reiterates resolve for social, economic uplift of all minorities



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday reaffirmed the resolve to work for the social uplift and integration of all the minorities in Pakistan. "I extend my heartfelt greetings to the Christian community of Pakistan and around the world, on the occasion of Easter," the prime minister said in a message.

He said much more than festivity and celebration, Easter was an occasion to reinforce and reflect on the values of love, tolerance and forgiveness as espoused by Prophet Isa (AS) and was a reminder to emulate these in their daily lives to bring harmony and peace in today's strife and conflict-ridden world. On this auspicious occasion, the prime minister also lauded the immense contributions of the Christian community in struggle for the creation of Pakistan and its socio-economic development and firmly believed that they would continue to play their proactive role in the progress and stability of Pakistan. "While we celebrate diversity of faiths as a source of strength and enrichment in our nation, let us join hands towards building a society that is tolerant and cohesive and together defeat the forces of discord that are trying to cause harm to the fabric of our society," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the prime minister as saying. He also wished all the Christian community a happy and peaceful Easter.

Maryam becomes first CM to visit Maryamabad Church in 131 years



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz became the first CM Punjab to visit the Maryamabad Church in 131 years on Sunday. She participated in the Christian festivities on Easter and for the first time in the history of Punjab, an Easter grant was disbursed.

Maryam Nawaz, by visiting the residential locality of the Christian community in the suburbs of Sheikhpura, presented Easter grant cheques to the Christian families. She greeted the Christian community on their "Happy Easter Day" and the Christian families accorded her a warm reception. The CM congratulated the Christian women by embracing them.

She mingled with women and inquired from them as what did they cook and which clothes did they prepare for the Easter Day. The Christian women profoundly prayed for the CM and thanked her for paying a visit to them. She while conversing with the Christian families remarked that "we equally participate in the festivities of the Christian community on the eve of Easter". She also cut the Easter cake jointly with the Christian leaders.

Later, the CM also visited the National Holy site located at Maryam

Church, Maryamabad.

CM distributed an Easter grant among the Christian families. Ten thousand Christian families were granted R 5,000 per family across Punjab. Maryam participated in the Easter prayers ceremony.

Father at Maryamabad Church Tariq George recited the Bible. The CM and other guests stood up to show their respect for the national anthem.

CM greeted the whole Christian Community on their Easter Day on behalf of PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif, adding that she visited along with Mian Nawaz Sharif the residences of MC workers to condole the death of MC workers in Faisalabad. "I felt heartily grieved to witness young wives and young children of MC workers. It was a responsibility of the government to provide precautionary equipment to the sanitary workers."

Federal Minister Rana Tanvir Hussain, former senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari, Assembly Members, Bishop Irfan Jamil, Bishop Alexander John Malik, Bishop Nadeem Kamran Church of Pakistan, Majid Abel of Naulakha Church and Bishop Azad Marshall Church of Pakistan were also present.

No proposal to increase Cj term ...

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Multiple TV channels had claimed that the government is mulling a proposal to allow every chief justice to remain in office for a three-year term.

The reports had suggested that the new rule could impact Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, who is set to reach the age of superannuation in October this year.

The rule if implemented could also impact who would become the chief justice in the future. The speculation had begun soon after the Chief Justice of Pakistan met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif over the matter of a letter by six high court judges, alleging interference by intelligence agencies.

The CJP had requested the government to form a judicial commission to investigate the allegations.

Senior police officials go on leave after 'junior' appointed as Islamabad IG

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: As many as three senior deputy inspector generals (DIGs) of Islamabad police went on leave after a junior officer was appointed as inspector general of the capital city.

DIG Awais Malik, DIG Hassan Raza and DIG Shoaib Janbaz were among the high-ranking officials who went on leave following the change of command in the Islamabad police.

The federal government on March 29 appointed Ali



Nasir Rizvi as Inspector General (IG) of Islamabad police. He replaced Akbar Nasir who was directed to report to Establishment Division.

A grad 20 officer, the

newly-appointed IG Islamabad has served as DIG Operations Lahore.

Before leaving the post, former IG Abar Nasir had also promoted at least 14 inspectors to deputy super-

intendent of police (DSP) posts.

The notification of the promotions was issued following the approval from the Departmental Promotion Committee.

Those promoted included Muhammad Sharif, Asadullah Mangi, Sham-ul Ahmed, Kamal Malik, Dilawar Khan and Zulfikar Ali.

Meanwhile, sources said that one of the DIGs who went on leave attempted to get posting in the Railways police.