

PM SHEHBAZ ACCUSES JUDICIARY OF HAVING 'DOUBLE STANDARDS'

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday criticized the superior judiciary and accused of having "double standards" with regard to treatment of different political parties.

"I am an elected representative and that's why question when the truth would be spoken, if not today."

Addressing a session of the National Assembly (NA) on Wednesday, Shehbaz Sharif reiterated that he greatly respected the judiciary and was only talking about "double standards", adding that it was his right to do so as an elected representative of the people.

The prime minister went on to say: "I ask that there was a time when a former chief justice took suo moto [notices] day and night ... when the courts summon then I think we should go with great respect ... but if you have to decide then it should be on the basis of truth and justice. It can't happen that you treat me one way and treat someone else differently."

The prime minister's criticism of the judiciary came a day after the



Supreme Court struck down Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling and removed his son Hamza Shehbaz as the province's chief minister.

The prime minister said that during the previous PTI government's tenure "no one took notice" of various scandals

such wheat and sugar crisis, the violation of its agreement with the International Monetary Fund as well as irregularities in the Peshawar BRT project.

"Who planned to attack this parliament in 2014, who hung dirty clothes on the building of the Supreme Court, who asked the public to set fire to electricity

bills but no one took notice, everyone was quiet." PM Shehbaz put up the question that how long could such "double standards continue".

He noted that the apex court had deemed the actions of former NA speaker Qasim Suri in March as a violation of the Constitution.

"[That was a] very good thing but no one summoned him. But the Punjab Assembly [deputy] speaker does an act and he was called to the court," Shehbaz said, referring to recent proceedings in the Supreme Court over the deputy speaker's ruling and conduct during Friday's Punjab chief minister election.

PM Shehbaz said the Constitution outlined the role and jurisdiction of the courts and other institutions, within which they were supposed to work. He lamented that in the 75 years that had passed, the Constitution was tampered with and martial law established, causing Pakistan to break in two and impeding democratic growth.

The prime minister lambasted the PTI government for its economic performance during its 3.5 years, adding that the coalition government had resolved to come in power to save the country from defaulting.

"Did we come [in power] through a backdoor? This is the first time someone didn't attack the Prime Minister House but [the change occurred] through the power of vote, in accordance with the law. They changed that worst government and accepted the challenge [to rule]."

PARLIAMENT HAS TO DEFEND ITSELF: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, in his address to the National Assembly, stressed the need for judicial reforms, saying it was the need of the hour and that the government must defend the role of the parliament. He underlined that the parliament's mandate was to form Constitution and the judiciary's job was to interpret it. "They cannot bring amendments on their own."

"Do you think that all your sins will be forgiven due to one night of neutrality?" he asked, without naming anyone.

Bilawal said it should not be a concern anymore whether a dictator came from Bani Gala or was sent by the establishment. "The parliament is supreme and it has the power to resolve all issues."

The foreign minister said the chief justice was not the entire Supreme Court, but instead each and every member of the top court had equal importance. "A mere three judges cannot change the Constitution," the minister said in reference to the SC ruling that saw Hamza Shehbaz's victory in the chief minister election voided.

He also voiced his support for the formation of a joint parliamentary committee on judicial reforms, saying it was essential to protect the Constitution and democracy.

Resolution passed for formation of committee on judicial reforms

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Govt decides on judicial reforms to 'curtail apex court powers'



ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision against Punjab Assembly Deputy speaker's ruling, the federal government on Wednesday decided to curtail the apex court's jurisdiction on suo motu notices and powers of the chief justice to constitute benches among others.

The federal cabinet met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shahbaz

Sharif and decided to legislate on the Supreme Court powers and jurisdiction.

After the meeting, while speaking to the media, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said that a parliamentary committee will be formed on "judicial reforms."

The move came after the devastating blow to the nascent Shehbaz Sharif-led ruling coalition, as the Supreme Court struck down Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling

on the election of Punjab chief minister, paving the way for PTI's selected Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi to ascend to the throne in the country's political heartland.

In the conclusion to a hearing that gripped the country for the past four days, a three-member bench, comprising Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar, announced an unusually harsh verdict after over a three-hour delay on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Supreme Court Bar Association, High Court Bars of all provinces, Pakistan Bar Council, and members and nominated members of Judicial Commission have also demanded to limit the powers of Supreme Court in their joint resolution.

They said that Article 175A and Article 209 of the Constitution should be amended so that the forum for appointment and removal of judges can be one and judges, bar, administration and parliament are all equally represented in it.

The lawyers said that the parliament should amend Article 175 (2) and 191 of the Constitution, abolishing the chief justice's blanket authority in forming the benches, fixing the date of the cases and taking suo motu notices and give these powers to five most senior judges of the top court.

Ms Khar calls for D-8 coordination facility to boost economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar on Wednesday called for creating a 'Private Sector Coordination Facility' to boost economic cooperation amongst the Developing-Eight (D-8) countries. The MoS spoke virtually to the 20th Session of the D-8 Council of Foreign Ministers, hosted by Bangladesh in a hybrid format, the Foreign Office said. The MoS called for creating a conducive environment for trade through facilitative legal frameworks, and equal opportunities for investment and business. She underscored that Pakistan's vision of geo-economics had socio-economic growth, connectivity, and development at its core. Through cooperation and partnerships, the D-8 countries can realize their true economic potential. Khar highlighted that Pakistan's location afforded critical overland and maritime connectivity to key regions of Asia - Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and China - that made Pakistan geo-politically among the most pivotal states in the world. "We were confident that through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), this geo-political asset will rapidly turn into a geo-economic dividend," she underlined. The Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, in his capacity as the Chair of the Council of Ministers, presided over the meeting. Foreign Ministers of Türkiye and Iran, and Minister of State of Nigeria, alongside senior officials from Egypt, Indonesia and Malaysia, also participated in the meeting. The Council meeting was preceded by the 45th Session of the D-8 Commission which adopted a series of major decisions building on the progress achieved. One of the key decisions taken by the Council was to fully operationalize the Preferential Trade Agreement by 31 October 2022 with a view to achieving the intra-D-8 trade target of US \$500 billion agreed under the Decennial Road Map 2020-30. **STAFF REPORT**

Fears of faltering economy fuel rupee's continued freefall

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

The Pakistani rupee on Wednesday made yet another new record of devaluation against the US dollar, closed at an all-time high of Rs236.02 in the interbank market.

According to the details, the local currency fell Rs3.09 or 1.31% from its previous close of Rs232.93 on Tuesday, making it the ninth straight session in which it took a thrashing against the greenback.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs236 and Rs240, respectively.

Similarly, the price of the euro increased by Rs1.26 and closed at Rs239.30 against the previous day's closing of Rs238.06.

The Japanese Yen gained 02 paisas to close at Rs1.72, whereas an increase of Rs3.61 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs284.19 as compared to its last closing of Rs280.58.

The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 85 paisas each to close at Rs64.25 and Rs62.83, respectively.

It is pertinent to note that Pakistan has spent over \$3.5 billion on the import of pe-

troleum products for August and September, and the payment is due in less than five weeks. The impact of this deadline is already causing a scarcity of the dollar in the markets and piling pressure on banks that are already running out of US currency.

Although the greenback is now at a 20-year high against other world currencies due to expectations that the Federal Reserve will increase its interest rates, the Pakistani Rupee has been one of Asia's worst-performing currency in 2022 with a fall of nearly 16.5% against the US Dollar that put it at the bottom of a basket of 13 peers, including the Japanese Yen, South Korean Won, and Bangladesh Taka.



GOVT TO COMPLETE THAR COAL POWER PROJECT IN FIRST QUARTER 2023: PM

ISLAMABAD
APP

PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the present government was making rapid progress to complete the Thar Coal Power Project by the first quarter of 2023 for which as many as 7,000 local people have been employed.

The prime minister was talking during a meeting with a Chinese delegation led by the president of

Shanghai Electric, Liu Ping. The meeting was attended by former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Federal Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan, Minister of State for Petroleum Dr. Mussadak Malik, Special Assistants Zafaruddin Mahmood, Dr. Jahanzeb Khan, and senior officials.

The PM said that the Thar Coal Power Project, which was supposed to be completed a long time ago, was deliberately stalled by the government of prime minister Imran Khan. "With its completion, the project would generate 1,320 MW of electricity from

local coal," he added.

However, he added that he has now tasked Special Representative Zafaruddin Mehmood and Additional Secretary Nadeem Chaudhry to provide assistance for the early completion of Thar Coal Project by Shanghai Electric.

Speaking on the occasion, Shehbaz vowed to oversee the early completion of ongoing development projects being carried out by Chinese companies in Pakistan. "My government will take all necessary steps to ensure the security of engineers and staffers

of Chinese companies working in Pakistan," he added.

He said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was playing an important role in the development of Pakistan and said that the government was eyeing increased cooperation and investment with Chinese companies.

PM Shehbaz said the entire nation was grateful to Chinese President Xi Jinping as well as the Chinese leadership for helping Pakistan in difficult times.

Welcoming the interest of Shanghai Electric to make further investments in the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity in Pakistan, PM Shehbaz said that Chinese cooperation and investment has led to an improvements in Pakistan's infrastructure, public transport, and power crisis.

He commended the assurance given by the Chinese companies to ensure the completion of projects in Pakistan at a fast pace.

DG FIA faced music for 'refusal' to lodge fake case against Imran

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

Following a high-level reshuffle in the bureaucracy, the federal government on Wednesday removed Director General Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Muhammad Tahir Rai from his post. According to a well-placed source, the federal cabinet, which met in Islamabad with the prime minister in the chair, approved replacing DG FIA Muhammad Tahir Rai with Mohsin Butt. It is learnt that the incumbent government removed Rai Tahir after he refused to initiate 'bogus' cases against former prime minister Imran Khan pertaining to Toshakhana gifts.

Honda making efforts to avert non-production days

LAHORE
DANIYAL AHMAD

Honda Atlas Cars Pakistan (HACPL) is yet to make a decision on whether to observe non-production days (NPD) but it is optimistic that the need may not arise, it was learnt on Wednesday. Profit has been able to confirm this with Amir Nazir, General Manager of Sales and Marketing at HACPL. "A very narrow range of letter of credits (LC) are being cleared right now. We are negotiating with the State Bank and we'll make a decision based on that. However, we are hopeful. We have only planned for our annual closure for now" Amir said. This comes days after Toyota and Suzuki making their own decisions amidst the prevailing supply chain crisis that has arisen as a result of the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) extended mandate over letters of credit for ckd imports.

CCPO Lahore, DG Punjab ACE removed from their posts

LAHORE
STAFF REPORT

CCPO Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana, DG Anti-Corruption Abdul Jabbar and Jhang DPO Sardar Ghias Gul Khan were relieved of their duties "with immediate effect" on Wednesday morning, according to a notification issued by the Punjab government. Kamyana and Jabbar were also asked to report to the Intelligence Bureau (IB), while Sardar Ghias was directed to report to the Cabinet Secretariat in Islamabad. Reportedly, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was annoyed with Kamyana over the police's highhandedness in dealing with PTI supporters when they participated in the 'Azadi March' to the capital in May, a month after the no-confidence motion sent former prime minister and party chief Imran Khan packing. Sources also say that many corruption cases against PTI leaders, including former chief minister Punjab Usman Buzdar and Farhat Shahzadi alias Farah Gogi, a close friend of the ex-first lady Bushra Bibi, were lodged as Abdul Jabbar had taken charge as DG anti-corruption. The move comes after Punjab saw yet another dramatic turn of events late last night. Hours after the Supreme Court had struck down the Punjab Assembly deputy speaker's ruling, President Dr Arif Alvi administered the oath of provincial chief executive to PTI candidate Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi at the President House at 2:30pm in the wee hours of Wednesday.

SCB account holders report erroneously debited amounts

KARACHI
STAFF REPORT

Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) account holders are complaining of a series of erroneous charges on their debit cards over the last few months of this year, it was learnt on Wednesday.

According to the details, a common trend that the affected customers noticed in these transactions is that their accounts are charged for multiple payments on Apple Store, Uber, and Netflix.

Profit approached SCB to find out what the actual issue is, why multiple customers are coming out with similar complaints; what SCB is doing to address the issue, what has already been done to rectify and compensate customers; and what SCB is doing to avoid further problems of this sort.

In response, SCB's communication team stated: "For reasons of client confidentiality, we cannot share any details. Rest assured, we have robust processes and procedures in place and

our systems have not been affected."

It may be mentioned here that customers are usually supposed to enter their One Time Pin (OTP) when a transaction is made. However, customers are not getting OTP requests for these random charges to their accounts whereas refunds for such charges can take up to 120 days depending on the card operator's investigation into the matter.

Speaking with Profit on whether customers were entitled to

compensation in addition to getting a refund, Mubazir Siddiqui, lawyer and founder of Carbon Law, a law firm that focuses on startups and venture financing, said, "The spirit of compensation is to cover for any harm incurred. The user would have to establish actual loss."

"It remains to be seen whether the actual loss would include a loss incurred as a result of late charges due to insufficient funds following these series of wrong debits," added Siddiqui.



LAHORE: Traffic bumper to bumper on Jail Road after a mini-truck stuck in underpass. PHOTO BY ZUBAIR MEHFOOZ

LPG price hiked by Rs10 per kg without OGRA notification

ISLAMABAD
AHMAD AHMADANI

The prices of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) on Wednesday increased by Rs10 per kilogram without a notification from the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA). Speaking with Profit, Chairman LPG Distribution Association (LDAP) Irfan Khokhar said that due to the unannounced hike in prices, a household cylinder will now cost Rs2,750 after an increase of Rs150, whereas commercial cylinder prices have surged by Rs450 to Rs10,438. "The increase in LPG prices is without any reason; the government must take action to control the prices otherwise there will be a further increase in the next 12 hours," he warned. He further warned that if the government did not control the prices soon, the association would go on a strike across the country and protest in front of the Ministry of Petroleum. The association's chairman also informed that prices in Gilgit are currently the highest rate in the country with the gas being sold at Rs300 per kg. "The price of each household cylinder there has surged to Rs3,600 while a commercial cylinder is being sold for Rs13,600," he added. Khokhar also informed Profit that LPG is being black marketed in Islamabad at Rs300 to Rs400 per household cylinder and Rs1,200 to Rs1,400 per commercial cylinder. "A commercial cylinder is being sold for Rs3,100 in the federal capital," he said. The LDAP chairman lamented that the government is not doing anything to make up for the loss of Rs60 billion due to the closure of Pakistan's biggest LPG plant, the Jamshoro Joint Venture Limited (JJVL), which removed 15% of domestic LPG supplies in the country where LPG accounts for about 1.5% of the total primary energy supply. Meanwhile, a letter to its chief commissioner on July 27, OGRA issued directions to control and monitor LPG prices with the help of deputy commissioner ICT. It is pertinent to mention here that according to the authority's last notification regarding prices, the maximum price of LPG for July is Rs220 per kg which means Rs2,600 for a household cylinder and Rs9,988 for a commercial cylinder.

Govt to lift import ban on most luxury items

ISLAMABAD
SHAHZAD PARACHA

Finance Minister Miftah Ismail on Wednesday said that the government will lift the ban on the import of certain goods in the coming weeks; however, the restrictions will stay in place for cellphones, automobiles and home appliances.

He was addressing a seminar organised by the Finance Division regarding the performance of state owned enterprises (SOEs) here in the federal capital wherein he revealed that the Commerce Ministry has forwarded a summary to the federal cabinet for removing restrictions on the import of non-essential and luxury items.

The finance minister said that the decision to do so has been taken in view of a reduced import bill due to certain conditions put on the import of raw materials and new machines coupled with lower oil prices in the international market. "We expect lower imports of petroleum products in the coming months. Lower imports will help Pakistan to save foreign exchange," he added.

He further added that he was optimistic of higher dollar inflows as compared to outflows from the next month which would reduce the pressure on the local currency.

"Imports in Pakistan as of July 25 were \$3.758 billion and our total imports are likely to be \$4.824 billion. This number will be less than our exports plus remittance", he had written on Twitter a day earlier.

On Tuesday, the finance minister had reportedly asked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to lift the ban on 30

categories involving 83 Customs headings.

However, on the recommendation of the Commerce Ministry, he suggested the continual of the ban on completely built unit (CBUs), automobiles and home appliances.

Speaking with Profit, sources revealed that Pakistan had imported Rs399 million worth CBU autos, mobiles and home appliances between May 19 and July 19, 2021, whereas after the imposition of the ban on May 19, 2022, there has been a decrease in the trend of importing these things.

In two months from May 19 to July 19, 2022, Pakistan has imported Rs123 million worth items, showing a difference of Rs276 million comparable to the corresponding months of the last fiscal year.

It is pertinent to note that the government had imposed a complete ban on the import of automobiles, mobile phones, home appliances, fruits and dry fruits except from Afghanistan, crockery, private weapons and ammunition, shoes, chandeliers and lighting except energy savers, headphones, and loudspeakers.

Other items on the list included sauces, doors and window frames, travel bags and suitcases, sanitary ware, fish and frozen fish, carpets except from Afghanistan, preserved fruits, tissue paper, furniture, shampoos, confectionery, luxury mattresses and sleeping bags, jams and jelly, cornflakes, toiletries, heaters, blowers, sunglasses, kitchenware, aerated water, frozen meat, juices, pasta, ice cream, cigarettes, shaving goods, luxury leather apparel, musical instruments, salon items like hair dryers, and chocolates.

PM assures Chinese delegation of workers' security

NEWS DESK

Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has said the incumbent government is taking concrete steps to promote cooperation with Chinese companies to attract investment.

Talking to a Chinese delegation led by President of Shanghai Electric Liu Ping, he said all necessary steps are also being taken

for the protection of workers and engineers of the Chinese companies.

The premier noted that China Pakistan Economic Corridor project is playing an important role in the development of Pakistan and welfare of its people.

Expressing his gratitude to the Chinese leadership for extending support to Pakistan in every difficult hour, Shehbaz

Sharif said the Chinese cooperation and investment has helped improve infrastructure and public transport system besides addressing the electricity crisis to a great extent.

He said the development projects being executed in cooperation with the Chinese cooperation will not be allowed to face any further delays.

PM Shehbaz Sharif appreciated the Chinese companies for ensuring completion of projects on fast track basis.

Regretting delay in Thar Coal Power Project, PM Shehbaz Sharif said its completion will help generate 1320 megawatts of electricity from the local coal.

The meeting was informed that work

has been accelerated on Thar Power Project by the present government and this will be completed in the first quarter of next year. The project will provide seven thousand jobs to the local population.

The meeting was further informed that Shanghai Electric is showing special interest for investment in electricity generation, transmission and distribution.

ELAHI CARRIES OUT CIVIL SERVICE RESHUFFLE

LAHORE

STAFF REPORT

CHAUDHRY Pervaiz Elahi carried out a bureaucracy reshuffle, begun shortly after he took oath as chief minister of Punjab in the wee hours of Wednesday. The Establishment Division removed Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamyana from his post.

A notification for this effect was issued Wednesday morning and he was directed to report to the Intelligence Bureau (IB).

The Punjab government appointed Kamyana, a deputy inspector general (DIG) of police, to head the Lahore police on April 28.

He was among over a dozen senior police officers who were repatriated from Punjab to the Establishment Division during the tenure of the



Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government "for being close to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)".

The posting order of Kamyana, who served on various posts in the federal institutes, as Lahore CCPO was issued directly from the Prime Minister's Office

(PMO).

The new chief minister also appointed Muhammad Khan Bhatti, Punjab Assembly secretary and a loyalist, as his principal secretary. Inayatullah Lak, Bhatti's deputy, meanwhile took over the post of his now-former boss.

Shahzad Shaukat, the advocate general, and his deputy Chaudhry Jawad Yaqub also resigned from their positions.

In his resignation note sent to the governor, Shaukat said since it was Hamza Shehbaz, Elahi's predecessor, who appointed him and now he was no more in the office, he did not consider it morally appropriate to get on with his duties.

He also returned the official vehicle issued to him by the outgoing government.

Separately, law officers who worked under Shaukat held a farewell meeting with him and applauded him for his services.



CJP convenes JCP meeting today

NEWS DESK

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial has summoned the meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) to consider the names of high court judges for their appointment as apex court judges on Thursday (July 28). The five judges of the high courts would be considered for the Supreme Court. The JCP is responsible for approving the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and five high courts of the country. The chief justice of Pakistan also heads the commission as its chairman. The body comprises of four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court, a former judge, federal law minister, the attorney general for Pakistan and a senior advocate nominated by the Pakistan Bar Council. One representative each is nominated by the provincial and Islamabad bar councils. According to Article 175-A of the Constitution, the JCP, after confirmation, will propose the names to the parliamentary committees for the appointment of judges in the superior courts.

Toyota, Suzuki to partially shut Pakistan output over forex, shortage issues

KARACHI
REUTERS

The nation's two leading car assemblers, Toyota and Suzuki, plan partial plant shutdowns next month due to unavailability of raw material amid import restrictions and exchange rate volatility, officials at both companies said on Wednesday. The government in recent weeks has attempted to curb imports in the face of fast depleting foreign reserves, a declining currency and a widening current account deficit, because of which the rupee has lost over 20 percent of its value this year. The move has had a cascading effect on industries that rely on imports to complete finished goods as they say the central bank has delayed the clearance of letters of credit with banks facing a shortage of dollars, affecting their ability to import materials. "There will be 10 working days next month, only if the central bank allows us to open a letter of credit based on the quota they promised," Ali Asghar Jamali, chief executive at Indus Motor Company Ltd. which assembles Toyota vehicles in Pakistan, told Reuters. He said the company was offering refunds to customers facing delays and markups on their payments, with deliveries likely to be delayed by at least three months and prices to be revised as the country does not have dollars available. Reserves with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) have fallen to as low as \$9.3 billion, enough to cover less than two months of imports. The current account deficit for the last financial year touched 5 percent of GDP with imports hitting record highs. Pak Suzuki, which assembles Suzuki vehicles locally, echoed the sentiment, citing the central bank's new mechanism for prior approval for imports. "Restrictions had adversely impacted clearance of import consignments from ports," the head of public relations for Pak Suzuki Motors, Shafiq A. Shaikh, said. He said the unavailability of materials may result in a plant shutdown in August. "If the same situation continues, then from August 2022 we have big problems," Shaikh said. State Bank of Pakistan did not respond to requests for comment. The sale of locally assembled cars in Pakistan surged by around 50 percent from July 2021 to May 2022 compared with the same period of the previous year, according to the data of the Pakistan Automotive Manufacturers Association (PAMA).

Shujaat advises working relationship to run national affairs

NEWS DESK

A formidable crisis has badly hit the national economy, PML-Q chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain on Wednesday said in a statement.

"Everyone knew it well that what is happening in Pakistan have political reasons, but the poor people have nothing to do with it," Shujaat said.

Emphasizing over the need of a working relationship in the ongoing situation, veteran politician said that all the people having privilege of authority should consider and think about solutions for the economy.

"The poor lot don't know about the politics, the political parties if don't want to set aside their differences, they don't do it, they should sit together to seek solution of the problems of common man who is hit by the price hike and dearth," PML-Q leader said.

He urged for a working relationship in view of



the existing circumstances, so as the national affairs being run smoothly without any hurdle and prejudice.

Capt Sarwar Shaheed paid glowing tribute martyrdom anniversary

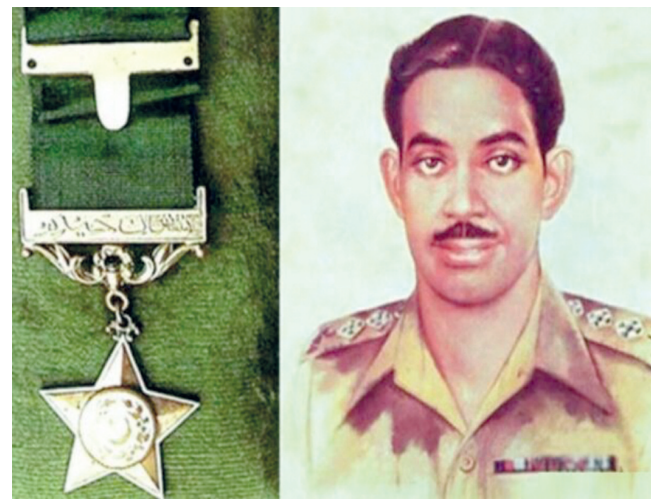
ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

The nation remembered Captain Muhammad Sarwar Shaheed on his 74th martyrdom anniversary observed on Wednesday.

Muhammad Sarwar was born in Gujjar Khan's Singhori village on November 10, 1910. In 1944, he received his commission in the Punjab Regiment.

In recognition of giving his life in the first Pakistan-Indian War in 1948, he received the Nishan-e-Haider award. At his grave in Gujjar Khan, Rawalpindi, Major General Mumtaz Hussain placed a floral wreath at his grave.

He received the commission in 1944 and served in the Punjab Regiment in the newly formed Pakistan Army. In 1947, he voluntarily took part in the battle for retaking Kashmir. During the



battle, the Indian troops were outflanked and forced to retreat to the Northern Areas.

Captain Sarwar launched an attack causing heavy casualties in Uri Sector. His regiment received heavy machine-gun fire along with grenades and mortar fire. He

was killed by a machine-gun fire as he along with five other men were cutting barbed wires.

He was posthumously awarded the highest military award of Pakistan, Nishan-e-Haider in recognition of his bravery.

87pc eligible Pakistanis fully vaccinated against covid-19: NIH

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

The National Institute of Health (NIH) on Wednesday announced that 87 percent of Pakistan's eligible population has been fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

According to details, 87 percent of the country's eligible population has been fully vaccinated against Covid-19. Sindh has the highest vaccination rate followed by Islamabad.

The National Institute of Health said that 89 percent of Punjab's eligible population and 82 percent of Azad Kashmir have been fully

vaccinated against coronavirus.

Meanwhile, 65% of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's population, 60% of Balochistan and 59% of Gilgit-Baltistan have been vaccinated.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan reported 620 fresh coronavirus cases, while four deaths were logged during the last 24 hours.

According to the NIH report, 16,704 Covid tests were conducted across the country in the past 24 hours, out of which 620 turned out to be positive. The nationwide Covid-19 test positivity ratio registered an increase and was recorded at 3.71pc as compared to Tuesday's 2.76 percent.



SC accepts PTI's plea against Registrar Office's objections in expats' vote right case

NEWS DESK

The Supreme Court Wednesday set aside the Registrar Office's objections regarding Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI's) petition to ensure overseas Pakistanis' right to vote. Justice Sajjad Ali Shah heard the PTI's petition in his chamber and allowed the appeal against recent legislation on the rights of overseas Pakistanis. The Registrar Supreme Court had raised several objections to the application including not approaching the relevant forum.

Cracks appear: MQM-P conveys reservations against PPP to PM Shehbaz

NEWS DESK

Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has conveyed reservations to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif over lack of implementation of an agreement by PPP which was agreed with the party before joining the federal government. According to sources privy to the matter, the MQM-P leaders held two meetings with PM Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad few days back and complained to him that the PPP was not implementing an agreement signed with the party and asked him to play his role as a guarantor. "Neither an inquiry has been launched against the use of fake domiciles in recruitments nor development funds or administrative role was offered to the party as agreed in the agreement," the sources said. It is pertinent to mention here that a 18-point agreement was reached between the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) before the quit the Imran Khan-led coalition government and it was named as the "Charter of Rights". The agreement was signed by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and MQM-P's Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, while Shehbaz Sharif, Fazlur Rehman, Akhtar Mengal and Khalid Magsi have signed the agreement as guarantor.

PTI to move no-trust motion against PA deputy speaker

LAHORE
MONITORING REPORT

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) is expected to introduce a vote of no-confidence to de-seat Dost Muhammad Mazari, a party lawmaker and deputy speaker of the Punjab Assembly, ARY News reported. The names of Wasiq Qayyum Abbasi and Malik Taimoor Masood are being considered for the office, people familiar with the development said. Meanwhile, several names are also being considered for the post of speaker, which fell vacant after incumbent Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi became chief minister, including Mian Mehmood ur-Rasheed, Mian Aslam Iqbal, Zain Qureshi and former chief minister Usman Buzdar.

IHC restores PEIRA chairperson

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

A division bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday suspended the decision of single member bench and restored Zia Batool as Chairperson of Pakistan Education Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA). The bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Saman Raffat Imtiaz heard the intra-court appeal filed by Zia Batool against her removal by the single member bench and served notices on respondents, including the Federal Government and sought their comments on the matter.

50 PAKISTANI UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TO STUDY IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES FOR ONE SEMESTER

NEWS DESK

APPROXIMATELY 50 Pakistani undergraduate students who received scholarships from the American Government are preparing to study in the United States for one semester under the Undergraduate Semester Exchange (UGRAD) Program for Pakistan.

During their stay in the USA, the students will attend undergraduate classes at 42 colleges and universities, participate in workshops to develop leadership skills, and engage in community service projects, said a press release issued here.

Before leaving Pakistan, the United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) welcomed the students to a two-day pre-departure orientation in Islamabad

to learn about campus life, American culture, and visa and travel requirements. The Acting Deputy Chief of Mission from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad personally greeted the students in the orientation.

"The United States has a long tradition of embracing international students," he noted, and "while it seems obvious that you are gaining a life-changing experience, it is actually a two-way street. We in the United

States also gain so much from your examples of hard work and dedication to your studies, as well as your willingness to share Pakistani culture with us."

The students come from all regions of Pakistan and represent 27 public and private universities. Since the UGRAD Program launched in 2010, approximately 2,391 Pakistani students have previously received this prestigious one-semester scholarship to

study in the United States.

USEFP Executive Director Rita Akhtar encouraged the students to take full advantage of the academic, extracurricular, and community service activities available in the United States. "Global UGRADs are selected on merit from thousands of applicants from every part of Pakistan. In many cases, they are the first person from their locality ever to travel to the United States.

They spend a semester studying in colleges and universities in parts of the United States where there are very few other Pakistanis, so American students also learn a lot about Pakistan through this exchange. We hope you meet a lot of interesting people on your adventure and that you share your U.S. experiences widely when you come home to Pakistan."

Haleem Adil Sheikh arrested from Jamshoro

NEWS DESK

Opposition Leader in Sindh Assembly and PTI leader Haleem Adil Sheikh has been arrested by a team of anti-corruption establishment (ACE) from Jamshoro.

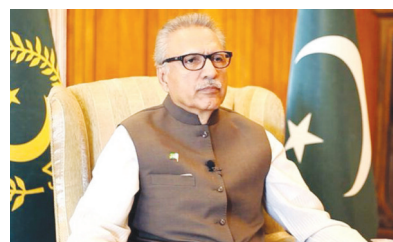
According to details, Haleem Adil Sheikh went to an anti-corruption court in Jamshoro to appear before it, however, the ACE team arrested him from outside the premise. An associate of the PTI leader accompanying him at the time of the arrest said that they went to the court to file their replies in the case. "We went to join the probe but they arrested him in another case registered against him," he said.

He added that Haleem Adil is currently being kept at a police station and the police have shown them a letter from anti-corruption East Karachi on which orders the arrest was made.

This is not the first time that Sheikh has been arrested and recently on July 06, he was nabbed from Lahore in the wee hours. Raja Azhar said that Haleem Adil Sheikh was arrested in the presence of the Dolphin police force by plain-clothed men from a local hotel in Lahore. "We continuously asked them where they were taking him but they refused to respond," he said. He shared that the police raided the opposition leader's house three days back in Karachi. "It seems that PPP is irritated from the opposition leader and wanted to arrest him under concocted charges," he said. He was, however, later released after the Lahore High Court ordered to immediately free him from the police custody.

Nation indebted to army for sacrifices to protect Pakistan: president

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT



The nation was indebted to soldiers who laid down their lives for the security of the motherland, said President Dr. Arif Alvi on Wednesday. In his message on the 74th martyrdom anniversary of Captain Raja Muhammad Sarwar, the first re-

ipient of Nishan-i-Haider honour, the president paid rich tribute to the "brave son of the soil".

He said Sarwar sacrificed his life in Kashmir while defending the country. "Captain Muhammad Sarwar Shaheed bravely and gallantly fought the enemies of the country," he said.

The president prayed for the eleva-

tion of ranks of the soul of Sarwar and all others who followed suit over the period of time. Sarwar was the first to be decorated with the supreme military award for sacrificing his life during the 1948 war between Pakistan and India over Kashmir. His only son, also a soldier, and a daughter are settled in his native Sangoori village of Gujar Khan.

Speakers highlight South Korea role as key link between Pakistan and East Asian countries

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

Diplomats, economists and intellectuals on Wednesday agreed that South Korea can play a significant role to develop economic and trade relations between Pakistan and East Asian countries.

Intellectuals emphasized on restoring multilateral sectors and historical

links for promoting economic and trade relations between Pakistan and East Asian countries including Korea.

The Institute of Strategic Studies (ISS), in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, organized a policy dialogue on "Comprehensive Economic Partnership: East Asia and Pakistan."

The China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) and Centre for Strategic Perspective (CSP) were organizers of the policy dialogue.

The distinguished speakers of the dialogue were included, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad

Chaudhry, DG ISSI; Suh SangPyo, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan; Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director CSP; Muhammad Naseer, DG Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP); Kim Sung Jae, DG (Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency) KOTRA; Chang Yong Il, Managing director of Samsung Pakistan; Zhonglei Mou, Chief Operating Officer of Hyundai Nishat Jamil Ahmad Qureshi, DG, Board of Investment, Pakistan; Ms.

Huma Fakhar, CEO and Founder of MAP Services Group; Muhammad Zubair, Joint Secretary (Emigration), Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development; Aftab ur Rehman Tarrar, Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation; and Dr. Nadeem Omar Tarar, Gandhara Chair in Cultural Studies, Wah University.

On the occasion, the speakers discussed various fields including mutual trade, investment, religious tourism, relocation of modern industry, development of mutual technology, people to peo-

ple contact and ancient Buddhist religious heritage for the promotion of economic and trade relations between Pakistan and East Asian countries.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Suh SangPyo explained the idea of the comprehensive economic partnership between Pakistan and East Asia. He said that Pakistan and East Asia share promising economic ties. The Ambassador elucidated the idea of the comprehensive economic partnership between Pakistan and East Asia accounts for one-fourth of Pakistan trade and there will be many opportunities for growing together once the partnership is reached an official agree-

ment. He spoke at length about the economic opportunities and challenges East Asian countries, particularly South Korea, face while interacting with Pakistan. In the end, he extended his gratitude to ISSI for putting its efforts into organizing the event.

Dr Talat Shabbir, Director of CPSC, moderated the event and introduced the theme of the dialogue and highlighted the prospects of Pakistan-East Asia comprehensive economic partnership.

He remarked that today's dialogue analyses Pakistan's interest in East Asia and ASEAN through the prism of geo-economics and economic security in line with the policy direction of the National Security Policy (NSP) of Pakistan.

MEPCO MULTAN ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY LIMITED (MEPCO)
Invitation to Bids (NCB)

Tender No.	Description	Qty (No.)	Date & Time of bid submission	Date & Time of bid opening	Amount of Bid Security (PKR)
PMU-04/2022	Tower Type ZM-60 along-with Nuts & Bolts and all allied accessories without stubs and cleats	38	18.08.2022 10:30Hrs	18.08.2022 11:00Hrs	2,861,500
	Stubs with Cleats along with Nuts and Bolts and all allied accessories	38-sets			
	3-Meter Leg. Extension for ZM-60	1			
	Additional Cross Arm for ZM-60	3			
	Landative Type Tower for ZM-60	2			
PMU-05/2022	Towers Type ZM-1 along-with Nuts & Bolts and all allied accessories without Stubs & Cleats	246	18.08.2022 10:45 Hrs	18.08.2022 11:15Hrs	8,913,600
	Stubs with Cleats along-with Nuts & Bolts and all allied accessories for ZM-1	246-sets			
	3-Meter Leg. Extension for ZM-1	08			
PMU-06/2022	132KV Steel Tubular Poles		18.08.2022 11:00 Hrs	18.08.2022 11:30 Hrs	5,018,600
	SPA	62			
	SPD	22			
	SPG	12			
PMU-07/2022	Tower Type ZM-30 along-with Nuts & Bolts and all allied accessories without stubs and cleats	07	18.08.2022 11:15 Hrs	18.08.2022 11:45 Hrs	333,500
	Stubs with Cleats along with Nuts and Bolts and all allied accessories	07-Sets			
	3-Meter Leg. Extension for ZM-30	02			
PMU-08/2022	Incoming Panel 25 KA 2500 A	24	18.08.2022 11:30 Hrs	18.08.2022 12:00 Hrs	8,636,000
	Outgoing Panel 25 KA 630 A	182			
	Bus Coupler Panels	1			
	11KV Capacitor Panels	6			
	Station AC/ DC Panels	1			

- This Invitation to Bids follows the Annual Procurement Plan of F.Y 2022-23 for the subject Procurement which appeared on MEPCO website dated 21.07.2022.
- The MEPCO has reserved the funds for the procurement planned during the financial year 2022-23. It is intended that part of the proceeds of the fund will be used to cover eligible payment under the Procurement contract.
- The MEPCO now invites sealed bids from eligible Suppliers of aforementioned materials.
- The bidding shall be conducted in line with the "Single Stage Two Envelope" procedure of the Public Procurement Rules 2004 and any Regulations, Regulatory Guides, Procurement Guidelines or Instructions issued by the Authority (from time to time), and is open to all potential bidders.
- All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an acceptable form of the amount mentioned against each bid.
- The original bid along with one copy, properly filled in, and enclosed in sealed envelope(s) must be delivered to the following address. The technical bids will be opened promptly thereafter in public and in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend in the opening at the office of Chief Engineer (Development) PMU MEPCO, Khanewal Road MEPCO Headquarter, Multan Circle Building, Opp. R.C Cola Factory, MEPCO Multan.

Chief Engineer (Development)
PMU MEPCO HQ Multan
Ph: No: + 92-61-9220238
Fax: No: + 92-61-9220187 **PID (L) 171**

Seminar highlights Pakistan tourism potential in Myanmar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar organized a seminar on tourism promotion in Pakistan in collaboration with Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) on Wednesday. Large number of Tour Operators and various officials of tourism organizations participated in the seminar while the potential of tourism was highlighted with the help of various documentary films and presentations by key note speakers, said a press release issued by PTDC here. After the opening comments, PTDC's Managing Director, Aftab ur Rehman Rana gave a detailed presentation about the potential of tourism in Pakistan highlighting various steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to promote tourism in the country. **STAFF REPORT**

Loss of Allotment Letter

Allotment Letter Of Plot No 473 Sector G Phase 5 Measuring 1 Kanal issued by Defence Housing Authority ,Lahore Cantt. In the name of Abdul Rasheed S/O Ch. Muhammad Tufail R/O 473-G Phase-5,DHA Lahore Cantt has been lost. Finder may Return To secretary Defence Housing Authority, Main office , Complex ,Phase 6,Lahore Cantt. Otherwise after 7 Days Original Allotment Letter Shall be Treated As Cancelled

UAN: 111-342-547 Ext: 2826

PUBLIC NOTICE (CHANGE/UPDATION NAME)

I have changed my name from Muhammad Kashif Javaid S/O Sheikh Javaid to Muhammad Kashif Javaid S/O Sheikh Javaid Akhtar

Javaid Akhtar: all government and non-government organizations including DHA Lahore may please update my new name in their records,therefore enabling me to correct my name in all my documents. Name Muhammad Kashif Javaid Father's Name Sheikh Javaid Akhtar Address: H#23-E, Street 8 Phase 5 DHA, Lahore

UAN (042-111-342-547) EXT: (2826)

PUBLIC NOTICE (LEGAL HEIR TRANSFER)

Beware that Fazal Mahmood S/O Muhammad Ashraf died on 28/12/2021 we are the legal heirs of his plot no

Plot	Sector	Phase	Measuring
449	C	6	1 Kanal
131	K	6	1 Kanal

Defence Authority ,Lahore Cantt. (Nazira Khanum)(Widow)(Z. Erum Mahmood)(Daughter)(S.Ashif Mazhar Butt)(Daughter), Kaiser Mahmood(Son)(S.Farhana Naveed (Daughter) Anybody having objections may contact secretary Defence Housing Authority,Main Office Complex Phase 6, Lahore Cantt. Within 15 days of the publication of this notice.

UAN (042-111-342-547) EXT: (2826)

Correction

Loss of Document Ad published in Pakistan Today on 27/July/ 2022 by the name of Humaira Ayub W/O Muhammad Ayub Sheikh. In the ad the sector of both plots is mistakenly written as "H" whereas the correct sector of both plots is "HH"

MULTAN ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY LIMITED (MEPCO)
Tender Notice for Procurement of Reclamation Workshops Items for MEPCO Transformer Reclamation Workshops for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

The following Sealed and super-scribed invitation of bids under MEPCO are invited by adopting the Single Stage, One Envelope bidding procedure, from WAPDA/PEPCO/DISCOs approved manufacturers / suppliers, duly prequalified / registered in required categories / Sales Tax, Income Tax Registered Firms having sound experience regarding supply of below mentioned material, for the supply of material mentioned against each according to WAPDA/ PEPCO /MEPCO TRW Drawings/Specifications etc (Amended to date) with the validity of bid for 120 days at MEPCO consignee's stores / TRWs (FCS) basis on the rates in local currency without involving foreign exchange element inclusive of all taxes, duties, inspection charges, testing charges etc and exclusive of General Sales Tax.

Tender No.	Description	Unit	Tender Qty.	WAPDA/PEPCO Specification	Last Date & Time of submission of Tenders	Opening Date & Time of Tenders
253/22	New Transformer Oil Class-1	Ltr.	240,000	IEC-60296 Class-1 (amended to date).	17.08.2022 (14:00Hrs)	18.08.2022 (14:30Hrs)

The tenders will be opened publicly in presence of bidders or their representatives who wish to attend on above mentioned date & time in the office of Addl. DG (MM) MEPCO Head Quarter Khanewal Road, Multan. The cost of each tender form is Rs. 2000/- (Non-refundable). Tender Form can be obtained personally from the office of Manager (MM) MEPCO Head Quarter Khanewal Road, Multan against cash payment of tender fee before the opening date during office hours on the production of prequalification/registration, copy of valid prototype approval, sales tax registration certificate and other required documents/proof. No tender form will be issued on the opening date. **The tender will be received half an hour before the above scheduled date and time and will be opened on the scheduled date and time.**

Bid Security/Guarantee @ 02% of the quoted price/value in shape of Deposit-at-Call, Bank Draft, Pay Order & Bid Guarantee issued by any scheduled Bank of Pakistan or W APDA Bearer Bonds valid for 150 days after the opening date of tender in favour of Chief Executive Officer MEPCO Multan must accompany with the Bid by the bidders, otherwise Bid will be rejected. However, the letter of commitment is acceptable in place of bid security/guarantee from Public Sector Enterprises (PSE), subject to the condition that they will provide the proof of their firm as Government Entity/Public Sector Company. The conditional tender will not be accepted. All rights are reserved. This advertisement is also available on MEPCO & PPA websites at www.mepco.com.pk & www.ppra.org.pk respectively. Bidding documents can also be download from www.mepco.com.pk free of cost.

Additional Director General (MM)
MEPCO Limited Multan **PID (L) 179**

CORPORATE CORNER

KE doesn't hold authority on taxes: Spokesman

"As regulated entities, no Distribution Company including K-Electric holds any authority to levy or remove taxes. While it is common knowledge on who has this authority, certain elements seem to be regrettably misleading the traders' community due to their vested interest in the matter. Approaching the correct forums could have resulted in more productive outcomes on the matter," spokesperson K-Electric highlighted in a statement today. The spokesperson further said, "We greatly value the traders' community. The company will ensure a swifter implementation of any revision in the orders from the relevant authorities if and when such revisions are received. PR

Shura Hamdard remembers Madr-e-Millat Fatima Jinnah

KARACHI: The members of the Shura Hamdard Karachi chapter remembered Madr-e-Millat Fatima Jinnah with reverence and respect in an online Shura meeting, held yesterday on the topic of "Social reform of women in the light of Madr-e-Millat's thoughts and national struggle." The meeting was presided over by speaker Shura Hamdard, Justice (r) Haziq-ul-Khairi. The grandson of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's sister Maryam Bai, Liaquat Merchant was invited as a guest speaker. He could not attend the meeting due to illness, as he was in London for treatment. However, his message was read by Commodore(r) Sadeed Anwar Malik. PR

foodpanda partners with Panther Tyres to Facilitate Riders in Managing their Maintenance Expenses

KARACHI: Continuing its diverse efforts to minimize overhead costs for delivery riders, foodpanda, the country's leading online delivery service, has partnered with Panther Tyres. The partnership aims to provide free tyres and discounts to all foodpanda riders. A signing ceremony was held in this regard recently which was attended by Farhan Khan Director Operations, Haider Malik Head of Logistics and Sheryar Junaid, Head of Rider Experience from foodpanda's side. While Khuram Javed COO, Asim Ahmed Abro GM Marketing & Sales, Usman Mukhtar Gondal Head of Marketing and Usama Imran, Brand Manager from Panther Tyres attended the event. PR

Bank Alfalah Welcomes 8th Batch of Management Trainee Program

KARACHI: Bank Alfalah has onboarded the 8th batch of its prestigious Management Trainee Program after a rigorous recruitment process involving gamified assessment, video interview, virtual assessment centers and panel interviews. This year, the Bank has welcomed 27 graduates out of 3000 applicants who will go through 3 months of classroom training on key development aspects before being placed in suitable department based on their individual skillsets. A meet and greet session was held on July 18th that was addressed by the President and CEO, Mr. Atif Bajwa. PR

Textile Magnate Alkaram joins hands with ABHI to offer Earned Wage Access to all employees across country

Alkaram, one of the biggest names in Pakistan's textile industry, is partnering with ABHI, Pakistan's first financial wellness platform, to offer its employees the facility of Earned Wage Access. ABHI's goal is to provide financial wellness services to all employees in Pakistan, giving them the ability and freedom to access their earned but unpaid salaries, so they don't have to face financial constraints in emergencies. One of the biggest players in textiles, with thousands of employees across the country, Alkaram is partnering with this revolutionary new venture, as employees' financial wellness is paramount to the company. This partnership will help the company in becoming one of the leaders in the global textile world, integrating vertical textile solutions with values and sustainability. PR

IMC to Feature Localization and Hybrid Technology in PAPS '22

LAHORE: In the Pakistan Auto Parts Show '22, Indus Motor Company, makers of Toyota vehicles in Pakistan is going to showcase and highlight the levels of localization achieved by the company. Organized by Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts and Accessories Manufacturers, country's largest exhibition of the Auto Industry, is to be held at the International Expo Centre in Lahore from July 29-31. IMC is the torch bearer of Make in Pakistan philosophy. With localized parts purchase of more than Rs. 270mn daily and more than 30 technical assistance programs aimed at transfer of technology, IMC has led the journey of local engineering base development. PR

PAKISTAN GOVT, PEOPLE TO WIN FIGHT AGAINST FLOODS, REBUILD HOMES: ZHAO LIJIAN

CHINESE Ministry Spokesperson, Zhao Lijian on Wednesday said he believed that Pakistani government and people would win the fight against floods and rebuild their homes and said that China was ready to provide help to Pakistan to improve people's livelihood and pursue social development. "We believe that the Pakistani government and people will win the fight against flood and rebuild their homes," he said during his regular briefing

while responding to a question about supply of relief packages to flood-hit people in Balochistan province.

The Spokesperson said, "I have noted that affected by Monsoon, Balochistan province of Pakistan has been hit with rounds of heavy rains causing flood."

As a good friend of Pakistan sharing weal and woe, China had spent no time in sending urgently needed humanitarian supplies including food packages, and solar power generation equipment to help the local people go

through difficulties, he added.

Zhao Lijian said that the Chinese side was ready to continue to provide help to Pakistan to help improve people's livelihood and pursue social development.

Balochistan province has recently received a new batch of relief packages from China.

About 800 to 1,000 food packs were distributed among the families living in the makeshift camps in the province's Qila Saifullah district.

The Chinese people also provided

around 300 pieces of solar panels as the current rains destroyed electricity lines in many areas.

According to official sources, around 310 people have been killed and 295 others injured so far in separate rain-related incidents in Pakistan since June 14.

Most of the damages and casualties were reported from Balochistan province, where 100 people died and 57 others sustained injuries due to monsoon rains that triggered flash floods. AGENCIES

PM Shehbaz accuses judiciary of having 'double standards'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

Meanwhile, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar presented a resolution for a parliamentary committee for judicial reforms in today's session, which was unanimously approved.

A day earlier, as the SC proceedings were going against them, the ruling coalition had given a clear indication that it would consider legislation to curtail the powers of the Supreme Court.

The resolution said the Parlia-

ment would not allow any other institution to "transgress and encroach" on its powers. It said that the NA resolved to make a special joint committee of the upper and lower houses to institute requisite judicial reforms, adding that they were "the need of the hour".

RELIEF EFFORTS AFTER COUNTRY-WIDE RAINS: The prime minister also addressed the country-wide devastation caused by monsoon rains and said the coalition government was well

aware of it, adding that he himself had held meetings with the provinces on the matter.

He said provincial governments were working day and night for relief operations and the centre was also playing its role.

PM Shehbaz said he had called another meeting and that the government would increase the relief package announced for the people. "Wherever there are losses, we will spare no opportunity to make up for them."

Depts prodded into quick redressal of public complaints received on Pak Portal

LAHORE

NEWS DESK

Secretary Services & General Administration South Punjab, Nosheen Malik on Wednesday directed all departments to resolve the complaints received on Pakistan Portal as early as possible.

She said that any delay in this regard would not be tolerated.

She issued these directives while chairing a review meeting

held here to know the status of complaints. Deputy Secretary Ali Atif Buttar, Section Officers Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Wajih Rasool and Asadullah Shahzad, and focal persons of all departments of South Punjab Secretariat were also present on the occasion.

In the meeting, the complaints received on the Pakistan Portal were reviewed and the status of the complaints received by Health, Education, Public Health, Board

of Revenue, Livestock and other departments were also checked.

She said that South Punjab Secretariat was active to improve public service delivery in all departments. Malik further said that the government wanted to improve public service delivery in all departments. She also instructed all departments concerned to take immediate notice of the complaints raised by the media and play their due role to resolve.

Monsoon rains: 105 died, 61 injured in Balochistan: Spokesperson

NEWS DESK

At least 105 people died, 61 injured whereas over 1000 have been displaced due to torrential rains and flash floods in Balochistan, spokesperson Farah Azeem Shah said on Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference here, she said due to recent floods in the province over 5000 livestock and houses were completely damaged, whereas partially loss occurred to over 7000 houses.

Out of total 220 disconnected roads, around 185 have been restored while work on restoration of 34

was in progress.

Likewise, the rains also damaged 44 bridges out of which 38 were restored. Different types of machinery including loaders, tractors, excavators was also deployed in the field to carry out relief operation in smooth way. There was no loss occurred to major dams, however 1020 small dams were damaged on which rehabilitation work underway, she maintained.

Sharing details of relief measures taken by the Balochistan government, she said the provincial government continued relief operation in the rain-affected districts by utilising all available resources.

Lawmakers ask govt to declare Balochistan as calamity-hit

ISLAMABAD

STAFF REPORT

The lawmakers in the National Assembly on Wednesday demanded the federal government declare Balochistan as calamity-hit province due to human and property losses caused by the ongoing torrential rains.

Talking on Point of Order, MNA Khalid Hussain Magsi said that different areas of Balochistan were badly affected due to current flash-floods. He thanked the federal government for assuring to provide maximum relief package to the people of Balochistan.

He said that a large number of people were stranded due to flash flooding and there was a need of immediately expediting the ongoing rescue and relief operations.

Muhammad Aslam Bhoonani said that many areas including Lasbela were the most affected areas due to flash floods. He said he had talked to minister for communications who assured to reconstruct the main Hub bridge connecting Sindh and Balochistan. He said that security forces and other concerned departments were

also busy in rescue and relief operations. However, hundred per cent safety embankments had broken in district Lasbela. There was also deficiency of tents.

He also demanded of Balochistan Chief Minister to send tents as people were sitting in open spaces. "Federal government should also announce special relief package for Balochistan and Lasbela flood affecteds," he said expressing the hope that federal government would announce special relief package soon.

Dr Shahnaz Baloch said that the whole of Balochistan was affected due to flash floods. Balochistan should be declared calamity-hit province, she demanded.

Sardar Riaz Mehmood Khan Mazari said that maximum relief should be given to his constituency Rajanpur as it was also badly affected due to recent rains and flash flooding.

Speaking on point of order, Minister for Science and Technology Syed Aminul Haq said that people of Karachi were also badly affected due to recent torrential rains. Chief Minister and ministers were present on the spot but Karachi infrastructure was totally dam-



IIOJK journalist barred from travelling to Sri Lanka

NEWS DESK

A journalist from Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir has been barred by Indian officials from travelling to Sri Lanka without giving any reason for the action.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the journalist Aakash Hassan said that Immigration officials at New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport barred him from boarding a flight to Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Aakash wrote on his Twitter handle, "I was headed to report on the current crises in the country [Sri Lanka]. The immigration officials took my passport, boarding pass and made me sit in a room for four hours". He added that after making him wait for hours, the officials handed over his passport and boarding pass to him with a red rejection stamp: 'Cancelled Without Prejudice'.

He pointed out that the officials didn't give any reason for why he was not allowed. A staff from the airlines he was travelling in told him that officials had directed them to offload his luggage from the aircraft, he said, adding he was questioned by two officials about his background and travel purpose.

Earlier this month, Kashmiri photojournalist, Sanna Irshad Mattoo, was denied permission to travel to Paris to attend a scheduled photography exhibition.

In a tweet, Sanna Mattoo, had said, "I was scheduled to travel from Delhi to Paris for a book launch and photography exhibition as one of 10 award winners of the Serendipity Arles grant 2020. Despite procuring a French visa, I was stopped at the immigration desk at Delhi airport." "I was not given any reason but told I would not be able to travel internationally," she had added.

aged, he said adding that the K-electric was minting money from people but not resolving their problems.

He said that Karachi should also be declared as calamity hit city. All stake holders should sit together and resolve these problems, he said adding that relief package should be announced for Karachi and Hyderabad.

MNA Syed Mahmood Shah said that Balochistan and Sindh were badly affected due to recent flash floods and rains. He said that bridges connecting Jhal Magsi and Lasbela were washed away due to flooding. He demanded of the federal government to announce special relief package and declared Balochistan calamity hit area.

MNA Syed Javed Ali Shah said that rains had affected many areas. He said that 80 percent date crops in Khairpur were badly affected due to recent rains.

MNA Dr. Ramesh Kumar said that unfortunately rain which is considered blessing was bringing hardships in the country. He also proposed that Minority Day should be observed from August 11 to 14 in Parliament House. Pakistan should be put on right directions, he added.

SC policies and critics

Power used injudiciously is not sustainable

THE judiciary is free from the shackles of the executive, thanks to the 19th Constitutional Amendment, robust jurisprudence, powerful bars, civil society, competitive politics, and a watchful media. Constitutionally, the judiciary in Pakistan is completely self-regulated. It dominates the process of the appointment as well as removal of judges, unlike many other common-law countries, including the UK, the USA and India, where parliament or Congress retains the power of impeaching judges. Some of the actions by the Supreme Court lead one to wonder if it is using its powers judiciously.

One expects that the SC would act as a standard setter for other institutions of the country. One is worried therefore when the SC is accused of acting arbitrarily or out of favouritism. The accusations do not come from politicians or media alone, but from the legal community itself. The charges relate mostly to the raising of junior judges to the SC, formation of benches, and the way suo motu actions are taken. It is claimed that no well thought out rules have been formulated to guide decisions on these matters.

Last year there were widespread protests by lawyers when two junior judges were elevated to the SC. It was pointed out by critics that bypassing a senior judge in favour of a junior one is tantamount to displaying a vote of no-confidence in his competence or character, or both. And he is condemned unheard, which is also a violation of the due process of law.

Once again five junior judges from the High Courts have been nominated as SC members without defining the required criteria. This has led to complaints about disregard for merit. It is also being suggested that likes and dislikes play a role in setting up the benches. As senior lawyer Hamid Khan puts it, 'favourite' judges were being picked for the elevation to the Supreme Court against the seniority principle. Khan alleged that the senior-most judges of the Sindh High Court, including its chief justice himself, were being ignored for "not being in the good books." According to Mr Justice Faez Isa, the nomination for elevation to SC is being done in a very questionable manner. Decisions are being taken by the CJ arbitrarily and the kind of power exercised by him is not permitted by the Constitution.

The way the SC is acting would lead many to agree with PPP leader Fahatullah Babar to ask Parliament to limit the SC's powers in the appointment and promotion of judges through Article 191 of the Constitution.

The price of using religion

The arrest of Rizwan in India will merely add to the the BJP's anti-Pakistan narrative

THE arrest of Riwan Ashraf while trying to cross over into India over the Rajasthan border, while carrying knives, and with the avowed intention of killing Nupur Sharma, the BJP spokeswoman whose blasphemous remarks about the Holy Prophet (PBUH) on a TV talk show led to her being sacked and loud protests from a number of Arab countries, should expose the counterproductive nature of patronizing such organizations as the Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). The recent Punjab by-elections saw the TLP wiped out, indicating that its message was not getting much traction among the public. Mr Ashraf is a fervent TLP member, whose previous high point had been destroying the equestrian statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh outside the Lahore Fort. His membership of the TLP was perhaps inevitable, as the party had been founded by the late Maulana Khadim Hussain Rizvi to harness the fervour caused by Mumtaz Qadri's assassination of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer for blasphemy, and which had viewed the French President as a blasphemer, and thus had demanded that its Ambassador be expelled. Its links to the intelligence agencies, was notorious, by and it was because of this that Mr Justice Qazi Faiz Issa's judgement on its Faizabad sit-in, had led to him being gunned for.

Now, it seems, the TLP has a member who has taken a stand that the agencies will find harmful to Pakistan. Ms Sharma is going to be portrayed by the BJP not as a blasphemer, but as the victim of a Pakistani intelligence operation, and even the indigenous attacks on her, which have already begun, will be tarred with that brush. Religious sentiments can be powerful forces too huge to be contained within the vessel of national interest. Even where the national interest is of a state created in the name of Islam, such sentiments may over flow those boundaries, as the sponsors of the TLP are finding out.

PAKISTAN TODAY
Dedicated to the legacy of late Hameed Nizami

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Institutional Memory is Permanent

Institutional memory is the biggest hurdle to change



DR FARID A MALIK

IT is almost impossible to erase institutional memory. Set and deep-rooted cultural changes in institutions are impossible. The colonial institutions that we inherited have continued to exercise the built-in hatred for the subjects. Those officers who opted to serve the first Islamic Republic understood their role but unfortunately once they were gone, the old ways returned.

In the USA the Founding Fathers totally dismantled the structures built by the colonists. All files were burnt, uniforms and medals stripped, laws were rewritten with freedom in mind. Even the right to bear arms was granted which is currently being debated to contain the recent shooting incidents. Ownership of state land was transferred to the people under the 'Law of Homestead'. Any citizen could lay claim on one square mile of unclaimed state land under this law. Immigrants on covered horse-driven carriages travelled West in search of greener pastures and became prosperous landowners.

From the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean the entire country was developed by people through facilitation of the state.

President Ronald Reagan believed, "No govern-

ment is the best government". In other words, the state was there to serve not to rule as is the case in the land of the pure. In over 200 years the US constitution has been amended less than 20 times while in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan it has not just been amended in a short span many times more but also disfigured without due legislative process. The draconian Government of India Acts prevail over the constitutional boundaries.

Unlike institutions, it is widely believed that muscles have no memory. Powerful people with 'muscle' embark on ambitious plans with no lessons learnt and eventually end up dealing with institutions that are full of sickness and hatred. It is a perfect blend of sick institutions with colonial memories and individuals with 'muscles' only.

I had the opportunity of interacting with Lt Gen Tanvir Naqvi who was heading the National Reconstruction Bureau under Gen Pervez Musharraf, the fourth usurper. He was very upbeat about the devolution plan he had formulated. I asked him a simple question about its implementation. His answer surprised me. "The bureaucracy will be tasked to implement it, moreover I have nothing to do with the implementation, the CEO is responsible for it".

In the end institutional memory prevailed over the might of the 'muscle'. It was a total disaster from which the administrative set-up has not recovered yet. In Punjabi they say, 'Khoti Rahi Borh Thhalay' (The donkey remained under the tree). It is time to move the donkey out of the shade for it to experience light.

Colonial Institutions designed and built on the foundations of 'People Hatred' cannot spread love or empathy. Executive abuse is the order of the day. For relief the public is forced to approach the courts which are overloaded and equally sluggish with an unending backlog of cases. The Ombudsman's office is again manned by retired bureaucrats who are not trained to provide relief. However the Information Commissions 'are effective in digging out the much needed information, they cannot correct mal-administration.

There are several classic cases to report. When my term ended as Chairman Pakistan Science Foundation in August 2005, I went for a farewell call on the Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology. In his parting words he said, "You did a lot of good work but never heeded our requests."

My reply was, "I had a choice to either deliver or

act on your requests." I was 52 years old then, at the peak of my professional innings. In order to get their way, I was replaced by a 74-year-old retired scientist who remained obedient till the end. The Ministry took control of the Foundation land reserved for building the Science Centre. In its place a monstrosity was built which now houses the bureaucrats who do not even understand the difference between science and technology.

The buildings on Lahore's Mall Road are protected under a Historic Buildings Act passed by Parliament. The Lahore High Court complex is on the top of the list followed by the GPO (General Post Office). In the 1990s, Their Lordships decided to rebuild a portion of the court premises in violation of the act. There was public outcry. As I knew the Judge who was in charge of the renovation I decided to approach him. I was surprised by his thinking "It is our building, we know what needs to be done." Finally, the Architects Association, led by the late Khawaja Zaheeruddin, a senior architect, started street protests to preserve the historic building of the city. There were loud chants of "It's our heritage". Finally the Lordships were forced to back off.

A similar resistance was exhibited against the Orange Train project. The management committee of the 'Chief's College' now called Aitchison College decided to appoint an Aitchisonian as the Principal. During one of my meetings with him, I requested him to replace the turbans in the uniform with Jinnah caps. He said, "No, it's our tradition" which remains unchanged till today. The independence on 14 August 1947 had no impact on his thinking.

After the enactment of the 1973 Constitution, 'Institutional Restructuring' had started by the Bhutto regime when the 'Empire' decided to strike back in 1977 to reverse all the democratic gains.

The elected government of Imran Khan almost succeeded in convicting the corrupt politicians after over three years of exhaustive investigations and legal delays when it was decided to save them to keep them in the arena as checkmates. If the current Azadi Movement succeeds, which is most probable, it must be followed by massive 'Institutional Rebuilding' to ensure continuity of freedom and People's Power. Otherwise the poor donkey will remain in the shade. Beating the proverbial dead horse cannot and will not produce results.

The writer is ex-Chairman, Pakistan Science Foundation. He can be contacted at: fmaliks@hotmail.com

Arif Nizami of Lahore

His friends have lost someone special

NASIR MIAN

ON the death of my friend Arif Nizami, I was reminded of the obituary of Faiq Amin which Prof. R. A. Khan wrote in the college gazette. The first sentence read "Faiq has seized to be".

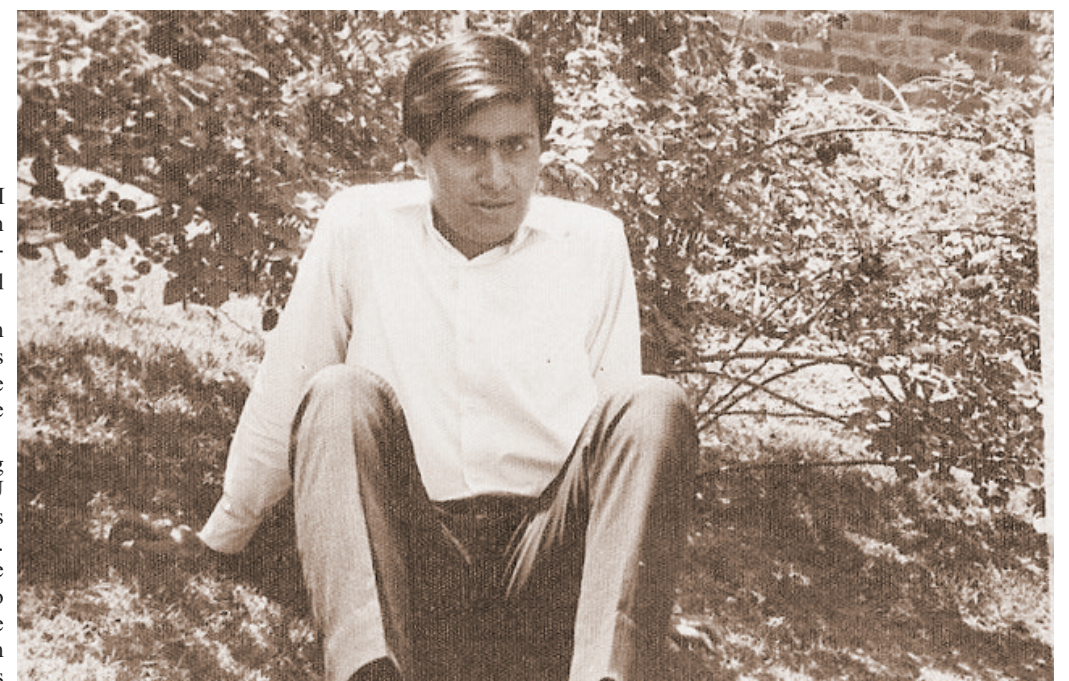
For me, Arif has not seized to be. He is very much alive in my memory and in the memories of his countless number of friends. One of my visits to see him in the hospital was the last visit after which he passed away.

Surprisingly on that fateful afternoon, the young doctors on duty allowed me to see him in the I.C.U. of the hospital to cheer him up. When I went to his bed, he had an oxygen pipe fixed in his trachea. Upon seeing me he tried to remove the oxygen to be able to speak to me. The doctors on duty rushed to force him to stop. He could not speak to me but he had his eyes focused on me and he held my both hands strongly with tears in his eyes. I wiped off his tears and with my heart missing a beat I left the room praying for him. I could not stand the agony of my friend and its effect upon me. Later on that evening he left this world.

Arif and I met in Government College Lahore in September 1965 as first-year freshmen. He came from the elitist St. Anthony's and I came from the common man's Central Model School. We knew that his father and my father were close friends, and so were his elder brother Shoaib Nizami and my elder brother Mian Tariq. We also knew that our relationships were based on common values of opposing the military dictatorship of Ayub Khan and freedom of the press.

We also knew that our relationships were based on common values of opposing the military dictatorship of Ayub Khan and freedom of press.

I cannot forget that Arif Nizami was a workaholic from a very young age. While most of us youngsters at the GC would enjoy our freshly acquired freedom to loiter around the city admiring the beauties of our age he would always be seen in the Shah Din Building office of Nawa-i-Waqt in the afternoon till late at night when the dummy of the next day's paper was scrutinized by him before publication.



fore publication.

Such was his routine in all those years till he, together with Majid Nizami brought the institution out of woods and till he breathed his last. His career went through many upheavals. From the death of his father Hamid Nizami when he was just 12 years old till the death of his relationship with Majid Nizami and the institution that he had saved from closure. He had worked tirelessly to make it a top financial success. After The Nation, Waqt TV was his other creation. Both enterprises were snatched from him unceremoniously.

I would meet him regularly all through and found him in high spirits and enthusiasm hardly talking about his whole life's efforts going to ashes.

He was fond of good clothes and good cars. In my first year at GC, I recall meeting him and his close buddies Saeed Uz Zaman and Tariq Ali Malik in front of the Shah Din Building. He was wearing a black serge blazer unusually different from the popular navy blue blazers. He creates his own designs he said.

Later the loss of his child and serious personal injuries in a car accident on G. T. Road was a traumatic blow to him. He handled it with courage. In the fol-

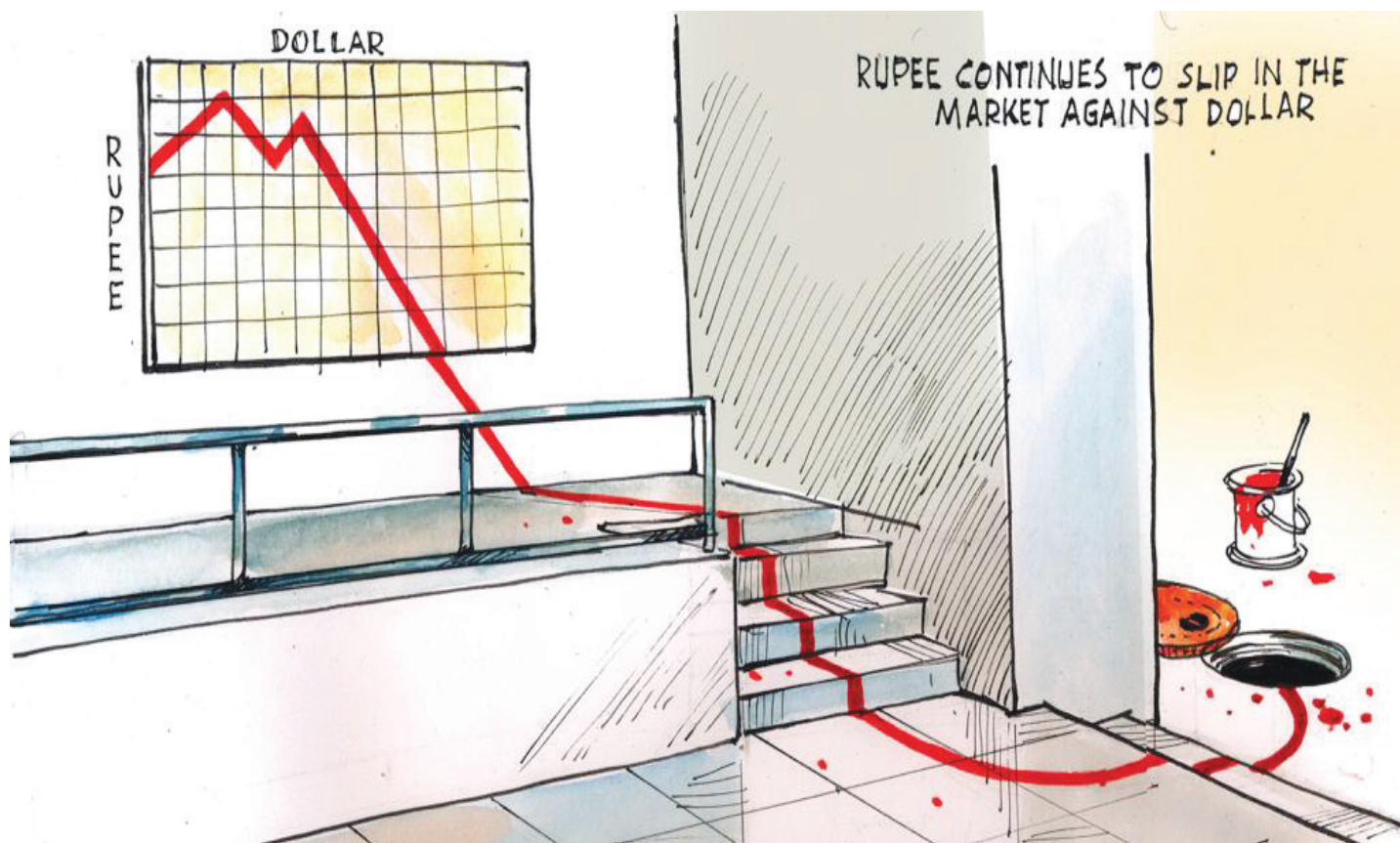
lowing years, I moved to Karachi for business. Arif would always meet me in Karachi when he was in transit and later when he opened the offices of the Nawa-i-Waqt group in the city.

Once sitting in Shezan he broke the news to me. He said you always asked me about my children. Now I have 3 boys and don't be surprised 2 of them are twins. We laughed at it and I wondered how our creator makes or breaks things.

Arif Nizami was an honest, brilliant and brave man. During Musharraf's days, he had an altercation with General Naqvi in a TV programme in which he defended the politicians against military rulers. For some months, he was not invited on any TV programmes or the government's press briefings. Later Musharraf invited Majid Nizami to his office and complained about Arif Nizami. Majid Nizami told Musharraf that if Arif would not have expressed his opinion the way he did then I would have reprimanded him.

Lahore has lost one of its gentle and popular citizens after the demise of Arif Nizami. His friends have lost a sincere and jovial companion.

God bless him and send him to heaven: the place he rightly deserves.



Can ICJ ruling pave the way of Rohingya repatriation in Myanmar from Bangladesh?

► The ruling could be a gamechanger



DR ARPITA HAZARIKA

ACCORDING to academics and rights campaigners, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling has opened up fresh opportunities for the international community to put pressure on the Myanmar military to provide justice for the Rohingyas.

The International Court of Justice ruled on July 22 that The Gambia's case for genocide against Myanmar would proceed despite Myanmar's preliminary objections.

According to media reports, Myanmar must now submit its counterargument by April of the following year. The International Court of Justice will then likely issue its ruling by 2024.

According to the reports, the Myanmar military has a long-standing record of committing serious human rights crimes. A year after the military overthrew the democratically elected civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi, the US also ruled in the early months of this year that the Myanmar army had committed genocide against the Rohingyas.

The National Unity Government (NUG), a parallel administration run in exile by the expelled Suu Kyi party MPs, also vowed to assist the ICJ case and to give the tribunal the required information about the genocide.

For decades, genocidal atrocities have been committed against the Rohingya people in Myanmar, forcing hundreds of thousands of them to migrate to Bangladesh from Rakhine State, where they are denied citizenship and basic rights.

The largest flood, which brought roughly 750,000 Rohingya refugees in 2017, encouraged The Gambia to appeal to the highest UN court in The Hague in November 2019 with help from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) granted The Gambia's request and imposed provisional measures requiring Myanmar to stop all genocide against the Rohingyas, to make sure that its security forces don't carry out genocide, and to take action to protect any relevant evidence.

The Gambia's standing in the case and the court's authority were both contested in preliminary objections filed by Myanmar in January of last year. Myanmar claimed that because The Gambia was not directly affected, the country

lacked jurisdiction to file the complaint. Additionally, it contended that the OIC lacked jurisdiction and was in fact the driving force behind the case. The ICJ dismissed each and every defence.

We can see that the ICJ has backed the Rohingya cause from the start. Additionally, it referred to them as Rohingyas, an ethnic identifier. Therefore, this decision is significant for Rohingya justice and their ability to return home. Under pressure from the ICJ ruling, Myanmar will finally take the repatriation of the Rohingyas seriously.

Bangladesh will be better able to bargain with Myanmar as a result. However, Bangladesh must exercise caution so that Myanmar does not treat it as a token repatriation. It's important to deal with the issue's underlying causes.

In order to make the repatriation process more successful, Bangladesh must also involve nations like China, Japan, and India.

Only the Netherlands and Canada officially joined The Gambia case for holding Myanmar accountable in 2020. Later, the USA promised to contribute financially to the case.

It is time for Bangladesh to begin talking to the USA and other like-minded countries for them to join the case and make financial contributions.

Given the renewed pressure Myanmar is facing in the wake of the ICJ ruling, Bangladesh is hopeful that Myanmar will take the required steps to establish favourable conditions for the repatriation of the Rohingyas.

Myanmar has not yet put the temporary restrictions that the ICJ set into effect. It claimed that clashes between the Arakan Army and the Myanmar military frequently take place in Rakhine State and that the Rohingya community is increasingly suffering as a result. While more than 130,000 Rohingyas continue to live in camps in Rakhine, the UN and other aid organizations are unable to access these communities freely, which suggests that the Myanmar army continues to disregard the ICJ's provisional measures.

All UN members must support The Gambia in ending the crimes committed by the Myanmar military. By holding the military accountable for its atrocities against the Rohingyas, the World Court might create the incentive for further international action towards justice for all victims of the Myanmar security forces' crimes.

According to the HRW, ethnic groupings and human rights advocates in Myanmar have united to struggle for the creation of democratic rule; these efforts are strengthened by the fight for justice at the ICJ. Concerned governments should formally intervene in the Genocide Convention case if they want to be leaders for accountability in Myanmar.

The case presents an important chance to ex-

amine the harsh policies and practices of the Myanmar military that have maintained its control for decades. Now is really high time to mount global pressure on Myanmar to stop atrocities against its people and to start Rohingya repatriation shortly from Bangladesh?

The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) has made a good decision regarding the admissibility of the Rohingya genocide case trial. This gives optimism that, despite its continued inaction in its repatriation negotiations with Bangladesh, the Myanmar military will not get off easily. The court's decision opens the door for a full hearing of the matter, which hopefully will result in swift justice. Both the trial and resolving the Rohingya situation permanently should be prioritized and given the attention they deserve.

It has been a number of years since the Myanmar military engaged in what has been referred to as "ethnic cleansing" with genocidal intent, a type of crime that has not been seen in the world recently. The World Court dismissed the junta's arguments on Friday, despite the fact that it has been denying the "genocide" element of the issue.

Myanmar's main defense was that Gambia lacked standing to file the lawsuit in front of the highest UN court. Judge Joan Donoghue, the president of the ICJ, however, made it plain that the court has jurisdiction in this matter and that Gambia can take action to avoid genocide as a state signatory to the 1948 Genocide Convention.

Since they were mercilessly killed, raped, and driven from their ancestral homes in Myanmar, the Rohingya people have had to endure a string of tragic events. As they wait in filthy camps in Bangladesh to return home and start a new life, the trauma still plagues them. However, while their fate is being decided, safety, dignity, and integration are crucial, and caution should be taken so that they do not jump from the frying pan into the fire. Undoubtedly, a lasting solution to the problem will depend on the issue of global justice and accountability.

All parties concerned should keep their attention on the issue of restoring trust among the Rohingyas, first by achieving prompt justice in the ICJ case and then by making sure their return home is supported by the restoration of their citizenship rights.

In this regard, it must be stressed again how crucial it is to begin the repatriation process, which has been dragged out for a few years. The Rohingyas are equally worried, and rightfully so, about what will happen to them in the future in addition to receiving justice for what happened to them in the past. Leaders from around the world cannot support the cause of justice on one front while giving up on it on another.

The writer is a freelance columnist

EDITOR'S MAIL

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NADRA rebuttal

APROPOS to the letter "Gender Versus Merit" by Abbas Ali Qureshi published on July 25, 2022, in Pakistan Today NADRA intends to put the record straight for general public to understand the very purpose of giving priority to women or gender in new hiring.

NADRA being public service organization provides services to all sections of society including male, female, trans-gender, old, young and children. NADRA ensures presence of both male and female staff at each field office to serve all citizens. To cater for the requirement, NADRA provides equal opportunity to all genders during its hiring process. However, whenever there is any kind of deficiency/requirement of specific gender at any field office; the advertisements are designed accordingly.

As it was done in the instant case there is requirement of male staff for those Mobile Registration Vans, which will operate in far flung remote areas. While on the other hand in Officer category hiring is open for all; however, in Swabi and Bunir there is deficiency of female officers therefore female applicants were encouraged.

SPOKESPERSON NADRA
ISLAMABAD

Problems of DHA residents

IT was 20 years ago that I was finally able to purchase a small house in Phase IV of the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) in Karachi. I threw in every penny that I had and yet had to rely on bank loan to be able to make the move. But I did all that happily, with spring in my feet and stars in my eyes. I thought I was able to give my family a decent lifestyle in a decent locality.

It seemed like the best and the wisest decision of my life. Was it? Frankly, I don't know. Buying water through tankers all these years make me wonder if it was. Perhaps it was the worst and the stupidest decision of my life. Was it? Frankly, I don't know. At least during the monsoon season, it certainly looks like one. What I can say for sure is that the spring in my feet and the stars in my eyes have long parted company.

During the 2020 monsoons, our area experienced the worst, almost unimaginable, conditions, and the residents held protests in front of the offices of the Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC) and the DHA Administrator. The idea was to express our grief and make the authorities take note of the losses and sufferings of those paying exorbitant taxes and charges regularly. However, instead of doing something positive, the officials lodged FIR against the innocent citizens whose only demand was for the relevant authorities to make amends, and protect the residents from such losses the next time it rains.

The last year was relatively peaceful because there were no heavy rains. We hoped we would be lucky this year as well; either there won't be downpours or the administration would have done its homework. We knew it was a case of hoping against hope, but that was the only choice we had. The moment it started raining this year, all our layers of hope started diminishing with every drop of rain. The situation in the entire DHA was dismal, but in phase IV it was clearly the worst.

Starting July 10, the area had blanket power outage. There was no electricity for close to 55-60 hours. All lanes and streets were inundated. Water mixed with a fair amount of sewage entered the houses. The basements, in houses that had one, were flooded. It was like living in some remote backwater during high tide. Sitting helpless within the confines of the island that my house had become, cut off from the rest of the world, including the neighbourhood, as the phone batteries went dead, I cursed the day when I planned to make the move to the DHA. I hope the authorities will not file an FIR against me just on the basis of some odd thoughts and the choicest of grumbles that I mumbled in those dark hours. Some high-ranking VIPs are said to have surveyed the area in a helicopter during the time. Did it help? No. Will it help? No. Can things get any darker? Yes. Everything soon will be nothing more than a bad memory for the authorities that they would love to forget about. Nobody will be held accountable for anything. Anybody demanding accountability will face an FIR. Will there ever be an FIR against the administrators? Well, the question itself is preposterous. Let's take recourse to Ghalib for some emotional catharsis!

OBABIDA IQBAL RIZVI
KARACHI

Food Insecurity

PAKISTAN ranks 92nd out of 116 countries on the Global Hunger Index (GHI) which aims at mobilising global action to combat hunger. The index includes four indicators: undernourishment, child wasting, stunting, and the under-five mortality rate. While 37.6 per cent of children are stunted, Pakistan has reduced the proportion of the undernourished population from 21.1pc in 2000 to 12.9pc today. Similarly, Pakistan has reduced the prevalence of wasting in under-five children from 14.1pc in 2000 to 7.1pc in 2020.

Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe published a report on global hunger which stated: "As the year 2030 approaches, achievement of the world's commitment to zero hunger is tragically distant." Furthermore, it claims that current projections show that the world as a whole — and 47 countries in particular — will fail to achieve even low-income status by 2030.

According to the World Food Programme (WFP) Global Report on Food Crises 2021, food crises will become more widespread and severe, with a bleak outlook for 2021. The WFP estimates that 41 million people are on the verge of starvation.

Food security is under threat from a variety of sources, including growing conflicts, extreme weather events caused by global climate change, and the economic and health issues posed by Covid. Food insecurity refers to more than just a lack of food in the market. It also indicates a lack of funds to obtain food, let alone nutritious and wholesome food.

More Pakistanis are now facing food insecurity as a result of double-digit food price increases and declining income over the last three years. According to WFP, 18pc of Pakistanis suffer from acute food insecurity. The WFP claims that access to affordable food is the biggest barrier to achieving a balanced diet, and that the majority of Pakistanis are unable to do so. Hence, increasing food availability is insufficient to end hunger and under-nutrition. If universal food security and the pervasive concern of stunting and wasting among children are to be dealt with, it is just as important, if not more, to ensure that people have access to healthy and safe meals. The number of individuals who are food-insecure has increased, while social and economic imbalances have only gotten worse as a result of our economic and financial policies. The government must work to enhance the value chain of fruit and vegetable crops while also assuring the availability of storage facilities in order to prevent future food crises.

MUHAMMAD ABDULLAH
KARACHI

HOW BAD WILL THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS GET?

FOOD COMMODITY PRICES ARE FALLING, BUT EXPERTS SAY GLOBAL PRODUCTION AND HUNGER RATES MIGHT BE EVEN WORSE IN 2023

FINANCIAL TIMES

CHELSEA BRUCE-LOCKHART AND
EMIKO TERAZONO

HAS the high price of food passed a peak? Even before the UN-brokered grain deal between Kyiv and Moscow gave the green light last week for shipments to leave Ukraine's Black Sea ports, food commodity prices had been plummeting. Fears of recession, a bumper harvest in Russia and hopes of revived grain trade flows have pushed prices lower.

But the price declines do not mean the food crisis is over. Analysts say the underlying factors that drove markets higher are unchanged. The ongoing war is only one of a multitude of problems that could sustain higher hunger rates for many years to come.

The Ukraine conflict came at a time when food prices were already being pushed upwards by a range of factors — mainly droughts affecting key crop-producing countries and supply chains dealing with the residual effects of the pandemic. In poorer countries whose economies have been left in tatters by Covid-19 lockdowns, the war only exacerbated a grim situation.

"What sets this global food crisis apart from previous similar situations is that there are multiple major causes behind it," says Cary Fowler, the US special envoy for food security.

The true impact of this combination of factors will only become apparent next year, analysts say. "I'm more worried about 2023 than 2022," says one.

STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

The war has undoubtedly been a big drag on global food production. With Ukraine's ports blockaded and capacity on alternative routes limited, export volumes are significantly down. In June, the country exported just under 1mn tonnes of wheat, corn and barley, 40 per cent lower than the same month in 2021, according to Ukraine's agriculture ministry.

Ukraine's harvest started this month and growers are scrambling for storage for the new crop. But if farmers cannot sell their

grains, it will have a knock-on effect into 2023 as they will not have the funds to pay for seeds and fertiliser for the next season. They may not even have a crop, warns an international food policy official. The high commodity prices seen in late spring may have incentivised greater production elsewhere. But that will be offset by the surge in input costs for many farmers, especially fertilisers and diesel used for transportation and farm equipment.

Food policy officials warn that soaring energy prices, which are expected to rise further over the winter, have also hit the production of nitrogen fertiliser, a key crop nutrient. "If we don't sort out [the issue with] agricultural inputs — in particular fertilisers — then the crisis of affordability will turn into a crisis of availability come next year," warns Arif Husain, chief economist at the UN World Food Programme.

So far, the main concern about food has been grain supplies, especially the wheat and vegetable oils of which Ukraine is a large exporter. But some analysts are concerned about the price of rice, the cornerstone of diets across Asia.

For now, there are high levels of inventories in leading producing countries such as India, Thailand and Vietnam. However, there are worries about export restrictions, if the high cost of wheat prompts more consumers to turn to rice as a substitute.

Only about 10 per cent of total global production of the grain is exported, so a restriction by any one exporter can have an outsized impact on international prices.

In 2007-08, export restrictions by India and Vietnam combined with panic buying by large rice importers, such as the Philippines, leading to prices more than doubling.

"We are monitoring rice prices closely," say analysts at Nomura, the Japanese investment bank, adding: "If rising wheat prices lead to substitution towards rice, this could lower existing stocks, trigger restrictions by key producers and lead to higher rice prices over time." Officials are also watching fertiliser availability for rice production in Asia.

THE HUMAN EFFECTS: Long before Russia invaded Ukraine, food insecurity was

at record levels. Due to the pandemic, droughts and other regional conflicts, just under 770mn went hungry in 2021, the highest number since 2006, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

The FAO predicts the war in Ukraine will raise the number of undernourished people by up to 13mn this year and another 17mn in 2023. According to the World Bank, for every 1 percentage point increase in food prices, an additional 10mn people are expected to fall into extreme poverty.

Across much of Africa, the Middle East and central Asia, consumption of staples outweighs production. It is countries in these regions that are most exposed to global price rises, according to commodity data group Gro Intelligence. Many emerging economies are facing the additional burden of a decline in their currencies on top of rising food prices.

The impact on countries in the Middle East and Africa that depend on imports from Ukraine and Russia has been stark. Egypt has turned to the IMF for aid, inflation in Turkey has surged to almost 80 per cent while the World Bank has described the crisis in Lebanon as one of the most severe of the past 100 years.

Even countries that do not buy from Russia or Ukraine but are high net importers of agricultural commodities are facing higher import costs. The price of staple foods such as bread, pasta and cooking oils have been rising fastest. A loaf of bread in Bulgaria cost almost 50 per cent more in June than it did a year earlier. Cooking oils in Spain are almost twice as expensive now than they were a year ago and sugar prices in Poland have risen by 40 per cent.

In lower income countries where food makes up a large portion of consumer spending, cutting back to compensate for rising costs of living is much harder. In Egypt, where food and non-alcoholic drinks account for more than a third of household spending, people are facing food price rises of 24 per cent. In Ethiopia, where the budget on food is even higher, food inflation is 38 per cent.

"If you live in a country where, on a good

EGYPT HAS TURNED TO THE IMF FOR AID, INFLATION IN TURKEY HAS SURGED TO ALMOST 80 PER CENT WHILE THE WORLD BANK HAS DESCRIBED THE CRISIS IN LEBANON AS ONE OF THE MOST SEVERE OF THE PAST 100 YEARS

day, you spend upwards of 50 to 60 per cent of your disposable income on food. There's not much space left after that to deal with a shock of this magnitude," says Husain.

In Africa especially, "there is a risk of famine next year," says Gilbert Hounbo, president of the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development. This in turn "could create social unrest and mass economic migration," he adds.

Food price spikes in 2007-08 and in 2010-11 each resulted in riots around the world, and sky-high food prices were a key factor in the unrest that recently gripped Sri Lanka. Other worst-affected governments have so far managed to keep a lid on social unrest by using subsidies.

"That's provided a Band-Aid," says Michael Pond, analyst at Barclays. "But at some point, the pressure might be so strong that governments can't provide that Band-Aid. And that's where things could boil over," he adds.

NO RETURN TO NORMAL: Not everyone thinks the crisis will become more severe. Earlier this month, Morgan Stanley issued an optimistic report on the future of food prices, suggesting increases in 2023 will be lower than expected. Increased grain production by farmers, including in Ukraine as tensions ease, will temper food inflation, the report said.

Yet while some international traders are hopeful that the reopening of the Black Sea trading route for Ukrainian grains could signal the start of a "de facto ceasefire", there is still uncertainty over Russia's intentions. It is continuing to attack areas around Ukrainian ports.

And even if the war were to end tomorrow, Ukraine's agricultural and port infrastructure need to be rebuilt and the waters off its coastline demined. The country's farmers

may not be able or willing to come back to work on their land.

Many western government officials and analysts expect the current food crisis to last years, with the war coming on top of climate change, the pandemic and other conflicts around the world. "Any one of these factors that have pushed food inflation [higher] could continue," says Pond.

Diversifying import sources among countries, which were reliant on Ukraine for grains and vegetable oils, means that prices will remain elevated for longer, and the story will be similar in energy, says Laura Wellesley, senior research fellow at Chatham House. "The overall picture looks like one of tightening supply and high prices, without any likelihood of let-up any time soon."

Consumers may need to get used to permanently higher food prices, economists warn. Capital Economics forecasts that market levels will "remain at historically high prices" due to the increased volatility in the weather. "It's undeniable that we're seeing lower yields and harvests" over the past few years due to the growing impact of climate change, says Caroline Bain, chief commodities economist at the research firm.

Some analysts wonder whether the conflict has started a process of dismantling a trade system designed to deliver low cost goods, including food commodities, to all corners of the globe. The global food trading system that allowed us to access all kinds of foods is not set to return to normal any time soon, says Wellesley. "That in turn likely means continued high food and fertiliser prices and a reconfiguration of trade dependencies, perhaps with a greater focus on more regional supply chains."

Additional reporting by Federica Cocco in London.

Opposition on their knees but BJP has troubles brewing within

PRINT

D.K. SINGH

ON the face of it, the Bharatiya Janata Party is on a roll. Opposition parties are on their knees.

Nothing negative sticks to the government at the Centre. Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains Teflon.

The Centre can keep extending the free food grain programme and depositing money into farmers' accounts. And PM Modi can denounce 'revdi' (freebies) culture as dangerous for India's development. What his government gives for free are for Garib Kalyan and Kisan Samman — welfare of the poor and in honour of farmers. What other political parties offer are 'revdis'. Modi's Cabinet and his party are full of dynasts. But he can slam opposition parties for dynastic politics.

The Prime Minister can deny Chinese army's transgressions into Indian territory to the country's top political leaders: "Nobody has intruded into our territory..." Yet, he can make them duck for cover over national security issues.

He can push Ctrl + Alt + Delete, and the much-hyped things get erased from public memory — demonetisation, doubling farmers' income, \$5 trillion economy, 100 'Smart' cities, et al.

Nothing said by the opposition sticks to PM Modi. Because most Indians believe that he can do no wrong and the opposition can say nothing right. Modi's colleagues in the BJP can, therefore, bask in the reflected glory and relax. They are probably becoming too complacent.

What else can explain the BJP leadership's failure to notice the emerging fault lines in the party? And the seeming nonchalance about what's happening in states? Even at the Centre, there is a sense of drift in organisational affairs.

WHAT HEADLINES SAY: Let's look at the news headlines over the weekend. First, Union Minister Smriti Irani braves political storm over daughter's allegedly 'illegal bar'.



FOR A PARTY THAT DERIVES ITS ELECTORAL PROWESS FROM PM MODI AND IS UNDER DIRECT SUPERVISION OF MASTER STRATEGIST AMIT SHAH, BJP LOOKS LIKE A HOUSE IN DISORDER

BJP leaders' response: Silence. Nothing from ministers or senior BJP leaders all through Saturday. No official reaction from the government or the party. While her detractors had a field day on social media, the famed 'IT cell' on the other side kept waiting to be deployed. Irani was left to fend for herself, rebutting allegations in a press conference at her residence. Sooner than later, her colleagues would have to back her. But their failure to promptly come to her defence must disappoint her. If they had some questions about her version, they could have asked her directly, instead of clammung up. It was Shiv Sena's Priyanka Chaturvedi who urged the opposition not to "demonise" a young girl's "audacious" attempt to "pursue her dream". While a couple of leaders like Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga and Vanathi Srinivasan tweeted in her defence, top BJP leaders and ministers have stayed silent. The BJP on its part shared Irani's rebuttal on its official Twitter handle and her legal notice to Congress leaders in its official WhatsApp group. The message is: It's Smriti Irani's battle to fight.

Second news headline was: 6 minors rescued, 73 arrested from 'brothel' run by Meghalaya BJP vice-president. Bernard R Marak, who was on the run, accused NDA's chief minister Conrad Sangma of "political vendetta" for "using the police" to raid his farmhouse.

The BJP, a part of the Meghalaya government, chose to defend Marak. In a statement Sunday evening, the Meghalaya BJP said that it's vice-president was 'unjustly framed and maligned'. He appears to be a victim of a political vendetta, said the BJP, virtually indicting the government of which it's a part. Incidentally, Marak had in 2017 quit as a BJP district president after his party colleagues objected to his plan to hold a 'bitchi-beef' festival (bitchi is rice beer) to celebrate PM Modi's three years in power at the Centre. He had even promised to bring down beef prices if the BJP came to power in the state. He has been climbing up the organisational ladder since then.

Third news headline was: BJP made Eknath Shinde

CM with heavy heart, says Maharashtra BJP president Chandrakant Patil. After all, former CM Devendra Fadnavis didn't do all the hard work to bring down the Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA government to become deputy CM. Once the high command decided that Shinde would be the CM, Fadnavis went public saying he wouldn't be part of the government. Later, he disclosed the sequence of events. He said in Nagpur that Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president J.P. Nadda asked him to be part of the government. "I spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji and following the conversation, I decided to obey their instructions." The Economic Times quoted Fadnavis as saying. Read between the lines. He "obeyed" Nadda's and Shah's "instruction" to join the government only after the PM persuaded him. So, a reluctant CM, Uddhav, has been replaced by a reluctant de facto CM — deputy CM in this case. No wonder, the two-member BJP-Shiv Sena cabinet has been running the entire government for about a month.

There is a pattern here though. Every time a leader outside the BJP high command's core team of loyalists forms a government, he must struggle for weeks before he can get his team. When Shivraj Singh Chouhan toppled the Congress-led government in Madhya Pradesh in March 2020, he had to wait for 25 days before he could get a team.

In 2019, when B.S. Yediyurappa became CM after toppling the Congress-JDS government in Karnataka, he ran a one-man administration for three weeks before he could get a team and then another week to finalise the allocation of the ministers' portfolios.

Fourth headline over the weekend was: Day after announcing son's candidature, BS Yediyurappa puts ball in the BJP court.

Forced to step down as the CM and then sidelined in the party, Yediyurappa virtually declared his retirement from electoral politics, saying that his son Vijayendra would contest from his home turf, Shikaripura. This came in the backdrop of the BJP high command ignoring Vijayendra's claim for a Legislative Council seat in May.

Apprehensive that his son wouldn't get even the assembly ticket, BSY declared his candidature from Shikaripura on Friday, only to retract the next day and leave it to the BJP leadership to decide. BSY is obviously not ready to go down without a fight.

INTERNAL BICKERING IN SEVERAL STATES: Now go back a few days. You would find that news headlines from Uttar Pradesh tell a bigger story in Yogi Adityanath's state. There was a political storm when deputy CM Brajesh Pathak wrote to the additional chief secretary (medical and health) Amit Mohan Prasad, raising questions about the transfer of doctors when Pathak was away. The letter conveniently found its way to social media, embarrassing CM Adityanath. Pathak is considered close to Amit Shah while Prasad, who faced the deputy CM's ire, enjoys Yogi's trust. Prasad is part of Team-9 that meets at the CM's residence every morning to discuss the government's agenda for the day.

Then there was a rebellion by junior minister for Jal Shakti, Dinesh Khatik, who shot off a letter to Amit Shah, alleging that officials were not following his orders because he is a Dalit and he was not given any work. It was a veiled dig at his immediate boss, cabinet minister Swatantra Dev Singh, who is also Uttar Pradesh BJP chief. Again, Khatik's letter was all over the social media. Swatantra Dev Singh — named Congress Singh until he joined politics — was a Shah protégé but he has grown closer to Yogi since his induction in the government.

Speaking of Shivraj Singh Chouhan, his list of detractors seems to be only growing, with Uma Bharti being the latest to attack him — over liquor policy, this time. A couple of weeks ago, BJP MLA Narayan Tripathi left the Chouhan government red-faced, saying that government officials were working for the BJP.

There are constant dissensions and bickering in the BJP in West Bengal, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, you name it. For a party that derives its electoral prowess from PM Modi and is under direct supervision of master strategist Amit Shah, the BJP is looking like a house in disorder. There are broadly two camps emerging in the ruling party — those who enjoy the blessings of the high command and those who don't. And the trust deficit between the two is deepening.

The author is Political Editor, ThePrint.

CORPORATE CORNER

Allied Bank partners with Haball to accelerate digitalization of B2B payments in Pakistan



Allied Bank (ABL) and Haball has signed an agreement to digitalize supply chain payments in a ceremony held at Innovation Lab located at ABL Head Office in Lahore. The agreement was signed by Mr. Mohsin Mithani – Group Head Digital Financial Services & Innovation at ABL and Mr. Omer Bin Ahsan, CEO Haball. This partnership between ABL and Haball simplifies the B2B payment process by allowing businesses of all sizes to make high-speed digital payments and participate in the digitalization of their supply chains. **PR**

SIH role recognized as Highest Employment Generator



ISLAMABAD: The role of Shifa International Hospital Islamabad (SIH) as a contributor to the social and economic wellbeing of the communities has been recognized by a nomination as the highest employment generator by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). Honorable Dr. Arif Alvi (President, Islamic Republic of Pakistan) presented the award to Mr. Taimoor Shah (Chief Operating Officer, SIH) at the ICCI 5th Business Excellence Awards Ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Saddar, Islamabad on July 21st, 2022. As part of the evaluation, the ICCI award committee has rigorous criteria for reviewing and collecting data from credible sources, i.e., Ministry of Labour & Manpower, Government of Pakistan, to assess the outlook and impact of an organisation as a leading employment generator. The contribution as the largest employment generator is also coupled with providing equal employment opportunities and representation to all segments of society on the basis of merit and transparency. Shifa International Hospital also believes in empowering women by enabling them to pursue successful careers in the healthcare industry in a safe and conducive environment. At Shifa, women make up at least 35% of its workforce. Mr. Taimoor Shah (COO SIH) thanked Mr. Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) for the award nomination and reiterated that Shifa will keep on working with ICCI and all relevant stakeholders on social and health initiatives. **PR**

PROVINCIAL HELP MANDATORY TO COMPLETE POPULATION CENSUS IN TIME: AHSAN

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

2ND meeting of the Census Monitoring Committee to oversee/ monitor Census activities to ensure an expeditious, transparent and credible census operation was held on 26th July, 2022 under chair of Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission (DCPC) at Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Pak Secretariat Islamabad.

The main objective of the meeting was to review Progress of the Pilot Census. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretaries of all provinces/ regions with relevant Secretaries, Additional Commissioner Islamabad, DG Military Operations Directorate, Chairman NADRA, MD NTC and senior officers from Education, Local Government, Finance, and PBS.

Mr. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that the population census is an important and critical exercise so it should be completed in February 2023 by utilizing all the possible resources. He directed the Chief Secretaries to assure their full cooperation and give full support to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in this process to make this census successful. He also directed NADRA that they should expedite the process of procurement of tablets and accessories for conduct of digital census as the exercise of paramount importance due to linkages with resource allocation and delimitation of constituencies. Any delay in the process will create constitutional crises as conduct of next General election of 2023 depends of the census 2022. He appreciated the role of Pak Army in this process and emphasized to provide fool proof security to the enumerators in this whole census process. He also assured full support of government for successful conduct of this gigantic task.

Dr. Naeem uz Zafar, Chief Statistician sensitized the relevant departments by presenting the progress and issues of PBS related to Pilot Census. He further explained that PBS has started Pilot Census of 7th Population & Housing Census-2022 for testing tools, technology, field operation & security



mechanism, communication strategy etc. in 33 selected Administrative Districts (417 Blocks) w.e.f. 20th July, 2022 all over Pakistan, including AJK and GB. Training to enumerators for the Pilot Census was imparted at 27 stations in Pakistan. For the field operation the responsibility of provision of security rest with Armed Forces with the involvement of Civil Armed Forces and Police of respective Government. NADRA will provide tablets and census software, however, data infrastructure (Computing and storage) is the responsibility of National Telecom Corporation (NTC). Similarly, SUPARCO is also awarded contract for the provision of high resolution imagery for coverage and Geo Tagging. On the other hand, the State of AJ&K has informed that population data of the refugees living in Pakistan is highly desirable for academic/ political purposes to study the effects of Indian subjugation and perpetual denial of right to self-determination of the People of the State of Jammu and Kashmir; which can also be safely used for the purposes of electoral rolls of

constituencies of AJ&K Legislative Assembly and for planning purposes as well. Therefore, in 7th Population and Housing Census-2022 the data of refugees living in Pakistan may be collected through addition of a column in the existing data collection form. Participants from other Departments and provinces were also invited to share their point of view and all the queries raised by provinces were addressed. The participants appreciated the efforts of PBS to bring transparency and confidentiality and suggested to form working Committees for smooth functioning of Census process. All the Chief Secretaries assured their cooperation to fulfil this National Task. This meeting was an effort of PBS to involve all stakeholders for the successful Pilot Census process. Due to presence of relevant persons from provinces and departments, the meeting proved to be the best forum to resolve issues and queries of all Departments related to Pilot Census process and present progress and ambiguities of PBS to all concerns well before time.

All resources to be utilised for prompt rehab of flood-hit road network: Communication Minister

ISLAMABAD
PR

Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood has said that all the measures should be taken on emergency basis to ensure the restoration of traffic on national highways and motorways in the recent heavy rains and resulting floods. In this regard, a control room has been established at NHA Headquarters Islamabad so that the maintenance units and field formations of the authority across the country may remain in constant contact with headquarter. Immediate action can thus be taken to restore the affected roads well in time. He said this while presiding over a high-level meeting at the Ministry of Communications today, in which Federal Secretary Communications/Chairman National Highway Authority Captain (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha, along with senior officers of Ministry of Communications and re-

levant officers of National Highway Authority participated. A detailed briefing was given to Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood regarding the situation of rain and flood water on motorways and national highways as well as the measures taken by NHA to restore the traffic. Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood was told in a briefing that at the places of km 771-773 and km 780-782 the Indus Highway was affected due to heavy rains. The NHA officials posted in Dera Ghazi Khan are endeavoring to restore traffic on the Indus Highway. Traffic will be restored at the affected parts of the Indus Highway by this evening. Likewise, necessary machinery has been made available at the affected parts of Khuzdar-Quba Saeed Khan Highway in Balochistan. It was also informed in the meeting to Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood that

maintenance units on GT Road N-5, (Wazirabad and Rawalpindi) are also fully operational. It was also told in the briefing that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khawaza Khela-Bisham Road, Chakdara-Kalam Road and Chitral- Shandur Road are open for traffic. While Nowshera-Dir-Chitral Road, Lowari Tunnel (North Bound) are also cleared for the traffic. The affected parts of Chitral-Garam Chashma-Shah Sadim Border Road are also being cleared completely. It should be noted that on special instructions of the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif and the Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood, Secretary of Communications and Chairman National Highway Authority Captain (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha, in view of the recent heavy rains and flooding situation, has left for Balochistan, where he will review the issues related to rehabilitation of the affected roads.

Bhayo briefed on Privatisation status of Steel Mills, other entities

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister and Chairman Privatisation Abid Hussain Bhayo chaired a privatisation review meeting here on Wednesday focusing on the progress so far made in the transaction of various entities to be privatized. Federal Secretary Privatisation Dr Irum A. Khan, senior officials and consultants were present. The Federal Minister/Chairman was briefed about the updated status of the privatisation of Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM). He was apprised that the meetings with the pre-qualified parties are underway as they have started their due-diligence process and on-site visits. Federal Minister desired that the PC should focus in order to resolve all the pending matters for the early revival of PSMC, as it is one of the biggest entities on the active privatisation list, and has incurred huge losses to the national exchequer since 2015. In the review meeting, transaction status of NPPMCL was also discussed. The Federal Minister was informed that a series of meetings with stakeholders have been held on the debt and equity matters. For that purpose, a plan of action has already been agreed upon regarding debt-refinancing for the plant from local and commercial banks. Once the debt-refinancing and recapitalization is finalized, the sale of equity shares will quickly follow. **PR**

Skills sector and NAVTTC: A high priority of government for employment

ISLAMABAD
PR

Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain said that NAVTTC and Skills TVET Sector are close to the heart of the Government as a national priority. Skills Trainings and Technical Education and Vocational Training (TVET) is the best way to educate and train them so that they get employment and integrated in the job market including abroad. TVET has globally been recognized as the most effective tool to bring out of school children into formal regime of education and training and increasing employment and poverty reduction. The Minister said that Pakistan requires one million skilled workforce every year. The Prime Minister and

Minister have directed NAVTTC to provide skills development to 100,000 more young individuals in year 2022-2023 for their career progression and empowerment. In addition, this Government has just approved a new Project for setting up 250 VTIs (Vocational and Technical Training Institutes) all over Pakistan.

The Minister highly appreciated ED NAVTTC Sajid Baloch and his team for an excellent performance, which is acknowledged by everyone including the development partners. He was pleased to note that NAVTTC has taken numerous steps to organize Skills and TVET system of the country on modern lines, and is delivering high quality training, as per international standards. The huge "Prime Minister Youth Skills Development Programme" is being

executed through NAVTTC. The main focus is on Hi Tech skills like Artificial Intelligence, e-commerce, Graphic design, Robotics, Cyber security, Hospitality etc.

The Minister of State / SAPM to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, Ms. Shaza Fatima Khwaja reiterated the resolve of the Government for uplift of youth and explained in detail about the steps being taken by the government. This Prime Minister's Youth Programme is providing Loans to the youth to become entrepreneurs, and instead of becoming job seekers they become job providers. She highlighted the importance of Skills TVET sector and performance of NAVTTC as vital for the progress of youth of Pakistan. SAPM also informed that PM Laptop programme is being implemented, focusing on less developed areas and segments.



20TH CPC NATIONAL CONGRESS TO SET CHINA'S MAIN TASKS IN NEXT FIVE YEARS

BEIJING
MIAN ABRAR

THE 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), scheduled for the second half of this year, will look ahead to China's two-stage development plan toward the middle of the 21st century and outline strategic tasks in the next five years in particular.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at a workshop for provincial and ministerial officials, held from Tuesday to Wednesday in Beijing in preparation for the key Party congress.

The CPC drew up a two-stage development plan for the period from 2020 to the middle of this century at its 19th National Congress in October 2017. According to the plan, socialist modernization will be basically realized in China by 2035, and China will be developed into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful by the middle of the century.

'BRAND NEW CHAPTER': Xi

said the 20th CPC National Congress will be a very important event taking place at a crucial moment, with China embarking on a new journey to fully build a modern socialist country. He called for efforts to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and write a "brand new chapter" of fully building a modern socialist country.

The 20th CPC National Congress will make arrangements on strategic tasks for the country and important measures to be taken in the next five years, he said, adding that the period is crucial for achieving the Party's second centenary goal.

More efforts should be made to solve problems in terms of "unbalanced and inadequate development" in the next five years, he said.

The CPC has set two centenary goals: The first was to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2021 when the CPC celebrated its centenary, and the second is to build China into a great modern socialist country in all respects by the middle of the century to celebrate the centenary of the People's Republic of China.

A workshop for provincial and ministerial officials in preparation for the 20th CPC National Congress is held in Beijing, July 26-27, 2022.

The world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century, which have been accelerating, Xi said, stressing that China faces risks and challenges more complex than before.

The rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is not an easy task, he said, calling for more strenuous efforts to achieve the goal. He also stressed that there is no fixed model for modernization in the world, and underscored the CPC's leadership in China's socialist modernization drive.

On the journey ahead, the Party must adhere to its fundamental aim of serving the people heart and soul and always maintain close ties with the people, he said.

'EXTRAORDINARY' ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2017: Xi reviewed China's development since the 19th CPC National Congress, hailing the past five years as "extraordinary." The Party has united and led the Chinese people to effectively address the "severe and complex" international situation and "huge risks and challenges" coming one after another, he said.

China has striven to advance the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, promote high-quality development, deepen reforms in a rapid and steady manner, and fight

poverty, he said.

China had declared a victory in eradicating absolute poverty nationwide by the end of 2020. It had also announced the completion of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

During the past five years, China has made great efforts to boost ecological civilization, resolutely safeguard national security, modernize national defense and the military, and advance the major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, Xi said.

China has followed a people-first approach in the fight against COVID-19 and made maximum efforts to protect people's lives and health, he said. China has achieved the best outcome worldwide in coordinating economic development and epidemic prevention and control, he added.

Facing "drastic changes" in the international situation, China has striven to safeguard its dignity and core interests, he said.

He also underscored efforts made in the anti-corruption campaign that aims to guarantee officials "do not have the audacity, opportunity, or desire to engage in corruption." The CPC National Congress is held every five years to set the Party's national policy goals and elect its top leadership.



Eye-popping: Saudi prince unveils mirrored skyscraper eco-city

JEDDAH
AFP

A futuristic Saudi megacity is to feature two skyscrapers extending across a swathe of desert and mountain terrain, according to the latest disclosures on the project by the kingdom's de facto ruler.

The parallel structures of mirror-encased skyscrapers extending over 170 kilometres (more than 100 miles), known collectively as The Line, form the heart of the Red Sea megacity NEOM, a plank of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's bid to diversify the Gulf state's oil-dependent economy. First announced in 2017, NEOM has consistently raised eyebrows for proposed flourishes like flying taxis and robot maids, even as architects and economists have questioned its feasibility.

In a presentation Monday night, Prince Mohammed sketched out an even more ambitious vision, describing a car-free utopia that would become the planet's most liveable city "by far".

Analysts noted, though, that plans for NEOM have changed course over the years, fuelling doubts about whether The Line will ever become reality.

NEOM, a biotech and digital hub spread over 26,500 square kilometres (10,000 square miles), was once touted as a regional "Silicon Valley".

Now it's a vehicle for reimagining urban life on a footprint of just 34 square kilometres, and addressing what Prince Mohammed describes as "liveability and environmental crises". "The concept has morphed so much from its early conception that it's sometimes hard to determine its direction: scaling down, scaling up, or making an aggressive turn sideways," said Robert Mogielnicki of the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington.

POPULATION BOOM: Officials had earlier said NEOM's population would top one million, but Prince Mohammed said the number would actually hit 1.2 million by 2030 before climbing to nine million by 2045.

The eye-popping total is part of a hoped-for nationwide population boom that Prince Mohammed said would be necessary to make Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude exporter, an economic powerhouse.

The goal for 2030 is to have 50 million people — half Saudis and half foreigners — living in the kingdom, up from roughly 34 million today.



Rocket fire targets Turkish consulate in Iraq's Mosul

BAGHDAD: Rockets hit the vicinity of the Turkish consulate in Iraq's main northern city of Mosul causing damage but no casualties, Iraqi and Turkish sources said Wednesday.

The overnight fire came after deadly shelling blamed on the Turkish army killed nine civilians last week, prompting anti-Turkish protests in cities across Iraq. Four rockets hit, causing damage to cars parked in the street near the consulate, provincial lawmaker Shirwan Dobardani told AFP.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Turkey, which denied its forces were behind last week's artillery bombardment and instead blamed the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), condemned the overnight rocket fire.

"We condemn this attack, in which no casualties were reported, in the strongest terms," the Turkish foreign ministry said in a statement.

"We firmly request from the Iraqi authorities to fulfil their responsibilities in protecting diplomatic and consular missions."

The ministry said it was a "grave and noteworthy development that this attack was carried out during the UN Security Council meeting, which was held upon the call of the Iraqi authorities."

Following last week's shelling, Baghdad called on the Security Council to pass a resolution demanding that Ankara withdraw its troops from northern Iraq, where it maintains a network of bases as part of its long-running campaign against the PKK. **AFP**

India continues with its hegemonic designs in region

Continuing with its hegemonic designs in the region, India has approved the procurement of military equipment and weapon worth Rs 28,000 crore.

The procurement proposals for military equipment which includes swarm drones, carbines and bulletproof jackets were cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

"The Acceptance of Necessity [AoN] for capital acquisition proposals of the armed forces amounting to Rs 28,732 crore were accorded by the DAC," the Defence Ministry

said in a statement.

The approval to the new procurement proposals came amid over two-year-long border standoff between India and China in eastern Ladakh.

The Indian ministry said approval to procure four lakh close quarter battle carbines was granted to combat the "current complex paradigm of conventional and hybrid warfare". This is set to provide a major impetus to the small arms manufacturing industry in India and enhancing self-reliance in small arms, the ministry claimed in the statement.

Meanwhile, Hindustan

Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has commenced flight trials of the next version of fighter jets Tejas Mark 1A. Indian media quoting sources reported that flight-test has started as per schedule.

In February last year, the Indian Ministry of Defence had signed a contract with the HAL for the supply of 83 jets at a cost of Rs 45,696 crore. Tejas MK 1A will have 43 improvements over the existing version. Most of the changes are related to avionics, weapons and maintenance. In all, 40 Tejas jets of this variant have already been manufactured. **AGENCIES**

Commonwealth Games defy doomsayers to remain afloat

LONDON
AFP

The Commonwealth Games are sometimes seen as a quirky relic in the modern sporting calendar but former International Olympic Committee (IOC) marketing chief Michael Payne says they have consistently defied the doomsayers.

The 22nd edition of the Games opens in Birmingham on Thursday, bringing together around 5,000 athletes from 72 nations and territories — mostly former British colonies — to compete in 19 sports over 11 days.

Some track and field stars will be absent when the competition gets underway — just days after the end of the world championships in Eugene, Oregon.

But there will still be plenty of big names on show at the event, which features sports as diverse as lawn bowls and marathon running.

The Commonwealth Games are not on the scale of the Olympics that Birmingham once aspired to host — the city was beaten by Barcelona for the right to put on the 1992 Games — but officials hope they can provide a big economic boost for the area.

According to the Financial Times, the West Midlands Combined Authority estimates the event will be worth £1 billion (\$1.2 billion) to the regional economy.

Payne, credited with transforming the IOC brand and finances through sponsorship, said the Commonwealth Games had shown remarkable resilience over the decades.

"People have been talking of the demise of the Commonwealth Games for nearly half a century but they are still going, so I would not write them off just yet," he told AFP.

Another former IOC marketing executive, Terrence Burns, who since leaving the organisation has played a role in five successful Olympic bid campaigns, said it was important for the event to find its own niche and

evolve accordingly.

"These other Games are not the Olympic Games but tend to try to mirror them in look, feel, and impact," he said. "That's just not possible or credible."

"So I think they need to redefine 'success' and build their product accordingly."

'Proud nation'

The Commonwealth Games have, like other global events in recent years, had trouble in attracting host cities.

"Finding nations willing to host is a challenge for many sports bodies these days," said Payne. "That is why you have seen a far more flexible process introduced to identify potential hosts."

"But the Commonwealth Games do face a major hurdle, as their marketing and sponsorship revenue potential is limited and, as such, nations wanting to host must be willing to commit to \$1 billion of taxpayer support."

China calls for more influential peace conference to address Palestinian issue

BEIJING
AGENCIES

China has called for a more influential international peace conference to address the Palestinian issue. "China calls for a larger, more authoritative, and more influential international peace conference, in which permanent members of the Security Council and all stakeholders in the Middle East process are invited to participate in exploring effective ways and means to politically resolve the Palestinian issue," Geng Shuang, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations (UN), told the UN Security Council briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian ques-

tion, CGTN reported on Wednesday.

Geng underscored that the Middle East peace process is "still at a standstill" and relevant UN resolutions have not been implemented for a long time, and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people have been continuously violated.

"The question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East issue that bears on regional peace and security. It should not be marginalized, much less forgotten," he said.

Geng called for reversing the situation on the ground, noting that Israel continues to expand its settlement activities in the occupied territories, thus continuing to squeeze the living space of Palestinian people and undermining the continuity of the occupied

Palestinian territory and the prospect of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state.

"We urge Israel to abide by international law, implement Security Council Resolution 2334, and immediately stop all settlement activities," he said.

Geng highlighted the importance of achieving common security as well.

Since the beginning of this year, violent incidents have occurred one after another in occupied territories and it is disturbing that clashes happened in Gaza, he said.

"The security of Israel and Palestine is interdependent and indivisible. The two sides should uphold the common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security concept, and find a way to live side by side

in peace," he said.

"Seeking absolute security by using one's advantageous position can only lead to

greater security dilemma."

"Advancing the two-state solution brooks no delay," said Geng.



PAKISTAN BATTLE TO SAVE SECOND TEST AS SRI LANKA SMELLS VICTORY

GALLE
STAFF REPORT

SRI Lanka set Pakistan a record target of 508 and then restricted them to 89-1 to keep alive their hopes of a series-levelling victory in the second Test on Wednesday.

The hosts declared their second innings on 360-8 but were robbed of precious time as only six overs could be played in the final session before bad light stopped play.

Opener Imam-ul-Haq was batting on 46 at stumps with Pakistan 419 runs behind the improbable target.

The onus would be on Pakistan skipper Babar Azam, batting on 26, to

help his team bat out the final three sessions for a draw that would also secure a 1-0 series victory for the tourists.

West Indies own the record for the highest successful fourth innings chase in tests having overwhelmed a target of 418 in a 2003 test in Antigua.

Earlier, Dhananjaya de Silva smashed 109, his ninth test hundred, to help Sri Lanka consolidate their position at the Galle International Stadium.

Home captain Dimuth Karunaratne (61) braved lower back pain to combine in a 126-run stand with de Silva after Sri Lanka resumed on 176-5.

After the barren first hour, Nauman Ali struck when Abdullah Shafique took a sharp, reflex catch at

short leg to remove Karunaratne, who became the sixth Sri Lankan batter to score 6000 test runs.

De Silva brought up his hundred with a boundary off Mohammad Nawaz and got good support from tailender Ramesh Mendis who remained not out on 45. Sri Lanka declared immediately after de Silva ran himself out.

Shafique and Imam began well for Pakistan before Prabath Jayasuriya snapped the 42-run opening stand.

Shafique charged out against the spinner but could not connect well sending the ball to mid-off where Dunith Wellalage ran sideways while eyes on the ball to take a tumbling catch.



Waseem reaches Scrabble Players C'ship final

ISLAMABAD
NEWS DESK

Pakistan's Waseem Khatri has stormed in the final of the Scrabble Players Championship at Baltimore, USA. According to details, Waseem was playing in the international division of this prime North American championship featuring around 400 players. Waseem finished day-four of the championship with 19 wins out of 28 games and qualified to play the best-of-five final against Austin Shin of England. Both Waseem and Austin Shin ended up with 19 wins while Mathew Tunnicliffe of Canada was third. Waseem and Austin Shin would face each other in the finals while remaining players will continue playing three more rounds.

Umair Arif of KP wins All Pakistan Squash Open Championship title

AGENCIES

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's budding junior squash player Umair Arif clinched the All Pakistan National Junior U15 title recorded victory against Azan Khan in the final played at Jehangir Khan Squash Complex, Karachi. More than hundred players from all over the country participated in the Championship with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Umeer Arif registering excellent performance and first reaching the grand final and later on defeated Pakistan's top seed Azan Khan by 3-2. In the final, Umair showed the best game after losing the first and second sets and despite conceding two sets, Umair staged a strong comeback by winning three consecutive sets to march into victory 3-2. The score was 9-11, 8-11, 13-11, 12-10 and 11-9. Umair Arif is determined to do well for Pakistan in the future at the national and international level. On this occasion, he also appreciated the efforts of his coach Tahir Iqbal Khan and DG Sports Khalid Khan and expressed hope that many national and international players will be produced from the Directorate of Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Squash Academy in the future.

Amateur mountaineers honored

SWAT
SYED SHAHABUDDIN



Commissioner Malakand Division, Shaukat Ali Yousafzai on Wednesday awarded certificates of appreciation to young mountaineers – Syed Zeeshan Umar and Nauman Khalil for climbing the highest peak in Swat district.

The young mountaineers met Commissioner Malakand Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai at Commissioner's Office in Saidu Sharif.

In the meeting, the commissioner termed the brave effort of the young mountaineers not only an honor

for Swat, but for Pakistan and assured all kinds of support will be provided to young mountaineers.

He said that the growing trend of mountaineering among the youth will play an important role in the promotion of healthy activities.

On the other hand, Deputy Commissioner Swat, Junaid Khan presented cheque of Rs50,000 each to the young mountaineers.

It is important to mention here that Syed Zeeshan Umar and Noman Khalil have accomplished the expedition of climbing to Falak Sar, the highest mountain peak in Swat district, on a self-help basis.

Neymar to be tried over irregularities in Barcelona transfer

AGENCIES

Neymar is due to face trial in October over alleged irregularities in his transfer to Barcelona, judicial sources said on Wednesday. The Brazilian international, his parents and former Barcelona presidents Sandro Rosell and Josep Maria Bartomeu will be tried for alleged corruption related to the forward's move from Santos to Barcelona in 2013. Rosell and Bartomeu will also face fraud charges in the trial which is scheduled to take place from October 17 to 31.

Neymar left Barcelona for Paris Saint-Germain in 2017 for a world-record 222 million euros, but it is his move from boyhood club Santos to Barca which has caused controversy. The case stems from a complaint by Brazilian group DIS, the former owner of a percentage of the player's rights.

Barcelona officially said the transfer cost 57.1 million euros (\$63.6 million), with 40 million euros going to Neymar's family and 17.1 million to Santos, but Spanish prosecutors later said it actually cost at least 83.3 million euros.

DIS, which received 6.8 million of the 17.1 million euros paid to Santos, have alleged that Barca and Neymar joined forces to hide the real amount of the transfer. On Wednesday, DIS said it was "satisfied" that there is now a date for the trial of the case, which has been in the Spanish courts since 2016.

The prosecution has requested a two-year prison sentence for Neymar, but he has insisted he was only focused on football and that he blindly trusted his father, who is also his agent.

Bartomeu took over the Barcelona presidency from his good friend Rosell, after the latter resigned in January 2014 as he faced charges of corruption over the transfer.

In 2020, Barcelona said they had been cleared by the Court of Arbitration for Sport over claims of fraud. A document in 2020 showed Neymar owed more unpaid tax than any other individual on a Spanish authorities' blacklist.

The tax office refused to say whether Neymar's presence on that list was linked to his transfer from Santos. Barcelona agreed to pay a fine of 5.5 million euros to avoid a trial in 2016 over alleged tax fraud in the signing of Neymar. Then-president Bartomeu said at the time there had been a "tax planning error".

Neymar has also been in trouble with Brazilian tax authorities, being fined for tax evasion in Brazil.

The 30-year-old has recently been playing on PSG's pre-season tour of Japan as they build up for the season-opening French Champions' Trophy against Nantes on Sunday in Tel-Aviv. Neymar, Brazil's second highest goalscorer of all time behind Pele, will be hoping to lead his country to a record-extending sixth World Cup title in Qatar later this year.

Champions League winners should play Super Cup, says Ancelotti

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti dropped some big hints about the players who are likely to be in his starting 11 for the first competitive match of the season. Real Madrid will play Europa League winners Eintracht Frankfurt in the European Super Cup on August 10. The Italian believes the players who led them to the Champions League title against Liverpool on May 28 should have the honor of playing in the game. "We have to take into account those who won the Champions League and we need to finish last season's work by winning the Super Cup," said Ancelotti after watching his side draw Club America 2-2 in a preparation game as part of their tour of the United States. The game saw fringe player Dani Ceballos produce another impressive display alongside Eduardo Camavinga after Toni Kroos, Luka Modric and Casemiro had looked flat in the first half. "We're a bit tired, because we're training hard. We're not fresh but that's not a negative sign, it's a positive one," said Ancelotti, adding that after their final match, which is against Juventus, he would "lower" the training load "to be good in the Super Cup." AGENCIES

Pakistan Cricket Board

**PRE QUALIFICATION NOTICE OF EVENT
MANAGEMENT CRICKETING (BOUNDARY
ROPE, 3D MID-WICKET LOGOS, PITCH
MATS) SEPTEMBER 2022 – SEPTEMBER 2024**

The Pakistan Cricket Board ("PCB") wishes to invite expression of interest for the selection of prequalification parties for the award of contract for event management cricketing (boundary rope, 3D mid-wicket logos, Pitch mats) for the bilateral home series, Pakistan Super League, Pakistan Junior League, and any other events that may be organized by the Pakistan Cricket Board in Pakistan during the period between September 2022 till September 2024.

- All the relevant details in the pre-qualification document (PQD) which may be obtained from the undersigned on working days from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Pakistan standard time (PST) by or before 9th August 2022.
- The expression of interest (boundary rope, 3D mid wicket log, Pitch mats) should be submitted in the manner set forth in the PQD and should reach the undersigned at the address provided below by or before 11:00 A/M, PST on 12th August 2022.
- Firms providing incomplete and/or incorrect information are liable to be disqualified. Only prequalified parties shall be allowed to participate further in the process.
- Any query(s) related to the PQD must be in writing and should be addressed to the undersigned by and before the abovementioned submission date. Information obtained from any other source shall not be deemed as official.

Mr. Ahmad Raza

Assistant Manager Marketing
Pakistan Cricket Board

Gaddafi Stadium, Ferozepur Road, Lahore, Pakistan.

Tel: +92 42 35717231 to 34 | Fax: +92 42 35711860

E-mail: ahmad.raza@pcb.com.pk

PID (L) 187

Australian curator terms Pakistan visit useful, enjoyable and collaborative

LAHORE
STAFF REPORT

Australia's Adelaide Oval chief curator Damien Hough has completed his 12-day visit of Pakistan during which he visited four Test centres and worked with the ground staff, curators and coaches on pitch and outfield preparation methods.

Hough, started his visit at the headquarters of Pakistan cricket, Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium. From Lahore, Hough travelled to Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi before coming down to spend the last weekend in Karachi. Besides a thorough inspection of the city's Test venue – National Stadium, Hough also made a visit to the Naya Nazimabad Ground.

Hough made a two-day visit to Multan Cricket Stadium early this week and later returned to Lahore for his final assignment. He will depart to Adelaide from Lahore on Thursday.

Besides inspecting the pitches and the outfield in the four cities, Hough also delivered lectures on pitch making and outfield inspection which were attended by

local coaches, ground staff and curators.

Hough meanwhile, has termed his trip very useful and enjoyable one as besides making the pitch and ground related visits, delivering lectures and presentations, he also got an opportunity to understand and learn about pitch making in Pakistan. The visit according to him was also about exchanging ideas and collaboration.

Hough also lauded the Pakistan Cricket Board's efforts and interest in experimenting with imported Australian soil and called it a world class approach.

Damien Hough said on Wednesday: "There were two parts to the plan of coming over to Pakistan, like it was about providing information and understanding on how we prepare pitches at the Adelaide Oval, the grass we leave on to assist with the pace, bounce and carry which was conveyed through presentations to the coaches and participants of the lectures at the four cities we visited. We also went on the ground and rolled out a pitch to explain how we do things.

"The other part was about a visit to the different venues and to meet the grounds team and the staff and understand how they do things, the outfields, the ma-

chinery and to go home and put together a report about what I have seen. There have been a lot of positives to take away and it has been a really enjoyable tour.

"The engagement of the curators and the coaches was extremely positive. The challenges in Pakistan are different with regards to the environment and busy schedules for the curators but the good thing was that everyone was willing to learn and progress, it was about exchanging ideas and having a collaborative approach as a lot of things are done similarly both here and in Australia.

"There are a lot of things that are being done already and the curators and the ground staff are ready to learn and up skill. The commitment of the staff is exactly the same as Australia which is commendable. The machinery here is good, it is all about how to use it and about providing some advice on how it can be best used to get the results. Every year or so the equipment gets advanced. It is the same challenge for us back home as we are always trying to update and see what new machinery we need to add because it makes our job easier and of course helps improve the surface.

GENERAL ELECTIONS ONLY WAY OUT OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL TURMOIL: IMRAN

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

PAKISTAN Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has said that the only way for the country to escape the prevailing economic and political crises via fresh general elections.

The former prime minister in his televised address to the nation said that the Pakistani masses "have turned into a nation", adding that the way the PTI emerged successful despite all "tactics" by the ruling party was a miracle.

The PTI chief claimed that the country had the right economic indicators when he was in power and he had warned the "powerful quarters" about it.

"We were on a fast pace on the agricultural front with all four bumper crops witnessing progress," he said, adding, "The way we tackled the situation during the Covid-19 pandemic was also admired by the international organisations."

"Pakistan was on an upward trajectory and that's when a conspiracy was hatched against us," he recalled.



The PTI chief opined that timely elections would have saved the country from the economic crisis that it is facing today. He also took the Election Commission to task for its opposition to the electronic voting machines. Imran added that the EVMs could have stopped uncountable ways of corruption but it was opposed.

The ousted prime minister claimed that there is only one way for Pakistan to come out of the prevailing situation and

that is to ensure fresh general elections in the country.

Earlier today, the former prime minister took to his official Twitter handle to thank the nation for coming out last evening in support of the Supreme Court's decision, which he claimed upheld the "Constitution and the law".

His announcement came after the devastating blow to the nascent Shehbaz Sharif-led ruling coalition, as the apex

court struck down Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling on the election of Punjab chief minister, paving the way for PTI's selected Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi to ascend to the throne in the country's political heartland.

In the conclusion to a hearing that gripped the country for the past four days, a three-member bench, comprising Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar, announced an unusually harsh verdict after over a three-hour delay.

"The governance of the province of Punjab in accordance with the Constitution has been subverted whereby the fundamental rights of the people have been seriously infringed," said the top court in its 11-page short order.

"As a result, the ruling dated 22.07.2022 issued by Respondent No1, Deputy Speaker, the Punjab Assembly is set aside and declared to be void, without lawful authority and of no legal effect," read the order. By virtue of the order, PML-N's Hamza Shehbaz lost his status of the "trustee" chief minister.

25 members cabinet likely: Will dissolve assembly on Imran's call: Elahi

ISLAMABAD: The newly-elected Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on Wednesday said that he would dissolve the Punjab Assembly immediately "whenever Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman (PTI) Imran Khan give a call for."

Punjab Chief Minister Elahi visited former Prime Minister Imran Khan at his Banigala residence, where the two leaders made important decisions including the election of Sibtain Khan as the new speaker of the province. The meeting, which discussed the political and administrative state of the province, included senior leadership from the PTI as well. Along with the speaker election, they also talked about the formation of the Punjab cabinet and the election of a new deputy speaker.

A decision was also taken regarding important appointments in the province.

25-MEMBER PUNJAB CABINET LIKELY IN FIRST PHASE: The Punjab cabinet to be formed with Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi as the provincial chief minister will initially consist of 25 members, it has been learnt on Wednesday.

Names of those MPAs likely to be inducted as minister include: Raja Basharat, Usman Buzdar, Yasmin Rashid, Hafiz Ammar Yasir, Shahabuddin Seharr, Ghazanfar Abbas Cheena, Taimur Bhatti, Faisal Cheema, Rafaqat Gilani, Murad Raas, Hashim Jawan Bakht, Chaudhry Zaheeruddin, Ali Afzal Sahi, Zain Qureshi, Aslam Iqbal, Rana Shehbaz, Saifuddin Khosa, Raja Humayun Yasir and Rashid Hafeez. The sources informed that the names of these MPAs from both parties are under consideration for different ministerial portfolios.

On the other hand, names of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Mehmoodur Rasheed and Sibtain Khan are doing rounds for the seat of Punjab Assembly speaker. The Supreme Court had Tuesday declared Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi as the Punjab chief minister after declaring the ruling given by the provincial assembly deputy speaker 'null and void' under which 10 votes of the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) MPAs cast in the favour of Chaudhry Pervaiz in the Punjab CM election had been deducted from total 186 votes he had secured. **STAFF REPORT**

Restore Ehsaas, health cards & panahgahs programmes, Imran directs Punjab govt

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday directed the Punjab government to restore Ehsaas programmes in the province. According to details, the former premier has directed the newly elected Punjab Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi-led provincial government to restore Ehsaas programmes, including health cards and Panahgahs (shelter homes).

The PTI chairman also directed former special assistant on poverty alleviation Dr Sania Nishtar to help the Punjab government in restoring the welfare programmes.

"Sania Nishtar will soon reach Punjab and monitor the restoration of programmes in the province," Imran Khan said. The former prime minister will also announce restoration of welfare projects in today's address to the nation.

Meanwhile, the former prime minister decided to accelerate "aggressive" strategy against the "imported" government. The decision was taken during a meeting of PTI's political committee under the chairmanship of Imran Khan. The meeting decided to accelerate the "aggressive" strategy against the federal government.

During the meeting, the former premier announced to address the nation and inform the people of Pakistan about his future strategy.

2,000 FC personnel to be imparted anti-riot training: Sana

NEWS DESK

Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah, while terming the Frontier Constabulary (FC) a national asset, on Wednesday said anti-riot training would be imparted to 2,000 FC personnel during the current financial year and 5,000 next year.

Addressing the passing-out of First Batch of FC Anti-Riot Training Course here, he said all-out facilities would be provided to the FC for making it the best professional force. After anti-riot training, he said, the FC would now provide additional support to the Islamabad Police and Rangers for the maintenance of law and order in the Federal Capital.

The minister said the government would also provide funds for the training of 5,000 FC personnel next year. After amendment in the law, the FC could also perform the duties of maintenance of law and order, he said. Keeping in view additional anti-riot role of the FC along with protecting the country's borders, he said women should also be recruited in the force as they constituted over 50 percent of the country's total population. He asked the FC Commandant to prepare a proposal about the recruitment of women in the force. He would not only get the proposal approved but also secure funds, he added.

Oil rises on US inventory drop, Russian gas cuts

LONDON: Oil rose by \$1 a barrel on Wednesday as a report of lower inventories in the United States and cuts in Russian gas flows to Europe offset concern about weaker demand and a looming US interest rate hike. Industry group the American Petroleum Institute said on Tuesday crude stocks fell by 4 million barrels, four times the forecast decline. The Energy Information Administration's official figures are out at 1430 GMT. "Coupled with the Fed decision on interest rates, today is sure to be a heavy US-centric session," said Stephen Brennock of oil broker PVM. Brent crude rose 91 cents, or 0.9%, to \$105.31 a barrel at 0811 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude gained \$1.16, or 1.2%, to \$96.14. "It looks the more vulnerable from a technical perspective, and a large gain by official US crude inventories tonight could spark more selling. **REUTERS**

Power prices raised amid energy crisis despite rampant inflation

KARACHI
REUTERS

Pakistan has raised electricity prices to match rising generation costs amid a global energy crisis and a heatwave, even as the country grapples with its highest inflation in over a decade, the power minister said.

Inflation last month reached 21.3 percent, driven mainly by rising food costs, and the country also faces fast-depleting foreign reserves, a depreciating currency and a widening current account deficit.

"Cabinet has approved an increase in electricity tariffs but lifeline (poor) consumers will not be affected," Power Minister Khurram Dastagir Khan told reporters in Islamabad, adding the increase would not apply to them.

Pakistan's monthly fuel oil imports are set to

hit a four-year high in June, Refinitiv data shows, as the country struggles to buy liquefied natural gas for power generation amid a heatwave that is driving demand.

Higher energy imports have hit the economy as the country struggles to boost foreign exchange. The rupee has lost 20 percent of its value in 2022. Reserves have fallen to as low as \$9.3 billion, hardly enough to pay for 45 days of imports.

Pakistan this month reached a staff-level agreement with the IMF for \$1.17 billion in critical funding under a resumed bailout package.

The country is also pushing to tap other avenues for power. The minister said that nuclear power production had risen after the refuelling of one plant.

From the beginning of July, the K2 plant has been operating at full capacity.

Nawaz asks Shehbaz to consult PDM to frame new strategy

LONDON, ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif talked to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the party's vice-president Maryam Nawaz on telephone and held discussions with both of them about the Supreme Court's decision on Wednesday.

Nawaz Sharif directed the prime minister to consult with the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) to decide the future course of action.

Earlier, former prime minister

Nawaz Sharif had taken to Twitter to express his resentment over the Supreme Court's decision to annul the ruling of the Punjab Assembly deputy speaker declaring Hamza Shehbaz as CM.

The coalition government, led by the PML-N, had strongly reacted to the Supreme Court verdict. Maryam Nawaz, daughter of Nawaz Sharif, had called the verdict a judicial coup.

The top court had ruled that PTI's candidate Pervaiz Elahi would be the new CM of the province.

The coalition partners had

yesterday announced boycotting proceedings after the Supreme Court rejected their request for constituting a full court on the matter.

On the other hand, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who is the president of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance of parties currently forming the coalition government at the Center, has convened the alliance leaders' summit at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) secretariat in Islamabad at 3:00 PM tomorrow (Thursday).

Sana threatens governor's rule in Punjab if his entry banned

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

The government was preparing a summary for possible proclamation of central rule, known as governor's rule, in Punjab, said Rana Sanaullah Khan as warned to throw out the government of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi if he was prevented from entering the province as intended by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership.

Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, the interior minister said the volatile political situation in the country has deteriorated after the decision of the

Supreme Court to "declare" Elahi as the new chief minister.

Khan said any ban on his or other ministers' entry into Punjab would lead to central rule in the province. "Ban on my entry in Punjab will be reason enough to impose governor's rule," he declared.

The minister's statement came in response to reporters' query about the new provincial government's apparent plans to impose restrictions on a number of ministers including himself in an effort to pressurise the Centre to call snap elections.

Khan lamented the court decision and used the term "bench fixing" coined by his

party leader Maryam Nawaz at a news conference on Monday.

The minister further bemoaned the language used by Justice Qazi Faez Isa in a letter to the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP). "Such things are really deplorable and if this is true then this is a moment of reflection for the nation as to where we are heading," he said.

Khan said the court's decision to not count the lawmakers' vote was an effort to give it retrospective effect. "Never such a thing has happened as a result 25 votes were minus," he stressed.

The minister defended his argument by

quoting the decision of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) that the MPs were de-seated after PTI secretary general Asad Umar's letter that said they violated the party's direction.

He said the same course was taken in the run-off election for Punjab chief minister by the issuance of a letter from the party head, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. "This has led to further complication and destabilise the political and economical situation. The dollar will continue to jump amidst this."

"Economy and political instability will remain so when the court takes decisions

against political stability," the minister said, adding that in his view, an independent and transparent judiciary was crucial for a country's development.

"There was never a time when the court took unbiased decisions," he said in response to a question and called for the nation's role in averting such an apparent trend.

Responding to a question, the minister said: "The group clergy who are in Kabul [for talks with the proscribed TTP] have not gone on a government level. But, this is in the government's knowledge and if someone talks and if it leads to peace so such efforts should not be stopped or opposed."