

QUETTA VOICE

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No date for general elections decided as yet: Ahsan Iqbal



Rana Sana vows to rupture PTI's 'vile' long march

Iranian aircraft lands in Pakistan to join operation as Sherani forest fire rages

Syed Ali Shah
Manan Mandokhail

QUETTA: An Iranian firefighting aircraft has landed in Pakistan to join efforts to put out the Sherani forest fire in the Koh e Suleman Range on Monday. The federal government had requested the Iranian government to provide firefighting aircraft as the forest inferno raged on.

"This is one of the largest firefighting aircraft", the Iranian Consulate in Quetta said in a statement. The aircraft can carry almost 40 tons of water to extinguish fire, the statement mentioned.

A forest fire has been raging since May 18 in Balochistan's Sherani district. Roaring flames of fire have burnt down ancient pine trees and olive trees located in the



dense ancient forest.

This Iranian aircraft was used to extinguish fires in Georgia, Turkey, and Armenia.

This Iranian aircraft was used earlier in the forest of Georgia, Turkey and Armenia. International organizations have declared one of the firefighting aircraft after its performance in extinguishing a forest fire in Turkey.

Initially, the forest caught fire in the Mughal Kot area on May 9.

However, the fire entered Balochistan territory on May 13. Fire erupted in various spots of the Koh e Suleman Range, Attique ur Rehman Kakar, a forest officer of the Balochistan government based in the area said.

Pak Army helicopters engaged in the operation. Pak Army's helicopters are engaged in extinguishing flames of fire in the Sherani forest. The civil administration, forest, and wildlife department, and provincial disaster

management authority are making coordinated efforts to put out the fire in the Sherani forest. The fire continues to rage despite the efforts of the administration. "The fire has engulfed more than 30 kilometers area of the Sherani forest", Bashir Khan Buzai, the Commissioner Zhob Division said. Mr. Buzai said the fire continues to spread fast and burns ancient pine and olive trees in the ancient Sherani forest.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal addressing at the ceremony of groundbreaking ceremony of HEC Seerat Centre for Gender Studies & Rights for Women.

No confidence motion: CM Bizenjo calls on Maulana Wasey

Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo called on Maulana Abdul Wasey, the provincial amir of Jamiat ul Ulama e Islam (JUI) ahead of the no-confidence motion. Provincial ministers, Muhammad Khan Lehri and Noor Muhammad Dumar also accompanied the CM. However, the opposition leader in Balochistan Assembly, Malik Sikandar Advocate, and Younas Aziz Zehri were also present on the occa-



sion. "The CM discussed the ongoing operation to put out Sherani forest fire with Maulana Wasey", an official handout issued on Monday said. Although, an insider of the meeting told Quetta Voice that

the CM discussed the no-confidence motion with the JUI provincial chief.

This meeting has come after the President Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), Jam Kamal Khan, and others submitted a no-confi-

dence motion against Mir Qudus Bizenjo. "We are yet to make a decision regarding the no-confidence motion", the insider of the meeting said while quoting Maulana Wasey. The religious party is the second-largest parliamentary group with 11 lawmakers in the house of 65 in the Balochistan Assembly.

The official handout mentioned that the CM and Maulana agreed to make coordinated efforts to extinguish the flames of fire in the Sherani forest.

Pir Koh: Over 4,000 patients provided treatment at FC medical camp

From Our Correspondent

DERA BUGTI: Over 4,000 patients including women and children were provided medical treatment at the Frontier Corps (FC) medical camp. The Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP), UNICEF, and FC have also been providing medicines to patients in the Pir Koh area of Dera Bugti district. 972 cases of typhoid were treated and the rest were treated for other diseases. More than 162 lab tests were performed in the last 24 hours. 124 water bowlers are working to provide clean drinking water



to the local population and during the last 24 hours, 598000 liters of water were distributed in 54 affected villages. A team of Army Engineers has started a survey for the excavation of sacks of PSDP water supply scheme projects.

No date for general elections decided as yet: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Ahsan Iqbal on Monday said that Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan had been spreading 'mischief' in the country since 2014.

Speaking to media persons in Lahore, he said that the coalition government had no decision on the date of general elections as yet.

"We will announce the elections after taking the nation into confidence," he said.

Ahsan, who is also a senior PML-N leader, alleged that the PTI chairman's team was busy spreading propaganda. INP

PTI MNA's bail before arrest granted

KARACHI: Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) MNA Alamgir Khan was granted bail before arrest by the court on Monday.

According to details, the court granted interim bail to Alamgir Khan in exchange for a bail bond of Rs100,000.

The court restrained the police from arresting Alamgir Khan till May 28 and ordered Alamgir Khan to cooperate the police investigation.

The court has asked the prosecution and the investigating officer to reply by May 28.

A case of incitement against state institutions has been registered against Alamgir Khan at Gulshan-e-Iqbal police station. INP

Rana Sana vows to rupture PTI's 'vile' long march

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has warned that the government will not let the PTI long march become successful saying that the 'slayer' of the economy is now out to stop the country's march towards economic recovery.

Talking to the media on Monday, the interior minister cautioned whoever crossed the boundaries of decency, the law would teach him how to remain within the limits of civilization. He said that there were evilness and wickedness about the personality and in the language of Imran Khan, believing that he could not remain peaceful. "We will not let them bring the groups of goons and indulge in riots. If Imran Niazi tries to become the gravedigger of democracy, then the law will deal with him," Rana Sana warned. Lashing out at the PTI chief and former prime minister, the interior minister dubbed him a liar. He said that in 2014, the PTI was indulged in 126 cases of public disorder. INP

Hazara women block Western Bypass Quetta against scarcity of water

Ibrar Ahmed

QUETTA: Hazara women and children blocked the main Western Bypass area of the city in protest against the scarcity of water on Monday. Hazara women and children criticized the Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA) for its failure to provide drinking water to the Hazara town area.

"We want clean drinking water", Faiza Batool, one of the protesters demanded. She said despite repeated appeals to the WASA and the provincial government, the residents of the Hazara town were still deprived of drinking water.

Long queues were witnessed on both sides of the Western Bypass after the blockade by the protesters. People suffered difficulties in reaching their destinations due to the closure of the road.

"Enough is enough, government should provide water to us", Muhammad Hussain Hazara, another protester lamented. He stated that the area residents were forced to pay heavy payments to the tanker mafias because of the



non-availability of the water.

The protesters were also chanting full-throated slogans against the provincial government and WASA authorities because of the scarcity of water. They were also carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans against WASA and the Balochistan government.

The district Quetta administration and concerned police officials met with protesters and assured a solution to their problem. Subsequently, the protesters reopened the road and ended their protest. They peacefully dispersed after recording their protest.

Anti Polio campaign underway across Balochistan

Health Desk

An anti-polio campaign is underway in Quetta and other Balochistan to provide drops to children under the age of five years. The anti-polio campaign began on Monday in Quetta and all 34 districts of the province.

During the campaign, over 2.6 million children under the age of five years are being provided polio drops. The Balochistan health department, UNICEF, rotary club, and world health organization



have been making coordinated efforts to eradicate

the crippling virus from Balochistan.

So far, Balochistan has not reported any polio cases during last more than a year. Unfortunately, three cases were reported from North Waziristan this year.

The government has established teams throughout the province to make the campaign a success and reach every child for polio drops. Mobile volunteers have also been deployed at all bus stops, railway stations, and airports to ensure the provision of drops to every child under the age of five years.

پولیکو کی بیماری، عمر بھری کی معذوری

پولیکو کے دو قطرے ہر بچہ ہر بار

پولیکو سے بچاؤ کی قومی مہم

23 تا 27 مئی 2022

مہمیں وہاں سے کی انسانی خوراک بھی دی جائے گی

پولیکو سے متعلق معلومات کے لئے 1166 پر رابطہ کریں۔

QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

Balochistan needs inclusive development

Balochistan, the country's resource-rich province is lagging behind all other provinces in terms of key social indicators including education, health, sanitation, clean drinking water etc. Mismanagement, injudicious distribution of development funds coupled with a lack of political commitments are the underlying reasons behind backwardness of the province.

Track record shows, successive governments have always launched politically motivated development schemes to please their influential supporters. Constituency, individual and political schemes always dominated the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) in every year's financial budget. Nexus among the Chief Minister's Secretariat, the Planning Development and Finance Department continue to deprive the constituencies of other lawmakers.

Opposition's constituencies were ignored. Opposition lawmakers constituencies remained ignored during last three-years of former chief minister, Jam Kamal Khan's government. Despite agitation in and outside the assembly, the opposition lawmakers were not able to force government to allocate funds for their constituencies.

This is irony of fate that the mandate of the lawmakers is to frame laws since the assemblies are called legislative assemblies. But legislators are least bothered about the legislation rather they take keen interest in construction of roads, buildings etc. That's why, provincial governments prefer not to hold local bodies elections rather decentralization of development projects.

Development deficit of Balochistan is likely to be Rs. 100b. Balochistan government announced to have allocated Rs. 172 bs for the PSDP during the financial year 2021-22. However, currently the government has more than Rs. 40bs as per the statement of ruling party's Spokesman Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetrani. The province has already spent Rs. 40bs and it has more than 40bs for the remaining year. It means the deficit is close to Rs. 100bs.

Chief Minister Qudus Bizenjo needs to put his house in order and introduce a strict financial policy to ensure completion of development projects. The government should ensure inclusive development and end the practice of exclusive development so that this backward province could come at par with other parts of the country. Action should match words now.

No more misogyny, Mr Khan

By Taimur K Bandy

The writer is an educationist and International baccalaureate (IB) consultant.

I grew up in the late 1980s and early 1990s, almost worshipping Imran Khan as a cricket captain. I can't forget the countless delights he had given us as a nation by winning umpteen matches for Pakistan and crowning his cricket journey with a world cup win in 1992.

My present-day passion for cricket was fuelled by Imran Khan alone. Later when he embarked upon creating his cancer hospital, I felt obliged to help my fellow former Aitchisonian in this honourable pursuit. His entry into politics too attracted my attention and I joined his campaign as a volunteer along with my mother, who was part of the first women's wing of the PTI. We were the voices of the Tonga party that the PTI once was way back in the late 1990s. While my mother continues to support him and votes for IK and his party to date, I realized he was not the man that I thought he was and stopped supporting him way back in 1999.

I don't even know where to start. I am writing all of this as a very agitated man who just got off the television set watching IK spew misogynist filth yet again. I actually had to ask my wife to proofread this as I

didn't want to cross any red lines of decency and maturity.

The main reason my hero-worshipping of IK ended was when I heard his views on women way back in time. While I refuse to comment on his past life, as I don't want to judge his person, I am more inclined to comment on his political views instead of anything else. Sadly, the more I heard him speak and the more I read what he believed in, the more I got disgusted and upset with him. His regressive views on women, his double standards in life, his plethora of contradictions, and his constant fusion of religion into politics and – worse of all – his self-righteous messiah syndrome made me campaign against him and his party thereon.

One can always say he isn't the only politician who thinks this way or his party isn't the only party that does have misogynists amongst their ranks, but my answer to that comment is that how many party heads claim to be what IK claims to be? How many of them criticize all others calling them names, abusing them, slandering them without proof and what not? How many act as self-righteous while abusing all others?

This country has had a very ugly record of treating its women. We have a list of abuses, killings,

image trashing and what not of women both in and out of politics. From Fatima Jinnah, to Benazir Bhutto, from Nusrat Bhutto to Maryam Nawaz and from Jemima Khan to Bushra Bibi, we have crossed several red lines of decency, etiquettes and norms. Many IK supporters are echoing the party line of what Sharif brothers did to malign the Bhutto ladies in the past and how Jemima Khan was targeted and maligned ruthlessly. So my question is: does that mess justify today's vilification of Maryam Nawaz? Are those actions of the past a licence to go after the women in the Sharif family today? Should this then be used as a logic tomorrow by Junaid Saffar to go after Imran Khan's female relations?

In the same vein, why should or how can a personal attack on Nawaz Sharif's daughter be justified today? We may hate, disagree and criticize the politics, actions or stance of all the women mentioned, but we cannot pass sexist, misogynist and vile comments about them and others at any cost. None of that is justified or acceptable ever.

We live in a country already hostile, intolerant, rigid and unacceptable of women/ girls to live their lives the way they want. We are in a Pakistan that hates when its women march once a

year on the streets of this country more than it hates the men who rape, threaten and kill them on a daily basis. We belong to a nation that laughs in public and privately when women are targeted for their clothes, their lifestyles, their choices and more so for being themselves. We are part of a society that teaches a woman from childhood to obey and tolerate all that society (read: men) says or does and to suppress, control and forget her dreams in life. We live in houses where girls are caged, bottled up and forced to live the lives chalked out by men of the house and society without asking them for their opinions, views and choices about their own lives. This is why it is even worse when a man who is an 'inspiration' to millions, has a cult following of blind supporters and also happens to be a former prime minister, vying for another term in office, targets a much younger rival female politician at a massive public rally passing misogynist comments openly and shockingly at the delight and applause of his fan base present at the rally and listening to him on television. His remarks were welcomed and disgustingly justified by his followers and party men (and women), and became part of acceptable and institutionalized content about women in gen-

eral. The younger followers finding a blind inspiration in this blatant misogyny and more becomes an even greater worry.

You can debate, deliberate, disagree, shred and blast Maryam Nawaz's views on politics or that of her party, but sorry Mr Khan you have no right to hit below the belt with your typically sexist remarks and then have a smirk on your face which eggs on your supporters and party leaders/ workers to ape you on this and take it to a much higher and filthier level.

This filth has to stop and it has to stop now before even you can't control it. How you can stoop to such low levels of indecency, sexism and misogyny is beyond understanding. While many may agree with your calls to cleanse the country of the corruption that has eaten away the soul of this country, they may still not vote for you or stand behind you because of your mindset, views and beliefs about women. I am a proud father of a gifted young girl, I am a husband to a talented wife and I am a son to a dedicated mother and even if I had neither of these women in my life, I would still oppose you for the ugly message you send out there to the mesmerized youth of this country and the immediate impact it has on our bigoted.

A change for the worse

By Hussain H Zaidi

Prior to the exit of Imran Khan, in 1989 a no-trust motion was voted upon against the then prime minister Benazir Bhutto. The contrasting manners in which the ruling party of the day reacted to the no-trust motion on each occasion is a grim pointer to the direction in which our politics has moved since 1989 – by all accounts, a turn for the worse.

In a parliamentary democracy, the executive is the creation of parliament. Being the chief executive, the prime minister must enjoy the confidence of the majority of the popularly-elected legislature – in our case the National Assembly. That is the reason one of the first agenda items after the election of the presiding officers in a newly elected parliament is to ascertain who enjoys the confidence of the majority of the members.

In some countries, as in India, the prime minister is appointed by the president. After his/her appointment, the prime minister is bound to seek a vote of confidence from the popular chamber within the stipulated period. In case he fails to do so, he has to call it quits. In India, in 1996, Atal Bihari Vajpayee stepped down as premier only a fortnight after being sworn in having failed to win the vote of confidence from the Lok Sabha.

Taking due cognizance of this fundamental convention of parliamentary

form of government, Article 91 (3) of the constitution of Pakistan states: "After the election of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, the National Assembly shall, to the exclusion of any other business, proceed to elect without debate one of its Muslim members to be the Prime Minister." Clause (4) of the same article adds: "The Prime Minister shall be elected by the votes of the majority of the total membership of the National Assembly."

Logically, if the National Assembly by a majority can elect a member as prime minister, it can also vote them out. Hence, Article 95 of the constitution stipulates that if a motion of no-confidence is passed by a majority of the total membership of the National Assembly, the prime minister shall cease to hold office. Thus the popularly elected assembly's power to vote out the prime minister is an essential, non-negotiable feature of parliamentary democracy.

Coming back to Pakistan, in a power struggle, prime ministers have generally been whumped by powerful presidents. However, prior to April 10, 2022 no prime minister had ever been voted out on the floor of the house. The only prime minister who had come close to being voted out was Benazir Bhutto.

The election of the charismatic Benazir Bhutto in 1988 marked the eclipse of a long,

dark era of despotism, against which she had spearheaded a popular movement. Though it had emerged as the single largest party in the national elections, her party, the PPP, fell short of a clear majority and could form the government only with the help of smaller/regional parties and independents, and having reached a power-sharing deal with the then president and other powerful stakeholders. However, all along the weak coalition hung by a thread.

Things came to a head in 1989 when the opposition tabled a non-confidence motion against Benazir Bhutto. In view of the thin majority of the ruling coalition in the National Assembly, the outcome of the motion was anybody's guess. That said, Benazir Bhutto dealt with the opposition's move with all grace and dignity befitting a democratically elected leader. At no point did she term the motion an international conspiracy, although being a leader of international stature, she could have contrived a conspiracy theory without much ado. Her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, it may be mentioned, is widely believed to have been a victim of such a conspiracy.

Nor did she, or any other leader from her party, use abusive language against her opponents, much less accuse them of being morally bankrupt or traitors. She did strongly criticize the

opposition for what she called their undemocratic tactics and allegedly trying to purchase loyalties of her parliamentarians. In return, she took the flak for having allegedly resorted to similar tactics. At that time, the constitution didn't embody provisions against floor-crossing by the legislators and so they were absolutely free to move from one party to another.

It is widely believed that the strings of the opposition, which was led by the then Punjab chief minister and future prime minister Nawaz Sharif, were pulled by the then president Ghulam Ishaq Khan (GIK). But Benazir Bhutto didn't point an accusing finger at state institutions. Nor did she threaten the members of her party who were suspected of defecting, or their families, of dire consequences. To top it all, despite being a hugely popular leader, she didn't seek to defeat the no-confidence motion through a show of strength on the streets. Being a leader who was well-steeped in democratic conventions, she knew well that, far from being an aberration, a non-trust motion was an integral part of the parliamentary form of government.

Equally graceful was the role of the then speaker of the National Assembly and veteran politician, Malik Meraj Khalid, who had already won accolades for conducting the business of

the house in a completely impartial way, as he was supposed to do as per the spirit of his high office. At no point during the whole episode did he demonstrate that he was taking sides. Instead, he went by the book and allowed the no-trust motion to take its logical course. The highest court of the land didn't have to intervene to ensure that the motion was put to vote.

The no-trust motion was defeated by only 12 votes and Prime Minister Bhutto survived. But the cards had already been stacked against her. In a few months, she was sacked by president GIK by invoking the now-defunct Article 58 (2-b) of the constitution. In a game of fluctuating fortunes, three years later she was back in the saddle having sunk her differences with the same GIK. Politicians can always have more than one bite on the cherry; so political battles may not be taken as a matter of life and death.

The logical question which the events preceding the exit of Imran Khan has given rise to is this: why has politics become such a squalid affair in Pakistan? Certainly, the advent of the 24/7 TV channels and the presence of a ubiquitous social media provide sufficient ammunition to politicians and their supporters to heap slur on their opponents to their heart's content. But the media, mainstream or social, isn't the prime culprit.

Poor choices

By Rev Dr W.J Barber li, Topc Folarin

Americans across the country have suffered during this pandemic. But new research by the Poor People's Campaign strongly suggests the poor and low-income have suffered the most. Even controlling for vaccination rates, they found that Covid-19 death rates in poorer US counties were nearly double those in wealthier counties. During the deadliest phases of the pandemic, it rose to five times as many. White Americans still make up the largest share of America's poor and those who've died from Covid-19. But Black, Hispanic and Indigenous Americans are significantly overrepresented in America's poorest counties, and COVID-19 casualty rates run significantly higher for many communities of color.

Poor Americans are hit hardest for many reasons. Since they make up a large share of low-wage, frontline workers, they're more exposed to the virus and often lack paid sick leave if they contract it. They're also more likely to lack health insurance and suffer from pre-existing conditions. But it's not just that the poor have suffered. Equally important is that the very richest Americans have seen their wealth skyrocket.

As of this May, America's billionaires' collective wealth had ballooned by \$1.7 trillion since the pandemic began, according to the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and Americans for Tax Fairness. Elon Musk alone saw his wealth increase more than ten-

fold. That's not all. In 2020, more than half of America's largest low-wage employers bent the rules to give CEOs enormous pay raises even as their essential workers suffered cuts. On average, CEOs at these firms made over \$15 million – more than what their median employees would make in eight centuries. And now, those who've benefited the most from this pandemic are trying to pull the rug out from those who've suffered the worst. They're spending big to undo some of the most important public policies our country has seen in generations.

President Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan made testing and vaccines nearly universally accessible. It also delivered stimulus payments, expanded unemployment insurance, made the Child Tax Credit more generous and increased assistance for everything from food to health insurance.

These life-saving provisions got hundreds of millions of Americans vaccinated and helped millions more weather an extremely difficult time. The expanded Child Tax Credit alone reduced child poverty by 30 percent – a stunning, if incomplete, achievement. But billionaires, executives and corporations who've seen their fortunes flourish have poured money into the campaign coffers of politicians who oppose these measures. When Democrat Joe Manchin joined every Senate Republican in opposing the renewal and expansion of these programs – and was showered with

campaign cash in return – they withered on the vine.

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President Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan made testing and vaccines nearly universally accessible. It also delivered stimulus

Damned from here to eternity

By Dr Naazir Mahmood

If you have read James Jones' book or seen the movie 'From Here to Eternity', do it again and you are likely to find some similarities with today's Pakistan. At times, I feel we are damned from here to eternity. James Jones took the title for his novel from an 1892 poem by Rudyard Kipling entitled 'Gentlemen Rankers'.

Kipling framed this as a song soldiers sang while serving in the British imperial army. They were soldiers from all corners, serving the British army, putting their own lives at stake, realizing that they were damned from here to eternity. But complain they must not; they sing the song, and the verse in question reads: "Gentlemen Rankers out on the spree, Damned from here to Eternity, God ha' mercy on such as we".

You may ask if they know they're 'damned' from here to eternity why they are singing. Being damned, after all, isn't such a nice thing. Perhaps they are trying to refer to immortality in an interesting way, but is it really interesting or rather depressing? Presumably, we may shift the context across continents and countries. Is there a positive

way of looking at your life and what it entails, and still remain positive? In the long run, if people tend to forget the services rendered, is it worth it?

Perhaps it depends on the cause you are fighting for and the leaders who put you in that situation. Being damned from here to eternity seems to be a timeless story. It has a darker origin and the darkness may intensify or lighten up a bit from time to time.

James Jones served in the US army during the Second World War and then wrote the novel, just at the age of 30 in 1951. The book revolves around events immediately preceding the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The setting is intense, as it is in Pakistan today. One of the main characters is a new arrival at the unit – Private Robert Prewitt, played by Montgomery Clift in the movie. He is a boxer who refuses to fight after blinding an opponent in the ring. Then there is First Sergeant Warden played by Burt Lancaster.

These two we may consider common members of any society including Pakistan. Prewitt is at the lowest rung of the hierarchy, a simple man who loves to play the bugle and

who avoids fights. He represents the people in any country: simple, peace loving, with moderate ambitions. Just like any regular person, he wants to have some connections with fellow human beings, craves love and respect, and is attracted to women. He is a common person who does not want to be damned from here to eternity – but he is bound to be.

Prewitt reports to his sergeant who is slightly higher in the scheme of things. The sergeant warden is concerned about Prewitt's disciplinary problems. The warden represents the lower middle class in society – any society, including Pakistan. His class character forces him to serve his boss, Captain Holmes. The captain is more concerned about his own promotion than the wellbeing of his team. He wants Prewitt for the boxing team, which is a gang of tough boxers.

Prewitt is not inclined to be a boxer again; he knows the dangers of punching somebody in the head. He longs for companionship like most people. Punching others is not his priority, but the system does not like his peaceable manners. He falls for a girl Alma – played by Donna Reed in the movie, for which

she won an Oscar. Alma is again a commoner; a representative of women from among the people. She finds it hard to earn a living so turns to the oldest profession in the novel, but in the movie she is an entertainer at a local club. She has a desire to live a respectable life and not be damned from here to eternity – but she is bound to be.

Then there's the captain's wife Karen, neglected by her husband. Since the captain represents a middle-class man, he is unscrupulous in his own ways. He exploits his team members for his own benefits and wants to lead a promiscuous life. His wife – Deborah Carr in the movie – is a middle-class woman dissatisfied with her circumstances, and rightfully so. If the captain could have multiple affairs, why couldn't she? The captain had infected her with a sexually transmitted disease in the novel, but in the movie it is a miscarriage due to her husband's negligence that renders her infertile.

Karen's barrenness is a symbol of an intellectually infertile life that most middle-class women – or most women for that matter in any society including Pakistan – end up living. The captain's

wife does not want to live a life like that. She takes solace with the sergeant who is lower in rank but slightly more caring and has a lower-middle class human touch that most middle-class people seem to lack. She indulges in adultery but does not want to be damned from here to eternity – well, she is bound to be.

This novel is an unflattering look at life in which economic and social injustices prevail. There is nothing sacrosanct in it. It reflects boredom and isolation that haunt nearly every individual who feels. Those who don't feel, they target their subordinates and their fellow human beings. The story challenges traditionally held notions and exposes cracks in a seemingly solid facade. This is the history of personal lives that should not be damned but they are. Flawed characters are loveable; pristine images are not. The novel is voluminous but the film rendition does full justice to it, of course with some sanitization of the 1950s. The original story line was complex but the film made it digestible. Film and literature – if bold and explicit – make you wiser. In societies such as in Pakistan now,

Hungry for profits

By Jim Hightower

The problem with our so-called 'free market' is that it's not free for you and me. It's largely controlled by monopolies, which are free to inflate prices just because they can, without worrying that consumers will be able to flee to cheaper sellers. In turn, this market punch lets the noncompetitive gougers gleefully extract unwarranted monopoly profits. It's a phenomenon that corporatists euphemistically label 'pricing power'. This economy-wide milking of consumers by tightly consolidated industries is the unbridled force propelling today's surging price hikes.

Brand-name corporations claim they are being forced to mark up price tags just to cover rising costs for raw materials, labor, transportation, etc. But in a competitive marketplace, they'd have to eat much of those increases by taking a bit less in profits. The giants have been stockpiling record profits for years, so they could easily weather a downturn. Instead, they're raising prices not simply to maintain exorbitant profits, but to squeeze even greater profits from hard-hit consumers. It's a game

of corporate greed that socks America's economy. Monopolies cynically exploit the public's worry about inflation to create more inflation.

Consider diapers, a necessity for many families. As corporate watchdog Judd Legum reported, the huge consumer product seller Procter & Gamble Co announced a year ago that Covid-19-driven production costs were forcing it to raise the price for its Pampers brand. At the time, it had just posted a quarterly profit of \$3.8 billion, so P&G could easily have absorbed a temporary rise in its costs. But instead of holding the price to ease their customers' economic pain, the conglomerate used a global health crisis to justify upping diaper prices. Six months later, P&G's quarterly profit topped \$5 billion. And – in that same quarter – P&G spent \$3 billion to buy back shares of its own stock – a Wall Street manipulation that artificially inflates the wealth of top execs and other big shareholders. In sum, P&G used the excuse of inflation to inflate the price of diapers, then used the extra money it extracted from families to inflate the value of its stock in a ploy to further enrich

its biggest shareholders. And why wouldn't savvy consumers switch from Pampers to Huggies, the brand sold by Kimberly-Clark, P&G's main 'competitor'? Because c o m p o n o l i s t Kimberly-Clark goosed up its prices at the same time. And – get this – the two companies control 80 percent of the global disposable diaper market. Welcome to the monopoly merry-go-round.

Almost all CEOs of big corporations are playing this tricky inflation blame game. Publicly, they moan that the pandemic is slamming their poor corporation with factory shutdowns, supply chain delays, labor shortages, wage hikes and other increased costs. But wait – inside their boardrooms, executives are high-fiving each other and pocketing bonuses. What's going on?

It turns out that inflation is a boon for monopolies, for it gives them cover to flash their pricing power. The trick is that these giants are in noncompetitive markets operating as monopolies, so they can set higher prices, mug you and me, and scamper away with a record-busting share of America's total economic output.

Chinese & Pakistani scholars proposed CPEC Digital Transformation Center

ISLAMABAD: Chinese and Pakistani scholars have proposed setting up a CPEC Digital Transformation Center (DTC). Gwadar Pro reported on Monday quoting a study published in the journal Frontiers in Psychology.

Researchers from Xi'an Jiao Tong University, Xi'an, China, University of Peshawar, Islamabad College University, Peshawar, and Chinese University of Political Science and Law, Beijing, China, concluded in the study that Pakistan needs to transform CPEC digitalization by setting up CPEC Digitalization and Transformation Center (DTC) at the CPECA office to attract more investors and businesses.

Pakistan can take advantage of CPEC funding, and Chinese and foreign investments by transparently managing through ICT applications in government, private, and public-private partnerships initiatives, the study stated.

After finalizing the infrastructure component, the second phase of CPEC is attracting investors and technological transformation, and the installation of industrial, technical, and agricultural technologies for the envisioned development of Pakistan, the study explored.

Scholars from Chinese and Pakistani varieties believe that the "Digitalization and Transformation Center (DTC) could be benefited from strategic decisions, efficient implementation, system platforms, governing culture, and behavior".

Therefore, DTC is a concept that will synchronize the needs of Pakistan with the current situation. INP



QUETTA: Chairman NDM Mohsin Dawar in a group photo with lawyer's after a ceremony at Balochistan High Court Bar.

Anti-Tobacco Activists urge government to raise taxes on tobacco products

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan top social and digital media influencers pledged to create awareness against the use of tobacco in Pakistan. The commitment was made by them in a conference organized by Human Rights organization, Chromatic Trust at Murree in a local hotel on Monday.

The conference started with a comprehensive presentation which included latest research and data of Tobacco consumers, effects on health sector and taxes. Project Manager Chromatic Trust, Mr. Tayyab Raza explained the attendees during his presentation that how smoking tobacco causes death, disease and disability.

The conference urged social media influencers to play their role towards increasing taxes on tobacco products as availability of cheap cigarettes is the reason behind widespread smoking in Pakistan.

CEO Chromatic Trust Mr. Shariq Khan while speaking on the occasion said that according to World Health Organization's survey 1200 children start smoking every day in Pakistan which is alarming and we need to take immediate measures to protect our youth from this menace.

"We want government to further strengthen its law towards tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products", said Mr. Shariq.

Mr. Malik Imran Ahmed, Country Head CTFK said that one in ten deaths around the world is caused by tobacco use and tobacco is the single greatest preventable cause of death in the world. He said that tobacco use continues to grow in developing countries including in Pakistan due to steady population growth, low prices, lack of awareness about its dangers and aggressive tobacco industry marketing efforts.

Local coal a viable option for power generation in Pakistan: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Coal is one of the best viable and cheap options to generate electricity for Pakistan where power tariff generally remains on the higher side due to high cost of production from imported gas and furnace oil.

According to Shamsuddin Shaikh, former CEO Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company, the major problem with the local coal is that Pakistan's coal power plants are designed according to the imported coal.

As a consequence, Pakistan is not able to convert the entire plants to local coal, but it can do so partially. In order to alter the design, a large investment is required," he said.

Dissident PML-N MPA Jalil Sharaquri decides to resign

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) member Punjab Assembly Jalil Ahmed Sharaquri on Monday decided to resign as the member of Punjab Assembly.

Sharaquri will announce his resignation and formally join PTI. As per sources privy to the matter, Sharaquri will be announcing his resignation in a press conference with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership and later will give his resignation to Speaker Punjab Assembly Pervaiz Elahi.

Sharaquri was elected from Sheikhpura district PP139 from PML-N's ticket.

It should be noted that PML-N MPA Faisal Niazi from Khanewal also gave his resignation as the member of the assembly. Faisal Niazi will also officially join PTI in few days. INP

PTI Long March: Asad says people to make history on May 25

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Umar on Monday said that people of Pakistan will make history on May 25 as PTI chairman announced Long March to Islamabad on Sunday.

Talking to media persons, Asad Umar said that all the arrangements for the march have been made. "After this day, decisions for Pakistan will not be made behind the closed doors," he said.

He went on to say that decisions regarding Pakistan will not be made by the illegal money or by conspiracies and after Haqueeqi Azadi March, masses will be prosperous.

On the other hand, PTI decided to hold protest at Numaish Chorangi in Karachi while live screening of the footages from Islamabad Long March will be shown there.

President of PTI Karachi Bilal Ghaffar will be leading the protests in Karachi.

Bilal Ghaffar said that 5 long Marches were held in Islamabad in Imran Khan's government which were not stopped, adding, "masses will not accept the regime change operation in Pakistan".

On the other hand, PTI decided to hold protest at Numaish Chorangi in Karachi while live screening of the footages from Islamabad Long March will be shown there.

President of PTI Karachi Bilal Ghaffar will be leading the protests in Karachi. INP

Pakistan far from being polio-free as two more cases emerge in Vehari

ISLAMABAD: Two more cases of polio disease have emerged in a remote village of Vehari in Punjab.

Minister Hamza Shehbaz to help them and order for the free medical treatment of their kids.

The first case of poliovirus was emerged in a 15-month-old boy in North Waziristan on April 22 after a lull of about 15 months across the country.

In his tweet uploaded on April 23, the premier expressed his deep concern over the emergence of polio case. The first case of poliovirus was emerged in a 15-month-old boy in North Waziristan on April 22 after a lull of about 15 months across the country.

On April 29, a two-year-old girl was paralyzed by the wild poliovirus in the second case confirmed in Pakistan this year. The child had an onset of paralysis on April 14.

The new type-1 Wild Poliovirus (WPV1) was confirmed from North Waziristan on 29 April 2022 by the Pakistan National Polio Laboratory at the National Institute of Health in Islamabad.



PARACHAINAR: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sajid Hussain Turi addressing the inaugural ceremony of OPF Public School.

China's hybrid oilseed reap to help ease edible oil shortage in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: China's hybrid oilseed reap to help ease edible oil shortage in Pakistan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Monday.

According to Zhu Xiaobo, executive member of the Asia and Pacific Seed Association and General Manager of Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Seed Company, hybrid canola variety has been planted in Pakistan on about 10,000 hectares of land, covering around 6000 households.

"Pakistan needs to ensure food security for a fast-multiplying population. For this, we ought to be independent in local seed production. This is where we look forward to China's cooperation for meaningful technical support both in terms of training and development of local human resources and farm mechanization", he said.

He said the developed world has done injustice and ignored the third world particularly Pakistan that as bearing the burden of their environment damaging development. Zulfikar stated plantation became essential however now no longer the best strategy to address the whopping affects of worldwide warming, adding, "Adaptation is likewise essential to be spearheaded on the character and network stages and create focus a number of the hundreds to address worldwide warming".

PBF President also said the country also needed to focus on energy transition to clean energy mix. "The Ministry of Climate Change may recommend adaptation measures at the national level and start mass awareness campaign on it".

Currently, rapeseed is being cultivated on 0.23 million hectares of land across Pakistan, covering 12% of the entire oilseeds cultivated area. According to estimation, this area is likely to be increased by 10%-15% this year.

"During FY2021 (July-March), among the 2.917 million tonnes of edible imported, local production is provisionally estimated at 0.374 million tonnes, grabbing a mere 13% share", told Mr. Ghazanfar Ali, Head of Marketing, Evyol Group, an agriculture services provider group and business partner of Qingfa Hesheng.

Pakistan needs Chinese assistance for modernisation of carpet sector: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The carpet sector in Pakistan needs to adopt technological methods to reduce the cost of production and develop the industry on modern lines.

The carpet industry in Pakistan has a long history with a good reputation in the world. The history of the carpet industry in the region can be traced back to the 11th century.

The second reason was the huge influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan after the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan. The Afghan refugees brought the fabrics, varieties, weaving skills and natural dyes with them that gave a boost to the carpet sector in Pakistan.

The Pakistani carpet manufacturers use Persian techniques to make carpets and rugs. The potential of the sector can be judged by the fact that despite using traditional methods, it has provided employment opportunities to 1.5 million people in the country. However, during the last decade, INP

the carpet sector in Pakistan needs to adopt technological methods to reduce the cost of production and develop the industry on modern lines.

The people associated with the sector told WealthPK that Pakistani carpets and rugs were famous globally. Pakistan exported carpets and rugs worth \$79.34 million in 2021.

With the evolution of technology, carpet manufacturers in other parts of the world are adopting modern methods to improve productivity and decrease the cost of production. It is time for

IHC forms larger bench on petition against removal of Cheema as Punjab governor

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday formed a larger bench on petition against removal of Omar Sarfraz Cheema from the post of Punjab Governor.

The bench will be headed by IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah. Justice Amir Farooq and Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani are also part of the bench.

Country may lead to water scarcity by 2025 if timely measures not taken

KARACHI: President, Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) Mian Usman Zulfikar on Monday has stated that environmental degradation becomes rising as a country and it was paying a disproportionate price for climate change impacts derived by the developed world.

He said the World Bank has mentioned that climate induced disasters were causing 4-6% of the Pakistan's GDP which was a huge sum that needed to be preserved through timely interventions.

He said the developed world has done injustice and ignored the third world particularly Pakistan that as bearing the burden of their environment damaging development. Zulfikar stated plantation became essential however now no longer the best strategy to address the whopping affects of worldwide warming, adding, "Adaptation is likewise essential to be spearheaded on the character and network stages and create focus a number of the hundreds to address worldwide warming".

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Deputy Conservator of Forests Quetta invites bids from eligible Bidders for Rehabilitation of fence of key protected areas (state/private/Community) and core Zones AT Thore Shore Shaban under the Development Scheme "Ten Billion Trees Tsunami Programme Phase-I Up scaling of Green Pakistan Programme (Wildlife Component) PSDP No. 1198 FY 2021-22. Bid Security 2% and Tender fee Rs.2000/- for the work.

S.No.	Name of Items	Estimated Cost
1.	Rehabilitation of fence of key protected areas (state/private/Community) and core Zones AT Thore Shore Shaban TSE: 21220593183	Rs:- 5,000,000/-

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014 Eligibility of Bidders: (a) The bidder must have completed Three (3) assignments of similar nature of work in last three years showing financial capacity of the firm. (c) Registration with relevant taxation departments: GST, Income Tax, B.R.A. etc and PEC (in category C-1 to C-6) Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Call Deposit@ 2% of the total cost of the works. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the undersigned upon payment (non refundable) bidding document fee (amount mentioned above) through Green Chailan./If Others please specify (The NIT & Bidding Document can also be downloaded from www.bppra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 08-06-2022, during office hours on working days. Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 08-06-2022, till 10:00 AM at the office of the undersigned. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the undersigned at 11:00PM. Address: "Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests Quetta. Phone No. * 081-9202606. TERMS & CONDITIONS: No advance payment shall be made to the contractor. All Government taxes shall be paid by the contractor. The bills of contractor / firms will be entertained after completion of the works / supply. The rates offered should be clear, unambiguous and over-written rates will not be considered. The tender rates received after due date and time will not be accepted. The firm/contractor will also furnish an affidavit for not being blacklisted or under any litigation. The 10% security amount will be deducted and returned after three months of the satisfaction of work. The contractor having passed experience with Forest Department will be given PRIORITY preference. The approval of tender and issuance of work order will be subject to the approval of plan and subsequent release of funds by the competent authority to the undersigned. Tender Method: Single Stage Single Envelope

Deputy Conservator of Forests Quetta
PRQ NO.3985.23-05-2022
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ISLAMABAD: Chairman NADRA Muhammad Tariq Malik called on Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Akram Durrani at Parliament house.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Senior Assistant Director, Local Government Department Quetta invites sealed bids from eligible bidders who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the bidding documents for the works mentioned below. The estimated cost and other information of works as under: percentage tender based on Composite Schedule of Rates 2018, Government of Balochistan amended up-to-date from interested contractors / firms for the works listed below under BPPRA Rules. Earnest Money 2% in Shape of Call Deposit, and Tender fee Rs.2000/- for the work.

S#	PSDP No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs Million)	Date of Technical Bid Opening
1	376	CONSTRUCTION OF SEWERAGE LINE AND DRAIN AT PB -30 SARIAB QUETTA TSE: 21220590513	11,000,000	06-06-2022
2	495	PROV/LAYING PCC(TUFF) TILES SEWRG-DRAINS & PROV-INSTALL-OF SOLAR STREET LIGHTS IN RIND STREET,SHOUQAT STREET & RAISANI STREET MIANGUNDHI QUETTA TSE: 21220590483	40,000,000	06-06-2022

The office of the Senior Assistant Director, Local Government & Rural Development Department Quetta invites technical proposal of Contractors/firms along with sealed financial proposals (Single Stage-Two Envelope) for above mentioned works. All interested bidders are required to submit documents as per following briefs in support of their technical/financial proposal. The procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory, Rules 2014 and amended upto date and Pakistan Engineering Council By-Laws. BASIC ELIGIBILITY: The Contractor must have valid registration in 2021-22 with Pakistan Engineering Council in relevant discipline/specialty code mentioned in the bidding documents and fresh registration with tax authorities i.e. (NTN, sales tax Department and B.R.A) where applicable. The bidder must have completed similar nature assignments mentioned in the bidding documents. As per BPPRA rule #25 (3) only one Bid can be submitted against one NTN, only original Contractors with original Documents will be eligible. METHOD OF PROCUREMENT: (Single Stage - Two Envelope) Bidding Procedure will be adopted. Call Deposit and Challan should be attached with technical proposal which will be verified accordingly. BIDDING /TENDER DOCUMENTS: Issuance: The bidders can obtain the bidding document from the address mentioned above on production of green Chailan form for an amount of Rs. mentioned above (Non-refundable) for each work deposited in the head of account C-3725 Civil works through Govt. Treasury/National Bank of Pakistan or can be downloaded from the website of BPPRA (www.bppra.gov.pk), during working hour, from the date of publication of this invitation in newspapers till one day prior to the last date of submission. The contractors/firms who obtain bidding documents by downloading them from BPPRA website will also be required to provide deposited green Chailan form of above mentioned Fee. The bids must be accompanied by bid security "Technical Bid" for each work in the form of call deposit of amount specified above in the office name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. No any Bank Drafts & Bank Cheque shall be acceptable. DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION: Technical and financial proposals from intending contractors/firms sealed in two separate envelopes clearly marked with Work title & type of proposal must be delivered by hand or through registered mail to the address mentioned below on or before 06th June, 2022, at 12:00 PM. OPENING: The envelope containing "Technical Bids" will be opened on the same day specified in the above table before procurement committee in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives who choose to attend with authority letter. Second envelope containing financial bids of technically qualified bidders will be opened later, the date of which will be communicated after evaluation of the technical bids. BIDS VALIDITY: Ninety (90) days. PLACE: The date of issuance, submission, inquiries and opening will be the Office of the Senior Assistant Director Local Government & Rural Development Department Satellite Town Quetta. The Technical Qualification Criteria as mentioned in Bid data sheet and annexures of bidding documents viz. Equipment, Financial capabilities and staff requirements etc. must be fulfilled besides other requirements as mentioned in bidding document by the participating firms. All bidders are required to examine bidding documents in all respect prior to bid submission. The firms providing unsubstantiated and / or incorrect information are liable to disqualification and / or legal action. The undersigned reserves the right to reject all bids as per the BPPRA rules in case the bidder quotes the rate 10% or more below than the Engineers Estimated Cost he shall have to attach Bank Guarantee of the percentage he filled below from a scheduled bank.

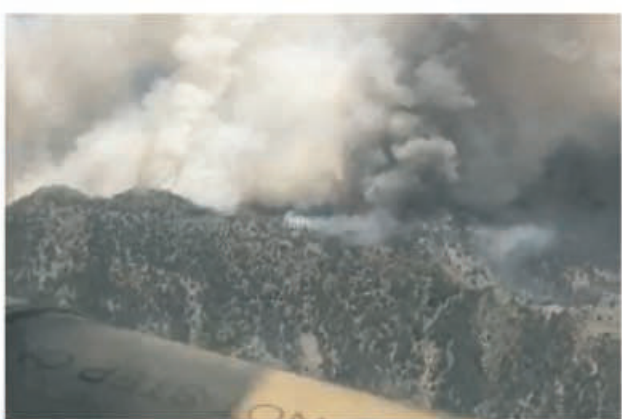
Senior Assistant Director
Local Government & Rural
Development Quetta
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Delayed response to Sherani Koh e Suleman forest fire

Syed Ali Shah analysis

It has been eleven days since the ancient pine trees and olive trees are on fire in Balochistan's Sherani district. Disturbing images of forest fire have pained every sane person on this planet. Three people lost their lives and four sustained injuries while battling the flames of fire in the ancient forest. The scale of the destruction was and is massive. Nevertheless, the Balochistan government and the federal government's immediate response was poor. At the government level, only the poorly

equipped civil administration and a few forest guards were making abortive attempts to put out the fire. Officials fail to assess the damages initially when the fire erupted. The officials failed to assess the damages and the scale/spread of the fire initially. However, gradually, when the fire continued to spread, the provincial and federal governments realized the sensitivity of the matter. Commander 12-Corps Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ali took serious notice of the forest fire and directed the frontier corps personnel deployed in the



area to assist the civil administration. The military also provided helicopters to put out the fire. Chief Minister Mir Qudus Bizenjo and Commander 12-Corps flew to Zhub and had an aerial view of the destruction caused by the fire. Responsibility needs to be fixed. First of all, there has to be an investigation that what caused this fire. Forest guards are already deployed in the area and their core responsibility is to protect the ancient forest. Second, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA)'s delayed response

should be investigated. The PDMA should go beyond the distribution of flour and rice. Rather, the authority should be well-equipped with the latest machinery and trained manpower to make sure timely responses to such natural disasters. Balochistan is prone to all-natural disasters including earthquakes, flash floods, drought, etc. The government should not make PDMA an ATM machine rather it should tackle such situations in an effective way. PDMA should go beyond the distribution of flour and rice. The government needs to revamp the PDMA and pre-

pare an effective mechanism to give response to such disasters timely. First and foremost, the security of forests across Balochistan should be tightened and all-out efforts should be made to protect our natural assets. The provincial and federal governments should also announce a special relief package for the people of Sherani and other affected areas since they were financially dependent on these pine and olive trees for a long time. Environmental experts on national and international levels should be engaged to evolve a strategy for the regrowth of the Sherani forest.



PESHAWAR: Former Prime Minister and PTI chief Imran Khan arrived in Sadar bazaar.

Pakistan reports 49 COVID-19 cases, no death in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported no death in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has risen to 1,529,834. The nationwide tally of fatalities stands at 30,379 on Monday. According to the latest figures by the National Institute of Health (NIH), at least 49 persons were tested positive for COVID-19 across the country in the past 24 hours. Pakistan has conducted 13,078 tests in the past 24 hours out of which 49 persons were tested positive for the disease. The COVID Positivity Ratio was recorded at 0.37 percent. INP

PTI seeks permission for May 25 sit-in on Srinagar Highway

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) on Monday sought permission from Islamabad district commissioner for holding a sit-in on Srinagar Highway in the federal capital on May 25. According to details, the PTI wrote an application to the Islamabad DC requesting him to allow the party to stage a sit-in on Srinagar Highway on the day of party's long march as was announced by party Chairman Imran Khan. It was stated in the application that the administration should provide security and take other measures for the security of participants of the long march. It was also assured in the application that the rally participants would stage a peaceful demonstration. INP

Rains to continue till Tuesday in Lahore: Weather office

LAHORE: The Pakistan Meteorological Department on Monday forecasted that the persist rain spell will continue till Tuesday (today) and gusty winds followed by rain has turned the weather pleasant and beat the scorching heatwave. The current temperature recorded was 29 degree Celsius in Lahore. The met office said that Lahore city may receive rain with strong winds and it also improved the air quality index which recorded 55 AQI points. A westerly wave is present over upper parts of the country and likely to strengthen from today (evening/night). Dust-thunderstorm-rain with gusty winds are expected in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan, Kashmir, Islamabad and upper Punjab. Hot and dry weather is expected in other parts of the country with dust raising/gusty winds in central and southern parts. Sunday's recorded highest maximum temperature's (°C): Mohenjodaro, Jacobabad, Dadu, Sibbi, Shaheed Benazirabad 49, Larkana, Padidan and Sakrand 48. Rainfall (mm): Punjab: Chakwal 04, Narowal 01, Gilgit Baltistan: Babusar 03, Astore 01 and Kashmir: Garhi Dupatta 01. INP

Asif Zardari, Fazlur Rehman vow to deal with PTI long march

ISLAMABAD: Former President and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Asif Ali Zardari on Monday met Jamiat Ulemai-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Moulana Fazlur Rehman where the two vowed to foil Imran Khan's ambitions which he wanted to achieve through his Islamabad long march. During the meeting, Asif Zardari and Fazlur Rehman discussed political developments in the country. "Imran Khan's long march is a failed bid to create anarchy in the country," the JUI-F chief said and added that they would give a fight to the PTI chairman on every platform. Speaking during the meeting, Asif Zardari said that Pakistan is facing an economic crisis and Imran Khan wanted to further prolong it. The two agreed that they would not allow Imran Khan's ambitions to succeed and the coalition government will drag the country out of the ongoing crisis. INP

Notices issued under Anti-Money Laundering Act look flawed: LHC

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court on Monday said that apparently it looks like that the show-cause notices issued in the anti-money laundering cases are not appropriate. The high court was hearing petitions challenging call-up notices issued under the Money-Laundering Act. The law officers from Inland Revenue and the federal government appeared before the court. The court asked the lawyers of the petitioners to submit their replies to the court by next week. While giving his observations, LHC Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza remarked that it appeared that the show-cause notices issued under the Anti-Money Laundering Act looked flawed. The rule is: first determine sources of money then start proceedings, the judge said adding that the FBR first lodged cases and then started determining sources of income. Saying this, the judge extended court's order that restricted the FBR intelligence to take final

decisions on the call-up notices, besides extending another court order directing the FBR not to harass the petitioners. Justice Mirza was hearing 300 petitions including a petition filed by the SM Group of Industries. Syed Mustafa Naqvi, Murtaza Naqvi advocate and other lawyers appeared before the court on behalf of the petitioners. The petitioners contended that if a tax payer did not declare his bank accounts, it did not come in the ambit of anti-money laundering case. It was further argued that the FIR registered on the mere basis of bank accounts was violation of the Hudaibya Paper Mills verdict and Justice Qazi Faiz Isa's judgement. The petitioners said that the Anti-Money Laundering Act could not be used for the back-date cases. The FBR's I&I Inland Revenue does not have the jurisdiction to hear cases lodged in 2020, they said adding that they were issued call-up notices on the previous cases which were illegal. INP

Miftah Ismail leaves for Doha to hold final talks with IMF

KARACHI: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail on Monday claimed the nation is paying the price of wrong policies and agreements signed by the previous government with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Talking to the media persons in Karachi before leaving for Doha for talks with IMF, he said tough conditions of withdrawing subsidies and imposing tax on petroleum products is the result of agreements of the previous government with IMF. Miftah Ismail said as per agreements of the previous government, the diesel price is to be increased by 150 rupees per litre and petrol by 100 rupees per litre but the present government does not want to carry it forward as it will result in a heavy financial burden on the masses. He said Imran Khan has always created impediments in the path of development of the country. He said Imran Khan's 2014 sit-in caused the postponement of the

Chinese president's visit to Pakistan and today IMF team that was due in Islamabad for talks has declined to visit because of Imran Khan's sit-ins. Miftah Ismail expressed the hope that in the next two days he will succeed in having agreement with IMF in the best interest of the country and the people. Talking to the media persons in Karachi before leaving for Doha for talks with IMF, he said tough conditions of withdrawing subsidies and imposing tax on petroleum products is the result of agreements of the previous government with IMF. Miftah Ismail said as per agreements of the previous government, the diesel price is to be increased by 150 rupees per litre and petrol by 100 rupees per litre but the present government does not want to carry it forward as it will result in a heavy financial burden on the masses. He said Imran Khan has always created impediments in the path of development of the country. INP

PIA likely to kick-off Hajj operation from May 31

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Monday decided to begin pre-Hajj operation of transporting intending pilgrims to Saudi Arabia from May 31, 2022. Well-informed sources told that the national flag carrier has completed all preparations to start Hajj operation from May 31. PIA will operate Hajj flights from eight destinations including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Sialkot, Multan, Sukkur, Peshawar and Rahim Yar Khan. The religious affairs ministry has finalised arrangements with 81,000 allowed to travel to the Kingdom this year. According to the ministry, 31,253 aspiring pilgrims will perform Hajj this year as Pakistan was given the

quota of 86,000 pilgrims in 2022. The names of 32,000 successful applicants will be announced after balloting in accordance with the 40 per cent government quota. The quota for pilgrims has been divided into 60% and 40% for private and government tour operators respectively, it was learnt. It has been further recommended to charge Rs945,000 for government-facilitated Hajj while private tour operators will be allowed to charge above Rs1.2 million for the pilgrimage. It is to be noted that Saudi Arabia has allotted the second-highest quota of Hajj pilgrims to Pakistan after the Kingdom allowed one million people to perform the holy pilgrimage this year. INP



QUETTA: PTI Balochistan general secretary DR Muneer addressing a press conference regarding 25 May Azadi March in Islamabad.

Agarwood has potential to be a future cash crop in Pakistan: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Agarwood, or oud, has the potential to be a future cash crop in Pakistan. Prospects of successful seed cultivation are about 90-98%. Tropical areas in Pakistan are suitable to grow agarwood/black gold or "the wood of gods", said Abrar Hussain, in-charge of Horticulture Training Institute of Pattoki (HTIP), a non-governmental organization established by the local people. Abrar stated that the HTIP is working to promote agarwood cultivation in Pakistan. Talking to WealthPK, Abrar said the HTIP is importing agarwood seeds from Indonesia. "Shelf life of agarwood seed is seven to eight days only. That's why seed is imported on demand or according to need for the preparation of seedlings. Each seed is sold at Rs300 normally. Seedlings become ready to plant after the span of a year," he said. An agarwood plant takes at least eight years to mature, but some plants apparently mature at the age of four to five years as well. At the maturity level, the tree is ready for fungus inoculation if it does not occur naturally. "Due to its economic value, people are keen to cultivate agarwood in Pakistan. That's why we are importing it. But if the government takes interest, it can be a most productive cultivation for the national economy," he said. Abrar said the National Agriculture Research Centre (NARC) must start a research program for agarwood cultivation in Pakistan. "It will help the farmers in getting training from the most relevant people concerning its cultivation," he said. Dr. Rifat Tahira, Principal Scientist Plant Genetic Resources Program, Bioresources Conservation Institute of NARC, told WealthPK that agarwood is a valuable non-timber forest product. Oud formation turns tropical evergreen agarwood trees into a valuable

commodity. Oud is the defensive aromatic resin/sap of agar tree against fungal disease. Its self-defence system creates black resin around the infected area. Such black shield is the precious oud or black gold. Native areas of agarwood are Burma, few parts of Thailand and Assam, etc. It can be grown in other tropical places, but it is not certain that without specific temperature or conditions, fungus will grow in it. For this purpose, agar tree is made infected with mould or bacteria invasion through inoculation process. As a result, few trees can be infected. "To get the essential oil from agarwood, only the infected part is soaked in water for a month or more. After this period, oil is distilled through steam distillation. Agarwood oil can never be extracted from leaves, roots or other healthy branches or trunk. Black agarwood is considered precious as it is full of essential oil and its sinking ratio is higher. Sinking test shows the percentage of oil in wood. Its fragrance notes of rose and old woods. Its fumes also create the feeling of warmth," Dr. Rifat said. Principal Scientific Officer in NARC Dr. Aamir Sultan said while talking to WealthPK that few people have started agarwood cultivation in Pakistan, but at official level there is no research study about its adaptability in the country. "If experiments prove its adaptability in our tropical areas, it will be a great prospect in our farming segment," he said. From ancient times, agarwood is used to scent the holy places, carve the artifacts, craft the religious ornaments, heal the patients, fumigate the clothes against lice and other micro insects, and for preparation of incense sticks. Book of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is incomplete without the description of agarwood. INP

US dollar reaches record Rs200.50 after jump by 36 paise

KARACHI: There seems to be no end in sight to the flight of US dollar vis-à-vis Pak Rupee as the currency, which had closed at Rs200.14 on Friday, touched an all-time high Rs200.50 mark after an increase by 36 paise in the interbank market on Monday. Experts have attributed devaluation of the rupee to an increase in the import bill and repay of foreign loans. The local currency continued to be on a slippery slope as it loses another 36 paise against the US dollar. Experts said that investors are concerned as there is speculation and uncertainty in market poses that the IMF may not agree to resume the loan programme following the government's reluctance to implement the prerequisite conditions including POL price hike ending subsidies. On the other hand, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reserves, after drop of \$140.5 million, have now reached the lowest level of \$10.16 billion. INP

Anti-polio drive kicks off across Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: A five-day anti-polio campaign began across the country on Monday. During the campaign, approximately 43.3 million children under the age of five years will be administered the anti-polio vaccine. A supplementary dose of Vitamin A drops will also be administered to children aged 6 months to five years. Around 340,000 frontline workers will take part in the campaign to administer vaccines to the children at their doorsteps. Earlier, inaugurating the campaign, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had assured that the government would take all measures to eradicate this crippling disease from the country. He directed the federal and provincial governments and district management to

address the challenge of persistently missed children, refusals and fake finger marking during the campaign. Pakistan has reported three cases of polio in 2022 so far. All the cases have been reported in North Waziristan. Earlier, Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Bill Gates held a telephone conversation. During a telephonic conversation with COAS Bajwa, Bill Gates appreciated Pakistan's success against COVID-19 despite resource constraints. He also appreciated Pakistan Army for supporting the national polio drive, ensuring proper reach and coverage. Matters related to Pakistan's commitment to comprehensive Polio eradication and COVID-19 were discussed during the conversation. INP



Finance Minister Miftah Ismail speaks to the media in Karachi.

PTI approaches ECP to denotify PTI MPAs, bar Hamza Shahbaz as CM

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) on Monday approached the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to issue a notification for the de-seating of the dissident members of the Punjab Assembly (MPAs) besides also barring Hamza Shahbaz from working as chief minister. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has de-seated 25 dissident Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MPAs who voted for PML-N's Hamza Shehbaz Sharif in Punjab chief minister's election. The letter was written by PTI counsel Faysal Chaudhry to Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. In his letter, the PTI counsel said that Hamza Shahbaz has lost his majority after the de-seating of the PTI lawmakers and therefore the ECP should bar him from acting as the chief minister. He further asked the CEC to denotify the dissident MPA in light of the decision given on May 20.

Yesterday, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) has filed a petition in the Lahore High Court (LHC) for ensuring the immediate de-seating of Punjab Assembly lawmakers disqualified by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and oath-taking of new members. The application was submitted to Chief Justice Lahore High Court (LHC) by PTI's counsel, who also shared details of the happening at the Punjab Assembly. He argued in his plea that dissident PTI lawmakers have no right to attend the Punjab Assembly's proceedings after being disqualified and de-seated by the election commission. "The court should ensure oath of new members on reserved seats that fell vacant after PTI lawmakers got de-seated," he said. Azhar Siddique said that the chief justice has asked them to submit the plea tomorrow as per the procedure. "The plea will be taken up by the court tomorrow," he said. INP

BOI facilitates MoU signing between Optima Integration Group and others

ISLAMABAD: Board of Investment (BOI) has facilitated MoU signing between Optima Integration Group, China Optima Integration Group, China and Asia Pak Investments. A statement of the Prime Minister office of the BOI issued here on Monday said, Pakistan in spirit to enhance Business to Business (B2B) Agricultural Cooperation between Pakistan and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Monday, May 23, 2022 under the auspices of Board of Investment (BoI). Federal Minister Board of Investment, Chaudhry Salik Hussain was the chief guest of the event and Secretary BOI Ms. Fareena Mazhar also participated in the ceremony. The signatories included Mr. Sam Siu, Chairman, Optima Integration Group and Mr. Eusha Saleem Bajwa, CEO, Sino Pak Optima Technologies (SPOT). Federal Minister BOI appreciated the interest of Chinese side in Agriculture & Livestock sector of

Pakistan particularly, Fish & Seafood industry. The Minister informed the participating parties about the establishment of Pakistan-China Business and Investment Forum (PCBIF) which is the result of joint efforts of Board of Investment (BOI), Chinese Embassy and All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises' Association (APCEA) and comprises of leading Pakistani and Chinese companies. The project between the signing parties will comprise setting up an end-to-end supply chain for seafood export (79 species of fish are approved by General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) for export from Pakistan to China), to be produced in Pakistan and transported to China for consumption there. The statement further said that it will include a high-tech processing facility and related technology transfer. In the first phase, the estimated investment will be around USD 50 Million and will create more than 100 jobs in Gwadar and Karachi in Fishing, Power and Logistics sectors. INP