

Anum Fayyaz bids goodbye to showbiz for Islam

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Govt taking tangible steps to strengthen economy: PM

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the government was taking tangible and necessary steps to strengthen the economy and prioritizing reduction in unnecessary imports by enhancing exports.

He said the incumbent government also faced the issues of mismanagement of the previous regime, and still in the face of such issues, it was committed to improving the economy with strenuous efforts.

The prime minister was talking to a delegation of Rothschild and Co, one of the world's largest independent financial advisory groups, to call on him, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by

Minister of State for Finance Dr Ayesha Ghous Pasha and other relevant officials.

Talking to the delegation, the prime minister mentioned that Pakistan faced natural calamity in the shape of recent floods spurred by the worst climate changes.

The delegation members termed the economic situation in Pakistan stable and said its talented manpower was its real strength. The present government was taking steps to take the economy on the right path, they observed.

They also commended Pakistan Stock Exchange as among the best-performing stocks in the region. Pakistan had also created awareness, in an effective manner, about the impacts of climate change at the global level, they said.

PM grieved over casualties as boat capsized in Kalankar Lake

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday expressed grief over the loss of life as a boat capsized in the Kalankar Lake of Umerkot, Sindh.

Six persons of the same family drowned in the incident on Sunday.

The prime minister directed the authorities concerned to take effective measures to avert such incidents in the future. He prayed for the departed souls to rest in peace and for the grant of patience to the bereaved families.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Rothschild and Co calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

ECP again excuses itself from consulting president over polls

IQRA ZAHOOR ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday confirmed that it cannot participate in a consultative session with President Dr Arif Alvi regarding electoral dates for the Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa National Assembly polls as the matter was subjective.

A letter from the ECP Secretary Omar Hamid Khan stated that the ECP meeting "decided that the matter being subjective, the Commission cannot participate in a meeting on the subject matter with the President."

It may be noted that President Alvi had invited Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Farooq Anjum to an "urgent meeting" on February 20 for consultations on the dates for the polls in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) and Punjab. The meeting was scheduled to take place at Aiwan-e-Sadr in accordance with Section 57(1) of the Elections Act, 2017, which provides that the president is entrusted to announce the date for the polls after consulting the ECP.

Naqeebullah Mehsud's brother moves SHC

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Naqeebullah Mehsud's brother Sher Alam on Monday moved the Sindh High Court (SHC) against Mallik's former senior superintendent of police (SSP) Rao Anwar and his around two dozen subordinates' acquittal in Mehsud's high-profile murder case.

The petition stated Rao Anwar's acquittal had reflected that evidence was ignored while deciding the case. "This verdict should be nullified," the petition added. An anti-terrorism court had, earlier, acquitted Rao Anwar and his subordinates in the high-profile case five years after the gruesome killing. On Jan 13, 2018, Mehsud, an aspiring model, was murdered in controversial circumstances which led to an outpouring of condemnations on social media and countryside protests by civil society against Rao Anwar and his team. Rao Anwar was sacked from his post following the probe into the extrajudicial killing in an alleged police encounter.

LHC approves Imran Khan's protective bail plea till March 3

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday approved protective bail of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan till March 3 in case pertaining to protest outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

A two-member bench of the Lahore High Court (LHC) resumed hearing after brief adjournment. The court also barred police from arresting Imran Khan.

Taking the rostrum, Imran said that his leg had recovered to an extent but the doctors had still told him to rest for two weeks.

He said that his medical checkup was sched-



uled for February 28. He further said that he had waited outside the courtroom for an hour, adding that he "fully respects the courts."

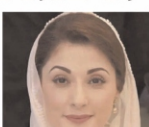
The court granted Imran protective bail till March 3 and directed him to approach the relevant court by then. Complying to court's orders, former prime minister Imran Khan had reached court to appear before it in a bail petition regarding a case about protest outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The PTI chairman reached court, alongside a horde of PTI supporters, to attend two separate hearings.

Maryam says PTI workers 'begging' to join PML-N

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Monday said that workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were "begging to join" the PML-N. Addressing an organizational meeting, Maryam stated that the cases against PTI chief Imran Khan were not made on the basis of political revenge.

She claimed that everyone was aware that the former premier lied about concealing information regarding his alleged



daughter Tyran Jade White in his nomination papers for the 2018 elections. Maryam added that his lie was "not going anywhere".

The PML-N leader further alleged that Imran committed "robbery" in the Toshakhana (gift depository), and was found guilty of foreign funding.

Maryam maintained that the incumbent Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government was not responsible for the ongoing inflation across the country. "People know that the previous government brought the punishment of economic destruction and inflation, it will take a few years to get rid of the devastation caused in the last four years," she said. She said that if Nawaz Sharif came into power, everything would be "fine" and that in the past the Sharif brothers always delivered and helped bring the nation out of bad situations.

Ahlsan hints at focusing on foreign markets to boost exports, reserves

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal has said that the coalition government is trying to divert the orientation of industrial and corporate sectors from domestic to foreign markets, since it is the only way to bring in dollars, build up foreign reserves, and ensure the balance of payments. He was talking to the media after visiting a



mobile assembling factory 'Air Link Communication' at Quaid-i-Azam Industrial Estate, here on Monday. He said that ignoring the export sector and relying on imports had been one of

the key reasons for our failure on maintaining a balance of payment. The planning minister said that the government had devised a five-point framework through which foreign reserves need would be fulfilled by improving exports. Exports, E-Pakistan's Information Technology, energy, environment or water food security and education, health and population control were the key segments of the framework.

Dar for further expanding PaK-UK relations

HASSAN NABEEL

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar said here on Monday that Pakistan had long historic ties with the United Kingdom and relations between the two countries needed to be further expanded for the mutual benefit of the countries.

The minister was talking to British Acting High Commissioner, Andrew Dalgleish who called him here, according to a press statement issued by the finance ministry.

They exchanged views on matters of common interest including promoting mutual trade and investment between the two countries, the statement added.

He briefed the envoy about economic challenges coupled with devastating floods and said that the government aimed to bring about economic and fiscal stability leading to economic recovery and growth.

He also appreciated the goodwill and cooperation extended by the British Acting High Commissioner.

On the occasion, the British Acting High Commissioner commended the practical and pragmatic measures being undertaken by the government and extended full support of the British government for the government and people of Pakistan in mitigating the socio-economic challenges.

No political future for Imran lest he chooses 'democratic path': Bilawal

MONITORING DESK

MUNICH: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has hinted that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan may not have a future in politics if he refuses to follow "the democratic path". The foreign minister is presently in Germany as he participates in the Munich Security Conference. In an interview with CNBC, the minister said "Pakistan has had a history that is not hidden from anyone. We have had more than half the time of our country's history under direct military rule and various transitions in between; at the



moment I believe Pakistan is in a period of transition and absolutely it could go either way." "It could mean a success and a strengthening of the democratic forces or it could mean a success and a strengthening of unconstitutional undemocratic forces," he added.

Bilawal went on to note that he deemed two events

in the past year as significant for Pakistan's future: Imran's ouster and former army chief General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa's pledge of neutrality.

The vote of no confidence that took the PTI chief out of office, Bilawal described it as an "institutional and democratic milestone". "You might not like the results of it (the vote of no confidence) if you are from his party," he said, "but in the course of Pakistan's history, that is a fundamental achievement that a military man has not come in and pulled out the prime minister or a court has not ordered for them to go."

LHC reserves verdict on admissibility of contempt petition against Rana Sanaullah

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday reserved a verdict on a petition seeking contempt proceedings against Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah for allegedly scandalising the judiciary through an audio leak involving former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parwez Elahi and his lawyer. LHC Justice Abid Aziz Shaikh reserved the verdict after hearing arguments of petitioner Shahid Rana who argued

that the minister hurt the privacy of a lawyer and his client by leaking the audio. He said contempt proceedings should be initiated against him for "ridiculing" judiciary and taking unconstitutional step. During the hearing, the judge remarked that the Supreme Court was also looking into the matter and inquired if forensic examination of the audio had been conducted. When petitioner said the interior minister attempted to defame the

judiciary, Justice Shaikh remarked: "Now, you don't need to worry. We will handle it". On Feb 16, Mr Sanaullah in a press conference run an audio tape of an alleged conversation between Chaudhry Pervaz Elahi and his counsel, Supreme Court Bar Association President, Abid Shahid Zuberi. The minister claimed that the former chief minister wanted to get a case fixed before his favourite judge in a bid to get desirable verdict.



ISLAMABAD: H.E Mr Andrew Dalgleish, British Acting High Commissioner called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.



PSL 2023 day 8 round-up: Peshawar Zalmi beat Quetta Gladiators by 4 wickets

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

KARACHI: Peshawar Zalmi put up an all-round performance to defeat Quetta Gladiators by 4 wickets in the ninth match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight.

Babar Azam-led Peshawar strode past Quetta's 155-run target in 18.3 overs with 4 wickets to spare.

Neesham (37) and Rovshan Powell (36) to push back Zalmi, but Dasan Shanaka (16) and Wahab Riaz (10) made sure no drama was created.

Naseem Shah and Mohammad Haseeb were economical for Quetta. They bowled their four-over quota for 1/19, and 3/13, respectively.

PSL 2023 day 7 round-up: Clinical Karachi register first win, Multan crush Islamabad

"First Innings"

After being put into bat, Quetta Gladiators had a horrible start, scoring only 48 runs in the first half of the innings after losing three wickets. Both openers, Jason Roy (14) and Martin Gupit (12), couldn't get going on a



turning wicket. Sarfaraz Ahmed (38) and Iftikhar Ahmed rebuilt the innings and took the game deep, before Iftikhar and Odean Smith's (25*) power-hitting propelled them to a respectable total of 154/4.

Usman Qadir bowled brilliantly and finished with figures of 2/6 in 4 overs. Neesham conceded 28 runs and picked up a wick as well.

Points Table Update

The win has provided Zalmi with two crucial points and they now perch second in the points table, just beneath Multan Sultans who are at the top with 6 points. Karachi Kings are in the third spot with two points, followed by Islamabad United, Quetta Gladiators, and Lahore Qalandars in the

fourth, fifth and sixth spots.

Fans will witness a vital game between Lahore Qalandars and Quetta Gladiators at 7:00 pm on Tuesday. The match will be played at the National Bank Cricket Arena, Karachi.

Past PSL Winners

PSL 2016 - Islamabad United, PSL 2017 - Peshawar Zalmi, PSL 2018 - Islamabad United, PSL 2019 - Quetta Gladiators, PSL 2020 - Karachi Kings, PSL 2021 - Multan Sultans, PSL 2022 - Lahore Qalandars.

GTA to establish Taekwondo Centre of Excellence in Pakistan

SAMR ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: The three member's delegation of Gyeonggido Taekwondo Association (GTA) from Korea arrived in Islamabad to finalise the details of establishing the Taekwondo Centre of Excellence in Pakistan. The three member delegation led by GTA President Kim Kyuengduk, Executive Director, Kim Pyeong, Director Mun He Sung received warm welcome by Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari, Acting Director General Pakistan Sports Board Muhammad Ibrar, President Pakistan Taekwondo Federation (PTF) Col. (Retd.) Waseem Janjua, Korean Poosaac head coach Choi Seung and other officials at the arrival of Islamabad. The GTA delegation who is on five days visit to Pakistan visited different localities to finalise the modalities of establishing centre of excellence as Pakistan



Taekwondo Federation and Gyeonggido Taekwondo Association of Korea have already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to cooperate in the development of matters of mutual interest of this sport in both the countries. "We are very much happy to again here in Pakistan to find out some more

options to establish centre of excellence for taekwondo and martial arts games", said GTA President Kim Kyuengduk adding that Gyeonggido Taekwondo Association decided to support Pakistan and their talented kids to enhance their skills in the field of taekwondo. Kim Kyuengduk said that we wanted to establish

this project in Pakistan because of wonderful efforts done by Pakistan Taekwondo Federation in last few years as well as Pakistan is like centre headquarter for South and West Asian countries and having easy approach for everyone having good option for GTA to establish centre of excellence here. "I am very happy to receive warm welcome from Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari as he promised me if I came Pakistan he will come to receive at airport", Kim said adding that Ehsan Mazari is a gentleman person who also want to promote sports in Pakistan as well. He said that GTA will continue their support with mutual cooperation as after establishing a centre of excellence we will hold many training camps, seminars, technical courses for players and officials to enhance their skills not only in taekwondo but also in martial arts taekwondo as well.

National Junior Ranking Tennis Tournaments-2023 to begin today

JORA ZAHOOR ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tennis Federation is pleased to inform you that the Pakistan Sports Board National Junior Ranking Tennis Tournaments 2023 will commence on 21st February 2023 at PTF-SDA Complex Islamabad. Players from all over Pakistan are participating in the subject event. The following categories are included in the Championships. Boys 18 & Under Singles Boys 18 & Under Doubles Girls 18 & Under Singles Boys 16 & Under Singles Boys 14 & Under Singles Boys 14 &



Under Doubles Boys / Girls 12 & Under Singles Boys / Girls 10 & Under Singles Boys / Girls 8 & Under Singles Mr Ibrar Ahmad Director General-PSB will grace the occasion as Chief Guest at the Opening Ceremony along with Mr Rashid Malik (Former Davis Cupper) Secretary-PTA. Mr Shahbaz Akhtar Alvi will supervise the event as Referee.

9th J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf all set for six days of competition

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The landmark 9th J.A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship will go under way from Tuesday, Feb 21, at the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Club.

This was stated by Sarmad Nadeem of Lahore Gymkhana Golf Club at a media conference, attended and addressed by Hamid Zaman, head of Zaman Family, Bilal Zaman, Taha Mehmood, Captain Golf and Ayesha Hamid, Lady Captain of Gymkhana Golf Club.



Hamid Zaman, speaking on the occasion, said the golfing activity which is a PGA and PCF-sanctioned tournament has evolved to become one of the biggest golf tournaments nationwide with total prize money of Rs. 6.0 million. The tournament attracts the top golfing talent from across the

country and is one of the most anticipated match ups of the golfing calendar in Pakistan. The salient features of this year's edition included: Top 100 ranked golf

The championship includes nationally recognized golf amateur players who compete for glory and honors in victory.

Total Prize Money of Rs. 6.0 million and a chance to win a 1,300 CC Honda City on a Hole-in-One makes the match one of the top purses in Pakistan golf.

6 categories of players including juniors, ladies, senior professionals and amateurs, and veteran golfers all participate in the tournament.

Record number of entries highlighting the anticipation and excitement the championship brings forth with more than 500+ participants.

All Pakistan Men's Squash Championship start at Qayyum Stadium Peshawar

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: 1ST MAIN QUALIFY ROUNDAzaan Khalil (KP) (2-0) Arbab Meharan (KP) (11-7 11-3) Zeeshan Malik (Army) (2-0) Arbab Khan (KP) (11-2 11-4) Arbab Aizaz (Army) (2-0) Zuraiz Naem (PB) (11-6 11-9) Muhammad Farhan (Sugpl) (2-0) Komal Tariq (PB) (11-9 11-4) Shahab Khan (PB) (11-9 11-9) Faheem Ahmad (11-4 11-9) Noor Zaman Orakzai (KP) (W/O) M Dawood Ahmad (PB) Fahad Sharif (KP) (2-0) Yaseen Khattak (KP) (11-7 11-5) Varun Asif (PB) (2-0) Awais Ahmad (KP) (11-7 11-4) M Sami



Ullah (KP) (2-0) Zeeshan Gul (Army) (14-12 11-9) Shahzad (Snr) (KP) (2-0) Faisal Fayyaz (KP) (11-4 11-6) Usman Nadeem (PB) (2-0) Nasir Khan (KP) (11-9 11-9) Fawad Hussain (KP) (2-0) Osama (KP) (11-4 11-2) Abdullah Nawaz (PAF) (11-7 11-4).

(2-0) Talha Bin Zubair (PB) (11-5 11-8) Owais Mastoor (Sindh) (2-0) Nouman Shah (KP) (11-3 11-7) Abdullah Nadeem (PB) (2-0) M din Harris (PB) (11-11 6/0) Ammad (PAF) (2-0) Haroon Khan (PB) (11-7 11-4).

Inter University Hockey Championship started in Peshawar

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Inter Varsity Hockey Championship started in Peshawar, GC University Faisalabad won the first match. The chief guest of the opening ceremony of the championship was Zahir Shah, President of the Provincial Hockey Association, while he was accompanied by Islamia College Director Sports

Alli Hoti and other former legendary hockey players. The best arrangements have been made for the championship. Organized by Islamia College U-University Peshawar, eleven University teams from across the country are participating in this championship organized at Lala Ayub Hockey Stadium. In the first match to be played at the Lala Ayub Hockey Stadium under the supervision of Pakistan Higher Education Commission, GC University Faisalabad defeated Swat by three goals to zero and qualified for the next round. For GC University Faisalabad, Izbharul Haq scored the first goal in the 12th minute of the game, while Muhammad Saad scored the second goal in the 16th minute and the third goal was scored by Muhammad Usman in the 21st

minute for GCU University Faisalabad. In the match, Haroon and Hamza performed the duties of empires while Hidayatullah and Ziaur Rahman Banuri performed the technical officials. On this occasion, Alli Hoti, director of sports and championship organizer of Islamia College University, while talking to the media, said that at the level of educational institutions. Organizing this kind of sports competitions is a good initiative and because it will promote sports in educational institutions and at the same time the best players will come forward who will make the name of the country and nations bright in the future at the national and international level.

2nd President of Pakistan Polo Cup gets under way on today

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The 2nd President of Pakistan Polo Cup 2023 will get under way on Tuesday, Feb 21, here at the Jinnah Polo Fields. According to President of Jinnah Polo Fields Lt. Col Shoab Atfah (retd.), the eight teams are included in this two-week high-goal tournament, in which two foreign players are also participating in each team. He said that the teams have been divided into two pools. Pool A includes Remounts, BN Polo, HN Polo and Master Paints/Newage Cables while Pool B consists of Diamond Paints, FC Polo Team, Master Paints, FS Polo Team, Tomorrow (Tuesday), Remounts will face BN Polo at 2:30 pm



Roberto Iturriz, Baber Naseem, Hamza Mawaz Khan and Juan Maria Ruiz Guinazu are the part of BN Polo, Halder Naseem, Raja Jalal Arsalan, Raja Samiullah and Sant Losa are in HN Polo while Master Paints/Newage Cables team comprises Ahmed Zubair Butt, Imran Shahid, Jota Chavanne, Manuel Sundblad while Swr Nadeem and Ma) Naeem are reserve players.

Shazia Marri calls for steps to ensure transgenders' inclusion in mainstream

Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation



NAVTC trains over 100,000 youth as contribution to national development

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTC) has equipped over 100,000 youth with income-generating skills for employment generation, economic development and productivity.

NAVTC has made significant achievements and has elevated the quality of Skills and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) training in Pakistan under Chairman Shahid Khan and former Executive Director NAVTC, Sajid Baloch.

NAVTC has equipped youth with in-demand income-generating technical and High Tech IT Skills trainings in cutting-edge technologies like Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Apps and Game Development, Cyber Security, Industrial Automation, Cloud Computing, E-Mechatronics, E-Commerce and beautiful etc.

NAVTC has already trained 143,000 highly skilled professionals, with 71 per cent employment; 75,268 have been trained in Hi-Tech Digital IT skills; and 53,598 in conventional trades. Over 13,000 NAVTC skilled and certified youth got employed abroad and are earning billions to improve the national economy. NAVTC has also launched the highly promising Matric-Tech and Middle Tech programmes for skills education in formal education schools.



ISLAMABAD: Government Employees under banner of APCA stage a protest against rising inflation, imposition of additional tax through mini-budget, demanding increase in salaries as per rising price-hike here on Monday. PHOTO BY AHMAD NAWAZ

DC instructs officials to ensure public facilities at Sunday markets

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, Irfan Nawaz Memon to the part reviewed the up-gradation work of the weekly markets, H-9 and G-6 (Iwar Bazaar) and directed officials to facilitate citizens to get affordable and quality items.

While chairing a meeting on weekly Bazaars up-gradation DC directed the officials of the Municipal Administration Directorate (DMA), market committee and other stakeholders to ensure their security and improve water and lighting arrangements for the citizens in the market, said a press release.

Memon directed the officials to install sign boards, fire extinguishing and safety equipment, maintain cleanliness, install shade sheds and expedite the renovation in Sunday markets. He ordered the staff to keep an eye on the rate lists and prices of commodities for providing relief to the citizens.

Sania for amending BISP Act to facilitate poor masses amid rising inflation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Senator Sania Nishtar of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Monday apprised the House that aim of introducing the Bill further to amend the Benazir Income Support Act, 2010 which was rejected by the House suggested measures for enhancing the stipend under BISP to protect the poor masses from rising inflation.

Addressing the House at the issue of public importance, the Senator said according to the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, on February 16 Sensitive Price Index was recorded at 88.42 per cent and purchase of daily commodities was beyond the reach of common man, particularly middle and lower middle class.

She said that due to inflation, it was difficult for lower income group people to bear the expenditure of health, education and meet other daily household needs. She said that the bill, which was introduced in the House aimed to relate stipend of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) with inflation to provide relief to the marginalised segments of the society to provide maximum relief to them through enhanced allocation for the programme.

Sania Nishtar said that to this effect, a committee was already formed to prepare mechanism to increase the amount according to inflation in budget, adding that one meeting of the committee was also held.

Speaking on the occasion, Senator Dr Zarqa Suhrawardy Taimur (PTI) expressed her concerns over rising influence of India on water resources of Pakistan, particularly construction of water reservoirs on Neelum River. She also expressed her displeasure over a question paper of COMSAT University and termed it against social and religious ethics. She also called for allocating proper time for women members of Senate for expressing their point of view and urged the need for taking appropriate measures to tackle with environmental degradation. Dr Taimur lauded the efforts of law enforcement agencies and their sacrifices for restoring peace and security in the country.

Senator Robina Khaild of PPP said that the Senate was the highest forum of the country and discussion in it must be based on evidence and should not discuss concocted happenings circulating in news papers and social media.

She appreciated the role of Chairman PPP, Foreign Minister Bilawal Butto Zardari for further cementing diplomatic ties of the country with different countries of the world. She expressed her concerns over increasing use of drugs among youth, particularly in educational institutions and stressed the need for taking strict measures to overcome the menace. Senator Robina also demanded to provide proper opportunities for the youth to engage with them.

NUST appeals for donations to help quake victims of Turkey, Syria

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Maintaining its previous tradition to extend support to the calamity-stricken people within the country and outside, the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) is actively participating in Pakistan's government relief efforts for the earthquake-stricken people in Turkey and Syria. According to an official source, the university has been actively engaged in receiving in-cash donations in addition to in-kind aid for the quake-affected people in Turkey and Syria.

NUST has appealed to the benevolent members of society for providing donations to assist the quake victims in Turkey and Syria in dealing with the havoc wreaked by the recent earthquake. The funds can be transferred to Account No: 2927-7973442-01, Account Title: NUST Flood Relief Fund, Bank Name: Habib Bank Limited, Branch: NUST Branch, Sector H: 12, Islamabad.

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Failure of imagination

Dr Ayesha Razaque

In the evening of January 27, 1967 the Apollo 1 crew was performing a test rehearsal on the pad at Launch complex 34 when a spark from a power surge ignited the pressurized command module inside the atmosphere. All three crew members, Ed White, Gus Grissom and Roger Chaffee, perished in the fire. The accident investigation that followed showed that the atmosphere inside the command module comprised pressurized pure oxygen. Today, we recognize the danger in that situation.

In the Congressional hearings that followed, Frank Borman, one of the investigators of the Apollo 1 fire and a former astronaut himself, was asked for his opinion on the cause of the accident. Borman famously answered that it was the "failure of imagination". While there is some disagreement about whether Borman coined the phrase, his use is certainly credited with putting it in the public lexicon.

Almost four decades later, in 2004, the 9/11 Commission brought this expression back to the forefront when it was used in numerous parts of its report and accompanying executive summary where it said: "The most important failure was one of imagination. It took a terror group to put the idea of airliners as weapons into our collective consciousness."

Today, inflation is ravaging every Pakistani's purchasing power and bleeding public support for the PM coalition government. And yet, there is no immediate end in sight for the downside the economy finds itself on. In the last few decades, all governments, regardless of whether they were led by (selected political parties or strongmen who imposed themselves by the force of their guns, did little to differentiate themselves.

On just about every metric of progress, very little has changed. None could bring any reforms of note while all major centres of power of influence further entrenched their positions and widened their moats. By every measure that makes a difference to the lives of the ocean of humanity on the outside of those moats - healthcare, education, transportation, social welfare - save for the one. Like NASA before the Apollo 1

few showcase projects, there has been little to no progress. Whatever little improvements there have been in people's lives have happened despite, not because of, governments.

Regardless of which party they may presently associate with, our rulers and leaders are united by their membership in the club of elites. 'Elite' is a term that gets thrown around far too freely. In my book, merely driving a nicer-than-average car or buying your beverage from a foreign coffee chain or always having the latest gadget or trotting the globe in glamor or being a member of a fancy country club does not qualify you as elite. When you know that laws are for other people and you can break them with impunity, knowing you can get away with things others cannot, traveling with a truckload of armed guards trailing you, whether you hold any office yourself or don't, that is the line that divides the elite from everyone else. The surest ways of joining this club are to either be born into it or to marry into it - any other way is an outlier event.

And, yet, voters continue to do as if they have thought of us as one of them but none of these is true. Unless one is independently wealthy (with power/influence to match), this elite views outsiders of the working and professional class with suspicion, as possible opportunists, social climbers, not to be trusted. Consider the many special advisers that are providing their services to the government without drawing a salary and ask yourself: how many qualified professionals from working backgrounds could possibly afford to do that?

And, yet, voters continue to look towards these same people, attached to one party in one election cycle and another the next, for salvation. Every few years, the deck gets shuffled but we end up with the same faces sitting on one side of the parliament or the other. Like NASA before the Apollo 1

Price of elite capture

Maleeha Lodhi

PAKISTAN'S bane has long been a narrow, oligarchic power elite that has dominated its politics and controlled its economy at the cost of people's welfare and the country's progress and development.

Its entrenched position over decades meant that governance challenges multiplied with force and intensity, leaving the country with daunting problems of security, security and mounting energy and water shortages.

These were left to fester rather than be addressed. Chronic instability and an oligarchic political order impeded the evolution of modern governance.

Patronage-based politics practised by elected and military governments alike relied on working networks of influential political families, kinship groups and cronies to maintain their power. But this mode of governance failed to meet the needs of an increasingly complex society. Yet the mass of unfulfilled public expectations never persuaded the elite to meaningfully respond to the needs and demands of the people.

This power elite resisted meaningful reform - whether land reform, tax reform or reforms in governance. It also acquired 'rentier' characteristics: using access to public office as a means of leveraging state resources to transfer wealth and acquire sources of unearned income.

This has been a common feature of both civilian and military elites. Both used patron-client relations to reinforce their dominance and protect their economic interests and privileged status.

With successive row and military governments living beyond their means, unwilling to mobilise domestic resources and averse to economic reform, that fact alone contributed to mirroring Pakistan in perpetual financial crisis, with virtually every government in the past few decades leaving the economy in much worse shape for its successors to manage.

Borrowing both at home and abroad became its preferred way of managing public finances, which has landed the country today with an unprecedented and unsustainable level of debt. Can the stranglehold of a narrow elite over the economic and political system be broken? The politics and economics of elite 'capture' has long been discussed in the country. Published some years ago, Ishrat Husain's impressive book, The Economy of an Elitist State, highlighted how one per cent of the population constituting an elite group maintained a stranglehold on the affairs of the state. Its power and dominance persisted through different forms and changes of government. As did inequality, which continues to characterise Pakistani society. Husain's main argument was that the respective roles of the state and market had been reversed as a narrow elite rigged the markets and hijacked the state to advantage itself. It concluded that this concentration of wealth and political power at the expense of the majority of the population had created a situation that was neither socially acceptable nor economically sustainable.

Courtesy Dawn

Election 2023, anyone?

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has excused itself from holding consultations with President Arif Alvi on elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the time being, saying that the matter is "sub-judice at various judicial fora" among other reasons. This comes after President Alvi had summoned Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja for an urgent meeting today (February 20) to hold a consultation of the dates of the polls. The letter by the ECP states that the electoral body is well aware of its constitutional and legal obligations. As constitutional experts argue, we are not in any such exceptional situation at the moment and snatching away the right of the people to choose their representatives, just on the whims or fears of the ruling elite, will only further erode people's trust in the system. The constitution does not say that general elections have to be held on the same day, so the delay cannot be across as even more confusing. It also makes the PML-N - the party at the forefront of the current government - look like it's literally running away from elections. That is not good optics for a party in power. There has also been some talk about how if the PTI and PDM were to reach a consensus - a rare occurrence if at all - on delaying the Punjab and KP elections and holding the general elections on the same day, they would have to make a constitutional amendment in this regard.

President for using digital technologies to improve healthcare services

ARSHAD MALIK
ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called for using digital technologies to improve the health and well-being of the people of Pakistan and provide them with quality healthcare services.

He emphasised that advances in medical technology could help transform the country's medicine and healthcare system.

The president expressed these views while talking to Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan and Afghanistan Siemens Healthineers

Khurram Jameel, who called on him here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, a press release issued by the President's Media Wing said.

Khurram Jameel briefed the president that Siemens Healthineers was one of the leading healthcare solution providers in Pakistan and its mission was to transform the country's medicine and healthcare delivery and improve patient experience through digitalization.

President Alvi emphasised that Pakistani healthcare providers needed to embrace innovation and transform

healthcare delivery to successfully meet the challenges in the health sector, besides fulfilling the future healthcare needs of the country.

He underlined the need for establishing partnerships among government institutions, private organizations, and non-governmental organisations to work together for the betterment of persons with disabilities and raise awareness about breast cancer.

The president appreciated the efforts of Siemens Healthineers for the development of Pakistan's healthcare.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing a meeting regarding crop insurance at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Mushaal blasts world's callous approach towards smoldering Kashmir

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organization, Mushaal Hussain Mullick lashed out at the international community and UN for adopting a "deaf and dumb approach" towards smoldering Kashmir, which, she said, they can't even hear the heart-breaking pleas of Kashmiri little daughters demanding release of their fathers illegally detained in Indian jails for years.

In a statement on Monday, she said that several families from Baramulla district along with their children protested at Srinagar's press colony against the delay in trials of their kin in several jails for many years. She said that the innocent daughters of incarcerated Kashmiri fathers were demanding release on a fast-track basis with eyes full of tears since they are cognisant of the brutal treatment being meted out by the fascist Indian govern-



ment against their fathers.

The Hurriyat leader stated that the notorious Indian government was brazenly violating the fundamental rights of Kashmiri people and unleashed state terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) but the so-called civilized world "sewed their lips" on the world's worst human rights abuses in the occupied valley. Mushaal said that a little girl, who did not see her father for the past five years, was crying seeking to meet her jailed father. The chairperson urged that world powers and human rights organisations should listen to the pleas of the innocent souls who wanted the

release of their fathers incarcerated in Indian jails in fake politically-motivated cases.

She said that like other Kashmiri daughters, Raziyah Sultana had not seen her father for almost 9 years and demanded several times to the UN bodies to ensure her father's release and her meeting but neither the world nor the notorious Modi government paid any attention to her repeated requests.

Mushaal urged the world community and UN bodies to ensure the release of the Kashmiri political prisoners including Yasin Malik instantly because they all were put in jails, not for any crime, but only to defuse the flames of the Kashmir freedom struggle.

She said that the Kashmir dispute was an international dispute, not an internal matter of India, which was recognized by UN resolutions; hence it should be dealt with and resolved in its historical perspective.

Senators demand action to lift curbs on girls' education in Afghanistan

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Senators on Monday demanded the upper house of the parliament to ensure measures to remove obstacles to girls' education in Afghanistan.

Senator Rubina Khaid of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on a point of public importance highlighted that the curbs on girls' education in Afghanistan were casting negative ideological impacts along the border region of the country. She said the House should refer this matter to the committee to work out solutions to address this matter on priority as girls' education was a prerequisite for nation-building. Senator Rubina also underlined that the population was the elephant in the room that was rising with every passing year and unfortunately no one was paying attention to it. Senator Mushtaq Ahmed of Jamaat-e-Islami

Pakistan (JIP) also underscored that the issue of girls' education in Afghanistan was necessary to address as it had across-the-border impacts due to cultural affinities among both nations. This issue, he said, should be referred to the committee to resolve the problems of girls in merged districts who are likely to be negatively impacted due to the decision of the Afghan government.

He also demanded the attention of the house on issues of missing persons and Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman Baloch facing detention due to the Haq D Gwadar movement. This issue should also be referred to the committee to provide a way for the family of the aggrieved, he added. Senator Dr Zarqa Suhrawardy, a member of PTI also raised the issue of a controversial question placed in COMSAT University's paper of English and demanded the House to take up the matter for disciplinary guidelines to address such attacks on social.

J. Salik announces interfaith conference portrait auction start with George Washington's painting

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Convener, World Minorities Alliance (WMA) and Former Federal Minister for Population Welfare, Julius Salik on Monday announced that he will start his international interfaith conference with the exhibition and auction of the first US President George Washington had deep imprints on the American Society who was an American military officer, statesman and founding fathers of the US.

President J. Salik said the personality of George Washington had deep imprints on the American Society who was an American military officer, statesman and founding fathers of the US. President George Washington and President Joe Biden share many things in common particularly feeling the pain of humans. "If he had been alive and was approached by weak countries facing acute problems including economic recession then he would definitely supported the cause. President Joe Biden had also faced witnessed great tragedy in his life and would have a special corner for the destitute people," he said.

The WMA Convener informed that the cause



of his campaign is also the same that is to manage funds to support the marginalised and down-trodden people of the society.

Julius Salik famously said by his late brother Markus Salik who was a self-made artist that are a tribute to the great leaders of different faiths who fought for democracy, minorities rights and advocated religious harmony.

In a telephonic conversation from Washington D.C. with AFP, J. Salik said the portraits made by his brother included that of the Head of Catholic Church, Pope Francis, Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, first US President Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr, Imam-e-Kaba Abdul Rahman Ibn Abdul Aziz al-Sudais, and a special photograph of Princess of Wales Lady Diana that was captured during her visit to Riyadh.

Sustainability of sports Tourism stressed

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The stakeholders of Sports Tourism in a Conference held at Bagh stressed the sustainability of Winter Sports Tourism. The purpose of this Conference is to highlight the importance of the sustainability of winter sports tourism among masses and to discuss way forward. The activities and festivals of winter sports have recently been witnessed in different mountain regions of the country. The activities held occasionally for a short period but no one talked about its continu-



ity and sustainability. The Conference held three Sessions. In the first Session was held with the media persons were briefed about the Conference and its objectives. The representatives

of main stream media and Bagh Digital Media Club were present at the occasion. They took active part and highlighting the role of media assured that activities of sports tourism in winter would be project to attract more participants. Second Session was held with the stakeholders. Mr. Ali Shoukat General Manger from MTBC, the sponsoring agency welcome the participants and enlightened about their contribution and support for the local community and promotion of winter sports tourism under the initiative of social corporate responsibility. He stressed that need to facilitate tourists towards more destination for which they are working with concerned departments.

Friends-turned-Culprits Rape Job-Seeking Girl in Islamabad

NADEEM TANOLI
ISLAMABAD: Another case of alleged gang rape has emerged in the capital city of Islamabad, where a Rawalpindi resident has lodged a complaint at the Shalimar Police Station. The complainant claimed to have known the accused, Amjad Khan and Amir Zaman, who had offered her jobs on multiple occasions. After losing her job at a call center, she contacted the accused for help finding a new one. However, on February 18, when she met with them, they drove around indecently before stopping behind flats in Sector F1, where they raped her at gunpoint in the car. The victim immediately went to the police station to file a complaint with the help of her Aunt. Two individuals, Amjad Khan and Amir Zaman have been booked in a First Information Report (FIR) for sexually assaulting and raping the victim. This case comes after a recent incident where a girl was gang-raped in the park of Sector F9, and the accused were later killed in an encounter with the police. The increasing occurrence of such incidents is alarming, and the authorities are urged to take strict measures to ensure that such heinous crimes are punished severely to deter others from committing such atrocities.

District Police Chief Haroon surprise visit to Judicial Complex Takhtbhai

SYED HARIS
Mardan: District Police Chief Haroon Rashid Khan surprise visit to Judicial Complex Takhtbhai. On the occasion of the visit, met DSP Takhtbhai Circle Bashir Ahmad Yousafzai and other police officers. DPO Mardan reviewed the various promises and security arrangements of the court and courthouse, DSP Takhtbhai briefed the District Police Chief regarding the security and administrative matters. While talking to the



responsible persons of the judicial complex, seeking information regarding security and other issues. Appropriate instructions were also given to the police officers regarding security in view of the current situation.

Chairman ALM group of Co's calls on Federal Secretary of Commerce

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Chairman ALM group of companies Syed Hassan Farid Khan called on Federal Secretary of Commerce Muhammad Suleah Ahmed Faruqi and matter pertaining to the export of precious metals were discussed. According to Press Release issued by ALM Group, during meeting Syed Hassan Farid Khan highlighted the

matters faced by the precious metal industry specially regarding the exports. ALM being the largest exporter of precious metals and having the first productive precious metal mine of Pakistan, has the experience and knowledge to make this a \$85 export industry within the year. To make this a reality, Syed Hassan Farid Khan urged the need of a better policy to enable the indus-

trialists to invest and take interest in this field as it can earn Pakistan much needed foreign reserves. The Secretary Commerce took keen interest in the suggested proposals and ensured ALM group of companies, that the proposed changes in precious metal mining/exports policy will be taken up by all concerned departments of the government to increase the export volume earned in this sector.



ISLAMABAD: Model pose for photo during Master Class Bridal Show in a local hotel.

Irfanullah Wazir takes charge as new DC Swat

HAROON SIRAJ
SWAT: A prominent officer Khyber Pakhtunkhwa bureaucracy Mr Irfan Ullah Khan Wazir has been transferred and appointed as Deputy Commissioner

Swat. A formal notification for his posting of the Deputy Commissioner Swat has also been issued. Irfan Ullah Khan Wazir has served in various field posts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He is known one of the good administrators and enjoying excellent reputation amongst the official circles. Newly appointed Deputy Commissioner Swat take charge of his office on Monday.