



Deep grief and sorrow over loss of previous lives and property due to heavy rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces

Prime Minister of Pakistan
Shehbaz Sharif

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Interior ministry decides to launch joint operation in Kacha area of Sindh



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi, after consultation with all stakeholders in the interior ministry decided to conduct a joint operation in Kacha area of Sindh province, with full force to clear the area from dacoits.

An important meeting of the National Action Plan Implementation Review Committee was held at NACTA headquarters here on Friday under the chairmanship of the Interior Minister which was attended by Federal Interior Secretary, Head NACTA, DG FIA, Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

IGs and provincial secretaries Interior besides National Coordinator NACTA, all teams of National Action Plan and Intelligence agencies and Chief Commissioners also attended the meeting.

The top brass after detailed brainstorming, decided to conduct a joint operation in the Kacha area with full force and close coordination between the provinces and all stake holders to clear the area from dacoits.

Detailed consultation and consideration was made to provide new modern technology to the police across Pakistan.

The meeting also carefully reviewed the measures taken regarding the security of Chinese citizens while All the IGs gave a detailed briefing on security and safety measures for Chinese citizens in Pakistan. The meeting also decided to restrict the movement of those tourists who do not follow the prescribed SOPs. The meeting also reviewed the foolproof security arrangements in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad during the Iranian President's visit.

Any negligence in this regard will not be tolerated at all, said Mohsin Naqvi and added that strict disciplinary action will be taken for negligence in implementing the SOPs for the protection of foreign nationals.

The minister said that to eradicate terrorism, institutions should be equipped with modern technology while the Federation will provide all possible support to the provinces in this regard.

The minister said that Good progress has been made in the last few months to prevent smuggling and it has reduced substantially. All institutions must ensure strict legal action against smugglers with a common strategy, he directed. APP



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari meeting with the Chief of Turkish General Staff, Republic of Turkiye, General Metin Gurak who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Youth should be provided with employment opportunities: PM

Pays tribute to Army Chief General Syed Asim Muir for his all out cooperation with the govt to end smuggling



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the law enforcement agencies to expedite the countrywide anti-smuggling campaign.

Pm Shehbaz Sharif was chairing a high-level review meeting in Islamabad on Friday regarding prevention of smuggling in the country.

The Prime Minister said monitoring of Afghan transit trade items should be made effective to prevent their smuggling.

He directed the customs authorities to conduct a third-party audit of the system that monitors Afghan transit trade.

Appreciating the performance of law enforcement and intelligence agencies, he directed them to cooperate with each other to prevent smuggling and ensure strict action against those involved in drug dealing.

He also directed the Ministry of Law and Justice to immediately enact necessary rules in this regard. The Prime Minister said youth should be provided with employment opportunities and favorable environment for business to avoid border area smuggling.

The Prime Minister issued instructions to immediately release funds for a survey to check the use of drugs at national level. He also issued instructions to completely stop the smuggling of sugar.

The Prime Minister paid tribute to Army Chief

General Syed Asim Muir for his all out cooperation with the government to end smuggling.

During the meeting, committee on illegal use of Afghan transit trade and identification of elements involved in smuggling and their facilitators presented its report.

The Prime Minister was briefed that a list of smugglers, hoarders and their facilitators has been prepared and provided to the law enforcement agencies and relevant provinces. He was informed in detail about misuse of Afghan transit trade, food items including sugar, wheat, fertilizers, petroleum products and illegal weapons.

The meeting was informed that National Anti-Trafficking Strategy is in the final phase and after consultation with all stakeholders, it will be presented for approval.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the NDMA and other relevant institutions to accelerate relief operations in rain affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. In a statement today, he expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of life and property due to heavy rains and commiserated with the bereaved families.

He said the federal government stands with the provincial governments of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in providing all possible assistance in relief operations.

COAS General Syed Asim Munir affirmed Pak Army's continuing support towards capacity building of Royal Saudi Land Forces

Assistant Minister of Defence KSA acknowledges Pakistan Army's achievements & sacrifices in war against terrorism



RAWALPINDI: Major General (Engineer) Talal Bin Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Assistant Minister of Defence, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at General headquarters (GHQ).

According to the statement issued by ISPR, during the meeting, matters of mutual interest and measures to further enhance bilateral defence collaboration including defence production and military training were discussed. General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) affirmed Pakistan Army's continuing support towards capacity building of Royal Saudi Land Forces.

The visiting dignitary acknowledged Pakistan Army's achievements and sacrifices in war against terrorism and Army's valuable contributions towards regional peace and stability.

The visiting dignitary also participated in the 5th Meeting of Pakistan-KSA Defence Collaboration at GHQ, which he co-chaired by CGS Pakistan Army. The forum discussed challenges to global and regional security and their implications on Defence Forces.

Forum noted that rapid advancements in modern technologies necessitated defence industrial cooperation in critical capabilities between the two brotherly countries.

Both sides reiterated their resolve to solidify the efforts in defence collaboration with focused approach to target specific capabilities in land, air and sea domains.

In this context, concrete proposals were deliberated by the forum to meet tangible objectives within specific timelines. PR

Minister advocates for IT sector growth with public-private collaboration



LAHORE: Minister of State for Information Technology and Communications Shaza Fatima Khawaja has reiterated the government's dedication to enhancing the IT industry by endorsing and aiding the private sector.

Addressing the participants at the Global Digital Summit during the 24th ICTN Asia Conference at the Expo Centre here on Friday, she lauded the collective zeal for technology and its role in transforming economies and societies. She underscored the value of such summits in fostering collaboration and exchanging knowledge among stakeholders from both public and private sectors.

She emphasised the government's efforts, under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision, to review

policies and legislation to better support the private sector's growth and innovation. The minister stressed creation of a conducive environment in Pakistan for the private sector, focusing on business culture, technology, and the ecosystem.

The minister pointed out cybersecurity and the skills gap as major challenges, but also as opportunities, especially in leveraging Pakistan's young population for national development. She highlighted the need to modernise education systems to address immediate lack of skilled labour and employable graduates.

She referenced the industry-academia bridge programme that facilitates on-job training for university students, ensuring their employability upon graduation. She also called for a quicker adaptation of university curricula to keep up with the fast-paced industry changes. The minister outlined the complexities universities face with industry advancements and the importance of international exposure for Pakistan.

Ambassador Munir Akram discusses issues on UN agenda with Iran's top diplomat



UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN, Munir Akram, met Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian at UN Headquarters in New York on Thursday. A press release of the Pakistan Mission said that they exchanged views on the close cooperation between the two brotherly countries and discussed various issues on the UN agenda, including the UN Security Council, without elaborating. The Iranian top diplomat was here in connection with the Council's high-level debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. APP

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Turkish CGS calls on Minister for Defence

ISLAMABAD: Turkish Chief of General Staff (CGS), General Metin Gurak called on Minister for Defence and Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif here on Friday.

The Defence Minister extended warm welcome to the esteemed Turkish defence delegation, a news release said.

He described the bilateral defence relations between Pakistan and Türkiye as robust. The Defence Minister acknowledged the active role being played by Türkiye for controlling the situation and suffering in Gaza.

The visiting dignitary commended Pakistan's efforts in fostering regional peace and stability,



as well as Pakistan Armed Forces' role in combating terrorism. Both sides acknowledged the strong relationship between their Armed Forces and committed to further expand defense collaboration. APP

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) on forged collaboration to boost green development, nature conservation and food security in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan by promoting the Green Legacy Initiative of H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

The collaboration was announced at a seminar titled Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity Under The Green Legacy Initiative, jointly organized by the Embassy of Ethiopia in Islamabad and the SDPI. It was attended by H.E. Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, H.E. Dr. Abid Qaiyum Sulehri, Executive Director of SDPI, government officials, civil society and media.

Addressing the Seminar, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia in Pakistan, H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula lauded the

Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad & SDPI Collaborate to Promote Green Legacy Initiative in Pakistan

Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change for her efforts and wished her good luck for championing all efforts for mitigating adverse impacts of climate change.

H.E. Ambassador Jemal Beker Abdula mentioned that the Initiative is the brainchild of H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, the Prime Minister of the FDR of Ethiopia who came into power in 2018 and injected various policy reforms that made Ethiopia peaceful, stable, prosperous, eco-friendly, resilient and greener. It has been formally launched at the Embassy in Pakistan in 2023, he added.

He informed that Ethiopia is aggressively taking up green development initiatives starting from its intended nationally determined contributions, halt on import of fossil fuel-based vehicles, net zero target by 2050.



Commenting on the Initiative, he said it has different components of human-nature relationship, developing synergies and collaboration for one common goal,

respect for humanity and political, economic, social and environmental wellbeing. He mentioned that mass media mobiliza-

tion, community ownership and leading role by the top leadership of the country were among the reasons behind success of the initiative.

The Ambassador said the FDR Embassy is honored to collaborate with SDPI and the PM's Coordinator on Climate Change and will commence the initiative from Punjab's mega cities and then will start in Sindh and other provinces.

"We will need SDPI support in this regard and we are proud to announce Pakistan-Ethiopia fraternity on Green Legacy Initiative."

Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, H.E. Romina Khurshid Alam, addressed the seminar via telephone and extended her gratitude to the Ambassador H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula for playing the role of a bridge between Ethiopia,

Pakistan and Africa.

"We are ready to collaborate and work together to promote the Green Legacy Initiative. Moreover, the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination is working on establishing International Green Parliamentarians' Caucus and it needs help from Ethiopia and where we can work together to save mother nature and learn from each other's success," H.E. Romina Khurshid Alam remarked.

Executive Director SDPI, Dr. Abid Qaiyum Sulehri said the Ethiopian Ambassador is launching the leading Green Legacy Initiative in Pakistan that changed the flora and fauna of Ethiopia and incurred great societal impacts in terms of employment creation and food security.

He said the government of Ethiopia is sharing its success story with other developing countries facing climate crisis to achieve resilience against environmental degradation. At the end, the Executive Director, SDPI presented a memento and the latest publications of the SDPI to the Ambassador.

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Invest in a woman's right to work

KUMAIL MEHDI

The true spirit of development demands that women's participation in the labour force remain healthy. Among many indicators of economic development, women's participation rate is a reliable method to measure development prospects. In the 21st century, developing countries have made amazing strides in economic development. One such example is Bangladesh, where we see the direct correlations between sustainable economic growth and female labour participation. Its economy is among the few countries to maintain a high growth rate (6.9 per cent) even during the Covid-19 pandemic. In achieving this remarkable feat, Bangladesh made some necessary changes. According to the World Bank, in Bangladesh, from 2003 to 2016, female labour participation increased from 10 per cent to 36 per cent. Its garment industry, which contains a maximum number of female labourers, has been the main driver of its economic development. Consequently, the data shows that there exists a positive correlation between women's participation in labour and economic growth.

In Pakistan, women's labour participation remains bleak. According to the Global Economy, it has a 24.61 per cent female labour participation rate against Bangladesh's 37.69 per cent. At the national level, according to the UN Women report, only 26 per cent of women labour participation against 84 per cent of men. Coming to the provincial stage, Punjab has the highest 31 per cent, Sindh at 18 per cent, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at 19 per cent, and Balochistan at 14 per cent. Similarly, Pakistan's economic performance, given its potential, is unpleasant and concerning. According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2022-2023, the GDP growth stood at 0.29 per cent in FY2023. Per-capita income declined from \$1,765 in 2022 to \$1,568 in 2023. Likewise, the investment-to-GDP ratio stood at 13.6 per cent in FY2023 compared to 15.6 per cent in FY 2022. With the economy again in a major crisis, women's participation should be increased to achieve sustainable development. Data suggests that when more women work, economies grow. Increased women's labour participation enhances economic diversification and income equality for shared growth and prosperity. It brings competition and creativity. A healthy women's force bulge is an encouraging sign for economic development. It makes women financially independent and enhances their decision-making power within households. With women spending 25 per cent more of their lives in health, closing this gap will help in curtailing poverty. In Pakistan, there exists a plethora of challenges that women face in labour employment. First, women remain financially dependent, which curtails their say in decision-making. As a result, women fail to assert their wishes and rights.

Second, the working environment remains largely unsafe for women. Although laws such as the Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2011 and the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 exist to ensure women's security, their implementation remains a big challenge. Third, the patriarchal mindset of our society is a significant psychological barrier to women's labour participation. Patriarchy causes economic, political, and social violations of women's rights. So, these barriers pose a serious challenge to women's empowerment and the resultant economic development. To ensure active women's labour participation, the government needs to take concrete steps in the financial sphere. In this arena, Pakistan has the potential to address its economic woes by increasing women's participation in labour. According to the International Growth Centre, if women's participation in labour was on par with men, Pakistan's GDP could increase by 60 per cent by 2025.

Through public and private partnerships, the government can launch skill-imparting drives to enhance women's capabilities. This blessed partnership can boost our small-home-based industries, which make cultural artifacts and pottery. To achieve this, the government should introduce small interest-free loan schemes for women to encourage their financial independence. This is because without financial independence, there can be no sustainable development. A wide range of areas should be addressed to achieve the above-mentioned economic gains and set into motion the virtuous cycle of development. These areas include the political/administrative and social spheres. Doing so would ensure Pakistan's Vision 2025, calling for an enabling environment for women so that they may realize their full potential.

In the realm of politics, Pakistan has a quota of 60 seats in the National Assembly for women. Without that quota, women's political participation will reduce to only 3.0 per cent. According to research, women bring unique perspectives to governance, working towards inclusivity, gender equality, and family-friendly policies in areas such as income, parental leave, and employment. Women's political participation is likely to create responsive and equitable local communities. To achieve political participation, rule of law should be ensured. The promises made in the 18th Amendment of establishing local governments and devolution of power must be completed. The pace of justice must be enhanced to reduce crime against women and deter criminal instincts from the fear of punishment. In the social aspect, Pakistani society displays patriarchy and regressive social values for women. Women's positions are mediated by wealth and land, and the degree of men's honour depends on the possession and control of wealth, women and land. Men receive social preference in education, health and decision-making. There is a common perception among people that Islam prohibits women's role as rulers. Such regressive and patriarchal values are the biggest threat to women's empowerment. To set in motion a virtuous development cycle, encompassing economic and human development, Pakistan should take steps to address them. There is a need to promote inclusive, liberal and quality education. People should be made aware that the link between honour and women's chastity has no logical basis. The government should invest in women's health across the country, especially in rural and remote areas, because sound women's health makes the community flourish.

The writer is a research intern at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad.



Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri

The annual and spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank (WB) are key events for the global economic community.

These meetings, attended by high-level officials such as finance ministers, central bankers from member countries, and decision-makers of other regional lenders, serve as crucial platforms for discussing transnational issues like macroeconomic stability, climate change, and debt sustainability. The discussions that unfold here play a significant role in shaping decision-making processes and strategies for resource mobilization, particularly for developing nations.

The 2024 Spring Meetings, themed 'Vision to Impact,' are not just another event on the calendar, but an important opportunity to translate broad visions and promises into actionable and impactful realities. These discussions, coinciding with the release of global, regional, and country-wise economic updates, are particularly relevant. For Pakistan, these updates are especially pertinent as they shed light on the persistent challenges its economy faces.

The bad news is that according to the latest reports from the IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Pakistan's economy has undergone a significant downturn in the last fiscal year (FY2023), with the real GDP growth rate contracted to negative 0.2 per cent. The agricultural sector's growth was halved to 2.3 per cent, industry contracted by 3.8 per cent, and services growth nearly stagnated at 0.1 per cent. According to the World Bank and ADB, this decline is a consequence of the combined effect of different factors, including devastating floods, political unrest, and ineffective policy measures, which severely impacted investment, consumption, and production.

Inflation in Pakistan has skyrocketed to a historic peak of 29.2 per cent, driven by supply disruptions, currency depreciation, and dramatic increases in food and energy prices. Notably, food prices, which constitute more than half of the overall price index, saw a staggering rise from

Pakistan's economic reckoning

about 13 per cent to nearly 40 per cent (before taming down to 29 per cent last month).

Investment has also taken a severe hit, with public investment dropping by 31.6 per cent and private investment by 14.6 per cent, reflecting a grim economic outlook and constrained fiscal resources. To address these challenges, the State Bank of Pakistan elevated its policy rate by 700 basis points to 22.0 per cent, aiming to control inflation and manage external imbalances.

These chronic economic challenges have severe implications for human development in Pakistan. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)'s recently released human development report indicates that Pakistan ranks 164 out of 193 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI), placing it in the 'low' human development category (Afghanistan is the only other South Asian nation in this category).

The economic turmoil has exacerbated inequality and restricted access to essential services like quality education and healthcare, directly affecting the living standards necessary for improving the HDI. A significant 33 per cent decline in Pakistan's inequality-adjusted HDI highlights the considerable internal disparities within the country. In terms of gender inequality, the country's rank remains unchanged at 135 out of 166 countries. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) score remains unchanged at 0.198, indicating persistent challenges whose resolution requires something beyond doing business as usual.

The good news is that, despite the current economic and human development challenges, there is a promising pathway forward as outlined by multilaterals such as the UNDP, World Bank, IMF, and ADB. UNDP Pakistan Country Director Samuel Rizk notes that with a new government in place and ambitious reform plans, there is a significant opportunity for prosperity in Pakistan. This vision, which requires substantial mobilization of climate and SDG financing, is not only feasible but also holds the potential to uplift everyone, enhancing the prospects for human development across all societal layers. Likewise, World Bank Pakistan Country Director Najy Benhassine reminds us that Pakistan has enormous untapped development potential, which must now be realized through bold and decisive policy reforms.

What are those bold and decisive

reforms? Both ADB and the World Bank emphasize the need for structural reforms focused on enhancing fiscal management, rejuvenating the energy sector, and rectifying inefficiencies in state-owned enterprises. These reforms are crucial for broadening the tax base, reducing fiscal deficits, and making strategic investments in infrastructure that are necessary to support economic recovery and sustainability. There is a consensus on these foundational steps needed to stabilize and stimulate Pakistan's economy.

However, the 'banks' diverge slightly in their specific emphases: the ADB places a greater focus on enhancing women's financial inclusion and leveraging technology to boost productivity, particularly in the agricultural and industrial sectors. This focus aims to integrate more inclusive practices into the economic fold.

On the other hand, the World Bank advocates for robust measures to ensure fiscal consolidation and monetary stability. The Bank also emphasizes that the fiscal impact of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) is substantial, with ongoing losses since 2016. It stresses the urgent need for reforms to enhance SOE performance, efficiency, and governance. The World Bank advocates: "Privatizing SOEs and implementing the SOE Triage exercise completed in 2021 could significantly reduce fiscal drains". All multilateral partners agree: policy consistency, robust governance, and strategic infrastructure development are the keys to restoring investor confidence and fostering sustainable economic growth. When executed effectively, these reforms are projected to stabilize and gradually stimulate growth, with GDP growth anticipated at around 2.0 per cent (World Bank 1.8 per cent, ADB 1.9 per cent, and IMF 2.0 per cent) in the ongoing fiscal year and 2.8 to 3.5 per cent in FY2025 (the IMF anticipates that it can be 3.5 per cent in FY2025). The IMF also projects that the inflation rate will decrease to 24.8 per cent in 2024 and further down to 12.7 per cent in 2025.

There is little room to disagree with the ADB and World Bank's analyses that Pakistan's economy will bounce back by FY2025, provided the above-mentioned reforms are undertaken. Both lack detailed assessments of how the proposed reforms will address the underlying issues and risks highlighted in their reports, such as high inflation, low investment, and sectoral contractions. Additionally, perhaps constrained by their man-

date, their reports carry very limited discussion on addressing political instability and its economic ramifications, which are crucial for achieving sustainable growth.

More clarity is also needed on long-term economic strategies, particularly regarding sustainable development, debt sustainability, and diversification of the economy. However, the consensus among multilateral partners provides a solid foundation for these discussions and future actions.

Pakistan stands at a crossroads, confronting a choice between persevering with traditional financial bailouts and genuinely transformative economic and social reform. The prospect of returning to the IMF for assistance may not be the preferred route for many among the treasury benches, yet it presents an opportunity not merely to stabilize the economy but to reshape it fundamentally. Likewise, the upcoming negotiations with the IMF, spearheaded by Finance Minister Senator Aurangzeb during the Spring Meetings, are not just another round of fiscal adjustments but a crucial juncture to advocate for and secure a commitment to human development.

Going by the current theme of the Spring Meetings, the implementation of the next IMF programme offers a unique opportunity to enforce economic discipline while broadening the focus to include substantial investments in Pakistan's human capital for a visible impact on human development. This approach is critical, as sustainable economic growth cannot be achieved without enhancing the social and human dimensions. Education, health, social protection, and gender equality must be integral components of the reform agenda, ensuring that economic advancements are inclusive and equitable. The next IMF programme should aim not only to satisfy short-term financial metrics but also to establish a foundation for long-term development that prioritizes the well-being and potential of Pakistan's population. By effectively integrating human development goals with economic policies, Pakistan can leverage spring meetings' engagement to catalyze much-needed societal change. Such a comprehensive approach promises not just a positive economic outlook but a reinvention of Pakistan's developmental trajectory, ensuring a higher quality of life for all its citizens.

The writer heads the Sustainable Development Policy Institute. He tweets/posts @abidsuleri

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Today in History

History of Pakistan



This was challenged by the opposition, which accused Bhutto of rigging the election process. There were protests against Bhutto and public disorder, causing Chief of the Army Staff General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq to take power in

a bloodless coup. Following this Bhutto and his leftist colleagues were dragged into a two-year-long political trial in the Supreme Court. Bhutto was executed in 1979 after being convicted of authorising the murder of a political oppo-

nent in a controversial 4-3 split decision by the Supreme Court. **1977-1988: Second military era**
 Main articles: Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq § Reign as President of Pakistan, Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization, Death of Zia-ul-Haq,

and Insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir New wave of Pakistan rock music (1980-89), Fashion in Pakistan, Soviet-Afghan War, and Operation Cyclone.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Rihanna shares another 'good' update for her potential album

Rihanna debuts shinny blonde hair at her Fenty beauty x Puma launch

Another update on her much anticipated second album has been released by Rihanna, who says the tracks she's been working on are "so good." The Grammy-winning singer teased fans during a red carpet interview with Entertainment Tonight on Wednesday at the premiere of her new Fenty x Puma Creeper Phatty Earth Tone sneaker. The artist hasn't released a studio album since 2016's *Anti*. "I already got stuff that I feel like I can make hits out of. Yeah, really," Rihanna said, adding that her partner, rapper A\$AP Rocky, also loves the tracks for himself. "Me and Rocky are really trying to figure out who is going to use what because it's so



good." The Work singer said she wasn't sure when the next album would be out, teasing, "I wanna know, too." The founder of Fenty Beauty's most recent remarks are probably not going to calm the restless fans who are clamouring for more Rihanna songs. They also come after the singer revealed earlier this month that she has "a lot of visual ideas" for a new album in an interview with Interview magazine. "It's weird. My brain is working backward right now," she said at the time. "I usually have the music first, and the music leads me into all of these visual opportunities, and now I'm having all of these visuals."

Tech

Elon Musk issues fresh threat to X users



Elon Musk, the owner of X, has threatened to suspend accounts on the social media network that are discovered to be involved in 'engagement farming.' A number of users on X are farming to increase their revenue via the platform's content creator monetisation programme. This occurs as the 52-year-old billionaire battles to remove fake accounts and bots from X, the platform that was formerly known as Twitter, according to Nairametrics. When someone writes offensive or generic information in an attempt to obtain likes or comments, it's known as engagement farming. The intention is to encourage interaction

with the post to gain more followers and money. "Any accounts doing engagement farming will be suspended and traced to source," Musk wrote on X Friday.

In addition to increasing their likelihood of receiving payment from the platform, people and businesses utilise engagement farming to fictitiously increase their online visibility and authority. This included using fake accounts or technologies to inflate metrics such as likes, retweets, and follower counts, along with other practices.

The natural flow of information on Elon Musk's platform is disturbed by this activity, and authentic voices are diminished by altered content. X Crop wants to promote a unique and organic online community where content is evaluated according to its uniqueness, which is why it is blocking these accounts. Users of X have been responding to the founder of SpaceX's warning in the meantime.

You should shampoo twice if you have this hair type

Shampooing twice can help many people keep their hair healthy

Most people just give their hair a once-over with shampoo and conditioner to keep it clean, however, can "double shampooing" produce better outcomes and healthier hair?

"This hair-washing method is exactly what it sounds like — if someone double shampoos, they'll wash their hair with shampoo twice during a single shower session," Brendan Camp, MD, a board-certified dermatologist at MDCCS Dermatology, told Health.

"Deciding whether to double shampoo your hair is dependent on several factors, including hair type, activity level, and personal hair care needs," said Melanie Palm, MD, a board-certified dermatologist and cosmetic surgeon at Art of Skin MD.

Notably, double-shampooing can help a lot of people secure their hair. "So this deeper clean can be especially helpful for people with curly or coarse hair or anyone who frequently goes without wash-

ing their hair for several days," Palm told Health. "People who do not shampoo often will notice that shampooing twice makes their hair feel cleaner because it is more effective at removing oils and residue than shampooing once," Camp added. While double shampooing is meant to clear the hair and scalp of buildup and oil, using conditioner twice likely won't have the same effect, Camp said. In fact, it could "mitigate the effects of double shampooing," he explained.

Health



President Zardari commends professionalism of Pak Navy in protecting the maritime interests of country

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf calls on the President



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Friday and congratulated him on assuming the office of the President.

The Naval Chief briefed the President about the operational readiness of the Pakistan Navy in safeguarding the maritime interests of the country. He highlighted that the Pakistan Navy had the capability to defend the national sea frontiers. The President commended the professionalism of the Pakistan Navy in protecting the maritime interests of the country. Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives and property caused by the recent rains in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In a statement, the President said his sympathies are with the victims in these testing times. The President said all possible measures need to be taken for the rehabilitation and relief of the victims. He also prayed for those who lost their lives in rains-related incidents.

Good governance, relief for masses top priorities of govt: Sarfraz Bugti

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti on Friday said that providing maximum relief to the public and strengthening good governance were key priorities for the provincial government. Talking to media persons after oath ceremony at governor house, he said that the ministers who took oath would be allotted their portfolios soon. The chief minister said that the formation of the cabinet took time due to the consultation with all coalition parties. He said that currently, Balochistan was facing many challenges including terrorism and effective measures were in place to eliminate it and maintain law and order. The chief minister said that rescue and relief efforts continued in rain hit districts, adding that our teams were busy to deal with the recent torrential rains and flood situation across the province.



Washington DC: Finance Minister, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb, met with Mr. Andrew Mitchell, UK's Minister of State for Development and Africa.

British army chief lauds Pakistan Army's professionalism, expertise

LONDON: Several decorated British military officers paid glowing tributes to the allure of Pakistan while referring to the hospitality of Pakistanis as being unparalleled.

They appreciated the professionalism and versatility of the Pakistan Army, calling it one of the best and most disciplined military organisations in the world, according to a press release received here.

Around 50 senior British military men of the Quetta Association who studied and served in Pakistan Army's elite Command and Staff College in the last 50 years shared their views after attending a luncheon in their honour hosted at the Army and Navy Club in London. UK Army Chief General Patrick Sanders was the chief guest on the occasion.

The event was organised to cherish the indelible imprints of the British officer's stay at Quetta. The veteran British officers paid rich tributes, unbounded homage and reverence to the great institution at Quetta.

Notable British military officers who attended the event included Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin (1980 graduate), Lieutenant General Anthony Palmer (1981 graduate), Brigadier Nick Thompson (1971 graduate), Brigadier Tony Berry (1970 graduate) and Major General Seumas Kerr (1985 graduate). They were accompanied by their wives who were equally delighted in reminiscing the



good old memories of the past.

The event was conducted by Colonel Taimur Rahat, Army and Air Adviser at Pakistan High Commission London.

He spoke on the achievements of the Staff College and informed the audience of the value that Staff College beholds for the training and grooming of officers from 1905 onwards. Col Taimur gave various examples of how command and staff echelons in all major battles fought by the British Army from 1900s to 1950s were groomed at Quetta.

He stated that students who studied from this prestigious institution have gone on to become Viceroy, Governor Generals, Presidents and Field Marshals. Some are even credited with being founding

fathers of various Arms / Services in their country's armed forces. Countless have laid the supreme sacrifices of their lives in almost every theatre and battlefield of the world.

The message of Commandant Command and Staff College Major General Nassem Anwer was also read out in the gathering to the applause of everyone.

Souvenirs were presented on the occasion to the chief guest and other notables by spouse of the High Commissioner, Pakistan High Commission.

Commenting about the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces, the British Army Chief said there was no comparison to the Pakistan military's professional finesse and expertise. General Patrick Sanders termed Pakistan as UK Army's foremost priority in various avenues of Defence Association and Defence Collaboration during his tenure.

He fondly recalled the glimpses of his visits to Pakistan over the years and lamented about his forthcoming trip to Pakistan as his last in uniform. He spoke at length on the significance of Pakistan as an extremely vital country situated exactly at the centre of the East and the West. General Patrick Sanders referred to the enriched association and tapestry between the Pakistani and British militaries and highlighted the potential of collaborating in the Defence Industry. APP

Pakistan aims to agree outline of new IMF loan in May: Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan hopes to agree the contours of a new International Monetary Fund loan in May, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb told Reuters, and has kicked off talks with ratings agencies to lay the groundwork for a return to international debt markets.

The country's current \$3 billion arrangement with the fund runs out in late April and the government is seeking a longer and bigger loan to help bring permanence to macroeconomic stability as well as an umbrella under which the country can execute much needed structural reforms, the minister said.

"We expect the IMF mission to be in Islamabad around the middle of May - and that is when some of these contours will start developing," said Aurangzeb, who met with the Fund's Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on Wednesday during the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Spring Meetings, said a release issued by Ministry of Finance here on Friday.

He declined to outline what size programme the government hoped to secure, though Pakistan is expected to seek, opens new tab at least \$6 billion. Aurangzeb added that once the IMF loan was agreed, Pakistan would also request additional financing from the Fund under the Resilience and Sustainability Trust.

The struggling South Asian nation had managed to accumulate foreign exchange reserves in recent months and was on track for its war chest to hit \$10 billion - or roughly two months import cover - by end-June. The debt situation also looked more benign, Aurangzeb said.

"The bulk of our bilateral debt - including our China debt - is being rolled over, so in that sense I think we are in good shape and I don't see a big issue during this fiscal year nor next fiscal year, cause we need to repay roughly \$25 billion dollars every fiscal year."

Pakistan is also due to come back to international capital markets, possibly with a green bond. However, there was some more work to be done before that happens, said Aurangzeb. "We have to come back into a certain ratings environment," he said, having kicked off talks with ratings agencies, adding the government was hoping to get an improvement in its sovereign rating in the next fiscal year. "In all likelihood, any international capital markets issuance will likely be in the 2025/2026 fiscal year."



ISLAMABAD: PM's coordinator on climate change Romina Khurshid Alam holds meeting with Ms. Stoyanka, cluster coordinator, energy and climate change cluster, GIZ, Pakistan at her office.

Two Pakistani nationals killed in a terrorist attack in Karachi's Landhi area: FO

Says Pakistan remains committed to ensuring the safety of foreign nationals residing in the country



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has said that two Pakistani nationals were killed on Friday in a terrorist attack in Karachi's Landhi area. Five Japanese nationals remained unhurt during the attack. Timely action by law enforcement agencies resulted in the death of two terror-

ists, she said.

In a statement issued on Friday FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that the Government of Pakistan strongly condemns this heinous act of terrorism. All necessary measures will be taken to bring the perpetrators to justice. Such dastardly acts only strengthen the resolve of the Government and the people of Pakistan to eliminate

the scourge of terrorism, she said. Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that Pakistan remains committed to ensuring the safety of foreign nationals residing in the country. We will continue to work with our international partners to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, she said. SABAH

Modi govt broken all records of oppression to win elections: President AJK



MIRPUR-AJK: AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry on Friday said that the Modi government has broken all records of oppression, barbarism and brutality in order to win

the upcoming general elections in country. During a meeting with Former Prime Minister of AJK Sardar Atique Ahmad Khan, Barrister Sultan Mahmood said that the Indian government was engaged in a sledgehammer policy in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) region. He further said that India's intelligence agency, RAW was engaged in global terrorist activities.

Both the leaders discussed various matters of mutual concern with a focus on the political and human rights situation in the occupied territory.

Sultan emphasized the importance of unity among all political parties in AJK to expose India's nefarious designs and its efforts to suppress the legitimate struggle of Kashmiris. APP

Pakistan committed to further strengthen parliamentary cooperation with Kazakhstan: Speaker



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Friday said that Pakistan highly values its relations with Kazakhstan and is committed to further enhancing them through increased people-to-people contacts, strengthened parliamentary cooperation, expanded economic ties, and regional connectivity. He made these remarks during a meeting with the Kazakhstani Ambassador, Yerzhan Kistafin, who called on him at the Parliament House. The Speaker said that both countries share common views on various regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Ayaz Sadiq stressed the importance of enhancing parliamentary cooperation, noting that both countries were committed to strengthening their parliamentary links through increased interaction between the two legislatures.

The Speaker proposed activating the Pak-Kazakhstan Parliamentary Friendship Group and high-level exchanges between the two parliaments to bring the brotherly countries closer. He also proposed increased interaction between the business communities of both countries for mutual benefit, highlighting the immense potential for investment in oil exploration, energy generation, agriculture, and other economic sectors. Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin congratulated the Speaker on his successful re-election and expressed his country's high regard for its friendship with Pakistan, and keenness to strengthen relations and enhance cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, including parliamentary cooperation. — VOM Report

Malaysian HC hosts Eid-ul-Fitr Open House, celebrating cultural unity, bilateral ties



ISLAMABAD: Malaysian High Commissioner, Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan and his spouse, Amelia Amani Azhar here on Friday hosted an Eid-ul-Fitr

Open House at the Malaysian High Commission.

The guests, representing a cross section of the society from the diplomatic corps, senior government officials, Pakistani captains of industry, friends of the media as well as the Malaysian diaspora were among those present to celebrate the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. Donning their national costumes, the host-hostess with his team and families at the High Commission welcomed the guests with renowned Malaysian Hospitality. The guests were served with a delightful array

of traditional Malaysian and Pakistani cuisines such as Mee Goreng, Mutton Curry, Nasi Goreng, Satay with peanut sauce and traditional Eid cookies.

The gathering reflected the true spirit of friendship and peaceful co-existence amongst nations especially with the host nation, Pakistan. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Azhar underscored the importance of cultural understanding and mutual respect in strengthening bilateral ties, emphasizing the commonalities and traditions that bind the people of Malaysia and Pakistan.

He expressed gratitude to the guests for joining the celebration and reiterated Malaysia's commitment to advancing cooperation with Pakistan in various fields, including trade, investment, education, and tourism, among others. Considering the candid remarks and feedback from those present, the gathering was a success, exemplifying the strong brotherly ties and cooperation between Malaysia and Pakistan. APP

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarrar on Friday emphasized the importance of upholding parliamentary rules and traditions, urging the opposition within the National Assembly to ensure the smooth conduct of House proceedings. Addressing concerns raised by Opposition Leader Omar Ayub regarding the absence of a motion of thanks on the presidential address in the agenda, Minister Tarrar reiterated the clarity provided by the Rules of the Procedures and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly 2007. Citing Rule 60, which outlines the discussion of the President's address, Minister Azam Nazeer Tarrar highlighted the procedure stating, "At the first sitting of the Assembly held after the President's Address, a Minister shall lay a copy of the Address on the Table."

He further emphasized the neces-



sity of a motion of thanks as stipulated in Sub-Rule 2 of Rule 60 which states that the President's Address may be discussed by means of a motion of thanks moved by Minister for [Parliamentary Affairs] and seconded by any Minister or a member. Additionally, Rule 61 was referenced, which pertains to the appointment of days for discussion, and Rule 62, specifying the scope of discussion, emphasizing the importance of adhering to these rules for productive parliamentary discourse. Expressing dismay over the opposition's behavior during the address of the Constitutional head

of the country (President) in the joint session of Parliament, Minister Tarrar highlighted the need for decorum and respect for such occasions. Speaking on a point of order, Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPP) lawmaker Abdul Qadir Patel emphasized the importance of orderly conduct, ensuring that each member is given a fair opportunity to speak without disruption or disregard for parliamentary decorum by the opposition.

Meanwhile, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) legislator Noor Alam Khan protested the oath-taking of female lawmaker Sadaf Ehsan, citing party disassociation. The Speaker clarified that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had issued a notification following which the oath was being taken. Subsequently, Noor Alam Khan raised a quorum issue, which was found complete upon counting. DNA

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif meets Secretary General Digital Cooperation Organization Deema AlYahya

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with the Secretary General of Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) Deema AlYahya. Deema AlYahya congratulated CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif on being elected as the first woman Chief Minister. The CM lauded the cooperation of Digital Cooperation Organization for the promotion of Information Technology in Pakistan. She said, "The progress of every country depends on acquiring the latest technology during present time. There is a great IT potential among the Pakistani youth and future of the youth can be brightened with the provision of better training and technology. We have to enable the youth to create employment opportunities instead of searching for their jobs. There is a dire need for the promotion of Virtual Education and enhancing the number of Information Technology graduates."

The Chief Minister said, "We are keen to provide trained IT manpower to the Saudi companies from Punjab. We are keen to establish a Start Exchange Program with the superior Tech Incubators of Saudi Arabia. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia can work jointly in the chip manufacturing industries, lithium ion batteries and in the manufacturing of electric vehicle sector. Both the countries need to further enhance their cooperation to work in the agriculture and mining technologies."