



The present government is committed to enhance Pakistan's climate resilience by protecting people, their lives and livelihoods from the adverse impacts of climate change by utilizing all available resources, capacity and technical know-how."

Coordinator to PM on Climate Change
Romina Khurshid

Objective of PTI protest to derail economy, spread anarchy: Tarar



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Ataullah Tarar said on Sunday that the objective of the so-called "Tehreek-e-Intishar" was to derail the country's economy and spread

chaos and anarchy.

Talking to Media here, the minister said he wondered what were the objectives of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf protest movement?

He said he was deeply saddened by the martyrdom of Islamabad Police Constable Abdul Hameed Shah. "Abdul Hameed Shah had left home to perform security duties and was martyred by the anarchist group," he added. The anarchist movement cannot feel the grief of the family members on the martyrdom of Abdul Hameed Shah, he said.

The people of the PTI attacked the federal capital armed with weapons.

The minister said the PTI was not digesting the country's economic development, they wanted to derail the system.

Islamabad Police showed patience and performed the security duties in a friendly manner and did not allow any loss of life or property, he remarked.

He said that the PTI once again wanted dead bodies, but they were not given the opportunity.

Ali Amin Gandapur, he said invaded the federal government with government resources and weapons but he failed miserably in achieving his target.

He said that they wanted to defame the country.

Ataullah Tarar said that the country has a professional army chief and a strong leadership who cared about the country's interests.

Ali Amin Gandapur should spend the tax-payers money on the welfare of the people instead of wasting on protests and sit-ins.

King Salman Centre distributes relief goods among flood-hit families in KP

PESHAWAR: King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre on Sunday distributed relief goods among flood hit families in five districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The relief items included shelters, solar panels, plastic mats, blankets, water coolers, kitchen sets and anti-bacterial soaps.

The districts where relief items were distributed included Dera Ismail Khan, Mansehra, Kohistan, Upper and Lower Chitral. INP



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi paying tribute to martyred constable Abdul Hameed Shah during his funeral. INP

Govt won't allow anyone to destabilise economy: PM

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has stated that Pakistan's economic policies are being recognised globally, but political opponents are unable to accept the country's economic progress and are attempting to hinder its development.

During a meeting with Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday, he said that the government would not allow anyone to destabilise economy. He praised the Islamabad administration, Islamabad and Punjab police, Pakistan Army, and Rangers for their role in maintaining peace in the capital. He lauded the Islamabad police for their exemplary role in thwarting an assault on the city, highlighting the collective efforts of the security forces in ensuring law and order.

The prime minister paid tribute to Constable Hameed Shah, who sacrificed his life in the line of duty while protecting the public. "May Allah elevate the martyr's ranks. The nation will always remember this sacrifice," said the PM, expressing solidarity with the constable's family and directing that they be fully cared for. Shehbaz Sharif assured the public that the situation in Islamabad was rapidly returning to normal, and reaffirmed that economic development and national prosper-



ity remain the government's top priorities. He said the upcoming international events in Pakistan would proceed as planned, with the best security arrangements in place. Earlier, Interior Minister Naqvi briefed the prime minister on the reopening of main roads for traffic and the overall improvement in the situation, confirming that the situation was swiftly normalising. The interior minister also informed the PM

about the return of 56 Pakistani prisoners from Sri Lanka, who were expected to arrive home soon. Naqvi noted that Federal Minister for Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan had volunteered to bear all expenses for repatriation of the prisoners. The PM commended both the interior minister and the minister for privatization for their efforts in facilitating the prisoners' return from Sri Lanka. APP

President condoles with family of Shaheed Lt Col. Ali



soul; expressed sympathy with the martyr's family and also prayed for their patience, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Lt. Col. Muhammad Ali embraced Shahadat while fighting with terrorists in North Waziristan the other day.

On behalf of the nation, President Zardari paid tribute to the services and valour of Shaheed Lt. Col. Muhammad Ali.

He appreciated the affection and passion of sacrifice of late Lt. Col. Muhammad Ali Shaheed and his family for the country. The entire nation valued the sacrifices of the martyrs and their families, he said, adding the nation would not forget its martyrs and their sacrifices. INP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday visited the residence of martyred Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali in Faisalabad and expressed condolence with the bereaved family. The president offered Fateha for the departed

Closing ceremony of 10th CNS Amateur Net Shield Golf Tournament 2024 held in Lahore

LAHORE: Mr. Innam ul Haq Malik of Rawalpindi Golf club won the coveted title of 10th CNS Amateur Net Shield 2024. Closing and Prize Distribution Ceremony of 10th CNS Amateur Net Shield 2024 was held at the scenic Defence Raya Golf & Country Club, Lahore. Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Earlier, the Chief Guest was received by Commander Central Punjab Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood. The Chief Guest while congratulating the prize winners for their well-earned success also appreciated the high standard of golf displayed by them.

He also lauded the management and appreciated the consistent support from sponsors, management of club and media fraternity. Later, the Chief Guest distributed prizes among winners of all categories. The three days event was held from 4-6 Oct 24. More than 200 enthusiastic golfers from all over the country participated in Men, Ladies & Senior Amateur categories.

The Closing Ceremony was attended by sponsors and golfers of the country.

'Action must be taken against those making scene in Islamabad'



KARACHI: The Federal Minister for Education and Vocational Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Sunday said that action must be taken against those, who were becoming cause of the situation on the roads of Islamabad.

While talking to media persons after a special reception in honour of a delegation from the United Kingdom hosted by NAVTTC at a local hotel here, he said that the world was approaching towards Pakistan but some elements wanted to make her solitude at diplomatic level. He said that the attitude being posed on the roads of Islamabad should be stopped by action.

Replying to a question, the federal minister said that the National Education Policy would be announced by the end of current year or in the start of new year. He said that 25 million children were out-of-school and they had to make

efforts for them. Siddiqui said that the world needed Information Technology (IT) experts and Pakistan had youth for availing this opportunity.

The minister said that Karachi was the biggest city of Pakistan and centre of commerce and trade. There were approximately 180 million youth in the country and they should be trained in line with modern skills based on demand.

Siddiqui said and added, our first priority is International Certification in Vocational Training. He, on the occasion, also welcomed the foreign delegation and hoped that the cooperation among them would help equip Pakistani youth and students with modern market-oriented skills and education. NAVTTC Executive Director Mohammed Aamir Jan and NAVTTC Director General Sindh Aziz Chandio were also present on the occasion. APP

Interior Minister rules out talks with PTI protesters

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi on Sunday ruled out any possibility of talks with the protestors of a political party and announced the Shaheed package for the assistance of the bereaved family of Shaheed Islamabad Capital Territory Police Constable Abdul Hameed Shah to be delivered within upcoming days.

In a media talk after the funeral of the constable who was martyred during the PTI protest here, the Interior Minister said that those involved in the killing of the martyr would face law and vowed to bring the culprits to justice. He

expressed his condolences to the police and the victim's family. Naqvi informed that he had received the information of Constable Abdul Hameed's martyrdom late at night. He added that the martyr has one son employed at CDA, who would be regularized, while the other son would also be provided employment in the public department, along with a martyr's package and a plot given to the martyrs' families would be given. The minister expressed that they aimed to complete this process within next two to three days.

Interior Minister Naqvi added Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtukhwa (KP)

Ali Amin Gandapur was not present at the Khyber Pakhtukhwa House and the Islamabad police is searching for him. He said the Rangers and police had raided the Khyber Pakhtukhwa House yesterday to arrest Gandapur, but he escaped through the main entrance and there are photos of his fleeing. "The chief minister is neither in their custody nor in the custody of any Pakistani institution. We had suspicions about his presence at two to three locations, which led to the raids, but they are still maintaining roadblocks. Wherever he is found, the police will take necessary action," Naqvi said.

Mohsin Naqvi added that if there was no way to resolve the situation peacefully or through negotiations, he would not negotiate with someone who attacked his home. He stated that whoever was involved in this incident would face police action, and they would be named in the case.

In response to another question, the interior minister mentioned that Islamabad would be cleared in the next few hours. He noted that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtukhwa was wanted in connection with the events in Islamabad and further details would be provided later. INP

Punjab govt, Argentina agree to launch silos project in Okara

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz says government is providing every possible facility, including security, to the foreign investors in Pakistan. She was talking to Ambassador of Argentina in Pakistan, Sebastian Sayus, in Lahore on Sunday. They discussed ways to boost cooperation in fields of livestock, agriculture, industry and IT. Both sides agreed to launch a silos project in Okara.



Editor-in-Chief: Amna Munawwar Awan
 Editor: Muhammad Hasam
 Office # 408, 4th Floor, Evacuee Trust,
 Agha Khan Road, F-5/1 Islamabad
 Phone: + 92 51 8354964

The DEPIx report

ASGHAR SOOMRO

The Sindh government has, for the first time, voiced serious reservations regarding the Planning Commission's District Education Performance Report Index (DEPIx) 2023, calling it biased. In a jointly held press conference, the Sindh minister for Education and minister for universities and boards accused the report of deliberately downplaying the province's education performance and damaging its image in public. Are these grieves grounded in reality or are they a case of shooting the messenger? To get to the bottom of this, we need to step back and take a hard, critical and impartial look at both sides of the argument. The ministers raised mainly four key objections: the report was put together with a desk analysis without accounting for on-the-ground realities in the province; it overlooks the massive impact of the devastating floods which destroyed 50 per cent of school buildings; the report was prepared in isolation without consultation with Sindh; and the province has made tangible strides in reforming its education system – most notably with initiatives like the introduction of teaching licences, which have gone unrecognized in the report. So, what should we make of these complaints? Is it fair for Sindh to feel aggrieved, or is it simply a way to deflect criticism? One of the key accusations regarding the report is that it is nothing more than desk analysis. On this point, the provincial education minister is quite right. On page 28 of the DEPIx, it clearly outlines source data, relying on existing surveys, assessments and various census reports produced by both federal and provincial governments. So, in that sense, the analysis was largely desk-bound, built on available data rather than fresh, field-level research.

But the real question is whether the DEPIx solely relied on federal government data. Here, the evidence contradicts that claim. According to the report, the data was not drawn from a single source, it used a range of provincial data as well. For example, the Sindh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) report prepared in collaboration with UNICEF, Monitoring and Evaluation Reports, the Sindh Annual School Census Report, even notifications from Sindh Services and General Administration Department (SS&GD) were all part of the analysis. Further weakening Sindh's claim that it was sidelined is the fact that the data review process involved a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Secretary of Education from Sindh was part of this very committee. Page 72 of the report makes that abundantly clear. So, the idea that this report was crafted in isolation, without consulting the government of Sindh, simply doesn't stand up to scrutiny.

Moreover, the report provides analysis across five key domains: infrastructure and access, learning, inclusion: equity and technology, governance and management, and public financing. While Punjab is indeed ahead of Sindh in three domains (infrastructure & access, inclusion, governance & management), the gap in learning outcomes is negligible – Sindh scores 50 while Punjab scores 51. In fact, Sindh performs above the national average in the domain of learning. If the report was deliberately undermining Sindh's performance, would it still acknowledge the province's relatively strong learning outcomes? This raises an intriguing question about the missing correlation between Sindh's better-than-expected learning outcomes and its lagging infrastructure and management performance. Why has this trend not been explored further? A deeper analysis could help uncover how these factors are influencing students' learning. The report also highlights some broader trends that call for closer scrutiny. For instance, none of the top ten districts in the national rankings come from major capital cities – Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar are noticeably absent. One would expect these cities, like the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), to rank higher given their status as provincial capitals. Yet, Lahore and Peshawar didn't make it into their respective provincial top five. How do the governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa led by the PML-N and PTI respectively, explain this? Interestingly, in Sindh, all the top-performing districts are in the capital of Karachi, reflecting a different trend altogether.

If the Sindh government believes the report is designed to undermine its performance, one could argue that the report similarly undermines Pakistan's overall performance. Out of 134 districts, the majority fall into medium and low categories, with none qualifying as high performers. How does all this reflect on Pakistan's image internationally? What would the international community think of a country that has grappled with basic problems for decades? Sindh's frustration with the report is understandable, especially given the province's struggles with natural disasters and entrenched governance issues in education. However, discrediting the DEPIx on the grounds of bias might not be the strongest argument when its methodology and inclusivity of data sources tell a different story. While much of the criticism around Sindh's education system focuses on its shortcomings, it's important to acknowledge that not all is bleak.

There are significant efforts underway to improve school infrastructure, which often go unnoticed amid the louder critiques. With the support of international partners like USAID and JICA, around 140 state-of-the-art school buildings have already been constructed across the province, and the work doesn't stop there. Currently, construction of 1,000 additional schools is underway in flood-affected areas and 10 other districts. In a promising shift in school management, many of these newly built schools funded by USAID have been handed over to private entities known as Education Management Organisations (EMOs) through a competitive process. This model aims to ensure better management, accountability and overall school performance – something the traditional public management system has long struggled with.

The writer is an education expert and can be reached at: asgharsoomro@gmail.com



Eman Hassan Jugg

A silent struggle

On one side of the world, millions of people are fighting to survive, to live another day, to celebrate life. In stark contrast, there are those who voluntarily deprive themselves of this very right – a right that every citizen in the world guarantees to protect.

According to a WHO study, suicide is completed every 40 seconds, and 5.0 per cent of the global population will attempt suicide at least once in their lifetime. In 2019, over three-quarters (77 per cent) of global suicides occurred in low- and middle-income countries, as reported by WHO in 2021.

The situation in Pakistan is no different; the country has maintained a suicide rate between 8.0 and 9.0 per 100,000 people since 2000, representing a deeply concerning social issue with significant legal implications as well.

Until December 2022, suicide was classified as a criminal act in Pakistan under Section 325 of the Pakistan Penal Code, which imposed a punishment of up to one year of imprisonment along with a fine for attempted suicide. This law was intended to deter people from committing the act, but the persistently high suicide rates reflected the law's ineffectiveness. The government ultimately repealed this sec-

tion in 2022, recognizing that criminalization was not a solution.

However, merely decriminalizing suicide does not solve this deeply rooted issue. Suicide in Pakistan requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes and the challenges faced by those who experience profound hopelessness and despair.

The causes of suicide in Pakistan are multifaceted, rooted in a complex interplay of social, economic, cultural, and individual factors. Socioeconomic challenges, such as poverty and unemployment, significantly contribute, exacerbated by the country's economic crisis, high inflation, and political instability. Gender disparities, reflected in workplace harassment of women, rape, and domestic violence, also elevate suicide risks. Cultural pressures and societal expectations – including the pressure to conform to traditional norms and fulfill familial expectations – drive feelings of isolation.

These issues often lead to severe mental health problems, which largely go unaddressed. Many do not seek medical assistance due to a lack of awareness, the social stigma surrounding mental health, and limited government-supported resources. As a result, individuals experiencing these challenges may ultimately take their own lives.

A high suicide rate in a country reflects the government's failure to develop strong and effective mental health policies and programmes. Initiatives that prioritize mental health funding, train healthcare

professionals, and establish mental health facilities require legislative support. Follow-up care for those who have attempted suicide is critical, as they are at a higher risk of reattempting. Communities must foster nurturing environments for those who are vulnerable, and governments can set an example by empowering communities to do so. Awareness is also crucial, particularly through responsible media reporting. This includes educating the public about suicide, its risk factors, and available help while avoiding graphic descriptions of suicidal acts. Governments can assist by releasing public service announcements to help people identify and treat mental disorders early, ensuring that vulnerable individuals receive the necessary care before it is too late. Mental health policies should be integrated into overall healthcare services, and governments must ensure sufficient funding to improve these services.

One of the initiatives undertaken by the government of Pakistan is the launch of a mental health app called 'Humraaz' in March 2023. This app aims to provide confidential help to anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts or other mental health crises, enabling patients to arrange appointments with psychiatrists and psychologists. The government has pledged to hire and train professionals to combat the mental health crisis. However, this app has limitations.

Accessibility remains an issue, as the majority of Pakistan's population lives in rural areas with limited

access to technology. Many people are unaware of this app, and others may not be able to use it even if they are informed, either because they lack digital literacy or because seeking mental health assistance remains taboo in their communities. A grassroots campaign targeting those living on the edge of poverty and illiteracy is necessary. The primary legislative framework for mental health is the Mental Health Ordinance of 2001, under which each province has established its own regulations. However, none of these frameworks include a comprehensive plan to tackle the underlying issues that contribute to Pakistan's high suicide rates.

A holistic approach is needed – one that encompasses mental health awareness, socioeconomic development, legal reform, and cultural shifts toward a more supportive and understanding society. Improved tracking of such cases is also essential for effective suicide prevention strategies. This could include registering suicide attempts in hospitals, maintaining vital records, and conducting nationally representative surveys on self-reported attempts.

By combining legal measures with broader societal initiatives, Pakistan can work towards an environment that prioritizes mental well-being, provides support to those in need, and fosters a society where everyone has a safe space to thrive.

The writer is a law student. (Courtesy: The News)

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

History of Pakistan



When, unexpectedly, the Pakistani government declared a unilateral cease-fire and sought negotiations with New Delhi. The following month, two attempts were made on the president's life. Acts of political and religious violence continued to escalate, particularly those between Sunni and Shi'i factions. Late in December the parliament ratified most provisions of the LFO as the 17th amendment to the constitution, confirming Musharraf's power to dismiss a prime minister, dissolve the National Assembly, and appoint chiefs of the armed forces and provincial governors.

In January 2004 Musharraf sought and received an unprecedented vote of confidence from a parliamentary electoral college. In August Shaukat Aziz, a former banker and minister of finance, took the premiership. Musharraf, however, clearly continued to hold the reins of power, and, despite repeated promises to return the country to full civilian authority, he announced at the end of the year

that the country was too fragile for him to comply with his own deadlines. This applied also to the president's refusal to step down as head of the armed forces, despite repeated demands by political opponents that he do so. On the other side of the political spectrum, Musharraf had to contend with constant attacks from the MMA, who accused him of seeking to secularize Pakistan. The country continued to be subject to increasing incidents of sectarian violence, including suicide bombings at mosques and other public places. Adding to this human-generated calamity, Pakistan suffered a devastating earthquake in October 2005 in the Kashmir region that killed tens of thousands of people and left hundreds of thousands homeless.

In early 2007 Musharraf began seeking reelection to the presidency. However, because he remained head of the military, opposition parties and then the Pakistan Supreme Court objected on constitutional grounds. In March Musharraf dismissed Chief Justice Iftikhar

Mohammad Chaudhry, which sparked a general strike of Pakistani lawyers and outbreaks of violent protest in various parts of the country; the Supreme Court overturned the dismissal in July, and Chaudhry was reinstated. In October an electoral college consisting of the parliament and four provincial legislatures voted to give Musharraf another five-year term, although opposition members refused to participate in the proceedings. After the Supreme Court delayed the pronouncement of this outcome (in order to review its constitutionality), Musharraf declared a state of emergency in early November. The constitution was once again suspended, members of the Supreme Court (including Chaudhry) were dismissed, and the activities of independent news media organizations were curtailed. Later in the month, the Supreme Court, reconstituted with Musharraf appointees, upheld his reelection; Musharraf subsequently resigned his military commission and was sworn into the

presidency as a civilian. In the fall of 2007 Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto—who had also been living in exile—were permitted to return to Pakistan, and each began campaigning for upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for early January 2008. At the end of December, however, Bhutto was assassinated at a political rally in Rawalpindi, an act that stunned Pakistanis and set off riots and rampages in different parts of the country. Musharraf, having only just lifted the state of emergency, had to again place the armed forces on special alert, and he was forced to postpone the election until mid-February.

The outcome of the voting was seen as a rejection of Musharraf and his rule; his PML-Q party finished a distant third behind the PPP (now led by Asif Ali Zardari, Bhutto's widower), which captured about one-third of the parliamentary seats up for election, and Sharif's party, the PML-N, with about one-fourth of the seats.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Tech

Khloe Kardashian unveils 'super creepy' Halloween decor

Khloe Kardashian surprises kids by going above and beyond for Halloween preparations

Khloe Kardashian shared her excitement for the spooky season by revealing her plans for this year's Halloween, while looking back at past years' décor. The Keeping Up With the Kardashians star shared the behind-the-scenes progress of her Halloween prep, including a surprise feature for her kids, of their beloved classic spooky character. Khloe took to her Snapchat on Thursday, October 3rd, to walk her fans through her seasonal décor. "We have a special guest at the front of the house..." she said, before disclosing that the "guest" is the infamous The Nightmare Before Christmas protagonist Jack Skellington. "This year for my Halloween décor, I



wanted to do something that the kids would love," she wrote, before showing off her decorations.

The socialite shared that her kids, True, six, and Tatum, two, who she shares with her ex Tristan Thompson, "love" the 1993 musical character. However, the gigantic, suit-wearing skeletons aren't the only spooky decorations the Halloween-loving star chose for this year. "We have two giant Jack Skellingtons out front!!" the mom-of-two wrote alongside photos of the setup. "And super creepy pumpkins." Compared to her last year's "cutesy" décor, she has stepped out of her comfort zone as she shared in the throwback photo series.



Aurora borealis to light up skies as strong G3 solar storm approaches Earth

October is off to a hot start as a significant solar storm is currently headed towards the Earth and is likely to bring back striking auroras to the skies which were witnessed by many Earthlings from the front seat, earlier this year. Recently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) warned that a solar storm, which is classified as a strong "G3-class geomagnetic storm" – the third most powerful category after the G4 and G5 – is likely to hit Earth on Friday. According to the NOAA, this will be the second geomagnetic storm to hit Earth in five months this year. Experts at the United States-based scientific

and regulatory agency said that, while this solar storm will not have a direct effect on humans, it will impact sensitive electrical systems, such as power grids and satellites and navigation systems but the threat should be "mostly mitigatable."

These geomagnetic storms are triggered by eruptions on the sun's surface, such as solar flares, which release large amounts of plasma into space, eventually impacting our planet's atmosphere, Gizmodo reported.

Previously, NOAA cautioned that a solar flare could result in a coronal mass ejection (CME), expelling solar particles towards Earth. The severity will be "dependent upon the orientation of the embedded magnetic field," according to the alert.

However, CMEs can result in bright auroras, giving people on Earth another chance to witness a stunning display of bright aurora borealis that may be visible over many of the northern US states, the lower Midwest, and even as far as Oregon.

Rawalpindi patient caught viral infection, not MERS-CoV: official

RAWALPINDI: The patient who was thought to have contracted Middle East Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in Rawalpindi was actually suffering with a viral infection, said a health official on Saturday. Muhammad Ameen, who hailed from Punjab's Kharian, had returned from a Middle Eastern country a month ago. MERS-CoV – not to be confused with COVID-19, commonly known as the coronavirus, pandemic – is a viral respiratory illness first identified in 2012, and has been reported in 27 countries. However, Medical Superintendent of Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH) Dr Tahir Rizvi said MERS-CoV was not detected in the patient. "The patient has been discharged after his recovery and testing negative for MERS-CoV," the official said. Following suspicion of Ameen's contracting MERS-CoV, at least 40 members of his

"Patient has been discharged after his recovery and testing negative for MERS-CoV," says doctor

family were tested for the virus.

The 55-year-old was transferred to BBH in Rawalpindi on September 5, where he remained in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for several days. He was kept in isolation.

The MERS-CoV disease has a mortality rate of around 36%, although this figure may be inflated due to the underreporting of mild, undetected cases. Symptoms of MERS-CoV include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, with some patients developing severe respiratory distress. The mortality rate is particularly high among

those with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes or chronic lung disease. The infection is usually diagnosed through laboratory testing of respiratory specimens, but early detection remains challenging due to the nonspecific nature of its initial symptoms, which often resemble those of other respiratory illnesses. Human-to-human transmission has been linked to delays in recognising symptoms and implementing isolation measures, highlighting the critical need for early detection and swift responses to potential cases.

As the world continues to battle respiratory infections, including COVID-19, maintaining awareness of MERS-CoV remains crucial. Public health education, hygiene practices, and responsible interactions with camels are key to preventing the spread of this dangerous virus.



Health

Strict action will be taken against orchestrators, abettors & perpetrators of violent attacks on police: IG Islamabad Nasir Rizvi

Says those involved in the killing of police constable Abdul Hameed Shah will not be spared



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Islamabad Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi has said strict action will be taken against orchestrators, abettors and perpetrators of violent attacks on police, law enforcement agencies and public property.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Sunday, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said those involved in the killing of police constable Abdul Hameed Shah will not be spared. He said a strict First Information Report, as per the law, will be lodged against these elements. He added that Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur was leading this onslaught.

The Inspector General of Police said so far 10 FIRs have been registered against violent protesters. He said 878 miscreants, including 120 Afghan nationals, have been arrested. He added 144 safe-city cameras worth 154 million rupees, 10 police vehicles, 31 motorcycles of police personnel, and three private cars were badly damaged by the violent protesters.

Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said resources of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government were used in this onslaught on the Federal Capital. He said eight Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police officials were arrested, while slingshots, live teargas shells, government and private weapons were recovered from the violent protesters.

The Inspector General, however, said the Islamabad Police is fully alert and committed to protect the citizens' lives, property and honour. He said no one will be allowed to disturb peace and tranquility in the Federal Capital. He said now the police force is going after miscreants' hideouts in every nook and corner of the Islamabad Capital Territory. Answering a question, the Inspector General said Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is neither in the custody of police nor other law enforcement agencies. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: Commandant Frontier Constabulary (FC), Muhammad Riaz Nazir Gara visiting the troops at D Chowk on Sunday to boost their motivation and enthusiasm. ONLINE

Pro-Palestinian crowds rally across the world on the eve of Oct 7 anniversary

PARIS: Crowds were participating in pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli protests and memorial events across the world on Sunday on the eve of the first anniversary of the Hamas attacks on Israel.

Sunday's events follow massive rallies that took place Saturday in several European cities, including London, Berlin, Paris and Rome. Other events are scheduled through the week, with an expected peak on Monday, the date of the anniversary.

In Australia, thousands of people on Sunday protested in support of Palestinians and Lebanon in various cities, while a pro-Israeli rally also took place in Melbourne.

Samantha Gazal, who came to the rally in Sydney, said she was there "because I can't believe our government is giving impunity to a violent extremist nation and has done nothing... We're watching the violence play out on livestream, and they're doing nothing."

In Melbourne, supporters of Israel held up posters showing Israeli hostages who are still missing. "We feel like we didn't do anything to deserve this," said Jeremy Wenstein, one of the participants. "We're just supporting our brothers and sisters who are fighting a war that they didn't invite."

At a rally in Berlin, near the Brandenburg Gate, hundreds of pro-Israeli demonstrators set off the famed Unter den Linden behind a banner that read "Against all antisemitism," accompanied by a police escort.

With many Israel flags waving over head, some Jewish leaders led a song about "shalom" — peace — while marchers chanted "Free Gaza from Hamas!" and "Bring them home," referring to hostages still held in the Gaza strip.

Some in the crowd held up photos of hostages still held by Hamas. Photos of several women featured the word "Kidnapped" in German.

Memorial events organized by the Jewish community for those killed in the Oct. 7 attack and prayers for those still in captivity were also to be held in Paris and London on Sunday afternoon.

Security forces in several countries warned of heightened levels of alert in major cities, amid concerns that the escalating conflict in the Middle East could inspire new terror attacks in Europe or that some of the protests could turn violent.

On Sunday, Italy's Premier Giorgia Meloni expressed her "full solidarity" with police, the day after security forces used tear gas and water cannons to disperse violent demonstrators in Rome.

Meloni firmly condemned clashes between a few pro-Palestinian demonstrators and law enforcement officers, saying it was "intolerable that dozens of officers are injured during a demonstration."

Thirty police officers and four protesters were hurt in clashes at the pro-Palestinian march in Rome Saturday, local media said. In Rome's central Piazzale Ostiense, hooded

protesters threw stones, bottles and even a street sign at the police, who responded using water cannons and tear gas.

Pope Francis, celebrating his Sunday Angelus prayer from the Vatican, issued a new appeal for peace "on every front." Francis also urged his audience not to forget the many hostages still held in Gaza, asking for "their immediate liberation."

The pope called for a day of prayer and fasting on Monday, the first anniversary of the attack.

On Oct. 7 last year, Hamas launched a surprise attack into Israel, killing 1,200 Israelis, taking 250 people hostage and setting off a war with Israel that has shattered much of the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.

More than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed since then in Gaza, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not differentiate between fighters and civilians. It says more than half were women and children.

Nearly 100 Israeli hostages remain in Gaza, with fewer than 70 believed to be alive. Israelis have experienced attacks — missiles from Iran and Hezbollah, explosive drones from Yemen, fatal shootings and stabbings — as the region braces for further escalation.

In late September, Israel shifted some of its focus to Hezbollah, which holds much of the power in parts of southern Lebanon and some other areas of the country, attacking the militants with exploding paggers, airstrikes and, eventually, incursions into Lebanon. Agencies

'Great Debate': Power minister, CEOs, experts weigh in on controversial issue of IPPs

ISLAMABAD: Panelists discuss growing public outcry over skyrocketing electricity bills and ongoing debate surrounding IPPs capacity payments. Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Awasi Leghari, alongside top officials of private electricity companies, and economists, are weighing in on the contentious issue of independent power producers (IPPs) in the debate anchored by Senior journalist, analyst and anchor Shahzad Iqbal, Leghari addressed the growing public outcry over skyrocketing electricity bills and the ongoing debate surrounding capacity payment charges (CPC) to IPPs.

He acknowledged the need for a thorough review of these agreements, hinting that the government is open to exploring ways to renegotiate terms with IPPs to bring some relief to consumers. Hubco CEO Kamran Kamal, Lucky Electric Power CEO Rohail Muhammad, FPCCI Vice President Asif Inam, former caretaker minister Gohar Ijaz, and Economist Ammar Habib Khan added their voices, stressing the urgency of reforms.

With rising inflation and energy costs, nearly all participants, including prominent entrepreneurs, were on the same page regarding the fact that it was high time to reconsider the current arrangements.

As the programme unfolds, the discussion is expected to delve deeper into whether revising IPP contracts can lead to immediate relief for the public.

The government is in a catch-22 situation. The high cost of electricity has become a contentious political issue, with opposition parties leveraging public dissatisfaction to criticise the incumbent government's handling of the energy sector.

Analysts say that the political implications of the controversy surrounding capacity payments to IPPs are equally significant. The burden of high electricity tariffs falls disproportionately on the middle and lower-income segments of society, fuelling public outrage and eroding trust in the government's ability to manage the economy. The controversy also exposes the challenges of governance and accountability in Pakistan's energy sector.

Addressing these governance issues is crucial for restoring public trust and ensuring the sustainable development of the energy sector.

A successful renegotiation with both local and international IPPs would drastically reduce tariffs, boost industrial competitiveness, and increase public trust in the government's ability to effectively manage the economy.

On the other hand, a failed renegotiation could multiply the tariffs, bringing the government and consumers under added financial strain, crippling industry, and fanning the public unrest. Any populism-driven deviations from International Monetary Fund (IMF) terms under the current \$7 billion loan programme will not bode well for the country's macroeconomic stability. Agencies

KP CM surfaces in KP Assembly



PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Sunday resurfaced and entered the KP Assembly after the PTI demanded his production

within 24 hours. Gandapur was greeted with cheers and applause as he entered the KP Assembly building.

Earlier in the evening, the provincial assembly passed a resolution demanding that CM KP to be presented within 24 hours.

The chief minister's whereabouts had been unknown since Saturday from KP House in Islamabad. APP

Case registered against Imran Khan for planning the D-Chowk protest

ISLAMABAD: A case has been registered against PTI founder Imran Khan for allegedly planning the D-Chowk protest. The charges against him included kidnapping, robbery, attempted murder, interference with government operations, and violations under the Anti-Terrorism Act, among 13 sections in total. The case was filed by Sub-Inspector Qaiser Mehmood and named Imran Khan along with 14 local leaders. The complaint stated that, contrary to prison manual, Imran Khan was granted extraordinary illegal facilities while incarcerated. It alleged that he incited his political workers to violence against the state and institutions during visits and communications from jail. The FIR further claimed that Imran Khan compelled PTI leaders to lead a violent mob, resulting in the abduction of a constable and injuries to five others through gunfire and petrol bombs. Additionally, the report mentioned that police arrested 105 protesters and confiscated 20 catapults, 2,500 mobile balls, 40 sticks, and nine vehicles from them. Agencies

Federal govt imposes ban on PTM

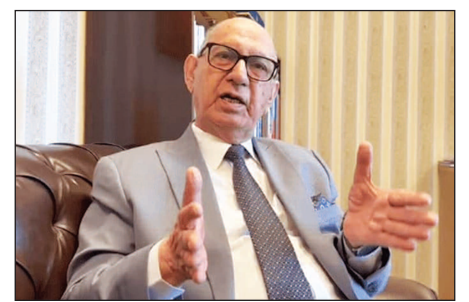


Interior Ministry, the PTM is declared "unlawful" under Section 11B of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997. The announcement from the Interior Ministry stated that the PTM poses a "significant danger" to public order and safety in the country. APP

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Sunday has imposed a ban the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), citing threats to national peace and security. According to a notification issued by the

'Strongly condemns PTI for utilizing provincial resources against federation'

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in the Senate, Irfan Siddiqui has strongly condemned Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf for utilizing provincial resources against federation. In a post on his official X-handle, Senator Irfan Siddiqui said it happened many times in past that government of PML-N and the Pakistan People's Party was in some parts of federation and provinces, but it was never happened that any of the federating unit attacked the federation under the leadership of Chief Minister. SABAH



NDRMF supporting National Climate Finance Strategy to be launched at COP29: Bilal Anwar

ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), Bilal Anwar on Sunday said the Fund is assisting the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination in formulation of the National Climate Finance Strategy that would be launched at the COP29.

The NDRMF is supporting the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination by extending financial and technical assistance in establishing the COP pavilion, pre-COP events and writing position papers on different agenda items like Article 13, Article 6 and others under the Paris Accord, the CEO NDRMF said in an exclusive interview with APP while showcasing the efforts and accomplishments of the Fund.

The Fund is also assisting in formulation of the National Climate Finance Strategy that would be launched at the COP29, he said. Denouncing the criticism on COP Pavilions, Bilal Anwar said the criticism on the COP pavilions established by the country at previous conferences was unfair. "Pakistan's pavilion has enhanced its utility in the previous two to three

COPs as during the COP27 due to 2022 floods it has garnered much attention whereas during the COP28, some 29 events were organised throughout the moot at the pavilion. Pakistan this time has a wonderful story to tell at COP29," Bilal said.

The Fund, he said have launched its first Business Policy 2024 that helped in repurposing and redefining it over a course of 18-month to change the donors' mindset for well-informed disaster resilience interventions.

The document is a 10-year long-term policy intervention being implemented after extensive consultations with all stakeholders, he added.

"Resilience building is a long-term process and its challenging amid growing climate catastrophes as every intervention has its impacts but a long-term strategy is necessary and the NDRMF Business Policy is addressing it. There have been repeated discussions with relevant bodies, provinces, fund implementing partners (FIPs), researchers, practitioners and experts related to the subject which resulted into culmination of our efforts in the form of the strategy," Bilal Anwar said. The Business Policy, he said has bagged huge acclaim from the donors

who have demanded a framework under the Policy to continue their operations in line with the national document.

The Policy has been aligned with the National Climate Change Policy, National Adaptation Plan, National Disaster Management Plan, National Flood Protection Plan IV, Disaster Risk Financing Strategy and National Climate Finance strategy which is in the offing, he added.

"Previously, the disaster risk management has been a supply-driven realm curated by the donor agencies whereas the NDRMF approach at present is demand driven that has been worked out after extreme strides in the field and keeping in view our extensive knowledge of national challenges and needs or priorities of the community," he said.

Bilal Anwar pointed out that the Fund was educating the donors fraternity to look countries from their communities' lens based on their indigenous priorities to align their fundings accordingly. He added that there was a huge knowledge gap across the country as the funding in disaster risk management was implemented without risk

financing. "The National Catastrophe model (NATCAT) Data Center has been established with the support of the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) whereas a special application to be built on its data is underway," he said.

"The NATCAT unlike the conventional databases is a progressive tech-based solution using most-modern approach and solutions," he said, adding that it could help drawing risk profiling of intended regions and use that risk modelling to assess future disaster before time."

The NDRMF CEO underlined that there have been nine perils identified by this system and it could undertake 400 years modelling in case of flood and gauge its impacts. He informed that the Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) Strategy has been recently approved by the government which was enacted in the aftermath of devastating 2022 floods' impacts and losses borne by the government. The government, he said used to divert the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) fundings which was not sustainable. APP



Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami giving away trophy to Inam ul Haq Malik winner of 10th CNS Amateur Net Shield Golf Tournament. (Story on page 1)

Pakistan' economy shows signs of recovery, says Rana Ihsan Afzal

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan Sunday expressed optimism about Pakistan's economic recovery, highlighting the government's initiatives that have boosted investor confidence, exporter confidence, and attracted foreign investment, paving the way for sustainable economic growth.

Pakistan's economic recovery is gaining momentum, driven by strategic reforms and investments, he said in an exclusive talk with PTV news channel.

Pakistan's economy is showing promising signs of recovery, thanks to the government's strategic efforts, he said. He painted a positive picture of Pakistan's economic outlook and expressed confidence in the government's reform agenda, citing notable progress in tax stabilization, privatization and exporter support. Pakistan is poised for significant economic growth, with a focus on resolving long-standing issues faced by manufacturers and exporters,

he said, adding, the government is actively addressing refund issues and implementing strategies to boost exports.

In fact, Pakistan has planned to raise its exports to \$50 billion in five years, with an ambitious long-term target of \$100 billion, he added.

Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan emphasized that eliminating the non-filer category will have a positive impact on exporters, boosting Pakistan's economic growth.

Coordinator to the Prime Minister also highlighted a significant shift in Pakistan's economy, adding, previously, investments were largely concentrated in the property sector, which did not contribute significantly to the country's economic growth.

He mentioned that maintaining an exchange rate aligned with market rates is our priority to benefit exporters. Responding a query, he said the government has committed to maintaining current tax rates in the budget, prioritizing sustainability over increases. APP