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The World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) has released a report on "Climate Change Adaptation in the Indus Eco-region: A Micro Econometric Study of the Determinants, Impact, and Cost Effectiveness of Adaptation Strategies." Prepared in collaboration with the London School of Economics and the Lahore University of Management Sciences, the report highlights the impact of climate change on this country's agriculture and food security. It reckons by 2040, assuming a 0.5 degree Celsius increase in average nationwide temperature, 8-10 percent loss in expected Rs 30,000 per acre, which is worrisome but unsurprising. As a matter of fact, Pakistan is known to be one of the top ten countries most vulnerable to effects of global warming. Environmental scientists have been warning of melting of the Himalayan glaciers, leading to alternating periods of floods and droughts, and ultimately a long-term water scarcity, which would have a devastating impact on this country's agrarian economy.

What is important about the WWF report are its recommendations for an optimal public policy response to climate change. Its authors suggest specific methods that can help improve crop resilience to temperature and rainfall variations, and also five on-farm adaptation measures for raising productivity of cotton and wheat crops (not rice) by up to 49.52 percent. Almost half of the farmers in Punjab and Sindh are not applying these measures due to lack of awareness, says the report, while asking the government to introduce low-cost climate field schools to equip farmers with the knowledge of climate resilient methods within tillage, agri-chemical input use, crop husbandry and irrigation. These recommendations should form part of the sustainable development goals. They are an important reminder of the clear and present threat of changing weather patterns. Unfortunately, however, the issue continues to be assigned low priority by the government. In 2012 the national disaster management ministry was renamed climate change ministry. But soon after it came to power, the PML-N government downgraded it to a division, until last January, when the ministry status was restored and a party leader, Mushahid Ullah Khan, appointed as minister. The change though seems to have come more out of a desire to reward Khan with a coveted position than a serious interest in confronting the challenge of climate change. Similarly, the provinces remain unenthusiastic about fulfilling their responsibilities. After the 18th Amendment, almost all the related subjects like environment, agriculture, and food production have been devolved to the provinces. These departments need to come together in an integrated policy response to environmental change. Equally important, the federal government must get serious about the issue and make substantial allocations to the climate change ministry so it can undertake a well-defined goal-oriented programme, in cooperation with provincial governments, for addressing the impending threat in an effective and meaningful manner.

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Major General Asghar Nawaz, Friday, said that pattern of upcoming monsoon would become clear by the May and June. Presently, our meteorological department is incapacitate to issue long range or short range forecast, therefore, it is quite impossible to forecast about the tenure, quantity, potential and velocity of the upcoming monsoon he said while talking to Pakistan Observer after the conclusion of ceremony of three day training of facilitators on Disaster Management in coordination with World Food Program (WFP). He said that our meteorological department could only issue a forecast of seven days, whereas in developed countries, meteorological department were able to issue two month or three month forecasts. Therefore, to it was need of the hour to develop our own forecast system. However, we are quite prepared to handle in kind of disaster and training of facilitators was also a part of preparedness he said adding that natural disasters were quite imminent therefore NDMA in collaboration with provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs), irrigation departments and others was making all out efforts to grid the lions to tackle any untoward situation in the upcoming rainy season.

After getting the true picture of pattern of monsoon, the necessary steps with adequate resources will be made in the possible affected areas. To a question, he observed that participants of the training were selected from those organizations which supposed to handle the disastrous situation on the ground and their preparedness was pivotal to tackle the situation. Moreover, he said that process of analyzing the situation of any disaster started soon after the happening of disaster as both the federal and provincial departments joined heads to assess the volume of losses and damages to the infrastructure, crops and others and on the basis of assessment precautionary and safeguard measures were taken to avert such situation in future. The participants of the training included responsible for planning, designing and delivering the simulation exercises. Similar simulation exercise was also carried out in June 2014. The training was imparted by WFP Readiness Initiative Team and the purpose was to familiarize officials on how to design, build and implement an emergency management simulation exercise as well as to test disaster response plans, procedures, contingency plans and SOPs. Training session was inaugurated by Anthony Craig Senior Preparedness Advisor WFP, Geneva, Switzerland.

Faisalabad: Food insecurity in the country has been aggravated by natural disasters, land degradation, water scarcity and climate change, speakers at an International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) PhD workshop being held at University of Agriculture Faisalabad said.

The workshop is being funded by German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Researchers
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and scientists from eight countries are participating in the three-day event. Speakers said poor crop production and poor public health had also emerged as other pressing issues. Prof. Dr. Robert Buskirk from University of Kassel, Germany, said consolidated efforts were needed to combat food insecurity. “There are many organisations willing to work with the government on this issue.” He said often good policies enacted by governments failed to filter down to the ground. “The government has made many commitments to combat food insecurity but numbers keep deteriorating.” He said researches should address the issue. He added that the ICDD was focusing on four core research subjects, including decent work along with land use, food insecurity and unemployment, food to filter down to the ground. “The farming community is vulnerable to these changes and there are not enough safety nets to support the affected farmers.”

KARACHI: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has officially handed over the Humanitarian Response Facility (HRF) to the Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) so as to enhance its emergency response capacity. WFP official talking to APP Friday said the HRF network, established in the aftermath of the 2010 monsoon floods, is a joint project between WFP and the Government of Pakistan with the primary objective to increase the emergency and disaster response capacity of both the government and the humanitarian community in Pakistan.

It was mentioned that the project in Sindh was initiated in July 2014 and has been completed in record time of 8 months at a cost of Rs 250 million. The HRF was said to cover 9.1 acres and has one 20 by 50 meter warehouse, two 15 by 32 meter warehouses and one 10 by 20 meter climate resistant warehouse to store temperature sensitive food items such as vaccines, milk, medicines. The total covered storage capacity of the facility was cited to be 3000 metric tons and an open space of up to 10,000 metric tons. Four pre-fabricated offices and a reinforced paved area to facilitate truck movement have also been constructed. The facility has been designed to cater to basic needs of the warehouse staff and is equipped with alternate power solutions (generator). The structure is also earthquake resistant and other environmental hazards have been factored into its construction. WFP officials said that the Government of Pakistan has provided land to WFP to construct 8 strategically located HRFs in each of the most disaster-prone districts to enhance the country’s emergency response capacity.

The project is being implemented in close coordination with the NDMA and PDMAs of Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan with the generous funding provided by the government and the people of Japan, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the United States of America. WFP is also providing training on how to run and maintain the HRFs effectively as well as targeted training on emergency response. It may be pertinent to mention that in the past decade, the people of Sindh have suffered considerable losses due to natural disasters affecting the province including the flooding in 2010, heavy rains in 2011 and drought in 2014. Experts confirm that continuous shocks have left the inhabitants of Sindh, especially those residing in rural areas depending on agriculture and livestock, vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition. Since, victims of human induced or natural disasters can lose everything they own as well as their sources of livelihood in minutes hence being prepared for such emergencies and being able to immediately respond is a top priority for the Government and WFP, said the official.

SWABI: The farmers, whose crops were affected by the recent hailstorm, on Thursday asked the provincial government to declare the district as calamity-hit. Talking to reporters, the representatives of the farmers said the hailstorm damaged the crops, especially tobacco crop and wheat in the district. They said that it was the responsibility of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to support the affected growers. Liaqat Yousufzai, general secretary of Kashtkar Coordination Council, said that they had planned to meet the elected representatives and brief them about the plight of the poverty-stricken farmers after the hailstorms. “We expect that the government will extend us financial help,” he remarked. Aamir Gohati, district president of Anjuman-i-Kashtkaran Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said there was need of a survey by the provincial government about the damage caused by the hailstorm. “The elected representatives should extend financial help to the growers,” he said. Khalid Khan, district president of Kisar, said that farmers needed financial help. “The elected representatives must play a role to facilitate the affected farmers,” he said.

LAHORE: Pakistan (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Food and water security in Pakistan, already fragile in many parts of the South Asian nation, face an additional threat from climate change impacts, an independent human rights watchdog said on Friday April 17. “(The) pattern of (the) monsoon is shifting. For the third year running, a pre-monsoon spell of heavy rain and hail in March has damaged crops,” the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report. “This farming command there are not enough safety nets to bolster them and help them secure food security,” it added. Pakistan’s Federal Committee on Agriculture has fixed a wheat production target of 26.3 million tonnes for the October 2014 to March 2015 season, against 25.3 million tonnes harvested in the same period a year ago. The wheat harvest in southern areas such as Sindh province is about to start. In eastern Punjab, northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and southwestern Balochistan provinces, it is due to begin in 2015.
Ghulam Rasul, the chief meteorologist at the Pakistan Meteorological Department, has warned that March’s abnormal early rains and predictions of uncertain weather in the wheat harvesting and the threshing season may cause losses to farmers. Strong winds, as experienced in recent weeks, can also knock mangoes off trees and hail storms could affect the quality of the fruit in southern parts of Punjab. Rasul was quoted as saying in the national media. Other Rabi crops - which are sown in winter and harvested in the summer - such as mustard, gram, lentil, potato and other vegetables are also under threat this year, he added.

COSTS TO FARMERS: Researchers warned in a new study this week of the rising costs of climate change to Pakistan’s farming households. “With increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, agricultural productivity - corresponding to 30,000 rupees ($295) per acre - if we don’t introduce adaptive farming techniques,” said Ahmad Rafay Alam, an independent climate change expert and environmental lawyer. Ali Dehlavi, one of the report’s authors and an economist with WWF-Pakistan, said productivity of cotton and wheat crops could be increased by up to around 50 per cent if adaptation measures were put into practice. The Human Rights Commission report recommended making adaptation plans to grow different crops or introduce varieties that could cope better with changing weather patterns. The commission’s chairperson, Zohra Yusuf, said the prognosis is grim, due to population pressures, diminishing natural resources and rising poverty.

The report also noted a “gap in governance”, which “belies the impression of government knowledge, or concern about the threats from a degraded environment”. The federal government has largely devolved issues including the environment, ecology, health, food production and agriculture to the provinces. Lawyer Alam said provincial authorities, especially in Sindh and Punjab, have made little effort to draw up climate adaptation policies. “The provinces are just as responsible for ensuring water and food security as the federal government, but there appears no sense of the urgency to respond to the magnitude of the challenge,” he said.

TENSIONS OVER WATER: The report noted that the availability of water for agriculture, industry, urban use and environmental flows “is still contentious”, especially given the prospect of glacial retreat amid rising temperatures. Disagreements over how to share water resources have created tensions with neighbouring India, as well as among Pakistan’s provinces. Human Rights Commission head Yusuf said climate extremes and pressure on limited resources like water could also spur internal migration. “Movement of population from one area to another due to environmental reasons - floods, drought - causes problems both for displaced people and host communities,” she added. Alam said the Indus Waters Treaty, which regulates the rights of India and Pakistan over the tributary rivers of the Indus except the Kabul River, had been able to resolve disputes so far. But that had not stopped accusations in Pakistan that India is violating the treaty, he added. “We probably waste and pollute more water than Indian is supposedly ‘stealing’,” he said.

In Pakistan, the Indus River System Authority regulates the flow of water between Punjab and Sindh. But Alam said “shaky official platforms” had not been able to find compromises between provinces on how the waters of the Indus Basin should be allocated and used. “Depleting water resources are going to severely affect food security, which is already a cause for concern because of the high population growth rate,” the commission’s report noted.

Met Office predicted scattered rains-thundershowers in upper parts of the country during next 2-3 days. Met Office informed that a westerly weather system is likely to enter upper parts of the country on Saturday (Evening) and expected to persist in upper parts till Monday. Under the influence of this weather system rain-thundershowers associated with few hailstorms is predicted in Islamabad, upper & central Punjab (Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Gujranwala and Lahore divisions), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar, Kohat, Malakand, Mardan, Hazara, divisions), Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir during Sunday-Monday. Outbreaks of strong winds are also expected at isolated places in Sahiwal, Multan, D.G Khan, D.I Khan, Bannu and Zhob divisions on Saturday (night)/Sunday. The farmers of Punjab, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and FATA are advised to take precautionary measures for harvesting wheat crop during the period.

On 18 March, the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) culminated in the official adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030). UNDP was actively engaged in this process, both in the months of development leading up to it and at the WCDRR itself. UNDP welcomed the new framework and congratulated Member States and UNISDR on managing this process. Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator who led UNDP’s delegation, also expressed UNDP’s appreciation to Japan and to Prime Minister Abe in particular for hosting the Conference and for remaining such an important global leader on DRR.

A big part of UNDP’s advocacy campaign over the last year has been to emphasize that disasters are the result of poor, risk-blind development choices, and to encourage partners to adopt a risk-informed approach to sustainable development. Substantially, the Framework consists of four priority areas relevant to the business of disaster risk reduction at the country level: (1) understanding disaster risk; (2) strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (3) investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience; and (4) enhancing disaster preparedness for an effective response and with a view to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. UNDP’s support to the process has led to its recovery as two of the four dedicated priority areas. UNDP announced at Sendai the development of a new 10-year global programme called ‘5-10-50’. This programme, which is still under development and targeting an early 2016 release, will see UNDP support 50 countries with comprehensive risk-informed development. Further information on this programme will be made available in the months ahead as we continue the development phase.

Across Pakistan, communities struggle with the threats posed by the environment in which they live. Many areas of the country are prone to natural disaster, from drought to flood, to devastating
The mountainous areas of Gilgit and Chitral districts are increasingly vulnerable to devastating glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF). We work with the Government of Pakistan and the Adaptation Fund to reduce this environmental risk. In 2014, we strengthened district disaster emergency response cells and prepared risk reduction plans in the worst affected valleys (Bagrot and Bindo Gol), and improved the GLOF monitoring system. Meteorological observatories were established in these valleys, and trained community volunteers now regularly record and analyse data. UNDP’s Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy is closely aligned with national policy and the National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP). In 2014, we helped the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) establish the NDMP Implementation Unit to monitor implementation, improve coordination, and mobilize resources from international development partners. With the NDMA we ran the National Institute for Disaster Management, which trains officials working in disaster management. Effective response to disaster is dependent on timely information. In 2014, we helped the Pakistan Meteorological Department to develop and field-test an early warning system using FM radio to broadcast messages even to remote and inaccessible regions during the 2014 monsoon season.

There is a growing chorus of voices blaming climate change for fostering more conflict and violence. Books have been released on the impending age of climate wars, while media outlets dutifully report on research that purports to show how global warming will increase violence of every form, from the number of times pitches throw batters in baseball to the rate of sexual assault. Concern has become so widespread the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change devoted a chapter of its Fifth Assessment Report to the topic. In it, the authors write, “there is justifiable common concern that climate change or changes in climate variability increase the risk of armed conflict in certain circumstances, even if the strength of the effect is uncertain.” But is this relationship between climate change and conflict set in stone? Could we leverage changes to the environment to promote peace instead? According to one group of researchers, the answer may be yes.

Disasters on the Upswing: In the near future, it seems likely most people will encounter climate change through disasters and extreme events. Evidence suggests the number and scope of natural disasters has increased significantly in the last few decades. According to data from the Emergency Events Database, the world averaged 58 natural disasters a year during the 1960s. From 2000 to 2010, this number increased nearly eightfold to 449 per year. While some of this spike stems from the combined effects of economic growth and demographic changes putting more people and property at risk, a recent study has also linked the trend to climate change. Accordingly, it may seem we are likely to see a more violent planet in the wake of climate-driven droughts, floods, and heat waves. The concept of disaster diplomacy, however, asserts otherwise: that disaster response can be an opportunity to create positive change in societies and between countries. Introduced by Ilan Kelman in a special edition of the Cambridge Review of International Affairs in 2000, disaster diplomacy recognizes that while natural disasters may reinforce inequalities and trigger conflicts, they can also provide a mechanism to break down existing social cleavages and foster goodwill among the affected, even among nominal adversaries. Humans are naturally inclined to cooperate when catastrophes strike.

Disaster diplomacy theory builds upon earlier research, particularly the work of sociologist Charles E. Fritz, who argued in 1981 that disasters create an “community of sufferers.” Because serious disasters can affect large numbers of people living in the same communities, they may engender a sense of solidarity and unity of purpose among survivors. At least in the immediate aftermath, all survivors share a common goal – rebuilding their lives. This shared experience can alter social relations and help bridging existing divides. There is considerable evidence that humans are naturally inclined to cooperate with one another when catastrophes strike. One can find evidence of this around the globe, from survivors of the Haiti earthquake moving rubble with their bare hands to rescue strangers, to the thousands of doctors, nurses, and health workers who volunteered to endure grueling conditions during the worst Ebola epidemic in history. According to Jack Hirshleifer, the late, renowned economist from UCLA, humans have evolved to cooperate and share our limited resources during such periods of scarcity. This learned response has been essential to our survival as a species.

Not Just a Theory: Where has disaster diplomacy worked? Kelman, now a professor at University College London’s Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction, maintains a near encyclopedic list of case studies (full disclosure: this list includes a study I wrote on Cyclone Nargis, which struck Burma in 2008). One of the first and best known cases involves Greece and Turkey, two countries which share a long history of conflict and discord. In August 1999, a severe earthquake struck Izmit, Turkey. Within hours, Greece became the first country to offer its support. In addition to financial assistance, Greece rapidly deployed its emergency response team to provide search and rescue support. Less than a month later, a category 5.8 earthquake occurred near Athens. Turkey quickly reached out to the Greek government and dispatched its own search and rescue team. These mutual shows of support dramatically improved relations between the rival states. That December, Greece dropped its opposition and formally supported Turkey’s candidacy for the European Union. Another prominent case is that of Aceh, an Indonesian province located on the island of Sumatra. Aceh was the center of a separatist conflict...
led by Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – the Free Aceh Movement. This group waged a 30-year-long guerrilla war against the Jakarta government in an effort to establish an independent Acehnese state. But Aceh also found itself at the epicenter of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which heavily damaged the restive region, killing more than 220,000 people. In the aftermath of the disaster, there was a rapid influx of relief and reconstruction assistance from around the world. The flood of attention helped internationalize the Aceh conflict, which had largely stayed below the radar, fostering the necessary space for peace negotiations. Just one month after the tsunami, the Indonesian government and Free Aceh Movement leaders met in Sweden to negotiate an end to the conflict.

But Not a Silver Bullet: That said, disaster diplomacy is far from a silver bullet. Consider Sri Lanka. Like Aceh, it was home to a long-running separatist movement, and, like Aceh, it suffered severe damage from the tsunami. But, whereas insurgent leaders in Aceh saw the tsunami as a reason to put down their weapons and return to the negotiating table, the leaders of the Tamil Tigers simply viewed Sri Lanka’s response to the disaster as further evidence the government was discriminating against the Tamil minority. Both sides resumed hostilities, and the war only ended in 2009 after a violent campaign by the Sri Lankan government, which likely included crimes against humanity. Other instances which would seem ripe for disaster diplomacy have fallen short. Disasters have continually failed to help bring peace between India and Pakistan, for instance. In May 1965, a major cyclone hit southern Pakistan in the midst of its second war with India over Kashmir. The storm killed 48,000 Pakistanis and the two sides reached a ceasefire shortly thereafter, but the arrangement was short-lived and full-scale hostilities resumed by September. India and Pakistan also squandered similar opportunities to reach détente over Kashmir following the October 2005 earthquake and last fall’s devastating floods.

How to Make It Work: What separates the Acehs from the Sri Lankas? According to a 2006 study from Kelman in the Journal of International Affairs, effective disaster diplomacy requires four things: the talks must be disaster-related; they must be new; there must be legitimate efforts by both sides to end hostilities; and the actions must last beyond the short term. If these elements are not present, diplomacy may fail. Failing this, disasters may simply create an “accelerated status quo”. Other researchers disagree that diplomatic overtures should be new. In a 2010 paper, Marco Pelling and Katherine Dill outline the ways in which disasters can become tipping points for altering the social contract between citizens and the state. They argue that while disasters may provide momentum for diplomacy, they are not catalysts in and of themselves. Instead, the push for political change must have been in the works before the catastrophe. Failing this, disaster status quo” that reinforces the existing political structures. Here, it’s important to note that in Aceh, the rebels had actually begun backdoor discussions with the Indonesian government before the tsunami hit. The opposite was true in Sri Lanka, where the Tamil Tigers had pulled out of peace talks just months before the disaster. Clearly, disaster diplomacy is a useful concept and could provide a framework to turn a negative – the upswing in disasters brought by climate change – into something positive.

At the same time, it may not be wise to place faith in the concept without pre-existing political frameworks. And certainly we don’t want to be wishing for disasters in conflict-affected countries. “As with all disaster diplomacy case studies, those associated with climate change always have underlying, longer-term, more poignant causes, even where climate change influences or spurs on the outcome,” Ilan Kelman told me in response to my questions about the future of disaster diplomacy. “The research and policy challenge, is determining the circumstances under which climate change does catalyze peace and conflict.”

Muslim Aid is building fifty houses for the unfortunate people of Nankana, a remote village of District Jhang, who were hit by devastated flash flood in September 2014. If not permanent, suffering is still prolonged for the people of Nankana, who right after the flood, a well anticipated consequence of blowing up of a railway track near their peaceful community, are bound to live under the naked sky, with their children, women and elderly, many ailing from diseases caused to flood water.

Muslim Aid not only reached out to help and rescue people stranded in flood water with their belongings and animals, it strived to provide shelter to people who were still living in camps provided by Muslim Aid and could not afford to rebuild their destroyed dwellings. After identifying underserved families and a need assessment, Muslim Aid started work of building 50 houses in Nankana in February 2015. Twenty houses have been completed by March 19, 2015, when Head of Humanitarian Mr. Rizwan Baig visited Jhang to inspect the progress of work on site. He interacted with beneficiaries and inquired about the quality of work and their concerns and feedback. People expressed their satisfaction over the quality and pace of work and thanked Muslim Aid team for their reaching out to them in the time of crisis.

Responding to the dire need of clean drinking water of the vulnerable people of famine hit district Tharparkar, Muslim Aid completed establishment of two surface wells in district Tharparkar, providing clean drinking water to about ten thousand people in two villages of Phathoonk and Bhakou in Tehsil Islamkot. Both the wells are completed with the generous support of Shakir family, a family with great history of philanthropy and social work. Provincial Coordinator Sindh Mr. Bilal Siddiqui monitored the completion of both the projects. The main objective of Dig A Well project is to provide clean drinking water access to drought affected people, reduce water born disease, provide supply of water for crops and also meet the needs of drinking water for domestic animals.

Tharparkar is one of the most neglected regions of Sindh. Famine claimed dozens of precious lives in this region. It also killed hundreds of birds and animals, domestic as well as wild. Assessing critical situation, Provincial Disaster Management Authority declared emergency in this area in April 2014. A number of local and international NGOs then responded to the call. Muslim Aid Pakistan was one of the pioneer organizations which started its interventions through

Muslim Aid Building Homes For Flood Hit Community Muslim Aid, April 15, 2015

Muslim Aid completes two more water wells in Tharparkar Muslim Aid, April 15, 2015
establishment of Primary health Care Unit to provide free healthcare assistance, free medicines and mobile health care services to vulnerable communities of Tehsil Islamkot. Moreover Muslim Aid after proper need assessment surveys worked to come up with long term solutions in the area. With completion of these two water wells, Muslim Aid, with the support of overseas Pakistani philanthropists, has so far completed nine water well projects for deprived communities in Tehsil Islamkot of District Tharparkar.
ISLAMABAD: Bringing peace to Karachi is the main target of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Information and Broadcasting Minister Senator Pervaiz Rashid said on Saturday, while PTI chief Imran Khan’s efforts in the same city were directed at gaining a seat there. In a statement, the minister said that Imran Khan’s free movement and activities in Karachi had become possible only after the government succeeded in taking culprits to task. “Had the prime minister not initiated the process to once again turn Karachi into the city of lights, it would not have been possible for Imran to organise a gathering there without the MQM’s NOC,” the minister added.

About the Karachi bye-election, he said that the PML-N did not field its candidate in NA-246 as it could have given a political colour to the ongoing operation in Karachi. He said that the PML-N does not believe in doing politics of securing National Assembly constituencies in Karachi, rather it was doing politics of service and doing its best to make Karachi a peaceful city.

KHYBER AGENCY: At least five suspected militants were killed while three security officials were injured in clashes between security forces and militants in Tirah Valley of Khyber Agency. The injured were immediately shifted to Combine Military Hospital (CMH) Peshawar, Radio Pakistan reported. On April 16, militant group Islamic State’s commander-designate for Pakistan, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed was killed along with two others in an explosion in the Toor Dara area of the valley. Khyber Agency officials said the militants were planting or manufacturing an improvised explosive device (IED) when it went off, killing the three men on the spot.

TEHRAN: After three days of intensive talks between Iran and Pakistan, and at the end of the eighth Iran-Pakistan Border Security Conference in Islamabad, the two sides inked an agreement on security cooperation, it was announced on Saturday. According to Iranian news agency, the two sides discussed various issues such as fight against terrorism, upgrading current level of security cooperation on joint borders, fight against organised crimes, kidnapping and human trafficking, expansion of border cooperation, border markets and extradition of prisoners.

KAKUL: Afghan Chief of General Staff General Sher Muhammad Karimi warned Pakistan Army cadets on Saturday that Afghanistan and Pakistan face threats by non-state actors. “We see around us, almost every day that the world and our region, especially Afghanistan and Pakistan, face the greatest threats and dangers from individuals and groups that are not affiliated directly with any state. That is precisely why these people are called non-state actors,” the Afghan army chief said at the Kakul passing out parade. General Karimi is the first Afghan army chief to speak as chief guest at the Pakistan Military Academy Kakul in Abbotabad where a group of six Afghan army cadets are also receiving training. “This new era of military contacts, the enemy for all of us and of the system in our region, does not recognise boundaries and is not bound by any religious and moral principles,” General Karimi said.

“Their naked, nefarious designs undermine states and [they] grab power through terror and fear,” the Afghan Army chief said. “Countering and ultimately defeating this menace and threats effective therefore require sincere and close result-oriented cooperation and coordination between states especially between next door neighbours.” General Karimi also called for non-interference in each other’s affairs and mutual respect and shared interests among sovereign states. The Afghan army chief arrived in Pakistan on a two-day visit for talks on bilateral security issues. It is his second visit to Pakistan in nearly four months. He last visited Pakistan in December days after the Taliban attacked an army-run school in Peshawar killing 150 people, including 132 children.

General Karimi met his Pakistani counterpart General Raheel Sharif on Friday and discussed border management and defence cooperation amid growing military-to-military contacts, the military said. “During the meeting, matters related to peace and stability in the region especially in Afghanistan, Pak-Afghan border management and measures to further enhance defence and training cooperation between both the armies were discussed,” a military statement said. At the passing out parade the Afghan army chief who served as chief guest on the occasion, handed over trophies and sword of honor amongst the outstanding cadets.

QUETTA: Balochistan Home Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti said on Thursday that the provincial government had decided to establish special cells of security forces, including Frontier Corps, police, Levies and intelligence agencies, at the divisional level to ensure they worked in close coordination in countering terrorist attacks. Addressing a press conference after a meeting on the law and order situation, the minister said that the group called the ‘fusion cells’ had already been working at the provincial level successfully in 40 per cent of areas of Balochistan where the law and order situation had improved. The cells would be set up at the district level later, he added. Mr Bugti said the meeting, presided over by Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch, took a number of decisions for improving law and order in the province and establishing the writ of the government.

Commander Southern Command Lt Gen Naseer Khan Janjua, the General Officer Commanding of 33 and 42 Divisions, Chief Secretary Saifullah Chattah, Home Secretary Akbar Hussain Durrani, Inspector General of the Frontier Corps Maj Gen Sher Afgan, Inspector General of Police Amlish Khan and other senior officials attended the meeting. Mr Bugti admitted that the Turbat incident had taken place because of lack of coordination among law-enforcement agencies, but said steps would be taken to prevent such incidents in future. Answering a question, he said the government was not planning to launch a military operation like Zarb-i-Azb in Balochistan. There was no need for that because Frontier Corps, police, Levies and other security agencies had already carried out successful search operations against militants and anti-social elements in the
province, he said.

The minister said the search operations would continue across Balochistan. "We have formulated a new policy in consultation with our coalition partners and civil and military leadership." He said under the new plan, elected representatives of local government agencies in their efforts to restore peace and order in the province. Mr Bugti said Chief of Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif had taken notice of the killing of 20 labourers in Turbat and assured all help to the provincial government in crushing terrorists.

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed execution of six militants on terror charges awarded by military courts. On Wednesday, the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) had requested the top court to pass an interim order staying execution of the condemned prisoners. Noor Sanha, Haider Ali, Murad Khan, Inayatullah, Israruddin and Qari Zahir were condemned to death on April 2 by the military courts which have been established through a constitutional amendment under the National Action Plan. The military said this month its courts had sentenced six "hard core terrorists" to death and a seventh to life imprisonment. A 17-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Nasirul Mulk heard the case in the apex court today (April 16). According to the court’s short order, the death warrants of terror convicts awarded by the military courts in the future will also be suspended.

Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Salman Aslam Butt expressed reservation over the apex court's decision and said the trial of the convicts in the military courts was not a secret crime and a complete procedure was adopted. "Prisoners have the right to appeal against the black warrants under the Pakistan Army Act 1952," he added. The convicts were reportedly involved in several serious crimes. Chief Justice of Pakistan Nasirul Mulk said the trial of the convicts was not public, while it were just death sentences that were public. Counsel for SCBA Asma Jahangir stated that she can produce the affidavits of the family members of the convicts, proving that they were aware about the black warrants through media. While Justice Saqib Nisar said that there is a procedure to confirm death warrants of convicts. The court adjourned the hearing of the case until next week.

The SCBA had filed an application through Asma Jahangir, requesting the apex court pass an interim order staying execution of the men convicted by the military courts till the final disposal of the constitutional petition. It also prayed that the apex court has to ensure the fundamental rights. "The recent trials of military courts are neither public nor transparent and military courts do not ordinarily observe principle of due process thus the apprehensions of the petitioner are genuine and have merit," read the plea. Critics have raised questions about the fairness and accountability of the military courts. Nine military courts were established in January, after militants attacked a school in Peshawar, killing 134 pupils and 19 teachers. Amid popular pressure to crack down on militants after the school attack in December, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif championed the new courts in parliament and lifted a moratorium on the death penalty.

Several police officers were injured during the clash with the extortionists. A police constable was injured, while another one was killed in the clash. The police shot dead two extortionists.珉

The minister said the search operations would continue across Balochistan. "We have formulated a new policy in consultation with our coalition partners and civil and military leadership." He said under the new plan, elected representatives of local government agencies in their efforts to restore peace and order in the province. Mr Bugti said Chief of Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif had taken notice of the killing of 20 labourers in Turbat and assured all help to the provincial government in crushing terrorists.

ISLAMABAD: Vowing to support the Balochistan government in eliminating terrorists, Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif on Wednesday sternly warned foreign states and international agencies to refrain from destabilising the province. "We will unearth terrorists, their abettors, sympathisers and financiers. None of them will find any place in the country to hide," General
Raheel Sharif said during his visit to Quetta. Commander Southern Command Lt-Gen Nasir Khan Janjua received the army chief upon his arrival. According to ISPR, the army chief also held meetings with the governor, the chief minister and the Commander Southern Command and reassured them that the Pakistan Army will go to any length for full restoration of the writ of the state. Credible sources in the Balochistan government told The Nation that plans were afoot to expand military operation Zarb-e-Azb to Balochistan to tackle the challenge relating to terrorism.

The COAS also visited Frontier Corps Headquarters and reviewed security situation in the province. He reviewed the progress of FC operation against terrorists. Senior military officials, FC personnel and other high-ups attended the meeting. The army chief commended law enforcement agencies and the Frontier Corps for noticeable law and order improvement. He vowed to stand by the people of Balochistan to bring peace and prosperity. He said that Frontier Works Organisation will continue development projects. He emphasised the need to adopt an integrated approach by civil and military leadership and law enforcers for a peaceful Balochistan. FC Inspector General Major General Sher Afghand briefed the COAS about law and order situation in the province and search operations being carried out in Turbat and outskirts.

General Raheel Sharif expressed grief over the recent brutal killing of innocent labourers by terrorists in Turbat. He said: “We will defeat terrorism comprehensively.”

Twenty construction workers were killed and three others were injured on Saturday when unidentified gunmen opened fire on them in a pre-dawn attack on a labourers’ camp near Turbat. The victims belonged to Sindh and Punjab, Balochistan Home Minister Sarfaraz Bugti had said at the time, adding that they were working for a private construction company and building a bridge over a stream in Gogdan. The banned Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) claimed responsibility for the attack. Following the massacre, security was beefed up in and around Turbat. Patrolling by FC, Levies and police was increased in the town to keep a vigilant eye on the movements of suspects. On Monday, at least 13 suspected militants belonging to the BLF were killed in a raid by security forces near Turbat. The dead militants were allegedly involved in Saturday’s gun attack on labourers. Turbat is considered one of the most sensitive districts in Balochistan. It is also the hometown of Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch.

Upon his return to Islamabad, General Raheel Sharif called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and discussed the law and order situation in Balochistan. Their meeting, following the daylong visit of the army chief to Balochistan, gained more significance as it was the first time the military chief issued a public warning to foreign actors involved in destabilising the restive province. Sources aware of the deliberations of the meeting informed The Nation that various options to contain the growing unrest and activities of insurgents came under discussion in the meeting and it was decided to work out a strategy to contain the insurgency and to bring peace and tranquillity to the restive province. The COAS informed the prime minister about the evidence of foreign hand behind the killing of innocent labourers in Turbat and it was decided in the meeting that all state organs should be used to crush all those working on the nefarious plan to destabilise Balochistan.

PESHAWAR: The Lakki Marwat internment centre oversight board has placed 22 detainees in the black category of proven militants and listed five in the grey category of suspected militants. A report of the investigation was presented before the Peshawar High Court by the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Home and Tribal Affairs department on Wednesday. A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice Mazhar Alam Miankhel and Justice Muhammad Daud Khan was hearing a petition filed by Muhammad Ayub. The detainees had been whisked away from different parts of the province on different occasions between 2009 and 2012. Of these, six individuals were previously missing and later found incarcerated at the centre and placed in the black category. The petitioners identified as Akbar Ali, Mian Anwer, Abdullah, Iftikhar Ahmad and Imdad Hussain. Those placed in the category of suspected militants include the petitioner’s brother Asghar Khan, Inamullah, Muhammad Hayat, Zamir Gul and Abdul Khaliq.

Care of the missing persons

During the course of the hearing, the court was informed a hospital has been established at the internment centre. Two male nurses and one medical officer are on duty there. Specialist physicians are called in when detainees require advanced medical assistance. The court also sought reports of missing persons Khalil Khan, Muhammad Yousaf and Danishmand. The petition of Mohajara Bibi was disposed of after the court learnt the previously missing person, Nafees, has returned home safely. Section 14 of the Action (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulation 2011 says, “The governor shall notify an oversight board for each internment centre comprising two civilians and two military officers to review the case of each person interned within a period of 120 days from the issuance of order of internment.”

QUETTA: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met Army chief General Raheel Sharif on Wednesday to discuss national security and the law and order situation of Quetta, Express News reported. Sources privy to the development told The Express Tribune that Operation Zarb-e-Azb might be extended to Balochistan to fight against Baloch insurgents as well. The army launched Operation Zarb-e-Azb against militants in North Waziristan in June 2014. “COAS and PM apart from this issue also discussed visiting top level delegation led by Punjab CM Shahbaz Sharif in Saudi Arabia,” the sources further added. During his visit, the army chief presided over a law and order meeting at the Frontier Corps Balochistan headquarters. Days after a sickening orgy of bloodshed played out in a remote town of southern Balochistan on April 11 when 20 construction workers were methodically massacred in a predawn attack on their camp near Turbat city in Kech district of Balochistan.

Inspector General Frontier Corps (IGFC) Sher Afghaen, Balochistan home secretary, IG Police and other high officials are present during the meeting. Further, briefing on the army chief’s visit DG ISPR Asim Bajwa tweeted: Major-General Sher Afghaen briefed the army chief regarding the law and order situation in the province and search operations being carried out in Turbat and its vicinity.
Pakistan successfully test fires Ghauri Missile
*The Express Tribune, April 15, 2015*

Web Desk: Pakistan successfully conducted a training launch of Ghauri Missile system on Wednesday, according to Inter Services Public Relations. Ghauri Ballistic Missile can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads up to a distance of 1,300 kilometres. The launch was conducted by a strategic missile group of the Army Strategic Forces Command that was aimed at testing the operational and technical readiness of the command. The launch was witnessed by senior officers from Strategic Plans Division, strategic forces, scientists and engineers of strategic organisations.

While congratulating the scientists, engineers and all ranks of Strategic Forces, Director General Strategic Plans Division Lieutenant General Zubair Mahmood Hayat expressed his full satisfaction over the excellent standard achieved by the Strategic Forces. President Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif congratulated the Strategic Forces, scientists and engineers on the achievement.

Mission Impossible: UNHCR says no to forced repatriation of refugees
*The Express Tribune, April 14, 2015*

PESHAWAR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) officials said on Monday they would not agree to the forced return of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan. UNHCR Peshawar sub office head Jacques Franquin said his organisation would stand firm on the issue. Briefing the media at a local hotel in the provincial capital, he cast doubts over the ability to meet the repatriation deadline of December 31, 2015. “It would be difficult to send around 1.5 million people back to their native land,” Franquin said UNHCR was negotiating with Pakistani authorities to ensure refugees return safety and with their dignity intact. To a question about extending the deadline, he said his organisation has been pleading with Pakistan officials for years to show flexibility and compassion.

Host of problems
He said there were three solutions to the problem of refugees: Repatriation, integration in host countries and finally resettlement to a third country. Franquin said Pakistani authorities were not ready to consider integration process and want Afghans to return to their country. The UNHCR head believed that the matter of unregistered Afghans in Pakistan could be resolved through visas. He admitted there was also donor fatigue for Afghan refugees, saying funding was shrinking year by year.

Post APS attack
According to the UN refugee agency, at least 10,777 Afghan refugees have returned to their country during the first three months of the current year, adding the attack on the Army Public School (APS) has expedited the repatriation process. UNHCR Protection Officer Bashir Ahmed, also present at the briefing, said since the APS massacre, about 700 registered Afghans were rounded up by police. However, all of them were later released without being charged, he added. Ahmed said Pakistan lacked legislation related to refugees despite hosting millions of them over

Restoration of death penalty will deter terrorism: Mamnoon
*Daily Dawn, April 15, 2015*

President Mamnoon Hussain has said that Pakistan’s decision to lift moratorium on death penalty will act as a deterrent against terrorism. “Lifting the moratorium is a deterrent to financiers and handlers of terrorism,” he said during a meeting with a delegation of the German-Southern Asian Parliamentary Group of the German Parliament. According to the group’s chairman, led the delegation during the meeting held at the presidency. The decision to lift the moratorium was based on the desire of people who had been demanding stern action against terrorists, he said. Mr Hussain said that the country’s policy on death penalty had been made in the light of its constitution and international laws. The government lifted the six-year moratorium in December 2014 and it is expected that the decision will lead to execution of about 8,000 death-row prisoners. The process has started and over 60 convicts have been hanged since the lifting of the moratorium. Some western countries and human rights organisations have criticised the government for executing convicts of crimes other than terrorism. “Terrorists have no religion and the need of the hour is to promote inter-faith harmony for world peace,” the president said.

He said the Constitution guaranteed fundamental rights of all citizens irrespective of religion, race, caste, colour, creed or gender. He told the delegation that the government was taking steps to prevent misuse of blasphemy law. “The law is non-discriminatory as it applies to both Muslims and non-Muslims alike.” On the country’s role in war on terrorism, he said Pakistan had been the worst victim of terrorism as more than 60,000 innocent Pakistanis had lost their lives and the country had suffered the economic loss amounting to more than $100 billion. Reiterating Pakistan’s commitment to fighting terrorism and extremism, he said a National Action Plan had been formulated to effectively deal with the menace. He said Operation Zarb-i-Azb against terrorists would continue until terrorism was eliminated and expressed satisfaction over the progress achieved so far. The government, he said, had set up a National Commission on Human Rights to ensure an independent judiciary, free media and a vibrant civil society to protect human rights.

President Hussain said Pakistan held its relations with Germany in high esteem. “Pakistan seeks enhanced bilateral contacts, parliamentary exchanges, trade and cooperation in defence, counter-terrorism, energy and other fields,” he said. He said the government was keenly anticipating the visit of Chancellor Angela Merkel to Pakistan this year on the invitation of the prime minister. Later, addressing a meeting at the National Defence University, the president said that challenges to national security needed to be tackled through a comprehensive and unified approach. “Pakistan is going through difficult circumstances and facing multi-dimensional challenges, including terrorism, but the army is bravely fighting against militancy in tribal areas to restore peace in the country,” he added.

He admitted there were also donor fatigue for Afghan refugees, saying funding was shrinking year by year.

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He said UNHCR and the Pakistan government completed the registration process of Afghan refugees back in 2006 under which they were issued machine-readable proof of registration cards. “Registered refugees are of concern to us and they are about 1.6 million in number,” he said.

Ahmed added the Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees was launched in 2012 and aims to make voluntary repatriation sustainable by providing economic opportunities and ensuring development of refugee-hosting areas. However, he said there were political and economic considerations that compelled people to continue living in Pakistan. UN refugee agency figures shared with the media showed that about 6,394 people returned to Afghanistan all of last year, but the number was already up to 10,777 by March 31, 2015. The document also showed reasons for the return of these refugees. Around 41% returned due to the fear of arrest or deportation, while 30% went back due to camp/settlement closures or relocation campaigns. UNHCR figures show there are about 965,301 Afghan refugees in K-P and Fata. Of the total, 53% live in Peshawar, while Nowshera is home to 9%.

QUETTA: Hardly two days after gunmen massacred 20 construction workers in an attack that reeked of ethnic hatred, paramilitary troops claimed that they have killed 13 insurgents from the Baloch separatist group responsible for the bloodbath. A proscribed separatist group, Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), had claimed credit for the mass killings at a labourers’ camp in the Gogdan area, a few kilometres away from Turbat city in Kech district shortly before dawn on Saturday. Subsequently, a manhunt was launched in the barren mountains of Turbat for the killers, but it did not yield anything. On Monday, the paramilitary Frontier Corps conducted raids in different parts of Turbat after the force was tipped off about the presence of militants in the region. One of the raids conducted in Gogdan, the area where the labourers’ camp was stormed, sparked a gunfight that left 13 militants, including their commander, dead, FC spokesman Khan Wasey told The Express Tribune. Some militants were also wounded in the firefight. “The raid was carried out by a special wing of the FC and Mekran Scouts with the help of an intelligence agency on the directives of the provincial government,” he added.

The FC spokesperson claimed that the dead militants included perpetrators of the Turbat massacre. He added that BLF commander Zareef was also arrested in the raid that yielded a cache of automatic weapons, including rocket launchers. Provincial home secretary Akbar Hussain Durram confirmed the militant death toll. IGFC Maj Gen Sher Afgan hailed the operation and vowed that his force would not rest until the last militant was eliminated from the province where Baloch militants have been fighting a low-profile insurgency since 2004. He added that the militants involved in the grisly massacre of 20 labourers would have to pay a heavy price for their dastardly crime. Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch is in his hometown of Turbat and personally supervising the operation, a source said.
LAHORE: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will provide necessary medical gadgets worth Rs22.7 million to Government Mian Munshi Hospital.Afghan Refugees Commissioner Chaudhry Riaz and Lahore Health Executive District Officer (EDO) Dr Zulfiquar Ali signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard on Saturday.According to a handout, Adviser on Health Khwaja Salman Rafique said earlier the UNHCR had also provided Rs30m for the renovation of maxillofacial ward at Mayo Hospital.He said the cooperation of philanthropists and donors was of great importance in the development of the health sector. Chaudhry Riaz assured that his institution would continue financial cooperation for improving performance of hospitals. He said an amount of Rs30m would also be provided by the UNHCR for a trauma centre at Munshi Hospital. He said there was a vast catchment area of Government Mian Munshi Hospital and a large number of Afghan Refugees were residing on Bund Road and other areas. Earlier, Munshi Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Mohammad Amir said there was a shortage of doctors and nurses at his hospital. It also needed increase in its budget for medicines. He said the medical equipment and other machines of the hospital were old. The funds would help replace these gadgets primarily, including an ultrasound machine, colour developer, digital X-ray, ECG machine, refrigerator, microscope, sucker machine, auto-washer, traction table, with machine, dental unit, automotive and other equipment.

LAHORE: A Chinese delegation headed by Chengdu Mayor Tang Lianghzi called on Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif and discussed matters related to the energy sector. Shahbaz said the Chinese president’s visit to Pakistan would be very important. “Agreements on investment of billions of dollars will be signed, including a $20 billion project in the energy sector,” he said. The chief minister said these agreements were historic vis-à-vis Pakistan-China friendship. Owing to the visit of the Chinese president, economic and trade cooperation would further be strengthened between the two countries. “We consider Chinese investment as cooperation and assistance for the development of various sectors and it will help rid us of the energy crisis,” he said.

Shahbaz said China was extending great economic cooperation to Pakistan and that the government was making serious efforts for resolving the energy crisis and a number of projects with Chinese cooperation would start producing electricity by 2017. He further said an agreement for declaring Lahore and the Chinese city of Chengdu ‘twin city’ would be signed during the Chinese president’s visit. He said due to this agreement, cooperation in tourism, trade, economy, and other sectors would be promoted between the two cities. Tang Lianghzi said China and Pakistan were tied with relations of brotherhood and everlasting friendship. He said mutual cooperation would further strengthen with the agreement of declaring Chengdu and Lahore ‘twin city’. He said he had come to Pakistan for the first time and was highly impressed with the beauty and development of Lahore. Chinese Consul General in Lahore Yu Boren was also present in the meeting.

The Senate was informed Friday that only eight per cent of the people between the age of 17 and 23 years have access to higher education compared to 26 per cent in South Asia and 43 per cent in Germany. Minister of State for Education Baleegur Rehman said the top priority of the government is provision of higher education and for this purpose the budget of HEC has been increased to Rs 70 billion. He said during the last five years 698 students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were sent abroad on scholarship. He said there is a fixed criterion based on which students are selected for scholarships abroad. He said students from Balochistan could not fulfil the criteria and as a result it was relaxed for them. He said 23 girls were among those who were sent abroad for education from Balochistan. He said in view of the priority being given to higher education, the present government increased the scholarships and enhanced the allocations to Rs 6 billion while allocations for Research and Development have been raised to Rs 20 billion. To another question, the Minister of State for education said the number of PhDs has crossed 10,000. He said the National Vocational and Training Commission has launched a number of activities and registered 500,000 people for giving them training.

ISLAMABAD: With 21 polio cases already confirmed in the country during the current year, the National Institute of Health (NIH) is analysing 20 suspected cases. In the year 2014, as many as 306 polio cases were reported from different parts of the country. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif formed a cabinet committee to take steps to eradicate the crippling disease. Moreover, on May 5, 2014, the World Health Organisation made it mandatory for all Pakistanis travelling abroad to have at least one dose of the anti-polio vaccine. The government was also suggested to issue vaccination certificates to the travelers. The decision was made to avoid the risk of transfer of the poliovirus to other countries.

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court on Friday asked medical superintendent (MS) of the Civil Hospital Karachi to make vascular and isolation wards at the hospital operational. The MS assured the division bench headed by Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi who heard a petition against the wards’ closure that they would be made functional as soon as the hospital found a suitable doctor to look after them. The petitioner submitted that the wards were closed due to doctors’ shortage and after the head of the ward Prof Dr Sohail Ahmad Khan went on long leave about two years ago.

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Russia have finalised an agreement under which Moscow will lend Islamabad $2 billion to lay a pipeline that will transport liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Karachi to Lahore. Petroleum Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi says, adding that in return Russian
companies will be awarded the contract to build the pipeline. The formal agreement between the two sides is expected to be signed next month, following which Pakistan will also sign a commercial agreement with a Russian firm that Moscow will identify as its preferred contractor to build the 1,100-kilometre pipeline. According to the agreement, the contract will be awarded without any formal bidding process. The financing for the LNG pipeline comes as a prelude to Russia’s offer to sell LNG to Pakistan. Russia is the second-largest producer of natural gas in the world, and is seeking to diversify its export markets after a spat last year with the European Union, its main buyer, over Ukraine. “Pakistan and Russia have finalised an LNG pipeline deal in a recent meeting in Moscow and the two countries will sign a government-to-government basis deal next month,” Petroleum Minister Abbasi told The Express Tribune. “Russia will start its first LNG exports in 2016 and has also offered to sell gas to Pakistan.”

This is not Islamabad’s first major cooperation agreement with Moscow over infrastructure. The former Soviet Union had financed the construction of the state-owned Pakistan Steel Mills under a similar arrangement. The Soviets had also helped supply some of the oil drilling equipment for the state-owned Oil and Gas Development Company. Some of that equipment is in use till date. Currently, Pakistan is working on two pipelines to transport re-gassified LNG from Karachi to the northern parts of the country. The first is a pipeline that will connect the Gwadar Port to the main natural gas pipeline hub in Nawabshah. The second will lay a direct pipeline from Karachi to Lahore. The government has signed an initial deal with China to award a $3 billion LNG terminal and pipeline project to a Chinese contractor in a similar financing-for-guaranteed-contract arrangement. Islamabad had initially offered Moscow and Beijing a similar arrangement for the Iran-Pakistan pipeline, but American and European sanctions against Tehran scuttled that project – at least for now.

An LNG import terminal, owned and operated by the Engro Corporation, an industrial conglomerate, is already up and running, though there is, as yet, no agreement to import natural gas from Qatar, the third-largest natural gas producer in the world and closest to Pakistan. There is also no infrastructure yet that would allow that natural gas to be transported upcountry. “We are negotiating an LNG supply deal with Qatar which will be finalised soon,” Abbasi said. Pakistan’s existing pipeline network has the capacity to transport 1,000 mmcmd (mmcmd) in re-gassified LNG. Consumption in Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, as well as upper Sindh, however, exceeds 3,000 mmcmd, which is why the new pipelines are badly needed. In order to finance the payback of the loans needed to construct the pipelines, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) has allowed the state-owned gas utilities, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines (SNGP) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), to start charging consumers more for their gas bills every month. SNGP and SSGC are expected to invest $750 million and $300 million respectively to finance the LNG pipeline.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Ahsan Iqbal on Friday said the first phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would bring in $35 billion to $37 billion investment in energy projects, which would produce 16500 MW of electricity. This would be a commercial transaction as Chinese firms would give loans to Pakistani partners and government would ink agreements with the latter to acquire electricity, he told editors and senior journalists along with Federal Minister for Information Pervaiz Rashid and Prime Minister’s Special Assistant on Foreign Affairs Tariq Fatemi at a briefing.

Ahsan Iqbal said with CPEC, the missing link of bringing Pak-China economic ties at par with their geo-political ties would be restored. Seeing the massive Chinese investment in Pakistan, the investors across the globe were also likely to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan, he added. The minister said coal projects would take three years while solar and wind projects would be accomplished in six to 12 months. Giving details, he said four provinces would benefit from these projects, which would generate 10,400 MW power under early harvest projects by tapping coal, hydel, solar and wind potential for Pakistan. The government would ensure the upgradation of transmission and distribution lines because current transmission lines were unable to carry that load. At least 10 coal-fired projects would be set under the economic corridor, he added.

Ahsan Iqbal said that Chinese firms would give concessional loans for infrastructure projects spreading over 15 to 20 years period. The loan would be on far less mark-up than available anywhere in the world and the difference in mark-up will be paid to them by the Chinese government. The minister said the only challenge for Pakistan was to ensure it kept pace with investment vision of the Chinese leadership by turning itself into an economic nation by ensuring success of the CPEC. During question-answer session, the minister told a questioner that given diligence, transparency and tough negotiations, all the projects envisaged under the economic corridor would be able to stand any scrutiny by the court.

PESHAWAR: The fifth round of anti polio drive concluded in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday wherein more than 1.370 million children under the age of five years were administered anti-polio drops across the province. This figure makes more than 90 per cent of the total target set for the round, said an official release of the Polio Emergency Operation Centre of KP Health Department. According to a report of Polio Emergency Operation Centre, 14511 children have been immunized in district Abbottabad, 68479 in Bannu, 8816 in Battagram, 12003 in Charsadda, 10858 in D.I.Khan, 17615 in Dir Lower, 35614 in Dir Upper, 33029 in Hangu, 33048 in Haripur, 20745 in Karak, 36893 in Kohat, 3836 in Kohistan, 7246 in Malakand, 227205 in Mardan, 61101 in Nowshera, 469130 in Peshawar, 35861 in Shangla and 73178 in Tank. The three day drive was put off in district Buner, Lakki Marwat, Swabi and Swat for some unavoidable circumstances, it concluded. - APP

Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide forty three million dollars to Pakistan for completion of water related projects in FATA. An agreement to this effect was signed by the
25 million children out of school in Pakistan

The News, April 17, 2015

School teacher brutally beats student over asking reason for low marks

Dunya News, April 17, 2015

FAISALABAD: Warehouse catches fire, goods worth millions burnt

Dunya News, April 17, 2015

Nandipur power plant to be fully functional by May

Business Recorder, April 17, 2015

Secretary Economic Affairs Division Muhammad Saleem Sethi and the Country Director of Asian Development Bank in Islamabad on Friday. It will benefit 1.4 million people besides promotion of agriculture in FATA. The amount will be utilized for the construction of nine small dams in the tribal areas.

LAHORE: Nine-year old student of Class- 3 faced brutal violence from her teacher in Government Girls High School on Thokar Niaz Baig, Dunya News reported on Friday. According to details, the student named Saher asked the reason of getting low marks in test from her teacher Zahida on which she became furious and beat her savagely with stick. The student got severe bruises on her body reacting to which her father Malik Ishfaq lodged a complaint against the teacher in Hanjarwal police station. Police officials carried out medical checkup of Saher and confirmed the violence. Saher’s father has also appealed the higher authorities to take notice of the incident.

ISLAMABAD: Children in Pakistan had to live with a dilapidated health sector, a dismal public education system, retributive and violent juvenile justice system, lack of positive alternatives to child labour and a tacit cultural acceptance of various forms of violence against them during the year 2014. The overall situation of Pakistani children was summarised well in one sentence in annual ‘State of Pakistan’s Children Report’ by Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) launched on Thursday. The report provided an annual overview of the state of various sectors that affect children in the country, including child rights, health, education, child labour, juvenile justice and violence against children. The report termed deadly terror attack on Army Public School, Peshawar, as testimony to the fact that the state of Pakistan has comprehensively failed in meeting its obligations to the children of the country. The title page of the report also carries a picture from the same incident. The report quoted various national and international sources to reveal that 25 million children are out of school in Pakistan. The situation is further compounded by the lack of infrastructure and teaching staff along with poor teaching standards in public schools which can force more children to drop out of schools altogether. Moreover, in 2014, 296 cases of polio were reported from different parts of the country and 546 children died of acute malnutrition in Tharparkar district of Sindh. These cases were presented as testimony to the systemic failure of the government health sector which has failed to take proactive measures to address the various health crises afflicting the country.

The report also revealed that provincial governments have failed to come up with updated or revamped legislation on important child rights issues in the post 18th Amendment scenario. For instance, child and bonded labour legislation is still in various stages of completion; furthermore, information on underage employment in the country has not been updated since 1996. The report says that Pakistan is ranked number 3 in the world with the highest prevalence of child and forced labour, 69,604 cases of violence against children were reported between 2000 and 2013, 1,361 cases of ‘wani’ happened between 2000 to 2013 and 1,786 cases of Child Sexual Abuse were reported between January and June 2014. The report also identified the increasing prevalence of violence against children in the country and highlighted that incidents of violence are much higher than what is stated by the media and research organisations as majority of cases are never reported to the authorities. The report called for concerted government and civil society engagement to address the issues faced by children and for bringing child rights and child protection in mainstream public discourse. The report revealed that in 2014 no significant breakthroughs were achieved to reach the health and education targets of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With the current rate of progress, Pakistan is most likely to miss its 2015 targets.

The event was attended by state functionaries, human and child right activists, mediapersons and officials from national and international NGOs and donor agencies. The keynote speakers included former Inter minister for health Dr Sania Nishtar, Zoe Lofger from E-Sanjari Commission, Hassan Mangi from Law and Human Rights Ministry and Anees Jillani of SPARC. SPARC’s research department representatives Zohair Waheed, Hamza Hassan and Marium Soomro presented the findings of the 2014 report and highlighted that Pakistan has remained far from achieving its national and international commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals, with regards to protecting and promoting the rights of children in the country. Speaking on the occasion, former federal minister for health Dr Sania Nishtar pointed out that there is no dearth of laws. “All we need is efficient intersectoral collaboration and creation of demand among public for effective implementation of these laws and policies.” Director Law and Human Rights Ministry Hassan Mangi highlighted the challenges of capacity and resources at provincial level that lead to delay in service delivery. He pointed out lack of data as another problem which contributes in poor implementation of laws.

FAISALABAD – A grain warehouse in Ghalla Mandi area of Faisalabad caught fire on Saturday. Grain stock worth millions of rupees was burnt in the fire. The fire also engulfed nearby shops. Rescue 1122 teams reached the site of the fire and were able to control the fire after battling it for 1 and a half hour. Nearby shops engulfed by the flames also suffered damages. Peanuts and spices stored in nearby shops were destroyed by the flames. Wedding of daughter of the warehouse owner Mohammad Khalid was being held today.

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director Nandipur Power Project Muhammad Mehmood on Friday said that 425 MW Nandipur Power Project would be fully operationalized by May. Talking to APP here he said that three units of the project have already been commissioned while fourth unit combine circles was being tested. Currently, the plants was generating 300 MW, he added. The MD said that with the operationalization of fourth unit of combine circle, the plant would supply 425 MW electricity to the national grid system. He said that cost of the project was estimated at Rs. 85 billion, however, it would cost Rs.69 billion. He said that the Nandipur power plant was 2nd most
The Lahore High Court said on Thursday the decision of shutting down shops and business places at 8pm was a policy matter of the government and the court had no jurisdiction to interfere in it. With this observation, Justice Ijazul Ahsan dismissed a petition filed by All Pakistan Anjuman-i-Tajiran central secretary general Naeem Mir, assailing the decision for being discriminatory and unconstitutional. As the court resumed hearing, petitioner’s counsel CM Afzal argued that the government’s decision was arbitrary, capricious and was taken without building any consensus and taking into confidence any of the traders body. He said it was the worst example of discrimination as the government was shutting down business premises in Cantonment areas of the province and only small traders were likely to suffer.

The counsel argued the government awfully failed to fulfill its responsibilities with respect to required energy production. He said the government should be directed to take effective steps for production of the required electricity and to withdraw the announcement regarding closure of shops by 8pm in Punjab and Islamabad. He said the government be also directed to upgrade modes of domestic and commercial electricity appliances instead of obsolete technologies being used in Pakistan. The judge dismissed the petition for being not maintainable. Naeem Mir announced that he would challenge the order before a division bench by filing an intra-court appeal.

UPPER DIR: Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) country director Ruza Auat and field coordinator Prue Coakley visited the district headquarters hospital, Dir, to have firsthand knowledge of the facilities and problems being faced by patients and people of remote areas, especially women. MNA Sahibzada Tanqullah, deputy commissioner Imran Hameed and MPA Mohammad Ali were also present on the occasion. The MSF delegation visited various wards of the hospital. Briefing the delegation, the deputy commissioner said that the DHQ hospital had 250 beds and it was catering to over one million population. He said that patients, especially women, had been facing difficulties due to lack of facilities, female doctors and gynaecologists. Mr Tanqullah said on the occasion that MSF was an organisation that provided facilities like doctors, free medicines, paramedical staff and others to the patients. He said that it had also established its special wards in various hospitals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He demanded establishment of MSF centre in the DHQ hospital for the sake of poor patients.

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Information Technology approved on Thursday a ‘controversial legislation’ on cyber terrorism and has referred it to Parliament for final approval. The parliamentary panel adopted the Cyber Crimes Bill 2015 without considering objections as serious or merited. A majority of members failed to turn up at the meeting, paving way for Pakistan Muslim League—Nawaz (PML-N) to table a new bill. A range of issues critical of the legislation, including the media, internet service providers, NGOs and members of civil society, State Minister for Information Technology Anusha Rehman told The Express News it was incorrect to say that the legislation is non-transparent and non-consultative. Safeguards have been ensured against any expected misuse, and there is no substance in the criticism on the legislation, she assured. She further argued that once the legislation is passed, Pakistan would succeed to convince Google to launch YouTube.com.pk — a local version of the YouTube.

Bolo Bhi, Director Farieha Aziz said the draft bill in its current form will seriously impact internet users, the ICT industry, print and electronic media, academicians, researchers, the legal community and the educated youth as well as ordinary citizens of Pakistan. MNA Talal Chaudhry said he should trust that our institutions will not misuse this new legislation, while Major (retd) Tahir Iqbal termed the bill a perfect legislation, saying one out 100 officers may misuse the law. The on

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LAHORE: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has agreed to hear petition of two power producers next week for tariff revision and activation of plants, sources said on Thursday. Notification in this regard has been issued by the power regulator in which all the stakeholders have been asked to submit their objections, if any, within the stipulated period regarding the revision of tariff and resumption of power production by the Japan Power Generation Ltd and Southern Electric Power Company Ltd, the sources said.

As per the stance of owners of both the power plants, NEPRA had already accepted the point of view of two other power houses, including Reshma Power and Gulf Power and allowed electricity generation agreement with the power purchasers and same pattern, the management of the Japan Power and Southern Electric submitted applications, showing their readiness for initiating plant operation. The sources said a legal team of NEPRA has accepted the application and issued notification in this regard. Both the plants are ready to start operations after striking their revised agreements, officials said. They welcomed the decision of Nepra for accepting the hearing applications. Amjad Awan, CEO of Japan Power with 110MW capacity said these plants can effectively contribute in meeting the power demands of Lahore and nearby cities. Tahir Sattar of Southern Electric Power Company Ltd with 118MW capacity said his company has paid the fees of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan and now there is no outstanding amount against his power plant.

K-Electric (KE) has always focused on its Social Investment Programme (SIP) through its corporate social responsibility and the Power Utility has added another partner to which the company would be providing 100 percent free electricity to Family Educational Services Foundation schools and technical training centre specialised for the deaf niche of the society. As per KE’s press statement an MoU was signed at the KE House between the FESF and KE where KE’s CEO Tayyab Tareen and FESF’s Director Daniel Marc were present. CEO K-Electric appreciated the efforts that FESS is rendering to serve this part of the society that was not being given proper focus. He also expressed interest for the keen investing time with FESS with their skill set that can help FESS grow. On this occasion Director FESS Daniel Marc said, “Family Educational Services Foundation (FESF) is an educational organisation working in Pakistan since 1984. They invest in educational development and provide innovative training programmes and services to enable recipients to gain competency and self-sufficiency, empowers them to reach their full potential. The Deaf Reach School currently has 219 students enrolled where they train deaf teens and adults.”

PESHAWAR: The paramedical employees of various government hospitals in Peshawar division on Wednesday observed a complete boycott of duties and held a rally outside the Peshawar Press Club to protest against the delay in implementation of service structure for them. Holding banners and placards inscribed with their demands, the protesters marched from the Lady Reading Hospital in a procession on Sher Shah Suri Road and shouted slogans against the secretary of finance department. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Paramedical Association president Jafar Ali, secretary general Roidar Shah, chairman Sirajuddin Barki and other office-bearers were leading the procession. Speaking on the occasion, the association leaders blamed the secretary finance of the provincial government for what they called delaying tactics to materialise the announcement of Chief Minister Pervez Khattak regarding promotion of the health workers. They said that the chief minister had promised in the presence of ministers for health and finance on Sept 13, 2014 at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House, Islamabad, to solve the issues of health workers, including elevation of their scales, within one month and also issued directives to the relevant officials in this regard, but to no avail. They said that major demands of paramedics included timescale formula for promotion and provision of professional allowance. “We held another meeting with the provincial minister for finance on Feb 28, 2015 and after lengthy discussion he also agreed to accept our demands,” they said and alleged that secretary finance was delaying the implementation phase. Besides, the association office-bearers expressed concern over raids at different laboratories and described it as an injustice with the paramedics. They said that they had time and again presented their demands to the relevant officers, but no one was paying attention. “Now, we have no other option, but to observe a complete strike in all the hospitals of the province from April 22,” they warned. They said that the government had forced them to take such an extreme step for acceptance of their demands. They warned that if the government did not pay attention the workers would also stop emergency cover and duties in the anti-polio campaigns.

ISLAMABAD: Uploading photos on Instagram and Facebook or sending emails or text messages to a recipient without their consent may be considered harmless online behaviour, but under the new Prevention of Electronic Crimes Bill (PECB) 2015, these actions and many more could land unsuspecting Internet users in jail. “The bill criminalises all such activities. Nowhere in the world is spam a criminal offence, but it is about to become one in Pakistan,” said Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan (ISPAP) Convenor Wajahus Siraj.

LAHORE: The City District Government of Lahore (CDGL) sought on Wednesday a case against the administration of the Convent Jesus and Mary High School, Durand Road, for allegedly refusing to get their students administered polio drops by the teams. According to officials, Gulberg Town Deputy District Officer (DDO) of Health Dr Faisal Malik submitted an application to the Racecourse police station for a case against the principal of the school for not getting 60 students of the Urdu medium section vaccinated despite several visits by a CDGL polio team there from April 13 to 15. School secretary Jafar was not available for comment. The Gulberg Health DDO said school officials’ behaviour with polio team members was very strange. He said though the school got vaccinated students of English medium section but refused to entertain Urdu medium children. He said the school was showing the visits of polio teams to the school. He said that for the last one year, the CDGL had been holding two polio
Teenager set on fire dies in hospital
Daily Dawn, April 16, 2015

A mysterious disease has killed around 60 camels in Kario Ghanwar, Tarai and Khorwah and parts of Shaheed Fazil Rahu taluka over the past three weeks. People engaged in the livelihood of breeding priced camel species told Dawn on Wednesday that the animal was hit by a sudden outbreak in this specific region of Badin district that was considered to be an ideal location for camel breeding. Mohammad Yousaf Mehri, a resident of Haji Chakar Mehri village, said camels would die soon after contracting the mysterious disease, believed to be a virus. He said the disease was yet to be determined by local experts or officials of the livestock department. Fotio Jat, a villager who lives near Khorwah, verified the claim, saying that his camels fell ill all of a sudden. Usually, he said, an animal disease gave time to practice some traditional methods for the cure. Many other villagers had similar stories to tell, saying that as many as 80 priced camel species had died in this region over the past four weeks. The affected camel breeders have been approaching the district veterinary officers to the region to diagnose the disease and prescribe treatment. District veterinary officer Dr Dodo Chando said that several hundred camels were suffering from a viral infection, Surra, in parts of Badin, Tando Bago and Shaheed Fazil Rahu talukas. He said the infection was caused by the stings of iseti flies and ticks. Although he
SC rejects govt's plea against gas cess verdict
Daily Dawn, April 16, 2015

Health situation under control in Tharparkar
The Statesman, April 16, 2015

Provincial divide: Energy for Punjab, resentment for others
The Express Tribune, April 16, 2015

K-Electric to supply 40MW of electricity to new DG Khan cement plant, Pakistan
Cement, April 16, 2015

WAPDA employees protest government’s privatisation plan
Black Sea Business Recorder, April 16, 2015

could not identify the prevailing mysterious disease, he said 2,100 of a total population of some 8,000 camels in Badin district had been vaccinated against identified diseases on an emergency basis.

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court rejected on Wednesday a federal government’s petition seeking review of its Aug 22, 2014, judgment declaring the gas infrastructure development cess (GIDC) a fee, and not a tax. The government had argued that collection of over Rs100 billion under the GIDC Act was not liable to be refunded to the industrial consumers from whom it had been recovered. A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Nasir-ul-Mulk dismissed the review petition on the grounds that the Sept 24, 2014 ordinance promulgated by the government soon after the Aug 22 verdict had been challenged in the Peshawar High Court and the matter would eventually come before the apex court in the form of an appeal. The ordinance had legalised the recovery of GIDC from non-domestic consumers, mainly industries. Referring to the issue of refund of over Rs100bn to the industrial consumers, the court said it would consider the matter on a case-to-case basis whenever it came before it. The review petition was filed on behalf of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources. The apex court in its judgment had explained that such a cess should not have been introduced through a money bill in the National Assembly under Article 73 of the Constitution. But soon after the judgment was announced, the government promulgated the ordinance.

The GIDC Act was approved by the National Assembly in December 2011, imposing a cess on gas consumers, other than the domestic sector, to develop infrastructure for a number of projects, including the Iran-Pakistan pipeline, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline and the liquefied natural gas (LNG) project, and for price equalisation of imported alternative fuels, including liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Later, a number of industrial concerns as well as the owners of CNG stations filed petitions against GIDC in the Peshawar High Court. The PHC allowed the petitions in Dec 2013 by declaring the cess unconstitutional with a direction to refund the money collected so far within a reasonable time, either in lump sum or by adjusting in monthly bills. The federal government had challenged the decision in the Supreme Court which dismissed the appeal and upheld the PHC verdict, but did not deal with the high court direction to refund the amount collected as GIDC.

MITH: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Tharparkar Muhammad Asif Jameel has said that the health situation within the district is under control and children were being provided better health care facilities. The overall health situation of Thari children was improving and the administration is taking every possible step for further improvement, he added. A press release issued by Information Department here Wednesday said that in previous 72 hours no death of any child occurred due to under-nutrition. He said that the hospital was providing all available health facilities to the ailing children including Incubator, oxygen and medicines. - APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is making efforts to address its power woes but seems like most projects are catering to Punjab, which would spark controversy and resentment among the other provinces. According to sources, electricity import from China and liquefied natural gas shipments from Qatar are catering to northern areas of Punjab. The federal government, led by PML-N, had decided to transport LNG to Punjab’s power plants in a bid to generate 3,600MW electricity. Now, in a recent move, the government is also looking to allocate 4,000MW power import from China to upper Punjab, which would trigger controversy.

The cabinet committee on energy, in its meeting held on March 12, was informed that officials of state grid/CET visited Pakistan on January 22, to explore the possibility of providing electricity to Pakistan out of the grounds that the Sept 24, 2014 ordinance promulgated by the government soon after the Aug 22 verdict had been challenged in the Peshawar High Court and the matter would eventually come before the apex court in the form of an appeal. The ordinance had legalised the recovery of GIDC from non-domestic consumers, mainly industries. Referring to the issue of refund of over Rs100bn to the industrial consumers, the court said it would consider the matter on a case-to-case basis whenever it came before it. The review petition was filed on behalf of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources. The apex court in its judgment had explained that such a cess should not have been introduced through a money bill in the National Assembly under Article 73 of the Constitution. But soon after the judgment was announced, the government promulgated the ordinance.

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China’s Silk Road Fund to finance USD 1.4 bn hydro dam in Pak

Business Standard, April 16, 2015

NEPRA hiked the price of electricity for K-Electric by 81 paisa/Unit

Dunya News, April 15, 2015

Electricity shortfall maintains at 4,500 MW

Dunya News, April 15, 2015

NAB to probe Pervez Ashraf for illegally awarding RPP contract

Dawn, April 15, 2015

Govt to allot health dept land to NGO for hospital

Daily Dawn, April 15, 2015

Altat and Abdul Samad (Joint Secretary) Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO).

At the call of Pakistan Workers Federation, hundreds of workers observed sit-in in front of Mepco headquarters. Senior officials of the Union Ghulam Rasul Gujjar, Saijad Baloch, Malik Saeed, Mehr Altat, Ikram Ali, Rana Zahid Javed, Khan Muh Bukhari, Saleem Gilani, Sheikh Shahid Hussain, Ghulam Dastgir Maftla and Naveed Baloch warned against privatisation of the Wapda and dissolution of MEPCO and threatened to cut power supply for indefinite period.

Besides Multan, protests were held in Dera Ghazi Khan, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Khanewal, Lodhran, Vehari etc. They warned that electricity supply would be halted if their demands were not met immediately. The labour leaders claimed that privatisation of electricity has proved a failure and one of clear examples is K-Electric Company. The union leaders anticipated that after privatisation, the new management would start massive downsizing. The labour union leaders said that Wapda employees know very well how to safeguard their interests and do not fear about any harsh steps like mass arrests.

A USD 1.4 billion hydro power dam in Pakistan will be the first project to be financed by China’s multi-billion Silk Road Fund to alleviate the power crisis faced by the country, state-run media reported today. The Karot Hydro Power Project, with a capacity of 720 megawatts, will be the first project to receive support the USD 40 billion Silk Road Fund, state-run Global Times quoted Mushahid Sayed, President of the Think Tank Pakistan-China Institute, as saying. The project is proposed to be built on the Jhelum River near village Karot in Kahuta tehsil in Rawalpindi district. The project, with its main sponsor being an investment arm of China Three Gorges Corporation, is expected to alleviate the energy shortage of Pakistan, the report said. 93 per cent of the project’s funding will be done by China, according to some Pakistani media reports.

The “One Belt, One Road” initiative, which refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, were launched by President Xi Jinping in 2013, under which China aims to support partner countries along the routes in infrastructure construction. The Pakistan Economic Corridor, connecting China’s Xinjiang with Pakistan’s Gwadar Port, is part of the Silk Road projects. The success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will boost confidence of countries and regions along the route Sayed said. "Pakistan has traditionally been a long-standing all-weather friend to China, and Pakistan is both a part of the Central Asian economic belt through the economic corridor and a part of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road through the port of Gwadar.

"Building ports, pipelines, roads, rail links, infrastructure and IT through the corridor will enhance connectivity between China, Pakistan and South and Central Asia, and the corridor would be a game changer and a win-win development for both countries," Sayed said. The framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt will be a number of economic corridors, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, along key transportation arteries supported by key cities, trade zones and industrial parks, Fan Hengshan, deputy secretary-general with the National Development and Reform Commission, said. The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road will be supported by key ports along the route to ensure smooth, and safe passage of transport and trade, Fan said. The Silk Road Fund Co Ltd was established in December last year in Beijing, after President Xi Jinping announced the creation of the USD 40 billion fund in November.

KARACHI: National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has hiked the price of electricity by 81 Paisas/Unit for K-Electric on Wednesday. The price is increased to do fuel adjustment for the month of January. Notification of the order has been released. Additional recovery would be made from users of K-Electric through the month of May.

According to NEPRA, K-Electric users consumed 1 billion, 10 million and 8 lac units of electricity in January while the production cost of the electricity was also increased in January. NEPRA showed concern on unscheduled load shedding in Karachi and asked K-Electric to produce electricity using all the production units.

LAHORE: The electricity shortfall maintains at 4,500 Megawatt (MW) as the weather turns hot and humid. According to the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) sources, the hot weather has caused escalation in the electricity demand while the electricity production limps. At least 9,800 MW electricity is being added to the national source. However, the increased imbalance between the demand and production is causing longer outages both in urban and rural areas.

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has decided to initiate fresh investigations against former prime minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and five former senior bureaucrats for illegally awarding a contract of rental power project (RPP) in Gujranwala. The RPP contract was illegally assigned to Gulf Rental Power, Gujranwala, for the production of 62 megawatts of electricity, the watchdog said. A NAB spokesperson said, "This illegal act caused the national exchequer a huge loss of Rs. 493.85 million." The decision to open the investigation was made during the NAB executive board meeting held at its headquarters in Islamabad on Tuesday. The NAB spokesman said an inquiry has been ordered against the former premier and five former senior bureaucrats.

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government will allot 80-kanal piece of land to a Karachi-based NGO free of cost for construction of an electricity generation project. According to an official about the allotment, it was decided that the land was being allotted to the NGO, Indus, on political grounds. The agreement is being inked between the provincial government and Indus, which also runs a free hospital in Karachi, under which the latter will provide free facilities to people like other public sector hospitals. Sources said that a local leader of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf was the moving spirit behind the hospital, which would be built on the land originally acquired for Benazir Bhutto.
FAISALABAD: Under a stopgap arrangement, doctors of different specialties, attached with Allied and DHQ hospitals, will render their services at the outpatient department (OPD) of General Hospital, Gujranwala.

The arrangement is being made under the direction of the Punjab government, doctors of the Allied and the DHQ hospitals would visit the hospital on Monday and Wednesday, neurology on Fridays, dermatology on Thursday, nephrology on Monday and renal on Tuesday.

Faisalabad’s allied hospital specialists to work at general hospital
Daily Dawn, April 15, 2015

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Tuesday was informed by the State Minister of the Capital Administration and Development Usman Ibrahim that stocks of most medicines are available at the hospital in the federal capital. Moreover, the ban on the purchase of equipment has been lifted to ensure adequate facilities for patients. During the question hour session, the minister informed the house that the government had allocated Rs53 million for the purchase of free medicines to the patients and Rs32 million have been allocated for the purchase of equipment. The minister said that the agreement also dealt a serious blow to the proposed ZA Bhutto Medical College on the proposed site.

Minister claims most medicines available in hospitals
Daily Dawn, April 15, 2015
Lack of resources leaves
drug control wing
‘dysfunctional’
Daily Dawn, April 15, 2015

LAHORE: The Drug Control Wing of the Health Department, which was established with a sole objective of ensuring “safe, effective and quality medicines” to patients, has been ‘practically dysfunctional since its introduction in 2013. The wing is critically short of budget, human resource, logistic support and designated office. Instead of empowering the wing according to the given rules and policy, its affairs are being run by other sections of the state. The powers to transfer and post pharmacists and drug inspectors are still in the hands of the health additional secretary (admin) while drug testing labs are also being managed by the director general health. A senior official told Dawn that the new department had suffered a major setback when a PSO to the health secretary was appointed as an additional secretary of the Drug Control Wing in a sheer violation of rules which say this position shall be filled by a pharmacist of BPS 19. He said this appointment showed that the bureaucracy wanted its monopoly in the department at all costs through people from a particular school of thought. He said the step had disappointed senior pharmacists who were preparing to contest for the top slot. The official said the Drug Control Wing had been established in 2013 in the wake of the drug reaction scam of the Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC) in addition to other wings of the provincial health department like establishment wing, administration, technical and legal wing.

A drug tribunal constituted to probe the PIC scam had recommended complete restructuring of the section dealing officials and drug related matters. Consequently, the provincial health department had sent a summary to the chief minister for establishing a full-fledged separate wing giving a major share in the top management to pharmacists and drug inspectors. The Punjab government finally created four key positions — additional secretary, a deputy secretary and two section officers — under this wing, the official said, the official wing, the authorities concerned are continuously making a mockery of the policy, laid down rules for appointments, delegation of powers, making it a ‘worst section’ of the provincial health secretariat,” he said. According to the laid down rules, he said, the additional secretary (BPS 19 post) of the Drug Control Wing was to be appointed from among the senior pharmacists. Currently, 43 pharmacists were available in Punjab in the BPS 19. Of them 35 got promotions through the department while the rest from the Public Service Commission, he said. All of them had completed 20-year service in their respective fields and were also eligible for grade 20. According to the rules and regulations, senior pharmacists are eligible to be considered for the post of additional secretary of the Drug Control Wing. The provincial health secretary Anwar Ghafoor was heading the new section as additional secretary of the Drug Control Wing in violation of rules. The other departments/wings had been provided full-fledged offices and designated staff to run the affairs.

Similarly, the Establishment Wing has three deputy secretaries and 11 section officers and the development wing is housing an additional secretary, two deputy secretaries, two section officers, chief planning officer, three senior planning officers and five planning officers. Almost the same strength of officials had also been provided to other wings of the provincial health department. However, the Drug Control Wing has only a deputy secretary and a section officer to run the affairs of the largest province. This wing has not been designated complete powers vested in the rules and regulations framed by the Punjab government. It has no designated office, clerical and the helping staff while few available officials are working in makeshift arrangements. The wing was to man 450 pharmacists all over the province and 36 secretaries of the district quality control board and 152 drug inspectors. These officials are discharging the duties in a very odd environment. The transport is provided to some drug inspectors and other officials in the provincial capital while their colleagues in districts are discharging official assignments on private vehicles and motorbikes. Established under the Drugs Act 1976, the provincial quality control board (PQCB) was a critical component of the Drug Control Wing to ensure availability of quality drugs to the general public and effectively interdict its violations through prosecution of defaulters in courts. The main functions of the PQCB were to scrutinize and take appropriate action on reports and cases of inspectors and government analysts, recommend cancellation and suspension of licenses, advise the government and the field staff regarding ways and means to ensure quality of drugs.

The main office of the PQCB is also facing serious issues for lack of resources. It is housing in government flats at Iqbal Town. The premises, where the high profile PQCB exists, is also being shared by the nursing staff and other employees. Health Secretary Jawad Rafique Malik said the post of the additional secretary of the wing was filled after interviewing many candidates. He said that pharmacists belonged to a very small-scale cadre and none of them could qualify for the top position which required managerial skills, dedication and experience. “The job description of an official of the additional secretary level is very tough due to heavy workload and assignments which requires extraordinary skills, especially while coordinating with relevant departments,” Mr.
Malik said. He said the appointment of the PSO was not made on a permanent basis as the health department was considering a proposal to make the general doctors' cadre as additional secretary of the drug control wing. He said the provision of infrastructure, budget, human resource, logistic support and designated office to the drug control wing was necessary for its smooth functioning and to get required result. “We are also addressing these issues on a priority basis,” the health secretary said.

LAHORE: The government has moved the Punjab Healthcare Commission to seek action against a known private hospital in Lahore for violating the Standard Operating Procedures in attending a swine flu patient. The step has been taken because the hospital management did not inform the health authorities about the presence of the swine flu patient. Syed Altaf Hussain Sherazi of Sargodha who was getting treatment at Doctors Hospital, Lahore, had died of the swine flu on Monday. The department later officially notified the first death by swine flu in Punjab in 2015 on the basis of the reports which tested the patient positive for the H1N1 virus. Quoting preliminary inquiries, health director general Dr Zahid Pervaiz told Dawn the patient might have contracted the virus from the wild birds as he was fond of hunting. According to the brief history of the patient, he did not visit any country during the last some months. Mr Husain’s family members told the health experts that hunting was his favourite hobby. Deceased was fond of bird hunting. Dr Zahid said the experts had sent blood samples of nine people, including his four family members who remained in contact with him during his treatment period.

He fell sick on March 31 and was taken to a local general practitioner in Bhalwal, Sargodha district. Later, he was shifted to a private hospital in his hometown when the disease continued to spread. The family of Mr Altaf took him to Doctors Hospital on April 5 where he was provided treatment for pneumonia. “We were alarmed when a specialist doctor of Doctors Hospital who was attending the patient contacted the health department for the provision of Tamiflu tablets which were used to prevent the disease,” Dr Zahid said adding a team of experts was dispatched to the hospital immediately. The experts later reported to the health department about the presence of suspected swine flu patient at the hospital. The WHO experts were called who later sent blood samples of the patient to the National Institute of Health, Islamabad, which confirmed the virus. He said the patient, however, succumbed to the virus on Monday. He said the health department had referred the case to the PHC against the hospital management for violating the SOP and WHO guidelines.

KARACHI: A five-day polio drive was launched on Tuesday in eight ‘high-risk’ union councils of Malir, east and west districts, targeting some 240,000 children, officials said. They added that 1,285 teams started vaccinating the children against polio in Muzaffarabad Colony, Gujro, Songai, Manghopir, Ittehad Town, Chishti Nagar and Islamia Colony. These union councils were among the 11 high-risk neighbourhoods identified by the authorities as the ones that produced all the 23 polio cases in Karachi last year. The polio drive, which began on Monday, will be extended till Thursday. Three of the 11 union councils — encompassing Rehri Goth of Bin Qasim Town, Firdous Colony of Liaquatabad Town and Chakra Goth of Korangi Town — were excluded from the category of high-risk localities by the Sindh health authorities and the World Health Organisation (WHO) after no poliovirus had been found in some environmental tests. The authorities decided to concentrate on the remaining eight neighbourhoods. A meeting held at Karachi commissioner’s office with Shoaib Ahmed Siddiqui in the chair decided to take the local communities in confidence to ensure that every child in the areas had been vaccinated. They also decided to put up health camps for general immunization of children.

KARACHI: In a rare move, Rangers have demanded the provision of biometric system for the upcoming by-elections in the NA-246 constituency. In a letter addressed to the interior ministry and Director General NADRA, the law enforcement agency contended that in order to ensure effective monitoring through television (CCTV) systems and biometric machines, they should be installed in the 213 polling stations and 770 polling booths in NA-246 constituency. This, they maintained, will enable smooth polling. Rangers further contended that if the provision of biometric machines for all polling booths is not possible, then at least 372 booths designated for female voters should be equipped with the machines in order to curb rigging and ensure transparent polls. Rangers pointed out 55 buildings as sensitive and called for installing sensitive cameras on these. According to the ECP, this is the first time in the history of the country that an LEA has demanded installation of biometric system for the aforementioned elections. Authorities have already directed deployment of Rangers personnel in and outside the polling stations to curb rigging during the all-important elections. Earlier, various concerned quarters of the country and political parties demanded deployment of security personnel, including Pakistan Army troops to deal with any untoward incident on polling day.

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Balighur Rehman on Tuesday informed the Senate that no discrimination was being carried out with any citizen of the country irrespective of their ethnic or regional background in renewal of computerized national identification cards (CNICs). Replying to a calling attention notice moved by Sitara Ayaz regarding blockage of CNICs of the people belonging to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by NADRA, the minister said that no CNIC was blocked on ethnic background adding that NADRA has blocked even CNICs in Punjab, Balochistan and others areas of the country for verification. The minister said that manual CNICs having no biometric verifications were issued on basis of B-form and attestation during 2000-2005. However, he said after the expiry of such CNICs, data was being scrutinized and re-verified.

He said that both NADRA and UNHCR have also data of Afghan refugees and if the data crossed with the refugees then such CNICs were sent to a Joint Verification Cell (JVC) for verification and scrutiny. The JVC comprising personnel of MI, ISI, IB and other government administrative agencies to re-verify the data, he said. He said that the re-verification process needed 45 days and efforts were being made to reduce the time period. The minister said maximum cases of
Petrol shortage: Ministry questions PNSC’s work, wants ECC review

The Express Tribune, April 15, 2015

ISLAMABAD: Holding the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC) responsible for the petrol shortage that engulfed Punjab and other parts of the country earlier this year, the petroleum ministry has alleged that the entity was utilising carriers of other shipping companies to carry oil for Pakistan State Oil (PSO) – a clear violation of the federal government orders. The petroleum ministry has now decided to seek the assistance of the economic decision-making body to issue directions to PNSC and get it to abide by the terms of the agreement through a bidding process and ensure a smooth supply of oil. The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), in its meeting held on November 22, 2012, had allowed the PNSC to transport oil for PSO subject to the condition that whenever the company has no carrier of its own, it shall issue a no-objection certificate to the prospective importer of cargo. Accordingly, a contract was signed between PSO and PNSC in 2012 followed by an addendum dated January 8, 2013 for transportation of premier motor gasoline (PMG) and furnace oil.

However, the petroleum ministry has informed the ECC that the state-owned oil company has had issues with PNSC. Due to its inadequate fleet and fewer self-owned vessels, PNSC charters vessels from other shipping companies for transportation of products, which is a clear violation of the guidelines given by the ECC. Consequently, the petroleum ministry has stated this practice leads to frequent disturbances and delays in parting the delayed reporting of PNSC vessels at the respective ports. “It may be observed that a major reason for the fuel crisis in the country was the late arrival of two PNSC tankers despite timely establishment of Letters of Credits by PSO,” petroleum ministry said. The ministry added that one particular vessel was loaded on January 12, while its original arrival window in Karachi was January 6-8. It arrived on January 15. Another vessel was supposed to reach the loading port in Singapore during January 3-5, 2015 that was also delayed and reached on January 15. It subsequently reached Karachi on January 28 instead of January 16. Looking for a solution - PSO has warned that amid these conditions a similar situation might arise leading to fuel shortages. Therefore, PSO has proposed that the matter should be raised at the ECC level to provide the company the provision to switch to importing petrol and oil on a cost and freight (C&F) basis. Additionally, the PNSC is involved in a litigation case against PSO on the issue of delayed vessels and demurrage already. The senate standing committee on petroleum, during its meeting held on November 6, 2014, had recommended that the petroleum ministry should revive the policy of oil import on a C&F basis. Despite repeated attempts, the PNSC did not respond to queries.

The perils of contaminated water are well known. So is the unfortunate fact that unscrupulous vendors will try to capitalise on high demand for a product to make a quick buck. It is, therefore, reassuring that the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources undertakes regular testing of mineral and bottled water brands available in the country. Its report for the period of January to March 2015, based on the results of testing 71 brands of mineral and bottled water collected from across the country, declares eight as being “completely unsafe” for human consumption on various grounds.

Several of them contain levels of arsenic, sodium and potassium either moderately or far higher than the permissible limits set by the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority. These chemicals can cause various ailments, including diabetes, kidney problems, hypertension and even cancer. Three brands were found to be unsafe due to “microbiological contamination which may cause cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, hepatitis and typhoid etc”. The quarterly exercise by the PCRWR is certainly helpful for consumers and may even be having a deterrent effect. In the first quarter of last year for instance, 21 brands of mineral and bottled water found to be contaminated compared to eight this time.

In November 2014, the PSQCA in a press release went further and declared it was illegal to buy or sell eight brands of water found unfit for human consumption during that monitoring cycle. Violating the ban, it said, would attract a fine of at least Rs50,000 and one year behind bars. However, without stringent implementation of the law, repeat offenders — as well as new, fly-by-night concerns — may resume the lucrative business of selling contaminated water masquerading as ‘pure’ and ‘safe’ to lure consumers. Under its mandate to check deceptive marketing and oversee consumer protection issues, the Competition Commission of Pakistan can also play a role here. Consumers themselves also be expected to stay abreast of periodic reports that inform them which brands of bottled water are safe.

Power distribution companies directed to improve load-management system

Radio Pakistan, April 14, 2015

Ministry of Water and Power has directed electricity distribution companies to improve load-management system to facilitate masses. According to a spokesperson of the ministry, hydel power generation of Tarbela and Mangla Dams has increased from 800 megawatt to 1200 megawatt, which helped overcome the situation. He said reduction in hydel generation resulted in increase in one hour additional load-shedding. The spokesperson said seven-hour load-shedding is being carried out in urban areas and nine hours in rural areas. He said uninterrupted electricity had been supplied to industrial units for the last four months. He said according to summer schedule, industrial feeders will face only eight hours’ load-shedding. He said electricity load-shedding duration in urban areas will decrease to six hours and eight hours in rural areas as soon as water situation in rivers improves.

Lahore - Electricity produced from LNG would add to problems of the power sector, as cost of such electricity would be higher than that from furnace oil. This was stated in a Fact Sheet issued
LNG to worsen power sector woes

The Express Tribune, April 14, 2015

on Monday by the Institute for Policy Reforms. IPR has advised the government to learn lessons from past mistakes. So far, it is known about three upfront cost of LNG. However, based on the estimated price paid for recent import of 147,000 cubic feet, cost of power from LNG would be higher than that produced from furnace oil. Nepra recently determined upfront tariff based on imported LNG. Nepra’s assumed cost of $12 per mmmbtu for imported LNG is higher than the present cost of power from furnace oil. IPR also questions the need for government to seek upfront tariff from Nepra. Upfront tariff guarantees return to investor, but do not require them to meet any efficiency or productivity criteria. The parameters for the power plant remain open. “All costs are passed through to the consumers while the power producer receives an assured return,” says the Fact Sheet. Upfront tariff also does not require the investor to come through a competitive process.

Relying on imported LNG is no different from what took place under the 1994 power policy. That policy brought about change in fuel mix from hydropower to thermal power and gave extensive comfort to the investor. Upfront tariff was part of the 1994 policy. The core problem with the present power sector is its high cost of production because of high reliance on furnace oil. To overcome this, government must seek lower cost solution not one that increases the cost. Imported LNG, whose input cost is higher than furnace oil, cannot help the power sector, the IPR report said. Government must also set right the many governance issues that hobble power supply. IPR estimates that about 30pc of the sector’s revenue is lost at the distribution stage. There are inefficiencies also with transmission and distribution of power. Tariff policy is skewed and circular debt uncontrollable. Almost every unit of power generated carries a subsidy. New generation also would face all of these issues and the sector would resultantly continue to under-perform. The Fact Sheet opines that reducing the suffering of the people and stimulating economy must be at the heart of any new initiative by the government. It counsels government to set the power sector house in order. For immediate relief to the people, it must increase allocation of domestic gas for power production. This will reduce cost and increase generation by bringing in capacity that cannot operate presently for want of gas. Government must take administrative measures to reduce excess losses. At the same time, it is necessary to look holistically at the power sector and reform the flawed policy, the crumbling structure, and broken governance. Increased power at high cost from imported LNG should not be its priority, the IPR report concluded.

PEW points towards inconsistency in LNG deal

INP from Islamabad: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Monday said kickbacks to the tune of billions have been feared in the LNG import deal which can jeopardise the energy future of the country. Authorities have been violating the LNG Policy in a bid to benefit a mafia comprising a banker, a stockbroker and others. It said Pakistan is paying almost two dollars extra to buy one mmmbtu of LNG hiking cost of first shipment of LNG comprising 140,000 tonnes or 72, 80,000 mmmbtu by almost Rs. 1.5 billion, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PEW. He said that if three million tonnes of LNG was imported annually as per the plan it will translate into losses of almost Rs 31 billion which will damage economy but benefit the influential individuals. Mughal said that international suppliers are delivering LNG at the port of buyer country at the cost of $7 per mmmbtu while Pakistan is buying the commodity at Qatar at the rate of $8 which costs it $9 at Karachi port. He said according to experts adding the charges of terminal, regasification, transportation, losses and theft will jack up the price of LNG to $12 per mmmbtu. Majority of Pakistan population depends on agriculture but the fertilizer sector has been forced to buy LNG from PSO but at exorbitant cost which is exploitation of masses, he noted. Some of the insiders are of the opinion that Indian companies were aware of the cost of LNG for Pakistan therefore they offer cheaper rates despite the fact that distance of Karachi port from Qatar is 933 nautical miles while its distance with Indian post of Gujrat is 1484 nautical miles.

ISLAMABAD: In a major breakthrough, Pakistan is set to sign a power purchase agreement with Tajikistan in Istanbul, Turkey on April 24, which will bring surplus electricity from Central Asia to South Asia. Under the project, known as Central Asia South Asia Electric Transmission and Trade (Casa-1000), Pakistan will be provided 1,000 megawatts of clean energy at 9.35 cents per unit including all charges. Initial agreement on hydroelectric power supply was signed by Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan in Turkey in December last year.

“We have finalised all aspects of the power purchase agreement, which will be signed in Istanbul on April 24,” a senior government official said. Tajikistan appears to be a strategic partner of Pakistan, especially in energy supplies, which will connect Pakistan with the Central Asian region. The two countries are working on different projects including power supply, transit trade and a transit route for oil supply through Pakistan. Although the proposal was coined long ago, the current government of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), which had promised to voters in its election campaign that it would overcome power shortages swiftly, stepped up work to push ahead with the project.

Casa-1000 is scheduled for completion by 2018 under the umbrella of the World Bank. Tajikistan’s share in electricity export will be 70% while Kyrgyzstan will contribute 30% of supplies. Afghanistan will consume 300MW of exported electricity while Pakistan will get 1,000MW. The project is expected to give a boost to energy trade in the region, leading to sustainable development. In addition to Casa-1000, Pakistan and Tajikistan are set to study prospects of supplying another 1,000MW by laying a transmission line to Chitralt in northern areas in an effort to put to use surplus energy and help Islamabad mitigate its energy crisis.

“We have the capacity to export an additional 1,000MW through the Chitralt route that will help our brotherly country overcome the energy crisis,” a Tajik embassy official said. Tajikistan is the world’s third largest producer of hydroelectric power after the US and Russia. Hydroelectric power generation accounts for 76% of the total energy production in the country. A proposal for oil transport to Tajikistan via Pakistan is also under consideration. The government has

Power purchase: Pakistan to sign accord with Tajikistan this month

The Express Tribune, April 14, 2015
welcomed Tajikistan’s plan for crude oil import from Kuwait and its processing in Pakistan into refined products. Tajikistan is a landlocked crude oil producer and is interested in exporting oil from Kuwait via the Karachi Port. First, the imported oil will be processed in Pakistan and then refined products will be sent to Tajikistan. The Central Asian state has sought help from the Pakistan government to press on with this plan.

LAHORE: With electricity shortfall rising to 33 per cent because of forced closure of a number of plants, power sector managers are left with no choice but to violate the prime minister’s directive of restricting loadshedding in urban areas to six hours. According to sources in the National Transmission and Despatch Company against a demand of 13,500MW on Monday. With around 1,500MW going to the ‘exempted feeders’, the managers had to increase loadshedding hours in urban centres; otherwise rural areas would have literally gone without power. According to the sources, two units of HUNCO (600MW) are undergoing scheduled maintenance. Normally, they are allowed routine maintenance during high water months, like July. The company’s third unit, adding to woes of the power sector as it lost 900MW from HUBCO alone on Monday. Two units at the Muzaffargarh power plant went off line because of leakage in boiler tube, causing another deficit of 500MW. AES Pak-Gen, which has been on forced closure for one month, is not expected to return to the system over the next few weeks, causing another shortage of 340MW on a daily basis. Cities facing over 7 and rural areas 13 hours of loadshedding. The power sector managers have kept Uch-II closed for one month because of fears of national breakdown. The plant had faltered twice, taking the entire system down in the beginning of this year. Uch-I, though available, has no transmission line to evacuate 525MW from the plant. Besides, three plants near Lahore — Japan Power (110MW), Sepcol (120MW) and Saba Power (120MW) — have been closed for the past several months because financial disputes with the government.

"With around 2,610MW out of the system, either because of technical faults, untimely permission of maintenance or disputes with the government, and all this happening in low water months, the woes of the power sector are not hard to imagine," said a former managing director of the Pakistan Electric Power Company (PEPCO). The company has so far been maintaining a scheduled six-hour loadshedding in cities on the orders of the prime minister and the entire brunt was transferred to rural areas. As the crisis deepened over the past few days, the power managers started putting industry off line to save city dwellers. But when the situation got out of control, they were left with no choice but to increase the duration of loadshedding in cities to seven hours officially and unofficially much more. The rural areas are facing over 13 hours of loadshedding. Since there was no mechanism to gauge the forced loadshedding, the managers used it to escape the wrath of the Prime Minister Secretariat and balance the system, the ex-PEPCO chief said. "One must not forget that it is only the start of summer and only fans are switched on. Wait for a week when the mercury is expected to touch 40 degree Celsius and the situation will start deteriorating," he warned. "The industry is now taking a hit of eight hours," said Seth Mohammad Akber, Chairman of the Punjab chapter of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association. Over the past one month, yam export has declined by about 20,000 tons because of the persistent energy crisis. When the prime minister issued the orders for restricting urban loadshedding to six hours, the textile sector, which consumes around 1,500MW, became a happy hunting ground. It was switched off for eight hours a day, when general industry was closed for six hours. On Monday, the entire industry was sent off line for eight hours. "One can only hope that this duration does not expand to 10 or 12 hours, as happened in the past," Seth Akber said.

Khar: A three-day anti-polio drive began in Bajaur Agency on Monday amid tight security to vaccinate over 224,000 children against the crippling disease. In this connection, a ceremony was held at the agency headquarters hospital here which was attended by officials of health department, local administration, WHO, religious leaders and social activists. The participants stressed the need of joint efforts for eradication of polio virus from the agency as the disease had become serious threat to the lives of children across the country. The tribal elders, religious leaders and social activists pleaded to continue their cooperation with the health department in eliminating the disease in the region. They vowed to create awareness among people of remote areas about the fatality of the polio disease. Agency Surgeon Dr Zakir Hussain, later, told journalists that 642 mobile, fixed and transit teams comprising more than 1,400 health workers, schoolteachers, volunteers and officials of health department and WHO were taking part in the campaign. He said foolproof security arrangements had been made by the administration to thwart any untoward incident during the drive.

LAHORE: Electricity produced from LNG will add to problems of the power sector, as cost of such electricity will be higher than that produced by furnace oil, maintains a Fact Sheet issued by the Institute for Policy Reforms here on Monday. IPR has advised the government to learn lessons from past mistakes. So far, little is known about the import price of LNG. However, based on the estimated price paid for recent import of 147,000 cubic feet, cost of power from LNG would be higher than that produced from furnace oil. Nepra has recently determined upfront tariff based on imported LNG. Nepra’s assumed cost of $12 per mmBTU for imported LNG is higher than the present cost of power from furnace oil. IPR also questions the need for the government to seek upfront tariff from Nepra. Upfront tariff guarantees return to investor, but does not require them to meet any efficiency or productivity criteria. The parameters for the power plant remain open. "All costs are passed onto the consumer while the power producer receives an assured return," says the Fact Sheet. Upfront tariff also does not require the investor to come through a competitive process. Relying on imported LNG is no different from what took place under the 1994 power policy. That policy brought about a change in fuel mix from hydel to thermal power and gave extensive comfort to the power utility. The core problem with the present power sector is its high cost of production because of high reliance on furnace oil. To overcome this, the government must seek low-cost solution, not one that increases the cost. The imported LNG, which costs higher than furnace oil, cannot help the power sector. The IPR
estimates that about 30 per cent of the sector’s revenue is lost at the distribution stage. There are inefficiencies also with transmission and distribution of power, leading to widespread and circular debt uncontrollable. Almost every unit of power generated carries a subsidy. New generation also would face all of these issues and the sector would resultanty continue to underperform. The Fact Sheet opines that reducing the suffering of the people and stimulating economy must be at the heart of any new initiative by the government. It counsels the government to set the power sector house in order. For immediate relief to the people, it must increase allocation of domestic gas for power production. Power generation at high cost from imported LNG should not be its priority, it said.

LAHORE: Scores of paramedics from all teaching hospitals of the provincial capital staged a sit-in on Monday outside the Punjab Assembly against delay in provision of service structure as per the “promises” made by the chief minister. They continued their agitation on The Mall for over three hours causing inconvenience to motorists on one of the busiest arteries of the city and other adjoining roads. The protesters after recording their agitation dispersed peacefully pleading to hold a province-wide sit-in on April 20. The paramedics had gathered on the call of the Punjab Paramedics Alliance (PPA) and health support staff. They said the government was not issuing a notification of the service structure that had been finalised for employees of the health department from BPS 5 to 17. Similarly, no move was being made to draft a service structure for employees of BPS 1 to 4 despite promises, they said.

Several paramedics first marched from Jinnah Hospital to Shaikh Zayed Hospital. They were joined by fellows from the Punjab Institute of Cardiology and the Services Hospital and reached outside the Punjab Assembly. Before joining the protesters on The Mall, paramedics of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital surrounded office of their medical superintendent and the Fatima Jinnah Medical College where they lodged a protest against the management for victimising employees. Addressing the protesters, PPA Chairman, said. The government had turned a deaf ear to the legitimate demands of health department employees. He said the service structure was a fundamental right of the paramedics and health support staff, but the government was delaying it for several years. He said the PPA and other associations would continue their agitation until the acceptance of their demands.

LAHORE: City District Government of Lahore’s health wing on Monday launched another round of a three-day polio drive in 150 union councils of the metropolis. District Coordination Officer retired Capt Muhammad Usman inaugurated the drive. He said the drive would cover students (less than five years of age) of the Divisional Public School in Model Town. Speaking on the occasion, he said some 1.57 million children would be administered anti-polio drops during the drive.

FAISALABAD: The upgraded 250-bed General Hospital, Ghulam Muhammadabad, which was inaugurated on March 16, 2013, still lacks major specialties and the patients are mostly referred to the Allied or DHQ hospitals while only a few are treated at its 10-bed emergency and medical ward. A gastroenteritis outbreak in the D-Block of Ghulam Muhammadabad in 2006 had panicked the then chief minister Parvaiz Elahi who had announced hospital’s upgrade from 50 to 250 beds at a cost of Rs.700 million. Aslam Ghafoor, waiting in the hospital ground for checkup of his 12-year-old daughter suffering from ear pain, said when he contacted the people at the reception the staff asked him to wait for the doctor concerned. “After three hours wait, I contacted a nurse who was kind enough to tell me that the hospital had no facility of the ENT ward,” Ghafoor said. MS Dr Masood Bukhari has claimed, through a steamer outside the emergency, that facilities of the ENT and eye treatment were available at the hospital. However, the reality is altogether different. During a visit to the hospital, it was observed that the hospital administration had earmarked rooms for male and female ENT and eye wards, setting up beds, however, both were locked as the government had not yet appointed doctors. A major portion of the hospital was also found locked.

General Hospital lacks all major specialties; patients are referred to other facilities. Presently, the patients are being received at the small emergency of the hospital and only minor surgeries are being conducted while the hospital has no anesthetia department or any professional anesthetist. Hamid Ali of Rashidabad said the emergency services were not available in the evening and at night when the ward wore a deserted look. People visit the hospital’s emergency, however, a majority of them are referred to the Allied Hospital as it lacked machinery and the latest equipment to treat patients. “I visited the general hospital with pain in my main artery but instead of giving me even first aid, the staff sent me to the Allied Hospital,” Ali shared his experience.

A doctor, requesting anonymity, told Dawn that even after two years of its upgrade, the hospital lacked major specialties like orthopedic, pulmonology, gastroenterology, cardiology, neurosurgery, eye, dermatology, psychiatry, pediatrics, nephrology, ICU and neurology. He said the hospital’s emergency was not enough as compared to the population of the area. He said appointments of doctors and availability of the latest machinery would resolve many health issues of residents of Ghulam Muhammadabad and adjoining localities while making the hospital fully functional would also reduce the burden on the Allied and DHQ hospitals. A couple of years ago, the Punjab government had given that to the Punjab Medical College (PMC), however, the majority of the hospital affairs, including transfer posting of staff and their salaries, remained with the district government, sources said. On Mar 11 last, they said, the hospital had been given autonomy by the Punjab government but no facility were announced for it. Now the administrative and financial control of the hospital had been given to the PMC administration. Dawn contacted the MS for his version through calls and SMS, however, he did not reply.

LAHORE: More than 25 million unverified and unclaimed mobile phone subscriber identity...
Quack ‘massagers’, a threat to public health

The Statesman, April 14, 2015

MULTAN: Quack massagers who operate widely after promising relief and relaxation continue to pose threats to public health in the cities and towns as there is no check on such ill-practices. Physiotherapists—Dr Jasarat and Dr Talha of Nishtar hospital while talking to APP informed that experts of their field have sound understanding of injuries, trauma, and subsequent treatment. However, wrong practices by quacks play havoc with public lives as they did not know which part of body should be massaged under certain circumstances and conditions. They said wrongly done exercises harm the patients and also transmit diseases as quacks donot follow hygiene cautious. Wrong healing of muscles due to untrained massage therapy is a common ailment, they noted. When contacted with District Health Officer (DHO), Dr Shahid Maggasi, informed that he inspected things lying in his jurisdiction. He said that such massagers donot fall under his jurisdiction and added that he was responsible for things falling within the area of drug act. He, however, conceded that there was need to discourage uneducated and unskilled massagers commonly known as ‘malishiya’/Rasheed Ahmed, a massager, who practiced his skills on people at General Bus Stand informed that he was engaged in the ‘practice’ since 2000. He informed that he learnt the physiotherapy skill from his elder brother and explained that he visited different locations in the city to approach his customers. - APP

3.5m kids to be vaccinated in Balochistan’s anti-measles drive

The Statesman, April 14, 2015

PESHAWAR: The three-day anti-polio drive which commenced Monday under Sehat Ka Ittehad programme has been cancelled in four districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) due to poor performance in the previous campaign on Monday. According to a source in an Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) for Polio of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department, the ongoing three-day anti-polio campaign was stopped in Buner, Swat, Lakki Marwat and Swabi districts. The source said polio teams had not reached the targeted number of children in the four districts despite having complete facilities and arrangements. The source added that the concerned authorities of the said districts have been called for explanation. It will be decided after the meeting when the drives will be launched in the districts. Meanwhile, the three-day anti-polio drive kicked off on Monday in 20 districts of the province. During the three days of the campaign, a total of 1.4 million children under the age of five will be administered anti-polio drops in 20 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to a report of the polio EOC, a total of 4,240 mobile and 395 fixed teams have been deputed while 141 transit points have also been set up across the province for the campaign. Polio vacs and full logistic support has also been provided to ensure the mobility and access of polio teams to the targeted areas, said the report. Pakistan is one of only three countries in the world where polio remains endemic, along with Afghanistan and Nigeria. Efforts to eradicate it have been seriously hampered by the deadly targeting of vaccination teams in recent years.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that Pakistan is responsible for nearly 80 per cent of polio cases reported globally and has imposed strict travel restrictions on Pakistan last year to prevent the possible spread of the polio virus to other countries. On recommendations of the National Advisory Group, a paradigm shift is seen in the Polio Eradication Initiative as chronically missed children are being tracked for vaccination through all possible interventions. The goal of polio eradication relies on reaching out to the 5-6 percent missed children that remain unapproachable in each campaign, says a press release. The National Emergency Operation Centre is exploring all means to track these missed children including vaccination at permanent transit points, installations of health camps in high risk areas and inclusion of female community volunteers in the programme.

In order to have reliable information regarding missed children in the high risk Union Councils of Pakistan, need of a mechanism was felt to collect information, therefore National Emergency Operations Centre has taken an initiative to track such missed children in high risk Union Councils of the country through specialized Data Support Centre to facilitate the collection, collation and data entry across the high risk districts. The data collection has been initiated during the recent National Polio Campaign of March 16-18, 2015.

To have the verifiable information regarding missed children in the High Risk Union Councils of Pakistan (HRUCs), the mechanism for collecting information directly from the vaccinator tally sheets has be put in place,” said Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq while reviewing the impact of the initiative. During the National Polio Campaign of March, the establishment of the establishment and operationalization of 11 Data Support Centres across the country to collect the tally sheets from the 554 HRUCs in 39 districts is formalized.

High Risk UCs identified in Balochistan were from district Quetta, Mastung, Nasirabad, Zhob, Killa Abdullah and Pishin. High Risk UCs of Punjab were identified from districts of Lahore, Faisalabad, Pakpattan, Rawalpindi, Rajanpur, Multan and Attock. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA, high risk UCs were identified in Peshawar, Charsadda,
**Inconsistency in LNG deal decried**  
*The Statesman, April 14, 2015*

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Monday said kickbacks to the tune of billions have been feared in the LNG import deal which can jeopardise the energy future of the country.Authorities have been violating the LNG Policy in a bid to benefit a mafia comprising a banker, a stockbroker and others, it said.Pakistan is paying almost two dollars extra to buy one mmbtu of LNG hiking cost of first shipment of LNG comprising 140,000 tonnes or 72, 80,000 mmbtu by almost Rs. 1.5 billion rupees, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PEW.He said that if three million tonnes of LNG was imported annually as per the plan it will translate into losses of almost Rs.31 billion rupees which will damage economy but benefit the influential individuals.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that international suppliers are delivering LNG at the port of buyer country at the cost of $7 per mmbtu while Pakistan is buying the commodity at Qatar at the rate of $8 dollars which costs it 9 USD at Karachi port.Dr. Murtaza Mughal said according to experts adding the charges of terminal, regasification, transportation, losses and theft will jack up the price of LNG to $12 per mmbtu.Majority of Pakistan population depends on agriculture but the fertilizer sector has been forced to buy LNG from PSO at exorbitant cost which is exploitation of masses, he noted.Some of the insiders are of the opinion that Indian companies were aware of the cost of LNG for Pakistan therefore they offer cheaper rates despite the fact that distance of Karachi port from Qatar is 933 nautical miles while its distance with Indian port of Gujarat is 1484 nautical miles.This indicates that Indians pay more fare for the commodity but can offer competitive rates which are evidence enough of the variability in the deal. - NNi

**Special anti-polio drive begins in KP today**  
*Daily Dawn, April 13, 2015*

LAHORE: The health department has denied any polio case in Shahpur tehsil of Sargodha. A spokesman of health department said that a team comprising experts of WHO and district health officer examined the twins and found them suffering from cerebral palsy, a congenital defect.The spokesman clarified that no polio case had so far been reported in Punjab during 2015.

LAHORE: A ‘new polio virus’ has been detected from the environmental sample drawn from Multan Road drain of Lahore, putting a good number of children of the provincial capital at risk of contracting the crippling disease. The health officials were shocked to learn that the lab investigations of the sewage sample could not trace genetic sequencing of the new polio virus which was a rare happening. The report has declared the fresh Lahore sample positive for the polio virus, an official who is close to the information, told Dawn. He said all the environmental samples of Lahore had been declared positive in the past which proved the genetic links of this new polio virus with either Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or Fata. He said the recent report, however, made it clear that the polio virus was not related to these areas. Lab analysis could not trace genetic sequencing of virus. Meanwhile, the official further said, the health authorities were already investigating a case in Faisalabad where a 60-old baby was suspected to be infected with polio disease. He said though the investigations were under process, if the reports were declared positive, it would be the first polio case of 2015 in Punjab. “The lab report shows a new polio virus has been circulating in Lahore for the last six months or so and it may infect children particularly those residing in Pakhtun colonies,” Punjab Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) Director Munir Ahmad told this reporter. He said it never happened in the past as the lab reports had been detecting the genetic sequencing of the polio virus whenever the sewage samples were sent to the National Institute of Health (NIH), Islamabad.

“Though the report is yet to be released, this time the relevant official who analysed the Multan Road Lahore sample has conveyed to us that the sample is infected with polio virus but the lab could not detect its origin,” Mr Munir said. He said the genetic sequencing of a polio virus played a decisive role for the health experts to stop its further spread by reaching the target population. “If the genetic links of this virus are established with the local virus, it will be unfortunate for us,” he said. According to the laid down guidelines, sewage samples are being drawn every month from major districts of the province particularly Lahore. The ‘unsual result’ of the fresh sampling showed that a large number of children was not getting vaccination during the last many anti-polio drives, he said. “We have conducted so far 10 campaigns during the last one year,” the EPI director said, adding that in the perspective of the new report more efforts were required to reach the missing children in order to prevent them from the virus. About the Faisalabad case, he said the matter had also disturbed the health authorities. He said the age of the suspected kid was also focus of discussions/investigations as normally the polio wild virus targeted under three-year-old babies. “According to the information so far, the chances of child’s paralysing by the disease were 50 per cent,” Munir Ahmad said.

This particular case was also different in nature due to the age of the suspected child, he said.
Six die after inhaling toxic gas in pickle factory

**Daily Dawn, April 13, 2015**

Six people died after inhaling toxic gases emitting from an underground tank containing a chemical substance being used in making pickle in a food factory set up in a residential area of Korangi on Sunday, police and hospital officials said. The owner of the factory was among the deceased; five were female, two were male. One of the policemen were seen entering it and the policemen said that it was an ‘illegal’ factory and action be taken against it. Meanwhile, a police mobile daily arrived there at 6pm and one of the policemen were seen entering it and the policemen said that it was an ‘illegal’ factory and action be taken against it. The deaths occurred due to inhalation of poisonous gaseous material, said the police surgeon. Blood samples and clothes of all the dead have been taken and preserved for chemical examinations. The dead were identified as 52-year-old Mehtab, stated to be the owner of the factory; 26-year-old Sohail; 50-year-old Saleem; 28-year-old Imran; 26-year-old Adnan; and 30-year-old Nawaz.

KARACHI: Six people died after inhaling toxic gases emitting from an underground tank containing a chemical substance being used in making pickle in a food factory set up in a residential area of Korangi on Sunday, police and hospital officials said. The owner of the factory was among the deceased; five were female, two were male. One of the policemen were seen entering it and the policemen said that it was an ‘illegal’ factory and action be taken against it. Meanwhile, a police mobile daily arrived there at 6pm and one of the policemen were seen entering it and the policemen said that it was an ‘illegal’ factory and action be taken against it. The deaths occurred due to inhalation of poisonous gaseous material, said the police surgeon. Blood samples and clothes of all the dead have been taken and preserved for chemical examinations. The dead were identified as 52-year-old Mehtab, stated to be the owner of the factory; 26-year-old Sohail; 50-year-old Saleem; 28-year-old Imran; 26-year-old Adnan; and 30-year-old Nawaz.

Speaking to Dawn, Karachi-East DIG Munir Ahmed Shaikh said he had instituted an inquiry committee led by the SSP of investigation, which would submit its report within seven days. “There are two aspects of the incident,” said the DIG East. “First, there are reports that it is an authorised factory. Secondly, chemicals were being used in pickle manufacturing and it needs to be ascertained that what type of precautions had been taken in this regard and why such chemicals were being used in a food factory.” Mr Shaikh said no government institution ever notified to the police that it was an ‘illegal’ factory and action be taken against it. Meanwhile, several residents told media persons at the spot that Achar Karkhana (the pickle factory) had been working there for the past 10 years and it was known to the police and local administration as well. Residents claimed that the police used to receive ‘protection money’ from the factory and a police mobile daily arrived there at 6pm and one of the policemen were seen entering it and coming out of the factory. Korangi district deputy commissioner Asif Jan Siddiqi told the media that it was an ‘illegal’ factory established in a home. Landhi SP Afzal Amin contended that it was the responsibility of the institutions concerned to take action against the factory set up in a home.

KARACHI: The absence of a hostel facility in the city to provide temporary residence to poor patients’ attendants is a major reason that forces a large number of families not to avail free life-saving treatment for their children suffering from cancer, it emerged on Sunday. Health experts working at health units offering free cancer treatment told Dawn that the rate of treatment abandonment in cancer patients was very high and it was estimated that about 30 per cent to 40pc children reporting with cancer at hospitals failed to receive treatment. The situation, they said, not only endangers a life but had serious financial implications, especially on a health facility being run on donations. Treatment abandonment is defined as the failure either to start or complete medically indicated curative therapy. About 20 to 25pc families reporting at hospitals don’t initiate cancer treatment for their children that could be cured in most cases while another 10 to 15pc leave in the middle of the treatment,” said Dr Shamvill Ashraf, the medical director (paediatrics) at the Indus Hospital. Around 500 new cases of cancer are reported at the unit. About half of the families that come to the health facility, he said, were from outside Karachi that included parts of interior of Sindh and Balochistan. And a long sustained treatment required for intensive cancer therapy, they have a genuine concern over the lack of a residence. Efforts are being made on our part to develop a hostel facility for such families;” Dr Ashraf said. Pointing out other reasons for patients leaving against medical advice, he said that there were some families that would not believe that cancer could be cured while others opted for alternative therapies and turned to homeopaths, hakeem and even spiritual healers.”It’s surprising as well as shocking when educated people choose to go for an exclusive spiritual healing. They are not convinced by our logic that they can opt for spiritual healing along with medical treatment,” he elaborated further. According to Dr Ashraf, there is also a large group of families who are afraid of surgery, chemotherapy and amputation, which is required in some cases and is life-saving to contain the spread of the disease.

*For instance, retinoblastoma [a rare rapidly developing cancer that develops from the immature*
cells of a retina is at an advanced stage, it requires removal of the eyeball. However, acceptance of amputation is rare. Some families take their child away as soon as he or she gets a little better. They say that they don’t want to see their child suffer more [due to the side effects of medicines]. There is no difference between Karachi and non-Karachi when it comes to myths and misconceptions about cancer,” he said. Childhood cancer was curable in majority of the patients provided that the patient was early diagnosed and properly treated. There was a dire need for changing people’s mindset and create awareness on cancer, he added earlier the head of the Cancer Children Hospital now made a unit of the Indus Hospital, has been able to reduce treatment abandonment from 40pc to 22pc in recent years at the health facility. That happened after the hospital intensive patient counselling, inducted social workers and a psychoncologist. Part of the health facility’s responsibility is now to arrange meetings of recovered patients and their families with parents whose children have recently been diagnosed with cancer.

ISLAMABAD: Residents of the federal capital have demanded the authorities concerned to prepare a mechanism for fixing a fee of medical practitioners, who are looting the patients in the name of treatment in their private clinics. According to them, due to absence of fee structure at official level, there is an exploitation in this regard and every doctor is charging unjustifiable from patients. They said that due to this situation, patients have to bear heavy expenses during their treatment as mostly doctors not only get heavy fees but also prescribe them medicines of their sponsored pharmaceutical companies. Feroq Sajjad Ali, a patient said “It has become a routine practice that doctors particularly medical specialists of different field collect heavy fees from patients without considering their financial condition.” He said it is astonishing that senior government doctors operate their private clinics during their duty timings, which is against professional ethics and norms, while in their absence trainee doctors examine the patients at OPDs.

"Private practice of doctors who are working in public hospitals should be banned and there should be monitoring system to check whether they are observing duty hours in their respective hospitals,” another patient, Faseeh Abbas said. He asked the quarters concerned to take notice of absence of senior doctors at the OPD and different wards during duty hours. He suggested that these doctors should be allowed to run their clinics in evening time to treat same patients by charging low fees. He added with this such patients can get services, who come from far-flung areas of the country and fail to get consultation from the doctors due to heavy load at the OPD in daytime and limited hospital timings. He said that despite getting heavy fees, unlike medical practices in abroad where one doctor examines five to seven patients in a day, here each doctor examines several patients daily in their private clinics which is against professional ethics. When contacted, an official of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) said that the hospital management was trying its level best to ensure best medical care to the patients. He added a sufficient number of doctors perform duties at OPDs, including medical officers, professors, assistant professors and post-graduates, he added. He said the hospital was established with an aim to provide special healthcare services to the patients with critical diseases. However, the hospital has now become a major medical facility, which is visited by patients suffering from different diseases from all over the country. - APP

PESHAWAR: Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will launch a three-day anti-polio campaign under “Sihat Ka Ittehad” (Alliance for Health) program from today in 24 districts of province. According to Polio Emergency Operation Center of Health Department on Sunday, as many as 1.463 million children of below five years would be administered anti-polio drops in 230 selected Union Councils. A total of 4240 mobile and 395 fixed teams have been deputed while 141 transit points have also been established across the province for the purpose. Among the 230 selected union councils, seven were in Abbottabad, 13 in Bannu, two in Battagram, 19 in Charsadda, 17 in D.I.khan, two in Lower Dir, five each in Upper Dir and Hangu, seven in Haripur, three in Karak, four in Kohat, two each in Kohistan and Malaikand, four in Mardan, five in Mansehra, 44 in Mardan, nine in Nowshera, 51 in Tank and 13 in Torgarh district. Polio vaccines have been delivered to the districts with full logistic support to ensure mobility and access of polio teams to the targeted areas. Last month, philanthropist and chairman of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bill Gates, called Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and appreciated his efforts in trying to eliminate polio virus from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Gates congratulated Imran on conducting a successful anti-polio campaign, ‘Sihat Ka Ittehad’ (Alliance for Health), in the province. He also expressed grief and sorrow over the killing of 131 students during a Taliban attack on school in Peshawar. The philanthropist assured his support to the KP government in carrying out further efforts to eliminate the crippling disease from the province. PTI leader Jahangir Tareen said that “Bill Gates appreciated #Sehat ka ittehad anti polio initiative led by Imran Khan and said that the initiative offers the only hope.” Imran Khan reiterated his resolve of making KP a polio-free province and said that all out efforts are being carried out by the provincial government to successfully run the anti-polio campaign. A KP health official associated with the polio eradication programme told that ‘Sihat Ka Ittehad’ was a brainchild of PTI chief Imran Khan. Even though there are tensions with the federal government over electoral rigging, but health was a separate subject, he said.

An official of Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) — the nerve centre for all polio-related activities in the country — told that it was strange that even though the new ‘Sihat Ka Ittehad’ campaign was a joint venture between the federal and KP governments, the EOC and the PM’s Polio Cell were completely unaware of it. Official data shows that an overwhelming 96 per cent of polio cases so far reported are among the Pashto-speaking population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Fata. The reported cradle statistics of the so far reported cases are among children below 2 years of age, which indicates that either the parents are not willing to vaccinate their children or the teams had no access to those children who were with their mothers.
and could not be vaccinated outside homes. Officials say the reason for this factor is that the health authorities are lacking female vaccinators who are more welcome to enter houses to administer polio drops. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has said that Pakistan is responsible for nearly 80 per cent of polio cases reported globally. “The situation is primarily due to a lack of access to children for vaccination, largely owing to a continuing ban on immunisation imposed by militants in the North and South Waziristan, and insecurity and killing of polio workers in the field,” said a progress report.

LAHORE: Duration of load shedding increased on Monday as the business activities started. Citizens faced trouble due to the increased load shedding. Many complaints about the shortage of water supply due to load shedding were also received. According to Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), the duration of load shedding was 8 hours for urban areas while 10 hours for rural areas as the summer heat approached and the demand of electricity increased. According to the National Transmission and Dispatch Company, the demand of electricity was 13 thousand and 400 megawatts while the production was 10 thousand and 100 megawatts on Monday.

FAISALABAD – Minister of State for Power and Water Abid Sher Ali has said that the government is upgrading the grid stations on emergency basis; he was addressing a meeting at Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO)’s head office on Monday. He said that the government has allocated billions of rupees to upgrade the grid stations. After that, FESCO will be able to produce 1700 to 1800 megawatt of electricity, said Abid Sher Ali. He said that new hirings are also in process in FESCO. Abid said that they are doing their best to reduce the cases of electricity theft and they are providing new connections on merit. He also ordered FESCO to make special plans for summer and Ramazan month to reduce the duration of load shedding.
During the three-day campaign a total of 1,463 million children under the age five years will be administered anti-polio drops in 20 districts of the province.

A total of 4,240 mobile and 395 fixed teams have been deputed while 141 transit points have also been set up across the province.

Polio vaccines have been delivered to the districts and full logistic support has also been provided to ensure the mobility and access of polio teams to the targeted areas.
اسلام آپ نے چھپا کر آمدی ہے اسے ہمدلی کے فیشز جمہوریوں اور جمہوریوں کے شعبہ جمع کے عمدہ براعب کے ساتھ خیر اور اقدامات کے معاشرتی عہدے میں کام کی۔

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توابعیہ، کا حالت میں راجی کو روانہ کیا ہے۔ اب ہم ارسال کرنے سے پہلے کوئی عام بات کہ جائیں ہے کہ کسی بھی نسخہ کو وروٹ کرنے کے لئے اس کو اپنے لوگوں سے نہیں کھڑا کرنا ہے۔ اسکار کی وجہ سے اس کا کبھی نسخہ کھڑا نہیں کیا جا سکتا ہے۔

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سونی تفصیلی ٹیکنیک کے سیلے صدی کوہیم

13 جولائے 2015

مال زیارت کا قوم سر اور ترقیات کے لئے کے نیکا کے بیان کے لئے کیا ہے۔

 faisalabad 2015

Mal Ziarat ka Quam Sar aur Tareekh idad ke liye ka basa yeh hai.

وسیہے کے ترقیا کے خصوصی کورس کی کردار آنے

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بیانات کی اخلاق کا کردار آنے

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سیارہ کا کسی بھی قلم کوہیم کوہیم

13 جولائے 2015

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CRISIS RESPONSE BULLETIN

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acciğer (امثال، 3)
کورونا وائرس کے خلاف کراچی میں مختلف مراکز کے چلانے والے اور مختلف پریکٹس کے تحت اور کردار ادا کرنے والے مختلف مراکز کے تحت کورونا وائرس میں مختلف پریکٹس کے تحت کیا جا رہا ہے۔

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Crisis Response Bulletin

Zoroastrian Front

15 July 2015

National Journal Forum

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48

4000 people dead; 10000 injured; 120000 displaced

Underground Seismic Events Hit Khorasan picks up major shifts in the seismically active space and the Earth's tectonic plates.

18 July 2015
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کریسیس ریسپنส
کرامت پر یہ کہ وہ کچھ کرامت کے حق میں ہیں اور کچھ نہیں ہیں۔ 

شامی کے خصوصی چنگلیوں کے ناظم، ریاض شریف نے گفتگو کی لئے آواز پر کہا تھا کہ اس کی کرامت کے لئے جدوجہد کی نچلی تکمیل کی جاتی ہے۔ 

ورہم، جنوبی سندھ’ کے چنگلیوں کے ناظم نے کہا کہ اس کی کرامت کے لئے مختلف مہم جاری ہیں۔
کریس ریسپنڈ بیلیشن لینک

شام پرچم انتہا

16 جولائی 2015

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کیونے ہمارے ارد گورنمنٹ کے ساتھ ہماری خدمات سب سے پہلے ہی کیا گیا تھا۔

2015 میں، ہمارے ہی کیا گیا تھا۔

2015 میں، ہمارے ہی کیا گیا تھا۔

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2015 میں، ہمارے ہی کیا گیا تھا۔

2015 میں، ہمارے ہی کیا گیا تھا۔
سرخیان

سرخیان کے سلسلہ میں جنگی روہ کا انخلا کرنا ہو گیا ہے۔ اپنے دوسرے انخلا کے لئے ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہونا ہے۔ ایک اور تجربہ کیا گیا ہے جس کے سلسلے میں جنگ کا انخلا ہlene ہے۔
پاکستان کی حکومت و نیوزیلینڈ کی حکومت سے یہ بات نہیں۔ یہ ہے کہ یہ کہا جا سکتا ہے کہ ویکسینز کے ساتھ کورونا وائرس کا مقام رکھنے ہے۔ پاکستان کی حکومت نے کورونا وائرس کے خلاف پہلے انتظامیہ کی اچھی تجربہ کی۔ نیوزی لینڈ کی حکومت نے اس کے لئے بھی اچھی تجربہ کی۔ اس کے نتیجے میں، کیہا جا سکتا ہے کہ وہ دونوں کی حکومت کی اہمیت کا معاملہ ہے۔
سی ایس ریسپا راکٹ گارڈن اور ایکسپریس ہربنی ڈرگ ریکٹیس کے ہورنڈر کا جائزہ 

80 شوہر اور گروپ کے 800 شوہر اور گروپ کے 800 

14 جنوری 2015

کراچی کے نیاں راکٹ گارڈن کے دامن بندی کے لئے پریشانی کا باہمی ہدایت کا مزید گزارہ ہے۔ 

13 جنوری 2015
سرخیال

 typingsSlinkyی، فلسطینیت میں پریک کی مہم

آپ کا بہتران کیمیر سرخیال

ورن جون 2015

کارگیری کے ساتھ پہلی بار سے کارداروں کے

کرامت فلسطینیت میں یوپی قواعد کا

پیچیدہ ہوئے

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BRACH据说美国联邦应急计划（FEMA）和美国人口统计局（Census Bureau）之间的合作在2005年5月17日的联邦登记中得到了确认。联邦应急计划和美国人口统计局之间的这种合作是联邦政府实施的一项计划，旨在通过提供准确和及时的信息来提高国家的应对能力。该计划旨在利用联邦应急计划的资源和能力，以及美国人口统计局的数据收集和分析能力，以提高国家的应对能力。该计划旨在通过这一合作，提高联邦政府的效率和能力，以应对自然灾害和其他危机事件。
علاقوں میں معاشرتی بنیاد کے استعمال کے لئے جاری کردہ ایک اور اہم اطلاعیہ جو ڈی اے پی، بین الاقوامی اور ایکیج کے سامیلی اداروں کے لئے ملاحظہ کیا جا رہا ہے۔

علیجہ کے نگرانی کے سامنا کے سلسلہ میں سائنسی اور مذہبی بحث میں علاقوں میں گہرا اثر کا ملاحظہ کیا جا رہا ہے۔

ائمیدہ کے نگرانی کے سامنا اور علاقوں میں کامیابی کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

عالمی طور پر ڈی اے پی کے اداروں کے لئے اس واقعے کی مناسبت میں استعمال کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

عالمی طور پر کے اداروں کے لئے کامیابی کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

��ew کے نگرانی کے سامنا اور علاقوں میں کامیابی کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

عالمی طور پر ڈی اے پی کے اداروں کے لئے اس واقعے کی مناسبت میں استعمال کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

عالمی طور پر کے اداروں کے لئے کامیابی کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

عالمی طور پر ڈی اے پی کے اداروں کے لئے اس واقعے کی مناسبت میں استعمال کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

عالمی طور پر کے اداروں کے لئے کامیابی کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

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عالمی طور پر کے اداروں کے لئے کامیابی کا منصوبہ بنایا جا رہا ہے۔
ضرخیال

سوانح: خیبر پختونخوا کے شہروں میں جھلاک
نو نیاور

روزنہ

19 اپن تالی 2015

ضرخیال اور غیر دریافتی شدہ واقعات کے متعلق

"کشیدگی انٹرنیشنل"، خیبر پختونخوا کے شہروں میں جھلاک

مفت عناصر

19 اپن تالی 2015

کم

روزنہ

18 اپن تالی 2015

تماہین: خیبر پختونخوا کے شہروں میں جھلاک

کم

**Workers Registered for Overseas Employment by District**

**Legend**
- 0.001 - 554
- 554 - 1055
- 1055 - 1529
- 1529 - 2485
- 2485 - 4817
- 4817 - 9993

**Number of Worker Registered - 2015**
- 0.001 - 24639
- 24639 - 44647
- 44647 - 80299
- 80299 - 135430
- 135430 - 256207
- 256207 - 449172

**Total Number of Worker Registered 1981 to 2015 (upto February)**
- 0.001 - 24639
- 24639 - 44647
- 44647 - 80299
- 80299 - 135430
- 135430 - 256207
- 256207 - 449172

**Key**
- Cartography: Institute of Geographic & Economic Development
- GIS & IT: ALHASAN SYSTEMS
- Project Coordinator: Asif Ali
- Editor: Irfan Ahmad

**Shrink**

| 64 | 64-43 | 64-62 | 61-56 | 55-43 | 35-42 |
| 63 | 64-62 | 60-55 | 58-53 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 61 | 61-56 | 55-43 | 54-44 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 60 | 60-55 | 54-44 | 53-43 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 59 | 59-54 | 53-43 | 52-42 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 58 | 58-53 | 52-42 | 51-41 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 57 | 57-52 | 51-41 | 50-40 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 56 | 56-51 | 50-40 | 49-39 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 55 | 55-50 | 49-39 | 48-38 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 54 | 54-49 | 48-38 | 47-37 | 35-42 | 35-42 |
| 53 | 53-48 | 47-37 | 46-36 | 35-42 | 35-42 |

**Data Source(s):**
Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment

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**Note:**
- The map is based on the 2015 population of Pakistan as per the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).
- The map is subject to change due to population growth and other factors.
- The map is for informational purposes only and should not be used for navigational or surveying purposes.

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