

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Gwadar

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British CGS lauds Pakistan Armed Forces' sacrifices in fight against terrorism

RAWALPINDI (Online): Gen Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, chief of general staff (CGS) of the UK Army, on Wednesday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir and acknowledged the Pakistan Army's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

According to a press release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Gen Sir Sanders met Gen Munir at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

"Upon arrival at the GHQ, CGS UK Army laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada [memorials of martyrs]. A smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignitary," the military's media wing said.

During the meeting, regional security issues and matters of mutual interest were discussed.

"The visiting dignitary acknowledged the sacrifices and achievements of the Pakistan Army in the fight against terrorism and efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region," the ISPR said.

The statement added that Gen Sir Sanders also called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahr Shamshad Mirza at the Joint Staff Headquarters in Rawalpindi earlier today.

The British army chief arrived in Pakistan on Monday for a five-day "defence engagement" visit.

Gen Sir Sanders' visit came almost a year after Pakistan's devastating floods which left nearly one-third of the country submerged and affected an estimated 33 million people, the ISPR had said in a statement issued earlier this week. "The UK's ministry of defence was directly involved in providing assistance for flood relief operations, airlifting in eight boats and 10 portable generators at the request of Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff," it added.

"Discussing bilateral military cooperation in response to climate change-related crises will be a key focus of the visit."



RAWALPINDI: Chief of General Staff (CGS) UK Army, General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad Sanders laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada during his visit to General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Launch of Balochistan health card program marks milestone agreement

National identity card of every individual to serve as Health card; Helpline set up by State Life Insurance Corporation to work 24/7 to facilitate all

Independent Report

QUETTA: In a significant development for healthcare in Balochistan, a momentous agreement has been reached between the Health Department and State Life Insurance Company, marking the launch of the Balochistan Health Card Program, on Wednesday.



The ceremony, attended by Provincial Health Minister Syed Ehsan Shah, Chairman B.R.A Noor ul Haq Baloch, Chairman State Life Insurance Shoaib Javed Hussain, Secretary Health Asfandyar Khan, and Executive Directors of State Life Insurance, Munawar Ali Sheikh and Abdul Shakoor Sheikh, witnessed the signing of the Health Card Agreement by Chief Executive Officer of Balochistan Health Card Program, Assadullah Kakar, and Divisional Head of State Life Insurance Company, Mohammad Ashar. Expressing his optimism, Provincial Health Minister Syed Ehsan Shah emphasized the significance of the State Life partnership, stating that the health sector holds a prominent position in the government's priorities.

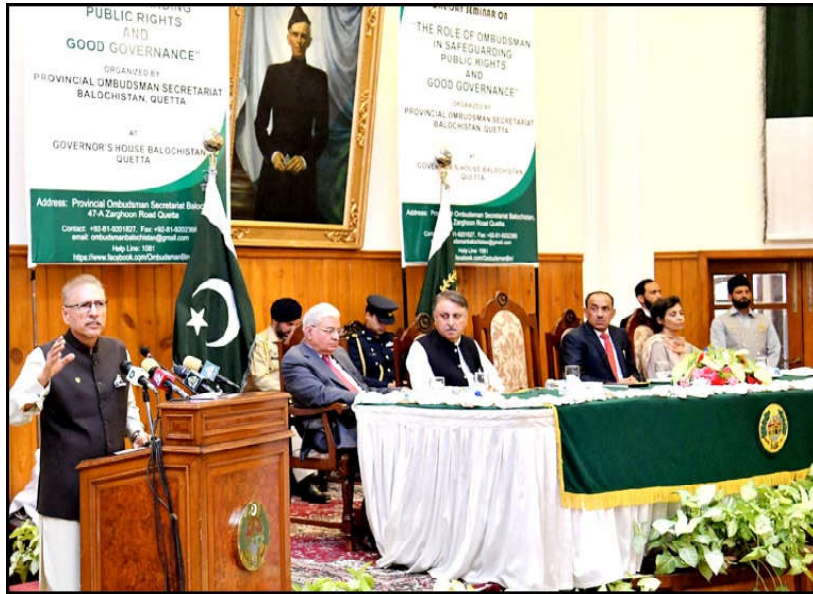
Mitha Khan Kakar says PM meeting with Iranian President to make Pak-Iran relation more cordial

QUETTA (APP): Adviser to Chief Minister Balochistan on Information Haji Mitha Khan Kakar on Wednesday said meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi would make friendly relations of both the countries more cordial.

He expressed these views while talking to Iran's Deputy Consul General, Fereydoun Perlorin who called on him at his residence, said a handout issued here.

Director General of Khana-e-Farhang Quetta, Syed Abul Hasan Meeri was also present.

The advisor said that exchanges of delegations at cultural, journalistic and



QUETTA: - President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing a seminar on the role of Ombudsman in safeguarding public rights and good governance, at Governor House

Petrol price slashed by Rs. 8 per litre, diesel by Rs. 5

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar announced on Wednesday a reduction of Rs5 per litre in the price of high-speed diesel and Rs8 per litre in the price of petrol.

Following the second consecutive price cut, diesel will now be available at Rs253 per litre, while petrol will be sold at Rs262 per litre.

These prices will remain in effect from June 1 to June 15. The price of light-speed diesel has also been reduced by Rs5 per litre, making it available at Rs253 per litre.

The government has decided to keep the price of kerosene oil unchanged for the next fortnight. Dar mentioned that despite the depreciation of the Pakistani rupee against the US dollar, the government has provided relief to the people.

Dr. Fouzia meets Aafia Siddiqui after 20 long years

NEW YORK (INP): Dr. Aafia's elder sister met her after 20 years in Fort Worth town of United States where she is currently detained. Meanwhile, British attorney Clive Stafford Smith accompanied Dr. Fouzia Siddiqui to meet her sister.

According to Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, Aafia Siddiqui is currently being detained at the infamous FMC Carswell prison. He added that a long journey of 20 years have at last started bearing fruit as Dr. Aafia Siddiqui has been granted the right to meet her family.

Good News: Ghee price drops for the second time

ISLAMABAD (Online): There is good news for the people suffering from inflation. Government has decreased the price of Ghee for the second time.

As per details, Government has reduced the price of Ghee by 68 rupees on utility stores and notification also has been issued.

According to issued notification, the reduction in prices of cooking oil and Ghee come into force from today.

The price of Ghee has been reduced by 68 rupees per kilogram.

It is to remember that, the price of branded Ghee was also reduced by 69 rupees per kg in last week.

The prices of cooking oil have also been reduced by 18 rupees to 76 rupees per liter.



ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango, Senators Danesh Kumar, Abdul Qadir, MNAs Aslam Bhotani and Khalid Magsi meeting with Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani

Pakistan highly values its broad-based ties with Belarus: PM

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said Pakistan greatly valued its cordial and broad-based relations with Belarus.

He also affirmed Pakistan's commitment towards building mutually beneficial cooperation with Belarus in all areas, including economic, agriculture, science and technology, information technology, education, and culture domains.

The prime minister received Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Foreign Minister Aleinik conveyed the warm greetings of President Lukashenko to the prime minister, while highlighting



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar seeing off President Dr. Arif Ali at Quetta Airport

Governor emphasizes reforms for justice system and good governance

Independent Report

QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, has stated the need to address deficiencies and ambiguities in the justice system's delivery of justice and implement reforms in accordance with the demands of time and human needs.

Expressing concern, he highlighted that our courts generally lack affordable and prompt justice, making it unaffordable for the common man to pay exorbitant

fees to lawyers. He voiced these concerns while addressing the participants of a one-day seminar titled "Protection of Public Rights and the Role of Accountability in Good Governance" held at Governor House, Quetta.

The special guest at the seminar was President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi. The event saw the attendance of parliamentarians, Federal Ombudsman Aijaz Qureshi, Provincial Ombudsmen from all four

Quetta Airport's upgraded main runway inaugurated with successful flight landing

Independent Report

QUETTA: Quetta International Airport's main runway, 13L/31R, has undergone a successful upgrade and is now operational. The first flight, PK-325 (Islamabad-Quetta), landed on the newly upgraded runway at 6:20 am. Airport Manager Malik Mazhar and Project Director were present during the landing.

After the successful landing on the upgraded runway, the pilots of the flight met with the Airport Manager. During the meeting, the pilots congratulated the Airport Manager on the completion of the project and praised the smooth and beautiful landing experience. They highlighted the excellent installation of the runway lights, which made the landing even more remarkable.

President calls for timely justice delivery to avoid aggravation of disputes

Says no nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam

QUETTA (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Wednesday called for early disposal of the small domestic cases to avoid the aggravation of disputes and bloodshed.

He said the federal and provincial ombudsmen had their key role in the promotion of public service and good governance.

Addressing a seminar here, the president said as a member of National Assembly (NA) in 2017, he proactively worked for passing a bill related to alternate dispute resolution to reduce the burden on the mainstream judiciary.

Dr. Arif Alvi pointed out, "When physical inter-

Soldier martyred as terrorist attack on polio team in Spinwam thwarted

RAWALPINDI (APP): A soldier of the Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom on Wednesday while successfully thwarting a terrorist attack on polio vaccination team in general area Spinwam of North Waziristan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the terrorists attempted to disrupt the ongoing polio campaign by firing on the members of a polio team, employed in the general area Spinwam of North Waziristan District.

The security forces, deputed to provide protection to the polio team, effectively engaged the terrorists ensuring safety of all members of the team and extricated them unharmed.

Martial law has been imposed: Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI chairman Imran Khan has said half martial law has been imposed.

"Staging protest in front of GHQ is our right. The democracy will end if the citizens are tried in military courts, he said this in an interview with US media.

He held the law and constitution allow us to stage peaceful protest. Voicing protest in front of GHQ is our right, PTI people did not go inside and on the other hand they were stopping others to go inside.

About May 9 incident, Imran Khan said the fire broke out at four and five places. The places like corps commander house and radio Pakistan were included in them. Cameras will be there. Safe city cameras are there. Every thing will become known. This inquiry is very simple.

Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi says 95 percent victims get relief through Federal Ombudsman institution

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QUETTA: The Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi has stated that we have heard 164,000 complaints during the year 2022 with 110,000 heard during 2021 at the Federal Ombudsman secretariat and its other offices in the country.

He noted with contentment that 95 percent people got relief on the complaints registered with the Federal Ombudsman set up.

He said that it is our utmost endeavor to provide relief to the maximum people. He said that we hear maximum cases at our secretariat and its other regional offices despite the limited resources.

The Federal Ombudsman was having an interaction with the provincial heads of the federal government departments here at

action was not possible owing to security issues, the executives including himself must have arranged online setups such as "Zoom meetings" to ensure direct communication with the common people to guarantee timely justice delivery."

Last night, he said, "He disposed of 10 cases of the federal ombudsman and normally he disposes of the cases of appeals in just a few hours.

The president also stressed the need to raise awareness about the role of the ombudsman as few people were currently aware of its role.

He also directed for re-

moval of obstacles in the way of interaction between government officials and the common people.

He said, "Islam teaches people to show patience and forgiveness to promote peace and harmony in society."

"No nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam."

Referring to the living standards of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the His companions, the president also asked the country's executives to follow them and adopt the living standard of the common man.



LAHORE: Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik calls on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

CM urges airlines to increase Quetta flights

Quetta International Airport's main runway upgrade receives high praise from CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo on Wednesday expressed delight and congratulated the successful completion of the main runway upgrade and activation at Quetta International Airport.

He commended the performance of the airport manager and project director and extended his heartfelt congratulations on the significant project's accomplishment. The Chief Minister conveyed his appreciation during a ceremony held to mark the occasion.

Addressing the audience, Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo hailed the modernization of the runway, equipped with state-of-the-art airport lighting systems, at a cost of five billion rupees. He stated that now Quetta will

be able to accommodate Boeing 777 and its equivalent aircraft, enabling their smooth landings during all types of weather conditions, day and night.

Highlighting the geographical significance of Quetta for the provincial government, the Chief Minister emphasized that the city holds immense commercial importance due to its proximity to Iran and Afghanistan. The availability of landing facilities for larger aircraft will enhance trade and tourism activities in the province.

CM further stated that the completion of the project will provide the people of Quetta with improved air travel facilities, and it is expected that other airlines, including PIA (Pakistan International Airlines), will increase their flights to and from Quetta.



QUETTA: A delegations of Editors Council Balochistan led by Anwar Sajidi meeting with Principal Secretary of Chief Minister Imran Gichki

the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Wednesday.

Mr. Qureshi said that

all departments have effective coordination in the province. He said that we try to resolve the federal government institutions' related issues at federal level if not resolved at the provincial level.

He said that the issues related to the orphan children, pensions and utility bills are registered for reso-

lution at the federal ombudsman offices.

He said that the federal ombudsman advisors are



going at the divisional level, however, we are also creating awareness through the newspapers.

He mentioned that the departments and institutions accept their mistakes in almost 70 percent issues, however, implementation on our orders is made on remaining 30 percent issues.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Gwadar International Airport: A Catalyst for Progress

The ongoing construction of the New Gwadar International Airport marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's development and opens up new avenues for progress and connectivity. With over 70% of the construction work completed, this ambitious project spearheaded by the Gwadar Development Authority promises to be a game-changer for the region.

The comprehensive scope of work undertaken encompasses civil, structural, mechanical, and engineering tasks, demonstrating meticulous planning and execution. The dedicated efforts of the teams from the China Communication Construction Company and the Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan have propelled the project towards its final stages. The installation of Navigational Aid and Communication systems is progressing rapidly, with completion expected within 60 days.

A key highlight of the New Gwadar International Airport is its adherence to international standards. State-of-the-art runway pathways have been meticulously designed to accommodate various aircraft, including wide-bodied planes like the Airbus A380 and Boeing B-747. These pathways, complemented by well-planned taxiways, aprons, and other operational areas, ensure seamless takeoff and landing procedures. Furthermore, the runway's durability has been enhanced to handle heavy aircraft, reinforcing the airport's capacity and efficiency.

Safety remains paramount at the New Gwadar International Airport. The presence of an ATC tower, high-intensity lighting, and painted runway centerlines ensures secure operations, even during challenging weather conditions. These advanced airfield facilities provide reassurance to both passengers and airlines alike, making the airport a reliable and dependable transportation hub. The completion of vital infrastructure elements is a testament to the ambitious vision driving the project. The operational building, complex registration office, water supply system, PTCL fiber optic network, desalination plant, grid station, and security system have all been successfully established within the sprawling 4,300-acre site. This achievement solidifies the New Gwadar International Airport's position as the largest ongoing airport construction project in Pakistan.

The economic significance of this airport cannot be understated. Its strategic location in Gwadar, adjacent to the Arabian Sea, positions it as a vital trade and connectivity hub for both domestic and international routes. With an open skies policy in place, the airport is set to enhance bilateral trade between Pakistan and China, strengthening economic ties and fostering mutual growth. The anticipated progress in Gwadar, coupled with increased accessibility, will unlock the region's untapped potential and contribute to the overall development of Balochistan. The New Gwadar International Airport represents a monumental step forward for Pakistan, as it prepares to welcome the world and become a vibrant gateway of opportunity. It is a testament to the country's determination to enhance connectivity, foster economic growth, and solidify its position on the global stage. The completion of this ambitious project will undoubtedly shape the trajectory of the region, empowering Gwadar and Pakistan as a whole. As we witness the rise of the New Gwadar International Airport, we anticipate a new era of progress, connectivity, and prosperity. It is a collective endeavor that reflects the nation's aspirations and paves the way for a brighter future.

Caregivers' burden



Ruksana Shah

A study on Maternal Stress and Health Quality of Life in Mothers with Special Needs Children, authored by Sara Jafree and Khadija Burhan of FCC University, Lahore, was published by Ataturk University recently. The study maintains that mothers of special needs children (SNC) face tremendous stress not only in accessing appropriate healthcare for their child, but also in negotiating economic, social and cultural support for themselves. The problem is exacerbated in conservative, including Muslim, societies where patriarchal attitudes, social stigma and superstition dominate the narrative and SNC and their families are shamed and excluded from the community.

The brunt of seeking medical treatment, education, therapies and vocational training, caring for the SNC physically and emotionally, and managing daily chores and family relations, falls on mothers. No wonder they feel exhausted, anxious and depressed, with low self-esteem and deteriorating health outcomes. The NIH in Maryland found that mothers of adolescents and adults with autism experienced "chronic stress comparable to combat soldiers". Many of them admitted to having said at least once in their lives: "I will kill him/her and then kill myself."

These women also experience insecurity due to the higher risk of abuse and violence of SNC. In many cases, family and in-laws are not supportive or are hostile, while conser-

vative norms restrict their mobility. Compared to fathers, mothers of SNC have very few opportunities to mingle with the larger community and are deprived of leisure activities. The solitary burden they have to bear due to unsupportive government policies and community neglect is incredible.

With three per cent of children currently diagnosed with autism according to the Centre for Prevention of Diseases, US, and an increasing number of self-diagnosed adults, there is an urgent need to restructure social welfare services in Pakistan. The government with its limited resources needs the help of civil society organisations to spread awareness and acceptance of invisible disabilities like autism and ADHD. It is also imperative to develop responsive communities to play a supportive role.

The ASD Welfare Trust is working to spread awareness about autism and related conditions in small towns and villages in Pakistan. The goal is to empower women — mothers, teachers, lady health workers — with information as well as comfort. Autism awareness seminars are held in local hotels and marriage halls where lectures and discussions are followed by lunch, giving people a chance to inter-mingle. Social engagement helps reduce class barriers, isolation and stigma, and creates opportunities for catharsis, psychoeducation and problem-solving. For parents, such activities are transformative as they find a new environment of empathy.

The approach focuses on groups and communities with little or no access to information, and that are vulnerable not only to the stigma attached to disability, but also to harmful practices such as recourse to faith healers and neglect of children and young adults,

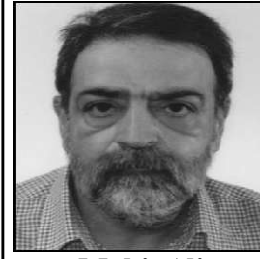
particularly girls with autism who are perceived as mad and socially and economically unproductive.

Social engagement improves communication, empathy and support for SNC and their families. Collective training programmes for mothers are needed to make them aware of the need for consistent engagement with their children, especially those with neurodivergent conditions. This is a neglected area as many mothers tend to leave everything to teachers and avoid personal responsibility.

In recent years, the concept of social role valorisation is being used by many social service delivery groups to train community leaders to support disabled and neurodivergent persons. According to SRV theory, everyone has the capacity to play a positive role in his/her personal life as well as that of society. The community needs to recognise these multiple roles and identities and add value to these through social role valorisation. The strategy is to mobilise and sensitise communities to evolve from devaluation of persons who are different from the rest, to 'valuation' and appreciation of their roles in different community settings.

It is the responsibility of the government to reinforce these initiatives through training of social welfare and health officials about the laws, rules and services related to SNC rights. Financial subsidies, free healthcare, hospitalisation, and maternal counselling must be given to SNC and their families. The government must engage with community notables, religious leaders, NGOs and CBOs and the media to create awareness and mobilise collective community support for their inclusion in educational, economic and sociocultural activities. -- Courtesy Dawn

Never say die



Mahir Ali

Henry Kissinger, often viewed as a war criminal, marked his 100th birthday last Saturday amid the usual accolades of the high and mighty, alongside a few barbs from others with a more realistic view of what his realpolitik entailed. Those hosting the soirées, however, tend to overlook the blood on the hand that cuts the cake.

Kissinger served as national security adviser and secretary of state in the Nixon and Ford regimes, and had been a consultant to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. His advice has been sought by every US government since he last held public office in the mid-1970s. In many ways, he is a key architect of the world in which we live.

It may be fairly remarkable that his intellect remains intact, and his recent interventions on questions such as Russia/Ukraine and China/Taiwan are more nuanced than the bluster of the Biden administration. The ultimate aim in both cases, however, is pre-emptive much the same: maintaining US hegemony in a world where alternatives exist.

Kissinger faced a somewhat similar dilemma during his years in power — it isn't uncommon to view him as effectively a co-president in what has been dubbed the Nixinger administration. Much has changed in the half-century since the US strove for better ties with both China and the Soviet Union than the two had with each other. The conciliation with Beijing was achieved in part through the good offices of Pakistan's military ruler

Yahya Khan.

It isn't unreasonable to assume that the Yahya regime might have been deterred from its 1971 military action in East Pakistan had Washington sought to dissuade it instead of egging it on, ignoring the information and advice it received from the US consulate in Dhaka and its embassy in New Delhi. Recently declassified texts of recorded White House conversations reveal the extent to which Richard Nixon held Indira Gandhi — and, more broadly, all Indians — in contempt, with Kissinger echoing the racist platitudes.

Bangladesh, infamously dismissed as a 'basket case', might not make it to the top five of Kissinger's 'greatest hits', though. There are many others. The primary slot must be reserved for Indochina — not just Vietnam, but also Laos and particularly Cambodia. There are several others, not least Chile, East Timor and Angola, where catastrophes unfolded courtesy of the Nixinger regime's ignorance, insouciance, encouragement or intervention.

The secret bombing of Cambodia was to ostensibly flush out or eliminate Vietnamese communist guerrillas (the Vietcong or, more accurately, the National Liberation Front). But villagers in bordering villages were killed in the bombing raids, strafing from helicopters, and by boots on the ground who didn't just shoot everything that moved — in keeping with Nixon-Kissinger instructions — but also looted villages.

The intervention wasn't that direct in Angola, Chile or East Timor, but the human consequences were not dissimilar. A Soviet-backed liberation movement's ascendancy in Angola simply had to be resisted, even if it meant collaborating with South Africa's apartheid regime. The result was years of avoidable violence. -- Courtesy Dawn

In Chile, US efforts to thwart Salvador Allende's mandate in 1970 led to the Pinochet coup 50 years ago. Indonesia's Suharto had presided over a massacre of hundreds of thousands of suspected communists — using lists provided by the CIA — since the mid-1960s. The massacres of freedom fighters in East Timor a decade later were not considered a travesty. In the case of Angola, Kissinger was surprised when the Cubans intervened to prevent a takeover by South Africa.

The Washington hi-rarchy bristled when Nelson Mandela thanked Fidel Castro for preventing the apartheid regime from extending its ascendancy by conquering Luanda on behalf of the US. That wasn't the only Kissinger venture to go awry, however. Perhaps it could even be argued that almost everything he touched globally turned to excrement sooner or later. Which makes his status as an oracle among substantial segments of the US foreign policy establishment all the more insane.

Notwithstanding Kissinger's purported threat to "make a horrible example" of Z.A. Bhutto if he proceeded with Pakistan's nuclear aspirations, there was a bit of mutual admiration society between the two of them, with ZAB hailing Kissinger as a 20th-century Metternich. Kissinger is quoted in Owen Bennett-Jones' 'The Bhutto Dynasty as saying "I am reluctant to negotiate anything with Prime Minister Bhutto. I always lose my shirt." Contrast those underhanded compliments with the opinion of the late celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, who wrote in 2001: "Once you've been to Cambodia, you'll never stop wanting to beat Henry Kissinger to death with your bare hands ... and you will never understand why he is not sitting in dock at The Hague next to [Serbian leader Slobodan] Milosevic." -- Courtesy Dawn

National News

KP Governor inaugurates road to be constructed with Rs 1.53 billions

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali along with Provincial Minister Sawak Nazir Wednesday inaugurated Detour Road Hayatabad, which is being constructed at a total cost of Rs 1.53 billions besides planting trees and installing street lights on the road for convenience of the local population. Provincial Ministers Haji Manzoor

Afridi, Abdul Halim Kasuria, Hamid Shah, Fazl Elahi, Muhammad Shafiullah, Advisor to Prisons Haji Hidayatullah were also present. With the construction of Detour Road, the heavy transport will have easy access to Afghanistan, and the local population will also be facilitated in transportation, the governor said.

Development Authority (PDA) officials in their briefing about the project said that the two-way Detour Road with a length of three kilometers was completed at a cost of Rs 1.53 billion. It was told in the briefing that the construction of the road would not only facilitate heavy goods vehicles going to Afghanistan, but the road would also be helpful for commercial traffic.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali along with Provincial Minister Sawal Nazir inaugurate Detour Road Hayatabad, which is being constructed at a total cost of Rs 1.53 billions.

Punjab Governor says: Strong economy pivotal to the prosperity of country

Independent Report
LAHORE: A Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) Sargodha delegation led by President Sargodha Division Chaudhry Shah Nawaz Ranjha called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and discussed prevailing political scenario in the country during a meeting at the Governor's House, here on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that a strong economy is pivotal to the prosperity of country. He said that if the economy is good, there will be improvement in all sectors, including education and health. Balighur Rehman said the government is utilizing all resources to

stabilize the economy. The Governor Punjab said that on May 9, the youth were misled, they not only attacked military installations, but also desecrated the memorials of national heroes. "The martyrs of Pakistan Army and security agencies are our benefactors and pride," he said, adding that the martyrs who laid down their lives for the security and defense of the country deserve utmost respect. He said there is only one person and thought behind these events, adding that people have now started to compare and distinguish between the constructive and the destructive politics. He further said instead of believing what is heard, research is necessary to know the facts.

UET Mardan suspends ACE on charges of vandalism on May 9

PESHAWAR (APP): The University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Mardan on Wednesday notified suspension of an assistant controller of examination (ACE) over charges of his alleged involvement in vandalism on May 9 in the district. According to the notification issued by the Registrar UET Mardan, the vice chancellor had approved the suspension of the services of ACE Muhammad Ismail in light of the investigation of the Superintendent of Police. It said that the accused ACE was booked by the police under FIR No 833 dated May 9.

PTI using women to cover-up its violence, attacks: Talal Chaudhry

FAISALABAD (INP): Former State Minister/Central Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Muhammad Talal Chaudhry on Wednesday said that PTI used women to cover up its violence and attacks on sensitive military installations on 9th May and in this connection, a misleading propaganda was promoted to hide its misdeed. Addressing a press conference at his residence here, he said that 9th May was not an incident but it was a calculated

activity which was conceived, designed and implemented in a planned manner. He said that the PTI continued its legacy of hate and in this incident once again the element of hate was used. The people were trained and deputed on a special mission with specific direction to hit the selected targets. Now a conspiracy was hatched to win sympathy of the masses through a bogus propaganda of torturing females only for harassing the institution which were investigating their crimes, he added.

KPK Former CM Mahmood comes on NAB's radar

PESHAWAR (Online): Former Chief Minister (CM) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Mahmood Khan came on NAB's radar. NAB has sought record of the recruitments made in the Fisheries department from the constituency of Chief Minister. NAB has also decided to include Former Provincial Minister Livestock Mohibullah in inquiry. NAB has also summoned the record of employee's details, educational certificates.

Minister seeks everyone role for protection of child rights

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Zakat Ushr, Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Salma Begum on Wednesday said that everyone must perform their role for child rights' protection and eradicating social issues and challenges faced by children. She urged the parents to pay special attention to the provision of their children's basic rights. She expressed these views in the closing ceremony of a two days training workshop on "Child Protection

Information Management System (CP-IMS)" organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child and Welfare Commission in Peshawar. This event, CP-IMS, signifies a significant milestone in our joint efforts to protect and promote the rights of children. She added that she commend all the participants from CPWC, Child Protection Units, Zamung Kor, Police Department, and Newly Merged Districts for their dedication and commitment to the cause of child protection in their respective roles.

Faisal Kundi says: PTI responsible for May 9 vandalism

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi here Wednesday claimed that Pakistan Tahrik e Insaaf (PTI) was responsible for the ransacking of government and public properties during May 9-10 vandalism and accused Imran Khan for disowning the arrested party workers.

He said the attacks on government and defense installations was a preplanned conspiracy, and that attackers, planners and abettors could not escape from law. Faisal Kundi said that it was highly deplorable that Imran Khan has disowned its party workers who were put behind the bar in May 9 vandalism cases and had hardly talked about them.

He said Imran Khan talked about beauty and visit of Northern Areas of Pakistan but it was unfortunate that he never talked to meet the jailed workers.



BAHAWALPUR: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin is being briefed about the history of Bahawalpur State and the contributions of Nawab of Bahawalpur Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan Abbasi to Pakistan during his visit to Noor Mahal.

Smuggling bids foiled; 24 kg hashish, 2880 kg NCP tea recovered

TANK (APP): The Tank police on Wednesday foiled two smuggling bids in the limits of Shaheed Mureed Akbar (SMA) Police Station and recovered 24 kilogram hashish and six sacks of non-custom paid (NCP) tea worth Rs 768,000 approximately. In a statement, DSP Headquarters Asghar Ali Shah along with SMA Police

Station SHO Abdul Ali Khan said that the police was strictly pursuing zero tolerance policy of District Police Officer Waqar Ahmad against all social crimes. Indiscriminate operations of the police were successfully underway to eradicate the menace of narcotics from the district, he told and added that he himself along with his team.



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz Sargodha delegation led by President Sargodha Division Chaudhry Shah Nawaz Ranjha in a group photo with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at the Governor's House

Time ripe for collective efforts to achieve national development: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal Wednesday stressed the need for making collective efforts to put the country on a consistent path of progress and development, saying it was high time to take all Pakistanis along in achieving the national goals.

"The time has come to bring all Pakistanis forward and give them an opportunity to play a role in the development of the country," he said while addressing a two-day

conference titled "Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit-2023," here.

He was of the view to extend all possible support to the business companies earning dollars and contributing to build the country's foreign exchange reserves.

The minister said this year, the country faced worst impacts of global climate change, and now the incumbent government was working to overcome the issues of water and food security by switching over to smart agriculture system.

He said the China-

Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a key component of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), was a game-changer project for Pakistan besides the entire region of South Asia.

He said around \$ 29 billion had been invested in the CPEC-related project in a period of three years.

Ahsan Iqbal regretted that the economic policies and projects faced considerable dent during the tenure of PTI government, which caused serious damage to the national economy and development.

He said it was the PTI

regime that scandalized the CPEC-related projects and stopped the economic boom and foreign investment pouring into the country during the last tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

He recalled that there was an economic boom during the PML-N's last tenure, adding in 2017, the ambassadors of developed countries including America, Britain, Japan, Germany and France were showing keen interest to invest in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs), under the CPEC.



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Federal Minister for Planning & Development Ahsan Iqbal along with Federal Minister for Energy Khurram Dastagir Khan during the 2-days conference "Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit 2023".



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif exchanging views with a delegation of Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited led by Wael Sabra, Area Director Asia Pacific Middle East and Africa (APMEA) during meeting held at FBR HQ in Islamabad.

SCCI delegation meets Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) held a meeting with Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif on Budget 2023-24 proposals.

SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Tariq Mehmood Pasha, Chairman RRCM Ashfaq Youisif Tola, Chairman FBR, and senior officers from Finance Division and FBR attended the meeting, said a press release issued here.

The delegation thanked the finance minister for inviting the budgetary proposals from the SCCI.

They discussed the current economic condition of the country with the finance minister and informed him about the range of issues being faced by them. To this end, they presented suggestions to

those issues in the form of budgetary proposals to the finance minister to be considered in the upcoming federal budget.

They also guaranteed the finance minister of their continuous assistance to the government to improve the situation of economic and business activities in Pakistan.

Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar appreciated the delegation and expressed the resolve of the government in overcoming the issues being faced by the business community to ensure the economic growth of the country. He also assured the business leaders that the government will provide all possible assistance to the business community for economic stability and growth by bringing forward a business and people-friendly budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Food Minister contradicts FAO WFP reports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Chaudhary Tariq Bashir Cheema Wednesday contradicted reports of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) regarding an acute shortage of food in Pakistan and said sufficient food stock was available to meet the country's demand.

Responding to a calling attention notice in the National Assembly regarding the expected acute shortage of food in the country as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP), he said, "I fully disagreed with the reports of WFO and FAO and facts indicated in the reports have no reality and there is no need to worry."

He said this year 28.5 million metric tons of wheat was recorded, along with the carry-over stock of the previous year.

Minister says electricity base tariff stable despite rupee depreciation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Division Khurram Dastgir on Wednesday said that the base tariff of electricity has not been changed since September 2022 despite the devaluation of the currency.

Speaking at the sixth edition of Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit 2023 here, the minister said that the government has decided that in the future electricity generation would not be based on imported fuel.

"We will have five sources, out of which four will be domestic and one would be

semi-domestic," he said.

He said the government set up large wind and solar-based power generation projects. Power generation from local Thar coal has also jumped to over 2,500 MW, he said. He said no one could deny the importance of Thar coal. Power generation from local resources helped a lot to keep the power base tariff unchanged, he added.

He said fuel cost adjustment (FCA) remained negative during the last winter and its benefit was also passed on to the consumers.

China-Pakistan aviation industry coop. embracing new possibility

BEIJING (APP): As a major aviation power, whether in civilian or military fields, China has cooperated closely with Pakistan in the field of aviation for decades.

The Gwadar International Airport under construction, as an outstanding example of China-Pakistan aviation cooperation, is located 26 kilometers northeast of the port. So far, most of the infrastructure has been fully completed and it is expected to be officially opened for navigation in September.

"The same as Gwadar Port, the new airport is also a representative project of the CPEC, which can accommodate the take-off and landing of large aircraft such as Boeing

747. In addition, the intersecting east-west air routes face China, Iran, Afghanistan, India and Central Asian countries, as well as a series of international routes will pass through this area. Therefore, the airport will gradually become an air economic and trade hub in the future," according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN).

With this platform, it will be more convenient for international goods, especially Chinese goods, to arrive in Balochistan, and then be distributed to various cities in the country.

Pakistan's characteristic goods can also be transported more efficiently to all parts of the world, promoting local economic and trade

development.

Except for the civilian field, China-Pakistan aviation cooperation in the military field can also be called fruitful. Fighter China-1 (FC-1) is an all-weather, single-engine, multi-purpose light fighter jointly invested and developed by two countries, which Pakistan side calls it Joint Fighter-17 Thunder (JF-17), and equips the Pakistan Air Force as the main fighter.

As early as June 1999, the two parties officially signed a cooperative research and development contract, entering the stage of prototype development. On March 12, 2007, the fighter officially entered into service with the Pakistan Air Force.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq exchanging views with Sergei Aleinik, Foreign Minister of Belarus during meeting held in Islamabad.

LCCI discloses proposals for upcoming federal budget

LAHORE (APP): Federal Finance Minister has assured Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) that the Federal Budget 2023-24 would be business friendly.

This was stated by the LCCI President Kashif Anwar while addressing at a press conference on upcoming Federal Budget 2023-24 here at Lahore Chamber on Wednesday. LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt also spoke on the occasion.

The LCCI President informed the media that recently he has a fruitful meeting with the Federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and apprised him of the issues being faced by the business community besides presenting a set of budget proposals for the financial year 2023-24.

Sharing budget proposals with reporters, the LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that since the position of foreign reserves is improving, the government should take

measures including trade in local currency where ever possible and barter trade mechanism to mitigate the prevailing foreign exchange crisis.

He said that for broadening of tax base and better documentation, there should be facilitation in the form of declaration scheme which must be introduced to bring undeclared foreign reserves, local assets and wealth in economic circle for injection of liquidity in economy.

To reduce the cost of doing business, Kashif Anwar emphasized the need to align Pakistan's interest rates with regional economies. He also urged the government to lower the refinancing rate, introduce soft policies for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and provide special financing schemes with low markup rates and no collateral requirements.

The LCCI President emphasized on the importance of reducing the cost of doing business.

Gold prices increase by Rs.1,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,600 and was sold at Rs. 234,400 on Wednesday against its sale at Rs. Rs. 232,800 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 1,372 to Rs. 100,960 from Rs. 199,588, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold up from Rs.184,214 from Rs.182,956, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver decreased by Rs.50 to Rs.2,800 whereas that of ten-gram silver went down by Rs.42.87 to Rs.2,400.54

Zong 4G partners with 'Roshan Packages' to enhance digital business solutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading digital company, has partnered with Roshan Packages Limited, one of the country's largest packaging manufacturers, to provide bespoke connectivity for its business.

This partnership will enable Roshan Packages Limited to employ Zong 4G's business solutions to optimize the efficacy and reliability of its daily operations across the board.

As part of this partnership, Zong 4G will provide Roshan Packages Limited with customized connectivity solutions

tailored to meet their specific business needs.

By leveraging Zong's sophisticated services, Roshan Packages Ltd. aims to achieve increased operational efficiency and reliability in their day-to-day activities.

The official spokesperson of Zong 4G said, "We are delighted to join hands with Roshan Packages Limited in enhancing their daily operations. Zong 4G is committed to digitizing Pakistan's corporate landscape by providing next-generation business solutions that are crucial for sustainable business growth."



ISLAMABAD: CEO Agha Khan Agency for Habitat Nurat Nasab and CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Bulani signing the MOUs for Memorandum of Understanding (IFC Edge Building Certification) at Serena Hotel in Federal Capital.

SECP warns time & again to beware of fraudulent financial activities

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), has been warning the public time and again to raise awareness among the general public regarding typologies of potentially fraudulent activities perpetrated by companies or entities/individuals posing as legitimate incorporated persons that come to its attention. The objective is to educate public, enabling them to recognize and avoid falling prey to deceptive practices.

On the basis of

information available on social media and complaints/queries received recently it is observed that following typical business models are being used to lure public; Mobile/web-based apps promising lucrative profits/referral bonuses on deposits/investments; Seeking deposits in the name of making investments on your behalf in different products and promise lucrative return like investments in Surface Mount LED (SMD) screens, trading of different products/ forex/cryptos.

Pakistan can earn \$300m through PVC exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Significant investments to expand and improve the efficiency of domestic PVC production have created an opportunity for Pakistan to earn USD 300 million through the export of surplus volumes and products.

Currently, Pakistan's per capita PVC consumption stands at 1.2 kg versus a global average of 6.1 kg. Growth in our per capita consumption will be driven by rising per capita income, increasing

urbanization, and robust domestic manufacturing in the coming years. Through various customer engagement and market development initiatives, such as a retail outlet - think PVC, Engro Polymer and Chemicals Limited (EPCL) is actively promoting various standardized, high-quality PVC products.

At a media briefing on Wednesday, Mahmood Siddiqui, Vice President of the Manufacturing wing of the Company, highlighted,

Budget to be people-friendly: Tasneem

SARGODHA (APP): State Minister for Productions and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi on Wednesday said the government was striving hard to raise living standard of people and the budget will facilitate the common man.

Talking to APP, he said that the budget would be people-friendly and the government would take solid steps to provide the maximum relief to the poor.

He said the Pakistan Peoples Party was the party of the poor and middle-class which was striving hard to facilitate the masses at their doorsteps.

The state minister said due to ineffective financial policies of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) the people had to face difficulties and hardships, adding that now the government was taking solid economic measures for welfare and prosperity of the masses.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, Maersk Atlanta, Maria Elena and Theresa Orion carrying Containers and Palm oil, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Liquid Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile two more ships, EM Astoria and Cielo Rosso with Containers and Mogas are also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same period.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Maersk Atlanta, Hafnia Providence and Theresa are expected to sail on Wednesday.

Cargo volume of 169,440 tonnes.



FAISALABAD: A worker busy in his routine work at his workplace outside local factory at Ghulam Muhammad Abad, in City.

IWCCI demands incentives in upcoming budget for FY-2023-24

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce (IWCCI) has demanded incentives for businesswomen in the upcoming budget saying the dream of national development can never become a reality by keeping the majority of the country's population away from economic activities.

In its budget proposals, the IWCCI has demanded an increase in the taxable income limit for businesswomen, saying

that it will encourage them to join the document economy.

Founder president of the IWCCI Samina Fazil said in the budget proposals sent to Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, that reports of heavy taxation on various sectors are disturbing. Enhanced taxes will hurt the weak economy and reduce revenue rather than increase it, she added.

Samina Fazil demanded that the obstacles in the way of women's development.



LAHORE: Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President, Kashif Anwar addresses to media persons during press conference regarding Budget 2023-24, in Lahore.

PIA bears 36.77b loss in last 3 months

LAHORE (Online): National airline beard Rs36.77 billion loss within the short period of three months.

Deficit increased due to increased price of fuel and dollar and uncontrolled expenses.

Pakistan International Airline (PIA) issue quarterly result of the quarter ended on march 2023.

According to report PIA income was 59 billion Pkr from January to March.

24 million increased this year's quarter as compared to last year this quarter. PIA also got \$ billion gross profit three month earlier.

Representative told 28.55 billion were spent in regard of salaries and ongoing expenditures.

Last year in same quarter PTI spent 21 billion Pkr on salaries and ongoing expenditures.

According to authorities, in March 2023 PIA bought 25.6 billion fuel. Big part in increased loss is due to double price of fuel expenses. Fuel and

Pakistani cherries poised to debut in Chinese market

BEIJING (APP): This year, for the first time ever, Pakistani cherries are poised to make their entrance into the Chinese market, marking an important step in the international expansion of the country's cherry industry.

"[The cherry in] our Pakistani market is too cheap... So if we have this opportunity to export our cherries to China, then we and the orchard owners, they can earn much more," Doulat Karim, a Kashgar-based Pakistani logistics trader, who has been prepared to bring Pakistani cherries eastward this year, told China Economic Net (CEN) in an interview.

Karim said the cherries to be exported would come from Gilgit-Balochistan, a major producer of cherries in Pakistan. He noted that despite the presence of local cherry varieties in China, Pakistani cherries would still be able to carve out a niche in the Chinese market, particularly due to

their organic nature.

"Before, we have already tested it [the Pakistani cherry] in the laboratory in Islamabad, [and the results showed that] it is totally organic," he said. The Pakistani exporter added that Pakistani cherries "typically ripen between May and the end of July, when Chinese cherries tend to be out of market. This is another advantage of Pakistani cherries."

Karim revealed that the primary market for Pakistani cherries would be China's Xinjiang, given the proximity and ease of access, and then they planned to gradually expand to other regions of China. "We have devised a detailed marketing strategy to promote our cherries in Xinjiang," he said.

"However, we have yet to solve issues of logistics and cold storage."

Karim told CEN that he was working with local chambers of commerce to address these issues and streamline the process.

Naval Chief calls for dev. of new technology

LAHORE (Online): Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi says development of new technology and artificial intelligence requires that traditional war tactics be replaced by innovation.

He said this while addressing the 52nd convocation ceremony of Pakistan Navy War College held in Lahore on Wednesday. The Naval Chief was the Chief Guest of the ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, the Naval Chief said that promotion of awareness regarding the maritime sector is a distinction of the Pakistan Navy War College. APP adds: The Convocation ceremony of 52nd Pakistan Navy Staff Course was held here on Wednesday at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), where Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced

the graduation ceremony as Chief Guest.

During the Convocation Ceremony Degrees were conferred upon 95 graduates, comprising 54 officers from Pakistan Navy, Army & Pakistan Air Force and 41 officers from friendly countries including Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Yemen, a Pakistan Navy news release said. While addressing the ceremony, the chief guest highlighted the complexities and wide variety of threats and challenges confronting the world impacting almost all regions. He underlined that wide ranging challenges in 21st century coupled with advancements in disruptive technology, proliferation of weapons.



QUETTA: First Lady Samina Alvi visits the Skill Center established by the Social Welfare Department in collaboration with the NAVTTC under the PM Youth Skills Program.

Govt delegation attends GITEX Africa 2023 in Morocco

Independent Report MORROCO: A government delegation from Balochistan, led by Provincial Minister of Finance and Food Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, has arrived in Casablanca, Morocco, to participate in GITEX Africa 2023.

GITEX Africa 2023, a comprehensive technology research and exhibition, is taking place from May 31 to June 2, 2023, where the Pakistani government has also established its presence.

During the visit, Minister of Finance Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, accompanied by officials, visited the Pakistan Pavilion, where the Balochistan government launched its e-procurement software.

Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Syed Aminul Haque, briefed Provincial Minister Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai about the Digital Pakistan vision, current challenges, and future goals of the government in Pakistan Pavilion. Pakistan Pavilion is also hosting the Pakistan Software Export Board and All Pakistan Software Houses Association.

The event aims to bring together technology operators, government institutions, small and medium-sized businesses, startups, investors.



QUETTA: A delegation led by President All Umra Group Balochistan Naeem Ahmed Madni photographed with General Manager PIA Abdul Ghaffar Miankhail after a meeting

First lady for facilitation, resources to make DAPs productive citizens

QUETTA (APP): First Lady Samina Alvi on Wednesday emphasized providing maximum resources and facilities to the differently-abled persons (DAPs), orphans and widows to make them productive citizens of society.

The first lady, during her visit to Vocational Training Center, Physiotherapy Institute and Darul Aman here, expressed the hope that the social welfare department of Balochistan would continue taking measures for the needy and the DAPs.

Secretary Social Welfare Imran Khan apprised

the first lady of the performance of the social welfare institutions and steps being taken for the welfare of DAPs including the provision of dignified employment to them.

Samina Alvi appreciated that the needy people were being imparted training of computer, mobile phone repairing, photography, and physiotherapy besides being provided employment opportunities to them at Darul Aman.

The first lady also interacted with the DAPs as well as the widows and listened to the problem faced by them.

Health secretary vows to improve health facilities

QUETTA (APP): Health Secretary of Balochistan Asfandyar Kakar has reiterated the government's resolve to improve the healthcare system and provide the best health facilities at the doorstep of the people. He was addressing a meeting of the officers of the health department soon after taking charge of the office here on Wednesday.

Additional Secretary of health Dawood Bazai, deputy secretaries, and sections officers of the health department attended the

meeting, said a statement issued by the health department. Secretary Health Asfandyar Kakar said, "Any individual who comes to the health department shall be respected."

"Administrative powers of the health offices will be trickled down to the lower level to make the district health committee including DG Health, DHOs, MS more effective," he said adding that reforms in health department will help improve health care in the province.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili presiding over meeting of Provincial Selection Board



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on budget 2023-24 proposals regarding the Agriculture sector in Lahore

PM Shehbaz says: Govt to enhance rural economy thru value addition of agri-produce

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed upon taking practical and permanent steps over the agriculture reforms and said that the government would improve the rural economy through the value addition of agri-production.

The prime minister chaired a high-level meeting on the fiscal budget 2023-24 proposals regarding the agriculture sector, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister observed that agriculture sector was the backbone of the national economy and the country's progress was not possible without innovations in this sector. He said that due to the incumbent government's Kisan package, a record wheat

yield was achieved in the current season.

During the meeting, the prime minister was apprised in details of the agriculture reforms during the previous one year.

Due to PM's special Kisan Package, the provision of loans to farmers on affordable terms was not only ensured but due to supply of timely fertilizers and quality seeds, the country also achieved the bumper wheat crop, exceeding the previous production in the last ten years.

Under the prime minister's directive, the best-supporting prices over different crops led to the prosperity of farmers which would also boost the upcoming crops, it was added. The prime minister also directed for direct provision of subsidy to farmers on fertilizers.

He said that the provision of quality seeds, latest machinery, extension services and for agriculture research, resources would be allocated in the fiscal budget.

The prime minister said that practical steps should be incorporated in the fiscal budget for complete conversion of agriculture tube wells on solar energy.

The prime minister was also informed about the international quality seeds, import of semen for animals breeding, functioning of the agriculture institutions and implementation over Kisan package.

The meeting was briefed over the National Oil Seed Policy whose objective was to reduce de-

pendence over import of edible oil by provision of quality seed.

Automatic Seed Certification and Trace System were being introduced for the provision of quality seed, it was further added.

The prime minister termed the proposals of experts as very useful, directed his Adviser Ahad Khan Cheema to form two sub-committees to give final shape to budget proposals regarding the agriculture sector.

These committees would be tasked to give concrete shape to innovations in this sector, mechanization, provision of quality seeds, direct provision of subsidy to farmers on fertilizers, solarization of tube wells and policy measures.

Court approves Imran bail in 19m pounds case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Accountability Court (AC) Islamabad has approved bail of Imran Khan till June 19 in 190 million pounds case.

The bail of Imran Khan has been approved against surety bonds of Rs 5 lac.

Chairman PTI Imran Khan came to rostrum.

Judge Muhammad Bashir said you have filed petition today. Imran Khan while expressing concern over the matter of rule of law in the country said that Pakistan was on 129 number among 140 countries in rule of law index.



Balochistan Finance Minister Zamrak Khan Achakzai in a group photo with delegations during International Software exhibition in Morocco

To save his politics Imran taking U-turn from 'absolutely not' to 'absolutely yes': Dastgir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Power Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan on Wednesday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan had a terrible history of taking U-turns and quipped him as the champion in this regard.

Addressing a news conference here, the minister said the former prime minister was ousted from power through a vote of confidence, adding he (Imran) first accused the U.S. was behind the toppling of his government, but now the PTI chief was purportedly seeking help from the same country. "Imran Khan raised slogans of 'absolutely not' during his regime and now he chants absolutely yes. There is a contradiction in his action, speech and character," he slammed. "Ironically, Imran, who once asserted that the slavery of the USA would not be tolerated, is seeking the US assistance to save his political career," he alleged. "The PTI is attacking Pakistan's integrity with lies since last year, which started with the issue of a cipher, blaming the US for dislodging Imran's government," he added. Condemning the May 9 riots, he said that no leniency would be shown against the miscreants and all the lawbreakers would be taken to task as per the law and the Constitution.

The foreign minister also reiterated Pakistan's political, moral and diplomatic support for the Kashmir cause.

AJK Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore was also present in the meeting, an AJK government press release said.



QUETTA: Chairman Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party Mehmood Khan Achakzai in a group photo with members of organizing committee of Pashtoonkhwa Students Organization District Quetta

Two active terrorists killed in S. Waziristan IBO: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces on Wednesday killed two terrorists, actively involved in hostile activities against the forces and killing of innocent civilians during an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO), conducted in general area Dossal of South Waziristan District on reported presence of terrorists.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), during conduct of the operation, intense fire

exchange occurred between security forces and terrorists. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists who remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces and killing of innocent citizens.

The sanitization of the area was being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. The locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate.

AJK PM calls on FM Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azad Jammu & Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq Wednesday called on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here at Zardari House and discussed matters of mutual interests, including prevailing political situation in the country.

FM Bilawal, reiterating the country's continual and consistent support to the Kashmiris' legitimate struggle, said efforts to highlight the Kashmir issue at the international level would be further accelerated in order to sensitize the global community about the early and amicable settlement of the longstanding dispute.

The foreign minister also reiterated Pakistan's political, moral and diplomatic support for the Kashmir cause.

AJK Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore was also present in the meeting, an AJK government press release said.

PNRA grants operating license to Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) on Wednesday granted an operating license to Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3 (K-3) upon completion of the regulatory review & assessment and inspection processes of the licensing submissions and satisfactory resolution of all regulatory issues.

According to a press release received here, K-3 is a Chinese-designed (Hualong One) Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR) and it is the second such unit deployed at the Karachi site adding 1100 MWe to the national grid.

In June 2022, PNRA granted an operating license to its sister unit, Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (K-2), having the same generation capacity.

Audio leaks matter: JIC raises objection over SC bench

ISLAMABAD (Online): A three members Judicial Inquiry Commission (JIC) presided over by Justice Qazi Faez Isa has filed reply in Supreme Court (SC) in alleged audio leaks matter. The JIC has raised objection over the SC bench hearing the plea against it.

It has been said in the reply the commission has no personal interest in audio leaks inquiry. Commission has been assigned this responsibility under law.

The commission will discharge its obligation under law and constitution. Commission assures that the objections raised by the respective respondents will be heard and considered.

It has been said in the reply it is not proper for the bench to hear the petitions.

ECNEC approves project for estab. of 48MW Shounter Hydropower Project

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) Wednesday considered and approved a project of the government of AJK to be executed by the Power Development Organization, AJK for the Establishment of a 48MW Shounter Hydropower Project in Neelam Valley District, AJK at an updated cost of Rs. 14,985 million including FEC of Rs. 12, 736.90 million.

The project is to be financed 85% from the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and 15% of the cost will be met through AJK ADP.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired the meeting of the ECNEC, said a press release issued here.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and

Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa, Senator Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers from Federal Ministries and Provincial deputations participated in the meeting in the meeting.

The ECNEC also considered and approved in principle a project of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and GB for the

Establishment of Regional Grids in Gilgit-Baltistan Phase-I in Astore, Gilgit, Hunza, and Skardu Districts in GB at the revised cost of Rs. 17, 425.57 million with FEC of Rs. 1824.02 million subject to the reconsideration of bidding, construction and engineering estimates by the Planning Ministry. The ECNEC also considered and approved another project of the Government of GB to be executed by W&P Department.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar in a group photo with participants of a seminar on the role of Ombudsman in safeguarding public rights and good governance

Environmental sampling for Polio underway as per WHO protocols

Independent Report LASBELA: Lasbela district and Hub polio-free zones have been established since 2007. However, as per the WHO protocol, polio risk has been declared in areas with sewerage water through environmental sampling routine. After a polio case was reported in Qila Abdullah district in 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) has initiated environmental sampling throughout Balochistan.

This was announced by the Stop Polio Immunization Officer of Balochistan, Dr. Aftab, during a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Hub Zahid Khan. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Hub, Dr. Shaukat Jalbani, WHO's Polio Surveillance

Officer, Dr. Nazir Ronjha. They praised the District Administration for the excellent results of the polio campaign and achieving 103% vaccine coverage. Deputy Commissioner Hub emphasized that environmental sampling in the routine, including sewage water, is necessary for the polio vaccination campaign along the border areas of Sindh and Balochistan.

He stated that there are transit points along the border where migrant populations reside in temporary settlements.

As per the WHO protocol, it is essential to assess the polio vaccination campaign in the first instance in these settlements to ensure that no child from any marginalized family is deprived of the polio vaccine.



ISLAMABAD: Security personnel with ballistic shields escort former Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan as he leaves from Islamabad High Court.

Balochistan's LG polls 871 contesting on 430 reserved seats

QUETTA (APP): As many as 871 candidates are contesting election of district councils on 430 reserved seats for women, farmers, labourers and non-muslims in local government, scheduled to be held in 35 districts of Balochistan on June 22.

According to the source, 522 candidates submitted their nomination papers on women's quota of District Council.

There are 289 seats allocated for farmers as dis-

trict councilor in the local government system of the province. Around 190 people submitted their nomination papers for 47 seats of farmers and 196 people would contest election on 47 reserved seats for labourers. Around 93 non-muslims will contest local government election on 47 seats of general councilor. The polling for the reserved seats in 35 districts of Balochistan will be held on June 22 except Quetta district.

Islam a religion of peace, harmony: Masood

WASHINGTON (Online): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan says Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) has raised awareness about the tenets and practices of Islam anchored in humanitarianism.

Addressing the 'Scholars and Community Leaders Recognition Lunch' hosted by ICNA in Washington, he said Pakistan would always remember ICNA for generating 15 million dollars to help victims of floods and its leaders for visiting flood areas during the height of the catastrophe.

He all Muslims living in United States should be thankful to rich and diverse ethnic backgrounds. He all Muslims living in United States should be thankful to rich and diverse ethnic backgrounds. He all Muslims living in United States should be thankful to rich and diverse ethnic backgrounds.

said that this organization had advocated protection of rights of Muslims and non-Muslims alike to create a harmonious society.

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