

# Independent

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Gwadar

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## Ahsan Iqbal says 18 mega uplift projects completed in Gwadar in record three months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jawad Akhtar Khokhar gave a detailed presentation over the projects. The meeting noted that since the incumbent government came into power in April 2022, the CEPC has been revived which remained neglected during the tenure of the previous government.

All major projects under CPEC in Gwadar, including Gwadar Power Plant, Distribution of 2000 Boat engines to fishermen of Gwadar, Khuzdar-Panjgur Transmission line (via Nag-Basima) which connect Markran with National Grid, New Gwadar International Airport Project, the China-Pak Friendship Hospital, China-Pak Technical and Vocational Institute in Gwadar, the Gwadar East-bay Expressway Project, Gwadar Free Zone, and Gwadar Port would become a shining pearl in the region.

This was disclosed by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday while chairing a meeting to review progress of projects in Gwadar, a news release said issued here on Wednesday.

Among others, the meeting was attended by the officials of all relevant ministries, provincial representatives of Balochistan and Chairman Gwadar Port Authority (GPA).

Maritime Affairs Advisor (Planning Commission)



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## JCP recommends elevation of PHC Chief Justice as SC judge

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Wednesday unanimously approved the nomination of Peshawar High Court (PHC) Chief Justice Musarrat Hilali as judge Supreme Court of Pakistan.

A meeting of the JCP was held here under the chairmanship of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial to consider the elevation of Justice Musarrat Hilali to the apex court. Justice Hilali's name would now be sent to the Parliamentary Committee on Judges Appointment for approval.

The JCP is responsible for approving the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and five high courts of the country. The chief justice of Pakistan also heads the commission as its chairman.

The body comprises four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court, a former judge, federal law minister, the attorney general for Pakistan and a senior advocate nominated by the Pakistan Bar Council.

The provincial and Islamabad bar councils each nominate a representative as a JCP member.

According to Article 175-A of the constitution, the JCP, after confirmation, will propose the names to parliamentary committees for appointment of judges in superior courts.



KARACHI: Officials placing red flag after alerts issued by the authorities regarding the effects of cyclone "Biparjoy" at the Hawksbay Beach.

## BHC refrains GoB from providing official vehicles on ownership basis to ministers, MPAs, others

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court (BHC) has refrained the Government of Balochistan from providing and allotting official vehicles on ownership basis to the provincial ministers, members of provincial assembly and other government functionaries.

The ground in the petition was that same would be an unnecessary burden on the public exchequer and will also cause inconvenience to the future incumbents.

The court issued notice to the Secretary Balochistan provincial assembly, Chief Secretary, Secretary S&GAD as well as to the learned AAG.

In the meantime, the Secretary Balochistan Assembly, Chief Secretary and Secretary S&GAD were restrained from further proceedings with the plan for providing official vehicles on ownership basis till the next date of hearing, June 22, 2023.

The order was passed by the division bench headed by the Chief Justice BHC, Mr. Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan on a constitutional petition here on Wednesday.

The petitioner Bayazid Khan Kharooti had challenged the allotment / providing official vehicles on



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates 7th Avenue Interchange on Srinagar Highway.

## Hopes Governor to limit security measures as well: CM writes official memo to CS on security measures during VVIP movement

Bizenjo calls for using alternative means of security monitoring during VVIP movement; directs to make security arrangements appropriate during movement of ministers, members assembly, CS and IGP

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has directed the Chief Secretary to use alternative means of security monitoring during the VVIP movement. He also directed to make the security arrangements during the movement of provincial ministers, members of assembly, Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police appropriate so as to ensure smooth flow of traffic and the general public is not suffered. He has also expressed the hope that the Governor Balochistan would also

limit the security arrangements during his movement in view of the public interest. This and similar other directives and observances made by the Chief Minister in an official memo to the Chief Secretary, Abdul Aziz Uqaili.

In his official letter, the Chief Minister observed that extra arrangements of security are made during the VVIP movement. Not only the traffic is affected due to the additional security arrangements, but the citizens also face hardships, he observed adding that it is often seen that during VVIP movement, ambulances and fire brigade vehicles are also struck in rush during the VVIP movement.

It was mentioned that the Chief Minister has already limited the security arrangements during his movement. And it is hoped that the Governor would also limit the security arrangements during his movement.

It was directed to the Chief Secretary to issue necessary directives to all the concerned departments in this regard stressing that public convenience must be upheld during the VVIP movement anyway.

## Four terrorists killed in encounter at Pak-Afghan Border: CTD

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) has claimed to have killed four terrorists in an operation at Pak-Afghan border, Chaman on Wednesday. According to the spokesman of CTD, the terrorists were gunned down during an exchange of fire took place at the Pak-Afghan border.

During the course of operation, weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the terrorists, the spokesman CTD maintained. According to the spokesman, the terrorists were involved in the target killing of police and facilitators of the miscreants accused in attack at the camp of security forces in Killa Saifullah.

WB approves \$200 million aid for Pakistan

WASHINGTON (Online): World Bank (WB) Executive Board has accorded approval to provide aid of 200 million dollars to Pakistan.

This aid will be spent in rehabilitation works in flood affected areas in KP.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal chaired a meeting to review the progress of projects in Gwadar.

## Cyclone biparjoy threat & precautions: Transport service suspended on Karachi route & coastal highway till June 17

Independent Report

QUETTA: In view of the cyclone biparjoy threat, the Provincial Transport Department has banned the movement of all kind of transports on Karachi route from Quetta and different other parts of the province.

All kind of transport service including buses, coaches, mazda and mini buses have been suspended from Quetta to Karachi, Khuzdar to Karachi, Bela to Karachi, Chaman to Karachi, Pishin to Karachi from June 15 to 17, 2023.

According to an announcement made by the Secretary Provincial Transport Authority on Wednesday, there are chances of cyclone, heavy rains and storm following the biparjoy. Therefore, all the transporters and owners of other vehicles have been directed to avoid plying the public transport in the given dates so that no financial and human loss is caused to them.

It was also warned that strict legal action would be taken against those violating the orders in this regard. This includes the impounding of the vehicle and cancellation and suspension of the route permits. In this regard, no regret would be accepted, it was further announced.

## PM says: Political stability, key to economic strength, development, prosperity

Government had met all the conditions of the IMF and hoped that the programme would resume anytime very soon

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that political stability was highly important to achieve economic strength, attract investment, and ensure development and prosperity in the country.

"Until there is no political stability, there would not be any economic stability as both are inter-linked with each other," he said while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the rehabilitated and widened Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed Road (previously known as IJ Principal Road).

Shehbaz Sharif said in a situation where there was political instability in the country, the political opponents were hatching conspiracies everywhere, spreading false propaganda and misleading the nation; nobody would be ready to invest in the country.

Putting the responsibility of current economic crisis on the previous government, the prime minister said it breached its own agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) due to which the confidence of the Fund in Pakistan shattered and it was now hesitant to resume its agreement.

However, he said the current government had met all the conditions of the IMF and hoped that the programme would resume anytime very soon.

PM Shehbaz resolved that "under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, we all together would bring the country out of all crises and make it a stable and developed Pakistan."

He said the previous government had ignored development projects and the progress on reconstruction of IJP Road was also going on at a snail's pace. However, he said current government made it possible to complete it in the stipulated time.

Appreciating the team responsible for the project to complete it on time, the prime minister said the project, previously known as IJ Principal Road, had now been named after Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider).



QUETTA: A delegation led by Chairman Balochistan Public Service Commission Abdul Salik Khan meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Shell Petroleum to sell stake in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Shell Pakistan said on Wednesday that parent Shell had notified it of the group's intent to sell its shareholding in the business.

Shell Petroleum Company (SPCo), the immediate parent company, owns 77 per cent of the local operations, which suffered losses in 2022 due to exchange rates, the devaluation of the Pakistani rupee, and overdue receivables.

"... the Board of Directors of Shell Pakistan Limited (SPL), in a meeting of its board held on June 14, 2023, have been notified by SPCo of its intent to sell its shareholding in SPL," SPL said in a notice to the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

It is unclear how much of its stake SPCo is selling. "This announcement does not impact SPL's current business operations, which continue," the notice said.

In a separate press release, SPL said that any sale would be "subject to a targeted sales process, the execution of binding documentation and the receipt of applicable regulatory approvals."

"Shell is seeing strong interest from international buyers," the press release said.

## Biparjoy cyclone may hit Ketu Bandar at 1100 hours today

PM directs relocation of over 50,000 people from coastal areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday said the very severe cyclonic storm BIPARJOY of Category-3 landfall was predicted to take place at around 1100 hours on Thursday which was earlier forecast in the evening of June 15th due to the evolving nature of the cyclone.

Addressing a joint news conference flanked by Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, the federal minister for climate change briefed the media persons on the latest situation of the Tropical Cyclone BIPARJOY.

Senator Rehman said the intensity of the cyclone was to increase amid nearing the shore of Ketu Bandar and Indian Gujarat while embracing its landfall. "We are trying to evacuate masses to safer places and it's the only remedy related to cyclones in the world. The accompanied activities alongwith the cyclone can put people's lives at risk," she added.

The Minister added that it was the second media briefing at the NDMA and was aimed at providing important updates to the masses through the media.

BIPARJOY, she said had achieved the intensity of a very severe cyclonic storm of Category-3 which was massive after the cyclone that hit the country's coastline after 1999.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman briefs to media persons about Cyclone Biparjoy during a press conference at NDMA.

## Langu praises CM's role for filling vacant posts in week

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs Mir Ziaullah Langu on Wednesday appreciated the orders of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo to fill the vacant posts within a week by the concerned secretaries.

He said that the Chief Minister had represented the people of the province in a powerful way, while the biggest problem of the people of Balochistan was unemployment. The people of Balochistan must be given jobs so that they could serve the nation, he said. He said that he was determined and the government had also decided that no concessions would be made on the delay of employees and in this context, no interruption would be tolerated in the employment issue.

More employment will be provided to the people before the tenure of the existing government ends, he noted.

Meanwhile, the provincial home minister praised the good initiative of the Chief Minister and said that the removal of the ban on the sale of Iranian petrol by the Chief Minister was a very good move.

Mir Ziaullah Langu directed the administration to follow the instructions of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and open the Iranian petrol business for the interest of local people.



Independent Report

QUETTA: The leader of Opposition in Balochistan Assembly, Malik Sikandar Khan Advocate and other members of the assembly have expressed deep concern over non-completion of the development projects and slow pace of work on certain other schemes of the energy and water supply sectors in their respective election constituencies.

They have urged the concerned high ups to expedite the pace of work on the development schemes.

They were in attendance at the meeting with the concerned high ups of the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), WASA and other concerned high ups.

The MPs who were present in the meeting were included: Malik Naseer Ahmed Shahwani, Akhtar Hussain Langove, Mir Akbar Mengal, Ahmed Nawaz Baloch, Mir Zahid Reki and Mir Younas Aziz Zehri.

The high ups in attendance were: Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Gichki, Chief Executive Officer of QESCO, Abdul Karim Jamali, MD WASA, Hamid Latif Rana besides other high ups.

The meeting held on special directives of Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo reviewed the public issues related to QESCO, WASA and Public Health Engineering (PHE) besides finding solution to them.

The meeting particularly reviewed the issues regarding installation and repair of transformers for making the non-functional tube wells functional, bifurcation of over load transformers besides non-completion of various development schemes despite release of the necessary funds.

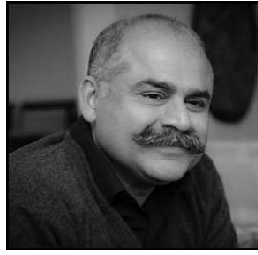
The leader of Opposition and other MPs regretfully pointed out that the non-supply of electricity is causing water shortage in their respective constituencies and thus creating problems for their dwellers.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Tedious declarations**

Monday's National Assembly session was not the civilian leadership's finest hour. In fact, the proceedings inside the house of representatives offered ample evidence of why the political class in general is held in such contempt, and why the public so readily embraces narratives that undermine democracy. The session was the first one after the federal budget had been presented, an occasion normally used to debate the various proposals in this critical financial plan. Certainly, there have been times when such a discussion has been reduced to a formality — that was the case last year, for example, when there was only a lame-duck opposition in the Lower House following the PTI legislators' en masse resignations. This year too, despite the dire economic crisis engulfing Pakistan, only two lawmakers took part in the budget debate. Instead of proving themselves even halfway equal to the job they have been elected for, almost all the lawmakers present devoted their energies elsewhere, making clear their disconnect with the bread-and-butter issues that affect the general public.

And so, reducing the budget to a footnote, the Lower House proceeded to adopt a resolution calling upon the government to immediately initiate proceedings under the Pakistan Army Act against those involved in vandalism of military installations on May 9. Moved by Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, the resolution does not name Imran Khan or his party, the PTI, but says there was evidence proving the involvement of "a political party and its chief" in the violent protest "which caused irreparable loss to the state and its institutions". No one can disagree on the need for those involved in the disturbances that day to be brought to justice. But for the minister to use his position and the occasion to vociferously make the demand for such accountability, that too in non-civilian forums, appears unnecessary and out of proportion. Mr Asif, however, is not alone. It is a manifestation of the politicians' skewed priorities — arguably even more pronounced in the wake of the events of May 9 — that many politicians tend towards such exaggerated gestures to demonstrate their allegiance to the security arm of the state. The civilian leadership must get its act together, work to strengthen democratic institutions, and set its priorities straight. That is a more reliable way to ensure political survival, rather than tedious and fulsome proclamations repeated ad nauseam.



**Shahzad Sharjeel**

The concept of outsourcing has been around for a while. Outsourcing to service providers has been the norm for manufacturers, especially under the globalisation mantra where finance and human resources know no boundaries. American and European automobile and cellular phone manufacturers have shifted most production to China — the same China they accuse of political repression and human rights violations — because it offers cheap labour and subsidised utilities to industry. Concerns about Chinese labour laws and weak environmental protection are forgotten so long as it gives the manufacturers a competitive edge.

Similarly, processing payrolls or medical and legal data entry from all over the world happens in Bangalore and Chennai because these places have invested in human resources and technological development. Just imagine. The worst type of xenophobes here get their 'Sharia-compliant' profits calculated in the land of Shiva in the Indian south. Money is progressive; it has no religion.

The outsourcing of intellect or the appropriation of 'others' inventions while denigrating them as 'heretics' and condemning them to eternal hell has been perfected by oily theocrats. Dare to point out the hypocrisy of the arrangement and you are reminded of the West's crimes of imperialism and slave trade that form the basis of their fortunes.

**IPP redux**

While benefiting from all the scientific development of the 'godless' and 'soul-less' West, the God-fearing and spiritual holy men in our neck of the woods are quick to point out the 'moral turpitude' of materialistic, modern societies. The objectification of women and the breakdown of the family unit are cited as sure signs of decline. It matters little that a spokesperson of a recently dethroned party presenting itself as the standard bearer of spiritual purity, not too long ago publicly insisted that the vernacular translation of 'prostitute' be used as a synonym for 'widow' because of some archaic and convoluted usage in a particular region.

This same party's leader hit upon the bright idea of outsourcing corruption. It appeared flawless till he got his vendors arrested. This is how it works: allow the wheeling-dealing types to use the 'charismatic leader' to mint money so long as a chunk of it is spent on maintaining his clean-as-a-whistle aura, dirty-rich lifestyle, and equally dirty politics. Get caught with your hand in the cookie jar and the leader will drop you like a hot brick. The sugar and cougar brigade goes to jail while the leader looks for the next ATM.

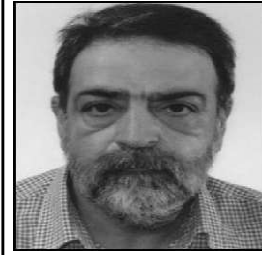
Back to inventions or lack thereof; the so-called scientists here obsess about making genies produce electricity, become public intellectuals, or acquire fat budgets for fake projects to get foreign inventions licensed to their families. Another lot specialises in tracing every scientific invention to the Muslim scientists of yore to prove that all progress is beholden to us. Yet another very elite group of researchers spends all its time proving every technological breakthrough under the sun as having at least one member be-

longing to some Pakistani ethnicity among the thousands-strong team of gofers behind the invention.

We have also had no qualms about not just crowdfunding and appropriating the most sensitive and potentially lethal technology but open-sourcing it to the larger detriment of mankind. Some insist on continuing in this vein till the Kohinoor comes 'home'. How interesting that things come full circle even in subjects seemingly poles apart — from offshore accounting to customer care call centres in Chennai to the celebrated Mountain of Light diamond's origins in the Golconda mines of southern India. Amidst all this East-West controversy, the prospects of South-South cooperation can open up vistas where 'going south' need not necessarily mean a downward trend. This leaves the northern hemisphere sticking out like a sore thumb — at least in some people's imaginations — as the hub of conspiracies and the nub of regime-change plots. Outsourcing the blame for poor economic management to the IFIs, and the power play between components of the state to foreign conspiracies. As for the fourth estate, the least said the better. It is tethered to estate agents.

A few decades back, we tried outsourcing the country's power production to the IPPs. A new conglomerate has been launched in the 'power' sector, this time referred to as Independent Power Purchasers. The regulators better determine the unit cost and capacity charge wisely and in the public interest this time, lest the new IPP gets embroiled in the same old battles with the 'oily and gassy regulatory authority' and the 'nation transformation company'. — Courtesy Dawn

**Italian trendsetter**



**Mahir Ali**

Well before global politics featured the likes of Trump, Bolsonaro, Orban, Erdogan, Imran Khan, Modi or even Netanyahu, there was Silvio Berlusconi, the slick and smarmy business magnate who was first elected prime minister of Italy in 1994, just months after founding his political party, Forza Italia.

That government lasted less than a year, and some dismissed him as a flash in the pizza pan, but when he returned to power in 2001, it was at the helm of the first postwar Italian government that was able to serve out a five-year term. Small wonder, then, that admirers and detractors alike have been describing Berlusconi's demise on Monday as the end of an era. But, like some of the political obituaries that greeted the end of his first and second stints as PM, that assessment may be premature. He returned in 2008, but then was barred from holding political office for several years after he resigned in 2011, and by the time he returned to the fray in 2018, the ground had shifted. The octogenarian found himself being treated as a relic on a playfield he had landscaped by aiding the far right's ascent into the conservative mainstream. Giorgia Meloni had served a decade earlier as a junior minister in Berlusconi's last administration. Since last year, when he was re-elected to the senate, his Forza Italia has been a minor partner in Meloni's governing coalition.

Berlusconi acknowledged as much in a 2019 speech: "It was us who legitimised and

constitutionalised the Lega [the former Northern League] and the fascists [the Meloni-led Brothers of Italy]." Back in 1996, in a profile of the Italian leader, the American writer and journalist Alexander Stille noted: "Imagine if a real-estate mogul along the lines of Donald Trump also owned CBS, NBC, the Fox network, Paramount Pictures, Newsweek, Random House, Condé Nast, The Los Angeles Times, HBO, the Dallas Cowboys, Walmart stores, Aetna insurance, Loews Theatres and Fidelity Investments and had the political clout of Bill Clinton or Newt Gingrich, and you get an idea of the long shadow Mr Berlusconi casts in Italian life."

Unlike Trump, Berlusconi started from scratch, building up first a real estate empire — the sources of his funding remain obscure — and then a commercial TV network that brought American soap operas and "reality" shows featuring semi-clad women to Italian audiences accustomed to more drab presentations. He invested his rapidly increasing wealth in a couple of national newspapers and a vast array of magazines, as well as AC Milan.

So he was hardly unknown by the time he went into politics 30 years ago, after Italy's party political structure began to collapse under the weight of a wide range of corruption investigations. That structure had effectively been in place since the immediate postwar era, when the CIA intervened to make sure that the Italian Communist Party did not win any elections. The Christian Democrats were the main beneficiaries, with the Socialists playing second fiddle. It was a Socialist prime minister, however, who became a crucial patron for Berlusconi in the 1980s: Bettino Craxi eventually fled Italy to a villa in Tunisia, in order to escape

the consequences of his shenanigans while in power. Italians were fed up, and expected to lean leftwards, by the time Forza Italia emerged. Berlusconi was motivated to a considerable extent by the desire to protect his still expanding empire, and offered himself up to voters as a solution to Italy's woes on the strength of his personality, rather than any coherent political programme.

That may not have been an entirely original leadership attribute, but it was relatively a novelty in Western democracies and, notwithstanding the occasional backlash, appears now to have been more or less normalised. Berlusconi's final term may have laid bare his economic incompetence in the face of the global financial crisis and European debt woes, but he's much more likely to be remembered for the level of sleaze

he unapologetically introduced into politics, and a penchant for making sexist or racist remarks that he invariably dismissed as 'jokes'. Even a reported predilection for sex with underage girls caused insufficient alarm among the Italian public.

Berlusconi saw himself as a celebrity role model for all Italian men, and even for world leaders — and, sadly, he wasn't wrong in some respects. He ignored constant conflicts of interest, and thrived on narcissism — with facelifts, hair implants and an unnatural tangerine glow enabling him, at least in his own mind, to disguise the fact that he was born when Benito Mussolini still ruled Italy. His enduring legacy what Stille summed up this week as a kind of postmodern, "content-less politics", which, one might add, serves the neoliberal status quo as an invaluable distraction. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**France provides Euro 180m for NTDC transmission lines, grid stations projects**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Credit Facility Agreement, said a press release issued here Wednesday. This loan will support the NTDC in its transmission mandate to provide reliable and efficient power supply in major cities of Punjab. The funding will also help enhance the transmission of efficient power distribution in Pakistan. Such benefits will contribute to improving affordability and scaling up the energy supply. Since most of the power generation in the

country is through the hydel sources, hence the projects will help mitigate impacts of climate change through transmission of green energy, in line with the policies of the Government of Pakistan and its commitment to fight climate change. It is also part of the pledge and commitments announced by France at the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan in Geneva on January 9, 2023. The Republic of

France, through the French Development Agency, is providing technical and financial support in several sectors such as energy, water and sanitation, urban development, and cultural heritage. The French loan will support NTDC in the components of the projects including: Construction of a new 220KV substation and 50km of new 220KV transmission lines to be connected to it in Aarifwala, which will be connected to the MEPCO grid.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting on Civil Aviation issues, at Finance Division.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State and Chairman Reforms and Reduces Mobilization Committee Ashfaq Yousuf Tola addressing to the post budget session at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

**Alashabi says: Banking, trade routes, removing policy barriers can increase direct trade**

LAHORE (APP): between Yemen and Pakistan. Alashabi also commended the city of Lahore for its stature as a bustling metropolis and a thriving market. Recognizing Pakistan as a significant market, he acknowledged the existing direct and indirect trade channels that Yemen maintained via Jeddah, Muscat, and Dubai. He also spoke about the impact of conflict in Yemen over the years, and exuded hope in overcoming these challenges and restoring stability.

**Shipping activity at Port Qasim**

KARACHI (APP): Two ships namely, PS-Pelican and Scarabe carrying 27,999 tonnes of Palm oil and 53,000 tonnes of Coal, berthed at Oil Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Tuesday. A total of seven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, oil tanker Demeter and bulk cargo carrier Butinah sailed out to sea on Wednesday (today) morning on Wednesday. A cargo Volume of 51,679 tonnes, comprising 51,679 tonnes imports Cargo exclusively, was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

**Dar for supporting Aviation Sector**

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday committed to support the Aviation Sector and directed to take pertinent measures to resume flights of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) to the US, UK and the Europe at the earliest. The minister chaired a meeting on Civil Aviation issues, which was also attended by the Federal Minister for Aviation and Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique, Federal Minister for Law & Justice Senator

**Govt. giving consideration to promote agro-based economy: Minister**

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for National Food Security, Tariq Bashir Cheema on Wednesday said the government is giving consideration to the promotion of agro-based economy. Participating in the general discussion on the budget for the year 2023-24, he recognized the crucial role of the agricultural sector in the country's economy and said that its importance cannot be denied. Cheema highlighted the significant increase in wheat production during

the current season, leading to a bumper crop. He further mentioned that Pakistan was also an exporter of rice and anticipates a similarly robust rice crop. These achievements underscore the potential of the agricultural sector to contribute to the nation's prosperity. Furthermore, the minister addressed the pressing issue of energy in agriculture by sharing that the current budget includes allocations for the solarization of tubewells. A meeting, presided over by the Prime Minister will discuss the allocation of funds for this initiative across different provinces, including the conversion of tube-wells, he added. Cheema acknowledged the efforts made by the Sindh government in assisting farmers affected by devastating floods last year. However, he expressed his intention to request further assistance from the government of Sindh to address the challenges faced by the remaining flood-affected areas.

**Senate body on Finance reviews proposed changes in Customs Tariff**

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, led by Chairman Committee, Senator Saleem Mandviwala, conducted a comprehensive review of the proposed changes in the first schedule to the Customs Act, 1969 (Pakistan Customs Tariff). The meeting took place on Wednesday at the Parliament House, where senior officials from the National Tariff Commission (NTC), Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), and Ministry of

**Rupee gains 79 paisas against US Dollar in interbank**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday strengthened by 79 paisas against the US Dollar (USD) in the interbank trading as it closed at Rs 287.18 against the previous day's closing of Rs 287.97. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs 292 and Rs 295 respectively.

**PCJCCI for effective measures to tackle climate change**

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) Wednesday called for taking effective measures to cope with the climatic challenges. Sharing his views on climate change in a meeting held here at PCJCCI Secretariat on Wednesday, the joint chamber's President Moazzam Ghurki said that despite contributing less than one percent of global emissions, Pakistan was among the top 10 countries

Thalassemia suffering children Donating blood is a great act of kindness

Independent Report LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Muhammad Balighur Rehman, donated blood for Thalassemia patients in blood camp organized by Sundas Foundation on the occasion of World Blood Donors Day here at Governor House Lahore today.



LAHORE: Students of Kinnaird College for Women taking keen interest in Textile Exhibition at Al-Hamma Art Gallery.

ANF seizes over 161 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in six operations conducted across the country managed to net four accused and recovered over 161 kg drugs, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday.

patients get new lives every year. Governor Punjab said that donating blood is harmless for a healthy person, while it saves the life of some one. Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Sundas Foundation is doing great work for Thalassemia and Hemophilia patients.

Rally held in favor of Pak Army

LARKANA (APP): Pakistan Patriotic Movement Zindabad Organization Larkana here on Wednesday took out a rally to express solidarity with the Pakistan Army.

The rally which started from Daragh Qaim Shah Bukhari, concluded at Larkana Press Club after passing through Bunder Road, Pakistan Chowk and Jinnah Bagh Chowk. The rally was led by Central Chairman of the Organization Liaquat Abro and was participated by Nazim Alim Younis Ali Abro, Raja Munir Jatoi and Abdul Karim Jatoi and others.



PESHAWAR: Head of Delegation International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Nicolas Lambert meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

Minister says: Improving medical facilities in public hospitals top priority

Independent Report SIALKOT: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health Dr. Jamal Nasir has said that improving medical facilities in government hospitals was the top priority and the problems of district, tehsil level and primary health centers would be resolved at earliest.

during his visit to various areas of Sialkot district. Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health expressed satisfaction over the performance of the District Health Authority and appreciated the Deputy Commissioner Adnan Mehmood Awan and the District Health Management Team for their effective supervision.

Caretaker Provincial Health Minister also visited Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital Sialkot and Civil Hospital Sambrial. He inspected the emergency ward, surgical ward, lab and issued instructions to improve the facilities. Dr. Jamal Nasir directed to issue notices to the laboratory supervisors both hospitals for not maintaining quality control standards in the lab.

Eight dengue cases reported this year

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as eight dengue-positive cases had been reported in the Rawalpindi district this year, but there was a need to remain vigilant to control the spread of the fatal disease as the prevailing weather was suitable for breeding larvae.

four patients were admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital, three to the Holy Family Hospital, and one to the Shifa International Hospital. Giving details of the punitive actions, the health officer said that the district administration, in collaboration with allied departments, had registered 107 FIRs, sealed 62 premises.

Two killed, one injured in road accident

FAISALABAD (APP): Two persons were killed, while another sustained serious injuries in a road mishap in the area of Chak Jhumra police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Wednesday that a speeding dumper truck hit a motorcycle near Nallaywala bridge late Tuesday night.

QWP calls for early announcement of NFC Award

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial chairman, Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Sikandar Sherpao said due to the incompetence of the previous rulers, the province is the victim of financial instability and the economic crisis is looming here.



PESHAWAR: People receiving vaccination at Haj center in Peshawar, Hayatabad.

IPO-Pakistan launches e-filing of IP applications

LAHORE (APP): Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan) in collaboration with Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) launched e-filing system to receive Intellectual Property (IP) applications from the stakeholders in a ceremony held here at Arfa Karim Software Technology Park on Wednesday.

International News

Xi hails establishment of 'China-Palestine strategic' ties

Monitoring Desk BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Wednesday that his country was establishing "strategic" relations with Palestinians ahead of talks with leader Mahmud Abbas in Beijing.

day to hold talks with top Chinese leaders including President Xi and Premier Li Qiang. The two sides are using the opportunity to discuss ways to advance relations and resolve longstanding challenges to the Palestinian-Israeli relationship. Beijing has sought to boost its ties in the Middle East, challenging US influence — efforts that have sparked unease in Washington.

tor in the Middle East, brokering the restoration of ties in March between Iran and Saudi Arabia — rivals in a region where the United States has for decades been the main powerbroker.

But finding a lasting solution to Israeli-Palestinian tensions may prove more elusive, as peace negotiations between the two sides have been stalled since 2014. In April, Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang told his Israeli and Palestinian counterparts that his country was willing to aid peace negotiations, Xinhua reported.



China's President Xi Jinping (C) and Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas attend a welcoming ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Kuwait strikes \$367 million deal to acquire Turkish-made combat drones

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Kuwait reached an agreement worth \$367 million with Turkish drone giant Baykar to purchase its increasingly sought-after TB2 combat drones, the Kuwaiti army said.

Successful deployment in conflict zones such as Libya, Syria and Ukraine. Kuwaiti Air Force operations chief brigadier, General Fahad Al-Dosari, said in a video posted on their Twitter account that the drone fleet can support the navy and coast guard, as well as monitor maritime and land borders.

der \$2 million each according to estimates. They are produced by Baykar Defense company, which belongs to the family of Selcuk Bayraktar, the son-in-law of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Bayraktar is the company's chief technical officer.

The drone, Bayraktar TB2, boasts unmanned aerial vehicles that can carry lightweight, laser-guided bombs, and fly for up to 27 hours at a time, which, according to the company, was "a record," it had set while testing the drone in Kuwait in 2019.

The announcement, on Tuesday, would set Kuwait to become the 28th country to procure the TB2 drones.

Baykar and the Kuwaiti government did not say how many drones were purchased or when they would be delivered. Both could not be immediately reached for comment.

Baykar and the Kuwaiti government did not say how many drones were purchased or when they would be delivered. Both could not be immediately reached for comment. The drones priced under \$2 million each according to estimates.

Sudan's war displaces over 2 million, as fighting rages in Darfur region: UN

Monitoring Desk CAIRO: The conflict in Sudan has displaced more than 2 million people, the United Nations said on Wednesday, as a U.N. official warned that escalating attacks in Darfur city could amount to "crimes against humanity."

in parts of the capital and the western region of Darfur, both have seen some of the worst battles. At least 959 civilians have been killed and about 4,750 others were wounded as of June 12, according to Sudan's Doctors Syndicate, which tracks civilian casualties.

Sudan has plunged into chaos since mid-April when months-long tensions between the military and its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, exploded into an open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and elsewhere across the north-eastern African nation.

The brutal clashes have forced more than 1.6 million people to leave their homes to safer areas inside Sudan, according to the International Organization for Migration. About 530,000 others fled to the neighboring countries of Egypt, South Sudan, Chad, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic.

Exclusive-Bill Gates in China to meet President Xi on Friday - sources

Monitoring Desk HONG KONG: Bill Gates, Microsoft Corp's co-founder, is set to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday during his visit to China, two people with knowledge of the matter said.

The sources did not say what the two might discuss. Gates tweeted on Wednesday that he had landed in Beijing.

9 killed in latest clash between ethnic groups in India's Manipur: police

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: At least nine people have been killed in the latest clashes between members of rival ethnic groups in India's northeastern state of Manipur, police said on Wednesday, as security forces pressed on with a hunt for illegal weapons.

dominant community in the low lands, erupted on May 3, sparked by resentment over economic benefits and quotas in government jobs and education reserved for hill people.

U.N. nuclear chief delays visit to Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant

Monitoring Desk KYIV: U.N. nuclear chief Rafael Grossi has delayed a planned trip to Ukraine's Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant until it is safer to travel, a senior Ukrainian government official said on Wednesday.

Grossi had been expected to visit the facility on Wednesday following talks in Kyiv on Tuesday.

Belarus starts taking delivery of Russian nuclear weapons

Monitoring Desk MINSK: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has said his country has started taking delivery of Russian tactical nuclear weapons, some of which he said were three times more powerful than the atomic bombs the US dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

Lukashenko said in an interview with the Rossiya-1 Russian state TV channel which was posted on the Belarusian Belta state news agency's Telegram channel. "The bombs are three times more powerful than those (dropped on) Hiroshima and Nagasaki," he said, speaking on a road in a forest clearing with military vehicles parked nearby and some kind of military storage facility visible in the background. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Friday that Russia, which will retain control of the tactical nuclear weapons, would start deploying them in Belarus after special storage facilities to house them were made ready.



Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri casts his vote as parliament gathers to elect a president at the parliament building in downtown Beirut, Lebanon.

Turkiye won't back Swedish Nato bid unless it stops anti-Turkish protests: Erdogan

Monitoring Desk ANKARA: Sweden should not expect a change of attitude from Ankara on its Nato membership bid at the Western alliance's summit next month unless it prevents anti-Turkish protests in Stockholm, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan was quoted as saying on Wednesday.

Erdogan was quoted as telling reporters on a flight returning from Azerbaijan on Tuesday. Erdogan made his comments before officials from Turkiye, Sweden, Finland and Nato met on Wednesday in Ankara for talks to try to overcome Turkish objections that have delayed Sweden's NATO membership bid.

In March, Turkiye ratified Finland's bid for membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but still objects to Sweden joining the alliance, as does Hungary.

