

Independent

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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-Haidar).



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



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

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. Following the consistent efforts of the federal government, fruition of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects can be seen as from 2022-till date around 637,124 metric ton of cargoes landed at the deep seaport of Gwadar which is manifold high compared to 166,207 metric tons arrived during 2018 -2021.

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 the all relevant ministries, provincial representatives of Balochistan and Chairman Gwadar Port Authority (GPA).

Maritime Affairs Advisor (Planning Commission)



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

Opposition leaders & MPs voice concern over non-completion & slow pace of work of projects

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.

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".

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.

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.

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 Su-

preme 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.

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 we were 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.



QUETTA: On the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan, Opposition leader Malik Sikandar Advocate, MPAs, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki and others attending to review issues regarding QESCO and PHE and their solution

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 observations made by the Chief Minister in an official memo to the Chief Secretary, Abdul Aziz Uqailli.

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 move-

ment, 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.



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

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.

BHC refrains GoB from providing official vehicles on ownership basis to ministers, MPs, 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, opposition leader, Deputy Speaker, chairman of the standing committees, Advisors to the Chief Minister and parliamentary secretaries.

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

The petitioner Bayazid Khan Kharooti had challenged the allotment / providing 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.

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.

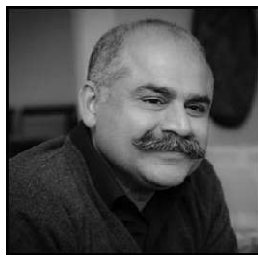
According to an announcement made by the Secretary Provincial Transport Authority on Wednesday, there are chances of cyclone, heavy rains and storm following the bipor joy. Therefore, all the transporters and owners of other vehicles have been directed to avoid plying the public transport in the given dates.

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.

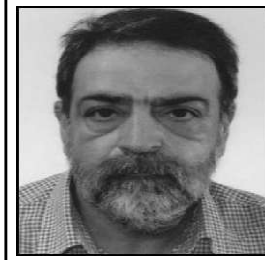
Back to inventions or lack thereof; the so-called scientists here obsess about making genies produce electricity, become public intellectuals, or acquire fat budgets for fake projects to get foreign inventions licensed to their families. Another lot specialises in tracing every scientific invention to 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): France has provided Euro 180 million soft loan to Pakistan for financing the National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) transmission lines and grid stations projects located in Vehari, Aarifiwala and Sialkot. Federal Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs Dr Kazim Niaz, Ambassador of France Nicolas Galey and Philippe Steinmetz, Country Director of the French Development Agency (AFD), signed the

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 Aarifiwala, 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): Ambassador of the Republic of Yemen, Muhammad Motaah Alashabi on Wednesday emphasized the need to bolster the trade volume and value between Pakistan and Yemen while simultaneously enhancing their trading capacities. During his visit to Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) here, he was of the view that banking channel, trade routes and removing policy barriers could increase the direct bilateral trade

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

Azam Nazir Tarar, Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Finance Tariq Bajwa and Mansoor Usman Awan Attorney General of Pakistan, The Secretary Aviation, Secretary Law and Justice DG CAA, DG ASF, and senior officers from Finance and Aviation attended the meeting, said a press release.

The secretary Aviation briefed the Chair on the issues being faced by the aviation sector pertaining to regulation, service provision, security, and enhancement of state capacity in aviation.

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

Commerce presented their insights regarding the rationale behind the proposed amendments.

During the meeting, a clause-by-clause review of the proposals and changes in customs duties for various items and raw materials was conducted. Chairman Senator Saleem Mandviwala emphasized the importance of ensuring that any relief or concessions provided to businesses in terms of duties should be passed on to the customers through a decrease in prices.

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.

Rupee gains 79 paises against US Dollar in interbank

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday strengthened by 79 paises 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

most affected by the climatic impacts in the past two decades. He added that Pakistan's agriculture-based economy was sensitive to climate-related shocks, and disasters could exacerbate the water security challenges. PCJCCI President said that according to the official post-disaster needs assessment (PDMA) 2022, the damages and losses were USD 14.9 billion and USD 15.3 billion respectively, with roughly 33 million people affected, of which 8 million.

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. Apart from Governor Punjab, the staff of Governor House and general public also donated blood. President Sundus Foundation Muhammad Yasin Khan, Medical Director Sundus Foundation Dr. Adnan Gilani, Sundus Foundation staff, blood donor students

and others were present on this occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that donating blood for innocent children suffering from thalassemia is a great act of kindness. He said that serving people suffering from life-threatening diseases is no less than worship. He said that it is the responsibility of all of us to bring a smile on the faces of such people. He further said that we should donate blood for this good cause. He said that due to blood donations millions of

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 Sundus Foundation is doing great work for Thalassemia and Hemophilia patients. He further said that Awareness should be raised among the people to prevent thalassemia. He said that the media should also play a positive role in creating awareness among the people regarding donating blood.



LAHORE: Students of Kinnaird College for Women taking keen interest in Textile Exhibition at Al-Hamra 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. He informed that in an operation near Gujranwala Toll Plaza, ANF recovered 93.6 kg charras concealed in secret cavities of a vehicle and arrested two drug smugglers, residents of Khyber. In another operation near Kuchlak bypass Quetta, ANF seized 50 kg heroin concealed in a dry rainy nullah. In third operation conducted near 'Jarhoi Zakha Khail' area, eight kg charras concealed in

plastic bags was seized. The spokesman informed that in fourth operation in Mianwali, ANF managed to recover 1.2 kg opium and 40 grams charras from the possession of a motorcyclist resident of Bhakkar. In the fifth operation conducted at Pakistan International Container Terminal, Karachi, ANF recovered five kg ice drug concealed in decoration pieces. The container was booked for Australia by a Peshawar-based private company. In the sixth operation conducted at Pak-Afghan Border area in Chaman, ANF recovered four kg suspicious material from the possession.

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 Darqah 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 Abdul Karim Jatoi and others. The participants of the rally were holding placards, national flags and banners, chanting slogans in favor of the Pak Army and the country. Addressing on the occasion, the leaders of the Organization said that the workers of a political party organized a protest in Punjab and KPK. As part of the conspiracy, stones were pelted at the soldiers of the Pakistan Army and government buildings besides burning the vehicles.



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. Cases will be reviewed for approval of development projects, posts of doctors and medical staff in government hospitals of district Sialkot. He expressed these views while talking to media here on Wednesday

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. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Health Dr. Rehan, Principal Khawaja Muhammad Safdar Medical College Sialkot Dr. Abdul Sattar and MS Dr. Ilyas were also present. Meanwhile, the

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. He directed that the patients should be prescribed the medicines available in the hospital stores, and attention should be paid to improve the quality of the tests.

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. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control Dr Sajjad Mehmood told APP, that

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. Consequently, Saqlain Ejaz (22).

QWP calls for early announcement of NFC Award

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial chairman, Quami Watan Party (QWP) Sikandar Sherpao has called for an early announcement of the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award with the increased share of small provinces. He expressed these views while addressing a joining ceremony at village Sherpao on Wednesday. On this occasion, the leading workers of PTI Union Council Lower Behram Haji Gul, Mohammad Zareen, Saleem Khan, Juma Gul, Waseemullah, Zahid Khan, Muhibullah, Khan Gulab, Farhad Khan, Isa Khan, Osman Khan, Saheb Noor and Khanzada Haji along with their families and

associates announced to join Quami Watan Party. 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. The policies of the previous government have not only affected the people and economy of the province but rather have also increased backwardness to an extent. He said that keeping in view the current situation the federal government should not only hand over the net profit on electricity net profit to the province, rather also take steps to increase the shares of small provinces by ensuring the early holding of the NFC.



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. IPO Director General Shazia Adnan and PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf announced the GO-LIVE of Trade Mark™ Online Filing System with online payment. This initiative

would ensure improved services in addition to the filing of trademark applications online, leading to cost and time saving for the applicants besides ensuring convenience. On this occasion, the IPO DG Shazia Adnan said that Intellectual Property Organisation of Pakistan was committed to provide hassle-free services to its stakeholders, adding that digitisation process involved tireless efforts by IT teams of the IPO-Pakistan and the PITB. Shazia Adnan said that with the launch of GO-LIVE system of online IP applications filing.

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. Abbas will be in the Chinese capital until Friday, Beijing has said, on his fifth official visit to the world's second-largest economy. "Facing a century of global changes and new developments to the situation in the Middle East, China is ready to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the Palestinian side," said Xi during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People. "Today, we will jointly announce the establishment of a China-Palestine strategic partnership, which will be an important milestone in the history of bilateral relations," added Xi. Abbas arrived in Beijing on Monday

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. During a regular press briefing last week, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin called long-time Palestinian leader Abbas an "old and good friend of the Chinese people". Last December, President Xi visited Saudi Arabia on an Arab outreach trip that also saw him meet with Abbas and pledge to "work for an early, just and durable solution to the Palestinian issue". Beijing has since positioned itself as a media-

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. And Qin told Palestinian foreign minister Riyad Al-Maliki that Beijing supports the resumption of talks as soon as possible, according to the state news agency. In both calls, Qin emphasised China's push for peace talks on the basis of implementing a "two-state solution".



China's President Xi Jinping (C) and Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas attend a welcome 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. 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. Demand for the drones has surged due to their suc-

cessful 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. He said the drones can also "carry out reconnaissance and targeted missions" in addition to supporting search and rescue efforts. 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 un-

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 TB2 has been credited with helping tip the balance of conflicts in Libya, as well as Turkey's ally Azerbaijan in fighting with Armenian-backed forces in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region in 2020. It has also enabled Ukraine to mount a stiff defense of its cities, carrying out attacks against Russian forces with an effectiveness that surprised many Western military experts and triggered a rush among nations to procure the unmanned craft.

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. The deployment is Moscow's first move of such warheads - shorter-range less powerful nuclear weapons that could potentially be used on the battlefield - outside Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union. "We have missiles and bombs that we have received from Russia,"

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. Turkey cannot approach Sweden's Nato bid positively while "terrorists" were protesting in Stockholm, and Turkey's position would be made clear once again in talks with Swedish officials in Ankara on Wednesday.

Erdogan was quoted as telling reporters on a flight returning from Azerbaijan on Tuesday. Erdogan made his comments before officials from Turkey, 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, Turkey ratified Finland's bid for membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but still objects to Sweden joining the alliance, as does Hungary.

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." Sudan has plunged into chaos since mid-April when monthslong 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 fighting continued unabated Wednesday

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. 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 meeting will mark Xi's first meeting with a foreign private entrepreneur in recent years. The people said the encounter may be a one-on-one meeting. A third source confirmed they would meet, without providing details. 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. Violence between members of the Kuki ethnic group, who mostly live in the hills, and Meiteis, the

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. At least 80 people have been killed and more than 40,000 have been displaced in the state on the Myanmar border that is governed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party.

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.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf addressing the participants of National Conference-Local Democracy Moving Forward for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Pakistan

NA Speaker says: Accelerating SDGs implementation crucial for sustainable development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervez Ashraf, emphasized the significance of focusing on the policies, processes, and challenges related to the localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan and assured full support from parliament to facilitate the legislative processes for achieving the SDGs Agenda 2030.

Speaking at the National Conference titled "Empowered Local Governments—Moving Forward to Accelerate the Implementation of Agenda 2030" organized by Lead for SDGs in Islamabad, the Speaker highlighted the need to accelerate SDGs

implementation in the country. He acknowledged the substantial progress made by Pakistan in defining national strategies, development plans, and institutional reforms to achieve the SDGs. The Speaker commended the efforts of the SDGs Task Force, led by Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, emphasizing the pivotal role of localizing SDGs for the socio-economic development of the country. He assured support from parliamentarians at all levels, including the National, Provincial, and local governments, to facilitate the legislative processes for achieving the SDGs Agenda 2030. Furthermore, the speaker emphasized the crucial role of local govern-

Mariyum says: Artists asset of nation who play key role in promoting national culture, identity

LAHORE (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday said that artists were national asset who play a key role in promoting national culture and developing national identity.

She expressed these views in a meeting with film, stage and television artists here. "Encouragement of creative thinking is indispensable for the growth of the society," the minister remarked.

In the budget of the

next fiscal year, Rs. 2 billion had been allocated for the film finance fund while Rs. 1 billion for the health insurance of artists, she said, adding that revival and development of the film industry was the "top priority of the government".

The minister said that promoting the positive image and true identity of Pakistan around the world was the need of the hour.

Films are an important means of highlighting a country's culture, history, values, heritage and tourism sector, she added.

All Pak mobile phone traders' association delegation visits PTA

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation representing the All Pakistan Mobile Phone Traders Association led by General Secretary (GS) Munir Baig Mirza visited Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Headquarters, in Islamabad today.

The delegation met with Chairman PTA, Major General Hafeez Ur Rehman, and discussed matters related to the business interests of mobile phone traders, particularly in relation to mobile devices, applicable FBR duties.

Economic revival: Khawaja Asif for getting rid of sick organizations, stopping tax evasion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Wednesday stressed the need for getting rid of sick organizations and taking effective measures to stop the billions of rupees tax evasion, causing a constant dent to the national economy.

Participating in the National Assembly debate for the budget 2023-24, he said giving the life-support and keep-pumping the financial resources to the deadwoods was the 'crime against the state,' being committed since long.

He said the incumbent government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, tried to give 'beyond the possibility' relief to the common man despite the severe financial challenges, and in his view it remained successful to some extent. The minister highlighted financial hardships of the public due to prevailing economic situation in the country and increased inflation, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar tried his best to 'possible the impossible' within the limited resources but there was dire need to strengthen the national economy with corrective measures.

He said the government had to pay a huge interest amount against the loans which was higher than the 'federal receipts'. Khawaja Asif said the government would have to get rid of the sick organization, citing examples of two such departments [without taking their names] of

which debt was over Rs 1000 billion but they were being carried forward for reasons beyond understanding. Their early disposal would be better for the country, he added.

"Billions of rupees are being spent on such organizations sick to keep them alive and pumping the dead ones whose survival is impossible. It is a crime against the state," he said, adding the CEO and COO of the departments, supposed to alleviate poverty from the country, were getting Rs 300,000-350,000 monthly salaries while holding their positions intact on stay orders of the courts.

The minister said revenue collection was the major source of the country's income.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet.

Only 5% given benefit, 95% given no benefit in budget: Javed Latif

ISLAMABAD (Online): PML-N leader and federal minister Mian Javed Latif has said which is the hand that does not allow to arrest facilitators of May 9 incidents.

No sector has been given the facility in the budget but no one is talking. 95 percent have not been given any benefit in budget and only 5 percent have been given benefit.

He said this while expressing his views in National Assembly (NA) Wednesday.

Dr Yasmin Rashid was involved in May 9 incident but she was acquitted. Pervez Elahi will be acquitted. Imran Khan will be acquitted then we will talk on it.

MQM convener Khalid calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Convener MQM and MNA Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has called on Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif and paid him tribute for laying foundation stone of K-4 project.

The two leaders exchanged views on prevailing political situation in the country during the meeting held in PM House on Wednesday.

Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui thanked the PM for including development projects of Sindh particularly urban areas in the budget for the financial year 2023-24.

He also paid rich tribute to PM for laying foundation stone of K-4 project for resolving old standing water problem in Karachi.

PPP committed to serve people in country

QUETTA (APP): President of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Balochistan Women's Wing and former provincial minister Ghazala Gola and General Secretary Zareena Zehri on Wednesday said that the PPP was committed to serving people in the country.

They said this while talking to a delegation of women who met here. Both leaders said that whenever the Pakistan Peoples Party come into power, it had served the masses.

Ghazala Gola said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project was owed to the PPP and its completion would usher in a new era of development and prosperity in the country.

Over 40 drug addicts held from Quetta city nullah

QUETTA: Over 40 drug addicts and peddlers were apprehended during crackdown against them in the city nullah falls in the jurisdiction of Sadar police station on Wednesday.

According to details, the police team raided in the nullah passing through near Jail road and Mano Jan road and caught over 40 drug addicts and peddlers from there.

The police also recovered a pistol from a drug addict during the crackdown, it was learnt.

The apprehended drug addicts and peddlers were shifted to the Sadar police station. The police officials informed that the addicts would be sent to the drug rehabilitation center being operated by the Social Welfare department in due course of time.

Talha announces successful impact of Hajj Portal in resolving pilgrims' issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood held a press conference on Wednesday to discuss the positive impact of the Hajj portal on pilgrims in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

He emphasized the portal's significance in addressing various issues faced by pilgrims during their sacred journey.

Senator Talha highlighted his personal commitment to facilitating direct communication with pilgrims by employing a team of information technology experts at his own expense.

This team had developed a state-of-the-art Hajj portal, enabling pilgrims to lodge complaints and providing the minister with a platform to monitor and promptly address their concerns. In addition, the minister informed the audience that the ministry had established complaint centers in Makkah and Madinah to further assist in resolving pilgrims' issues.

He assured everyone that the ministry was dedicated to ensuring the provision of maximum facilities and would continue to strive for the success of the Hajj operation.

Salute martyrs for their sacrifices, families for their patience: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday condoled with the family members of the Pakistan Army soldiers who embraced martyrdom for the country.

He saluted the martyrs and their families on their passion for sacrifice. He also paid tributes to the martyrs for sacrificing their lives for the sake of the country's security.

He telephoned the family members of the soldiers who were martyred in Miran Shah on June 9.

The president talked to the family members of

PTI purposefully deploys violence as policy: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said keeping in view the facts that had been established so far, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) under its chief purposefully deployed violence as a policy.

Responding to a tweet of the PTI chairman, the prime minister in his tweet said if there was someone who deserved the title of modern-day Joseph Goebbels, chief propagandist for the German Nazi Party, was none other than Imran Khan. "He is certainly perfecting the art of lying."



ISLAMABAD: Convener MQM and MNA Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui called on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PDM led govt striving to provide facilities to people: Agha Mehmood

QUETTA (APP): Parliamentary Secretary Housing and Works Member National Assembly (MNA) Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Balochistan General Secretary Maulana Agha Mehmood Shah on Wednesday said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led government believed in the development and prosperity of people in the country.

Talking to APP, he said the federal government was striving to provide facilities including health, education, clean drinking water and others to public in the state. He claimed that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) did not provide any kind of funds to the MNAs of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam during the 3-and-a-half-year tenure.

He said that in the budget of 2022, funds of Rs. 50 crore have been given for development projects under which new tube-wells were installed to provide clean water drinking facilities to around 23 villages in Kalat, Mastung district and Tehsil Mangchar which has solved the long-standing problem of the people of the area.

He said that earlier the children and women were forced to bring water from far away in the areas of Lahir, Tura, Skilko, Kohang, Shekhri, Katli, Hasan Lahu, Pindran, Bencha in Kalat district. In the same way, water supply was installed in the areas of Mastung district Kardgaap, Dasht, village Zehngit, Ganjadori, village Karsur, village Muhammad Hassani, Esplanji, Kund Imrani, Anjiri while tehsil Mangchar, Johan, Karchap, Baramzai, Sardar. Kot also started supplying clean water to the people by installing water supply to the people. Development works have also been done in respective areas including Marab, Kili Saloli Lakhoria, Adar Toba, Jhad Tarasani, Kili, Khayarzi and other areas of Surab district.

He said that in the budget of 2022, funds of Rs. 50 crore have been given for development projects under which new tube-wells were installed to provide clean water drinking facilities to

QUETTA: A delegation of Panjgur Press Club led by its President Umar Majid meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki

APCA Balochistan demands GoB to implement on federal budget with letter and spirit

QUETTA: The President All Pakistan Clerks Association (APCA) Balochistan, Dad Muhammad Baloch has demanded of the provincial government to implement on the federal budget with true letter and spirit regarding raise in salaries of the provincial government employees.

He warned that strong protest campaign would be launched if the demand of APCA was not met immediately.

He also announced to hold a protest public meeting to press the provincial government for acceptance of demands on June 15 (today).

He pointed out that the government employees are facing severe financial issues due to the unprecedented inflation. As a result, it has become very difficult for them to make their both ends meet, he maintained.

Blood Donor Day observed focusing on dire need for maximum donations

QUETTA: The World Blood Donor Day was observed in the provincial metropolis as elsewhere in the country and world on Wednesday. Marking the Blood Donor Day, blood donation camps were organized while a seminar and awareness walk was also held in the metropolis.

The main blood donation camp was set up by the Fatimid Foundation at the Institute of Nephro-Urology.

A number of volunteers turned up at the camp to donate their blood for thalassemia and other patients suffering from blood diseases.

A seminar was also held at the Institute. Moreover, an awareness walk was also arranged there in which the Fatimid Foundation's provincial head and trustee, Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezeai, other doctors, medical staff and volunteers participated.

Similarly, blood camp was also set up at the Pashtoonkhwah Blood Bank. A rally marking the day was also taken out and blood camp was arranged by the Baloch Blood Bank in the city.

Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Minister for Power Khuram Dastagir Khan, Minister for Industries,

Kiran declares PPP as best political choice for women

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)'s Secretary Information Women Wing Balochistan and Focal Person of the Federal Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, Human Development and Social Welfare Kiran Baloch said that the best choice in politics for the women of Balochistan was the PPP's politics.

She, in a statement, on Wednesday said Fatima Jinnah and Benazir Bhutto are the best examples for those women who wished to join politics.

CTD arrests TTP workers

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and an intelligence agency in an operation arrested two alleged activists of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) when they were funding for their organization.

According to a spokesman for CTD on Wednesday, the accused were arrested from New Karachi Industrial Area and Shershah.

They were identified as Fazal-ur-Rehman and Raheem Afridi.

The agencies also recovered funding cash Rs. 40,900 from their possession and literature.



GWADAR: On the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Izzat Nazir Baloch, Tehsildar Ormara Noor Khan Baloch inspecting preparation of relief works in wake of Biparjoy cyclone