

Independent

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Quetta

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“Decision on name of caretaker CM Balochistan would be made with consensus”

Important meeting held between the Chief Minister Bizenjo and the Opposition

Independent Report
QUETTA: In a late night important political development, the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and Opposition have unanimously agreed upon making final decision on the name of caretaker Chief Minister with consensus.

The decision to this effect was made in an important meeting held between the Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and the Opposition.

The members of different opposition parties including Balochistan National Party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Pashtoonkhaw Milli Awami party were present in the meeting.

The Chief Minister held consultation on the caretaker set up in the province right in accordance with the constitutional requirement.

The participants were literally agreed on that the final decision on the name of caretaker Chief Minister would be made with consensus.

However, it was decided to hold more similar consultations between the Chief Minister and Opposition.

Needless to mention here is that the incumbent Balochistan assembly is going to complete its five years' due tenure in second week of August, 2023.

After completion of the due tenure, the provincial assembly is likely to be dissolved.

Earlier, the Chief Minister hosted dinner in honour of the members of

provincial assembly on Tuesday.

The dinner was also attended by the Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, Deputy Speaker, Sardar Babar Musakhail, provincial ministers and members of the opposition.

The Chief Minister also had traditional Balochi gup-shup with the participants.

During the course of dinner, there was discussion on the political as well as other matters.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo holding consultative meeting with Opposition MPAs regarding caretaker setup



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of MQM led by the Convener Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM, MQM hold discussion on formation of caretaker governments

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Muthahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) led by the Convener Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Wednesday and discussed in detail the matter of formation of caretaker governments besides overall current political situation in the country.

Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Amin ul Haque, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori, Dr Farooq Sattar

and Mustafa Kamal were also part of the delegation. Minister for Railways and Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique and Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq were present in the meeting.

The meeting was held in connection with the prime minister's consultations with the allies with respect to formation of the caretaker governments. During the meeting, matter of the recent population census also came under discussion.

President summons NA session on July 20, Senate on July 24

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday separately summoned the sessions of the National Assembly and Senate to be held on July 20 and July 24 respectively.

The National Assembly session will be held on Thursday, July 20 at 1700 hours while the Senate would meet on Monday, July 24 at 1500 hours. The president summoned sessions of both Houses of Parliament on the prime minister's advice under Article 54 of the Constitution.

Terrorists used American weapons in Zhob attack

QUETTA (Online): The facts related to terrorists who were killed in Zhob area of Baluchistan have come to light. American weapons and equipments were used by terrorists in TTP's Zhob attack. Questions arose that: How did modern weapons and uniforms reach the terrorists? The terrorists had used weapons left by American army in Afghanistan in Zhob attack area of Baluchistan.

5.56 mm Caliber, M16 assault rifles, modern helmet, gloves, bag packs and uniforms were used against Pakistan. It can be seen in the pictures that the attackers who have been killed are dressed in American uniforms.

Even if heavy armed terrorists wear American uniforms they will die the death of cowardice. This is firm commitment of the military leadership that this war will continue till the complete elimination of the terrorists.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Saleh Muhammad Nassar presiding over a meeting regarding Zhob tragedy

No authentic report of security alert

Independent Report
QUETTA: The spokesman of Balochistan police department has stated that the security is on high alert owing to Muharramul Haram and the cooperation of citizens would be encouraging during the month.

This was stated by the spokesman of Police department in a statement issued here on Wednesday.

According to the spokesman, a story of threat alert is running with unauthentic and private source on social media and it is being attributed to the Balochistan police. He clarified that no such news has been shared recently by him.

The spokesman urged the general public not to pay any heed towards the unauthentic material being aired on the social media. He said that the police would continue to provide necessary information about anything related.

GoB & Google ink agreement for scholarships, internships to youth of Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has signed an agreement of Understanding (MoU) with the world-fame search engine firm, Google for awarding scholarships and internships to youth of the province. The agreement signing ceremony was held in Islamabad the other day which was also attended by the Provincial Minister for Finance and Food, Zamarak Khan Achakzai, Chief Secretary, Abdul Aziz Uqaili and other high ups.

The Secretary Information Technology, Government of Balochistan, Muhammad Tayyab Lehri and Secretary Information, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat signed the MoU on behalf of the provincial government

while the Google Team Leader, Umar Farooq signed the agreement from his company's side.

Needless to mention here is that the initiative is in line with the vision of Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo for imparting IT skills to youth of the province, in addition to this, this is also aimed to enable youth of the province to get online opportunities of jobs as per the modern-day requirements.

Under the agreement, the Google would also provide assistance in digitalization of the provincial Information department.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary termed the MoU between provincial government and Google as an important de-

velopment and said that it would provide ample opportunities of personal growth to the youth besides scholarships and internship. The Secretary Information on the occasion mentioned that 1000 scholarships had been given to youth of the province by Google in May this year while over 900 youngsters had got them enrolled in the programme.

He said that some 2,000 more scholarships have been given by Google to youth of the province. He informed that internees of the programme would have the international certification enabling them to get online jobs. The internees would also be able to earn at least US \$ 1,000 US per month through this programme, adding he disclosed.

Azam terms 'cypher gate' a premeditated conspiracy

Former principal secretary ecomes approver against chairman PTI

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former principal secretary Azam Khan has become approver against PTI chairman.

Azam Khan has recorded his statement under 164 before magistrate. In 164 statement charge sheet has been presented against chairman PTI.

Azam Khan termed cypher a well conceived conspiracy saying cypher had nothing to do with reality. Cypher drama was enacted for political motives.

Azam Khan said Imran Khan worked out a false and baseless narrative by concealing all facts. Color of foreign conspiracy was given to cypher to avert vote

of no confidence.

He went on to say Imran Khan said he would change the narrative of people by giving wrong color to cypher.

He held "Imran Khan obtained cypher from me on May 09 and later he said cypher has been misplaced when I asked him to return.

Imran Khan sowed the seed of hatred among the people against national security institutions. He waved a secret letter among the people to serve personal interest despite the fact he was forbidden to do so. Cypher was given wrong color of nexus between national security institutions and US deliberately.

Imran Khan to face trial in special court for hatching 'cypher conspiracy': Rana

Interior minister says Azam Khan's confessional statement is a charge sheet against former PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Rana Sanaulah Khan on Wednesday said that the cypher was still in the possession of Imran Khan Niazi, who would remain "criminal" until it was recovered from him.

The reported statement of Azam Khan, former principal secretary to the prime minister, confirmed that he had handed over the cypher to the then prime minister, who told him next day it was lost, the minister said while addressing the press conference, flanked by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Attaullah Tarar.



He said Azam Khan, in his statement, had clarified that when the then secretary foreign affairs brought the issue of cypher in his

Australian envoy calls on Info. Minister PML-N govt firmly believes in press freedom: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (Online): Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Neil Hawkins called on Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb in Islamabad on Wednesday and the two exchanged views on bilateral relations, economic stability and cooperation in the areas of film, art and culture.

Australian ambassador lauded the efforts of Pakistan government for stability of national economy and IMF agreement.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said Pakistan holds its relations

with Australia in high esteem.

She went on to say the government took immediate and concrete steps for national economy in line with the PM Shabbaz Sharif vision. Positive results have started coming in national economy due to these steps. She also appraised Australian ambassador about newly established Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

She said this council will ensure consistency and effective implementation of policies for economic recovery. SIFC will work on high forum of decision making.



QUETTA: Dean and director Brig. Prof. Dr. Wasim Khaliq briefed Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar during his visit to National University of Science & Technology (NUST) Balochistan Campus.

Visits NUST Balochistan campus: Governor calls for concentrating on learning modern skills along with scientific education

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has underlined the need to concentrate on learning modern skills besides scientific education.

The Governor believed that a skilled person can't be financially dependent on anyone, as such there is a dire need to make the technical institutions effective all over the province.

He was addressing the ceremony organized during his visit to the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) Balochistan campus here on Wednesday.

Also present on the occasion were the Dean and Director of NUST Balochistan campus, Brigadier Dr Waseem Khaliq and representatives of different

industries. While speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that the new generation would get help and guidance in the ever changing world by holding such programmes which otherwise are required to meet the modern day requirements and human needs.

He was of the view that as long as we take the aspect of creating partnership between the academia and market at national level serious as per our social needs, we can't join the race of real development.

The Governor said that such conscious efforts would help determine the new course of economic development at the time when we are confronting the deteriorated economic conditions, poverty, un-

12 killed in wall collapse during heavy rains in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (Online): At least 12 laborers were killed when a wall of under-construction bridge collapsed near GoIra Mor, Peshawar Road in Islamabad. Due to heavy rains a tragic incident has taken place near GoIra Mor Peshawar road claiming lives of 12 laborers.

According to police the rescue teams have pulled out 12 dead bodies with the help of machinery. Rescue operation is underway to rescue more persons likely to be trapped in rubble.

Wall is reported to be 100-foot wide and 11-foot high, under which the laborers were living in a tent at the construction site.

As per police Rescue teams have pulled out 4 laborers alive from debris of wall. According to PIMS hospital 12 bodies have been shifted in the hospital so far. 4 injured have also been brought in the hospital who are undergoing surgery.



QUETTA: Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman, Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

Establishing peace during Muharram collective obligation of Ulemas of all schools of thoughts & nation

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chairman Majlis-e-Ulema Pakistan (MUP) and Chairman central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad has emphasized that it is collective responsibility of religious leaders of all schools of thoughts and general public to maintain law and order in the country during Muharramul Haram.

He urged the religious scholars and general public to forge unity among their ranks and promote religious harmony to foil the nefarious designs of the enemies.

Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad was addressing the National Paigham-e-Aman Pakistan conference arranged by the MUP at

Quetta Press Club. The religious scholars from different schools of thoughts, social personalities and others participated in the conference.

Prominent among them were Dr. Raghif Hussain Naemi, Maulana Anwarul Haq Haqqani, Allama Syed Nasrullah Hussaini, Dr. Attaur Rehman, Syed Naeqebullah Agha, Allama Mukhtiar Hussain Habibi, Qari Mehruallah, Syed Haibullah and others.

Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad on the occasion said that it is compulsory for all of us to honour the sahaba karam (RA), the companions of Holy Prophet (SAW) having a firm belief in their virtues as well their good character.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Information Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat and CEO Google Umer Farooq signing MoU between Government of Balochistan and Google for digitalization of Information Department. Provincial Food Minister Zamarak Khan Achakzai and Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili are also present

FM highlights effectiveness of reforms, approaches in face of fast changing world

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday stressed upon adoption of new diplomatic approaches in the fast changing world and expressed the hope that the recently introduced change management reforms in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would bring further efficiency, accountability, agility and dynamism.

Addressing a ceremony at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the change management reforms initiatives taken during the last one year, the foreign minister said

that a total of 51 reform works were carried out at the ministry, among which 19 were fully implemented, three were partially completed and 29 initiatives were on the track of completion in the areas of automation and digitization processes, improvement in the diplomatic, administrative, financial and consular services abroad etc.

The foreign minister enumerated the significant achievements of the ministry at the global level under his stewardship, including Pakistan's removal from the FATF grey list, successful hosting of

COP27, effective role at the OIC Foreign Ministers Council, etc, besides endeavours to enhance the relationships and diplomatic outreach.

He said, "The world is changing at the lightening speed with technological advances shifting power dynamics while the interconnectedness has become the new norms on diplomatic fronts." To embrace the changes, after assuming the office, he said he embarked upon the reforms process to create a robust and agile ministry so that it could tackle any challenge that come their way.



LAHORE: Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board Zaka Ashraf with Pakistan's cricketer Wahab Riaz and cricket coach Waqar Younis unveil the Asia Cup 2023 trophy during a ceremony.

Pakistan lose three wickets in 131-run chase against Sri Lanka

Sports Desk
GALLE: Pakistan lost three wickets in a tricky 131-run chase on day four of the rain-hit opening Test on Wednesday, after spinners Noman Ali and Abrar Ahmed helped bowler Sri Lanka out for 279.

The tourists reached 48-3 at stumps in Galle, needing another 83 to take the lead in the two-match series. Imamul Haq, on 25, and skipper Babar Azam, on six, were at the crease.

Left-arm spinner Prabhath Jayasuriya struck twice with the wickets of Abdullah Shafique, caught behind for eight, and Shan Masood for seven.

Noman was sent in as nightwatchman but he was run out on night.

Sri Lanka's first-innings centurion Dhananjaya de Silva top-scored with 82 before the Pakistan bowlers combined to dismiss the hosts in the final session of the day.

Left-armed Ali and fellow spinner Ahmed took three wickets each and, along with Agha Salman's two wickets, struck regular blows.

Pacespearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi snared another two to help clean up the tail.

De Silva, who scored 122 in Sri Lanka's first-innings total of 312, built key partnerships including a 76-run seventh-wicket stand with Ramesh Mendis, who made 42.

Brother slaughters minor sisters 'under influence of PUBG'

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): In a sad and heart-wrenching incident, another family has been devastated by the curse of PUBG.

The killer of three innocent minor sisters turned out to be none other but the brother himself who confessed to the murder committed under the influence of the notorious online game PUBG, police said.

The boy, addicted to the popular online game PUBG (PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds) handed over the murder weapon to the police after proving the guilt.

In an initial statement recorded to the police, the boy said he was fond of playing the game that provoked him to commit the crime.

Reason for the murder

he told the police was the immense love of his parents with his slain sisters causing him an inferiority complex that led to take the lives of the sisters.

DPO Syed Hasnain Raza, talking to journalists said police succeeded to arrest the killer within 12 hours after the incident by using modern technology. He said the killer emerged from none other but the brother himself.

He said further that during the investigation they found a blood spot on the killer's hand prompting them to include him in the investigation who later confessed to the crime. According to police, the accused slaughtered the minors turn by turn with sharp-edged knives in a nearby vacant quarter being in use by the family.



QUETTA: Advocate Asadullah Lango meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Imran Khan to face trial in...

Continued from page 1

also part & parcel of the whole planning to use it (cypher) against the national interests for personal and political gains.

The interior minister said a case would be got registered against Imran Niazi and his accomplice Qureshi under the Official Secrets Act for making a classified document public. Eventually he would have to appear before the court as his case would be tried in the special court.

He said Azam Khan reportedly admitted that he had told Imran Niazi that using a classified document for political gains was a criminal act under the Official Secrets Act, but the then prime minister used the cypher to gain political mileage.

"That cypher is still in his custody and he will remain a criminal until he returns the classified document or it is recovered by an investigation agency from him," he added.

Citing that former United States president Donald Trump was being prosecuted on the same charges, he said Imran Niazi would be booked for violating the Official Secrets Act.

He said the May 9 incidents were also in continuity of the PTI chief's conspiracy against Pakistan and its institutions as it had been proved that the group led by him was involved in anti-state activities.

"This group has also connections outside the country," he said, adding it was now inevitable to punish them as per law.



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Sardar Babar Musakhail, Provincial Ministers, MPAs and CM's Coordinators meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo

Governor calls... Asia Cup 2023 to kick off in Multan on Aug 30; Pakistan-India clash on Sep 2

Sports Desk
LAHORE: The 2023 Asia Cup will kick off in Multan on August 30 — a day earlier than originally planned — with Pakistan clashing against Nepal in the six-nation tournament's opening match. The match in Multan will also mark the return of the Asia Cup to Pakistan after 15 years as it prepares to co-host the tournament with Sri Lanka on the basis of a hybrid model.

The model was approved for the tournament by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) last month after the Board of Control for Cricket in India refused to send its team to the neighbouring country for the tournament. The ACC and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced the schedule for the tournament today, according to which the 50-over event will be held from August 30 to September 17 with Pakistan staging four matches and Sri Lanka nine.

Four venues would be used for the 13-match tournament, a PCB press release said, adding that after the opening match in Multan, the remaining three matches in Pakistan would be held in Lahore.

Sri Lanka would use

Kandy for the three first-round matches and Colombo for the five Super-4 stage fixtures and the September 17 final, it said.

The first Pakistan-India clash is scheduled on September 2 in Kandy and if both teams advance to the Super-4 stage, their second faceoff will take place in Colombo on September 10.

Pakistan and India are seeded as A1 and A2, respectively, with Nepal as the third side in Group A, while Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are seeded as B1 and B2 in Group B, respectively, with Afghanistan as the third side.

If Nepal and Afghanistan progressed to the Super-4 stage from their respective groups, they would take the seeding of the sides that had dropped out in the first round, the press release said.

With the schedule's announcement, Zaka Ashraf, the chairman of the PCB's interim management committee, said: "As event hosts, the ACC's Asia Cup 2023 schedule announcement provides us absolute clarity on how we will plan and deliver this tournament so that it is enjoyable for the participants and the fans. Our arrangements and hospitality are second to none

and this will be a great opportunity to once again showcase this at an international level. "For Pakistan, it will be the homecoming of the ACC Asia Cup after 15 long years. Our fans have waited for this for a long time and, as such, we look forward to making it bigger and better so that the fans and participants can start counting down days leading up to the ICC Champions Trophy, which Pakistan will host in February 2025."

Schedule
Aug 30 — Pakistan v Nepal, Multan Cricket Stadium, Multan
Aug 31 — Bangladesh v Sri Lanka, Pallekele International Cricket Stadium, Kandy, Sri Lanka
Sep 2 — Pakistan v India, Pallekele International Cricket Stadium Kandy, Sri Lanka
Sep 3 — Bangladesh v Afghanistan, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
Sep 4 — India v Nepal, Pallekele International Cricket Stadium Kandy, Sri Lanka
Sep 5 — Afghanistan v Sri Lanka, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
Sep 6 — A1 v B2 (Super-4), Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
Sep 9 — B1 v B2 (Super-4), R. Premadasa International Cricket Stadium (RPICS), Colombo, Sri Lanka
Sep 10 — A1 v A2 (Super-4), RPICS, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Sep 12 — A2 v B1 (Super-4), RPICS, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Sep 14 — A1 v B1 (Super-4), RPICS, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Sep 15 — A2 v B2, (Super-4), RPICS, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Sep 17 — Final - 1 v 2, RPICS, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Sep 18 — Reserve day for the final



QUETTA: MNA Nawabzada Khalid Khan Magsi meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki. Provincial Minister Mobeen Khan Khilji and MPA Maulana Noor Muhammad are also present

PM reiterates unflinching support to Kashmiris on Day of Accession to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated that without the just and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, South Asia would never be able to attain durable peace and unlock its true development potential.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said the government and the people of Pakistan expressed their unflinching support and solidarity with the Kashmiris living in Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kash-

mir and elsewhere in the world on the Day of Accession to Pakistan.

The Day marked the adoption of a resolution by the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at a convention in Srinagar in 1947 that called for merging Kashmir with Pakistan, he added.

"We strongly condemn the relentless Indian persecution of Kashmiris & grave violation of human rights and call upon the UN and international community to ensure the implementation of the UN resolutions," he further added in a tweet.

Imran tenders apology in case of hurling threats against female judge

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI chairman has tendered apology before the court in the case of hurling threats against female judge Zeba Chaudhry. Chairman PTI appeared in the court of Judicial magistrate Malik Aman.

Case related to threatening female judge against chairman PTI came up for hearing in district and sessions court Islamabad. Chairman PTI appeared in the court of judicial magistrate Malik Aman.

On the occasion chairman PTI came on rostrum and said "I established political party for the sake of supremacy of justice 27 years back. I have not broken even a flower pot so far. I had uttered these words in a demonstration. I went to court of judge Zeba Chaudhry to apologize. I tender apology if any one has been hurt due to my statement."

Senator Talha unveils plan for reduction in next year's Hajj expenses

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood, on Wednesday revealed that next year's Hajj expenses could be significantly reduced by up to fifty per cent due to timely measures taken by the government.

Addressing the Pakistan Citizens Forum's event held to appreciate his unwavering efforts to provide ease and comfort to pilgrims throughout this spiritual journey here in Islamabad Club, the minister emphasized the importance of providing affordable Hajj during inflationary times, considering it a vital service to the pilgrims.

On this occasion, Senator Talha expressed his appreciation for the commendable services rendered by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and his Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, for their generous support in facilitating this year's Hajj arrangements.

The gathering was graced by esteemed dignitaries, including former Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs,

Murtaza Javed Abbasi, who served as the guest of honor. Professor Sajjad Qamar, President of Pakistan Citizens Forum, and Secretary Mohsin Khan Abbasi were also present at the occasion.

Senator Talha expressed his gratitude to the Pakistan Citizens Forum and stressed the significance of promoting positive messages within society.

He highlighted his relentless efforts during his two-month tenure to enhance facilities for the pilgrims.

The minister assured the return of surplus funds from pilgrims' expenses and announced the provision of free medicines worth millions of rupees through

pharmaceutical cooperation.

He credited the success of this year's Hajj to the exemplary arrangements made by the Saudi Arabian government, led by King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, which were widely appreciated.

Senator Talha's commitment to serving pilgrims was evident as he shared his experience of spending time with common pilgrims without any protocol, attentively addressing their complaints.

He reiterated that no free Hajj was granted to anyone, and measures were taken to put an end to the practice of officials mishandling pilgrims' funds.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani along with Senators offering Fateha on the sad demise of the son of Central Leader of Muslim League (PML-N) Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry at his residence

Hafiz Muhammad Abaseen tops Govt. schools of Quetta district in Matric Exam

Independent Report
QUETTA: The shining student of Government Sandeman Boys Higher Secondary School Hafiz Muhammad Abaseen Kakar topped the Matriculation examination in all government schools of Quetta district.

In the recently announced results of the annual Matriculation / Secondary School Certificate Examination, Muhammad Abaseen secured 1017 marks.

While Muhammad Abaseen was included in top 20 students obtaining remarkable marks, he remained third with difference of just two marks in all government schools of the province. He also had the pride of securing second position with negligible one number among all public and private schools of the Quetta district.

Muhammad Abaseen Kakar actually belongs to a middle-class family from Tehsil Barshore of Pishin district.

The modest Abaseen Kakar has been excelling in the curricula and healthy

extra-curricula activities making his moderate.

He gave credit of his successes to his parents and teachers, who guided him to excel in the studies



and otherwise.

He especially thanked his teachers including Mr. Irfan, Dr. Habibul Rehman, Mr. Abdul Malik, Mr. Zeeshan, Mr. Adnan and others for enabling him to make difference.

Abaseen Kakar was also indebted to the Principal and administration of Government Sandeman Boys Higher Secondary School Quetta for making the institution best particularly among the public sector ones in Balochistan.

تعداد	نام	وقت	مقام
01	آڈیٹر (BPS-14)	سورس 20 جولائی 2023 بروز جمعرات وقت 09:00 بجے	بیتا مقام پولیس ایسٹ بیٹا کوٹ اورنگستان روڈ کوٹ
02	غاکر (BPS-01)	سورس 20 جولائی 2023 بروز جمعرات وقت 10:00 بجے	بیتا مقام پولیس ایسٹ بیٹا کوٹ اورنگستان روڈ کوٹ
03	جیٹیکوٹ (BPS-11)	سورس 21 جولائی 2023 بروز جمعرات وقت 09:00 بجے	بیتا مقام پولیس ایسٹ بیٹا کوٹ اورنگستان روڈ کوٹ
04	جیٹیکوٹ (BPS-11)	سورس 24 جولائی 2023 بروز جمعرات وقت 09:00 بجے	بیتا مقام پولیس ایسٹ بیٹا کوٹ اورنگستان روڈ کوٹ

سورس ہدایت: 01- تمام امیدواران اپنے اہل گھر اور اہل شاخہ کا کارڈ ہارڈ کاپ فراہم کرنا اور تمام اہل شاخہ کے اہل شاخہ کے نام لکھ کر اپنے پاس رکھنا۔ 02- ہر سے آئے والے امیدواروں کو انٹرویو میں شرکت کرنے کی اجازت نہیں دی جائے گی۔ 03- انٹرویو کے حوالے سے تمام شرائط امیدواروں کو انٹرویو میں فراہم کیا جائے گا۔

انٹرنیٹ پر اسے لکھی آن لائن رجسٹریشن کے ذریعے کیا جائے گی۔

PRQ No. 162 / 19-07-2023

President for further strengthening economic, cultural ties with Jordan

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said that Pakistan wanted to further deepen its ties with Jordan in areas of trade, economy, culture and defense.

The president, talking to outgoing Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan Ambassador Ibrahim Yala Al Madani, who called on him, said that Pakistan enjoyed excellent fraternal relations with Jordan based on common culture and history.

He emphasized the need for enhancing cooperation with Jordan in the economic and commercial fields for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries.

He called for political, cultural and educational exchanges to bring the two brotherly countries further closer.

President Alvi appreciated Jordan's peace efforts and support to the Palestine issue through political and diplomatic means. He reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support to the people of Palestine for their inalienable right to self-determination.

Expressing deep concern over the rising incidents of Islamophobia, the president emphasized the need for taking effective measures by the international community to prevent such incidents. He stated that there was a growing need to promote interfaith harmony, tolerance and mutual respect for each other's religion. The president appreciated the efforts made by the outgoing ambassador for improving bilateral cooperation during his stay in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan, Ibrahim Yala Al Madani, call on President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

PM's Taskforce, diplomats visit Bhamala Stupa

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism, headed by its Chairman Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani along with diplomats Wednesday visited the historical Bhamala Stupa a Buddhist Site near Haripur to highlight Gandhara heritage and promote religious tourism in Pakistan.

Dr Ramesh Kumar with the status of Minister of State, has arranged a series of visits every Wednesday to promote sacred sites and monuments built during the Gandhara era.

Bhamala stupa and monastery is situated in the scenic valley of Khanpur at

the gateway of Khanpur dam. The visiting delegates comprised diplomats of various countries, Gandhara Heritage experts, other dignitaries and members of the media. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Ramesh Kumar said this series of visits is showing keen interest of diplomats and foreigners towards Gandhara heritage sites in Pakistan.

There is huge potential for Gandhara heritage in Pakistan, said Vankwani, calling upon the renowned hotel chains to show interest in opening their branches or portable hotels near popular scenic Gandhara Tourism points.

CBA and IPC partnered to promote multilateral trade & investment opportunities

ISLAMABAD (Online): In a recent development, CBA and IPC (International Parliamentarians Congress) have partnered to promote bilateral or multilateral trade and investment opportunities between the countries represented by the IPC.

This partnership is expected to bring a major impact in economic development and promoting social welfare in developing regions.

IPC is an international organization that aims to establish cooperation, synergy, and strategies across parliamentarians from different regions of the world

and work on promotion of world peace, prosperity trade, and development cooperation. CBA, on the other hand, is the largest digital distribution platform of the country that aims to promote micro-entrepreneurship, trading opportunities within & outside the country. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, the CEO of CBA, highlighted the company's commitment to develop a framework where IPC & CBA will work together to create trade opportunities in IPC members countries. He emphasized CBA's dedication to continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration to play a more significant role.

Traffic police arranges road safety workshop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Traffic Police Education Wing organized a one-day road safety workshop for the drivers of the COMSATS University Islamabad.

More than 15 Public Service Vehicles (PSV) drivers participated in the workshop, where they were educated about road safety and traffic laws. The drivers appreciated the initiative by the traffic police.

The staff of the Education Wing also provided awareness to the participants about the benefits of seat belt usage, the dangers of using mobile phones while driving, the hazards

of overspeeding, lane violations, overloading, and other traffic laws.

Chief Traffic Officer Dr Syed Mustafa Tanveer said that true humans care about their own and others' lives and property.

He said that it is the duty of the police to enforce the law and protect the lives of citizens on the road.

He urged citizens to demonstrate a responsible attitude, follow traffic laws, and educate others as well.

He asked to join hands with the police to reduce accidents and inform family members, children, and friends about traffic laws and road safety.



RAWALPINDE: Vehicles passing through rain water accumulated on road during torrential rain since last night.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf in a group photo with participants of the closing ceremony of Roundtable of Political Parties on Women Manifesto 2023 organized by WPC.

Women's political inclusion vital for stable democracy, proactive Parliament: Raja

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf on Wednesday said no society could develop without inclusion and active participation of women in all spheres of life.

The political inclusion of women was imperative for a stable democracy and proactive Parliament as those societies remained backward and underdeveloped where they were not encouraged and promoted, he said while addressing the closing ceremony of the two-day 'Roundtable of Political Parties on Women's Manifesto', organized by the Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) in collaboration with the UN Women.

The NA speaker said the Pakistani women were talented and taking active part in politics. The women parliamentarians had been on the forefront and proactive in the legislative process.

He said the Constitution discouraged gender-based discrimination. He also said that women empowerment should be central goal of manifestos of all political parties.

Raja Pervez said stable politics and a strong Parliament were interlinked with political empowerment of women. "Women comprise more than 50 percent of population and their representation in politics will strengthen the Parliament and democracy," he added.

He felicitated the organizers on holding a successful roundtable conference and appreciated the consensus evolved on its manifesto.

WPC Secretary Shahida Rehmani, in her remarks, said the Caucus had always been at the forefront to legislate for protection of fundamental women's rights.

She said the political participation of women was vital for the country's progress and development, and all political parties were in unison to represent women at every political forum.

Shahida Rehmani said empowerment of women and ensuring their participation in Next 16th National Assembly was essential for their economic and social empowerment.

Freeha Omar, UN Women Representative in Pakistan, said the political participation of women was pivotal for empowering them.

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CJIHC says: Policy being devised for early disposal of cases in courts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Aamer Farooq on Wednesday said that a policy was being introduced for early disposal of cases in the high court and lower courts.

He said that shifting of 'kachehri' to judicial complex G-11 was a milestone which would help to address the problems of lower courts.

He stated this during his visit to the press room of IHC along with Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, President Islamabad High Court Journalists Association (IHCA) Rizwan Qazi, Vice President Farah Mahjabeen, Secretary Hussain Ahmed Chaudhry, former president IHCA Asad Malik, Awais Yousafzai, Saqib Bashir,

former general secretary Fiaz Mehmood and others were also present on the occasion.

The chief justice said that we were considering setting up a judicial academy at the chief justice block of the old building of IHC. However, family courts would be set up in other parts of the building where recreational facilities would be ensured for the children to give them a pleasing environment beyond family conflicts.

The chief justice IHC also issued instructions regarding the construction of shades at the place dedicated to cameramen. Justice Tariq Mehmood on the occasion said that the media should focus on highlighting the problems of the public.



MNA Hamid Hameed calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad

NSFC-PSF invites joint proposals for research & development projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) have invited universities, research centres and institutions to submit joint proposals for Research and Development projects, as per a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between institutions.

According to an official of PSF, the call for Proposals for Joint Research and Development Projects with National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) is open in the priority areas including Green technologies (mainly focusing development of green sources of energy generation which may have industrial implications); Nanotechnology (based on the socioeconomic needs of Pak-China) and Computing sciences (Limited to Augmented/Virtual reality, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing).

About the guidelines for proposal submission, the official informed that

Chinese and Pakistani scientists should come to an agreement with each other using their own means of communications and jointly develop and complete their project proposal before submitting it to NSFC and PSF. NSFC and PSF do not match the collaborating partners.

Chinese or Pakistani Collaborator or partner should necessarily be identified in each submitted Joint Research Project Proposal submitted individually from any side without Chinese or Pakistani collaborator or partner will not be processed further.

Joint Research and Development Project must be basic or applied research with strong implications for the development of Industry, Technology, Process, Techniques, Prototype, Commercialization and Innovation, leading to socioeconomic uplift of both countries.

The joint research proposal which will be applied in nature will be financed on priority, the official added.



ISLAMABAD: Director AIOU Professor Dr. Amir Shah presenting the shield to DG National Police Bureau Dr. Ehsan Sadiq after the seminar.

HEC unveils graduate education policy for implementation fall 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan has unveiled its highly anticipated Graduate Education Policy 2023 (GEP-2023) which marks a crucial milestone for higher education institutions in Pakistan and is available at <https://www.hec.gov.pk/site/gep/>.

It is effective and applicable from Fall 2023 semester onwards, said a press release on Wednesday.

Drawing upon the Commission's extensive two-decade experience and feedback from academia, the new policy has been meticulously crafted to embody the core principles of university autonomy, flexibility, and quality assurance, while also upholding academic freedom, relevance, and originality.

One of the notable features of GEP-2023 is its liberal approach, which allows for intra-disciplinary admissions, enabling students to explore diverse academic fields within their chosen discipline. The policy recognises the value of both local and foreign expertise

by introducing external evaluation conducted by indigenous Professors alongside foreign evaluators. This inclusive approach aims to ensure a comprehensive assessment of academic standards.

Furthermore, the policy demonstrates its flexibility by introducing relaxation to the CGPA requirements for admission and offering a more dynamic assessment of the time duration for degree completion. It also streamlines the process for determining faculty relevance, and the requirements for HEC's NOC (No Objection Certificate) and approval to become a doctoral supervisor.

The policy provides clear guidelines and suggests mechanisms to strengthen the implementation of these principles at the institutional level, ensuring consistency and transparency.

GEP-2023 recognises the significance of a rigorous and comprehensive degree-obtaining process. It introduces detailed guidelines for conducting comprehensive examinations.

Medium to high level flooding in Rivers Jhelum, Chenab in next 24 hours

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that sharp peaks of medium to high level flood in River Jhelum (upstream Mangla) and medium to high level flood in River Chenab (Marala, Khanki & Qadirabad) including Nullahs of Rivers Ravi & Chenab and Hill torrents of DG Khan Division is likely in next 24 hours.

According to the daily FFC report on Wednesday, currently, there is no riverine flood situation and all major Rivers of Indus River System are flowing normally.

However, owing to very heavy rainfall (188 mm) in the twin cities of Islamabad-Rawalpindi high flood flows were generated in Lai Nullah. The water level has now started receding. Rawalpindi, District Administration and WASA with the help of

Rescue-1122 are ensuring all precautionary measures. The combined live storage of Tarbela, Chashma and Mangla is 9.135 MAF (67.95% of maximum live storage of 13.443 MAF) while this was 4.334 MAF last year on the same date. Yesterday's monsoon low over East Madiya Pradesh (India) has become insignificant, however, another fresh monsoon low has developed over Northwestern Bay of Bengal (India).

Westerly Wave's trough prevails over North-eastern parts of Afghanistan and adjoining areas with seasonal low lies over Northeastern Balochistan.

Owing to present meteorological conditions, moderate to strong moist currents from Bay of Bengal are penetrating into upper parts of Pakistan up to 7000 feet.

FPSC Chairman appointment welcomed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The appointment of Mr Shahid Ashraf Tarar as the new Chairman of the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) comes as a relief for the officers who had been patiently waiting for their long-standing promotion.

The promotion of officers in BPS-19 and above required to hold meeting of the CSB and deliberations on eligible candidates but the absence of the FPSC chairman brought the promotion process to a standstill, causing distress and helplessness among the officers.

The affected officers, some of whom have dedicated approximately 30 years of their lives to government service, had found themselves in a state of uncertainty. These officers had tirelessly devoted their youth, energy,

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Independent

Thursday July 20, 2023

Census & polls

As the nation begins to enter election mode, the rulers have made it clear that the next polls will be based on the 2017 census. While this decision has been decryd by some government allies, such as the MQM, the inconvenient truth is that this late in the day, the government has little choice — mainly because of its own lethargy — but to hold polls as per the 2017 numbers. Any other option may end up delaying elections, which is unacceptable.

The federal law minister announced on Monday that “if” the seventh census is not approved then constituencies will be drawn up on the basis of the previous head count’s figures. This is largely a foregone conclusion as the legal and constitutional process of notifying the latest census and delimiting new constituencies would clash with the electoral time line.

Some media reports on Tuesday indicated that the National Assembly could be dissolved early, though these were denied by the information minister. Regardless, elections would be due no later than November.

This means there is not enough time to notify the results, make the requisite constitutional amendment, and delimit new constituencies.

Independent observers also concur that polls will have to be held on the basis of the 2017 numbers. This is because even if the government notifies the 2023 results today, it will have to amend the Constitution under Article 51(3) and thereafter delimit new constituencies.

As mentioned, the government does not have the time to carry out these legal processes, while a caretaker set-up does not have the mandate to make constitutional amendments. Therefore, despite the reservations of the MQM, the fact is that there are few good options other than holding polls based on the 2017 numbers.

Of course, the rulers must shoulder the blame for this predicament. Apart from resource allocation, updated census numbers are essential for the democratic process, yet the multibillion-rupee exercise will be of no utility in the upcoming polls.

When provisional census numbers had been finalised two months ago, the government should have gone ahead and notified the results so that the legal process could have begun.

Perhaps the rulers feared they lacked the numbers in a rump parliament to make the requisite constitutional changes. Because of this mismanagement, voters in provinces where the population has grown will not get increased representation in parliament.

However, the fresh census controversy notwithstanding, under no circumstances should the polls be delayed any further. Already the Punjab and KP caretakers are operating beyond their constitutional tenures. This must not be replicated in Sindh, Balochistan and the centre. The only way out of the current quagmire is for free and fair polls to be held on time, bringing in a new dispensation with a fresh mandate to govern.

**Zahid Hussain**

Last week’s coordinated assault on an army garrison in Zhob was yet another grim reminder of the growing terrorist threat emanating from cross-border sanctuaries.

The highest single-day casualties suffered by the security forces in a long time shows that the militants are now well equipped and better trained. The high-profile attack was claimed by a faction of the outlawed TTP that seems to have now extended its operation from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Balochistan.

There has been a marked escalation in militant attacks targeting the security forces in the troubled region. Balochistan’s Zhob division that borders South Waziristan has become the

main centre of militant activities. This was the second attack on security forces in the area this month.

Earlier in the month, on July 2, militants raided three security check-posts on the main highway linking the region to KP. In another incident on the same day, security personnel were martyred in a gun battle with militants in Sui district.

It is evident that the return of Taliban rule in Afghanistan has given a huge impetus to militant groups operating from their sanctuaries across the border. There is little doubt that the current wave of militancy has its roots across the border. But it is also our disastrous appeasement policy in the past that is now coming back to haunt us.

Thousands of armed militants returned to their home in the former tribal districts as part of the so-called peace deal that the state made under pressure from the Taliban regime in Afghanistan last year. The deal allowed the TTP to regroup and revive their activities in the region from where they had been driven

out by military operations in 2016.

Most of the fighters are now back in their areas but their leadership is still operating from safe havens inside Afghanistan under the protection of the conservative regime. The country is now paying for the shameful surrender to the militants with the blood of its people.

Scores of Pakistani soldiers have been martyred in terrorist attacks in the last one year since the dubious peace deal struck with some factions of the TTP. After a wave of attacks in KP, the militants have now made Balochistan their new battleground.

It is certainly a matter of serious concern for the security agencies already confronting Baloch separatist militant groups in the province. Although TTP activities are largely confined to northern Balochistan areas in the predominantly Pakhtun belt, the group seems to have also made some inroads into Baloch areas.

What is most alarming is the reported tactical alliance between some Baloch separatist groups and the TTP. Some recent militant

attacks in predominantly Baloch areas claimed by Islamic groups having close links with the TTP is disturbing. The region has also been the centre of Baloch militancy. The unholy alliance has worsened the predicament of the security agencies in a mostly ungoverned region.

Recent militant attacks showed that both the groups are now equipped with the most modern weapons left by the American forces in Afghanistan. The long porous borders with Afghanistan as well as with Iran have allowed militants of both kinds to move freely. The border region has become a safe haven also for transnational militant groups.

Notwithstanding the Afghan Taliban administration’s denial, it is evident that the TTP militants are still being sheltered by the conservative Islamic regime. The easy availability of modern weaponry to these militant groups has made the situation extremely precarious.

Unfortunately, there has been a tangible toughening in Islamabad’s stance towards the Afghan Taliban administration after the lat-

est wave of militant attacks claimed by the outlawed TTP.

In a strongly worded statement, the military leadership warned the Afghan regime against providing shelter to the terrorist groups involved in attacks on Pakistani security agencies. “It is expected that the interim Afghan government would not allow the use of its soil to perpetrate terror against any country, in the real sense and in line with commitments made in the Doha agreement,” the ISPR said in a statement. “Such attacks are intolerable and would elicit an effective response from the security forces of Pakistan,” it asserted.

It is not for the first time that Pakistan has called upon the Afghan Taliban regime to act against militant sanctuaries, but to no avail. Instead, Afghan Taliban officials have strongly reacted to Pakistan’s warning. A Taliban spokesman said that it was mainly Pakistan’s responsibility to deal with the problem at home.

The war of words highlights that the simmering tensions between Paki-

stan and Afghanistan’s Taliban regime are fast spilling over into an open conflict. It is evident that Pakistan is losing its patience with the Afghan Taliban’s inaction. Pakistan now appears to be threatening to take its war against militancy across the border if the Afghan Taliban administration continues to provide sanctuary to the TTP and other outlawed groups that are involved in terrorist activities inside Pakistan.

Last year, Pakistan reportedly carried out some cross-border operations to take out militant leaders based in Afghanistan’s Kunar and Nangarhar provinces. But such actions are quite risky and could have serious consequences for regional peace. It will put to the test Pakistan’s resolve to fight terrorism in all its manifestations. Indeed, Pakistan needs to act to contain the rising militancy emanating from Afghanistan, but it also requires caution in undertaking any action that could lead to wider conflagration. Retaliatory cross-border raids could also result in the toughening of the Afghan Taliban administration. -- Courtesy Dawn

The cross-border challenge**The amazing world of discovery****Atta-ur-Rahman**

We live in an amazing world of discovery where truth is often stranger than fiction. Thanks to technological advancements, we do not need seeds any more to grow plants as plant tissue culture has transformed the way many types of plants may be grown. Other inventions are even more incredible: the blind can have their eyesight partly restored through a lollipop device placed on their tongue. Objects can be made to disappear to the naked eye when cloaked with a special sheath of metamaterials.

The ageing process can be slowed down, even reversed, using certain anti-ageing compounds such as resveratrol, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD), curcumin and metformin. New animal and plant species can be ‘created’ in the laboratory us-

ing gene editing technologies.

The advent of nanotechnology has created huge international waves in areas such as new materials, pharmaceuticals and electronics. Artificial intelligence coupled with quantum computing are on the verge of transforming civilization. Bio-saline agriculture is already allowing edible plants to grow on saline soils, and before long we may be able to develop varieties of wheat, rice, fruit and vegetables that can be grown with seawater, thereby permanently solving the issues of food security on our planet.

The combustion engine that we use in our cars and buses is taking its last breath as it is being replaced by electric vehicles running on lithium or sodium batteries, and before long our present vehicles will simply adorn museums and history books.

These incredible advances are no fairy tales. They are happening right now all around us, and those countries investing in research and development are progressing rapidly, leaving others lying in the dust. From precision farming and genetic engineering

to nanomaterials and medical innovations, we need to understand and appreciate the potential benefits, challenges and ethical considerations associated with these groundbreaking discoveries.

The realm of scientific discovery is indeed a constant source of awe and wonder, driving progress and shaping the future. Some of the most exciting new developments hold immense potential to revolutionize various aspects of our lives, from enhancing food production and sustainability to enabling breakthroughs in healthcare and creating cutting-edge technologies.

A McKinsey report forecasts a \$33 trillion impact of these new and emerging technologies, with artificial intelligence alone having a \$15.6 trillion dollar impact. If we in Pakistan can capture even 1.0 per cent of this potential, it can result in the enhancement of \$156 billion in our exports. It is for this reason that I am deeply involved in the establishment of centres of artificial intelligence across the country.

Three such centres have been established through our efforts in the Pakistan Austrian

Fachhochschule in Haripur, Hazara; the Pak University of Engineering and Emerging Technologies in Sambrial, Sialkot; and the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences at the University of Karachi, Karachi.

These centres will focus on the myriad applications of artificial intelligence in health, agriculture and industry. The feasibility of another mega project of Rs40 billion has been completed by the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications in Islamabad, and this should give a huge national boost to our expertise in this fast-emerging transformative field. These projects involve training in machine learning algorithms that combined with vast amounts of data enable computers to recognize patterns, make predictions, and learn from experience.

Deep learning models, inspired by the human brain’s neural networks, excel in image and speech recognition, natural language processing and autonomous systems. Robotics and automation technologies are indeed revolutionizing industries ranging from manufacturing and

healthcare to transportation and agriculture. Collaborative robots (cobots), exoskeletons and autonomous vehicles are transforming the way tasks are performed, increasing efficiency and reducing human error.

Let us consider the recent advances in the field of agriculture. The advent of precision farming techniques, such as GPS-guided equipment and remote sensing technologies, enables farmers to optimize resource allocation and enhance crop yields. Sensor-based systems, real-time data analytics, and machine learning algorithms enable farmers to make informed decisions about irrigation, use of fertilizers and pest control.

Genetic engineering allows scientists to develop crops with enhanced traits, such as increased yield, disease resistance and nutritional content. Biotechnology tools, such as CRISPR-Cas9, offer precise gene editing capabilities, thereby accelerating crop improvement efforts and reducing environmental impacts.

Gene editing technologies like CRISPR-Cas9 hold immense promise in agriculture and medicine for devel-

oping new high yielding crops as well as treating genetic disorders and diseases. Synthetic biology combines engineering principles with biological systems to create novel biological parts, devices, and systems for plant and animal life. The field offers possibilities for biofuels, bio-based materials and environmentally friendly manufacturing processes.

Let us now turn to new advances in material sciences. Nanomaterials possess unique properties at the nanoscale (a billionth of a millionth of a metre), enabling advancements in various fields, including electronics, energy storage, and medicine. Applications range from lightweight and flexible electronics to targeted drug delivery systems and efficient solar cells. Graphene, a single layer of carbon atoms, is about 200 times stronger than steel and it exhibits extraordinary mechanical, electrical, and thermal properties. Potential applications include ultrafast electronics, high-performance batteries and water purification systems. New materials can be combined with novel fabrication technologies to produce novel high-quality products. -- Courtesy TheNews

The strength within**Muhammad Mohsin Masood**

The resilience of people is awe-inspiring. In the darkest of crannies and nooks, the strength that is within us can lead to us to light. In individuals, that tiny flicker of light can give rise to unprecedented amounts of courage, energy, kindness and joy. In the lives of nations, the resilience of its peoples, if led through the halls of principle, can lead to tolerance, magnanimity, stability and democratic values.

Unfortunately, in Pakistan, we have an uncharitable tendency to discount much of the suffering and the long-term trauma that ordinary individual citizens face. It would be accurate to say that the most ordinary of people lead, in the most ordinary of circumstances, the most extraordinary of lives. It is certainly most extraordinary of them to face up to a barrage of challenges such as terrorism, poverty, the worsening political and economic stability, testing their resilience in everyday life.

One such challenge which silently gnaws at the heart of one in 10 menstruating women in the world is endometriosis. This disease which affects some 200 million women in the world literally eats into the very insides of a person and drains the physical and mental strength with which they face the world.

Endometriosis is a condition where tissue similar to that found in the lining of the womb grows

elsewhere in the body, such as on the ovaries and in the fallopian tubes. Symptoms can include lower abdomen or back pain, severe pain during periods, pain during intercourse, bowel and bladder symptoms, and fertility problems. The symptoms can vary for different women, with some more severely affected than others.

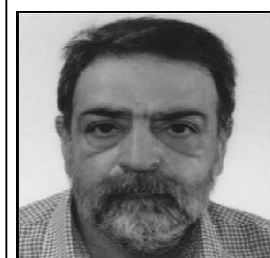
Endometriosis can have a significant impact on some women’s lives. It is a debilitating condition characterised primarily with intense pain with no cure. The level of pain can not only cause fainting in those living with endometriosis but also take a mental toll and can cause complete paralysis in social and domestic functioning. Yet, they are there, living, working, and existing with us in our homes, social spaces and workplaces.

The amount of energy that they expend on just functioning and adding to our productivity as a society is colossal. Endometriosis is not a rare disease in Pakistan, it is estimated that some 25 per cent of all laparoscopies done in the country find traces of endometriosis. A condition that has such a vast impact upon the lives of such a huge number of women needs to be addressed. Yet, this disease remains shrouded because many doctors are misinformed about the disease; then there is a major lack of awareness, funding, research into diagnosis coupled with the cultural silence and taboo around women’s bodies, menstrual cycles and health.

The resilience of patients of endometriosis is not only to be admired but should be taken as a source of inspiration to take action as a society and state which attempts to grant its citizens the rights with which they can en-

joy a safe, respectful and healthy life. Yes, Pakistan does not have an explicit right to health enshrined in the Constitution. We do, however, have a jurisprudence developed around Articles 9 and 14 of the Constitution to guarantee the right to healthcare to ensure the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The Supreme Court has recently stressed on the availability of access to all kinds of medical services to everyone without discrimination. Endometriosis and its affectees on the other hand remain under the radar and the shroud of societal invisibility not only denies them proper healthcare but also recognition of their pain. However, the state is obligated under the dictates of its moral and political authority to grant them not only that recognition but also cater to and facilitate them with its resources.

It is partly because of this, that the US Congress passed a law to get funding into endometriosis research programmes. There is also the Endometriosis CARE Act of 2022 introduced in the Congress attempting to get more funding and raise awareness and education with respect to endometriosis. Considering that many are unaware of endometriosis, such targeted legislation is a good starting point. In Pakistan, we recently had the 2020 Rights of Persons with Disability Act; however, endometriosis is not considered a disability to enable women to get benefit of the legislation. What is needed is research backed by legislation attempting to understand not only the disease but also to counter the multidimensional barricades that such women face to properly realise their right to health in combatting this disease. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Mahir Ali**

The headlines from the Nato summit that concluded a week ago in the Lithuanian capital mainly reflected the prospect of Swedish membership and, more dramatically, the failure to invite Ukraine into the fold. The petulant reaction from Volodymyr Zelensky suggested he was counting on not an immediate induction but at least some kind of timetable.

Leading figures from the British and US administrations indicated that they expected a bit more gratitude from Kyiv. There is some consternation among Western political-military elites that whenever Zelensky thanks his Western backers for their latest shipment — or promise — of lethal weaponry, he asks for more.

For obvious reasons, there was never any question of Ukraine entering the fold in the middle of a war, but there was the possibility of announcing that it would be able to join right after it ended. That, in turn, could have reduced the likelihood of Vladimir Putin agreeing under any circumstances to any kind of truce.

Mind you, the Russian president has never so much as hinted at the possibility of a ceasefire, and his imperialist impulses appear undamaged in the wake of the Wagner mutiny and the consequent impression of a weaker Kremlin. But then, the same goes for the other side.

Even before Joe Biden held out the promise of cluster bombs — a particularly pernicious weapon banned by several Nato members —

Masters of war

the response to Russia’s invasion has involved pumping weapons into Ukraine, mainly from the US but also from others. Germany advanced rapidly from helmets to tanks, and one of the less-publicised achievements of the Vilnius summit was an agreement on training Ukrainian pilots to fly F-16s.

Those warplanes are among the commitments Recep Tayyip Erdogan was seeking for his own regime, alongside Stockholm’s willingness to turn its back on the Kurds who have sought refuge in Sweden, as the price for agreeing to Swedish membership of Nato. He also wanted the resumption of talks on Turkey joining the EU, even though there is no short-term prospect of accession.

Biden has also indicated that the quality of Ukrainian democracy remains a concern, but that’s hardly bothered Nato in the past. Military coups in Turkey and Greece did not affect their status, and questions could justifiably be raised about the quality of purported democracy in countries such as Hungary and Poland, not to mention the US itself.

Following the birth of Nato in the aftermath of World War II, its first secretary general, Britain’s Lord Ismay — who was born in India, and served as military secretary to colonial viceroy Lord Willingdon — said that the military alliance was intended to keep “the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down”. However, as Grey Anderson and Thomas Meaney pointed out in a New York Times column, Nato “was never primarily concerned with aggregating military power”, as the divisions it fielded would never have been enough to repel a Soviet ground invasion (which, one might add, was never contemplated in Moscow). “Rather, it set out to bind western Europe to a far vaster project of a US-led world order, in which Ameri-

can protection served as a lever to obtain concessions on other issues, like trade and monetary policy.”

“In that mission,” they add, “it has proved remarkably successful.” There is talk now of a ‘global Nato’, and putative ‘Indo-Pacific 4’ partners — Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand — were all present at Vilnius, as they were at Madrid last year. The potential adversary, in this case, is China.

No challenge to American hegemony can be tolerated, and Nato has never been more than an instrument for that mindset, primarily in Europe — including its bombardment of the Balkans in the 1990s — but also in territories from Afghanistan to Libya. It leaves a trail of mass destruction wherever it goes, and the project of making the world safe for capitalism has not been a particular success outside Europe.

None of the above is intended to suggest that Russia or China is on the right track. The monumental folly of invading Ukraine will haunt Russia long after Putin perishes, by natural causes or otherwise, and Xi Jinping’s ‘Chinese dream’ could turn out to be a nightmare for plenty of less powerful nations, but also for China itself. Yet the prospect of entrenching US neo-imperialism more widely is much like adding fossil fuel to the fire while the world experiences some of its hottest days in thousands of years.

Anthropogenic climate change has brought humanity to the brink of self-annihilation. Egged on by the masters of war — excoriated by Bob Dylan 60 years ago shortly after Dwight Eisenhower’s warning against the military-industrial complex, which remains dedicated to profiting from the economies of conflict — misanthropic militarism could push us over the cliff. -- Courtesy Dawn

Govt sends Pakistanis abroad for employment after signing MoUs with foreign countries: Sajid Tori

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Sajid Husain Tori here Wednesday said the government was sending Pakistanis abroad for employment after signing proper MoUs and agreements with foreign countries to ensure their jobs security and dignified stay there.

“People are not going by themselves but rather being sent abroad under proper MoUs and agreements signed with 16 different countries to ensure their jobs security and dignified stay in these states,” he said.

The federal minister said that up till now, MoUs were signed with about 16 countries for abroad employment to Pakistanis and some more agreements were under consideration.

“Without quality education and vocational training to youth, the country’s development seemed difficult and collective efforts were required to promote technical education in all areas of Pakistan,” he said.

He expressed these views during separate meetings of officers and focal persons at the regional office of the Overseas Pakistan Foundation (OPF), Peshawar.

The Minister said that under proper agreements and MoUs, the skilled and semi-skilled workforce of Pakistan were being sent to different countries for employment to earn valuable foreign exchange for the country.

“People are not going by themselves but rather being sent abroad under proper MoUs and agreements signed with 16 different countries to ensure their jobs security and dignified stay in these states,” he said.

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“Without quality education and vocational training to youth, the country’s development seemed difficult and collective efforts were required to promote technical education in all areas of Pakistan,” he said.



PESHAWAR: A delegation of public representatives of District Khyber Tehsil Bara meting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali.



PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis & HRD, Sajid Hussain Tori chairing a meeting at OPF Regional Office.

Special medical facilities to be provided to participants of Muharram processions

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Dr Javed Akram on Wednesday directed to provide the best medical facilities to participants of the processions during Muharram-ul-Haram.

including medical, nursing, paramedical and support staff will perform 24-hour duties. He said that during Muharram, security staff would perform 24-hour duties in government teaching hospitals.

Reference against Memon, others adjourned till Aug 4

KARACHI (APP): The Accountability Court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing of a reference against Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon and others till August 4.

CM directs Admin to immediately complete rainwater drainage operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday directed the authorities concerned with the district administration to utilize all available resources and immediately complete the rainwater drainage operation.

China Window can help promote Pak-Iran people to people ties: Iranian Consul

PESHAWAR (APP): Iranian Consul General in Peshawar, Ali Banafshekhan, Wednesday said the China’s cultural center set up in Peshawar could play an effective role in promoting people-to-people relations between Pakistan and Iran, besides its main objective of further strengthening Pak-China friendship.

Mayor Karachi says: Records of Land dept being computerized

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that all the records of the Land Department are being computerized where the citizens will be provided with a one-window facility for their land-related matters including ownership, transfer and lease of land in Karachi as all matters are being made transparent and improved so that no one complains in this regard.

IG police pins badges to promoted officials

FAISALABAD (APP): Inspector General Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar visited on Wednesday and pinned badges to promoted officials at the Police Lines.

CS orders intensifying action against fake pesticides

LAHORE (APP): Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman on Wednesday directed the authorities to intensify the crackdown on spurious pesticides and constitute special squads comprising officials of agriculture department for checking in the field. He issued this directive while presiding over a meeting to review cotton production targets, here at the Civil Secretariat.

PPP leaders capable to run country’s affairs in better way: Inqilabi

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Secretary Information Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter Gohar Inqilabi expressed optimism to win the next general elections.

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10 killed, 1160 injured in 1106 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least ten persons were killed and 1160 injured in 1106 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours.

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Seven proclaimed offenders arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested seven pro-claimed offenders from different areas during a crackdown here on Wednesday.

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Hearing of petition filed by Pervez against grant of his physical remand adjourned

LAHORE (Online): Without proceeding further, Lahore High Court (LHC) has adjourned till August 12 hearing of the petition against decision regarding physical remand of former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Pervez Elahi.

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PESHAWAR: A girl lighting candles in imam bargah on the eve of start Muharram ul Haram.

Seminar highlights family planning from perspective of Islam

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): District Welfare Department in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) organized a seminar to highlight the importance of family planning from the perspective of Islam.

IG police pins badges to promoted officials

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Kashmir Accession Day: The Day of Kashmiris’ resolve to destine with Pakistan

MIRPUR (APP): The chivalrous people of Jammu and Kashmir State, dwelling either side of the Line of Control and rest of the world, marked the 76th Kashmiris’ Accession-to-Pakistan Day with a resolve to attach their final destiny with Pakistan to transform Quaid-e-Azam’s vision into reality.

(later the founder President of Azad Jammu Kashmir) chaired by the veteran leader, Ch. Hamidullah Khan because the apex leader, Quaid-e-Millat Ch. Ghulam Abbas was put behind the bars by Han Singh for voicing the will of the people against the Dogra regime. The resolution of the State’s accession to Pakistan was presented in the presence of 59 bold and vibrant leaders.

gratulate him from the core of our hearts with mammoth delight and soul satisfaction on the auspicious occasion of the establishment of Pakistan.”

The day recollects the resolve by the people of Jammu and Kashmir asking India to bow before their acknowledged aspires for exercising their birth right of self-determination to save the South Asia region from a catastrophic peril.

As is indexed in the folio of the history, India is fully aware of the fact that not a single Kashmiri shall vote for New Delhi and that-is-why the perfidious Indians, steering the affairs—are evading the UN resolutions with sham excuses — one-way or the other.

It is pertinent to note that the people of Jammu Kashmir launched struggle for freedom under the spirit of the said resolution for the liberation of their motherland from the clutches of tyrannical dogra rule and later from the illegal and forcible occupation of Indian imperialism.

This freedom struggle of Kashmiris is continuing unabated since over last six decades. However since over last 33 years, the liberation movement has attained momentum after the people of Indian held Jammu Kashmir stood up launching their indigenous struggle against the long Indian subjugation.

The petitioner requested the court to nullify the decision of granting physical remand by sessions court.



FAISALABAD: A view of the closed shops and Markets in Kacheri Bazaar due to security measurements because of Shiite Muslims Rituals in the month of Muharram-ul-Haram in City.

ADB maintains growth forecast for Asia and the Pacific at 4.8%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is maintaining its growth outlook for developing economies in Asia and the Pacific at 4.8 percent this year, as robust domestic demand continues to support the region's recovery.

Inflation is expected to continue falling, approaching pre-pandemic levels as fuel and food prices decline. According to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) for July 2023 released by the ADB on Wednesday, growth in Pakistan in FY2023 (ended

30 June 2023) was weighed down by tighter monetary and fiscal policies to safeguard macroeconomic stability, pervasive inflation, and significant damage from flooding. The ADO April 2023 projection for Pakistan in FY2024 assumes that the government will continue reform as recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under a new policy-support program approved on July 12. Inflation in developing Asia is forecast at 3.6 percent this year, compared with April

forecast of 4.2 percent. The inflation outlook for 2024, meanwhile, is raised to 3.4 percent from an earlier estimate of 3.3 percent, it added. The reopening of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is bolstering the region's growth. The PRC's economy is projected to expand 5.0 percent this year, unchanged from the April forecast, amid strong domestic demand in the services sector. However, demand for developing Asia's exports of electronics and other manufactured goods is

slowing, as monetary tightening drags on economic activity in major advanced economies. The region's growth forecast for next year is marginally revised down to 4.7 percent from 4.8 percent estimate in April. "Asia and the Pacific continue to recover from the pandemic at a steady pace," said ADB Chief Economist Albert Park. "Domestic demand and services activity are driving growth, while many economies are also benefiting from a strong recovery in tourism."



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to review the progress regarding the ongoing SOE reforms.



A Delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) led by Country Director Mr. Young Ye, called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, at Finance Division, Islamabad

No additional tax being imposed on agriculture sector income: Bilal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani on Wednesday categorically said that the government had no plan to impose additional tax on income of agriculture sector.

Addressing a news conference here, he said it was unfortunate that those who pushed the country to the verge of default were now attempting to dent the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme. He expressed firm resolve that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) would continue to take the country's journey towards economic stability and progress forward after coming into power in the next general elections.

He mentioned that the government had successfully entered into a nine-month Stand-By-Agreement (SBA) with IMF, which was the result of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's dedicated efforts that received overwhelming support from the entire nation. One significant indicator of the country's economic growth was observed on July 3 when the Pakistan stock exchange experienced a remarkable increase of 2446 points, with the index surpassing the 45,000 mark. This positive development was well-received by the business and trading communities, signifying their confidence in the government's economic policies, he added.

Kayani highlighted that Fitch, a renowned credit rating agency, also improved Pakistan's rating from minus 'CCC' to '+CCC' further bolstering the nation's economic position. Acknowledging the concerns surrounding loans acquired from the IMF, the Prime Minister himself acknowledged the necessity of such measures for Pakistan's economic well-being. As a result, the country's foreign reserves increased, and exchange rate stability has been achieved, effectively eliminating the threats of default. In addition to the assistance of around \$4.2 billion from the IMF, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), China also recently rolled over a loan of \$600 million.

SBP designates domestic systemically important banks for 2023

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan on Wednesday announced the Domestic Systemically Important Banks for the year 2023 under D-SIBs framework aimed at further strengthening risk management capacities and resilience against shocks. According to a statement issued here, the central bank has designated National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), Habib Bank Limited (HBL) and United Bank Limited (UBL) as D-SIBs for the year 2023 after carrying out the annual assessment based on banks' financials as of December 31, 2022 in line with D-SIBs framework. In addition to the implementation of the enhanced supervisory requirements, the designated banks have to follow additional Common Equity Tier-1 (CET-1) capital requirements according to the specified bucket.

The NBP has been assigned bucket D with 2.5 percent additional CET-1 requirement, the HBL has been placed in bucket C with 1.5 percent additional CET-1 requirement and UBL in bucket A with 0.5 percent additional CET-1 requirement. The enhanced requirements aim to further strengthen the resilience of the systemically important banks against shocks and augment their risk management capacities, the SBP spokesperson informed. Besides, branches of Global-Systemically Important Banks (G-SIBs) operating in Pakistan would also be required to hold additional CET-1 capital against their risk-weighted assets in Pakistan at the rate as applicable on the respective principal G-SIB, it added. D-SIBs Framework notified in April 2018 by SBP is consistent with international standards.

PM directs for swift reforms in loss-making state-owned enterprises

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed the relevant authorities to introduce reforms on priority basis in the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) inflicting loss to the national exchequer. The prime minister, who chaired a meeting to review the reforms in the SOEs, instructed to ensure the transparency in the process of outsourcing the services as well as public-private partnership. He said the government would ensure that the caretaker government carried forward

the policies of the national interest to achieve consistent progress. The prime minister said the government was taking all-out measures to uplift the working of institutions at par with international standards and provide the best facilities to the masses. In the briefing, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was told that the reforms process of the SOEs was going on swiftly. It was told that government would ensure the inclusion of experts in the boards of the SOEs to establish modern systems and provide better facilities.

The prime minister was briefed on the performance indicators of the institutions as well as the corporations and the ongoing reforms process there. Federal ministers Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Syed Naveed Qamar, Makhdoom Murtaza Mahmood, Engineer Khurram Dastgir, Khawaja Saad Rafiq, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Advisor Ahad Cheema and special assistants to PM Jahanzeb Khan and Tariq Bajwa, and senior officers attended the meeting.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia visits SCCI

SIKALOT (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia Atif Sharif on Wednesday visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). During the meeting, VP SCCI Amer Majeed Sheikh emphasized the need to improve the current trade volume between the two countries. The meeting was aimed to strengthen bilateral trade relations and explore business opportunities. The vice president shared the potential of "Made in Sialkot" products in the Ethiopian market as well as ways to enhance trade and economic cooperation. Ambassador Sharif endorsed the exceptional quality, craftsmanship, and competitive pricing of Sialkot's products, emphasizing their potential in the Ethiopian market.

PTCL group posts 26.8% revenue growth in 6 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) revenue has jumped to Rs 90.9 billion posting a growth of 26.8 per cent during the first six months of the current year compared to the corresponding period. The financial results for six months were announced during the Board of Directors' meeting held in Islamabad here on Wednesday, said a news release. Throughout the first half of 2023, PTCL Group has sustained its momentum, further solidifying its position as the leading integrated telecom service provider in Pakistan. "This substantial increase in revenue is primarily attributed to the exceptional performance across multiple segments, including fixed broadband, mobile data, business solutions and banking services."

PTCL achieved 17.2 per cent revenue growth over the same period last year in the fixed broadband business. The Company further strengthened its flagship FTTH brand, "Flash Fiber" by achieving significant net subscriber additions through exceptional customer experiences and aggressive expansion of the fiber network across the country which played a vital role in achieving a significant increase in FTTH revenue by 106.5 per cent. IPTV segment also showed a 5.8 per cent revenue growth Year-on-Year basis (YoY). Voice and wireless revenue streams continue the declining trajectory as they are impacted by OTT services and tough competition from cellular operators. PTCL's enterprise business grew by 21.1 per cent as compared to last year.



Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Economy and Energy, Bilal Azhar Kayani addressing a press conference in Islamabad

Decision for charging add tax on POL products, property tax and fertilizer

LAHORE (Online): Federal Government has prepared a plan to collect additional tax of RS 254 billion. According to documents, the government has assured IMF to raise the petroleum levy 60 per cent. The average rate of levy will remain RS 55 per liter during the financial year 2023-24. Additional RS 79 billion will be received in the petroleum levy. On the other hand, collection of additional RS 30 billion from business income and salaried class is also part of the plan. 5 percent tax be collected by abolishing the tax exemption on fertilizer. Additional revenue of

RS 34 billion will be obtained in the form of tax on fertilizer. According to documents, unregistered business will get RS 23 billion from additional GST on supplies. RS 15 billion revenue will be obtained by increasing the advanced tax on builders and developers under the plan. RS 19 billion will be obtained by imposing 1 percent tax on property value of non-filers. Tax revenue of RS 46 billion will accrue by this step. According to documents, the property tax on sale of immovable property has been increased from 2 to 3 percent.

Gold rates increase Rs 5,400

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 5,400 and was sold at Rs 226,400 on Wednesday against its sale at Rs 221,000 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs4,630 to Rs 194,102 from Rs 189,472 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 177,926 from Rs 173,683, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola increased by Rs 250 to close at Rs 2900 and 10-gram silver also rose by Rs 214.34 to close at Rs 2486.28.

Rupee gains 76 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday gained 76 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading as it closed at Rs283.80 against the previous day's closing of Rs283.04. However, according to Rs283.04 the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs286 and Rs290 respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 19 paise to close at Rs 318.55 against the last day's

Pakistan earns \$2,369m from IT services' export in 11 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US\$ 2,369.110 million by providing different Information Technology (IT) services to various countries during the first eleven months of the fiscal year 2022-23. This shows a nominal decline of 0.59 percent as compared to US\$ 2,383.140 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding months of the fiscal year 2021-22, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During July-May (2022-23), the export of computer services declined by 0.16 percent as it went down from US\$ 1,913.360 million last fiscal year to

US\$ 1,910.39 million this year. Among the computer services, the exports of software consultancy services witnessed a decrease of 2.38 percent, from US\$ 715.743 million to US\$ 698.737 million while the exports of hardware consultancy services rose by 114.50 percent from US\$ 2.448 million to US\$ 5.251 million. The export and import of computer software-related services surged by 5.47 percent, from US\$ 512.167 million to US\$ 540.169 million whereas the exports of repair and maintenance services increased to US\$ 2.822 million from US\$ 1.435 million.

SM Tanveer chairs 123rd PSIC board meeting

Independent Report LAHORE: A caretaker Provincial Minister for Industry and Commerce SM Tanveer chaired the 123rd Board of Directors (BoD) meeting of Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) to discuss 14 agenda items here on Wednesday. The BoD approved the PSIC budget of Rs 5.1 billion for the financial year 2023-24, besides taking important decisions to expedite industrialisation. It was decided to give a final chance to those who have not yet established industries on vacant plots in industrial estates. The plot owner would have to fulfill obligations in the first month, submit a plan within three months, and start construction within the following three months. The process of setting up industries on vacant plots would have to be completed within one and a half years. Those

who fail to establish industries within the stipulated time would have their plots canceled. The board also reviewed the auction policy for plots and approved an honorarium of Rs 15,000 for board members at each meeting. Furthermore, the revised plan for the Taxila Small Industrial Estate and the approved Employees' Provident Fund Rules for PSIC employees were also passed. Addressing the meeting, he emphasized that the government aims to achieve 100 percent colonization of industrial estates. Therefore, all necessary steps would be taken to expedite the process of colonization. He directed that all boards of management for industrial estates should be completed according to policy guidelines. With the acceleration of industrialization, new employment opportunities would also be created.

PSX gains 85.77 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Wednesday gained 85.77 points, a positive change of 0.19 percent, closing at 45,095.11 points against 45,009.34 points the previous trading day. A total of 245,453,654 shares were traded during the day as compared to 254,960,671 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 9,402 billion against Rs 7,322 billion on the last trading day. As many as 319 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 96 of them recorded gains and 197 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 26 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 18,495,834 shares at Rs 1.31 per share; TLP Properties with 10,309,470 shares at Rs 13.22 per share and Pak Petroleum with 8,961,317 shares at Rs 68.66 per share.

FESCO Chief says: Complaints regarding new connections, defective meters being resolved on priority

FAISALABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Engineer Bashir Ahmed said that the complaints relating to new electricity connections and replacement of defective meters were being resolved on top priority basis. Addressing an e-court at FESCO Headquarters here on Wednesday, he said that FESCO had set its priorities to provide quality service to its consumers by redressing their electricity related complaints on urgent basis. In this connection, all available resources were being utilized; he said and added that the consumers could lodge their complaints by sitting at their homes through FESCO helpline 118 or sending SMS message on 8118 round the clock. He said that FESCO

was regularly arranging open courts and now these courts are being organized online to facilitate the consumers further and saving their precious time which they had to spend for visiting FESCO Headquarter to participate in the open court. He added that FESCO has created close liaison among company employees and its consumers so that uninterrupted power supply could be ensured by redressing genuine problems of the consumers without any delay. He said that FESCO had also launched a vigorous campaign against power pilferage. In this connection, FESCO teams were regularly patrolling on electricity lines in addition to ensuring surprise checking of electricity supply meters. However, without public cooperation.



SIKALOT: The farmer family is cultivating the rice crop in the fields in a traditional way.

Turkiye, Qatar to enhance bilateral relations after Erdogan visit

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: Turkiye and Qatar agreed to further boost bilateral ties in various fields, according to a joint statement issued after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to the Gulf country.

"On the basis of our strategic relations and bilateral cooperation in the political, diplomatic, economic and commercial fields, and in line with the directives of the wise leaders of the two countries, we are determined to continue our joint efforts to coordinate in various fields to ensure the continuity of the strengthening of bilateral relations for the benefit of the two brotherly countries and peoples."

The Turkish and Qatari foreign ministers signed the declaration during Erdogan's visit to Qatar,

marking a half-century since the establishment of diplomatic ties.

"We are pleased to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Turkiye and the State of Qatar in 2023," it said.

"Turkiye-Qatar relations have undergone a qualitative transformation since (their) establishment in 1973 until (they) reached the stage of strategic partnership." The declaration also stressed that Turkiye-Qatar relations reflect "deep-rooted" historical ties built on political and social foundations.

"The current strategic partnership between the Republic of Turkiye and the State of Qatar is fruitful at all levels, and the two countries have similar approaches on most regional and international is-



Australian sailor Timothy Speaks Shaddock, 54, who went adrift with his dog Bella over two months speaks during a welcoming ceremony in his honor after being rescued by a Mexican tuna trawler, in Manzanillo, Mexico.

An American economist is getting a top EU job. France's Macron isn't happy about it

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: With French President Emmanuel Macron insisting the European Union needs more strategic independence, he seemed decidedly piqued on Tuesday over the EU head office's plans to hire an American expert as its chief competition economist.

"Is there really no great European researcher with academic qualifications that could do this job?" Macron asked at a summit of EU leaders with their Latin American counterparts.

In a bloc of some 450 million people, "is there no one in the 27 member states that has a researcher good enough to advise the (European) Commission? That is a real question mark," Macron said.

The EU's executive commission announced last week that it had appointed

Yale economics professor Fiona Scott Morton as chief competition economist in its department tasked with ensuring that "all companies compete equally and fairly on their merits within the single market, to the benefit of consumers, businesses and the European economy as a whole."

Macron insisted that he has nothing against Scott Morton herself, an economist with multiple diplomas from elite schools. But the French leader demanded answers from the commission and suggested that hiring a non-EU citizen to such a senior job should not be allowed under EU statutes. Some other politicians and EU lawmakers — mainly French — have also voiced their complaints, although neither Macron nor members of the European Parliament questioned Scott Morton's qualifications for the job.

US says Ukraine has significant combat power not yet committed to the war

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Ukrainian forces have a "significant amount of combat power" that hasn't yet been committed to the war, the top U.S. military officer said Tuesday, saying Kyiv is conserving some of its tactical effort while troops slowly work their way through deadly Russian minefields.

Speaking to reporters after defense leaders from around the world met to discuss Ukraine's military needs, Army Gen. Mark Milley was asked about the slow pace of Ukraine's offensive to take back territory seized by Russia. He said Ukraine will decide when to use the combat power and complex training the U.S. and allies have provided.

Indian opposition parties form 'INDIA' alliance, Modi calls them opportunists

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: More than two dozen Indian opposition parties said on Tuesday that they had formed an alliance called "INDIA" to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in parliamentary elections next year.

The alliance said in a statement that the BJP was assaulting the character of the republic and they pledged to "safeguard the idea of India as enshrined in the Constitution."

In the first indication of a common political and economic policy, the alliance said it would focus on fighting rising prices and unemployment.

Naming the alliance INDIA is seen as an attempt to challenge the BJP's nationalist platform in elections due by May 2024.

Modi and BJP criticised the alliance mem-

bers as opportunists and the corrupt who defamed India globally but were now trying to save their existence and their families.

Malikarjun Kharge, president of the main opposition Congress party, said INDIA stood for "Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance."

"The main aim is to stand together to safeguard democracy and the constitution," Kharge told reporters at the end of a two-day meeting of 26 opposition parties in Bengaluru.

The meeting was their second in a month to build a platform ahead of elections, which BJP remains the favourite to win.

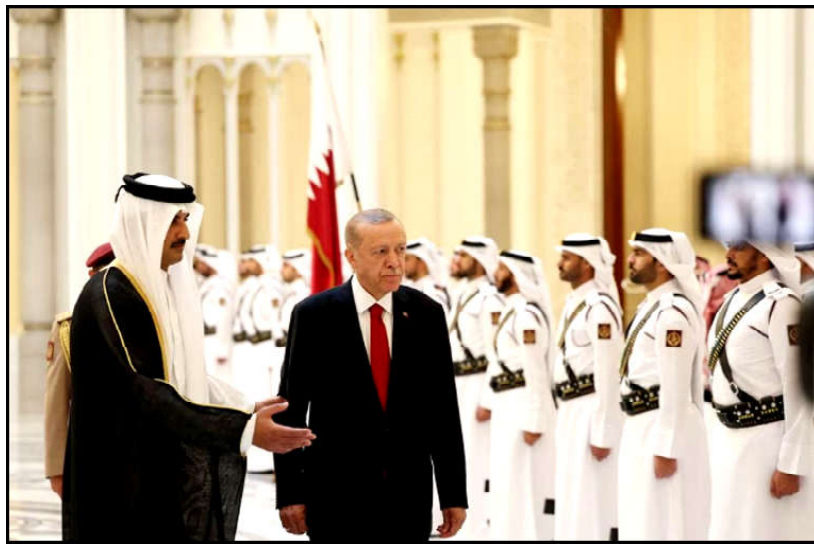
The parties, many of which are regional rivals and have been splintered at the national level, account for less than half the 301 seats BJP has in the 542-member lower house of parliament.

Chaos as U.S. soldier Travis King bolted into North Korea - witness

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: American and South Korean guards shouted "get him" as they scrambled unsuccessfully to stop U.S. Army soldier Travis King from sprinting into North Korea, a New Zealand woman who was on the same tour to the border area said on Wednesday.

"It all happened pretty quickly," said Sarah Leslie, who was in the Joint Security Area (JSA) of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) with some 40 other tourists who were walking around and taking photos in the moments before King made a mad dash to nuclear-armed and reclusive North Korea.

The group had just left one of the iconic blue buildings that straddles the border between the two Koreas and is used for negotiations, when King suddenly ran between the structures toward the North, she said.



Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani attend a welcoming ceremony in Doha, Qatar.

Russia strikes critical port facilities in Odesa after Kremlin halts grain deal

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russia unleashed intense drone and missile attacks overnight Wednesday, damaging critical port infrastructure in southern Ukraine, including grain and oil terminals, and wounding at least 12 people, officials said.

The bombardment crippled significant parts of export facilities in Odesa and nearby Chornomorsk and destroyed 60,000 tons of grain, according to Ukraine's Agriculture Ministry.

It came days after President Vladimir Putin pulled Russia out of its participation in the Black Sea

Grain Initiative, a wartime deal that enabled Ukraine's exports to reach many countries facing the threat of hunger.

It also followed a vow by Putin to retaliate against Kyiv for an attack Monday on the crucial Kerch Bridge linking Russia with the Crimean Peninsula, which the Kremlin illegally annexed in 2014.

The Agriculture Ministry, citing experts, estimated it would take a year to restore the damaged facilities.

The destroyed grain was supposed to have been loaded onto a vessel and sent through the grain cor-

ridor two months ago, the statement said.

"Such attacks by Russian terrorists are not only affecting our country but also global stability," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said during a briefing with the visiting Irish prime minister in Kyiv. He said Ukraine needs more anti-aircraft defense systems to protect the port.

Zelenskyy said his government is trying to find a way to maintain a corridor to keep grain exports flowing despite Russia's decision to abandon the deal brokered with the U.N. and Turkey.

Kremlin says it did not tell S.Africa that Putin arrest would mean war

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia did not tell South Africa that arresting President Vladimir Putin on an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court (ICC) would mean "war," the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

Shortly after the Kremlin's comments, South Africa said that Putin would not attend a summit of the BRICS group of nations in South Africa in August "by mutual agreement."

The ICC has ac-

cused Putin and his children's commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova of the war crime of deporting children from Ukraine to Russia, something Moscow rejects as false.

A local court submission published on Tuesday had shown that South African President Cyril Ramaphosa had asked permission from the ICC not to arrest Putin in the context of the BRICS summit because to do so would amount to a declaration of war.

At least 16 killed by suspected electrocution in north Indian state

Monitoring Desk
LUCKNOW: At least 16 people were killed and another six injured in a suspected case of electrocution in the north Indian state of Uttarakhnad on Wednesday morning, government officials said.

The incident took place inside a sewage treatment plant established in the Himalayan state's Chamoli district as part of a flagship programme of the federal government that focuses on conserving the river Ganga.



United Parcel Service and the Teamsters hold a rally before the beginning of the largest U.S. private sector labor contract talks covering more than 330,000 U.S. drivers, package handlers and loaders at the global delivery firm, in Orange, California, U.S.

Thai court suspends Pita as lawmaker with parliament due to vote on PM

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Thailand's Constitutional Court ordered a temporary suspension of prime ministerial hopeful Pita Limjaroenrat as a lawmaker on Wednesday, delivering its announcement as parliament convened for what could be his final shot at becoming premier.

The court decision came after accepting a case that alleges Pita, leader of the election-winning Move Forward Party, was unqualified to run in a May 14 election because he held shares in a media company, in violation of electoral

rules. The 42-year-old, U.S.-educated liberal Pita lost his initial bid for the premiership in a parliamentary vote last week and needs the backing of more than half of the bicameral parliament to become the next prime minister.

He must overcome fierce resistance from rivals at odds with his party's anti-establishment ambitions, including a royalist military that appointed members of the Senate that denied Pita in his initial bid.

It was not immediately clear whether the court announcement would scuttle Wednesday's vote.

Kenyan protesters hurl rocks at police as three-day tax protests begin

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: Kenyan protesters hurled rocks at police, which responded with volleys of tear gas, in skirmishes in the country's major cities on Wednesday as three days of demonstrations against high costs of living and tax hikes kicked off.

Two water-cannon trucks and dozens of riot police were stationed at the entrance to the Kibera neighbourhood in Nairobi, where protesters burned tires and engaged in running battles with security forces.

UK's migration crackdown plan to become law

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain's controversial plan to deter migrants without papers from landing on British shores was on Tuesday poised to become law, prompting criticism from the United Nations.

The legislation would outlaw asylum claims by all arrivals via the Channel and other "illegal" routes, and transfer them to third countries, such as Rwanda.

It was proposed in response to years of growing numbers of dangerous cross-Channel journeys from northern France in

small boats. Opposition to the bill was finally crushed at a late night sitting just hours before a barge that will be used to house migrants arrived at a port on England's south coast.

The Bibby Stockholm barge moored in Dorset's Portland Port is expected to house 500 asylum-seekers from later this month.

The UN refugee agency condemned the passage of the government's Illegal Migration Bill as a "breach of international law" and warned it would expose refugees to "grave risks".

South Africa says Putin will skip a summit next month because of his ICC arrest warrant

Monitoring Desk
CAPE TOWN: Russian President Vladimir Putin will not attend the BRICS economic summit in Johannesburg next month, the office of South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said in a statement Wednesday.

The decision means South Africa will not face the dilemma of whether it should carry out an International Criminal Court arrest warrant against the Russian leader.

South Africa is a signatory to the treaty that created the ICC and would have been obliged under that to arrest Putin, although the country had given strong hints that it

would have likely not executed the arrest warrant.

But Wednesday's announcement allows South Africa to avoid the problem and comes after Ramaphosa spoke with Putin by telephone in recent days. The decision for Putin not to attend was by "mutual agreement," Ramaphosa's office said. Russia will instead be represented at the Aug 22-24 summit by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. The BRICS economic bloc is made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. South Africa had invited the leaders of the other four countries to the summit before Putin's arrest warrant was issued by the ICC in March.

North Korea fires two missiles after U.S. submarine arrives in S.Korea

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: North Korea launched two ballistic missiles eastward early on Wednesday, Japan's and South Korea's militaries said, just hours after a U.S. ballistic missile submarine arrived in a South Korean port for the first time in four decades.

Both of the missiles appeared to have fallen outside Japan's exclusive economic zone, the Japanese Defence Ministry said.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) called on the North to cease such launches.

"We strongly condemn North Korea's successive ballistic missile launches as grave provocative acts that undermine the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula as well as the international community, and are a clear violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions," the JCS said in a statement.

The U.S. military said it was aware of the missile launches and was consulting closely with its allies and partners.

The launches do not appear to pose an immediate threat to the United States or to its allies, but the events highlight the destabilising impact of North Korea's illicit weapons programme, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement.

The first missile reached an altitude of 50 km (31 miles) and covered a range of 550 km, while the second one rose as high as 50 km and flew 600 km, Japanese Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada told reporters.

Japan lodged a protest against the missile launches through diplomatic channels, he said.

The firing comes nearly a week after North Korea tested its latest Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile, a launch Pyongyang said was a warning to the United States and other adversaries.

Also on Tuesday, a U.S. soldier facing disciplinary action fled across the inter-Korean border into North Korea.

Trump says he is a target in US 2020 election probe

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Former U.S. President Donald Trump said on Tuesday he had received a letter from Special Counsel Jack Smith stating that he is a target of a grand jury investigation into efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election result.

A letter would represent the clearest sign to date that Trump, front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, may face federal criminal charges around his efforts to remain in power after losing the election to Joe Biden.

Officials have testified that during his final months in office, Trump pressured them with unsubstantiated claims of widespread voter fraud. His supporters attacked the U.S. Capitol in a Jan. 6, 2021, bid to stop Congress from certifying Biden's win. Smith "sent a letter (again, it was Sunday night!) stating that I am a TARGET of the January

6th Grand Jury investigation," Trump wrote on his Truth Social media site.

His attorneys could not immediately be reached for comment.

NBC News, citing law enforcement sources, confirmed that Smith had sent the letter. A spokesperson for Smith's office declined to comment. Trump's legal woes have so far failed to dent his efforts to win the 2024 Republican nomination. His lead in opinion polls has widened in recent months and his Republican rivals have largely supported him in the face of several criminal probes. Peter Zeidenberg, a former federal prosecutor, said receiving a target letter means the individual should "presume that you're going to get indicted, unless you give us a damn good reason why we shouldn't."

Smith has already brought criminal charges against Trump in a separate federal case alleging he unlawfully retained national security documents after leaving office in 2021.

Record heat wave grips China as flood toll rises in South Korea

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Tourists flocked to a giant thermometer in China showing surface temperatures of 80C (176 Fahrenheit) while the death toll from torrential rains in South Korea hit 44 on Wednesday, the latest extreme weather sparking havoc and curiosity around the world.

Wildfires burned for a third day west of the Greek capital Athens, with air water bombers resuming operations at first light and firefighters working throughout the night to keep flames away from a complex of coastal refineries.

In a stifling Beijing, U.S. climate envoy John Kerry began the third day of talks with Chinese officials, expressing hope that cooperation to combat global warming could redefine troubled ties between the two superpowers.

A global pattern of heat waves that have scorched parts of Europe, Asia and the United States this week have thrown that challenge into sharp relief.

The World Meteorological Organization warned on Tuesday of increased risk of deaths linked to excessively high temperatures.

Meanwhile Hawaii's Big Island was bracing for the impact of Tropical Storm Calvin, expected to bring as much as 8 inches (20.3 cm) of rain and strong wind gusts, the National Weather Service (NWS) said. In South Korea, deluges of rain have pummelled central and southern regions since last week. Fourteen deaths occurred in an underpass in the central city of Cheongju, where more than a dozen vehicles were swamped on Saturday when a river levee collapsed.

In the southeastern province of North Gyeongang, 22 people died, many from landslides and swirling torrents.

This year's casualties have rekindled questions over South Korea's efforts to prevent and respond to flood damage, less than one year after the heaviest downpours in 115 years pounded Seoul.



Flooded banks of river Yamuna along the Taj Mahal in Agra.

President says: Imam Hussain (RA)'s sacrifice an immortal reminder about fighting oppression, upholding truth

PM urges countrymen to promote tolerance, social justice

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has said that the invaluable sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) is an immortal reminder about challenging the oppression and injustice, and standing firm to uphold truth.

He said the new Islamic year is a reminder that the strength of the nation lies in unity and harmony.

"With a united approach, we can overcome any challenge and make the future of our coming generations bright," he said, in his message to the nation on the advent of new Islamic year 1445 Hijrah.

President Alvi emphasized the need for mainstreaming all segments of society and providing them a level-playing field.

The president said new Islamic year has a great significance for the Muslims all over the world and reminds of the immense sacrifices rendered by their forefathers.

"On this day, we make a pledge to follow the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) and implement these in our lives," he said.

He said compassion, justice, unity and kindness are the ethos of Islamic culture and are important to promote harmony and prosperity in the society.

The president said Muharram as the first month of the Islamic calendar guides a Muslim to refresh his spiritual journey of life. He said it relates to the month when Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions sacrificed their lives in the battle of Karbala. Against oppression, the historic event of Karbala is an example of undeterred courage, sacrifice and steadfastness, he added.

The president said Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and his small army of fol-

lowers fought against the injustice and sacrificed their lives to uphold the sanctity of truth.

Dr Alvi prayed that may Allah Almighty make the new Islamic year a source of His blessings for Pakistan, the nation, Islamic community and the entire world.

"May the new Islamic year bring for us the peace, prosperity and happiness and lead us towards a better future ahead," he said.

Meanwhile on the advent of the new Islamic year on Wednesday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged countrymen to strive for emulating the noble teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions besides building a society featuring principles of social justice and equality.

"Let us pledge today that we will strive to emulate the noble qualities established by our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).



LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Ulama Council and Special Representative of Prime Minister of Pakistan for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi series of All Parties National Peace Seminar at Rahmani Islamic Center Model Town hand in hand for peace and unity on the occasion of Muharram.

Pakistan urges reinstatement of S. Asia's strategic balance; Kashmir dispute's resolution

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan has called for re-establishing the strategic balance in South Asia and for moving the region towards peace by promoting a settlement of the decades-old, UN-recognized Kashmir dispute through diplomacy.

"It is important that the strategic balance in South Asia is re-established, along with a quest for peace, so that the region does not remain a potential tinderbox," Masood Khan, Pakistan's Ambassador to the US, told a Conference on Diplomacy for Devel-

opment in Houston, Texas.

"We should resort to bilateral, third party and multilateral diplomacy to resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute and ensure nuclear stability," the Pakistani envoy said in his remarks on: The Future of Pakistan-US Relations: A Way Forward.

The conference, at which senior State Department official Elizabeth Horst was among the noted speakers, was organized by the International Academy of Letters, a think-tank seeking to build bridges through cultural & public

diplomacy. Pointing out that the US has chosen friends within the setting of the Indo-Pacific Strategy, Ambassador Masood Khan noted that "their (US friends) declared vectors of invest, align and compete, we are told are not designed to alienate or confront other countries in the region and beyond." On its part, he said Pakistan had pursued connectivity through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to leverage its economic geography, declaring, "Our defence and economic ties with China will continue."



QUETTA: A delegation of women MPAs meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo.

CPDI conducts orientation session on right to information for Govt officials & Journalists

QUETTA (APP): CPDI conducted a session on understanding right to information laws and the responsibilities of public officials was held for the government officials of the National Institute of Management Quetta.

The National Institute of Management Quetta's delegation, led by Director General Muhammad Aslam Ghani, expressed gratitude for the session.

Towards the session's conclusion, participants united in calling for the effective enforcement of right-to-information laws in Pakistan, said in a press release issued here on Wednesday.

A demand for the establishment of the Balochistan Information

Commission under the Balochistan Right to Information Act 2021 was raised, highlighting the urgency of transparent governance and information accessibility in Pakistan.

Another session took place on the same day, where journalists and media professionals gathered for an orientation session focused on leveraging the right to information for investigative reporting. Senior investigative journalists, including Mr. Waseem Abbasi, Mr. Umar Cheema, and Mr. Tahir Khalil shared their invaluable experiences in practicing investigative journalism in Pakistan.

Despite the challenges and risks associated with journalism in the country, they emphasized the para-

mount importance of truth-telling and combating corruption through the effective use of RTI. The remarked that collective mission should be to bring about transparency and foster social accountability in Pakistan through the power of responsible journalism.

They encouraged young and budding journalists to never shy away from speaking the truth. During the session, participants learned about the evolution of the RTI with a particular focus on its relevance in the present context.

Overall, the main theme revolved around utilizing this powerful tool as a catalyst for groundbreaking investigative reporting.

Large number of people benefiting from Green Bus Service in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Green bus service launched couple of days back has acclaimed much appreciation from general public. The Green bus service project started by the provincial government under leadership of Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has become attention of the general public, which is evident from the fact that a large number of people have started benefiting from the service. Matter of fact remains that the public circles have described the launch of Green bus service as welcoming. How the general public is benefiting from

the service is also evident from the number of passengers who travelled on the buses on Wednesday.

Worth mentioning is that a total of 3,862 passengers benefited from the ride of Green buses on the route from Balochi to Balochistan University.

It may also be mentioned here that over 3500 passengers had travelled by the Green buses on Tuesday. This speaks about the number of passengers is increasing on the Green buses with every passing day. This was the vision of Chief Minister to launch the Green buses who wanted to prefer the public welfare projects.

Alvi appoints AG I'abad, FPSC Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has approved appointment of Ayaz Shaukat Advocate as Advocate General (AG) Islamabad while Captain (retired) Shahid Ashraf Iqbal was appointed as Chairman of Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) with immediate effect.

The president also approved resignation of Jahangir Khan Jadoon from the office of Advocate General Islamabad with effect from July 14, the President Secretariat Press Wing said in press releases on Wednesday. President Alvi approved appointment and resignation under Article 48 (1) and Articles 2,3 and 6 of the Advocate General (Terms and Conditions).

Pakistan's youth always excelled whenever given opportunities: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said the country's youth always proved their mettle at the international level whenever provided the right opportunities.

In a tweet, he mentioned his yesterday's launch of a youth sports initiative programme aimed at converging the energies of youth towards a positive direction.

PM Sharif expressed confidence that youth would excel under the patronage of the Prime Minister's Youth Sports Initiative.

He pointed out the shortage of facilities for sportsmen in the country to compete in the games at the international level. The

programme would promote sports across the country through the training of talented youth, he added.

The prime minister hoped that future governments would ensure the continuity of the programme in best interest of the youth.

Shehbaz Sharif a day earlier launched multiple initiatives for promoting sports culture and welfare of the sports persons including the Rs 5 billion Pakistan Sports Endowment Fund with seed money of Rs 5 billion.

The other initiatives include the soft launch of the first dedicated Sports University, the Elite Sportspersons Development Programme and the sports development programme.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Anjad Khan Niazi exchanging views with Kamran Tessori, Governor Sindh during meeting held at Naval Headquarters in Islamabad.

Senator Gillani emphasizes significance of democracy, human rights & rule of law

LONDON (APP): Senator Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, on Wednesday stressed for advancing democratic principles, human rights, rule of law, tolerance, equality, and called for duly protecting rights of Kashmiri and Palestinian people, and opposing authoritarian populism.

Addressing the inaugural seminar at Society of Lincoln's Inn Old Court Room, Senator Yousaf Gillani reiterated his commitment to promoting human rights, safeguarding independence of the judiciary, and ensuring media freedom.

He discussed how his actions as Prime Minister, had been geared towards upholding these principles within the context of democracy and human rights.

He also stressed to address the challenges, being faced by Kashmiri and Palestinian people and called for international support in upholding their rights. He warned against authoritarian populism and urged the world to protect the rights of migrants.

"As a Senator and former Prime Minister of

Pakistan, I am deeply honoured to speak at this prestigious occasion, hosted by the Society of Lincoln's Inn — an institution known for its excellence in legal education. I am grateful for the opportunity to address this esteemed gathering and express my admiration for the institution's commitment to nurturing responsible and thoughtful legal professionals."

After undergoing six-year imprisonment by a dictator's regime, he was sworn in as the Prime Minister in 2008, with his convictions, vindicated by both the courts and people's support. This ordeal reinforced his dedication to advocating for a fair and just justice system, underscoring the significance of fundamental rights, he added. Gillani said his affiliation with PPP, founded by Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was rooted in the principles of democracy, equality, freedom, and human rights.

He lauded the sacrifices rendered by former Prime Ministers - Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Ms Benazir Bhutto - for promoting democratic culture in the country.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Excise Laila Tareen meeting with Parliamentary Secretary S&GAD Bushra Rind.

Balochistan Medical teachers call off strike; BMC, three other colleges to reopen today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan Medical Teachers Association (BMTA) has announced to call off two-months long strike on Wednesday.

The strike was called off by the President BMTA, Dr. Zahoor Shah while addressing a hurriedly called press conference along with the members of parliamentary committee at the protest camp

of BMTA set up in the premises of Bolan Medical College on Wednesday afternoon.

The members of parliamentary committee of the provincial assembly present on the occasion were the provincial minister for youth affairs and sports, Abdul Khaliq Hazara, Asghar Khan Achakzai, Nasrullah Zairay and Muhammad Arif Muhammad Hassani.

Quetta Customs seized smuggled goods worth of Rs 130m

QUETTA (APP): The Quetta Customs has expedited its ongoing operation and seized smuggled Chalia and Gutka worth of Rs 130 million.

The mobile squads of Quetta Customs intercepted a 22-wheeler container at Saria Road coming from the Afghan border and recovered the smuggled good in a huge quantity, spokesperson of Quetta Customs Dr Atta Baraich said on Wednesday.

The vehicle carrying smuggled goods comprising of 30,760 kg of chalia and 660,000 sachets of Indian gutka was also taken into custody.

The efforts taken by the Customs official has been significantly reduced the smuggling in the province.

BAEF to approve 500 more cases in its board meeting in August: Noorullah

QUETTA (APP): The next board meeting of the Balochistan Awami Endowment Fund (BAEF) would be held in the first week of August after a period of seven months due to a lack of funds to approve more cases of poor patients.

As many as 500 more cases would be approved in the 20th board meeting of BAEF to provide financial assistance to poor patients, the Coordinator of BAEF, Noorullah told APP on Wednesday.

The coordinator said the programme was receiving Rs 70 million monthly as seed money but the need of the poor people had gone above Rs 500 million.

The board meeting of the program could not commence after December last year due to the unavailability of funds to approve more cases of needy patients suffering from different chronic diseases, he added.

Noorullah said with the approval of 500 more cases the tally would be raised to 3500 patients

being treated under the BAEF initiative in the best public and private sector hospitals across the country.

Under the initiative, Rs 2.9 billion had been provided to poor patients for the treatment of "open heart surgery, Thalassemia, cancer, liver and kidney transplants, adding that all cases have been approved by the medical board on merit.

He had submitted the proposal to the provincial government to issue an Rs 500 million supplementary budget to the special support programme so that the needs of the people could be met.

He urged the government to convert the programme into a permanent authority to ensure the best healthcare facilities for a maximum number of poor people suffering from chronic diseases.

He also urged the private sector to come forward and join hands with the government for the noble cause.

DC Kalat urges scholars, parents, to play role for elimination of polio

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Kalat Munir Ahmed Durrani on Wednesday said that polio was a deadly disease and every member of the society has to play his role to save his children from it.

In this regard, scholars, journalist community, poets, writers, politicians, and social workers should raise awareness among the people so that it is possible to create a polio-free society, he said.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting to review steps for anti-polio drive which would be started from August 1st.



WASHINGTON: Shazia Marri, Federal Minister PA&SS and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme Presents Book titled 15 Years' Journey from Inception to a Globally Recognized Social Protection Vehicle" to Nicole Klingen, World Bank's Regional Head of Social Protection & Acting Director for Digital Development in Europe and Central Asia.

Chairman Senate commends PHF at Annual Report 2022 Launch Event

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjani, graced the "Pakistan Humanitarian Forum's Annual Report 2022 Launch Event" at Marriot Hotel Islamabad as the Chief Guest on Wednesday.

During his address at the ceremony, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjani extended his heartfelt appreciation for the remarkable efforts of the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) in organizing such an important event. He emphasized the pivotal role of humanitarian and development works in Pakistan, acknowledging PHF's exceptional contributions to providing relief and rehabilitation to those affected, especially after the devastating floods in Pakistan.

Chairman Senate also praised PHF for its efforts in creating a platform that enables various organizations to come together and serve the people of Pakistan. He assured PHF of

the Senate of Pakistan's cooperation, ensuring a strong partnership between PHF and the Climate Change Parliamentary Caucus. In line with this commitment, he pledged that two representatives from PHF will be provided representation in the Caucus to enhance coordination between the two bodies. Furthermore, Chairman Senate stressed the need to raise awareness among the public to protect the future of our children. He pledged to provide PHF and similar organizations with appropriate platforms to support their initiatives effectively.

Recognizing the significance of sustainable development in Balochistan, Chairman Senate proposed organizing a donor conference to channel resources towards the development of the province. Highlighting the critical role of the private sector, Chairman Senate called for their support in generating employment opportunities.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Asadullah Baloch meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki.