

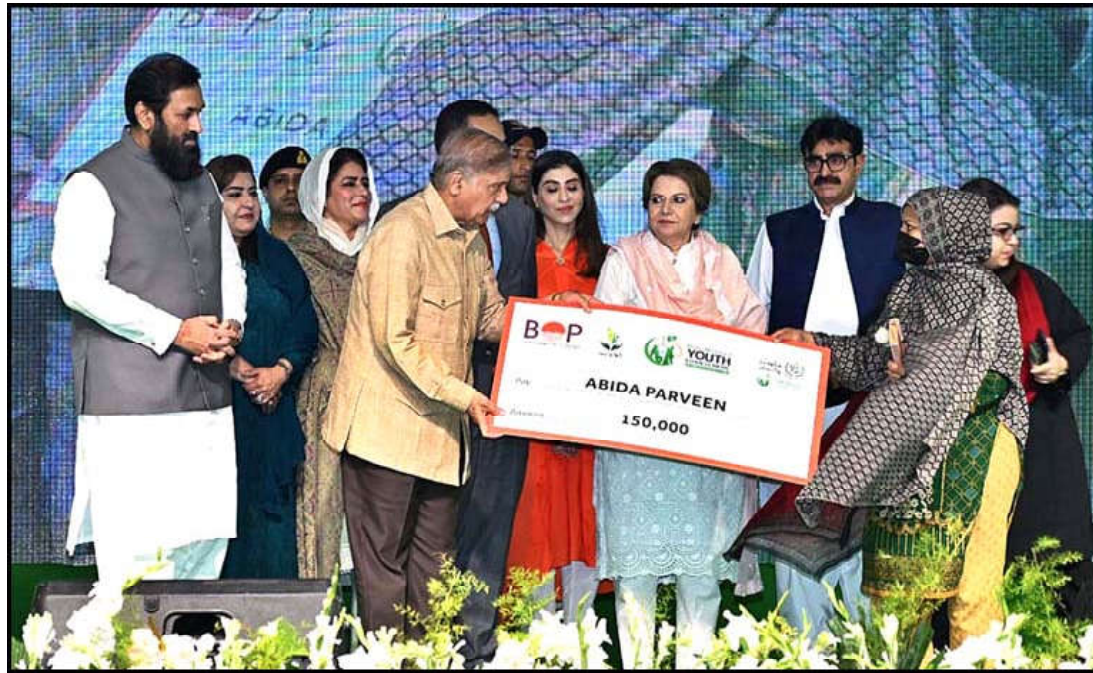
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LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributing cheques among the recipients of Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme.

PPP, PMLN set formulae for GB government

GILGIT (Online): Pakistan People Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) has set the formulae of power sharing on the basis of majority to form government in Gilgit Baltistan.

According to reports after PPP, PMLN is ready to be the part of government. People Party will get three positions and PMLN will have two ministries.

Sources told that PPP will have his deputy speaker and two ministries. Names has been finalised for two ministries. Engineer Ismael and Shehzad Agha will be the candidate for ministries.

PMLN has not finalised their names for ministries yet.

Pakistan, Iran military leadership vow to root out 'terrorism from border areas'

COAS Ge. Asim Munir wraps up a two-day "successful" trip to Iran; Army chief also meets Iranian president and foreign minister

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Sunday concluded his two-day successful visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The military leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan agreed that terrorism was a common threat to the region in general and both countries in particular.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the

military commanders on both sides vowed to eradicate the menace of terrorism in the border areas through intelligence sharing and effective actions against the terrorists' networks, and explore avenues for enhancing cooperation in the security domain.

During his visit, the COAS had detailed meetings with the Military leadership of Iran including Chief of General Staff of Armed Forces, Major General Mohammad Bagheri.

The COAS also called on President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

During discussions, the significance of Pakistan-Iran bilateral relations for regional peace and stability was highlighted. The COAS was presented with the Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of Iranian Armed Forces at the Military Headquarters on his arrival.



TEHRAN: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi

PM pledges to take country on path of prosperity if given opportunity in upcoming polls

Govt committed to empower youth of country

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that if given an opportunity in the upcoming general elections, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and the entire leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz would change the destiny of the country by taking it on the path of progress and prosperity.

Addressing the cheques distribution ceremony under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme, he said they would accept the public mandate in the upcoming polls and urged the people to take their decisions after looking into certain facts and by juxtaposing the performance of the PML-N gov-

ernments with that of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's four years' saga of destruction.

The prime minister while lauding the statesmanship qualities of his elder brother, regretted that former prime minister and his leader Nawaz Sharif was ousted from power despite the fact that he had ended hours-long crippling load shedding, provided laptops and loans to youth, brought multi-billions China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CEPC) power and road infrastructure projects during 2015.

On the other hand, Imran Khan had a phobia of PML-N leadership and the opposition as day in and day out, he was bent upon putting them in jails with

the framing of fake cases, he said, adding the PTI leader could not assimilate the revolutionary steps taken by the PML-N government.

All the youth programmes, he said were started during the tenure of Nawaz Sharif as alone 50,000 vehicles were provided to the people on merit across Punjab province. The success of the loan scheme could be gauged from the fact that 99 per cent of loans were returned back to banks, he added.

The prime minister maintained that Nawaz Sharif and they had experienced the worst kind of political vendetta, even they were sent into exile after ouster from power, but unlike Imran Niazi, the PML-N Quaid never thought of

anything against the country.

The prime minister elaborated that the person (IK) who was brought to power through a fraud election, kept on chanting the corruption charges during his four years tenure but did not prove them, adding that when he was removed from power corridors through a constitutional manner, he used dirty language and tactics against the state institutions.

The prime minister mentioned that PTI's tenure was tainted with huge corruption scams including sugar and wheat scams, BRT Peshawar, Malam Jabba, sale of Toshakhana gifts, Rs 60 billion money embezzlement returned by the UK agency, etc, and said that no one could deny these stark facts.

more

The prime minister said during his tenure, about one million laptops were given to the youth and the PTI leadership blamed them for using the scheme as a bribe, adding that contrary to it, their initiative brought about an IT revolution in the country, enabling the youth to continue their studies, work as freelancers and earn a respectable livelihood for their families.

A number of ministers, advisers, parliamentarians, officials and beneficiaries of the loan and families attended the ceremony.

The prime minister stressed that these laptops were given purely on merit, and if proved otherwise, he would be held accountable as these resources belonged to the country.

Religious Harmony: Pakistani leaders unite in historic interfaith press conference

LAHORE (APP): Muslim and Christian leaders, in a groundbreaking display of religious harmony, came together for a historic press conference on Sunday, where they held the holy scriptures of the Bible, Torah, Psalms, and the Quran.

This momentous event marked the first time in the nation's history that leaders from both communities gathered in unison to address the importance of respect for all four heavenly books.

The notable event took place at the University of the Central Punjab and was organized under the aus-

pieces of the International Interfaith Harmony Council and the Pakistan Ulema Council. Among the prominent figures present was Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, who joined hands with the Muslim and Christian leaders to promote interfaith understanding and cooperation.

During the conference, the leaders underscored the significance of showing reverence for all heavenly religions and their sacred texts.

They emphatically stated that no individual, group, country, or organization should ever be al-

lowed to disrespect any heavenly book, as well as the prophets and messengers associated with them.

Condemning the recent incident of Quran burning in Sweden, they also stressed that permitting the burning of Torah, Bible, or Psalms would be equally unacceptable. Gratitude was extended to those who respected the sanctity of the Torah.

In a collective appeal to the European Union and the United Nations, the leaders urged immediate attention and global legislative action to safeguard the sanctity of all heavenly religions.

Recognizing the universal message of peace, harmony, moderation, and tolerance found in Islam and all other religions, they vehemently clarified that no religion's teachings promote violence or extremism.

Furthermore, they disavowed any individuals or groups who propagate violence, asserting that such actions do not represent any religion's true essence.

The conference placed significant emphasis on fostering interfaith harmony within Pakistan.



LAHORE: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi talking to media persons at Jamia Manzoorul Islamia.

Govt takes tough decisions for resolving country's challenges: Hamza

LAHORE (APP): Former Punjab chief minister Hamza Shehbaz on Sunday said the incumbent government had taken tough decisions to bring the country out of challenges created by the previous incompetent Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government.

Talking to the media, he said anti-people policies of the PTI forced the people to "commit suicides".

The PTI dragged the country into an economic quagmire due to its flawed policies, whereas the present government had been working hard for the past 15 months to address issues that have

developed as a result of the PTI-led government's negligence."

He said the country's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has considerably prevented it from default. If the prime minister had not held negotiations with the IMF MD, the country might have defaulted, he continued. He said the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) put its politics at stake by taking tough decisions in larger national interest.

Hamza Shehbaz said that the future of the country was linked with holding general elections held on time in a free, fair and transparent manner.

PPP takes big decision over Asifa Bhutto politics

KARACHI (Online): Pakistan Peoples Party has decided to launch Asifa Bhutto in political arena in upcoming election. Sources told that Asifa Bhutto will take full part in next election. People party has started paying attention on various constituencies of Sindh.

Sources said that Asif Zardari will take final decision about the constituency from where Asifa will take part in politics.

PPP source told that Asifa Bhutto will run peoples party's political election campaign. She will address political rallies and meetings in various districts. Asifa Bhutto started preparation for proper political engagements.



SIALKOT: Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif addressing the workers convention of PML-N at Union Council Water Works.

At UN Pak urges unified action to assist Asian-Pacific nations deal with climate-induced disasters

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for a coordinated effort to help the vulnerable nations of the Asia-Pacific region confront many climate change-related challenges like floods, heat waves, water shortages and melting glaciers.

"Together, we can build a world where climate action and sustainable development go hand in hand, leaving no one behind," Romina Khurshid Alam, Special Assistant to the prime minister, told a U.N. conference on Sunday.

Speaking at the 4th Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies Between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, she underscored the need for knowledge sharing and utilization of collective experiences and expertise to chart a path toward a consortium that focuses on disaster risk reduction strategies for the Asia-Pacific region.

Ms. Alam, who is and

convener of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), introduced herself as "representing the Parliament of Pakistan" at the conference which is a part of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)'s High-Level Political Forum.

"I bring your attention to the Resolution I recently presented in the National Assembly to appreciate the contributions of the UN and its agencies that use their expertise and resources to help Pakistan in its fight against climate change.

The Resolution was passed unanimously by the members of the August Forum on 23rd June 2023," the Pakistani delegate told the conference.

Pakistan, she said, recognizes the critical importance of aligning its efforts with the Paris Agreement to the temperatures limited to 1.5 degrees and the 2030 UN Development Agenda.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Haji Gulbar Khan in a meeting with the delegation of Jamaat-e-Islami at CM House.

12 tourists dead as coaster falls into ditch in Chilas

GILGIT (INP): A tourist coaster on Sunday skidded off the road and fell into a ravine on the Karakoram Highway near Thalichi in Chilas, Gilgit-Baltistan, killing at least 12 people.

According to details, a coaster carrying tourists plunged into a gorge on the Karakoram Highway near Thalichi, killing at least 12 people and injuring 6 others including women and children. The coaster was going to Gilgit from Lahore. Rescue teams recovered the dead bodies and shifted them to a hospital.

According to the sources, the tourist coaster skidded off the road due to high speed. The local administration has started efforts to identify the names of the dead tourists.

PM expresses grief over loss of lives in tourist bus accident

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in a tourist bus accident near Thalichi, at Karakoram highway on Sunday.

In a statement on Sunday, he prayed for eternal peace of the deceased and expressed condolences with their bereaved families.

The Prime Minister directed the Gilgit-Baltistan authorities for immediate relief operation and also directed relevant federal departments to assist in relief work.

Praying for speedy recovery of the injured, the Prime Minister directed authorities concerned to provide best medical facilities to them.

Shehbaz Sharif also ordered an enquiry into the accident to ascertain its cause.

PML-N fully prepared to contest polls: Rana Tanveer

ISLAMABAD (Online): Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain says PML-N has strong roots in masses and party will fully take part in upcoming elections.

Addressing an inauguration ceremony of water supply project in Sharqpur on Sunday, he said PML-N will field young candidates in elections.

The Minister said there is no future for those who change political loyalties.

Wrong economic policies of PTI govt led to existing economic turmoil: Kh Asif

SIALKOT (INP): Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that wrong economic policies of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government has led to the existing economic turmoil.

Addressing the workers' convention at Mohallah Water Works on Sunday, he said, "We are determined and will soon succeed in bringing the country out of darkness."

Khawaja Asif said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif had gathered all political parties to support the national economy.

He said that unfortunately, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was brought into power in 2018 through a rigged elections, and those who supported Imran Khan, the performance of

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was in front of them.

During the planned attacks on 9th May, the memorials of martyrs were insulted, he said, adding "we stand with our martyrs and Ghazis" and those who insulted the memorials of martyrs would be brought to justice under the law.

Khawaja Asif said that during the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government before 2018 election, the country's economy was getting stable, but then the premier Nawaz Sharif was disqualified under a conspiracy. He said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was working very hard for the stability of the country's economy and he hoped that they would soon be able to put the country on road to development and prosperity.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Railways and Aviation, Khawaja Saad Rafique calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan first Judicial Protection Unit establish; to enhance judges security

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mian Shehbaz Sharif and the special interest of Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan, the Security Division Islamabad has undergone a comprehensive reorganization. This initiative, aimed at enhancing security measures, has led to the establishment of Pakistan's first Judicial Protection Unit, a police public relations officer said.

He said that the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan has spearheaded the complete restructuring of the Security Division to fortify the security of judges' offices, court premises, and residences. The newly formed Judicial Protection Unit will operate under the vigilant supervision of the SSP Security Division.



In addition, a standard operating procedure (SOP) has been issued for security of all courts, and over 500 high-tech security cameras have been installed in court facilities. These cameras are integrated with the advanced surveillance system of the Safe City Islamabad project, enabling direct monitoring of court premises. To further bolster the security of residences and courts, a request for the recruitment of 550 personnel has already been submitted to the Ministry of Interior. Once the necessary financial resources are allocated, the performance of this unit will further improve.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Financial woes of Balochistan and tepid response of Islamabad

The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo is up against the federal government once again. The issue is identical, one and the same, financial problems being confronted by the province for long. This is evident from yet another policy statement issued by the Chief Minister Bizenjo referring the otherwise "lukewarm" attitude of the federal government right under the Premier-ship of Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif. In his statement, the Chief Minister gave intense reaction towards the federal government's approach towards lack / non-existence of new National Finance Commission (NFC) Award. The Chief Minister rightly pointed out that the new NFC Award is overdue for last eight years. According to him, the new NFC Award is due since 2015, but this very constitutional obligation is being violated for last eight years affecting Balochistan the most.

He said that Balochistan province is the biggest affectee of the situation than other federating units. It's awesome when the Chief Minister noted with concern that Balochistan has so far suffered financial loss of over Rs. 300 billion due to non-existence of new National Finance Commission (NFC) Award since 2017. He said that the approach of federation on the NFC Award is beyond comprehensible, as it is a constitutional requirement to announce new NFC Award after every five years. At the time when there's talk of meeting constitutional requirements everywhere, then why the requirement of NFC Award is being overlooked? he questioned. Mr. Bizenjo also referred to the financial issues being confronted by the province and mentioned that the matter of arrears of the province against Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) is also yet to be resolved.

He said that it is an unwise act and insult of the people of Balochistan to give preference to a company (PPL) over a federating unit. Describing the attitude of federal government with Balochistan as unjustified, the Chief Minister maintained continuous and repeated contacts has not bear any positive result yet. He said that such attitudes cause differences and misunderstandings, which is not good for the federalism as well, he maintained. Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo was of the view that we had a lot of expectations with the incumbent government and Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and he had also taken our stance serious. But it is beyond understandable that why the concerned federal government institutions are not giving due importance to the orders of Prime Minister? he questioned. Justifying his fierce reaction to the federation's attitude, the Chief Minister if we give our reaction to the federation, it is because that we are facing hardships, and we do it in compulsion. Undoubtedly, it is high time for the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif-led federal government to pay proper heed towards the critical financial situation of the province. needless to mention here is that the Bizenjo government had already made it clear that it would not be able to execute the much-needed development process in the province, rather it would harm the already ongoing process. This is also high time for the federal government to pay heed towards the issue of lack of representation of the province in the federal government institutions and autonomous bodies. And last but not the least, the Prime Minister should personally look into the matter and find out why his very directives are being ignored by certain federal departments?

A fine balance



Muna Khan

When people hear I teach journalism, I'm often asked what I think about the media coverage of X issue or how I would cover X issue if I was a journalist. The questions usually reflect the person's frustration with the media. Last week, I was asked how I would cover Democratic candidate Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Jr's presidential bid. Kennedy is widely accused of spreading 'lies' — I use quotes because I don't think it's always possible to prove someone is willfully lying.

Should media organisations give their platform to someone who, according to the Centre for Counting Digital Hate named RFK as the second most prolific poster of anti-vaccine information online? There is a lot of focus on Kennedy's views on vaccines and he is routinely described as an anti-vaxxer, though he claims he is asking for more studies on vaccines.

I understand the dilemma with Kennedy. He is, after all, American royalty with that surname; I doubt he'd garner the kind of attention if he was someone else. Kennedy's views are controversial: he is against big pharma, blames 5G for a host of ailments, says Wi-Fi causes "leaky brain", HIV may not cause AIDS, suggests links between anti-depressants and the rise in mass school shootings, and claims chemicals in water may cause children to become transgender.

These are some of the wilder theories he has spoken about — but it's important to say they are finding resonance across

the political divide.

Kennedy has the support of venture capitalists, tech bros in Silicon Valley — including the former and present owners of Twitter — and has earned Donald Trump's praise too. Although he pitches himself as an outsider — who is routinely censored for his views — he has received immense media coverage with profiles in all leading publications. He has appeared on nearly all the highly watched podcasts, save Sam Harris' who said he won't give him the platform to air his misinformation. It was Harris' podcast that had my lunchmate posing the question on what I would do as a journalist.

I think the important distinction to make here is that Harris and the other podcast bros are not journalists. This doesn't diminish their power to engage with their guests, or influence voters, but they're not following the same rules as journalists. Journalists do their due diligence and ask tough questions, with the goal being to inform the public, not think about their own ratings or brand. I know this is hard to believe, given how polarised the media and society is, even in Pakistan, but the trust deficit has been caused because journalists veered from these guidelines. They can bring audiences back by ensuring fair and balanced coverage of leaders and fighting attempts to censor them as that is a huge disservice to the public's right to information.

Labelling Kennedy a loon or dangerous or both only shows the media has learned nothing from covering Trump — who, if you remember, was ridiculed from the day he announced his candidacy. There is a way to report on RFK without amplifying him and always adding context and data to

let readers make their own decisions.

RFK cannot be ignored, but should he get the oxygen the media feels it needs to get ratings? Because that is essentially what this comes down to: profitability vs public interest. Media outlets look at elections through the lens of a horse race, ie, who will win. Except that in their coverage of a candidate, they end up creating an electorate. RFK garners more attention than the other contender, Marianne Williamson, who was once described as Oprah's spiritual adviser. Why isn't every move of hers given the same space?

I see the appeal in RFK because he's saying things others do not: anti-corporates, anti-elite capture in the political system, antiwar, anti-CIA, whom he blames for the murder of his father and uncle. He does not have answers to the kind of policies he'll create, and lacks support from his party, and many of his family members, including siblings, have endorsed Joe Biden. Much of the RFK amplification machine is coming from the right-wing media that wants an election between Trump and RFK. The media shouldn't fall into this trap. There is a way to report on people without amplifying or ignoring them.

De-platforming and/or censorship does not work. It was embarrassing to watch TV channels in Pakistan blur out the PTI leader's face in his meeting with the IMF delegation. What is the purpose of this ridiculous ban? Why are audiences treated with such little regard? I have full faith in the media's ability to do its job of reporting fairly on all leaders and debunking their nonsense. Let them do their jobs, please. -- Courtesy Dawn

Abolish the CDA



Danyal Adam Khan

With the approval of three new sectors in Islamabad worth Rs30 billion, certain residents of the city can brace themselves for a new round of evictions and demolitions in the name of progress. Although this will — and should — spark legitimate resistance and a renewed conversation about the city's master plan, we can also use this opportunity to ask ourselves a more fundamental question: why does the CDA even exist?

If you happened to be a dictator in the 1960s, it would have been one of your lesser crimes if you looked over undulating green hills and thought, 'I probably need an authority to raze these and build a capital'. Nearly 56 years later, though, it is ludicrous to leave the governance of the capital city in the world's fifth-most populous country to a non-representative bureaucratic institution.

Islamabad is not the sleepy town it was even one decade ago, and requires some serious urban planning if it is to avoid the congested fate of our other megacities. It requires an intra-city mass transit system, entire sectors dedicated to low-cost housing, mixed-use development, an equitable expansion of its water network, a functioning waste management system, and so on. The idealistic list of possibilities is endless. But these are not decisions that can be made without incorporating the will of the city's residents and, as an

unelected institution, the CDA simply does not have that mandate.

By no means does this imply that every decision the CDA has ever made is flawed or, on the contrary, that the opposite will be true for an elected local government. It only means that the mechanism for reaching such decisions must contain a certain level of accountability towards the people on whose behalf they are being made. In other words, the prerequisite is to have a system which enables representation.

The CDA is essentially no different to any other housing society, except their playing field is all of Islamabad — or at least those parts where it can use bureaucratic muscle to evict, rather than, say, cantonment areas. They see land — not the people who happen to live on it — and feel irked by the wasted potential of 'undeveloped' sectors which could be lucrative plots. This is the CDA's bread and butter. It was never meant to govern the city, only to 'develop' it, and has been doing so in its own way. When looked at in this context, it seems obvious that the CDA is not a substitute for local government.

But what would abolishing this white elephant look like in practice? At the most, it would entail dismantling the entire institution. At the least, it would mean breaking its monopoly by placing it under the control of the Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad, ie, the capital's body of elected representatives. This would include legislative and constitutional amendments to guarantee election cycles and security of tenure — providing a legal and political foundation for local government. It

would include administrative devolution, such as transferring the CDA's nearly 20,000 staff to the MCI's payroll.

Most importantly, this would entail a fiscal rearrangement. The idea that the primary source of income for a city is to sell its own land has to be revisited. Any revenue currently collected by the CDA or the ICT administration can be redirected to the public exchequer, that is, MCI — and bolstered by a comprehensive taxation system, which includes sources that are common to cities worldwide, such as property tax. At present, the CDA has a Rs150bn bud-get for the in-coming financial year over which no control can be exerted by the residents of Islamabad.

This proposed arrangement is very much the opposite of what CDA has maintained with the MCI. Since the latter's inception in 2015, the bureaucratic resistance put up by the CDA against the fledgling and ineffective MCI has been fierce. Within the first mayoral term, any powers it had been vested with were stripped away and returned, leaving the MCI entirely dependent on the CDA for finances, rather than the other way around.

Such a relationship cannot be changed by a tweak to the system, but only through a fundamental shift towards prioritising citizens over profits. With Islamabad as its birthright, the CDA has become very comfortable wielding power that should not belong to it. The fact that a democratic institution can be held hostage by unelected officials is not new to Pakistan, but it does seem to plague the system ranging from local governments to the top of the pyramid. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM directs to establish one window facilitation centers to resolve exporters' problems

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed to establish one window operation facilitation centers to resolve exporters' problems.

He gave these instructions, while talking to a delegation of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industries and parliamentarians from the city of Iqbal, which called on him in the leadership of Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif in Sialkot on Sunday.

Besides, the Prime Minister instructed to formulate a policy in this

regard. He also ordered the Sialkot district administration to ensure construction, maintenance and restoration of national highways.

The delegation commended the Prime Minister for final approval of IMF agreement and economic revival in the country.

Shehbaz Sharif thanked members of the delegation for supporting him in taking tough decisions in the best interest of the country.

Prime Minister's Advisor Ahsan Khan Cheema, Special Assistants

Jahanzeb Khan, Tariq Bajwa, Rana Shamim Ahmed Khan, Nelson Azeem, Arshad Warraich, Rana Liaqat, Arif Iqbal, Rana Afzaal, Rana Abdul Sattar, Chaudhry Ikram, Manshaullah Butt, Mrs. Shehzad Gulnaz, Zeeshan Rafiq, Muhammad Rafiq Mughal, Khawaja Maqsood Akhtar were among those, who called on the Prime Minister.

President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industries Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Wahab Jahangir, Amir Majeed Sheikh, Dr Mariyam Noman, Arshad Butt, Sohail Barlas and

Sarfraz Bhatti represented the business community of Sialkot.

APP add: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday directed the formulation of a policy for the establishment of one-window facilitation centers for resolving issues of exporters. He was talking to a delegation comprising members of Parliament and office bearers of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) here.

The delegation paid tribute to the prime minister on the final approval of the agreement with the International.



A delegation of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Sialkot. Minister of Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif was also present.



FAISALABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan offering 'dua' after inaugurating sui gas supply at Chak No. 4 JB Ram Diwali.

Measures needed for industry to put economy on track: Faheem Saigol

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF), Faheemur Rehman Saigol stressing the need for putting the economy on a sustainable growth trajectory by providing incentives to the industry, has lamented that the economy was facing multiple challenges of falling exports, high inflation, and low growth, with fiscal accounts under immense pressure on account of heavy interest payments.

In a statement on Sunday, the PIAF Chairman said that the low growth shows the government was finding it difficult to achieve the industrial growth and export target, leading to more pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country.

He asked the government to address the underlying structural vulnerabilities through smooth energy supply at competitive rates, as country's overall export proceeds continued to shrink.

PCMEA for containing dollar rate

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMAEA) has urged the government to take appropriate steps to contain dollar rate against rupee so that export deals could not affect due to fluctuations in the dollar rate. PCMEA Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf, central leader Abdul Latif Malik, Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Chairperson Ejazur Rehman and other senior members told media here Sunday that exporters were reluctant to do foreign business deals due to uncertainty of the dollar, therefore government should focus on stabilizing the foreign exchange reserves by bringing in foreign exchange through exports and remittances to give a direction to the faltering economy. Dollar fluctuations were creating difficulties in importing raw materials and signing the contract with the foreign buyers, they added.

PCMEA office-bearers said that policy makers should also consult the stakeholders and take a unanimous decision regarding the dollar, as the prevailing situation had a negative impact.

PBF for bringing agri sector under federal govt again

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has suggested that federal government should take over the agriculture sector again for its revival in a better way through recently launched Green Pakistan Initiative.

Talking to media here Sunday, the PBF Central Vice President Jahan Ara Watoo said that agriculture sector development had been slowed since its devolution to provinces under 18th Amendment as the

provinces were still looking for federal government's assistance on this count. "At province level, agriculture is still functioning as extension departments with regard to monitoring, supply, procurement, distribution and prices, and even today, agricultural policy making is the domain of regulatory bodies at the centre," she argued.

Jahan Ara Watoo explained that about 48 million hectares (60 percent).

CEO TDAP says: Trade facilitation to Afghanistan vital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP) Muhammad Zubair Motiwala said that Pakistan always attached the highest importance to its trade facilitation for Afghanistan.

He was addressing the opening ceremony of the Imam Abu Hanifa Exhibition held Sunday in

Kabul. Motiwala shared that Pakistan was the largest trading partner of Afghanistan. In this context, he thanked the Afghan government for providing such business opportunities to Pakistani exhibitors which will further widen the business-to-business relations between the two fraternal neighbors.

Cabinet approves Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) Rule 2023: Amin

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for IT and Telecom Syed Amin ul Haque has said that move to strengthen the country's cybersecurity posture; the Federal Cabinet of Pakistan has given its approval to the Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) Rule 2023.

In a statement, the minister said that the decision comes after a thorough consultation process that involved various stakeholders, with the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication (MoITT) taking the lead in formulating the CERT Rules.

According to an official statement, under section 51, read with section 49 of the Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA), 2016, and in compliance with the National Cyber Security Policy (NCSP), 2021, the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication (MoITT) as a designated organization of the Federal Government to deal with

Cyber Security has formulated the CERT Rules in consultation with the concerned stakeholders.

The consultation session with the government bodies and regulatory authorities was started in August 2021. Subsequently, sector regulators carried out extensive consultations with their respective private entities.

IT Minister further said that CERT Rules - 2023 provides a legislative umbrella to handle ever-emerging cyber-security risks and vulnerabilities at the National, Sectoral, and Organizational levels by laying out a working mechanism in the form of technical support, operational facilities, and capacity-building services.

"These Rules further provide a state-of-the-art proactive and integrated risk management process for identifying and prioritizing protective measures regarding cyber-

security".

He said that a CERT council will be established as a forum for a consultative and coordinating process to advise CERTs for the effective implementation of its functions and services.

The definitions and constituencies of National CERT, Government CERT, Critical Information Infrastructure CERT, Sectoral CERT, Federal CERT, and Provincial CERT are discussed separately, he added.

The specific responsibilities, functions, and services of the National CERTs and Sectoral CERTs are also outlined in the rules.

Federal IT Minister said that as far as the impact on Cyber Security Landscape is concerned, CERTs at National and Sectoral Levels will enhance the overall cybersecurity posture and resilience at the national level.

PML-N saves country from default: Muqam

PESHAWAR (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political and Public Affairs and National Heritage, Engr Amir Muqam here Sunday said that Pakistan Muslim League-N President and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif have saved the country from default after a successful agreement with IMF besides taking bold economic and fiscal decisions for Pakistan. Addressing a big public gathering here where ANP leader Sher Rehman

along with thousands of supporters joined PML-N, Engr Amir Muqam said that PML-N was the only party that could take the country out of all existing challenges. He said that PML-N has strong roots in masses in all provinces and would form the next government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Engr Amir Muqam said that PTI has disappointed the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and completely failed to deliver despite its nine years long rule in the province.

He accused the PTI chief of destabilizing the country and destroying the national economy. Amir Muqam that the entire nation had seen attacks on national institutions and defense installations during May 9 vandalism. He said that one party had made a deep conspiracy against Pakistan on May 9 by attacking state institutions while Pakistan Muslim League-N had frustrated the evil designs of the attackers. Amir Muqam



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in a group photo with delegation of public representatives of District Mohmand.



HYDERABAD: View of the water level increasing in the Phuldi Canal while many nearby residents evacuate from their homes due to increased water level and overflowing canal water, in Hyderabad.

Ombudsman office facilitates 18 individuals in securing govt jobs

Independent Report
LAHORE: In the latest development, the Office of the Ombudsman Punjab successfully interceded on public complaints to ensure that provincial government departments provide permanent jobs to 18 applicants of different districts under Rule 17-A of the Punjab Civil Servants (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 1974. While giving details, the spokesman for the Office of the Ombudsman Punjab reported on Sunday that Talha Tariq had been appointed as a junior clerk in Attock, Muhammad

Ilyas of TT Singh as a gardener and Omar Daraz of Jhang as a watchman. Additionally, Amina Bibi from Vehari had been recruited as bulawi, Abrara Sadia and Chaand Hamza Goraya had been posted as naib qasid in Faisalabad and DG Khan respectively by the education department after the involvement of the ombudsman office. Furthermore, the health department recruited Muhammad Waqas Bashir of Jarawal as a ward boy, Rawalpindi's Sultan Muhammad as a sentry patrol and Muhammad Hamad Ali of TT Singh as a junior clerk in BPS-11.

One killed, 5 injured during firing in marriage ceremony

FAISALABAD (APP): One person was killed while five others sustained serious injuries due to firing during a marriage function in the area of Satiana police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Sunday that guests of groom and bride sides indulged firstly in exchange of harsh words and then in blunt firing on each other in Chak No.278-GB over some marriage related issues. As a result, 33-year-old Muhabbat Ali received serious injuries and died on the spot whereas Rescue 1122 shifted five others to hospital after providing them first aid.

Abbasi inaugurates development projects in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi Sunday inaugurated a series of completed development projects worth millions of rupees across various areas, including Batangi, Ser Sharqi and Ser Gharbi in Abbottabad.

The projects encompassed significant initiatives such as the expansion of the electricity supply and the construction of roads, demonstrating the government's commitment to progress and growth.

Addressing the public gathering after the inauguration of the projects the federal minister stressed the utmost importance of maintaining quality and transparency in all ongoing development ventures. He underscored the significance of timely project completion to ensure that the public can promptly benefit from the improvements. Murtaza Javed Abbasi emphasized the essential role of the youth in propelling Pakistan towards a brighter future.

Tight security to be ensured during Muharram: Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Higher Education/Chairman Standing Cabinet Committee for Law & Order Punjab Manzoor Qadir said that tight security arrangements would be ensured during Muharram-ul-Haram to foil all nefarious designs of the miscreants. Addressing a press conference at Municipal Corporation Hall here on Sunday, he said that all law enforcing departments including police have been made alert with a clear-cut

direction to keep vigil eye on movement of the suspects so that any untoward incident could be averted before its occurrence. He said that role of religious scholars was imperative for maintaining law and orders. Therefore, he appealed the Ulama Kiram to promote religious harmony and urged the nation to forge unity among their ranks and avoid from sectarianism so that peace could be ensured in the society for greater national interest. He said that control rooms would

be made functional at provincial, divisional and district level which would remain active round the clock. The minister said that divisional commissioner and police officers had pointed out some security related issues which would be resolved on war-footing to make the Muharram security foolproof. He said that a comprehensive strategy was devised for Muharram security which would be implemented in true spirit. This strategy would not affect trade and business activities.

Jirga succeeds in brokering peace agreement in Kurram

PESHAWAR (APP): A 30-member peace jirga succeeded in brokering a peace agreement between the two rival tribes of the tribal district Kurram on Sunday. After the signing of the one-year peace agreement, the personnel of security forces and police were deployed after clearing the fronts of the parties and normalcy began

to be restored. Talking to APP, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Kurram, Muazzam Khan Bangash said that a 30-member peace jirga comprising Sunni and Shia elders from Orakzai, Hangu and Kohat after hectic efforts of negotiations with both parties for a period of last three days succeeded in stoppage of clashes.

Two notorious bike snatcher gangs busted, 12 arrested

RAJANPUR (APP): Police have busted two notorious motorcycle snatcher gangs and arrested 12 criminals of these gangs besides recovering looted valuables worth over Rs two million during a special crackdown launched on Sunday. This was disclosed by Station House Officer (SHO) Muhammadpur Dewan police station, Akhtar Khan while holding a press conference at his office.

Sector Commander FC South reviews security arrangements for Muharram

TANK (APP): Sector Commander Frontier Corps (FC) South Brigadier Suhail Bajwa here on Sunday chaired an important meeting at Captain Sikandar Shaheed FC Camp and reviewed the security plan for upcoming Muharram-ul-Haram. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Tank Muhammad Shoib, Acting

District Police Officer Tank Nasir Khan, district officers of various departments and institutions, notables and elders of the area. The meeting was also attended by Suni religious scholars including Maulana Muhammad Sadiq Khatib, Pir Saleem Shah, Mulla Abdul Rehman, Qari Nasrullah, Hakeem Sana Khan, Maulana Gul Muhammad and Maulana Khan Muhammad.

International News

Putin says Russia has 'sufficient' cluster munitions for tit-for-tat

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said his country had enough cluster munitions to answer if Ukraine was to use the weapons, in an interview published on Sunday. Ukraine started receiving cluster weapons from the United States, a move that sparked concerns due to the long-term risk posed to civilians by bomblets that fail to explode. "Russia has a sufficient stockpile of various kinds of cluster munitions," Putin told a state-television

journalist. The controversial weapons can disperse up to several hundred small explosive charges, which can remain unexploded in the ground. "If they are used against us, we reserve ourselves the right to tit-for-tat actions," Putin said. He added Russia had not yet used the weapons despite a "certain shortage of munitions at some point". Human Rights Watch and Ukrainian forces have accused Russia of already using cluster munitions on

the battlefield. They are banned by numerous countries — notably in Europe — that are signatories to a 2008 Oslo Convention, to which neither Russia, the United States nor Ukraine are parties. Humanitarian groups have strongly condemned the US decision to supply cluster munitions to Ukraine. US President Joe Biden said the decision was "very difficult" but stressed Ukraine needed extra ammunition to refill its depleted stocks.



Syrian President Bashar Assad and Iraq's Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani review a military honour guard during a welcome ceremony in Damascus, Syria.

Iraqi premier in Syria for first visit in over a decade to discuss boosting cooperation

Monitoring Desk
DAMASCUS: Iraq's prime minister held talks Sunday with Syrian President Bashar Assad in Damascus during the first trip of its kind to the war-torn country since the 12-year conflict began. The two leaders told reporters that they discussed fighting drugs, the return of Syrian refugees and the imperative of lifting Western sanctions imposed in Syria. They also talked about Israel's strikes on the war-torn country

and water shortages in the Euphrates River that cuts through both countries because of projects in Turkey. Iraq and Syria have had close relations for years even after many Arab countries withdrew their ambassadors from Damascus and Syria's membership in the 22-member Arab League was suspended because of the crackdown on protesters in 2011. Assad received Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, who was heading a high-

ranking delegation, at the presidential palace in Damascus. They discussed mutual relations and cooperation between the two neighboring countries among other issues, according to the office of Syria's president. Al-Sudani's office said in a statement that talks revolved around ways of expanding cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, transportation, tourism, how to combat climate change and collaboration to fight terrorism.

India ties up with UAE to settle trade in rupees

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India has signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates that will allow it to settle trade in rupees instead of dollars, boosting India's efforts to cut transaction costs by eliminating dollar conversions. During a visit by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the UAE on Saturday, the two countries also agreed to set up a real-time payment link to facilitate easier cross-border money transfers. The two agreements will enable "seamless cross-border transactions and payments, and foster greater economic cooperation", said a statement from the Reserve Bank of India on Saturday.

India, the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer and whose central bank last year announced a framework for settling global trade in rupees, currently pays for UAE oil in dollars. Bilateral trade between the two countries was \$84.5 billion in the year from April 2022 to March 2023. An official with knowledge of the details of the agreement said India could make its first rupee payment for UAE oil to Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC). Reuters reported on Friday.



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol attend a meeting, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, Ukraine.

UK defence minister Wallace to step down as lawmaker at next election

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: British defence minister Ben Wallace will not stand as a member of parliament (MP) in the next UK national election, and will leave government when Prime Minister Rishi Sunak carries out his next cabinet reshuffle, he told The Sunday Times newspaper. Wallace, a member of the ruling Conservative party, has been MP for Wyre and Preston North and its predecessor constituency in northwest England since 2005. Advertisement • Scroll to continue He has been de-

fence secretary for four years, helping lead Britain's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "I'm not standing next time," he said in an interview with the newspaper, but ruled out going "prematurely" and forcing another by-election. Sunak is facing three by-elections next week, and opinion polls suggest his Conservative party could lose all of them. A general election must be held in Britain within the next 18 months. The Sunday Times said a cabinet reshuffle was expected in September.

Heavy rains, flooding leave 37 dead in South Korea

Monitoring Desk
CHEONGJU: Rescuers battled on Sunday to reach people trapped in a flooded tunnel in South Korea, where at least 37 people have died and nine are missing after heavy rains caused flooding and landslides. South Korea is at the peak of its summer monsoon season, and there has been heavy rainfall for the last four days, causing a major dam to overflow.

The interior ministry reported that 37 people were killed and another nine were missing nationwide in the heavy downpours, mostly buried by landslides or after falling into a flooded reservoir. Hundreds of rescue workers were still struggling to reach more than 10 cars and an unknown number of people trapped in a 430-metre (1,410-foot) underground tunnel in Cheongju.

EU urged to probe Greek shipwreck killing

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Nearly a month after the sinking of an overloaded boat off the Greek coast where 700 people, including Pakistanis, were killed, a prominent global humanitarian body has called on the European Union (EU) to ensure a "full, transparent" investigation into the tragedy. "So far, there have been no moves to launch such an investigation into the shipwreck—one of the deadliest on record in the Mediterranean Sea.

Xi Jinping calls for 'solid' security barrier around China's internet

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping said China must build a "solid" security barrier around its internet under the supervision of the ruling Communist Party, in his latest call to safeguard online data and information. China must persist in managing, operating and ensuring access to the internet in accordance with the law, Xi said in instructions delivered to officials attending a two-day

cybersecurity meeting in Beijing that ended on Saturday. "We must adhere to the Party's management of the internet and adhere to (the principle of) making the internet work for the people," state-run Xinhua news agency cited Xi as saying. In the past decade, Xi has made preserving security a priority, with his concept of security covering everything from politics and the economy to the environment and cyberspace.

US remains concerned N.Korea will conduct another missile test

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said on Sunday the Biden administration remains concerned that North Korea will move forward with another intercontinental ballistic missile test. "I have been concerned for some time that North Korea would conduct what would be its seventh nuclear test," Sullivan said during an interview with CBS's Face the Nation.



South Korean rescue workers search for missing persons near a bus along a deluged road leading to an underground tunnel where some 15 cars were trapped in flood waters after heavy rains in Cheongju.

Pak seeks Chinese investment to upgrade agriculture, IT, mining, housing sectors: Ahsan Iqbal

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal has said that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will provide an opportunity for Chinese investments to take advantage of incentives that Pakistan offers to foreign investment with concessions.

"We are working on nine special economic zones. The first Rashakai Special Economic Zone will be inaugurated later this month. Similarly, the other economic zones are also in the advanced stages, in Sindh, Punjab, and Baluchistan," he told APP during his recent visit to China.

Pakistan, he said, also has a great advantage in low cost of labour. As in China, many industries are experiencing high costs of production due to increased levels of cost and are now moving to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Pakistan also has a great advantage in

terms of low cost of production.

The minister said, Pakistan has a very good infrastructure and then it has the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. So, it becomes a very attractive destination for Chinese enterprises to relocate to these economic zones in Pakistan.

About specific Chinese companies who are looking forward to cooperating in this regard, he said, there are many Chinese companies which are coming. Many have invested in Gwadar free zone.

"But, we are now really looking forward to developing our agriculture sector based on new technologies. We are seeking cooperation to upgrade the quality of our seeds so those companies which have research and seed development can help us," he added.

Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan is also looking for new irrigation technologies to conserve water and bring

efficiency to agriculture, adding, "We are also looking for a food processing industry that has a great opportunity."

Regarding great opportunity in the mining sector, he said, Pakistan has huge marble deposits, which can be tapped with new technology and similarly, Pakistan has other mines like lithium and other material which is used in electric vehicles. "So, we can develop that."

He said Pakistan is also looking for joint cooperation and technology, particularly in information technology. Pakistan has a young population with very good IT skills.

"Many Chinese technology companies are shifting to Pakistan to take advantage of the low cost of human resources and high skills that our young population has. So, I think agriculture, industry, mining, IT, energy sector all these areas are very promising for Chinese enterprises to invest in Pakistan," he added.



KARACHI: Turkish Consul General Ali Fuad Erkurt sapsling plant for host lost their lives in July 15, 2016 defeated coup attempt orchestrated by Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETO), to mark the seventh anniversary of the July 15 defeated coup attempt, organized by Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) in Provincial Capital.

Rana Tanveer says: Govt aims to bring out-of-school children in educational network

ISLAMABAD (APP): "Education has always been our priority, it is the mission of the government to bring 20 million out-of-school children into the educational network, and under the dynamic leadership of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) can play a vital role to make this mission successful," said Federal Minister for Education, Rana Tanveer Hussain while addressing the foundation stone laying ceremony of the academic block of Sheikhupura Regional Campus of AIU.

Rana Tanveer Hussain briefed about the initiatives taken for Sheikhupura by the government, he said that he had laid the foundation stone for the building of Sheikhupura Regional Campus last year and today laying stone of its academic block.

The Federal Minister for Education, Rana Tanveer Hussain directed the Vice Chancellor AIU to complete the construction work of Sheikhupura Campus in three months.

He also demanded to provide scholarships for the students of Sheikhupura. He also asked to establish an examination centre at Narang Mandi.

Vice-Chancellor AIU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood announced that AIU will allocate 20 lacs per year as a scholarship fund for Sheikhupura and will refund the fees to students who get 80% marks.

Dr. Nasir assured Education Minister to establish an examination centre in Narang Mandi.

Director General, Pakistan Institute of Education, Dr. Shahid Soroya, Director General Regional Services, Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmad Khan, Assistant Regional Director Sheikhupura, Javed Iqbal, Regional Directors of Lahore, Faisalabad, Narowal, Sialkot, Gujranwala, MNAs, educationists, and students also attended the event.

Gwadar Free Zone North to start operation in 30 days

ISLAMABAD (INP): Holding Company. "The factory's construction started last year and was completed in a remarkably short time. Agven will offer hundreds of job opportunities and provide local business opportunities in terms of commodities and raw material supply," Project Coordinator Arslan told Gwadar Pro.

Upon operation, it can potentially attract other investors to Gwadar Free Zone. Mr. Arslan added that sulfur and sulfuric acid, used as raw materials for fertilizer manufacturing, would be imported from Iran and Central Asian countries.

Another export company, "Hangeng," along with its branches "Hangeng Trade Co (SMC-PVT) Ltd" and "Yuanhua Industrial Co," is set to start operations in Gwadar Free Zone North.

Hangeng Trading Co., Ltd. will foster cultivation and purchase of agricultural products like aloe vera and import pharmaceutical raw materials globally for processing in the Gwadar Free Zone and export to China. Yuanhua Industrial Co., Ltd. will mainly engage in animal husbandry and livestock development.

An official of Hangeng stated that the operation, expected to commence soon, will create 1,000 direct and 3,000 indirect employment opportunities for locals. Hangeng plans to build an industrial ecosystem in Gwadar, intending to establish aquaculture, medical treatment, and technical support facilities. For this, experts from China will be hired to train local youth in animal husbandry, livestock, and aloe vera cultivation.

Moreover, a free animal husbandry breeding hospital will be established to provide medical and technical services.



ISLAMABAD: View of gate closed of entrance of Bari Imam road for traffic due to construction of security gate, in the Federal Capital.

Railways minister calls on PM; briefs on reforms

LAHORE (APP): Minister for Railways and Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique on Sunday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and apprised him of the progress over reforms in Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and outsourcing process aimed at provision of better services at airports.

During the meeting, they also discussed the matters related to the relevant ministry.



SIALKOT: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with high achievers who received laptops under the PM Youth Scheme distribution ceremony.

15-member Pak delegation to visit China

ISLAMABAD (INP): A 15-member Pakistani delegation led by Ambassador @ Sohail Mahmood Director General, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), would participate in a Seminar and Think Tank Forum in China, with an aim to further promote academic and people-to-people exchanges between Pakistan and China.

On invitation from Fudan University, Shanghai, the Pakistani delegation including diplomats, senior academics, researchers and media persons, departed to China on Sunday for a week-long visit, said a press release issued here.

The delegation includes Prof. Dr. Engr. Attaullah Shah, Vice Chancellor, University of

Karakoram, Dr. Ayesha Alam, University of Hazara; Prof. Dr. Ayesha Sohail, University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir; Amb. Babar Amin, Former Ambassador; Dost Mohammad Barrech, University of Balochistan; Dr. Fouzia Hadi Ali, University of Punjab; Prof. Dr. Kausar Takrim, University of Peshawar; Muhammad Ali Baig, Research Fellow, ISSI; Dr. Mukesh Khatwani, University of Sindh; Shaikat Piracha, Senior Anchor, Aaj News; Dr. Tahir Mumtaz Awan, COMSATS University, Islamabad; Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC), ISSI; Tanveer Hashmi, Jang Group and Misbah Mukhtar, Research Associate, ISSI.

MD PBM commits to fighting poverty, uplifting underprivileged in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM), a national social welfare organization, led by Managing Director Amir Fida Paracha, is dedicated to combating poverty and uplifting marginalized communities in Pakistan.

The MD PBM in a statement highlighted the establishment of 46 Sweet Homes across the country, providing care for orphaned children. Additionally, PBM has set up 163 Women Empowerment Centers, promoting skill-based education for women, and 159 Child Labor Welfare Schools. Furthermore, 18 Shelter Homes have been established, and the "Roti Sab Kay Liye" program has been introduced, which offers meals through 20 food

trucks. The organization has successfully implemented the Orphan and Widows Support Program (OWSP) in ten districts, extending financial assistance to widows and orphans.

He appreciated the support provided to individuals with disabilities, senior citizens, and the needy, through medical treatments and educational opportunities. These programs have had a positive impact on the lives of deserving citizens.

He expressed the organization's commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of its programs by fostering public-private partnerships. By engaging local and international donors, PBM has gained increased resources and efficiency.

PM urges women to ramp up role in economic progress

SIALKOT (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday urged women to come forward and ramp up their vital roles in different fields of life and make contributions to the progress of the economy.

Addressing a ceremony to distribute laptops under PM's Youth Laptop Scheme 2023 at Government College Women University here, he said Rs 5 billion were allocated for projects related to the empowerment of women. "No nation can make progress if women are not made productive part of society."

He said in the past his government had spent a substantial amount on the medical education of female students and the investment in women's education would continue. He said

next month his government would complete its tenure and a caretaker government would be formed.

If people would give chance to them in the next election, our government would bring revolution in the field of education and a large number of students would be given laptops, he remarked.

He said the laptops were given as recognition of the hard work and talent of the students. The laptops were distributed on the basis of merit in the past as well, he added.

As Khadim e Aala Punjab, he said he always wanted to share the resources with other provinces as the progress and prosperity of the country depended upon shared development.

He said 100,000 laptops had already been

distributed while in the current year, another 100,000 laptops would be awarded.

The people should decide in the general elections after evaluating what had happened in the country in the last five years, he asserted.

He thanked Finance Minister Ishaq Dar for ensuring the allocation of funds for the import of laptops for students.

He said students would be given more laptops and scholarships and laboratories and research institutes would be set up in educational institutions.

Shehbaz Sharif said Muslims were left behind in different fields of education while the West moved ahead and it was time for reflection and action in the right direction.

Rain likely at various parts of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast hot and humid weather in most plain areas of the country. However, rain-wind/thundershower was expected in Kashmir, Potohar region, Northeast Punjab, and Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to the synoptic situation, monsoon currents from the Bay of Bengal were penetrating the upper parts of the country.

During the last 24 hours, the weather remained hot and humid in most parts of the country. However, rain-wind/thundershowers occurred in various parts of the country.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Engr. Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman addressing the cheques distribution ceremony of Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan.

Balochistan's development linked with provision of NFC share: Zubaida Jalal

QUETTA (APP): Member of the National Assembly, Zubaida Jalal has said that the provision of the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award is imperative for the economic development of the province and to bring it up to the level of other provinces.

Talking to members of the business community here on Sunday, she expressed that the federal government has acknowledged Balochistan's backwardness but failed to effectively address the issues and lift the people out of poverty, said a news release.

The main reason for the poverty and backwardness of Balochistan is the lack of funds and not enough share in the NFC Award, despite the fact that Balochistan constitutes half of Pakistan," she explained.

She said that the provision of security for half of Pakistan is a huge challenge, and the province spends 40

per cent of its resources on maintaining law and order.

"We are asserting our rights in accordance with the law and the Constitution while remaining within our means. We ought not to be found in some unacceptable light said Jalal.

and added, "We are also demanding our right, and every province demands its right."

She said that the Iranian diesel and petroleum exchange at the boundary is being facilitated to guarantee the continuation of individuals' jobs, empowering them to keep their ovens consuming in their homes. This action was taken to try not to deny our kin of work until we can give them elective well-springs of occupation.

She said there were few government jobs and no industries in Balochistan. If people remain unemployed, they may fall prey to the propaganda of anti-state elements.

PTI suspends membership of more party leaders

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday suspended the basic party membership of six more party leaders.

The members include Haji Shaikat Ali, Mujahid Maital, Nadia Aziz, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, Nadia Aziz and others.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) terminated the basic party membership of former defence minister Pervez Khattak for not giving satisfactory reply about inciting PTI members to leave party.

PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan issued the termination letter 'with reference to the show cause notice' served to Pervez Khattak last month.

"You [Khattak] have not provided a satisfactory reply within the given stipulated time regarding contacting party members and inciting them to leave the party," the termination notice stated.

Therefore, the notice stated, Khattak's basic membership of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has been terminated.

Govt crossing all bounds of shame: Rasheed

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and former federal minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed expressed his strong disapproval of the current government's attitude towards loan acquisitions, accusing them of exceeding all bounds of "shame." In a scathing Twitter statement on Sunday.

Ahmed highlighted the concerning trend of celebrating loans as an achievement. He underscored that governments across the globe typically feel a sense of embarrassment when seeking loans. However, he lamented that the sitting Pakistani government seemed to be embracing this practice as a source of pride. The former federal minister's remarks shed light on his concerns regarding the country's economic policies and decision-making.

Lambasting the government, Ahmed said electricity, gas, flour and sugar had become more expensive in the 15 months of the PDM government and any efforts to bring the country's economy on track would be "futile".

Strict action against smoke emitting vehicles ordered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police has intensified action against smoke emitting and pressure horns

in polluting the environment. Mobile squads of Islamabad capital police have been formed to implement the campaign



vehicles for the purpose of environmental protection, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Capital City Police Officer Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police have intensified the crackdown against vehicles causing environmental pollution and using pressure horns.

In this regard all Zonal DSPs have been directed to take stern action against vehicles involved

against the smoke-emitting vehicles. These squads patrol in various areas and important boulevards of the city and are directed to take legal action against those vehicles involved in noise and smoke pollution. Special squads had been constituted as per the directions of IGP Islamabad in order to conduct regular checking and issued fine tickets against vehicles involved in noise or other environmental pollution in the city.