

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vol XXIV No 338, Muharramul Haram 12, 1445 AH Monday July 31, 2023 Pages 12, Price Rs.15

President, PM, others condemn 44 martyred, over 100 injured in suicide blast at JUI-F convention in Bajaur

Maulana Hameedullah Haqqani and Maulana Zir Ur Rehman among those martyred; PM summons report on blast; emergency imposed at hospitals across Bajaur; 10kg of explosives were used in suicide blast; JUI-F chief demands inquiry in blast.

PESHAWAR (APP): Maulana Hameedullah Haqqani, General Secretary JUI-F Tehsil Navagai and Maulana Zir Ur Rehman, Ameer Tehsil Khar were martyred along with 44 other workers and over 150 others injured in the huge suicide bomb blast during the JUI-F Worker Convention at Dubai More (Shindai), Khal, Bajaur District on Sunday. Rescue 1122 officials confirmed. District Health Officer Bajaur Dr. Faisal also confirmed that they have received 40 dead bodies with more than 150 injured and among them, 16 persons were in critical condition that have been airlifted by Army Helicopters to CMH Hospital Peshawar. The Bacha International Airport Officials are said to have received 16 critically injured persons through two Army Helicopters. Soon after arrival, the injured were shifted to CHM Peshawar. The number of dead people is more than forty, including the local leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Ziaullah Jan, and former senator Maulana Abdul Rasheed was slightly injured. Dr. Faisal Kamal has confirmed that 40 people have died in the blast and more than 150 people have been injured in the Bajaur blast. He said 16 seriously

injured had been sent to Peshawar CMH by helicopter, DHO Dr Faisal Kamal said. He said, many were injured in Lower Dir Timergara, and many have been sent to Peshawar. However, according to reports, 7 ambulances of Rescue 1122 have been deployed at Peshawar Bacha Khan Airport, a spokesperson of Rescue 1122 said. He said all the injured from the Bajaur blast were shifted to Peshawar by two Army helicopters.

He said the injured are being transferred to Rescue 1122 ambulances which are equipped with medical technicians who will provide medical assistance en route. He said 16 seriously



BAJAUR: Worker of JUI (F) shifting injured suicide bomb blast victim in a hospital

COAS condoles with UAE president over brother's death

ISLAMABAD (Online): Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir condoled United Arab Emirates (UAE) president Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan on his brother during his visit to the UAE. The Emirates Embassy in Pakistan shared a photo. In the picture released on the Twitter account by

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LAHORE: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif talking with media persons after inaugurating various development projects.

Senate drops Prevention of Violent Extremism Bill after strong opposition

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Sunday took a decision to drop an item, which pertained to 'The Prevention of Violent Extremism Bill, 2023,' from the house's agenda due to reservations expressed by several members of parliament. Clarifying his position, he said the session was not summoned on the holiday due to this particular bill being introduced on behalf of Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah Khan for the prevention of violent extremism.

The chairman further made it clear that it was decided in the meeting of the advisory committee with the mutual understanding of all parliamentary leaders to summon the session on this day. However, Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan, terming the bill in the national interest said this legislation was made in the backdrop of United Nations Security Council Resolutions under 2178 and 2354. He further clarified that this particular legislation was being made to stop the violent extremism from the country as entire nation stands united against it. Senator Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) expressed his concerns and threatened to boycott the session if the bill was brought to the house. He proposed that the bill be sent to the relevant committee for a thorough review of its potential pros and cons to prevent misuse against any political party in the future.

Chinese Vice Premier arrives in capital on two day visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): At the invitation of the Government of Pakistan, the Special Envoy of President Xi Jinping, the Vice Premier of China and a Member of the Politburo of the Communist Party He Lifeng arrived here on Sunday on a two-day visit to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Continued on page 2



WADH: Chief of Sarawan Nawab Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani and Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Raisani meeting with President BNP Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal and Sardar Asadullah Mengal

Inefficiency, criminal negligence of PTI's govt cost country dearly: PM

National Assembly to be dissolved before August 12, says Shahbaz Sharif

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Sunday lambasted the criminal negligence and inefficient performance of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) government led by former prime minister Imran Khan Niazi, saying that the country paid a heavy price for their blunders and political vendetta. The prime minister expressed these views after performing the soft launching of various development projects which included Rs 50 billion Medical City, Rs 52 billion National Health Support Programme, and Rs 30 billion Population Welfare Programme. On the occasion, he also broke grounds for the SL-3 Lahore Ring Road project, Shadara to Kala Shah Kaku Metro Bus extension project, and inaugurated 1263 MW Punjab Thermal power plant in Jhang with a capacity of

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Bizenjo terms establishment of BCSA and graduation of 1st batch of MCMC historic

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has expressed his pleasure over graduation of the first batch of Mid-career Management Course (MCMC) from the Balochistan Civil Services Academy (BCSA). In an official statement issued here on Sunday, the Chief Minister termed es-

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Most welcome Excellency He Lifeng in Pakistan



The Vice Premier of China and Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, H.E He Lifeng has arrived Pakistan on three-day visit.

We heartily welcome the Excellency Hi Lifeng on his high profile visit being paid at the invitation of the Government of Pakistan.

Needless to mention here is that the important visit of the Vice Premier of China, who also happens to be the Special Envoy of President H.E Xi Jinping, is in connection with the 10th-anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

We are highly pleased to mention that this year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) proposed by Presi-

dent Xi Jinping, and also the 10th anniversary of the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

There's no denying the fact that the H.E He Lifeng has remained actively involved in the progress of CPEC projects and has contributed to the dynamic growth in the implementation of CPEC initiatives.

The Foreign Office spokesperson has termed the visit of the Chinese Vice Premier as a significant step to further strengthen the high-level bilateral ties and deepen the friendship between Pakistan and China.

Similarly, the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Mao Ning rightly stated that "Over the past decade, as an important pioneering project of the BRI, CPEC has achieved fruitful results and become a new benchmark for the friendship between China and Pakistan."

To mark the 10th anniversary of the launch of CPEC, the Pakistani government will hold a grand celebration event in Islamabad, wherein the Vice Premier of the State Council would be participating. In addition to this, Excellency He Lifeng is also scheduled to call on President Dr Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Undoubtedly China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners and iron-clad friends. The friendship is time-honored.

One also hopes that this very visit of the Vice Premier will be an opportunity for both sides to jointly implement the important consensus between leaders of the two countries, renew the traditional friendship, build on past achievements and upgrade the development of CPEC, consolidate and deepen the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, advance the building of an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era and contribute to the development and prosperity of the region and beyond.



PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN

Space donated by: Syed Farooq Shah Editor-in-Chief Independent Group of Newspapers

CM praises security institutions for making foolproof arrangements on Ashura-e-Muharram

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has expressed satisfaction over peaceful ending of the Ashura-e-Muharram's processions all over the province including Quetta and praised the security institutions for making foolproof security arrangements for the occasion.

According to an official handout issued here on late Sunday night, the Chief Minister particularly praised the Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh and Deputy Inspector General of Police, Ghulam Azfar Maheer.

He said that the police, Levies, Frontier Corps and local administration worked hard round the clock to make excellent arrangements and provided security to the processions and majalis with effective strategy.

While on the other hand, the Pak army also remained alert to assist the administration and other law enforcement agencies and avert any untoward incident, adding the Chief

Minister mentioned.

He said that the peaceful environment was made possible on Ashura in the province thanks to the effective coordination among the law enforcement agencies and the administration.

He also thanked the general public for extending cooperation to the LEAs. In addition to this, the Chief Minister was also indebted to the religious leaders of all schools of thoughts for playing wholehearted role in promotion of religious harmony.

Marriyum Aurangzeb strongly condemns violence against 14-year Rizwana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has strongly condemned the incident of violence against a 14-year-old domestic worker Rizwana and demanded swift justice in the case. The minister, in a news statement on Sunday, called the incident "shameful" and "condemnable."

She emphasized that no society could tolerate such oppressive elements, especially when it involved child labor and the brutal

treatment to young individuals like Rizwana.

Marriyum said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had directed Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi to take serious notice of the matter and ensure swift action to bring the perpetrators to justice. The government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, was committed to play its due role in ensuring that the accused were punished according to the law, she added.

She regretted that the courts were granting bails to the culprits instead of delivering justice to the innocent victim, Rizwana.

The minister stressed that delivering justice to Rizwana was a litmus test for the judiciary's reputation.

She pledged all-out efforts to ensure that the oppressed daughter, Rizwana, received the justice she rightfully deserved.

The nation, she urged, should unite in prayers for her early recovery.



SIALKOT: Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif is listening to people's problems at his residence in Cantt.

Inefficiency, criminal....

Continued from page 1
generating 10 billion inexpensive units annually.

Addressing the ceremony, the PM said Imran Niazi had neglected the completion of the gas-fired Haveli Bahadur Shah power plant due to his animosity with the PML-N leadership and the country had to pay an additional whopping amount of Rs 77 billion besides, its original cost of Rs 74 billion at that time due to non-functionality.

He said the project was to be inaugurated in 2019 but it was stalled due to criminal negligence of Imran Niazi and the lack of interest of the previous government.

A huge amount of the nation went down the drain, causing huge losses for the poor country, he opined, adding it was one of the worst examples of PTI's bad governance.

"Who will be held accountable for such a blunder? It is the continuation of a saga of 75 years for which they were all responsible," he quipped.

Why the judiciary did not take suo motu for such negligence? the prime minister questioned and maintained that he had no intention of victimization and did not want injustice with anyone, but there should be transparent accountability of all those responsible for such failures whether it was done in a dictatorship or democratic regime, justice should be dispensed without any victimization, he said.

With such accountability, the nations in the world moved forward, he added.

The ceremony was attended by Punjab Governor, Caretaker Chief Minister, federal and provincial ministers, parliamentarians, and the relevant authorities.

The prime minister said these were the facts that the nation must know about the four years rule of Imran Niazi who played havoc with the national economy.

The prime minister said that they felt ashamed while carrying the begging bowl due to the failures of the past government.

"It was a huge mishap of our history (PTI's government) which is already strewn with such unpleasant incidents. If we do not change the attitude, we cannot aspire to achieve anything," he regretted.

Citing the example of China, he said it had now become the world's second-largest economy.

Japan and Germany bounced back economically from the destruction of World Wars owing to commitment, devotion, and determination, he added.

"Let us gird up loins and work hard for the country's progress as peeping into the past would be useless. If they failed, the public will not forget them. Let us wash away the blots of the past," the PM stressed.

He also expressed his resolve to revive the country's economy by eliminating poverty and unemployment.

The prime minister also regretted that due to PTI's sits at D-Chowk in 2014, President Xi's visit to Pakistan was postponed.

He said under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the PML-N

government had initiated Haveli and Baloki power plants with power generation of 1200 MW each, besides, the 1150 MW Bhikki project in Punjab.

The prime minister, on the occasion, said the Medical City project would be completed with all the allied facilities and would be at par with the world's renowned health projects like the PKLI was ranked best among Asia's top institutes.

He said the federal and provincial governments would jointly execute the project.

About the 8km SL-3 Lahore Ring Road, the prime minister said that one part of the ring road was left out, adding now its completion would facilitate a huge number of commuters by removing the vehicular congestion. The extension of the Metro bus project would serve thousands of commuters on a daily basis, he added and directed for its completion within three months. Governor Punjab Baligh ur Rehman also highlighted the performance of the coalition government during the past fifteen months in which mega projects of public interest were launched.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday said National Assembly will be dissolved before August 12 with the consultation of the allied parties.

In an interview with a private news channel, he said the tenure of National Assembly will end on August 12 and before that the assembly will be dissolved, while the Election Commission will announce a date for the next elections.



QUETTA: Ameer of Jamiat-e-Taliba Islam Baluchistan Hafiz Hassan Shahab addressing a press conference in press club in Provincial Capital.

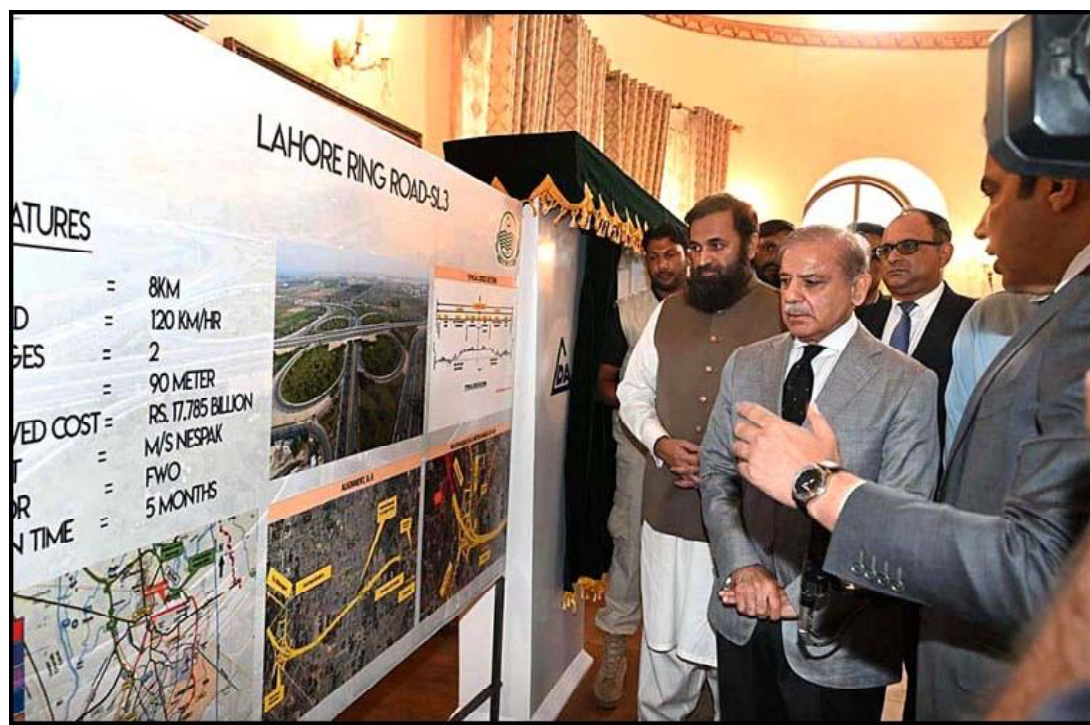
FM Bilawal embarks UAE on day long visit

DUBAI (Online): Foreign Minister (FM) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Sunday landed in United Arab Emirates on one day visit.

UAE authorities and Pakistani envoy Faisal Niaz Tirmizi paid reception to FM on airport.

FM Bilawal will meet UAE FM Sheikh Abdullah bin Zaid Al-Nehyan. All aspects of bilateral relations among brotherly countries will be discussed during the meeting. Foreign minister will attend the unveiling ceremony of 1st Pakistani personality Ms. Benazir Bhutto's statue in Madam Tussaud, Dubai.

FM visit reflects strong, bilateral relations. Both countries are eager to strengthen bilateral relations and more deepen beneficial partnership.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about the extension project of Lahore Ring Road SL-3.

Visits Central Police Office on Ashura: Governor commends police and other LEAs on making excellent arrangements

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar visited the Central Police Office here on Saturday, Ashura-e-Muharram.

He visited the Command and Control Center where he was briefed about the security arrangements and other related measures taken on eve of Ashura for security of the processions and majalis in Quetta.

On the occasion, the Governor also monitored the arrangements made in this regard from the Command and Control center.

Also present on the occasion were the Additional Chief Secretary Home, Saleh Muhammad Nasar, IGP Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Additional IGP, Jawad Ahmed Dogar, Additional IGP and Commandant Balochistan Constabulary, Chaudhary Salman besides other police senior officers.

The Governor appreciated the arrangements made by the police and other law enforcement agencies for maintaining overall law and order situation and particularly for the Muharramul Haram.

He said that the arrangements made by police and other LEAs are satisfactory.

However, no negligence would be tolerated on safety of the processions and other gatherings in this regard, adding he asserted.

He on the occasion directed to improve the monitoring of security through Command and Control Center further.

He noted with contentment that administration, police and all institutions are on one page for maintaining law and order in the province.

Earlier, the Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh along with other police senior officers at the CPO.

Dar pledges to raise foreign reserves to \$15 bln in 7 weeks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Ishaq Dar, on Sunday, pledged to increase the country's foreign exchange reserves from \$14 billion to \$15 billion in the next seven weeks.

Speaking on a Point of Order in the Senate, Dar mentioned that the past 11 months had been challenging due to predictions from rating agencies about Pakistan's potential default. The country faced pressure to pay a significant sum of 3 billion dollars.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said China has extended the loan duration of

\$2.4 billion for two years. This month, Pakistan, facing financial constraints, received a total of \$4.2 billion, which comprised \$2 billion from Saudi Arabia, \$1 billion from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and \$1.2 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF approved \$3 billion for Pakistan as part of a Standby Arrangement (SBA).

Dar revealed that Pakistan received \$300 million from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) to strengthen the country's foreign exchange reserves.

Bizenjo terms establishment of

Continued from page 1
his government took initiatives for betterment of the civil service like other sectors in the province.

The Chief Minister maintained that civil services has basic importance in construction and development and the potential of civil officers can be utilized for development of the province and country by providing them the necessary opportunities of training and capacity building.

He congratulated the

Chief Secretary, Abdul Aziz Uqaili, Director General BCSA Dr. Hafiz Jamali on successful completion of the first course at the Academy and hoped that BCSA would keep on making achievements in future as well.

The Chief Minister also congratulated the first batch of officers who completed MCMC at the BCSA expressing hope that they would use their capabilities for well being of the people of province.

44 martyred, over 100 injured....

emergency has also been imposed in the hospitals of nearby districts. The provincial government is firm on its resolve to eradicate terrorism, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel said.

Caretaker Provincial Minister Taj Mohammad Afridi condemned the blast and expressed regret over the horrific blast in Khar, Bajaur headquarters. It has been confirmed that 40 persons were killed with 16 in critical condition and are being airlifted by Army choppers to CMH Peshawar, LRH and HMC Peshawar.

Talking to media men, District Health Officer Dr Faisal while confirming the injured said that more than 150 were injured with the bodies of 40 others received and 16 in critical condition.

The caretaker Provincial Minister expressed condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief. Instructions have been issued to the relief department officials to take the necessary steps in time.

The miscreants and anti-peace elements will be dealt with strictly, the caretaker provincial minister said in

a message. Rescue 1122 teams are being engaged in rescue operations at the accident site, said the Caretaker Minister, Relief, Rehabilitation and Resettlement. As soon as the information was received, ambulances of Rescue 1122 reached the spot, Taj Mohammad Afridi said.

The staff was alerted to the blast in Bajaur LRH, Asim Khan Spokesperson LRH told APP. Emergency is fully operational, all staff are present, Asim Khan said. After transferring the injured from Bajaur to Peshawar, all kinds of treatment will be provided, Asim Khan said. Emergency ICU and other wards are also ready, Asim Khan said. Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Ghandapur confirmed that it was a suicide blast at the main gate. The death toll from the blast in Bajaur reached 40, he said. He also confirmed that as a result of the explosion, more than 150 people were injured.

He said the injured are being shifted to Bajaur Hospital, Timargarah Hos-

Benazir Bhutto's wax statue unveiled at Madame Tussauds in Dubai

DUBAI (APP): Wax figure of former Prime Minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was unveiled at Madame Tussauds Dubai in UAE on Sunday.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also attended the unveiling event.

Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto is the first Pakistani whose wax figure is displayed at Madame Tussauds Dubai.

Ambassador of Pakistan to UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, senior officials of the Embassy and Consulate General of Pakistan and prominent community members were also present.

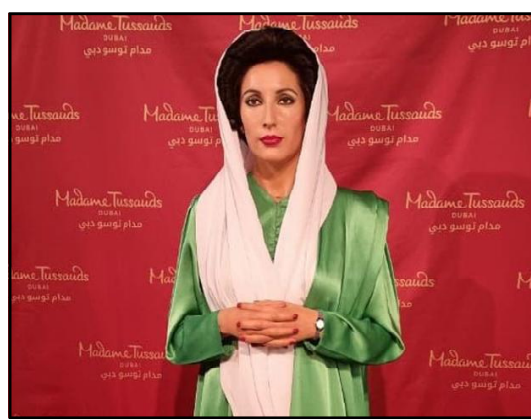
In his remarks on the occasion, the Foreign Minister highlighted that the wax figure is a befitting tribute to Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. He added that her legacy - being the first female Prime Minister from the Muslim World - continued to inspire the young generation - women in particular. He further remarked that the former Prime Minister of Pakistan was con-

sistent and passionate in advocating peace, stability, and cooperation amongst nations at international fora.

Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on the occasion said the work of Madame Tussauds allows us to celebrate the achievements and contributions of remarkable individuals who have inspired generations all over the world.

Late Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's wax figure unveiled at the Madame Tussauds wears the same outfit she wore when sworn in as Prime Minister of Pakistan. The figure was sculpted from a sitting in 1989 using the traditional techniques. The figure will be placed in the first zone of Madame Tussauds Dubai, alongside wax figures of Royals and leaders of the world.

Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was a Pakistani politician and stateswoman who served as the 11th and 13th Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1988 to 1990 and again from 1993 to 1996. She was the first female leader of any Islamic state in modern history and daughter of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.



COAS condoles UAE president...

Continued from page 1
The Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Pakistan, Army Chief General Asim Munir is seen expressing his condolences with the Emirati President Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan. It should be remembered that earlier Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif also visited the United Arab Emirates. He went to the Emirates and expressed his deep sorrow to Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan on the death of his brother.

Chinese Vice Premier arrives...

Continued from page 1
Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal and Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah received the visiting dignitary at the airport. "During his visit, He Lifeng will call on President Dr Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. He will also be the chief guest at an event celebrating the 'Decade of CPEC'," said a Foreign Office spokesperson.

"Vice Premier He Lifeng has played a prominent role in China's international economic relations and implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, of which CPEC is a flagship project." As the Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission (2017-23), he was instrumental in the planning and execution of multiple CPEC projects in Pakistan, she added.

"The visit is part of regular high-level exchanges and dialogue between Pakistan and China. It reflects the importance attached by Pakistan and China to further deepen their 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership'; reaffirm support on issues of each other's core interests.



QUETTA: Activists of BNP hold a protest in favor of their demands outside press club in Provincial Capital.

telephoned the chief of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Amir Jamiat Ulema Islam (F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Minister for Communications Maulana Asad Mehmood and condoled with them over the death of their workers in party convention in Khar, Bajaur.

Talking to the JUI leaders, the PM expressed his grief over the loss of precious lives.

He said the government was determined to eradicate terrorism and the culprits will be given exemplary punishment.

He sympathized with the bereaved families, prayed for the elevation of ranks of the martyrs in Jannah, and grant patience for the bereaved families and early recovery of the injured.

The prime minister also talked to the Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the telephone and instructed them to provide the best possible medical treatment to those injured in the blast in Khar. He directed that the severely injured should be transported to other hospitals on helicopters.

Posters urge IIOJK people to observe Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir as 'Black Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Posters appealing to the people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) for observing Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir on August 5 as the 'Black Day' have appeared across the occupied Valley.

According to the Kashmir Media Service (KMS), On August 5, 2019, the Modi-led Hindutva regime revoked Article 370 which granted special status to the internationally recognized disputed territory and imposed a brutal military and police siege.

The appeal was made by all Kashmiri freedom organizations through posters, appearing in Srinagar and other parts of the Valley. The posters urged the people to observe August 5 "Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir" as the Black Day.

Posters with pictures of illegally detained All Par-

ties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders Massarat Alam Butt, Shabbir Ahmed Shah, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Aasiya Andrabi and Nayeem Ahmed Khan again appeared in Srinagar and other parts of the territory, rejecting the illegal and unilateral Indian actions of August 5, 2019. The posters, displayed by APHC, Falah Party Jammu and Kashmir, Justice Party Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Youth Forum, Kashmir Political Resistance Movement, Jammu and Kashmir Justice and Peace Initiative, Nawjawan-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Justice League Forum, Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Movement, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Resistance Party, Wareseen-e-Shuhada Jammu and Kashmir, Sadai-

e-Mazloom Jammu and Kashmir and Kashmir Students Youth Forum in Srinagar, Islamabad, Kulgam, Shopian and other areas of the occupied territory, rejected the illegal and unilateral Indian actions of August 5, 2019.

The poster called the day "Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir". The posters said that masses of Jammu and Kashmir were demanding reversing of actions of 5th August 2019, the resolution of the Kashmir dispute as per the United Nations resolutions, the release of all political detainees, and end to human rights violations by Indian troops in IIOJK. The posters urged the Indian judiciary to give an urgent hearing and disposal to the representations before the courts and restore the illegally snatched Article 370 and 35A to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman WAPDA, Lt. Gen. (R) Sajjad Ghani calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

DG PMNH calls for investing more in science, technology sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General of the Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH), Prof. Dr Muhammad Akram Shaikh has urged the government to invest more in the science and technology sector in the country for achieving social and economic development.

"Those countries that have invested in the science and technology sector have achieved substantial progress and development", the DG said during an interview with APP.

Highlighting the performance of PMNH, Dr. Akram Shaikh said, "The PMNH is eager to complete

the construction of the remaining six blocks of the only science museum in the country which has been pending for the last many years." He said, "Rs 500 million has been approved for the construction of these blocks in this year's budgetary allocation which would help address the issue of space shortage hindering the display of more specimens." PMNH, established in 1976, is an attached department of the Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) for the collection, preservation, and identification of flora fauna, rock, fossils, gems, minerals, etc. with a two-fold objective of

exhibiting these to teach the general public and visitors about the bio-diversity and natural history and conducting research through field study by the scientists for identification and cataloging. The DG informed, "PMNH has recently completed the project of 'Outdoor Volcano Display' which is aimed at providing education to the general public especially students about the volcano eruption." "The Volcano Display, developed by the Earth Science Division of PMNH, provides information to visitors about the process of volcanism in the oceans and on the continents."



ISLAMABAD: Billboard and Pak-China flags are being displayed at Zero Point in connection with 10 years celebration of CPEC.

PRCS AJK responds better during Ashura processions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Red Crescent Society Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) chapter demonstrated exemplary humanitarian efforts during the Ashura commemorations in Muzaffarabad, Kotli, and Mirpur.

The organization's rapid response teams and dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of participants during significant religious occasions.

As hundreds and thousands of people gathered to pay homage to and observe Ashura, the PRCS - AJK Chapter took proactive measures to provide essential medical assistance and support.

Highly trained first aid responders and medical professionals were strategically stationed along procession routes and key gathering areas.

Medical camps, equipped with life-saving supplies and medicines, were established to cater to any health-related emergen-

cies. The PRCS teams effectively addressed minor injuries and provided immediate medical attention where required, ensuring a swift and effective response to incidents.

The staff and volunteers of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society AJK State Branch provided first aid to more than 500 people in districts Muzaffarabad, Kotli and Mirpur and shifted 60 severely injured to Sheikh Zaid Hospital Muzaffarabad through PRCS Ambulances.

While speaking on the occasion, Secretary Pakistan Red Crescent Society AJK Chapter Gulzar Fatima said that PRCS AJK State Branch remains committed to its mission of alleviating human suffering and serving vulnerable communities across the region.

The Society's prompt and effective response during Ashura exemplifies its dedication to upholding the principles of impartiality, neutrality and humanity.



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Capital Development Authority (CDA) draining rain water at Rawal Dam Underpass after the heavy Monsoon rains in Federal Capital.

Acknowledging brilliance of talented youth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Brilliant youth excelling in education and research provide as a backbone for any nation and its economy as they take strides in different arenas of life competing regionally and internationally to develop a strong base.

Their acknowledgment in the form of equipping them with the latest research techniques and gadgets pave the way for them to be compatible with international standards and capture more and more slots at universities abroad.

As many poor students who win laurels in studies were hit by abject poverty and lacking the latest equipment to compete in the world market, therefore the PML-N government has revived the Laptop Scheme for the outstanding students by allocating Rs 10 billion in budget 2023-24.

This amount would be spent to provide 100,000 high-quality latest laptops

to talented students of public sector universities studying all degree programs including BS (16 Years), MS/MPhil (18 Years), and PhD under the Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme. Laptops' share is calculated on an enrollment basis in each degree program as the scheme announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif aims at facilitating outstanding students to continue higher studies and earn a respectable living.

"In this era of latest learning techniques, laptops, and smart gadgets have an important role in building a knowledge economy and creating massive job opportunities for youth," said Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

Commenting on the scheme, she informed that the laptop scheme which was halted by the previous PTI government, has been revived with plans to dis-

tribute 100,000 laptops among talented students.

"It was a flagship project of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), launched during the government of the then Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif with a vision to empower youth by creating an enabling environment," she added.

She also mentioned the distribution of half a million laptops from 2013-2018 by the then PML-N government keeping in mind the importance of the latest technologies.

"This scheme will improve the quality of science and technology education by increasing productivity and efficiency of students in advanced IT technologies."

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has successfully executed two such schemes in the past by following strict criteria to ensure transparency.

According to an HEC official, the program would

NA speaker, Dy speaker flay bomb blast at JUI-F workers' convention

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani on Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of lives resulting from the bomb blast at Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazi (JUI-F) workers' convention in Bajaur.

Extending condolences to the bereaved families affected by the tragic incident, they said targeting innocent civilians was a

highly reprehensible act of terrorism.

The speaker and deputy speaker denounced the terrorists and those involved in such cowardly acts, as they were enemies of humanity and the nation.

"The entire nation stands united against terrorism and vows to eradicate it from the country as the terrorists are playing with the lives of innocent citizens to achieve their malicious objectives," they added.

Tariq elected as new EC member of WESPA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Tariq Pervez was elected as new Executive Committee member of the World English Scrabble Players Association (WESPA) at Las Vegas, USA. The elections for the new Executive Committee of the WESPA were held at Las Vegas during the annual general meeting, Tariq Pervez, Director, Pakistan Scrabble Association told.

Secured 348 votes the second highest among all members and was elected as member WESPA, he said.



ISLAMABAD: A view of People watch water is being released through the spillways as level in Rawal Dam reached dangerous height after the heavy monsoon rains in Federal Capital.

50 surveillance cameras installed from high security zone to airport

ISLAMABAD (APP): An additional 50 surveillance cameras have been strategically installed in Islamabad, covering the high-security zone to the airport, aiming to fortify the security in the city. In response to the growing security concerns, Federal Minister of Interior, Rana Sanaullah Khan, has taken decisive action to enhance the safety of Islamabad, police spokesperson said on Sunday.

He said an additional 50 surveillance cameras have been strategically installed, covering the high-security zone to the airport, aiming to fortify the city's surveillance.

These new security arrangements will be meticulously monitored through the Safe City cameras, with the public urged to cooperate with the police in bolstering civilian security.

IRSA releases 443,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 443,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 538,000 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1533.65 feet and was 135.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 283,700 cusecs and 256,300 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1227.00 feet, which was 177.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.

The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 76,900 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively.

"CGPA/ GPA to percentage conversion shall be governed by the HEC-defined formula. The top meritorious students against the allocated quota of each department/ program are considered for the award of laptops as per their respective quota (year-wise or semester-wise)." Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has also reiterated that the laptop scheme under the Youth Program had become a creed for the progress of Pakistani youth.

"The scheme would bring a knowledge revolution and create practical opportunities for online employment," he said in a tweet on his Twitter handle.

NDMA alerts flood, GLOF risk due to rain in northern parts of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday issued an advisory indicating flood and glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) risk due to expected rain in Punjab.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Islamabad and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

The NDMA advisory underscored that according to the forecast of the Pakistan Meteorological Department, rain was likely to occur in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad and Azad Jammu and Kashmir during the next 48 to 72 hours.

The flooding conditions were expected in the tributaries of the Kabul River and Hill Torrent of Dera Ghazi Khan Division from July 27 to 30.

Due to the confluence of flows at Taunsa, Panjand

and Guddu Barrages, the high flood level may be reached on July 30 and the high flood level at Sukkur Barrage on July 31.

An increase in the flow of rivers and streams of Gilgit-Baltistan and the occurrence of GLOF in mountain valleys was also expected.

The NDMA issued instructions to the relevant departments indicating that in order to remedy the possible dangers, the public should be notified in advance and safety measures should be publicized and the traffic towards sensitive areas should be systematically monitored.

However, the relevant departments should keep machinery ready to deal with emergency situations.

The departments concerned should also take measures for relocation of the people living in low-lying areas.



ISLAMABAD: People stands near a damage car after accident due to over speed at Srinagar Highway, in Federal Capital.

British HC-designate arrives in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): British High Commissioner-designate to Pakistan, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, has arrived in Islamabad on Sunday to take up her new posting at British High Commission Islamabad.

Jane arrives at an important time for UK-Pakistan relations, with a significant uplift in UK aid spending in Pakistan that focused on strengthening climate resilience and reducing humanitarian risks.

Last month, the UK also launched the new Developing Countries Trading Scheme, which will help Pakistan to boost exports by reducing tariffs and simplifying trade terms.

On arrival in Islamabad, she said, "I am delighted to be here in Pakistan, a country that deeply matters to, and has a long-standing relationship with, the UK. With over 1.6 million people of Pakistani heritage in the UK

making up every part of British society, we have a special and ever-growing special bond."

"Our friendship stems from our shared history and values, deep people-to-people ties, growing trade links and a renewed development partnership. I will be working hard to continue to expand these."

"With the climate emergency a growing threat to health and livelihoods across the world, I have a particular interest in ensuring the bilateral relationship between our countries is a green, sustainable one, she added."

It is pertinent to mention here that Jane joined the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in 2001. She was previously posted as British High Commissioner to Kenya from September 2019 to June 2023, and has served as British Ambassador to Yemen.

Intl Day of the World's Indigenous People to be marked on Aug 9

ISLAMABAD (APP): International Day of the World's Indigenous People will be marked on August 9 (Wednesday) across the globe.

The purpose is to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population.

The day also recognizes the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.

The International Day of the World's Indigenous People is celebrated on August 9 each year to recognize the first UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations meeting in Geneva in 1982. On December 23, 1994, the UN General Assembly decided that the International Day of the World's Indigenous People should be observed on August 9 annually during the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

In 2004, the assembly proclaimed the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2014). The assembly also decided to continue observing the International Day of Indigenous People annually during the second decade. The decade's goal was to further strengthen international cooperation for solving problems faced by indigenous peoples in different sectors including culture, education, health, human rights, the environment, and social and economic development.

In April 2000, the Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution to establish the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues that was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council. The forum's mandate is to discuss indigenous issues related to culture, economic and social development, education, the environment, health, and human rights.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters jumping and bathing in the water channel of Rawal Dam to get some relief from hot weather in Federal Capital.

CM inspects construction work on Gujranwala link project

Naqvi commends ministers, admin, police over peaceful Ashura

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the Gujranwala-link project with the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway and inspected the ongoing construction work on the project.

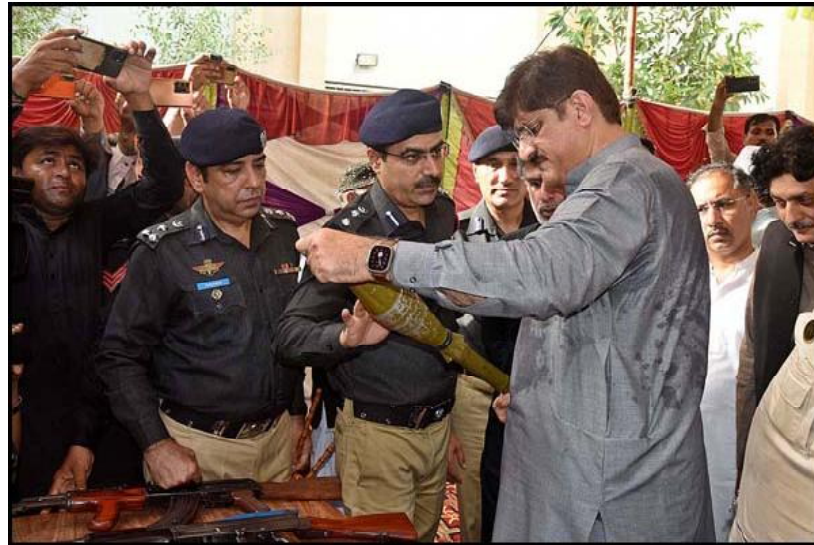
While directing the authorities concerned to expedite work on the project, he said that high quality construction work should be ensured on the project. Additional

resources should be utilised to complete the project in the stipulated period of time.

Mohsin Naqvi also visited the under-construction roads of Gujranwala Motorway-link road project. He issued necessary directions to the officials concerned to complete the project in the stipulated time period.

The CM was informed during the briefing that issues causing

obstructing in early construction of the project worth Rs 11 billion had been resolved amicably. The dual carpeted road stretching 15.2-km long will provide excellent access to the motorway. All resources are being utilised to complete the project within 90 days, he was informed. With the latest travel facilities, time and fuel will be saved along with lessening of traffic rush on the GT Road.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Lahore Medical City.

Dr Jamal appreciates best Ashura's arrangements

RAWALPINDI (APP): Muharram and remained in touch with the concerned officials till late at night to issue necessary instructions for maintaining peace in the district.

Dr Jamal remained present at the Central Control Room established at Municipal Corporation, Rawalpindi office along with Commissioner Laiqat Ali Chhatta and other officials to monitor the security arrangements for the processions.

The government ensured the safety of people's lives and property by working day and night during Muharram, especially on the 10th of Muharram, he added.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Lahore Medical City.

Minister directs Pindi admin to access damages of fire affected shopping centres

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare and Population Welfare Dr Jamal Nasir here on Sunday inspected the fire-affected plazas on Benazir Bhutto Road and reviewed the rescue operation. The provincial minister directed the district administration to assess the damage in Rabi Center, Gulf Center and China Center Plazas affected by the fire and asked to conduct a detailed inspection of the three plazas so that there was no possibility of fire again.

He asked the police to assist the traders in securing their remaining goods and praised the role of Rescue 1122 staff for timely controlling the fire.

On this occasion, Rescue 1122 official informed the minister that the fire was brought under control and apparently the cause of the fire was a short circuit, adding an investigation was also underway to determine the particular root. He said that due to timely action, there was no life of loss while major financial losses had been saved.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Lahore Medical City.

Nawabzada Iftikhar to inaugurate three uplift schemes

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Minister of State for Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Nawabzada Iftikhar Ali Khan will inaugurate three uplift projects here Monday (on July 31). The projects include inauguration of the newly established Division Office, Sub Division and Revenue Office of Multan Electric Power Company (Mepeco) in Khangarh and W a s i n d a y w a l i, respectively.

According to local people, establishing the MEPCO office was a long standing demand of the people of Khangarh which will help resolve problems of the people locally. The inaugural ceremony will be held at 10 am.

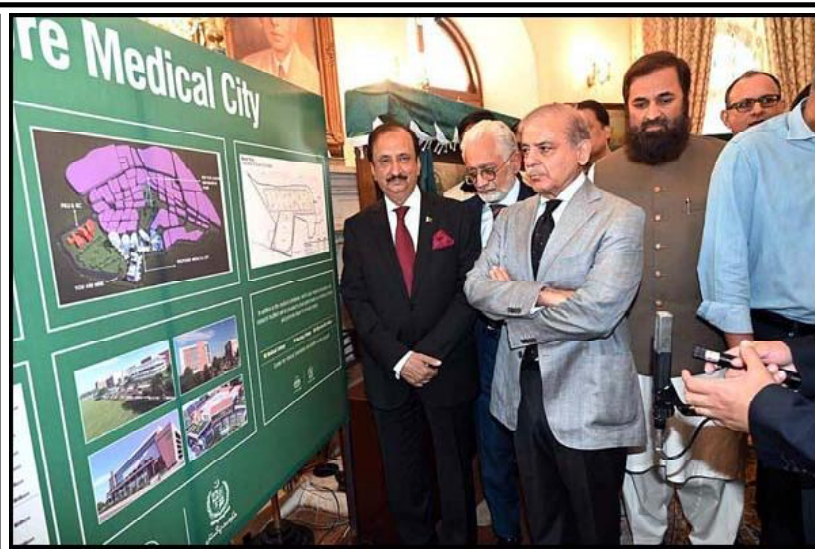
Governor Punjab condemns blast in JUI-F workers' convention

LAHORE (Online): Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rahman has strongly condemned the explosion in the workers convention of JUI (F) in Khar area of Bajaur. He expressed his condolences to the families of those who died in the blast. Governor Punjab prayed for the speedy recovery of those injured in the blast. He said that the nation is united against the monster of terrorism.

Two kids died after drowning in flood water

BUREWALA (APP): Two minor kids allegedly died of drowning in flood water as the ferocious floods damaged many villages and crops on thousands of acres near the Sahuka area in district Vehari.

According to local people, the water level is on the rise continuously in river Satluj and affecting villages and crops.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Lahore Medical City.

PMLN's politics revolves around masses, development of Pakistan: Muqam

SHANGLA (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister, Engr Amir Muqam has said that the politics of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was revolving around the welfare of the masses and the development of Pakistan.

Addressing a big public gathering here in the Dandai area after the inauguration of various projects including the Kabalgram bridge, Engr Amir Muqam said Hazara Motorway constructed by Nawaz Sharif Govt has brought positive changes in the lives of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially of Hazara division.

He said the distance between Shangla and Islamabad has been significantly reduced after the construction of Hazara Motorway which promoted trade, business

and tourism in Hazara in particular and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in general.

Engr Amir Muqam, who is also the President of PML-N KP, said that his party vision was uniform development of Pakistan, people's socioeconomic welfare and resolution of problems at their doorsteps.

The Prime Minister's aide said that Besham-Khwazakhela Expressway was cleared by Central Development Working Party and approved by ECNEC which would be completed with an estimated cost of Rs80 billion.

Upon its construction, he said the distance between Shangla, Swat, Dir, Mardan and Peshawar districts would be reduced significantly besides making the entire Malakand Division a hub of trade and investment.

He said the coalition government has saved the country from economic default and brought the economy back on track.

He said the previous government have destroyed the country's economy and tried to politically destabilize the country.

Engr Amir Muqam said that May 9 vandalism has exposed the negative designs of a leader, who deceived the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the name of change.

Amir Muqam said that all the ill designs of the previous ruler that deceived the people of KP about the name change for 9 years and tried to make the country bankrupt have been foiled by the coalition government.

He said that saving the country from bankruptcy and economic default after the agreement

LG Department, NADRA ink MoU for citizen facilitation in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Local Government and Rural Development Department (LG&RDD) and National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the facilitation of people of the province in getting their birth certificates.

The MoU was signed for a period of 2 years to ensure that the joint services, being provided to the citizens through Village and Neighbourhood Councils continue uninterrupted. A ceremony was held in the Directorate General LG&RDD, Hayatabad Peshawar, said a hand out issued here on Sunday.

The Minister for Local Government, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syawal Nazeer presided over the ceremony. Secretary Local Government Amer Afqar, Director General Local Government Iftikhar Alam,

Director General CRMS NADRA HQ Islamabad Col. Retd. Sohail Mehmoob and other senior officers were present on the occasion. The Minister for Local Government appreciated the partnership between NADRA and Local Government Department and expressed the hope that the MoU would facilitate the common citizens of the province to get easy access to birth certificates. Both NADRA and Local Government would work together to address the remaining issues and hindrances in the smooth service delivery in death and birth registration, especially to the people of remote districts and newly merged areas he said. He said that service Fee deposit process for birth and death certificates also needs to be computerized for accountability and transparency.

9 dacoits arrested, 6 motorcycles, weapons recovered

FAISALABAD (APP): The police have busted three dacoit gangs and arrested their nine active members during the past 12 hours and recovered six motorcycles, cash, illegal weapons and other items from their possession.

A police spokesman said here on Sunday that Sadar police on conducted a raid in Chak No 228-RB and arrested four active members of a gang including Mehran Ali, Mohsan, etc. along with two stolen motorcycles, cash, mobile-phones and illegal weapons whereas their three accomplices were still at large.

Similarly, the Raza Abad police arrested three outlaws of a gang including Muhammad Ali, Khizar Hayat and Sharjeel from Baghwali Pulli and recovered one motorcycle, pistols, cash of Rs 50,000, mobile-phones and other items from their possession.

First comprehensive labour policy being finalised: Tasneem

SARGODHA (APP): State Minister for Production and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi said on Sunday that for the first time in the country's history, a comprehensive labour policy was being finalised, under which people working at their homes would also be registered and given wages according to the set rules.

Talking to APP, he said that a mobile-phone application, namely Domestic Workers, had also been introduced across country, which would be helpful in registration process for the home-based workers.

To solve problems of sewerage and clean drinking water, consultations had been done with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), whereas work had been started on projects at a rapid pace, the minister said adding that while funds would also be spent for provision of clean drinking water and sewerage facilities to the area people.

The government has announced huge funds for the health sector in 2023-24 budget and work on 50 new hospitals and 63 new colleges was also under way.



LAHORE: Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council and Special Representative of Prime Minister of Pakistan for Inter-Religious Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi held a press conference with scholars and sheikhs at Jamia Manzoor-ul-Salami.

Ombudsman orders Rs 14.137m financial relief for applicants

LAHORE (APP): The Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in Okara. Similarly, the School Education Department was directed to appoint Abrara Saadia from Toba Tek Singh and Shahnaz Bibi's son from Bahawalnagar as naib qasid under Rule 17-A of the Punjab Civil Servants (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 1974.

Moreover, the Punjab Government Servants Benevolent Fund Board was directed to release an educational stipend of Rs 22,000 to Atta-ul-Haq Bhatti's daughter from Okara, Rs 32,000 to Gulshan Parveen's son from Talagang, and monthly grant arrears amounting to Rs 187,000 to Rao Muhammad Anwar from Bhakkar. Additionally,

the Punjab ombudsman has ordered provision of cumulative financial relief of Rs 14.137 million to applicants hailing from various districts.

In a statement issued on Sunday, a spokesman said the ombudsman's office had received applications for provision of financial relief, death grant, talent scholarships, outstanding dues, and resolution of employment-related issues, including non-payment of pension, leave encashment, GP fund matters, and creation of an OSD [officer on special duty] post, among others.



KARACHI: Participants hold banners during a walk, on the eve of World Friendship Day at Sea View in the in the Provincial Capital.

Mayor Peshawar appreciates peacefully ends of Muharram

PESHAWAR (APP): Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali on Sunday appreciated all the institutions who worked day and night and with dedication for a peaceful Muharram.

I thank Allah Almighty that Muharram-ul-Haram has passed peacefully and I pay tribute to all institutions for celebrating Muharram with peace and unity.

Haji Zubair Ali said that he is thankful to Allah Almighty that Muharram-

ul-Haram has passed well and to the officers of Capital Metropolitan, including the Director of Capital Metropolitan Syed Waqqas, for passing Muharram in Peshawar with peace and unity.

Ali Shah, Director East Rehman Khattak, Director West Riaz Awan, Focal Person Engineer Muhammad Riaz Khan, Other Officers, Police, District Administration Officers, WSPS, Rescue 1122, WAPDA, PESCO Civil, Traders.



KARACHI: Participants hold banners during a walk, on the eve of World Friendship Day at Sea View in the in the Provincial Capital.

Experts stress society free from abuse of children, child labourers

LAHORE (APP): Experts on Sunday called upon all concerned, including the media, government and private organisations to play their role in making institutional and non-institutional sectors free from child abuse and child labour. It is a social stigma and a gigantic problem in both developing and industrialised countries and low-income communities, they said. Ms. Munawar Sultana, National Project Coordinator, Asia Regional Child Labour (ARC) project, said that around 160 million children aged 5 to 17 years were engaged in child labour in 2020, with 79 million children involved in hazardous work. About 3.3 million of Pakistani children are trapped in child labour,

who are deprived of their childhood, their health and education, she said.

Hameed Alam, an elderly social activist, told APP here that children in all provinces of the country are being exploited physically, morally, socially and mentally. He said that hundreds of millions of girls and boys around the world are affected due to the child abuse and child labour menace. They are forced to spend a life of poverty and harassment, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) revealed in its recent report.

To prevent child labour, global organisations like the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and SPARC must work jointly to save children from the

curse of child abuse and child labour, he stressed. Child abuse is a serious problem in Pakistan that often goes unpunished; however, there are laws in place that offer severe penalties for those who are convicted of abusing children, he added.

A total of 160 million children – 63 million girls and 97 million boys – are in child labour globally, accounting for almost one in 10 of all children worldwide. Peter Buwembo, officer-in-charge, ILO Country Office, stressed in a statement the importance of reliable data on child labour. He mentioned that an ongoing child labour survey in Pakistan would generate updated and accurate evidence for programme and policies.

He acknowledged the Government of Pakistan for ratifying all eight fundamental conventions of the ILO including C182 in 2001 and C138 in 2006 and enacting national and sub-national legislation, prohibiting the employment of children in general and hazardous work in particular. Buwembo underscored the need for harmonising the age of children in all relevant laws by federal and provincial governments, urging all stakeholders to work together for a long-lasting solution and accelerating progress towards achieving the SDG targets by 2025.

According to a recent study report of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), the growth of girl

workers is higher as compared to boys. The industrial structure shows that at the national level and in the rural area, agriculture engaged the maximum number of children, followed by services, whereas, in the urban area, the services sector dominated. As for employment status, most of the children are unpaid family helpers. The occupational pattern indicates that the majority of them work on farms and in production activities.

The Government of Pakistan has enacted the Employment of Children Act of 1991 which has banned the employment of children below the age of 14 years and their employment is now a cognizable offense under the Act punishable.

Over 130 Chinese companies to exhibit products in FoodAg 2023 in Karachi

BEIJING (APP): Over 130 Chinese entrepreneurs will participate in the first international food and agriculture exhibition being held in Karachi from August 10 to 12, Commercial Counsellor, Pakistan Embassy Beijing, Ghulam Qadir said on Sunday.

We are getting an overwhelming response. So far, 130 Chinese businessmen have been registered with the Pakistan embassy and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) for participation in the exhibition, he told APP.

FoodAg 2023 is the first international food and agriculture exhibition being

organized by TDAP. With its theme of a Sustainable Future, The exhibition will bring international and local communities together to generate hope for building a common future.

Ghulam Qadir said that there had been a great impact of the TEXPO which was attended by a large number of Chinese businessmen. Now, more people intend to go to Pakistan to explore business opportunities there. Pakistan and China have finalized five protocols of cooperation after Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif's visit to China. These protocols included boiled beef, chilly, dairy products, cherry and donkey skin which have

attracted a lot of interest among Chinese businessmen, he added.

He informed that herbal medicines, seafood, rice, sesame, and boiled meat have big potential to attract the Chinese market. The commercial counsellor said that the upcoming food exhibition will connect hundreds of foreign delegates, media personnel, and regulators from 55 countries with established and budding Pakistani exporters.

FoodAg 2023 will provide a unique platform to all participants for exchanging novel ideas and building a long-term partnership with the aim to transform the food future of the world.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah visiting Greater Karachi Water Supply Scheme K-IV project take-off site at Keenjhar Lak.

ICCI to give awards to conveners of its top performing sub-committees

ISLAMABAD (APP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Sunday said that the top performing sub-committees of the Chamber would be given awards to recognize and acknowledge their effective role in resolving the issues of the business community of their respective sectors.

He said this while presiding over a meeting of the conveners of ICCI sub-committees, said a news release issued here.

A large number of conveners including women attended the meeting and briefed the President ICCI about the performance of their respective sub-committees.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that during his tenure, 150 sub-committees had been formed in the Chamber, but only some of them were showing good

performance. He urged all the conveners to further improve the performance of their committees and present their performance reports on a monthly basis to ICCI.

He assured that ICCI would provide all possible support to the committees in discharging their responsibilities.

He announced that conveners of high performing committees will be given special awards while inactive committees will be replaced next year and the whole process will be done on merit basis.

ICCI Group Leader Khalid Iqbal Malik said that just like the active role played by the standing committees of the Parliament in the legislative process, the sub-committees of the Chamber can also play an effective role in solving the issues of the business community of their respective sectors.

World Bank approves 300m USD for Bangladesh gas distribution system

DHAKA (Xinhua/APP): The World Bank has approved 300 million U.S. dollars to help Bangladesh improve the efficiency of gas distribution and end-use through prepaid metering systems for residential and industrial consumers and reduce methane emissions along the natural gas value chain.

The Gas Sector Efficiency Improvement and Carbon Abatement Project will address natural gas leakage and losses along the gas transmission and distribution network, reduce wastage in use by residential and industrial users, and strengthen network monitoring capabilities, said the Washington-based lender in a statement received here Friday.

It will install more than 1.2 million prepaid gas meters in Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions.

Among these, 1.1 million prepaid meters will be deployed in Greater Dhaka covering 54 percent of residential customers of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited, and 128,000 prepaid meters in the Rajshahi division, covering the entire residential customer base of Pashchimanchal Gas Company Limited (PGCL). It will also pilot rolling out about 50 smart meters to larger industrial users to demonstrate the viability of smart meters to better monitor and manage gas use in the industrial sector.

The project will install a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and Geographic Information System on the PGCL network to improve gas flow monitoring and help reduce methane leaks.



FAISALABAD: Female farmers are cultivating the rice crop in the field.

Fish farming under way on 15,000-acre land

SARGODHA (APP): Assistant Director Fisheries Rana Abdul Rauf said here on Sunday that 15,000 acres of land had been under use for fish farming in Sargodha division currently.

He told APP that the Fisheries Department was working on war-footing to produce more fish farms in the division. He said that 15,000 metric tonnes of fish were produced at 350 operational fish farms in the region during the last year.

He said the Fisheries Department would hold an open auction of 17 public water ponds and two nurseries units on the first of August 2023 to promote fish farming at all levels.

Cash prizes for peasants on bumper production of cotton announced

MULTAN (APP): Punjab government announced cash prizes for contestants on maximum per acre production of cotton for the year 2023-24 in order to revive and promote white gold in the province.

According to official sources, "The farmer who will secure the first position at the provincial level will be awarded Rs 1.5 million."

"Similarly, the farmers who will be at the top at the district level will be given Rs 800,000."

"The basic aim behind the cash prizes is to revive and promote cotton. As criteria for participation, the farmers who will cultivate cotton at five acres or more five will be eligible for appearing in the contest," the sources informed.

"The intending participants can get forms from the website www.agri.punjab.gov.pk. A committee at the divisional level will examine the participants' criteria.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about 1263 MW Punjab Power Plant Dist Jhang.

FTO Coordinator advocates for corporate farming to boost Pakistan's economy, agriculture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis on Sunday said with corporate farming, Pakistan would not only stimulate economic activities but also revolutionize its agriculture sector.

Speaking at a seminar on "Corporate Farming Promise Food Security" held under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, he said adopting corporate farming on state lands will not only facilitate the implementation of modern irrigation systems but also contribute to land

development in Pakistan, said a news release issued here.

He said, "It entails reclaiming barren lands including deserts and hilly areas and transforming them into arable lands suitable for farming and agriculture."

"Corporate farming requires simultaneously addressing the needs of small-scale farmers giving them access to modern processes, quality inputs, tools, and techniques for sustainable competition," he emphasized.

He said, "For attracting foreign direct investment, the government must declare agriculture as an industry

and implement a timely investment policy tailored to induce foreign investment which will pave the way for the country's progress and prosperity."

Meher Kashif Younis said, "Agriculture development is one of the most powerful tools to end abject poverty, boost shared prosperity and feed a projected 9.7 billion people by 2050."

He said, "Growth in the agriculture sector is two to four times more effective in raising the income among the poorest compared to other sectors. However, he said the potential in this sector is not being fully exploited in Pakistan."

'Relay cropping can help revolutionize agriculture sector'; says Saqib Ateel

MULTAN (APP): Secretary of Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ateel said that there was a dire need to relay cropping to get maximum production from available pieces of land.

"The best utilization of available resources is of vital importance to stabilize the economy by promoting the agriculture sector. Relay cropping is a method of multiple cropping where one crop is seeded into a second standing crop, before the harvest of the second crop," he added.

In a statement, he observed that the agriculture sector could be improved by following modern techniques.

He urged research bodies to conduct

experiments of inter and relay cropping. The separate trial at research bodies and the Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture should be done and data should also be arranged regularly.

The crops which proved best during trials should be promoted among farming communities, he stated.

To enhance soil fertility, he suggested the cultivation of leguminous crops.

Efforts should be made to cultivate cotton and soybean so that maximum economic returns should be achieved, he added.

"The relay cropping enhances soil quality, and limits weeds and pest attacks.

President ICAP calls on Dar, donates Rs 5m in PM relief fund

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) Muhammad Ali Latif on Sunday called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and donated Rs 5 million to Prime Minister Relief Fund.

According to the official account of the finance ministry, the president presented a cheque of Rs 5 million as a donation to the Prime Minister Relief Fund for Floods, Earthquakes, and Calamities on behalf of ICAP. "Muhammad Ali Latif, President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Ali Latif, President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division and presented a cheque for Rs.5 million as donation in the PM Relief Fund for Floods, Earthquake & Calamities on behalf of ICAP.

China's cultural industry achieves double-digit revenue growth amid recovery

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): Major enterprises in China's cultural sector and related businesses saw their combined revenue return to double-digit growth in the second quarter of this year as the industry continued to recover, official data showed Sunday.

Their revenue rose 10.7 percent year on year in the second quarter, the first time for the quarterly income to post a double-digit increase since the third quarter of 2021, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

In the first half of this year, these enterprises recorded 5.94 trillion yuan (about 832 billion U.S. dollars) of revenue in total, a 7.3-percent uplift from a year earlier and 3.3 percentage points higher than the first quarter, the

NBS data showed. The cultural industry maintained the momentum of improvement in the first half as the government support policies kicked in and unleashed market potential, said Zhang Peng, an NBS senior statistician.

Profits of major enterprises jumped 35.4 percent year on year in the first half, the data showed. Zhang attributed the growth to a low base of comparison and the rapid recovery of business.

Vegetables, fruits prices go higher

PESHAWAR (APP): The citizens of the provincial metropolis are worried about the everyday increase in the prices of vegetables and fruits in the local markets and the officials of the price control have so far failed to compel the shopkeepers to sell their food items on controlled rates issued by the administration.

However, some occasional visits by the officials of the price control were witnessed but overall it failed to control the rates.

The price of ginger touched an all-time high of Rs 1100 per kg, garlic Rs. 380, and lemon 160 per kg remained unchanged.

The price of the onion 60, tomato 130, green pepper 80, okra 80 and curry 40 rupees per kg and Potato 120, Kachalu 110, Cauliflower 160, Eggplant 90, Zucchini 130, Tenda Rs. 100 are being sold.

Malik highlights China's expertise in agricultural technology, hybrid seed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association (PHHSA) Shahzad Ali Malik Sunday said China had made substantial advancements in agricultural technology, including hybrid seed development, and had the expertise to share the practices with Pakistan.

Shahzad Ali Malik currently visiting China with a delegation said, "More collaboration between Pakistan and China in the agricultural sector, particularly in the development of new varieties of hybrid seeds in the private sector, is possible and could have significant benefits for both countries," said a news release issued here.

He said, "Collaboration in the private sector allows for joint research and development initiatives between both countries."

He said, "Such projects can lead to the creation of tailored hybrid seed varieties that cater to the specific needs of Pakistani farmers and align with the country's agricultural practices and climate."

He said, "China and Pakistan have longstanding ties, and such meetings could potentially lead to advancements in hybrid seed technology and agricultural practices, benefiting both countries' agricultural sectors."

He said, "Fruitful meetings between agricultural organizations from different countries can be beneficial for exchanging knowledge, technology, and expertise in the field of seed development and agriculture."

He said, "Hybrid seeds are created by crossing two genetically different parent plants to produce offspring with desired traits, such as improved yield, resistance to pests and diseases, or better adaptability to local environmental conditions."

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) Muhammad Ali Latif on Sunday called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and donated Rs 5 million to Prime Minister Relief Fund.

According to the official account of the finance ministry, the president presented a cheque of Rs 5 million as a donation to the Prime Minister Relief Fund for Floods, Earthquakes, and Calamities on behalf of ICAP. "Muhammad Ali Latif, President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

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LCCI resident lauds development projects inaugurated by PM

LAHORE (APP): Health Support Programme, he said, asserting that this initiative aimed to ensure access to healthcare for the underprivileged sections of society, providing essential medical services and financial support to those in need, fostering a healthier and more inclusive society.

Highlighting the government's commitment to population welfare, Kashif Anwar said that Rs 30 billion Population Welfare Programme was inaugurated to create awareness and provide resources to promote family planning, contributing to a balanced demographic growth and sustainable development.

Addressing the transportation needs of the growing city, he said, the SL-3 Lahore Ring Road project was also launched and hoped that the project would help alleviate traffic congestion and improve connectivity, making commuting more efficient and convenient for the residents of Lahore.

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IFTIKHAR ALI MALIK URGES GOVT TO EXPLORE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY OPTIONS

ISLAMABAD (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday urged the government to explore alternative energy source measures that could lead to a shift in the energy mix towards more sustainable options, which might have long-term benefits for energy security and environmental sustainability.

"Higher power tariffs lead to an inflation increase, increasing the cost of production besides mounting inflationary pressures on the economy."

"Electricity is a critical input for various economic activities, and any changes in its cost can affect industries, businesses, people, and the overall economic growth," he added.

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MULTAN: A gypsy family preparing traditional baskets with dry tree branches while sitting at the banks of a canal.

US announces \$345 million military aid package for Taiwan

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The U.S. on Friday announced \$345 million in military aid for Taiwan, in what is the Biden administration's first major package drawing on America's own stockpiles to help Taiwan counter China. The White House's announcement said the package would include defense, education and training for the Taiwanese. Washington will send man-portable air defense systems, or MANPADS, intelligence and surveillance capabilities, firearms and missiles, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters ahead of the announcement. U.S. lawmakers have been pressuring the Pentagon and White House to speed weapons to Taiwan. The goals are to help it counter China and to deter China from considering at-

China says US military aid to Taiwan will not deter its will to unify the island

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: China accused the United States of turning Taiwan into an "ammunition depot" after the White House announced a \$345 million military aid package for Taipei, and the self-ruled island said Sunday it tracked six Chinese navy ships in waters off its shores. China's Taiwan Affairs Office issued a statement late Saturday opposing the military aid to Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory. "No matter how much of the ordinary people's taxpayer money the... Taiwanese separatist forces spend, no matter how many U.S. weapons, it will not shake our resolve to solve the Taiwan problem. Or shake our firm will to realize the reunification of our motherland," said Chen Binhua, a spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office. "Their actions are turning Taiwan into a powder keg and ammunition depot, aggravating the threat of war in the Taiwan Strait," the statement said.



Ukrainian drones attempting to attack Moscow.

Putin says Russia does not reject talks with Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Saturday that an African initiative could be a basis for peace in Ukraine but that Ukrainian attacks made it hard to realise. He was speaking at a press conference after meeting African leaders in St Petersburg on Friday and hearing their calls for Moscow to move ahead with their plan. "There are provisions of this peace initiative that are being implemented," he said. "But there are things that are difficult or impossible to implement." Reuters reported in June that African mediation in the conflict could begin with confidence-building measures followed by a cessation of hostilities agreement accompanied by negotiations between Russia and the West. Putin said that one of the points in the initiative was a ceasefire. "But the Ukrainian army is on the offensive, they are attacking, they are implementing a large-scale strategic offensive operation... We cannot cease fire when we are under attack." On the question of starting peace talks, he said, "We did not reject them... In order for this process to begin, there needs to be agreement on both sides." Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has rejected the idea of a ceasefire now that would leave Russia in control of nearly a fifth of his country and give its forces time to regroup after 17 grinding months of war.

EU sanctions Rwandan army officer over involvement in Congo rebellion

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: The European Union on Friday added a Rwandan army captain under its sanctions list for his involvement and support to the M23 rebel group that launch an offensive in eastern Congo last year, displacing over a million people in the restive region. The M23 is a Tutsi-led rebel group, which the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Western powers including the United States and Belgium, as well as reports from a United Nations expert group, say is supported by neighbouring Rwanda. Rwanda has denied the accusations. The group is one of a myriad of armed rebels in eastern Congo who are fighting in a complex web of local politics and regional conflicts over ethnicity.

China issues red alert for torrential rain in Beijing, surrounding provinces

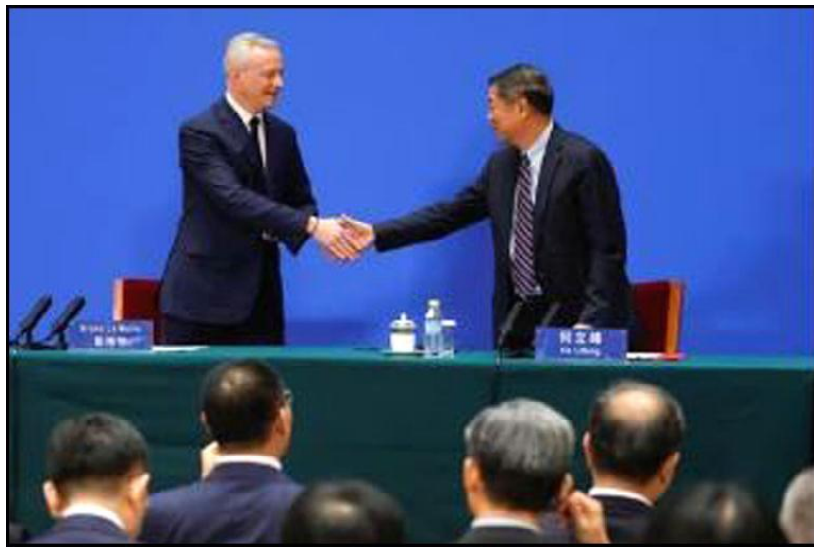
Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China's weather service on Saturday issued a red alert for torrential rain in the capital Beijing and surrounding provinces, as Typhoon Doksuri swept inland bringing hazardous weather conditions to many parts of the country. Doksuri smashed into southern Fujian province on Friday morning with gusts of up to 175 kilometres per hour, and China's meteorological service said on Saturday its "influence" was now being felt in the country's north. China has been experiencing extreme weather conditions and posting record temperatures this summer, events that scientists say are being exacerbated by climate change. Experts have warned Saturday's downpour could prompt even worse flooding than in July 2012, when



Rescuers evacuate residents in a flooded area after Typhoon Doksuri landfall in Quanzhou, in China's eastern Fujian province.

Death toll in Thailand firecrackers explosion at warehouse rises to 12

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Twelve people were killed and more than 100 injured when firecrackers kept in a warehouse exploded in southern Thailand, an official said on Sunday. The firecrackers set off a fire on Saturday at the unauthorised warehouse at the Muno market in Su-ngai Kolok district in the southern province of Narathiwat bordering Malaysia. Narathiwat's Governor Sanan Phongsakorn said. "There are 10 deaths plus the remains of two unidentified persons, which were sent for DNA checks," Sanan said. He said 121 people were injured, two severely, while 111 had been discharged from hospital, he said. "But there should be no more deaths."



China's Vice Premier He Lifeng and French Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire attend the China-France Economic and Financial Dialogue at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China.

3 Ukrainian drones downed over Moscow: Russia defence ministry

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Three Ukrainian drones were downed over Moscow early on Sunday, Russia's defence ministry said, in an attack that briefly shut an international airport. While one of the drones was shot down on the city's outskirts, two others were "suppressed by electronic warfare" and smashed into an office complex. No one was injured. Moscow and its environs, lying about 500 kilometres from the Ukrainian border, had been rarely targeted during the conflict in Ukraine until several drone attacks this year. The attack reported on Sunday is the latest in a series of recent drone assaults — including on the Kremlin and Russian towns near the border with Ukraine — that Moscow has blamed on Kyiv. The defence ministry called it an "attempted terrorist attack". "On the morning of July 30, the Kyiv regime's attempted terrorist attack with unmanned aerial vehicles on objects in the city of Moscow was thwarted," it said on Telegram. "One Ukrainian UAV was destroyed in the air by air defence systems over the territory of the Odintsovo district of Moscow region. Two more drones were suppressed by electronic warfare and, having lost control, crashed on the territory of Moscow-City's non-residential building complex." Moscow-City is a commercial development to the city's west.

Joining China's Belt and Road was an 'atrocious' decision: Italy minister

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy made an "improvised and atrocious" decision when it joined China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) four years ago as it did little to boost exports, Italian Defence Minister Guido Crosetto said in an interview published on Sunday. Italy signed up to the BRI under a previous government, becoming the only major Western country to have taken such a step. Crosetto is part of an administration that is considering how to break free of the agreement. The BRI scheme envisions rebuilding the old Silk Road to connect China with Asia, Europe and beyond with large infrastructure spending. Critics see it as a tool for China to spread its geopolitical and economic influence. "The decision to join the (new) Silk Road was an improvised and atrocious act" that multiplied China's exports to Italy but did not have the same effect on Italian exports to China, Crosetto told the Corriere della Sera newspaper. "The issue today is: how to walk back (from the BRI) without damaging relations (with Beijing)."

Turkiye urges Denmark to take urgent action to prevent Quran burnings

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on Saturday urged Denmark to take urgent action to prevent burnings of the Quran, a Turkish foreign ministry source said. In a phone call with his Danish counterpart Lars Lokke Rasmussen, Fidan condemned the "continuous vile attacks against the Quran." He told Rasmussen it was unacceptable to allow such actions under the guise of freedom of expression, the source said.



Bangladesh Nationalist party (BNP) activists blocking a highway entering Bangladesh's capital disperse after police fired tear gas shells during a protest demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and a general election under a neutral caretaker government, in Dhaka.

More Wagner fighters move closer to Polish border, Poland PM says

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: A group of a hundred soldiers from the Russian Wagner group have moved closer to the Belarusian city of Grodno near the Polish border, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said on Saturday. Poland, a former Warsaw Pact member which has been a full member of the U.S.-led NATO military alliance since 1999, has been concerned about the possible spillover of the war onto its territory ever since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Earlier this month, Poland began moving more than 1,000 troops to the east of the country amid rising concerns that the presence of Wagner fighters in Belarus could lead to increased tension on its border. "The situation is getting increasingly dangerous... Most likely they (the Wagner personnel) will be disguised as the Belarusian border guard and help illegal migrants get to the Polish territory (and) destabilise Poland," Morawiecki said at a press conference in Gliwice, western Poland.

Fire kills four in Karbala

Monitoring Desk
BAGHDAD: A fire killed four people in Karbala on Friday as hundreds of thousands of devotees gathered to mark Ashura. The blaze erupted in an alleyway near the mausoleum of Imam Hussein. "According to preliminary reports, the fire was sparked by a gas bottle in the kitchen" of a tent and then spread into an adjacent market, an emergency services statement said.

Nepalese climber breaks own record with sixth K2 summit

Monitoring Desk
GILGIT: As many as 26 foreign climbers summited K2, the world's second-highest peak at 8,611 metres above sea level, on Friday, a day after 86 foreigners scaled the mountain. One of the day's highlights was the Nepalese mountaineer Ming-ma David, who broke his own record to become the only person in the world to have scaled K2 six times. Mingma G, a renowned climber and owner of the peak climbing operator Imagine Nepal, told Dawn from the K2 base camp that 180 climbers had started the summit push but only 26 successfully reached the top, as the others had to abandon the adventure because of bad weather.

Bangladesh police clash with protesters blockading capital

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Bangladesh police fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse stone-throwing crowds blockading major roads in the capital Dhaka on Saturday in the latest protest demanding the prime minister's resignation. The opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its allies have staged a series of protests since last year demanding Sheikh Hasina step down and allow a caretaker government to oversee elections due next January. Clashes erupted in several locations when police moved in to clear thousands of people who gathered in the morning to block traffic on key arterials around the city. "Some officers were injured," Dhaka Metropolitan Police spokesman Faruk Hossain told AFP. "We fired tear gas and rubber bullets." At least four protest sites around the city saw clashes between police and protesters, Hossain said, with 20 officers injured and 90 protesters arrested.

African leaders leave Russia summit without grain deal or a path to end the war in Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: African leaders are leaving two days of meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin with little to show for their requests to resume a deal that kept grain flowing from Ukraine and to find a path to end the war there. Putin in a press conference late Saturday following the Russia-Africa summit said Russia's termination of the grain deal earlier this month caused a rise in grain prices that benefits Russian companies. He added that Moscow would share some of those revenues with the "poorest nations." That commitment, with no details, follows Putin's promise to start shipping 25,000 to 50,000 tons of grain free to each of six African nations in the next three to four months — an amount dwarfed by the 725,000 tons shipped by the U.N. World Food Program to several hungry countries, African and otherwise, under the grain deal. Russia plans to send the free grain to Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Mali, Somalia, Eritrea and Central African Republic. Fewer than 20 of Africa's 54 heads of state or government attended the Russia summit, while 43 attended the previous gathering in 2019, reflecting concerns over Russia's invasion of Ukraine even as Moscow seeks more allies on the African continent of 1.3 billion people. Putin praised Africa as a rising center of power in the world, while the Kremlin blamed "outrageous" Western pressure for discouraging some African countries from showing up.

Blinken says US economic support for Niger is at risk as military takeover threatens stability

Monitoring Desk
CANBERRA: Political instability in Niger resulting from a military takeover that deposed the president this week threatens the economic support provided by Washington to the African nation, U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said Saturday. Members of the Niger military announced on Wednesday they had deposed democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum and on Friday named Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani as the country's new leader, adding Niger to a growing list of military regimes in West Africa's Sahel region. Blinken, who is in Australia as part of a Pacific tour, said the continuing security and economic arrangements that Niger has with the U.S. hinged on the release of Bazoum and "the immediate restoration of the democratic order in Niger." "Our economic and security partnership with Niger — which is significant, hundreds of millions of dollars — depends on the continuation of the democratic governance and constitutional order that has been disrupted by the actions in the last few days," Blinken said. "So that assistance, that support, is in clear jeopardy as a result of these actions, which is another reason why they need to be immediately reversed." Blinken stopped short of calling the military actions in Niger a coup, a designation that could result in the African country losing millions of dollars of military aid and assistance. Speaking in Brisbane, Blinken said he had spoken with President Bazoum on Saturday but did not provide details. He cited the support of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and other regional entities in trying to bring an end to the unrest.

UN says it's forced to cut food aid to millions globally because of a funding crisis

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations has been forced to cut food, cash payments and assistance to millions of people in many countries because of "a crippling funding crisis" that has seen its donations plummet by about half as acute hunger is hitting record levels, a top official said Friday. Carl Skau, deputy executive director of the World Food Program, told a news conference that at least 38 of the 86 countries where WFP operates have already seen cuts or plan to cut assistance soon — including Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and West Africa. He said WFP's operating requirement is \$20 billion to deliver aid to everyone in need, but it was aiming for between \$10 billion and \$14 billion, which was what the agency had received in the past few years. "We're still aiming at that, but we have only so far this year gotten to about half of that, around \$5 billion," Skau said. He said humanitarian needs were "going through the roof" in 2021 and 2022 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine and its global implications. "Those needs continue to grow, those drivers are still there," he said, "but the funding is drying up. So we're looking at 2024 (being) even more dire." "The largest food and nutrition crisis in history today persists," Skau said. "This year, 345 million people continue to be acutely food insecure while hundreds of millions of people are at risk of worsening hunger." Skau said conflict and insecurity remain the primary drivers of acute hunger around the world, along with climate change, unrelenting disasters, persistent food price inflation and mounting debt stress — all during a slow-down in the global economy.

Power station fire, explosions cut off power in much of Iraq in scorching summer heat, officials say

Monitoring Desk
BAGHDAD: Power was cut off in large swaths of southern and central Iraq for much of Saturday during scorching summer heat and observances of the Shiite holy day of Ashoura after a fire broke out at a power station in the southern city of Basra. The fire at the Al-Bkir substation in Basra resulted in the separation of transmission lines linking the southern and central regions, leading to a complete shutdown of the electrical system in the area, Iraq's Ministry of Electricity said in a statement. It said the fire was accidental. The power outage came as the electrical system faces other challenges, including fuel shortages and surging demands for electricity during a major heat wave. On Saturday, temperatures reached 47 degrees Celsius (116.6 degrees Fahrenheit). Also on Saturday, the company that handles electricity transmission in the north reported that the northern transmission line in a remote area outside the city of Haditha in western Iraq had been sabotaged. Three towers were hit by improvised explosive devices, putting the line out of service, the statement said. It did not say who was responsible for the attack. Staff were not initially able to repair the damage on Friday due to security issues, the statement said. Islamic State cells and other armed groups are active in the remote desert area. On Saturday, workers were able to access the site with the help of security forces and begin repair work. The Ministry of Electricity ordered the formation of committees to investigate both incidents. The power blackout had a domino effect on other services, with Baghdad Municipality attributing a disruption in tap water supply to the outage caused by the fire in Basra. The municipality said it was trying to run water pumps using generators to limit the impact on citizens.



QUETTA: Security personnel standing high alert during Ashura procession on 10th Muharram ul Haram, commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (RA) grandson of Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) and other martyrs of Karbala.

Ahsan Iqbal highlights CPEC achievements, Sino-Pak deepening ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): He lauded Chinese President Xi Jinping's role in elevating Pakistan's image globally as an attractive investment destination, fostering economic cooperation and development.

The minister highlighted that in the span of three years, CPEC saw the successful completion of numerous projects worth around \$25 billion.

Addressing a news conference here ahead of the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister of China in connection with CPEC's 10-year celebrations, he signified the CPEC agreements signed in 2013, which transformed Pakistan's profile from a security state to an investment destination.

He lauded Chinese President Xi Jinping's role in elevating Pakistan's image globally as an attractive investment destination, fostering economic cooperation and development.

The minister highlighted that in the span of three years, CPEC saw the successful completion of numerous projects worth around \$25 billion.

These projects encompassed various sectors, including power generation, infrastructure development, education and more, he said adding the Thar coal project stood out as a monumental achievement, harnessing Pakistan's vast coal reserves for power generation, making it a significant contributor to the country's

energy needs. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that CPEC provided opportunities for Pakistani workers and engineers to acquire training in modern technology and project management. Additionally, he said, the collaboration between China and Pakistan in the education sector facilitated thousands of Pakistani students to pursue higher education in China.

The minister expressed gratitude to President Xi Jinping for China's unwavering support and investment in Pakistan during challenging times. He stressed that China's investment of billions of dollars in CPEC projects illustrated its status as Pakistan's most reliable friend and a key partner.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili addressing the graduation ceremony of the first batch of Mid-career Management Course (MCMC) passed out from the Balochistan Civil Service Academy (BCSA)

No dearth of competence in Balochistan officers: CS exhorts civil officers to play due role in tackling challenges being faced by Balochistan

Uqaili directs not to use word "bureaucrats" in provincial affairs, rather word "public servants" would be used for the government officers

QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz Uqaili has stated that there's no dearth of capability and competence in the civil officers of the province, and as such they should have to play their important role in tackling different challenges including those related to economy and backwardness being faced by the province.

The Chief Secretary was addressing the graduation ceremony of the first batch of Mid-career Management Course (MCMC) passed out from the Balochistan Civil Service Academy (BCSA) here on

Sunday. Referring the BCSA, the Chief Secretary said that the BCSA would not only become the important source of polishing the professional competence and increase their capacity, but the successful completion of first MCMC would also prove to be the important development for the province.

He expressed the hope that the officers who got training at the Academy would demonstrate excellent performance in their respective sectors.

The Chief Secretary strongly believed that the increase in capacity and capabilities of the public ser-

vants is unavoidable for bringing improvement in the public service delivery. He termed the establishment of BCSA a big achievement of the incumbent provincial government. He said that objective behind establishing the Academy at provincial level is the training of provincial civil officers at the local level. He said that the civil service officers would be provided expertise in working under pressure as well as the media management and other sectors besides management.

He said that the provincial government is providing opportunities of training to the officers.



QUETTA: DG PDMA Jahanzeb Khan briefed Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango about damages due to recent rains

DG PDMA pays emergent visit to Kech & Washuk; reviews rain losses

QUETTA: The Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Jahanzeb Khan paid an emergent visit to Kech district the other day. He reviewed the situation following the rains in Kech district and adjoining areas.

During the visit, the Deputy Director PDMA Makran, Reehan Dashti informed that although losses have been caused due to the rains and flashflood in the province, however, there were no much losses in Kech.

He was informed that only one death has been caused due to the rains in Kech.

The DG PDMA on

the occasion expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made to tackle the situation due to the rains in Kech.

It was urged to the general public not to pay any heed towards the rumours on social media regarding losses due to rains in the province.

Meanwhile, he visited Washuk district to personally review the situation emerged following the rains in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner Washuk, Sajjad Aslam Baloch and SP Washuk, Akhtar Iqbal were also accompanied with the DG PDMA.

He also inspected the losses caused due to the rains in Washuk.

NA Speaker says PPP always focused on well-being of people

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf reaffirmed on Sunday that Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)'s top priority is the progress of the nation and people's happiness. He conveyed these thoughts while addressing the participants of a public meeting held in Chhapar village, a Union Council Kori Dolal. Provincial Assembly candidate Khurram Pervez Raja was also present on the occasion.

The speaker emphasized that the PPP had always focused on the well-being of the people.

He further stated that the party had relentlessly worked towards the nation's development.

CM, Minister Home flay bomb blast in Bajor; grieved over losses of precious lives

Maintain provincial government and people of Balochistan share grief and sorrow with bereaved families of martyrs

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and Provincial Minister Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove have strongly condemned the bomb blast in the workers convention of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) in Bajor district.

In their separate condemnation statements issued here on Sunday, the Chief Minister expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the bomb blast.

He said that that terrorists don't belong to any religion or party nor they worth to be called Muslims. He said that the political parties hold public meetings and demonstrations and it is duty of the government to provide them protection.

He said that Bajor is the area which has gone through terrorism for long, but now the peace has been restored in the area with

support of the Pak army and security institutions.

He expressed sympathy with the bereaved families of the martyrs. He also prayed for early recovery of those injured in the blast.

Similarly, the Provincial Minister Home also condemned the Bajor terrorism act in strongest words.

In a condemnation statement issued here, he expressed condolence and sympathy with the bereaved families of those martyred in the terrorism. He said that no religion of the world allows attack on the innocent persons and it is an inhumane act to target the innocent people at public place.

He said that the people of Balochistan and government share the grief and sorrow with the bereaved families of martyrs.

He prayed for the departed souls of the martyrs and early recovery of the injured persons.



Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb addressing a Press Conference in Islamabad.

Zia Lango demands Immediate construction of national highway

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has demanded of federal government to immediately construct the national highway swept in the flood during last. In a statement issued here on Sunday, the Minister said that the provincial government restores the traffic by developing temporary passages in its own resources. But the national highway, which otherwise affected last year,

has been affected once again. He said that National Highway Authority (NHA) is a federal government's institution, therefore, the federation should release the necessary funds for rehabilitation of the highways in Balochistan immediately.

He also expressed his dissatisfaction over the performance of NHA in the province. He demanded of the federal government to take notice of the national highways, which are closed due to the rains and floods in the province.

Pak is ready for economic flight, Reko Diq, other mines projects' authorities' message

ISLAMABAD (Online): Authorities over Reko Diq and other mines and minerals projects said in their separate messages that Reko Diq resources are world largest copper and gold reservoirs discovered.

Government of Pakistan is going to hold Pakistan minerals summit. Pakistan is full of natural resources and minerals land.

Mr Mark Bristov and CEO Barick said Reko Diq reservoirs are world largest discovered reservoirs of copper and gold. National and International investment will get huge promotion from Reko Diq project

in Pakistan and especially in Balochistan. I am working with Pakistan and Balochistan government on projects of joint investment. Pakistan is full of natural treasury and minerals.

Mr Masood Nabi, managing director of GHPL said Pakistan not only have too much minerals but they are also cause of attraction to foreign investment. To utilities minerals perfectly and fully, we are going to hold historic mineral summit. This summit will be a perfect platform for national and international investors in which discussions will be held.

Marriyum Aurangzeb reiterates govt commitment to upgrade PTV, Radio Pakistan

RAWALPINDI (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Sunday reiterated the government's commitment to upgrade Pakistan Television (PTV) and Radio Pakistan which were indispensable to promoting national heritage and narrative at the global level.

"The national broadcasting institutions are more than just structures as they hold a paramount position in representing the country's identity to the entire world," the minister said while talking to media men after laying the foundation of 1000 KW Digital

DRM Medium Wave Transmitter Project at Radio Pakistan, Rawat.

Marriyum regretted that the previous regime of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was bent upon auctioning the national institutions including Radio Pakistan and others.

Highlighting the pivotal role of these national broadcasters, she stressed that the government was determined to leverage PTV and Radio Pakistan to enhance Pakistan's global presence and counter negative narratives about the country.

At the outset of the media talk, the minister said

Radio Pakistan accomplished a milestone today as the first time in history a Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) technology had been launched.

She said Radio Pakistan was based on analogue and short-wave technology since 1947 and most of its transmitters had already completed their life. The broadcaster was in dire need of DRM as analogue and short-wave technologies became obsolete a long ago, she added.

Marriyum said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed Finance Minister Ishaq Dar to release funds for transforming Radio Pa-

kistan on modern lines.

The minister extended gratitude to PM, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, and Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal for the initiative.

With the implementation of the 1000 kilowatt digital DRM medium wave transmitter, she said Radio Pakistan's reach would transcend borders, resonating in more than 52 countries.

She said the initiative would help promote Pakistan's narrative, news, heritage, and culture across the world. Out of 20 existing transmitters of Radio Pakistan, 14 had already become obsolete.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohns Naqvi, Chief Secretary and IG Punjab Police are also present.

Joint call in Senate to address Quran desecration incidents in Sweden, Denmark

ISLAMABAD (APP): The legislators from both sides of the aisle in the Senate on Sunday came together to urge the government to take concrete actions against the disgraceful incidents of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and Denmark.

During the session in the upper house, Senator Mushtaq Ahmed of Jamaat-e-Islami brought the matter to the attention of Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, stressing the importance of the upcoming Organization

of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) virtual meeting for the Council of Foreign Ministers of Member States on July 31. The meeting aimed to discuss measures against the repeated desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and Denmark, he added.

Senator Mushtaq emphasized the need to strengthen the OIC's strategy in dealing with the persistent menace of Quran burning on an international level. He proposed the government halt diplomatic relations, particularly with

Sweden and Denmark, to express its disappointment and protest against these recurrent incidents.

Supporting Senator Mushtaq's stance, Senator Molvi Faiz Muhammad of Jamaat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl expressed astonishment that believers of other faiths would resort to such sacrilegious acts despite the Holy Quran mentioning the names of many prophets from various religions.

He stressed the importance of cutting off all ties with Sweden and Denmark in response.

Senate passes Toshakhana bill proposing penalty for hiding state gifts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Sunday unanimously approved the Toshakhana bill, which proposes penalties for officials who hide state gifts instead of declaring and depositing them in the Toshakhana - the repository for such gifts.

The bill was presented by State Minister for Law and Justice, Shahadat Awan, during the Senate session.

The amendment states that anyone who breaks the rules outlined in Section 3 or any related rule will be fined an amount equal to five times the market value of the gift. If the person is a government servant, they may also face departmental proceedings as per the applicable laws and rules.

The Toshakhana is an administrative facility under the Cabinet Division, responsible for safeguarding valuable gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, and other officials by foreign leaders and dignitaries.

Four devotees die, 21 injured as bus overturns in Fazilpur

RAJANPUR (APP): Four devotees died and another 21 sustained injuries as a bus overturned at Indus Highway near Fazilpur in district Rajanpur on Sunday. According to district emergency officer Dr Muhammad Aslam, a bus of devotees was heading towards Jacobabad from Jhang. All of a sudden, the bus collided with a safety barrier installed along the road when its driver fell asleep. As a result, the bus overturned. The four deceased persons were identified as Yasir son of Muhammad Yousuf, resident of Jacobabad.

Khurshid Shah says Five names finalized for caretaker PM, assemblies to dissolve on Aug 9

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah has said that five names have been finalized for Caretaker Prime Minister (PM) and assemblies will dissolve on August 09.

He said a Committee of all parties finalized these names. The shortlisted candidates for Caretaker PM were neutral and they were not associated with any political party.

While talking to media persons after visiting the site of the Greater Karachi Bulk Water Supply Scheme

K-IV project at Keenjhar Lake on Sunday, he said that they were making all-out efforts to complete the project by 2024 or at the start of 2025. Replying to a question over the delay of the K-IV project which was expected to complete in 2018, he said, 'Where there is a will, there is a way.' He said that their 'Will' was that they had to complete this project whether two months before or two months later. He said that an investigation should be carried out to know about the responsible for the project's design.



BAJAUR: Rescue workers shifting an injured worker of JUI (F) in an Army Helicopter after the bomb blast in Bajaur district.

CS directs administration of Pishin to remain alert in view of flood threat

QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz Uqaili has directed the district administration of Pishin to remain active and alert keeping in view of the threat of flashflood due to rains in the district.

On this, the Deputy Commissioner Pishin, Dr. Yasir Khan Bazai visited different areas clearing and restoring the passages of the local stream including Dab cross, Nelai and Batezai.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that there is rain-

ing in different parts of the district and as such a mild increase is being witnessed in flow of water in the nullahs and streams of the district. He said that the situation is quite under control for time being in Pishin district.

He also directed the district administration to remain alert in view of the rains. He said that monitoring of the flow of water in the local streams and teams of health and livestock departments would also remain deployed in the areas likely to be affected more due to the upcoming rains.



WADH: Chief of Sarawan Nawab Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani and Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Raisani meeting with Mir Shafiqur Rehman.