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Rallies held to protest desecration of Holy Quran as nation observes 'Quran Sanctity Day'

ISLAMABAD (Online): Nation observed Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran on Friday to lodge protest against desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. In connection with Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran, rallies and demonstrations were being taken out across the country after Friday prayers.

On the constitution avenue in Islamabad, Supreme Court Bar Association organized a rally against the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden. The President of Supreme Court Bar Association said this despicable act is a conspiracy against Islam and Muslims. He said such incidents are intolerable.

The Supreme Court Bar Association also submitted a condemnation resolution at the ministry of foreign affairs.

Earlier, addressing the joint sitting in the Parliament Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged Islamic countries to forcefully raise their voice against

the recent despicable incident of desecrations of the Holy Quran in Sweden in all forms, including the United Nations, so that nobody can dare commit such a crime in future.

He said he will contact the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to convene a meeting of the world body on this matter wherein heads or representatives of all the Islamic countries are invited to express the sentiments of the Muslim Ummah.

He said this session should also pass a condemnation resolution, suggesting ways and means to curb the provocative acts of disrespecting the divine books and holy personalities.

The Prime Minister noted the Islamophobic incidents are a conspiracy aimed at driving wedge between Muslim and the Christians.

He also expressed his thanks to Pope Francis for condemning the incident and distancing himself from this profane act.



KARACHI: Members of Basic Human Rights International Council of Pakistan Agency holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden in front of Karachi press club



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and others in a group photo during inauguration ceremony of Land Information and Management System-Center of Excellence (LIMS-COE)

PM, COAS vow to address food insecurity, boost agri exports

Govt launches Land Information and Management System – Centre of Excellence – to transform unproductive land

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's civil and military leaders joined hands on Friday to tackle the pressing issues of food insecurity, malnutrition, and soaring import costs in the agriculture sector.

Inauguration Ceremony of Land Information and Management System - Center of Excellence (LIMS - COE) was graced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as a chief guest here on Friday.

Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir was also present on the occasion. The ceremony was also attended by Ministers of Finance, Defence, Planning Development & Special Initiative, National Food Security & Research, Information, Chief Secre-

taries of Provincial Governments, agricultural experts and Senior Army Officials. According to the World Food Programme, 36.9% of Pakistanis are food insecure and 18.3% of these are facing severe food crisis.

Cognizant of the prevailing food insecurity, mass malnutrition and widening import bill of agri related products vis-à-vis projected population growth and future domestic food needs, the National political, economic and military leadership has decided to undertake the decisive and meaningful steps to address this critical issue.

Establishment of LIMS is the first exceptional initiative, aimed at enhancing food security and improving agri exports thus

reducing import burden on national exchequer by transforming millions of acres of uncultivated and low yield land within the country.

This state-of-the-art system will help optimize the agricultural production through innovative technologies and sustainable precision agricultural practices based on agro-ecological potential of land, while ensuring well being of rural communities and preservation of environment.

The GIS based LIMS will greatly improve the national agri yield by systemizing digitization of agriculture, providing real time information to local farmers about soil, crops, weather, water resource and pest monitoring

through remote sensing and geospatial technologies as well as minimizing the role of middlemen through efficient marketing system.

The Land Information and Management System (LIMS) is an unprecedented project of the government of Pakistan and the Pakistan Army to promote modern agriculture, whereas the establishment of LIMS will help revolutionize the agriculture sector in the country.

LIMS is the first comprehensive government initiative for the development of the agricultural sector in the country's history, an official source said.

The main objective of LIMS is to reduce domestic agricultural imports, increase exports and meet the

food needs of the growing population.

Land Information Management System will also be helpful in enhancing food security of the country. The establishment of LIMS will provide farmers with simultaneous access to information on climate change, satellite crop monitoring, water, fertilizer and spray focus areas and direct access to markets.

Under Land Information Management System, it will be possible to increase agricultural production by using modern technology on uninhabited and low-yielding agricultural lands. This revolutionary institute will work on land, crops, weather, water resources and pest control under one roof.

Resolution of journalists' problems topmost priority of present government: Mariyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb said on Friday that the government fully believed in freedom of the press and addressing the problems of journalists was the topmost priority of the government.

This she said during a meeting with a delegation of journalists led by Abbottabad Press Club President Raja Haroon and Secretary General Raja Munir.

Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi was also present during the meeting.

The Ministry of Information, she said would continue to play its key role to equip the press clubs across the country with modern requirements.

Abbottabad Press Club, she added, was one of the most important and responsible press clubs in the country.

The minister issued directives to immediately set up a computer lab and studio at the Abbottabad Press Club.

She assured that Abbottabad Press Club would also be provided with a grant already announced.

Murtaza Javed Abbasi thanked the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for the announcement of the establishment of a computer lab, studio, and grant for the Abbottabad Press Club.

Abbottabad's journalistic community was doing its professional work despite limited resources, Murtaza Javed Abbasi said.

At least 50 dead in monsoon floods across Pakistan since June 25

KARACHI (INP): At least 50 people, including eight children, have been killed by floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains that have lashed Pakistan since last month, officials said on Friday.

The summer monsoon brings South Asia 70-80 per cent of its annual rainfall between June and September every year. It is vital for the livelihoods of millions of farmers and food security in a region of around two billion people — but it also brings landslides and floods.

"Fifty deaths have been reported in different rain-related incidents all over Pakistan since the start of the monsoon on June 25," a national disaster management official told reporters, adding that 87 people were injured during this period. The majority of the deaths were in Punjab, and were mainly due to electrocution and building collapses, the NDMA said in a report. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the bodies of eight children were recovered from a landslide in the Shangla district on Thursday.

PM phone calls OIC SG on desecration of Quran, Islamophobia

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a telephone conversation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Houssein Ibrahim Taha on Friday and discussed desecration of Holy Quran. Prime Minister conveyed Pakistan's strong condemnation of willful and provocative incidents of public burning of the Holy Quran which hurts Muslims sentiments worldwide.

He stressed that vilification of religion, revered religious personalities, Holy Scriptures and symbols could not be condoned on the self-serving pretext of freedom of expression and protest.

The Prime Minister appreciated the OIC Sec-

retary-General's role in articulating Muslim Ummah's concerns and demands about these Islamophobic trends and incidents. He emphasized that as the collective voice of the Islamic world, the OIC must chalk out a coordinated and comprehensive strategy, aimed at raising global awareness about its perspective and building legal and political deterrence against rising incidents of anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia.

While welcoming the convening of an urgent debate at the Geneva-based Human Rights Council on the issue, the Prime Minister further underscored that the OIC must raise the issue with the UN Secretary-General and at other relevant forums and bodies within the UN system.



ISLAMABAD: Ester Perez Luis, the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) resident representative, calls on the finance team of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), including Syed Naveed Qamar, the Federal Minister for Commerce, and Senator Saleem Mandviwala.

Baqaulah Unar holds charge as acting CS Sindh

KARACHI: The Services, General Administration and Coordination Department Government of Sindh has notified that Mr. Baqaulah Unar, an officer of Ex-PCS (BS-21), Senior Member, Board of Revenue, Sindh shall hold acting charge of the post of Chief Secretary, Sindh, in addition to his own duties, during the leave period of Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput, an officer of PAS (BS-22).

The post is assigned with the approval of the Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, according to a notification issued here on Friday.

Naveed Qamar, PPP finance team hold meeting with IMF country representative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar on Friday held crucial meeting with Ester Perez Luis, the country representative of International Monetary Fund (IMF). In a significant development for Pakistan's economic landscape, Ester Perez Luis, the International Monetary Fund's resident representative, met with the finance team of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), including Syed Naveed Qamar, Federal Minister for Commerce, and Saleem Mandviwala.

The meeting, held at minister's enclave, was aimed at discussing the possibility of a standby agreement with Pakistan, which would have a profound impact on the nation's financial stability, said a press release issued by Ministry of Commerce.

The PPP team expressed its willingness to support the IMF programme, citing larger national interests as the driving force behind their decision.

Syed Naveed Qamar, representing the PPP finance team, acknowledged the significance of the standby agreement in addressing Pakistan's economic concerns.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab inspects the machineries and vehicles during his visit to Mairaj Limited factory.

KWSB to get equipment soon for clearing choked sewerage lines: Murtaza

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Friday said that 12 suction, 12 jetting and 10 hybrid vehicles will soon be handed over to the Water and Sewerage Board which will help in opening the choke points of the sewerage lines in the city. Two mobile workshops have also been handed over to the Water Board to improve the sewerage system.

He said this on a visit to the factory of Mairaj Limited along with Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Water Board Syed Salahuddin and Project Director Karachi Water and Sewerage Services Improvement Project (KWSSIP).

General Secretary Pakistan People's Party South District Karamullah Waqasi and other officers and elected representatives were also present.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab inspected the mobile workshops and also drove them and said immediate action should be taken on complaints received from any area of the city regarding the sewerage system.

He observed that it was necessary to develop the underground sewerage system on better and modern lines to protect the roads and streets of the city from the overflow of sewage and to prevent the roads and streets from falling into disrepair. For this purpose modern and standard machinery.

Sharjeel assures business community of solving their issues on priority

KARACHI: A delegation from the Karachi Chamber of Commerce, led by President Tariq Yusuf, met with Sharjeel Inam Memon, Minister of Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, at his office in the Archives Complex, Clifton Karachi.

Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon assured the businessmen that he would work towards resolving their issues. He emphasized that a collaborative approach involving all stakeholders would be adopted to address the concerns of the traders.

He emphasized that the businessmen of Karachi hold a significant position in the country's economy. The Sindh government prioritizes addressing the issues faced by Karachi's business community. In the meeting, Tariq Yousaf, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, along with Senior Vice President Tauseef Ahmed, Vice Presi-



Sharjeel Inam Memon, Minister of Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, meeting with business community members.

Shortage of Climate resources holding Pakistan back, says Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday said Climate Finance was uncharted territory for many developing countries due to a significant knowledge and capacity gap on this critical issue.

Pakistan faces dual challenges of limited accessibility to climate finance and a lack of technical capacity, impeding its progress in achieving crucial climate adaptation and mitigation goals.

The minister was delivering her key note address

at the launch event of the Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA) organized by the UK Government, where she emphasized the significant role that programs like CFA could play in knowledge-creating, building capacity and new pathways within both the public and private sectors, a news release said. She underlined the challenge of prioritizing climate change in both sectors and highlighted the potential of such initiatives to elevate the government's narrative on climate finance.

By creating awareness and aligning public interests with government objec-

tives, these programs can effectively enhance the discourse on climate finance.

The minister highlighted Pakistan's commitment to exploring Carbon Markets as part of its efforts under the Paris Agreement. She mentioned that the country was in the process of developing an interim framework for a voluntary carbon market and we had officially signed on a collaboration with Verra, a global standard-setting body, to share knowledge and educate stakeholders on carbon markets and the certification process for generating carbon credits.

PM directs for steps to curb smuggling of tyres, spare parts

Assures to extend facilitation to Chinese investors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned for the early formulation of a comprehensive policy to do away with the smuggling of tyres and spare parts.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by their Chairman Li Qingwen, also instructed the relevant authorities to take effective measures to curb the smuggling of tyres.

He told the delegation that being a time-tested

friend, China always supported Pakistan like a brother in every hour of need.

He also assured the delegation that the government would extend all possible support to the Chinese investors to facilitate their investment in Pakistan.

The prime minister appreciated the delegation for their company's investment through a joint venture with Pakistan's renowned tyre manufacturing company.

The prime minister was told that tyres being manufactured by the plant established by Chinese

investment were also being exported to the international market.

It was told that within a short span of a year, the company's tyres have created their space in the world markets.

The prime minister was told that the company would enhance tyres manufacturing to boost its exports to \$200 million annually.

The prime minister instructed the authorities to extend all-out support to the Chinese investors to uplift the tyre industry in Pakistan.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister Tariq Pasha

and other relevant officers attended the meeting.

Online add: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured to extend every possible facilitation to the Chinese investors for investment in Pakistan.

He made the remarks while talking to a delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by Chairman Li Qingwen in Islamabad.

Shehbaz Sharif said China has also supported Pakistan in difficult times. He said China is a longstanding friend of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by their Chairman Mr Li Qingwen calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



MULTAN: Governor Punjab Engr. Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman cutting the ribbon to inaugurate three days of 'Mango Festival 2023' at DHA Arena Hall.

Wafaqi Mohtasib mediates to ensure payment of Rs 5m as wages to MEPCO labourers

Independent Report
MULTRAN: More than 100 daily wage labourers working in the Multan Electric Supply Company (MEPCO) were provided five months salary by their contractor due to the timely intervention and mediation of Mr. Muhammad Zahid Senior Investigation Officer (IRD) of Wafaqi Mohtasib Office, Multan.

Mr. Muhammad Zeeshan a daily wage labourer along with 33 others lodged complaint against "Ali Azam Enterprises", a contractor of MEPCO, wherein they claimed that the said contractor had failed in paying their daily wages for the last five months and they were living miserably.

The Complaint was processed under Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) through mediation and conciliation between the representative of MEPCO and the contractor, Mr Riaz Ahmad, under Wafaqi

Mohtasib IRD Mechanism.

The said contractor admitted the fact about non-payment of wages and undertook that payment of wages to all the laborers of D.G Khan, Kot Chutta and Rajanpur MEPCO Division would be made till June, 26th, 2023.

On 27th June, the representative of "Ali Azam Enterprises" appraised the Wafaqi Mohtasib Office that pending wages of more than 100 labourers amounting to Rs Five million has been paid and their rightful grievance have been redressed through mediation and conciliation.

Mr. Zeeshan, the representative of the complainants also endorsed the version of the agency to the extent that their wages have been paid before Eid-ul-Azha and extended gratitude to the Ombudsman office for redressal of their grievances.

Companies fail to distribute electricity, waste 1237k units daily

ISLAMABAD (Online): Reason behind unannounced electricity load shedding disclosed as distribution companies failure in distribution and waste of 1237000 units of electricity on daily basis.

It has been revealed that electricity distribution companies are failed and due to technical error electricity of 30 million is wasting on daily basis.

Source told that daily consumers are burdened 900 million without even consuming electricity.

FESCO cannot use 176 Mega Watt (MW) daily due to maintenance work daily. GEPCO fails to use 232 MW due to technical error. PESCO also fails to use 134MW due to overloading and faults. SEPCO cannot use 140MW due to electricity theft and line losses. MEPCO don not use 225MW. HESCO fails in using 114 MW due to theft, faults and overloading. KESCO fails in using 193MW electricity.

Pak-Korea program on certified seed system to yield 160,000 tons of seed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Project Steering Committee of Korea Program on International Agriculture (KOPIA) Pakistan Center was informed on Friday that "Pakistan-Korea Joint Program on Certified Seed Potato Production System" is set to yield an impressive production of 160,000 tons of certified seed potatoes.

The meeting was held with Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali in the chair and discussed collaborative efforts in various research projects, focusing on the development of technologies for potato seed, chili, and fodder crop production. This meeting was also attended by Korean scientists, representatives from the

Korean Embassy, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, universities and senior officials of allied departments, said a press release. These initiatives are being implemented through the joint efforts of PARC and the KOPIA and the successful outcomes of these projects are anticipated to significantly enhance both the quantity and quality of these crops.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Ali lauded the invaluable cooperation extended by the Government of Korea in this regard and emphasized the potential extension of this cooperation to the livestock sector and the application of sex semen technology. He assured the Korean counterparts of PARC's commitment to maintaining close collaboration and acknowledged the people.



QUETTA: Vendor sells mosquito nets to earn his livelihood for support his family during hot day of summer season at a roadside stall located on Zarghoon road in Quetta

Ahsan Iqbal inaugurates 200kv solar PV system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal on Friday inaugurated the installation of a 200kv solar PV system at the ministry to promote environment-friendly electricity.

The ceremony was held at the Ministry's auditorium which was attended by the Secretary, Ministry of Planning Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Additional Secretary (AS) and officials of the ministry, said a press release issued here.

Speaking at the occasion, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said, "The provision of affordable, reliable and clean energy has always remained a priority of the government."

"Pillar IV of Vision 2025 outlines the approach

towards achieving energy, water, and food security," the minister said.

"The recent 5E framework provides a short to medium-term strategy to achieve economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability in the coming years," he remarked.

"The recently launched 5Es framework and energy is one of the important E, he highlighted.

"Plan House will be established soon."

He said, "This generation will also reduce the annual energy bill for the Ministry from Rs 26.746m per annum to Rs 14.09m resulting in annual savings of Rs 12.66m. At the existing prices, the project is expected to recover its capital cost within four years."

Sindh Bank selects PTCL to implement cutting edge SD-WAN Infrastructure

Independent Report
KARACHI: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and Sindh Bank have signed an agreement for deployment of SD-WAN at 200 branches of Sindh Bank.

Karachi. The ceremony was witnessed by Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO PTCL, Imran Samad President & CEO Sindh Bank and their teams.

PTCL is providing Sindh Bank with its state-of-the-art infrastructure

agreement with Sindh Bank, emphasizing PTCL Group's commitment to assisting the bank in meeting its digital connectivity requirements.

As a national carrier, PTCL is at the forefront of driving digitalization throughout



Zarrar Hasham Khan, Group Chief Business Solutions Officer, PTCL & Ufone 4G and Syed Ata Hussain Jaffri, EVP Head of IT, Sindh Bank, signed the agreement at a ceremony recently held at Sindh Bank Head Office in

and platform solutions that are equipped with latest technology & managed security. Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G, expressed his satisfaction during the signing ceremony regarding the

the nation. By forging such alliances, PTCL remains dedicated to its pivotal role in advancing both telecommunications infrastructure and delivering cutting-edge, reliable solutions to the banking industry.

Govt taking concrete steps to stabilize country's economy: Governor

MULTAN (APP): Punjab Governor Engineer Baligh ur Rehman Friday said that the incumbent government was taking concrete and immediate steps to stabilize Pakistan's economy as country had come out of the economic crisis to a great extent.

He expressed these views while inaugurating the three-day Mango Festival organized here by Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University, DHA Multan and Mango Research Institute.

The governor said that the honest and hardworking leadership was working round the clock to get the country out of the problems, adding that everyone had to play his due role for developing the country.

Baligh ur Rehman said that those who spread hatred caused irreparable damage to the country, today even the monuments of the martyrs were not preserved.

He said that the nation had to end hatred and promote love in the society, adding that a lot of work had been done in

education sector in the province as new universities had been established in South Punjab and the research on crops was being made in the universities.

The governor pointed out that in 2018, the country was going to become the 24th largest economy in the world but it moved to 44th economy in 2022.

The country's leadership was striving hard to get it out of troubles, he said, adding that the stock exchange had been improved after the agreement with the IMF as the dollar was now heading towards a decline.

The governor said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif took crucial steps for the development of the agricultural sector as wheat crop's production had increased this year.

He said that the incumbent government had fixed the support price of wheat on time which benefited the farmers.

Baligh ur Rehman said that the agriculture sector of South Punjab

Gold prices up by Rs 600

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 600 and was sold at Rs 208,400 on Friday against its sale at Rs 207,800 the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 515 to Rs 178,670 from Rs 178,155 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 163,780 from Rs 163,309, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained constant at Rs 2480 and Rs 2,126.20 respectively.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships named, Seaspan Beacon, Singapore, and Atrotes Hercules Containers carrying Canola and Palm oil, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Grain & Fertilizer Terminal, and Liquid Cargo Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Kition-M and Perth-1 with Mogas and Coal also arrived at the outer anchorage of the Port Qasim on Friday.

SBP says: Financial system exhibit resilient performance with 18.3% growth in asset base

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), on Friday said that financial sector had shown resilience against internal and external headwinds and posted steady performance as the financial sector's asset base grew by 18.3 percent in Calendar year 2022.

The banking sector witnessed 19.1% growth in its assets mainly driven by investments while the credit risk remained contained as gross NPLs ratio lowered to 7.3 percent by end CY22.

The observations were made in Financial Stability Review (FSR) for CY22, the annual flagship publication of the central bank published under

Section 39(3) of the SBP Act 1956, said a statement issued here.

The review presents the performance and risk assessment of various segments of the financial sector including banks, non-bank financial institutions, financial markets, financial market infrastructures and non-financial corporates.

The FSR for CY22 noted that Pakistan's economy experienced a turbulent year as the existing economic imbalances were compounded by the unfavourable external environment.

The review termed the twin deficits, high inflation, catastrophic flooding, and delay in the completion of IMF program reviews as major challenges at domestic side while the global challenges including fast paced increase in commodity prices and monetary tightening by major central banks in advanced economies, manifested in the deteriorating macroeconomic conditions.

The FSR noted that the SBP and the government took various policy steps to address widening imbalances, which included further increase in policy rate and macro-prudential policies pertaining to consumer financing and administrative measures to contain external imbalance.

FPCCI, business bodies welcome direct link with Kazakhstan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and other business bodies on Friday welcomed commencing of direct air link between Pakistan and Kazakhstan on Saturday as it would help enhance bilateral economic cooperation.

Karachi Chamber of Commerce (KCCI) President Muhammad Tariq Yousaf said with the start of direct flights, the economic relations between the two countries would improve further.

He said the business community of Karachi considered that the step would have positive impact on trade relations with Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Kashif Anwar said Kazakhstan was an important country.

economic activities.

Irfan Malik said Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yezan Kistafin, deserved appreciation for playing an important role in the launch of a direct air link between the two brotherly countries.

It would prove to be a milestone in forging mutual business and economic integration with Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states, FPCCI President Irfan Iqbal Malik said while talking to APP.

He said the direct flights would increase the possibilities of economic cooperation between the two countries. Two flights in a week from Almaty, the industrial hub of Kazakhstan, to Lahore, would help enhance



LAHORE: A wood worker given the final touches and polishes on a clothes hanger stand at Shahdara Furniture Market.

Weekly inflation up by 0.70 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.70 per cent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on July 06, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 257.79 points as compared to 256.00 points during the past week, according to the PBS data.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 28.55 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential

items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732, increased by 1.08 per cent and went up to 265.88 points from last week's 263.03 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175; and above Rs 44,175 witnessed an increase of 1.02 per cent, 0.91 per cent, 0.83 per cent and 0.51 per cent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 24 (47.06%) items increased, 10 (19.61%) items decreased and 17 (33.33%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW), included bananas (7.51%), chicken (2.80%), eggs (1.17%).

President for accelerated efforts to provide jobs to differently-abled people

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Dr Arif Alvi has urged the need to accelerate efforts for the job placement of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the public and private sectors to empower them financially. He said that the suitability of PWDs for different jobs in the market should be determined as per international standards, and they should be facilitated in finding jobs for their financial empowerment.

The President expressed these views while chairing a meeting regarding the framework for the classification and severity of disability, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Senior officials of the Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination, NAVTTC, and NADRA, and representative of the World Health Organization,

Dr Maryam Malik, attended the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that prospective employers for the job placement of skilled Differently-abled People (DAPs) should be identified and, in the first phase, large employers in the private sector should be approached to accommodate DAPs as per their skill set. He said that the representation of PWDs in the business and industrial sectors should be increased to make them productive citizens of the country.

The President emphasized the need for adopting the framework for the classification of disabilities, developed in line with international standards and best practices, at the national and provincial levels. He added that the framework would help determine the severity of disability as well as the

suitability of PWDs for jobs in the market. He also called for making the disability certificates accessible and readable to the general public by translating them into Urdu.

He urged the concerned stakeholders to improve their coordination with the provinces for the adoption of a uniform classification framework and disability certificate throughout the country that would greatly facilitate PWDs. The President underscored the need for highlighting the success stories of DAPs in the media so as to encourage and motivate PWDs to make similar achievements.

The President urged the Ministry of Human Rights to further intensify its efforts for finding jobs for differently-abled people in the public and private sectors.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting regarding the framework for the classification of disabilities, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Launches 'Benazir Social Protection Account' Pakistan will soon stand on its feet: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday launched the "Benazir Social Protection Account" under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) here along with Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PA&SS) and BISP Chairperson Shazia Marri.

Addressing the ceremony, the prime minister directed the BISP authorities to place a condition for the Programme beneficiaries to get their children enrolled in schools to promote the education culture in the country.

It must be ensured that after a certain period the beneficiaries would get stipends only in case their children were attending schools, he reaffirmed.

The government, he said, should not go for promoting the 'flocks of beggars' in anyway, rather it must promote the ones who

were 'doers' in the real sense, with both mental and physical capacity to build Pakistan.

The time would come soon when the country would be standing on its own feet and generating resources itself, he added.

The launch ceremony was attended by Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation Faisal Kareem Kundi, members of diplomatic community and BISP beneficiaries.

Briefing about the salient features of the Account, Shazia Marri said under the new system, beneficiary women would have the option to select the bank of their choice, and they would receive the payments directly in their accounts which they could withdraw at their convenience.

Four banks namely National Bank of Pakistan, Bank Alfalah, JS Bank

Limited and United Bank Limited had been initially selected through a competitive process for the new payment model, she added.

PM Shehbaz appreciated Minister Shazia Marri for her hard work to expand the Programme, particularly introduction of the Benazir Social Protection Account which would help the beneficiaries to receive the stipends without any hassle, besides ensuring transparency in the system.

He recalled that last summer when the government was facing an intense economic crisis, massive floods caused heavy destruction in most parts of the country.

Through the BISP, the Federal Government distributed Rs 70 billion among the affectees in all the provinces in the most transparent manner, he said, adding the amount was apart from the aid

money sent by the friendly countries, and local and international donor agencies.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said former prime minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, who had a great vision of poverty alleviation, introduced the Programme which was successfully continuing.

With regards to standby loan arrangements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), he thanked all the friendly countries who helped Pakistan get through with the IMF and sign a staff-level agreement.

He expresses the hope that the programme would successfully complete and Pakistan would be able to bring in reforms and restructure its economy in the nine months period.

Shazia Marri said the BISP had achieved a significant milestone today with the formal launch of Benazir Social Protection Accounts under the esteemed patron-

age of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

She also acknowledged the visionary role played by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who had dreamt the social protection programme, and former president Asif Ali Zardari, who established it in 2008.

She said the BISP, a non-political programme, was committed to providing financial support to deserving women on an equal basis. Over the past 15 years, it had achieved numerous milestones: transforming the lives of countless families across the nation. Ms Marri said last year, the BISP's budget was increased from Rs 235 billion to Rs 404.2 billion, with an overall increase of 72% taking the number of beneficiaries from 7.2 million to 9 million, which was a testament of current government's commitment to protect the most vulnerable and marginalized segment of society.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributing smart cards and cheque books relating to Benazir Social Protection Account among the beneficiaries

Shazia Marri terms Benazir Social Protection Account as revolutionary milestone

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PA&SS) and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Shazia Marri Friday said that "Benazir Social Protection Accounts" is a revolutionary milestone in the 15-year journey of BISP which will further ensure transparency during cash disbursements.

She was speaking during the launching ceremony of "Benazir Social Protection Accounts" for Benazir Income Support Programme's beneficiaries.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was the chief guest at the ceremony who also launched the "Benazir Social Protection Account" along with the SAPM, Faisal Karim Kundi and others at Prime Minister House.

The launching ceremony was attended by a number of distinguished guests including Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, members of the diplomatic community and BISP beneficiaries.

The federal minister, Shazia Marri said that BISP has achieved a significant milestone today with the formal launch of Benazir Social Protection Accounts under the esteemed patronage of Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

She further said that this new payment system will give autonomy to women in selecting the bank of their choice.

The payments will be directly made into their accounts which beneficiaries can withdraw at their convenience, she added.

JUI protests against desecration of Holy Quran

HYDERABAD (APP): Jamiat ulama e Islam Hyderabad Chapter on Friday held a protest demonstration outside the Hyderabad Press Club to denounce the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

The protesters led by provincial Information Secretary District Ameer Maulana Taj Muhammad Naahiyon, Hafiz Khalid Hassan Dhamrah and Hafiz Muhammad Azam Jahangiri, Maulana Faiz ullah Khan Swati, Haji Abdul Aziz Rajput said that desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden was conspiracy against Muslims living across the

world. They deplored the silence of International organizations over the desecration of Holy Quran.

They urged all Religions including Muslim World to unite to discourage such incidents in future. They demanded the Pakistan Government deplore the Sweden envoy immediately and cut off diplomatic ties with Sweden. Meanwhile a massive rally led by District General Secretary Hafiz Khalid Hassan Dhamrah and Ameer Latifabad Taluka Maulana Faiz ullah Swati was also organized from Fateh Chowk to Press Club Hyderabad.



HYDERABAD: Workers of Pakistan Markazi Muslim League hold a protest rally against burning of Quran in Sweden

CPEC to promote growth, social prosperity: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning and Development Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday said that the government was promoting China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project (CPEC) to attain sustainable economic growth and social prosperity as envisaged by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the country.

Addressing a seminar on CPEC, organized by the Bahria University Islamabad, the minister said that CPEC was a mega-development project, which included developmental projects related to basic infrastructure, energy generation, Gwadar Port develop-

ment and industrial cooperation.

The minister said that the project which was started 10 years ago on July 5, 2013 which provided employment opportunities to millions of people across the country, besides speeding up the pace of development in various sectors of national economy.

The CPEC has made significant progress due to the vision of the leadership of the Chinese President Xi Jinping, he said adding that Gwadar, energy, infrastructure and industrial development projects were agreed upon during the visit of the Chinese President.

He said that 11 working groups were established in the context of CPEC projects, adding that there were key achievements in the construction and development of Gwadar port, adding that the port was fully functional, Gwadar airport, hospital, sea water potable plant and other projects have also been built.

The minister said that the projects which were completed under CPEC were contributing in economic development and employment creation and played a key role in improving the lives of the people.



MIRPURKHAS: Deputy Commissioner Zainul Abideen Memon presiding over a meeting with officers of Food Department and representatives of Flour Mills & Chakki Association regarding fixation of price of flour

Punjab Governor says: Intl community should make an effective strategy to prevent desecration of Holy Quran

LAHORE: Members of the National Assembly called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman here today at Governor House Lahore. Various issues including political and economic situation of the country were discussed in the meeting.

Talking on this occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the top priority of the government is to stabilize the economy of the country. He said that the economic condition of the country is improving due to the sincere efforts of the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and the economic team. Governor Punjab said that politics is the name of public service and under the leadership of Prime Minister

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the incumbent government is committed to bring economic stability, development and prosperity in the country. He said that the doors of the Governor's house are always open for public representatives. Governor Punjab further said that the incident of May 9 was very heartbreaking in which the memorials of the martyrs were desecrated. He said that the law is taking its course against the people involved in the incident of May 9.

Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Muslims all over the world have been deeply hurt by the heinous act of desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden. He said that the international community should make an effective strategy to prevent such incidents.

Toshakhana case: Court accepts exemption plea of Imran

ISLAMABAD (Online): Sessions Court Islamabad has accepted exemption plea of PTI chairman Imran Khan in Toshakhana case.

The hearing of the case will take place today (Saturday) too.



SUKKUR: Lawyers are holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden

Justice Musarrat Hilali takes oath as judge of SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Justice Musarrat Hilali took oath as second woman judge of Supreme Court (SC) on Friday.

Oath taking ceremony was held in SC and Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial administered oath to Ms Hilali.

The ceremony was attended by senior judges, Attorney General (AG) and lawyers.

Justice Musarrat Hilali will serve as SC judge for three years.

The total number of SC judges now has reached 16 with the induction of Justice Musarrat Hilali

Parliamentary committee for appointment of judges had approved induction of Justice Musarrat Hilali as SC judge.

PML-N submits request to retain 'tiger' as poll symbol

ISLAMABAD (Online): PML-N has filed application in Election Commission (EC) for the allotment of election symbol of tiger to the party in coming general election. EC had invited applications from all political parties through its July 01, 2023 press release for allotment of election symbols for next general elections.

PTCL Group's SummerSpark' Internship Program 2023 set to ignite careers of young graduates

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's leading telecommunications and integrated digital services provider, PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone 4G) has launched its highly anticipated 'SummerSpark' internship program at a vibrant opening ceremony held here at PTCL Group Tower.

The 6-week internship program, 'SummerSpark' received an overwhelming response upon opening the registration process, with over 15,475 young graduates from top universities eagerly vying for a spot.

After a rigorous selection process, the top 30 candidates with exceptional competencies and potential

were selected to participate in the program. These future leaders will enjoy valuable hands-on work experience on various business projects under expert mentorship at PTCL & Ufone 4G offices in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi that will facilitate them to set the stage for the successful commencement of their professional careers ahead.

Sharing his thoughts at the opening ceremony, Group Chief People Officer, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Shoaib Baig said, "We are thrilled to launch the 'SummerSpark' Internship Program 2023, which is designed to ignite the careers of Pakistan's highly tal-

ented graduates.

The internship program aligned with sustainable practices by investing in the long-term growth and success of individuals in the telecom sector, he added.

He said "We provide a diverse and enabling environment for the youth to develop and showcase their talent and focus on promoting experiential learning and equip interns with practical skills and knowledge that will pave the way for their future success".

The 'SummerSpark' goes beyond traditional mentorship as it helps the participants to fully immerse in the corporate culture.

Meeting held regarding rain emergency arrangements in District East

KARACHI: A meeting was held under the presidency of Transition Officer District East Naveed Khan Kolachi in view of the expected rains in which town chairmen, Dr. Fawad Ahmed, Rashid Khakheli and Rizwan Abdul Sami, town municipal commissioners Javed Kalwar, Ammar Khan, Intiaz Magsi, officers of the Defunct DMC East, water board and elected local bodies representatives attended the meeting.

Focal Person Taqueer Abbas, Superintending Engineer, Mubeen Sheikh and Senior Executive Engineer Intiaz Bhutto briefed the participants about drains, dewatering pumps and other arrangements on the occasion and assured that in rain emergency, staff and machinery will be available for drainage work which will perform duties especially in places where there is a possibility of drainage problems.

Various issues related to rain emergency were identified by the elected local bodies representatives, for which orders were issued on the spot for resolving the problems.

On the occasion, Transition Officer Naveed Khan Kolachi said that the choking points of the drains should be cleared immediately, kmc should be taken on board to play its role to ensure the execution of the works in those drains which pertains to him.

Install before rain dewatering pumps on important places that in case of rain not face difficulty in the transfer of pumps.

No compromise on nobility of Prophethood, sanctity of Quran: Ashrafi

LAHORE (Online): Special Representative to the Prime Minister for Interfaith Harmony and Middle Eastern Affairs Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has said that there will be no compromise on nobility of Prophethood and sanctity of the Holy Quran at all.

Addressing a press conference at Behria Town Grand Masjid, he said the Holy Quran Day was observed on Friday across various countries including Pakistan. He strongly condemned the burning and desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden. He urged the world to make legislation regarding sacred things and the Holy Quran.

Ashrafi said that the

Holy Quran teaches respect for all prophets, and it was not permissible to burn the divine books in Islam.

"Muslims believe in all prophets, and they want respect for all sacred articles related to Islam," he added. He said that the honour of the last Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him should also be respected as well.

Ashrafi said all Muslims should raise voice against the desecration of Holy Quran collectively. He said all Muslims should be part of peaceful protest against such abhorrent acts, leaving aside their political and religious differences.