

China proposes SCO members to expand digital currency settlements

BEIJING (APP): China has proposed to expand cooperation on sovereign digital currency among member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Experts have said that the proposal will elevate the transaction efficiency among SCO members.

In addition to the expanded cooperation on using sovereign digital currencies, the Chinese side also suggested the SCO to scale up local currency settlement between SCO members and promote the establishment of an SCO development bank.

The trade among SCO members can be expanded with higher efficiency through the increasing adoption of sovereign digital currency as enterprises can lower

potential risks resulting from geopolitical factors and the fluctuation in the US dollar exchange rate, Wang Peng, a research fellow at the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times. As a major SCO member, China has been implementing targeted efforts to boost the use of yuan in cross-border settlement.

In January 2023, a cross-border trade center was established at China-SCO Local Economic and Trade Cooperation Demonstration Area (SCODA) in Qingdao, East China's Shandong Province, where enterprises can choose to settle their international trade with SCO members in the yuan.

Lu Wei, a representative from SCODA, said in a statement sent to the

Global Times that the trade center can effectively reduce companies' settlement cost while avoiding the risks incurred by frequent exchange rates turbulences.

By the end of June, the trade center of SCODA has facilitated 24.29 billion yuan (\$3.35 billion) worth of cross-border settlement. The center processed 3.84 billion yuan in cross-border financing using the yuan, with 1.25 billion yuan coming from overseas markets, according to SCODA.

SCODA also revealed that demonstration area will set an innovation lab targeting China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System, aiming to expand the utility of the system among SCO members and the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative.



ISLAMABAD: Andreas Ferrarese the Italian Ambassador in Pakistan and Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs in a group photo after signs the Exchange of Letter as Pakistan and Italy extend Pakistan's Italian Debt Swap Agreement (PDSA) timeline until December 2024, at the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

PTI govt left biggest trade deficit in country's history, damaged economy: Kiyani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator for Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani Thursday lashed out at the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was responsible for damaging the economic sector and left biggest trade deficit in the country's history.

"PTI government brought the country on the verge of bankruptcy but the PDM-led government saved it from the default", he said while talking to a private news channel.

He further blamed that the political instability created by chairman PTI has also caused irreparable damage to the country's economy adding that the economy is in dire need of reforms which will be directly related to political stability as well.

Replying to a

question, he replied that we need to learn from our past mistakes and devise medium and long-term policies to improve the economy, adding, economic indicators are constantly improving after the signing of the staff-level agreement with the IMF.

The trust of domestic as well as foreign investors in Pakistan's economy will now enhance, he said, adding, the IMF agreement will also open the door to external financing, including funding from bilateral and multilateral institutions and individual investors.

IMF deal was the need of the hour, he said, adding, the conspiracies of some nimal forces did not succeed and that it was very important for Pakistan to get the IMF program as it will help achieve financial discipline.

Pakistan's total foreign reserves rise to \$ 9.74b

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan rise to US\$ 9,745.5 million while reserves held by the central bank reached US\$ 4,462.7 million.

The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, informed that foreign reserves held by the central bank increased by US\$ 393 million to US\$ 4,462.7 million 'mainly due to receipt of official GoP inflows' as of June 30, 2023.

Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at US\$ 5,282.8 million, it added.

In the previous week ending on June 23, 2023, total liquid foreign reserves held by the country was US\$ 9,340.8 million. Among them, foreign reserves held by the central bank were US\$ 4,069.9 million while net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were US\$ 5,270.9 million.

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Gold prices up by Rs1,800

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 1,800 and was sold at Rs 207,800 on Thursday against its sale at Rs. 206,000 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs1,543 to Rs178,155 from Rs 176,612 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 163,309 from Rs161,894. 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. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$23 to \$1905 from \$1928, the association reported.

PSX turns around to bullish trend, gains 626 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 626.01 points, a positive change of 1.44 percent, closing at 44,178.85 points against 43,552.84 points the previous trading day.

A total of 297,822,139 shares were traded during the day as compared to 351,181,910 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.12.428 billion against Rs12.014 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 335 companies transacted their shares in the stock market;

200 of them recorded gains and 112 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 23 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 28,845,201 shares at Rs.1.21 per share; Pak Elektron with 16,169,219 shares at Rs.10.66 per share and Pak Petroleum with 14,126,634 shares at Rs.67.24 per share.

Mehmood Tex witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.43.15 per share price, closing at Rs.725.00, whereas the runner-up was Shield Corp with an Rs.21.97 rise in its per share price to Rs.314.86.



MULTAN: A trader selling seasonal fruit mango at Fruit Market.



Federal Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting on restructuring of PIA at Finance Division.

Dar seeks early legislation for quick resumption of PIA flights to USA, UK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday instructed the relevant authorities to bring forward appropriate legislation as soon as possible to ensure quick resumption of PIA flights to the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK).

The minister was chairing a meeting on matters related to the Civil Aviation Division (CAA) and the Airport Security Force (ASF), according to a Finance Ministry press release. Earlier, the minister was briefed on the issues being faced by the aviation

sector pertaining to regulation, service provision, and security functions. The meeting discussed various legal solutions available and the necessary amendments required in the aviation laws/ordinances in order to enhance the capacity in the aviation sector and to make it compatible with the international standards.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Aviation and Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique; Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar; Federal Minister for Law & Justice Azam Nazir Tarar; SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa also present.

Naqvi presides over ceremony for providing skill courses to inmates

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presided over an agreement signing ceremony between the Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) and the Punjab Prisons Department aimed to facilitate technical courses for prisoners in 10 additional jails across the province. The agreement was signed by the Chief Operating Officer of TEVTA Ahmad Khawar Shahzad and IG Prisons Farooq Nazir, at the CM office.

Under this agreement, a total of 16 skill-based courses will be organized in Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhupura, Pakpattan,

Okara, Jhang, Sargodha, Vehari, Toba Tek Singh, and Layyah jails. Upon successful completion of these courses, which typically last between 3 to 6 months, the inmates will receive certificates to support their reintegration into society.

The courses will cover a wide range of skills, including electrical work, welding, plumbing, motorcycle mechanics, fashion design, and computer applications.

During the event, the COO TEVTA highlighted that each course can accommodate up to 25 detainees. It was mentioned that TEVTA had already provided training to 20,000 inmates.



HYDERABAD: Sindh Abadgar Ittehad President Nawaz Zubir Ahmed Talpur addressing a press conference at HPC.

Baligh initiates joint research to improve crop quality, boost agri production

ISLAMABAD: On the special direction of Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman, Chinese scientists, Punjab University and Guard Agriculture Research and Services will collaborate on modern research to develop the best quality seeds of rice, cotton, and wheat crops to boost agricultural production and meet the ever-increasing food needs of the growing population.

Vice Chancellor Punjab University Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood has already notified a high powered academia industrial linkage committee comprising Prof

Dr Muhammad Arshad Javed, head of Plant Breeding and Genetics Department Dr Nasim Ahmad Yasin, Dr Abdul Qayyum Rao and Prof Dr Shakil Ahmad, Director ORIC with Shahzad Ali Malik, Sitara-I-Imtiaz, as its Convenor, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

Chairman, Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association Shahzad Ali Malik, while chairing the preliminary meeting of the committee, expressed his solemn resolve to promote the linkage and assured full cooperation from his company and collaboration with Chinese scientists.

IMF board to give approval of Pakistan loan within days: PEW

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Brig. (ret'd) Aslam Khan on Thursday hoped that few days are left for the meeting of the Executive Board of the IMF for the review and possible ratification of the Staff Level Agreement with Pakistan.

In a statement issued here, he said that the IMF's Executive Board's meeting scheduled to be held on July 12, during which there was a strong possibility of approving a loan of three billion dollars and releasing

the first instalment of one billion and ten crore dollars. Brig. (ret'd) Aslam Khan said that the approval of IMF loan will open the way for more loans and investments for Pakistan, which will improve the situation.

The government should start a diplomatic campaign to get the international community and friendly countries to implement their commitments in addition to obtaining new loans, he concluded.

Pakistan, Italy extend PDSA timeline until December 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Italy have reached an agreement to extend the timeline of the Pakistan-Italian Debt Swap Agreement (PDSA) through the Exchange of Letters (EoL).

Mr. Andreas Ferrarese, the Italian Ambassador in Pakistan and Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, signed the EoL and extended the timeline of the PDSA up to December 31, 2024, on the same procedures, modalities, terms, and conditions as defined in the signed Agreement dated November 4, 2006, between Pakistan and Italy, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

During the extension period, the remaining activities of PDSA will be completed i.e. the remaining debt will be

cancelled, completion of ongoing PDSA projects, handing/taking over of assets, impact evaluation of the PDSA Programme, and final report of the PDSA Programme.

The Government of Pakistan and the Government of Italy had signed an agreement for Development Swap, on November 4, 2006, which came into force in 2009. Approximately \$100 million (US \$26.52 million & Euro 58.74 million) equivalent to PKR 8.276 billion of Pakistan's debt owed to Italy is to be swapped for expenditure on development projects around the country on Health, Education, Agriculture, and Environment, Micro Credit Schemes, Poverty Alleviation, Rural Development and Infrastructure.

Management Committee (MC) is the highest decision-making body of Pakistan Italian Debt Swap Agreement (PDSA), co-chaired by H.E. the Italian Ambassador and Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs along with representatives of the Federal and Provincial Governments. To date, 48 projects have been approved and funded by PDSA, out of which 45 projects have been completed and 3 are in progress.

The Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs thanked the Government of the Republic of Italy for providing assistance under the Debt Swap Agreement and other Technical Assistance and emphasized further enhancing the bilateral ties between the two countries.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships namely, Maersk Pelepas, MSC Lisbon, Eva Usuki and Milaha Ras Laffan carrying Containers, LNG and Chemicals, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Pakistan Port Gas Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Southern Anoa and Seaspan Beacon with Palm oil and Containers also arrived at the outer anchorage of Port Qasim during the last 24 hours.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two container ships 'Maersk Pelepas and MSC Lisbon' sailed out to sea on Thursday morning and four more ships, Eva Usuki, N-Orhan, Huang Shan and Yakul Silver are expected to sail on the same day. The cargo throughput of 128,071 tonnes, comprising 109,048 tonnes imports Cargo and 19,023 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,959 Containers (1,840 TEUs Imports and 1,119 TEUs export) was handled at the port.

Amin vows to address IT, Telecom issues, safeguard user rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Amin Ul Haque on Thursday made a firm commitment to tackle the challenges faced by the Information Technology and Telecom industry while ensuring the protection of cellular users' rights.

During a meeting with Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of telecom companies, namely Ufone, Jazz, and Telenor, the minister recognized the need for striking a balance between service providers and users.

He assured the CEOs of his dedicated efforts to resolve the issues plaguing the IT industry.

Additionally, the minister emphasized the active measures being taken to settle these matters through relevant forums, aiming for positive outcomes.

Furthermore, Syed Amin Ul Haque chaired a Universal Service Fund (USF) Policy meeting, where the USF Company's annual budget of Rs 18,036 million for FY

2023-24 was approved. The meeting was attended by high-ranking officials from the IT sector, including the Secretary IT and representatives from the Cabinet Division and Finance Ministry. The CEO of USF briefed the chair about the ongoing projects.

The minister also presided over the Policy Committee meeting of the Research & Development Fund. The CEO of Ignite, a government-owned technology innovation organization, presented various future projects during the meeting. The annual budget of Ignite for FY 2023-24, amounting to Rs 3,206 million, was approved.

Syed Amin Ul Haque highlighted the challenges faced by telecom companies in importing equipment and upgrading systems due to limited Letters of Credit (LCs), causing delays in completing USF's ongoing projects. The minister assured his commitment to addressing this issue and finding suitable solutions.



Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque chairing policy Committee meeting of Research & Development Fund in Islamabad.

China's services trade sustains growth in first 5 months

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): China's services trade sustained its growth momentum in the first five months of the year, official data showed Thursday.

The country's services trade reached nearly 2.61 trillion yuan (about 362 billion U.S. dollars) from January to May, up 10.2 percent year on year, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed.

Trade in knowledge-intensive services expanded 13.6 percent year on year to exceed 1.12 trillion yuan in the period, the data showed. The figure accounted for 43.1 percent of the country's total volume of services trade, up 1.3 percentage points from the same period last year. Travel services saw a notable recovery during the period, with trade in this sector.

Kashif highlights potential benefits of barter trade

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Executive Officer, Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Kashif Ashfaq on Thursday said that barter trade among Russia, Iran and Afghanistan would hold several potential benefits and significance for these countries.

Presiding over the PFC Board of Directors meeting, he said that this wise and timely epoch making decision of Pakistan would promote regional integration and economic cooperation by leveraging their geographic proximity. Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan can enhance trade routes, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges, leading to a more integrated regional economy, he said.

Kashif Ashfaq said that it would help further

strengthen economic ties and promote cooperation among these countries and facilitate the exchange of goods and services without necessarily involving traditional currency transactions. It will also be particularly useful for the countries facing financial constraints or limited access to global financial systems, he said and added that barter trade would serve as an alternative mechanism for conducting business when traditional financial channels were restricted and in addition to bypassing monetary transactions, these countries can continue trading despite the sanctions shocks. The PFC head said it can help address trade imbalances between these countries that promotes mutual benefits and foster economic equilibrium.

PM extends Pakistan's full support to UAE hosting COP28 summit

Woos UAE investment in alternative energy as both countries sign MoU

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday extended Pakistan's full support to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the country was set to host COP28 summit in Dubai from November 30 to December 12 this year.

The prime minister, in a meeting with President-designate of COP-28 and UAE's Special Envoy for Climate Change, Minister for Industries and Technologies and Chairman Masdar Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber and his delegation, conveyed best wishes to the leadership of UAE for the success of the event.

Welcoming Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, the prime minister underscored the importance of high level exchanges and felicitated him on his appointment as President-designate COP28.

He expressed full confidence in Dr. Jaber's stewardship of this important global conference.

Appreciating UAE's efforts in combating climate change and developing renewable energy projects, the prime minister thanked the Emir for his support during last year's devastating floods in Pakistan.

He also thanked the UAE for its vital support to Pakistan which has been critical in reaching staff level agreement with the IMF.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also briefed the delegation about the Special Investment Facilitation Council established by the government aimed at providing facilitating the foreign investors in diverse sectors.

He also shared details of the 10,000 MW solar energy projects for which a road show was already held in Dubai.

Dr. Sultan Al Jaber conveyed the greetings and best wishes of the UAE leadership to the prime minister. He showed keen interest to enhance partnership with Pakistan in all domains and emphasized UAE's leadership directions to him to further improve collaboration with Pakistan in the renewable energy sector that would help boost energy security for Pakistan. The visiting dignitary underscored that they viewed Pakistan as an important partner in climate change discourse and appreciated Pakistan's active role in climate change diplomacy.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing ceremony while Secretary Power Division Mr Rashid Mahmood Langrial and Undersecretary of Ministry & Infrastructure of UAE Mr Sharif al Olama signing MoU for development of renewable energy projects in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority Lt. Gen. Inam Haider Malik presiding Flood Management Conference.

Naqvi visits Ganga Ram Hospital to inquire about injured

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited Sir Ganga Ram Hospital to inquire about the injured due to collapse of a building's roof, caused by the falling of a wall from an adjacent building.

Mohsin Naqvi directed the Medical Superintendent to ensure comprehensive care and treatment for the injured, expressing his prayers for their swift recovery. He instructed the hospital administration to provide necessary medical assistance to the injured. Addressing the media after the visit, Mohsin Naqvi announced that an investigation would be launched against the owners of the wedding hall responsible for wall collapse. As many as 14

people, four of whom are in critical condition, were brought to Ganga Ram Hospital after the incident. He assured that appropriate action will be taken against those found responsible. In light of various incidents caused by heavy rainfall, financial assistance will be provided to the families of the deceased, and the injured will receive free medical treatment, he added.

Mohsin Naqvi commended efforts of the highly competent team of doctors at the hospital, who were diligently providing treatment to the injured and Provincial Minister Dr. Javed Akram was personally supervising their care. If necessary, the injured will be referred to other hospitals for treatment, he added.

Sharjeel condemns attack on check post in Mir Ali

KARACHI: The Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, has strongly condemned the attack on the check post in Mir Ali, expressing deep sorrow over the martyrdom of both security personnel and a child. Sharjeel Inam Memon has expressed profound sorrow and remorse for the martyrdom of Major Mian Abdullah Shah during the operation against terrorists in the Shikar area of Khyber. He also paid tribute to the late Major Mian Abdullah Shah for his sacrifice. Provincial Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs and emphasized that we stand in solidarity with the grieving families.



HYDERABAD: Members of Pakistan Zindabad Movement (PZM) holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, at Hyderabad press club

Chairman PRCS hands over keys first model shelter house to flood affected widow

LARKANA (APP): Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has set up the first shelter house for the flood victims of 2022 in village Badal Khan Brohi near Garhi Khudabakhsh Bhutto of Larkana district, on Thursday.

Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari along with his team reached the village and handed over the keys to the flood affected widow Mst. Sita Bibi house comprising on two-rooms and inaugurated the solar-powered water filtration plant at village Seerloo of Ratodero taluka along with the shelter house project.

Secretary General PRCS Ubeedullah Khan, Assistant Commissioner Ratodero Ghaus Bakhs Jatoi, Asma Naseem, Chairman Red Crescent Larkana Branch Ahmad Mehmood Farooqui, Rajab Ali, German Red Crescent Kasur Abbas, Nadeem Abbas, Nasir Khan, Kamran Kashif and others were also present, on the occasion.

Speaking to the media, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari said that last year about 3.5 crore people of Sindh, Baluchistan and KPK and Punjab were affected by floods and heavy rains, especially Larkana, Kamber Shahdadkot, Shikarpur, Dadu, Jamsoro, Thatta, Badin in the coastal areas. He said in the districts

of Balochistan, Sahabatpur, Jafarabad, Dera Murad Jamali were severely affected.

He also said some people have built their own houses under self help basis and the provincial government is also helping the victims, now we are trying to go to the flood affected talukas and UCs where people need such houses, he said.

Pakistan Red Crescent Society maintaining its tradition, is going to build more than 5 thousand shelter houses for the flood victims throughout Pakistan and the goal is to build more than 1 thousand shelter houses in each province.

Sardar Shahid Laghari we have promised to build a thousand shelter houses in which the Norwegian Red Crescent, International Federation of Red Cross, German Red Cross are our other partners and supporters so that they can come here and see that we will build houses where there is a need for houses, he added.

Chairman PRCS said that the health conditions in Pakistan are very bad due to which the flood victims of last year are still waiting for medical aid and it is not possible to reach everywhere, but the government and the Pakistan Red Crescent Society are working together with all stakeholders for rehabilitation and the flood.

Man tortures son to death over buffalo theft allegations

KARACHI (INP): A man tortured his young son to death over allegations of buffalo theft in Manghopir area of Karachi on Thursday.

Police said that a man got annoyed with son over charges of buffalo theft against him which led to exchange of hot words.

The angry father hit young son Zulfiqar in head with iron rod resulting in his immediate death. The accused fled the scene.

The body was shifted to hospital and police after registering a case into the incident started raids for his arrest.

Joint sitting of Parliament condemns desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden

ISLAMABAD (APP): The joint sitting of the Parliament on Thursday strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and called upon the international community to take serious action to prevent such incidents in the future.

They were addressing on a motion moved by Federal Minister for Human Rights, Riaz Hussain Pizada on the situation arising out of the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden in the joint sitting of the Parliament, which was chaired by Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaz Ashraf.

Parliamentarians from the government and the

opposition sides expressed deep distress over the incident, stating that Muslims worldwide have been profoundly hurt by this disgraceful act.

They emphasized that no civilized society should permit the provocation and disrespect of religious sentiments under the guise of freedom of expression. They urged the international community to address this tragic incident and take effective measures to prevent similar occurrences.

Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmad strongly condemned the incident and said that the entire nation was united on this matter. He said that

every forum should be used to raise the voice against this wrong act.

He said that although it was an individual act, but the government of the concerned country should take strict action against that person. He said that every Pakistani would participate in peaceful protests on Friday against the incident. He praised the decision to convene an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in response to the incident.

Opposition Leader in Senate, Senator Dr Shalhzad Waseem said that such act will increase the feeling of abhorrence among various communities of the world

and urged to control such incidents.

He added that the Muslims living in different parts of the world strongly condemned the incident.

He said that similar incidents already occurred in some countries and demanded to stop happening of such incidents. He said that playing with the sentiments of Muslims on the name of freedom of expression is absolutely deplorable.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani said that holding of joint sitting of the Parliament was a good step to give a message to the world that the entire nation was united on this incident. He said that Muslims respect

other religions in accordance with Islamic teachings and expect reciprocity from followers of other faiths for global peace. He stressed that promoting interfaith harmony among nations was essential for ensuring international peace.

He called upon the international community to take notice and strict action against those responsible. He said that our protests should be held peacefully following the teachings of Islam.

Federal Minister for Communications Maulana Asad Mehmood strongly condemned the anti-Islam act considering it highly unjustifiable.

Religious scholars condemn burning of Holy Quran

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prominent scholars, intellectuals, and leaders representing various schools of thought and religious denominations from across the country on Thursday strongly condemned the recent incident of burning the Holy Quran in Sweden.

In a joint statement, they expressed their outrage and announced that on upcoming Friday would be observed as 'Quran Sanctity Day.'

They called for peaceful protests and condemnation of the incident in all mosques, emphasizing the need for swift action against the blasphemous act.

The Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council and Prime Minister's Special

Kundi rejects propaganda on Iraq visa fee

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Central Information Secretary of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Faisal Karim Kundi has rejected a propaganda about increase in Iraq visa fee and termed it against the reality.

In a statement issued here on Thursday, he said some travel agents and opposition elements were misleading people regarding Iraqi visa fees despite the fact Foreign Minister and the party's chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had successfully fought the case of Pakistani people and demanded a reduction in visa fees during his visit to Iraq.

On the directives of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, he had a detailed meeting with the Iraqi ambassador and discussed the problems being faced by the Pakistani pilgrims, he added.

Faryal Talpur pays tribute to late Dr. Balqees

KARACHI: PPP Women's Wing Central President and Sindh Assembly Member Faryal Talpur visited the residence of the late Dr. Balqees Malik in Larkana to offer condolences.

She recited Fateha (a prayer for the deceased) for the late Dr. Balqees Malik's reward in the hereafter.

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The Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council and Prime Minister's Special

Two held for collecting funds for banned organization

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Thursday claimed to have arrested two alleged terrorists affiliated with a proscribed organization who were collecting funds for their organization.

According to In-charge Anti-Terrorism Financing Unit of CTD Razaqat Ali told that two of a banned Sipah-e-Sahaba were arrested from Scheme-33 area of the megalopolis.

Ahsan Iqbal says: Teachers play key role in country's development

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said on Thursday that it was responsibility of the government to provide facilities to universities' students at par with the international standards.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of 'strengthening of Main campus' of the University of Education here, he said that he had visited different sections of the university and observed that all facilities required for research were available like the facilities provided to any top ranked universities of Europe. He further said the government could only provide good

infrastructure and it was a job of teachers and students to achieve desired results from the world-class available facilities. In 2013 when the PML-N came into power, the country was facing a lot of challenges but during the tough situation dedicated efforts were made to turnaround the country, he said and added that unfortunately the country's development process was hindered in 2018. He said all projects which were initiated by the PML-N for strengthening the country were scandalized and stopped. He lamented that during the last four years no short, medium or long term development plan was given.

Jehangir Tareen's brother 'commits suicide'

LAHORE (APP): Alamgir Khan Tareen, a brother of Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Patron-in-Chief Jahangir Khan Tareen, allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself in his head with a pistol at his residence in Gulberg area, here on Thursday. Alamgir Tareen was the owner and managing director of the Multan Sultans PSL franchise.

Police said the 62-year-old lived alone. They said the crime scene had been sealed and the pistol he used for allegedly committing suicide recovered.

Electricity, gas outages: Protest at Maripur Road enters second day

KARACHI (INP): The protests of Karachi citizens against prolonged electricity and gas outages entered the second day on Thursday and the protestors blocked Maripur Road again.

A large number of protestors blocked Maripur Road for the second day which disrupted the flow of traffic on the arterial road. Heavy traffic coming from the Karachi Port was also trapped due to the closure of both tracks of the road.

To disperse protestors, heavy contingents of police force equipped with teargas shells reached the road. The police contingents are expected to use teargas shells once again to disperse the protestors.

The traffic police said on its Twitter handle that the traffic is being diverted to Mirza Adam to Miran Naka, ICI to G Allana Road, whereas, heavy traffic is being lined-up to Mochko, Truck Adda and Jackson Market.

CPC unites and leads Chinese People to achieve remarkable Success: CG Yang Yundong

CPC played a pivotal role in shaping the destiny of Chinese nation: Naqvi

Independent Report

KARACHI: Yang Yundong, Consul General of China in Karachi has said that the Communist Party of China (CPC) has been able to unite and lead the Chinese people to achieve such remarkable achievements, to the Party and the Chinese people, mainly includes the following aspects.

He said CPC is the central leading force of all causes in China. History



MIRPURKHAS: Chairman Mir Anwar Ali Khan Talpur presiding over introductory session of District Council. Deputy Commissioner Zainul Abideen Memon, SSP Chaudhry Asad Ali and Vice Chairman Mir Ahmed Khan Talpur are also present