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PM Shabbaz says Joint efforts by all institutions inevitable for country's progress

Federal Cabinet briefed about \$ 3 billion IMF deal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday, calling the IMF agreement a "breather" and a "moment of concern", urged all the national institutions to make concerted efforts to rid the country of loans and put it on the course to progress.

The prime minister, in his remarks at the Federal Cabinet meeting chaired by him, said while remaining in their respective jurisdictions, the institutions should make a united effort for at least next 15 years to address the country's economic woes.

He said Pakistan's deliverance from loans required a vision, unity, hard work and sacrifice by the affluent people.

"If we opt this course, no one can stop the coun-

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Pakistan asks Sweden to take 'serious action' against desecration of Holy Quran

PM demands proper investigation into the incident "without any interference"

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday asked Sweden to take "serious action" against the desecration of the Holy Quran and demanded a proper investigation into the incident "without any interference".

Addressing the federal cabinet, PM Shehbaz said the Pakistani people and government condemned the "disgusting incident" that took place in Sweden.

"Unfortunately, this is not the first incident to take place... such heart-wrenching incidents have taken place previously as well. They highlight that Muslims in Sweden, who are a minority, are facing Islamophobia and hatred."

"The Pakistani government condemns this narrative made of hatred and discrimination," he asserted and urged the Swedish government to take action.

Referring to the OIC statement released on Sunday, PM Shehbaz said the council also demanded that the culprit should be "heavily investigated" and such incidents should be prevented in the future.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet

PSX witnesses historic single-day gain of around 6%, expands by 2,446 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): Bullish trend dominated at the 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), as it witnessed historic single-day gain of 2,446 points on Monday, a positive change of 5.90 per cent, closing at 43,899.01 points against 41,452.69 points the previous trading day.

Following the agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a total of 381,904,794 shares were traded during the day as compared to 234,748,468 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.8.647 billion against Rs. 7.476 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 357 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 315 of them recorded gains and 36 sus-

tained losses, whereas the share price of 6 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 54,999,792 shares at Rs.1.23 per share; K-Electric Ltd with 30,596,397 shares at Rs.1.96 per share and Cnergyco PK with 22,447,095 shares at Rs.3.18 per share.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.152.50 per share price, closing at Rs.6,600.00, whereas the runner-up was Colgate Palm with an Rs.76.90 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,199.72. Pak Engineering witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.24.34 per share closing at Rs.300.21; followed by ZIL Limited with Rs.22.50 decline to close at Rs.277.50.

Minister Home condemns act of terrorism: Sacrifices rendered by security personnel would not go waste: CM

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo grieved over martyrdom of FC's Major Saqib and Naik Baqar in Kech attack

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has expressed his deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of a Major and Naik from Frontier Corps (FC) South while fighting with the terrorists in district Kech.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Monday, the Chief Minister said that both Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqar embraced martyrdom for the sake of defence of country.

He said that Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqar Ali overpowered the

terrorists by fighting against them courageously.

The Chief Minister said that the great sacrifices rendered by the security personnel in the war against terrorism would not go wasted at all.

He said that the people of Balochistan are shoulder to shoulder with their security forces to route out the menace of terrorism from the province.

The Chief Minister expressed sympathy and condolence with the bereaved families of martyrs. He also prayed for the departed souls of the martyrs.

Meanwhile, the Provin-

cial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langave also condemned the terrorism attack in Turbat area of Kech.

He also expressed grief and sorrow over martyrdom of an officer and a jawan of FC in the attack.

Mir Ziaullah Langave said that those attacking the security forces are unforgivable and they are enemies of the country.

He asserted that the terrorists and their perpetrators would be taken to task. The Minister said that the whole nation pays salute to the brave souls of the security forces.



Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Tokyo

Pakistan, Japan agree to expand bilateral relations in multiple areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Japan on Monday agreed to further deepen and enhance their mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in multiple areas including trade, investment, human resource development and exchange, IT, tourism and agriculture sectors.

"We have also jointly agreed to explore the possibility of working together on targeted programs with higher impact in the domains of solarization, desalination and water purification and infrastructure rebuilding in the floods affected areas in Pakistan, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said in a joint press statement along with his Japanese counterpart Yoshimasa Hayashi in To-

kyo. Earlier the two ministers held a meeting in a cordial environment. Both Ministers appreciated the free bilateral relations while expressing readiness to engage further.

In addition, the two sides have agreed to conduct language skill assessment tests for the Japanese language in Pakistan to facilitate the movement of the skilled workforce.

FM Bilawal said the two sides also identified the import of young Pakistani skilled human resources to Japan and their language training to be a prime area of cooperation.

"We also deliberated on investments and joint ventures by Japanese enterprises in Pakistan."



QUETTA: Central Executive Member of Balochistan National Party Haji Zahid Baloch meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Two security personnel martyred, one injured in Balor area

ISLAMABAD (APP): Two security personnel including one officer were martyred while one officer was injured in an exchange of fire with terrorists in the Balor area of Balochistan.

According to ISPR, a combat patrol of security forces was initiated in general areas of Balor, after credible intelligence with respect to the move of a group of terrorists in the Hoshab area.

The group was linked with firing incidents on security forces and civilians besides planting improvised explosive devices.

While the establishment of blocking positions

to cut the escape routes was underway, a party of terrorists tried to ambush the closing-in patrol and opened fire on security forces. As a result of the heavy exchange of fire, two brave souls of the nation Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqar Ali embraced martyrdom while another soldier was injured.

The security forces were determined to work with the nation to thwart such attempts to sabotage the peace, stability and development of Balochistan.

As a result, a follow-up operation was underway in the area to nab those responsible for the attack.

Bilawal calls on Japanese PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday called on the Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Tokyo and discussed with him matters of mutual interests.

The foreign minister conveyed greetings from the Government and people of Pakistan, according to the ministry of foreign office's spokesperson.

During the meeting, both leaders expressed the desire to further enhance bilateral engagement and cooperation in different fields.

President holds good meetings with Bangladesh's President in KSA

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Arif Alvi has said that he held good meetings with the President of Bangladesh Shahabuddin in Makkah, Mina and Madinah.

In a tweet on Monday, the President also shared the picture of his childhood friend Salman Rehman who is now member Parliament, Minister and Advisor in Bangladesh.

Sirajuddin Aziz appointed as Banking Pakistan Ombudsman

ISLAMABAD (Online): Acting President Sadiq Sanjrani has signed the summary of appointing Siraj ud Din Aziz as Banking Pakistan Ombudsman.

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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

Kakar slams terrorism in Kech district: Governor applauds invaluable services of security forces for making province hub of peace

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqar Ali of Frontier Corps in an encounter with the terrorists in Kech district.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Monday, the Governor said that it is top responsibility of the government to protect life and property of the masses.

He said that the sustainable peace plays basic role for development and prosperity of the human society and the security forces have played invaluable role to make the province hub of peace.

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Balochistan would be provided it's due share of water: Khursheed Shah

Independent Report

SUKKUR: The Federal Minister for Water Resources, Syed Khursheed Shah has assured that Balochistan would be provided it's due share of water.

The assurance was made by the Federal Minister during course of meetings held under his presidency the other day.

The meeting discussed matters pertaining to shortage of water in Kir thar canal and for tale's zamindars and growers.

It was actually in backdrop of the complaints and protests lodged by the growers. The Provincial President of PPP Mir Changez Jamali and Mir Faisal Jamali moved to Sukkur along with zamindars to meet the Federal Minister for water resources.



The speaker Balochistan Assembly Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali and other notables also had meeting with him. The high ups of Irrigation departments of Sindh and Balochistan briefed the participants about the related matters. Speaking on the occasion, Syed Khursheed Shah and others stressed the need to meet the demands of the growers regarding water shortage.

Acting President writes PM to build martyrs monuments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting President Sadiq Sanjrani has written a letter to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif drawing attention towards the establishment of monuments of the martyrs of the nation in the federal and provincial capitals.

He said there were no two opinions on the established fact that their forefathers gave everlasting sacrifices for the creation of the country. The sacrifices of the martyrs for the stability and integrity of the nation were also memorable, he wrote.

"The martyrs are our heroes as the peace and security in Pakistan is the result of their unparalleled sacrifices,"

Sanjrani said, adding, "As a nation it is our obligation that we should keep alive the martyrs in hearts of the people, particularly the youth."

The Acting President said the federal and provincial governments should ensure the establishment of martyrs monuments at the federal and provincial capitals. The pictures of the martyrs and the Pakistani Flag should be put up at airports, government buildings, schools, important highways, railway stations and other places.

"Pakistanis and foreigners should know that as a nation we are grateful to our martyrs," he said, adding visits of the people from different walks of life, particularly students to these monuments would reignite patriotism.

Toshakhana case: Chairman PTI expresses mistrust on CJ IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI Chairman has expressed mistrust on Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC).

PTI Chairman has filed petition seeking shifting of petitions filed against Toshakhana case trial to other bench.

Making district election commission respondent in his petition PTI chairman took the plea chairman PTI is sure that transparent and impartial justice will not be administered by this bench.

The appeal pleas of chairman PTI against session court's decision are pending hearing in the court of CJ IHC.

BNP observes wheel jam strike on national highways & roads across Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The wheel jam strike was observed on all the national highways and roads all over Balochistan province on Monday.

The call for wheel jam strike was given by the Balochistan National Party (BNP) against the law and order situation in Wadh and other parts of the province besides other certain issues.

Following the strike, the highways and roads were blocked at different places and points throughout the day from morning till 04:00 PM. While the Quetta-Karachi highway was blocked at Lak Pass, Mastung, Khad Kocha and Kalat, the Quetta-Taftan highway was blocked at Noshki and Dalbandin.

Similarly, the Quetta-Sibi-Sukkur highway was interrupted at Darakhsan area in Quetta suburb and few other parts. The Quetta-Punjab and DI Khan and Chaman highways and roads were blocked at Bakfi, Kila Saifullah, Rakhni and different other points.

The movement of traffic remained suspended causing immense problems to the commuters and transporters on the highways.

According to a leader of BNP, Ghulam Nabi Marri, the protest was lodged against the increasing incidents of extortion, kidnapping for ransom, armed groups besides the situation of law and order in Wadh and other parts of the province.



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party's supporters led by Malik Naseer Shahwani blocked main Sariab Road

OGDCL revives Jhal Magsi gas project

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant move towards meeting the country's growing energy demands, Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), the leading exploration and production company in Pakistan, has revived Jhal Magsi gas project.

The state-of-the-art gas processing plant, with a daily capacity to produce

13.7 MMSCF process gas and 45 BBL/day condensate, will mitigate escalating energy needs of Pakistan, said a news release issued here on Monday.

The installation of this plant is a testament to OGDCL's commitment to furthering the exploration and production of oil and gas resources in the region.

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QESCO goes bankrupt

QUETTA (Online): Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) has gone bankrupt. As per documents 344000 out of 689000 consumers don't pay electricity bills.

Defaulters have defaulted Rs 30.44 billion out of electricity bills of Rs 61.64 billion.

Domestic consumers are defaulters on payment of Rs 4.45 billion, agriculture consumers on payment

of Rs 12 billion, government departments of Rs 5 billion, commercial consumers of Rs 3 billion and industrial consumers are defaulters on payment of Rs 4 billion.

The documents revealed that QESCO is facing loss to the tune of Rs 108 billion.

QESCO has sustained loss of Rs 224 billion during the last five years.

Total assets of QESCO are valued at Rs 204 billion.



TOKYO: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari speaking at the Asian Development Bank Institute on the topic Pakistan and Japan in the Asian Context

Teenage Art exhibition held in Beijing to highlight refugee issue in Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): A two-day youth charity art exhibition Empowering with Love: Pakistan was held in Beijing on Saturday, collecting works created by hundreds of children and teenagers aged 4 to 14 years from 25 cities across China.

The exhibition was sponsored by the China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF) and supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Monday. A total of 600 works were exhibited in the children's art, digital and refugee handicraft exhibition area, reflecting the UNHCR's initiative to establish a human community awareness of refugees and global green energy among children and young people.

UNHCR Representative in China, Vanno

Noupech, made a video speech for this event, emphasizing "I hope that all young people participating in this exhibition can continue to use their brushes to convey love and strength by arousing the attention of refugees and environmental issues through art."

It is truly expected that by collecting teenager's creative artistic works, we can show our new generation's understanding of Pakistani refugee and environmental issues, revealing their awareness of the United Nations' sustainable development goals," noted an officer from CBCGDF.

According to data released by the National Disaster Management Authority (Pakistan) in September 2022, during the rainy season from mid-June to September last year, about 1,559 people were killed, 12,850 were injured, and 1,979,485 houses were destroyed in Pakistan due to monsoon heavy rainfall

brought about by climate change, not to mention 973,632 livestock were killed and 12,716 kilometers of roads and 374 bridges were destroyed, which has brought immeasurable huge losses to the local livelihood.

In addition to wars, the global refugee problem caused by natural disasters and climate change will reach a new height in 2022. UNHCR statistics showed that in the past two decades, the continuous wars and conflicts in Afghanistan have forced about 3.5 million people to be displaced, of which 60 percent are underage children and adolescents. Neighboring Pakistan and Iran, which are also developing countries, have accepted 2.2 million of them, accounting for about 90 percent of the total number of Afghan refugees in the world. Even more unfortunately, floods in Pakistan further increased the scale of climate refugees.

KP Govt completes 10 news degree colleges in merged areas

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government has completed 10 new degree colleges in merged districts of the province.

Shahab Khan, senior research officer of KP Education Department told APP on Monday that these colleges were constructed in different colleges on tribesmen's demands.

The number of degree colleges had raised to 55 in merged areas, he said adding 300 new lecturers and subject specialists recruited for 45 colleges.

Cadet College at Wana South Waziristan and Mohmand Cadet College in Mohmand district were completed.

One library each was also established at Khyber, Mohmand, Bajaur, Kurram, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan. He said work on solarization of colleges costing around Rs 1.6 billion was launched. The official said Rs 1.399 billion earmarked to provide 5,500 internships to tribal students.



KARACHI: Fishermen drawing back their fish catching net from sea at the end of day, during heavy summer season, at Seaview Beach of Karachi

Joint efforts by all institutions...

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from achieving progress," he remarked.

The prime minister thanked his all cabinet members, particularly Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and his team and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF) for their respective roles to help Pakistan achieve the nine-month stand-by agreement of \$3 billion.

"I pray that this is the last IMF deal. But this is easier said than done," he commented and mentioned that the state-owned enterprises like the Pakistan Steel Mills, Pakistan International Airlines and others were eating up around Rs 600 billion annually.

He said under the IMF deal, Pakistan would receive the first installment of \$1.1 billion in July.

He also thanked UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for his role in the IMF agreement and offering his further role in the process, if needed.

The prime minister spoke high of the Chinese support during last three months by rolling over \$5 billion of sovereign and commercial banks loans, which was unprecedented.

He said the situation would have been different, if China had not made the rollover. "The people of Pakistan should never forget this," he remarked.

Similarly, the prime minister also thanked Saudi Arabia for committing \$2 billion, and the United Arab

Emirates and Islamic Development Bank for \$1 billion each for Pakistan.

Calling it a teamwork, he particularly appreciated the role of Chief of the Army Staff General Asim Munir for his efforts to bring in the support of total \$3 billion from Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said during the remaining 40-42 days of the government's term, the cabinet members should make efforts to leave behind a policy framework providing a roadmap and a vision for future development.

He said the whole Muslim Ummah, including the government and the people of Pakistan, strongly condemned another incident of burning a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

"We demand immediate action against the perpetrator. Unfortunately, this is not the first time as a similar incident had also taken place in the past," he remarked.

He also demanded of the Swedish government to take notice of the Islamophobic and hateful narrative against the Muslim population in their country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz appreciated the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation for convening an urgent meeting on the issue and said Pakistan endorsed their meeting and decision, with a hope that such Islamophobic incidents did not recur in the future.

The Federal Cabinet

was briefed about the salient features of the \$3 billion deal with the International Monetary Fund on Monday.

While chairing the cabinet meeting here, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan was thankful to friendly countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the Islamic Development Bank and the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The prime minister said a comprehensive solid waste management system for the Islamabad Capital Territory should be introduced.

He instructed that under the solid waste management programme, responsibility should be given to companies which had experience in disposing off harmful and toxic waste in hospitals in Islamabad.

The cabinet in principle approved sending of the Islamabad Capital Territory Solid Waste Bill to the Cabinet Committee for Legislative Cases (CCLC).

It was given a detailed briefing about the solid waste management in Islamabad. It was informed under the project, two strategies would be formulated. Under the short term policy, waste collection had started from Islamabad, including the suburban areas, while under the long term one, tenders had been issued to hire services of high standard international companies.

Pakistan, Japan can boost efficient infrastructure network, regional connectivity, trade volume: FM

TOKYO (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday said by joining hands, Pakistan and Japan could create a robust and efficient infrastructure network, boost regional connectivity, and enhance trade volumes not only between the two countries but also across the entire region.

In his remarks at the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADB), on the topic 'Pakistan and Japan in the Asian context', the foreign minister said while Pakistan and Japan were situated in different corners of the Asian continent, they shared important convergences in terms of their outlook and vision for the region.

"As a developing country facing serious economic and environmental challenges, Pakistan simply does not have time for the Cold War-style bloc politics that sadly seem to be making a comeback. We want to focus on delivering jobs and prosperity to our 230 million people - two-thirds of whom are below 30 years of age," the Foreign Office Spokesperson in a press release quoted the foreign minister as saying.

FM Bilawal said they

could only do that by leveraging their strategic location at the crossroads of Central and South Asia to foster economic connectivity and generate growth.

"This vision is the moving force behind our shift from geopolitics to geo-economics. This is not just a rhetorical change but is rooted in the realization that business-as-usual is no longer an option," he reiterated.

The foreign minister further said that they regarded the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as an important part of the vision for enhanced connectivity.

Chinese investments in the power sector were a shot in the arm for Pakistan when they were facing crippling electricity cuts across the country that had paralyzed their industries, he opined.

He said the opportunities created in Pakistan's industrial, agricultural and energy sectors as a result of CPEC and other Chinese projects were not exclusive to any one country.

"Japanese firms have experience of working successfully and profitably in Pakistan. Their expertise in building infrastructure is

second to none," he added. He said the economic complementarities between Pakistan and Japan were vast and multifaceted and by capitalizing on each other's strengths, they could create a win-win situation, resulting in shared prosperity and growth.

"There is immense potential for collaboration in trade, investment, agriculture, infrastructure, and services. Let us seize this opportunity to build stronger ties, promote bilateral cooperation, and forge a brighter future for our countries, the region and the generations to come," he added.

The foreign minister said Pakistan and Japan also shared another complementarity as both were littoral states with vital and far-ranging maritime interests.

Situated on the Indian Ocean Rim, he said Pakistan had long been recognized as a stakeholder in the security of the Arabian Sea - as evidenced by the number of times Pakistan had been called on to lead the multinational Combined Task Force 150.

"Developing a blue economy is crucial to achieving Pakistan's eco-

nomical objectives. We hope to go a lot further in this area with Japan's assistance," he observed.

The foreign minister further elaborated that Pakistan was cognizant that their aspirations for regional connectivity and trade would remain unfulfilled as long as lasting peace and stability in South Asia remains elusive.

"Pakistan's position has always been clear: there can be no peace in South Asia until the region's core dispute - the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir - is resolved through dialogue and in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and the principles of international law," he stressed.

Pakistan had always been ready to work towards such a resolution, he said, adding tragically, Pakistan did not have a partner for peace in South Asia.

The foreign minister said, "India is in the grip of a form of religious hysteria that has closed out any space for dialogue and diplomacy."

While it was expected given the ideology of India's ruling party, what was surprising - and disappointing, he said, was the

silence of the international community on its oppression in Kashmir and provocations against a much smaller neighbour.

About Afghanistan, he said Pakistan and Japan had similar interests in that country.

"Both countries have stakes in Afghanistan's peace and stability. Japan had been one of Afghanistan's most steadfast economic partners, dating back to the time it hosted the Tokyo Conference in 2002 for Afghanistan's reconstruction," he added.

More recently, Bilawal said, Japan had provided crucial assistance to the Afghan people as they grappled with serious humanitarian and economic crises.

By aligning their efforts, he said, Pakistan and Japan could contribute to a stable, secure, and prosperous Afghanistan.

"Japan's expertise in development assistance and Pakistan's geographical proximity to Afghanistan can create opportunities for joint efforts in providing humanitarian aid and promoting sustainable development," he added.

Chinese companies enhance their role in social development of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chinese companies have enhanced their role in social development of Pakistan, while addressing the country's economic and development issues.

The companies are an integral part of CPEC. They are the torch bearer of this flagship project of BRI. They are not only helping Pakistan overcome its infrastructure problems but also investing in social development, skills, and environmental protection in Pakistan.

According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Monday, unfortunately their work could not get the attention of the media and society. Propaganda played a major role to undermine the social development work of the Chinese companies.

The propagandist kept the media and people busy with baseless theories and allegations against Chinese investment. Fortunately, the Chinese companies did not pay attention to allegations and propaganda and kept their focus on projects and social development, skill, and environmental protection programs.

All Chinese companies are investing in social development, but only a few have been selected for discussion. Sahiwal Coal Power and Port Qasim

power plants.

The Chinese companies not only helped to create thousands of jobs but also invested in building the capacity of hundreds of engineers and staff members.

According to available data, Huaneng Shandong Rui Group, which built the Sahiwal coal power plant, invested in 622 employees for building their capacity and sharpen their skills. Further segregation of data shows that 245 engineers were trained following the need for required skills at plants.

Moreover, Huaneng Shandong Rui Group plant administration also built a capacity of 377 general staff members i.e., administration, computer, etc.

Port Qasim also contributed to building the capacity of engineers and staff members. Data shows that 2600 employees benefited from the capacity-building and skill development opportunities offered by the Port Qasim plant. It trained 600 engineers and 2000 general staff members.

It is a huge number, especially in the engineering category. It will help Pakistan; as Pakistan has a shortage of qualified and trained engineers. These companies also assisted Pakistan during floods and COVID-19.

SBP to host Pak-UAE Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series

LAHORE (APP): The Sports Board Punjab (SBP) will host two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) under the auspices of Pakistan Rugby Union from Tuesday, July 4, to Saturday, July 8.

In this regard, SBP Director General Dr Asif Tufail and Additional Secretary Sports Ms Nabeela visited the Punjab Stadium on Monday to review arrangements. The SBP director general directed the ground staff to make top-level arrangements for the mega series.

Dr Asif Tufail said that holding of Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 at the Punjab Stadium was a good omen for the future of the game in our country. "The two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series will play a key role in the promotion of rugby among young generation".

He welcomed the guest

UAE rugby team in Lahore. "We are quite upbeat that the rugby fans will enjoy the exciting game of rugby during the Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series," he added.

Pakistan will take on United Arab Emirates (UAE) in first encounter of two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series at Punjab Stadium on Tuesday (July 4) while the second match will be played at the same venue on July 8.

A 29-member rugby contingent including 25 players and four officials from UAE have reached Lahore to participate in the two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series. The international match officials from Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Qatar and Japan will supervise the two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series. Asia Rugby has also appointed Rizwan Malik as the Citing Commissioner for the entire tournament.



HYDERABAD: Dangerous moment as a motorcyclists crossing railway track while the train is approaching at makki shah area

Agriculture emerges as a powerful driving for economic growth under CPEC

ISLAMABAD (INP): The alliance between Pakistan and China in the field of agriculture has emerged as a powerful force driving economic growth, sustainable development, and food security in both nations.

The strategic collaboration between these two neighboring countries, under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has witnessed significant advancements in recent years, transforming the agricultural landscape of Pakistan, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Monday.

Through joint initiatives, technological ex-

changes, and investment in key sectors, the bilateral partnership has not only addressed Pakistan's domestic agricultural challenges but has also paved the way for future prosperity and self-sufficiency.

The agricultural cooperation between Pakistan and China has witnessed remarkable developments, particularly in the cultivation of high-value crops and the introduction of advanced farming technologies.

The collaboration between Chinese and Pakistani companies in producing Chinese hybrid canola and edible oil has significantly reduced Pakistan's dependence on imported

cooking oil, meeting the country's domestic demand while bolstering its foreign exchange reserves.

The success of chili cultivation in South Punjab, Sindh and other provinces has opened new avenues for export to China, with substantial growth in agricultural exports expected in the coming years.

The establishment of the CPEC-Agriculture Cooperation Centre (ACC) and the signing of agreements between educational institutions for agricultural training programs further demonstrate the commitment of both nations to fostering long-term cooperation in the agricultural sector.

Pakistani racer Enam Ahmed battles slick track to earn top eight finish

ISLAMABAD (APP): British-Pakistani racer Enam Ahmed earned another top 10 result this past weekend in the IndyNXT by Firestone race, battling against top drivers and a treacherously wet track in the process.

The seventh round of the 2023 season took place from the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, and the track, which has so many elevation changes that it resembles a roller coaster, was lined with many American fans camping in their tents and trailers cheering on the action.

Ahmed started the Mid-Ohio Grand Prix in 11th, and immediately began fighting his way towards the front of the field. Before the first lap was even completed, the Pakistani Panther had moved his way into the top 10 and was looking for more.

The track had received a heavy rain just hours before the race began, and the track was not yet dry when Ahmed was fighting for position at 180 miles per hour.

To make things even more difficult, light mist began falling in the middle of the race and made the track surface slicker still.

The 23-year-old Ahmed was not daunted by the challenge, and continued to attack for position at every opportunity. At one point he was nearly pushed into the wet grass by Rasmus Lindh, and smartly backed out of the encounter. If he would have so much as touched the wet grass lining the track, his purpose-built race car would have become stuck and his race would have been over immediately. Ahmed regrouped and was able to pass Lindh a few laps later, using his unmatched pace on a restart to gain another position.

Ahmed was more than happy to take the positions given up by those that crashed, taking care to keep his Cape Motorsports car on the racing surface. As a British Formula F3 champion, Ahmed has learned a lot about how to race in cool and rainy conditions, and it showed this weekend.

"I capitalized on the first laps of the restarts," said Ahmed, describing the strategy he used to gain positions. "Every time there was a restart I was overtaking, so that was good. It was very, very slick out there."

OGDCL revives ...

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Besides the commercial operations, the company has underscored its dedication to transforming the lives of the local community in Jhal Magsi through a series of social welfare initiatives in the areas of education, health, water, and infrastructure.

As part of its efforts to enhance healthcare facilities, the OGDCL has provided ambulances to the District Headquarter Hospital (DHO) in Jhal Magsi. Additionally, the OGDCL has installed a Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant, recognizing the importance of clean drinking water.

The OGDCL is actively contributing to the

socioeconomic development of Jhal Magsi district by combining their commitment to meeting the country's energy requirements with community-focused initiatives.

Their multifaceted approach, dedicated to securing a reliable energy supply and enhancing the quality of life for residents, is a significant milestone in Pakistan's pursuit of energy security and sustainable progress.

The OGDCL's installation of the gas processing plant, along with their community development endeavors, showcases their dedication to the welfare of the local population and sets an example of responsible corporate citizenship in the country.



QUETTA: Vendor displaying mosquito net along roadside to attract customers

Ashrafi urges World for urgent legislation to prevent rising incidents of Islamophobia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council Allama Tahir Ashrafi Monday strongly condemned the "despicable act" of the public burning of a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden on the occasion of Eid ul Adha and urged the international community for taking urgent measures to legislate for the prevention of the rising incidents of Islamophobia.

world community should "take unified and collective measures to prevent the recurrence of incidents of desecration of copies of the Holy Quran". "The act of blasphemy against the holy book has tarnished religious tolerance," he said, adding, "Freedom of expression must be exercised in a responsible manner."

"Misusing of freedom of expression for such behavior would just only incite extremism, he said, adding, there is a dire need to

give an awareness among people in the world to control extremism".

He said respecting the Holy Quran is an integral part of every Muslim's faith, adding, such an incident is extremely unbearable in the name of freedom of expression."

The Muslim world should prevent the repetition of such anti-Islamic behavior and not let the perpetrators of hurting the feelings of Muslims go unpunished, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Police personnel stand guard outside Sweden Embassy during the Protest of Jamat-e-Islami against burning of Holy Quran in Sweden.

Youth future depends on economic stability of country: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal said that the youth were the greatest asset of any country and a stable economy was directly linked with their bright future.

He said this while talking to a Private news channel here on Monday.

He said the youth should be given the opportunity to participate as respected partners in decision-making.

"The youth talent can

be utilized for addressing current socioeconomic challenges of the country," he added.

He said, "The political grooming of youngsters will ensure a sincere and mature political leadership in the country."

Replying to a question, he said, "Economic recovery on a fast track is the top priority of the present government."

"The country is now on the right track after its agreement with the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund (IMF) and this 'Stand by Arrangement' will be helpful in the economic turnaround of Pakistan."

He further mentioned, "The signing of a staff-level agreement with IMF is a great success of government policy and measures."

The government had taken some unpopular and strict decisions, but these were necessary to save the country from the risk of default, he added.

ATC extends bail of PTI leader Ali Afzal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) extended the bail of the prominent Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Afzal Sahi, who was booked in a case at Golra Sharif police station on Monday.

PTI leader Ali Afzal Sahi, accompanied by his lawyer, appeared before the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) today to address the charges brought against him.

During the hearing, Ali Afzal Sahi's legal team requested interim bail, which was granted by the ATC. The court extended his bail until July 5, giving Sahi temporary relief from potential custody.

The extension of Sahi's bail signifies that the court is willing to grant him an opportunity to prepare

a robust defense. The details of the case remain undisclosed at this time, but it is believed to be of significant gravity, as evidenced by the involvement of the ATC.

Earlier to this, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shehryar Afridi, who was released from Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail on Tuesday, was rearrested immediately afterwards.

The former federal minister was taken into custody from Islamabad's Sector F-8 under Section 3 of Maintenance of Public Order (3MPO).

According to deputy commissioner Rawalpindi, the PTI leader has been put under house arrest for another 15 days under Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) section 3.



ISLAMABAD: People fill their pots with clean drinking water from water filtration plant in I-8 Sector.

IMF agreement opportunity for long-term economic reforms: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Monday said that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement is a positive development for Pakistan in a very difficult political, economic and international diplomatic environment.

This success is possible due to the efforts of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and their team, he said. In a statement issued by ICCI here, he said this agreement will prove beneficial for the struggling Pakistani economy.

He said that now is the time for the government to formulate a long-term economic policy together with the political leadership and stakeholders so that Pakistan can stand on its own feet permanently.

He said the current short-term agreement with the IMF gives Pakistan an opportunity for sustainable economic reforms.

Ahsan said that the government has made the current agreement possible after a year-long discussion with the International Monetary Fund.

President ICCI said this agreement was indispensable to gain the trust of other international financial institutions and friendly countries. He added Pakistan had to face political and economic situations at the local level and difficult diplomacy at the global level to reach this agreement, which was indicated by the Federal Finance Minister in his statement. He said that this is the right time to take measures like transparent and fast-track privatization of loss-making government-controlled enterprises.

Marriyum grieved over demise of mother of Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of the mother of senior journalist Khaleeq Kiani.

The minister, in a statement, expressed her heartfelt condolences to Khaleeq Kiani and his family.

Terming the mother's death a great tragedy, Marriyum said she shared the grief of the bereaved family.

She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude.

Supremacy of Parliament PML-N's top priority: Javed

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi has said that supremacy of Parliament is top priority of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led coalition government.

Taking to his twitter handle on Monday, he said that the National Assembly has achieved a milestone by completing one parliamentary year before the end of the government's tenure.

Murtaza Javed was of the view the coalition government has preferred legislation over promulgation of ordinances and has taken concrete steps for welfare of the people.

Mazari's intra court appeal's hearing adjourned till Thursday

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday adjourned hearing on an intra court appeal of former minister Shireen Mazari regarding the remarks of Defence Minister Khawaja Asif about her in 2016 at National Assembly till Thursday. The IHC sought arguments on maintainability of the ICA from the petitioner's lawyer on next hearing.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights, Riaz Hussain Pirzada talks on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

HEC bars varsities from granting new affiliations to colleges, institutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has announced a complete ban on granting new affiliations to colleges and institutions by universities, including affiliations in programmes, to ensure the quality of education. According to HEC, the decision comes as part of HEC's ongoing review of the Affiliation Policy/Criteria aimed at enhancing the standards of higher education in the country and curbing the practice, noted with concern, of certain public sector universities granting affiliations to colleges and institutions lacking adequate infrastructure, faculty, and auxiliary facilities despite clear directions issued by HEC.

In view of the foregoing, all public sector HEIs having the authority to grant affiliations are hereby instructed to immediately cease granting new affiliations to any college or institution as well as programmes, until the revised criteria are issued. However, the extension of affiliation for already affiliated programmes and colleges/institutions is permissible, provided that an HEC nominee is part of the Affiliation Committee for renewal. Furthermore, public sector HEIs are required to

promptly withdraw any advertisements related to granting affiliations that have been published in print and social media.

Failure to comply with these directions will result in the non-recognition and non-attestation of degrees issued by the non-compliant HEIs, and HEC will be compelled to initiate appropriate actions in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The move follows HEC's authority under Ordinance No. LIII of 2002 (Amendment Act No. XXI of 2021 and Second Amendment Act No. XXII of 2022), Section 10-1(a).

'Timely elections need of hour': Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanveer Hussain Monday stressed for timely elections within sixty days which is need of the hour to overcome the chaos and instability in the country. "The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is actively preparing for the elections under the leadership of three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif," he said while talking to a private news channel.

PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif will return from London and lead the party's poll campaign soon, he added.

About the exact date of the elections, he said, it was the duty of the Election Commission of Pakistan to announce a date for general elections but we want early elections.

The minister further called upon for ensuring free and fair general elections in the country and giving supremacy to the parliament, to move the country forward. Replying a question about PML-N leadership reshuffling, he said that party senior leadership would decide the matter after the arrival of former Prime minister Nawaz Sharif, adding, it is part of politics.

Death anniversary of folk singer Alam Lohar observed

ISLAMABAD (INP): The death anniversary of renowned Punjabi folk singer Alam Lohar was observed.

He was born in 1928 in the village of Achh in the district Gujarat of Punjab. He developed a new style of singing with "Chimta".

Alam Lohar was famous for his rendition of "Heer Waris Shah" along with other songs such as "Saif-ul-Malook" and "Jugn". He was awarded Prize of Performance in 1979 by the government of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way at Murree Road during heavy rain fall of Pre-monsoon spell in Federal Capital.

Scenic areas of KPK attract over 3 lakh 58 thousand tourists on Eid

ISLAMABAD (APP): The influx of local and foreign tourists increased in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) during the three days of Eid-ul-Azha, wherein over 3,58,000 tourists visited various destinations, where tourists were attracted by the natural beauty, cultural diversity and historical heritage of various sites.

The district administration had made tremendous efforts to provide facilities to the tourists at the hill stations in Lower Dir, Swat, Kalam, Saiful Malook, Kumrat, Abbottabad, Kaghan Naran and Malam Jabba, said a report aired by a private news channel.

All hotels and restaurants besides private inns were still witnessing jam-packed with tourists, said a local citizen. The influx of tourists have made a very positive effect on the rural economy and it is very encouraging to see our efforts yield results, said an official of the Tourism Corporation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (TCKP).

He also urged tourists to follow the guidelines of tourism through social media channels to ensure safe travel before leaving for tourist attractions and to ensure responsible tourism.

Long queues of cars, vans, and buses were being witnessed making their way to the region's favourite tourist spot, adding a festive vibe to the town's atmosphere, said a visitor.

The local people have also vacated extra rooms in their houses for tourists to earn profits these days, said another visitor. While enjoying national and cultural songs youngsters along with their family members were seen busy in hammering and fixing tents in KPK forests to enjoy a pleasant change in the weather during these holidays, said a district administration official.

The PTDC official added that ongoing summer vacations of kids were another factor which saw a rush of domestic tourists head to these scenic valleys of KPK.

Upper Dir is a most beautiful district in Pakistan's North Western region in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, said a foreign tourist, adding it is comfortably nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas.

The district mainly consists of most of the Pashtoon population that speaks the Pashto language. The people of Dir are amiable and hospitable, he mentioned.

Upper Dir enjoys a very moderate temperature throughout the year. This makes this beautiful district an attractive location for travellers, said a local tourist.

Tourists also took a keen interest in the cable car to cross the Swat River, said a resident.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used to expand lanes for smooth traffic on Islamabad Expressway.

PM congratulates Naila, Sameena for scaling Nanga Parbat

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday congratulated mountaineers Naila Kiyani and Sameena Baig for scaling the world's ninth highest peak of Nanga Parbat.

The prime minister, in a statement, said besides summiting the world's highest peak of Mount Everest, both Naila Kiyani and Sameena Baig were the first Pakistani women to scale the most dangerous peak of Nanga Parbat and brought fame to country.

The two mountaineers were representatives of those brave women of Pakistan who were second to none in their pursuit of te-

nacity, ambitions and objectives as they had proved that their mettle, determination and intentions were "higher than the highest mountains", PM Shehbaz added.

Praying for their more successes in future, he said the daughters of the nation like Sameena Baig, Naila Kiyani and others should continue to project Pakistan's bright image across the globe.

In May 2023, the prime minister conferred Sitar-e-Imtiaz on Naila Kiyani. After Sameena Baig, she is the second Pakistani woman mountaineer who has scaled the Mount Everest.

New SOPs issued for Police Bureau of Investigation

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, has is-

its operations. ICPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan stated that the Police Bureau of Investigation will lead the way in



sued new standard operating procedure (SOPs) for the recently established Police Bureau of Investigation, according to a police public relations officer.

The Islamabad Capital Police has undertaken a comprehensive restructuring of its investigation system to introduce innovation and improve efficiency in

implementing these transforming changes. To ensure smooth functioning of the Investigation Bureau, a standard operating procedure (SOP) has been issued.

As part of the investigation system revamp, three specialized investigation units have been established under the supervision of the SSP Operations.

Literature for children: Experts stress importance of child-centric approach

ISLAMABAD (APP): Experts have emphasized the importance of incorporating children into literature activities for nurturing their minds, needs and interests.

Talking to APP here Monday, an esteemed scholar Professor Dr. Ravish Nadim underscored the significance of children's literature and stressed the need for using a language accessible to pre-teen children when crafting literature, stories, and humor targeted towards them. "For pre-teen children, it is crucial to employ 50 commonly used words from their daily language," he stated.

He said that by using familiar vocabulary, writers can establish a deeper connection with young readers and facilitate better comprehension.

Turning his attention to literature tailored for teenagers, Dr. Ravish sug-

gested that content should be presented using 100-word sentences. He emphasized that when introducing concepts like Shakespeare, science, or ethics to young minds, it is imperative to convey complex ideas in simple and accessible language.

By employing this approach, he said educators and authors can empower adolescents to understand and appreciate diverse subjects.

Dr. Ravish raised concerns about the lack of children's involvement in the manufacturing process of literature in Pakistan and noted that adults predominantly write, read, and critique children's literature, with little input from the target audience.

Moreover, he said that national-level conferences and forums on literature often exclude children from active participation.



ISLAMABAD: Laborers are taking rest under the shadow of trees at Liaquat Bagh during high temperature in City.

CDA to organise public awareness walk on environmental pollution

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) is organizing a public awareness walk on Wednesday from 04 pm to 05 pm to reduce environmental pollution in the City.

The Environment Wing of the Capital Development Authority, in that regard, is commencing a series of plantations on the slopes of various highways, connecting roads, intersections, green belt and surrounding of Nullahs in the Islamabad city.

According to the details, the awareness campaign about ineffective and invasive or poisonous plants of different species will be launched in different areas of the city including Trail Five (5) Margalla Hills, National Park so that

a useful, healthy and better environment could be provided to the citizens of Islamabad.

Furthermore, useful species of plants and trees would be planted for the promotion of a healthy atmosphere in order to reduce plants which are harmful to the health of human beings. In addition, a step-by-step eradication of the paper mulberry and its replacement with the local indigenous plants will be carried on.

The people from all walks of life, including people from private and public institutions, are invited to participate in this awareness walk to create awareness among the public regarding the reduction of environmental pollution, increasing green areas.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Tuesday July 04, 2023

Restoring faith

With Pakistani democracy in the throes of yet another existential crisis, June 30, the International Day of Parliamentarianism, ought to have held special significance for us.

On that day, parliamentary democracies are supposed to take stock of where they stand, how far they've come, and how far they still have to go as they evolve into forums that are truly representative of their people.

It is unfortunate that our lawmakers felt no need for such self-reflection. Our parliament today seems more like a glorified fighting pit for the vile and uncouth, rather than an agora for the wise to engage in reasoned debate.

It is a place where the already privileged pass slurs and mock each other, instead of proposing solutions and counter-solutions to the problems of their constituents.

Of course, it is the very essence of democracy for there to be disagreement — sometimes with vehemence, sometimes with calm grace.

However, such disagreements are supposed to be resolved with ethos, logos and pathos, not brawling, spurious allegations and abuse of power. Unfortunately, our lawmakers have historically tended towards the latter, only to rue it when the tables turn.

The security establishment's repeated interference in the political process has also been key in never letting the parliamentary system stabilise enough so that it could perpetuate a resilient socioeconomic order.

Repeated military takeovers hollowed out the institution from within, preventing an organic, representative polity from taking root. Even when civilian-led governments have ostensibly been in the saddle, the state continued to pull the reins from behind the scenes, never really letting any popular leader have the final say in some of the most important aspects of statecraft, especially foreign policy.

Pakistan today stands at a crossroads. One path leads to an uncertain future; the other may set us back by a few decades. With a host of social, economic and political crises threatening to rip the country apart, a stable, representative parliament could have helped the nation muster the courage needed to make difficult choices.

Unfortunately, at a time when all shades of opinion needed to be brought together to find a consensus for the path forward, our parliamentarians once again seem to be working with non-parliamentary forces to repeat already failed experiments.

This is not to absolve those who have simply never given parliament or their fellow parliamentarians the respect and deference they deserved.

However, the answer lies not in once again engineering the electoral process to instal a more 'desirable' government, but in faithfully restoring parliament so that it truly represents the people of Pakistan.

How to do so, is a problem that our lawmakers — present and aspiring — must solve themselves. Their failure will only diminish the legislature's standing and cede more power to external forces.



Maleeha Lodhi

The recent trip by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to China marked an effort to stabilise relations between the two global powers that have plunged to an all-time low. The visit seemed to go well and included a meeting between Blinken and President Xi Jinping.

But, as has become a pattern in this complex relationship, any step forward is almost always followed by two steps backwards. And so it was this time. President Joe Biden's description of Xi as a "dictator" at a fundraiser prompted a strong response from Beijing, which called the remarks irresponsible and a provocation. This again revived the friction between them.

Then the red carpet rolled out by the Biden ad-

ministration for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Washington and the thrust of their joint statement reflected the apparent US effort to cement India more firmly in an anti-China coalition and use it as a counterweight to Beijing.

Questions are again being raised about the future trajectory of the world's most consequential relationship. There is now a rich body of literature that deals with the US-China confrontation and examines how this is likely to play out. Recent books include *The Avoidable War* by Kevin Rudd, *The Long Game* by Rush Doshi, *Avoiding the 'Thucydides Trap'* edited by Dong Wang and Travis Tanner, *How China Loses* by Luke Patey, *Kishore Mahbubani's Has China Won?* and *Oliver Letwin's China vs America: A Warning*.

Views, of course, diverge especially over who will prevail in the contest. As do assessments of whether their intense competition presages a new cold war and if their fraught relations can drift into conflict, even if neither side may want it. That miscalculation, especially over

the heavily militarised area around Taiwan, can lead to such an outcome is a worry for many countries in Asia and beyond. But even if conflict is avoided, their turbulent relationship will keep the global economy and the world in an unstable state.

An intelligent new book now joins the debate about the world's most critical bilateral relationship although its canvas also extends to Russia. *Cold Peace: Avoiding a New Cold War* by Michael Doyle, a Columbia University professor, offers a comprehensive review of the many issues that lie behind East-West tensions. The author sets out to examine whether a new cold war is likely and how different it might be from the Cold War of the past.

He points to the dangers of a looming cold war but argues that this is not inevitable. Instead, a 'cold peace' can be established if certain key compromises are made by competing powers, which can yield cooperation in critical areas.

The distinction Doyle draws between the contours and character of the old and new cold war is insightful.

He writes that like the original Cold War, the emerging cold war is a deeply structured conflict, both internationally and transnationally. There are similarities. Both are "non-armed conflicts" involving rivalries that go beyond contests for influence, power and prosperity. But he suggests that while Cold War I was fought primarily through proxy wars, arms races and espionage, the current confrontation entails a combination of cyber espionage, technological and industrial competition, political interference and arms contests.

He shows convincingly that the emerging Cold War II is not as extensive, extreme and polarising as its predecessor. Its reach is not yet global and "the sides are less clear-cut", with alliances not so firmly formed or ideologically defined. But the weaponisation of cyber technologies is making the confrontation a deadly one.

Doyle offers three reasons why the burgeoning cold war, dangerous as it is, will not be a replay of the original one. One, the likely costs of an escalating cold war between the

US and China. Two, the large global common interest in interdependent prosperity and saving the planet from environmental degradation. And three, he sees China and Russia as authoritarian but not totalitarian.

The book's main concern is how to prevent a second cold war. Doyle identifies what he sees as four bridges towards this end. The first concerns US-China cooperation on the shared challenge of climate change mitigation. The second is finding a negotiated end to the Ukraine conflict with Russia.

He sets forth a package of proposals on this, some workable, some unrealistic. The third bridge is détente between the US and China. Here too ideas for a compromise on Taiwan are presented. The fourth bridge to a 'cold peace' is to forge new rules on cyber. While acknowledging clashing interests and ambitions, he argues that compromises are possible to limit the harmful fallout of cyber hacking and warfare.

For Doyle, diplomatic accommodation to achieve a cold peace would also in-

volve a "non-subversion pact", resting on mutual commitments not to attack the political independence and territorial integrity of each other. That also means barring covert operations. The book has interesting 'solutions' to many of the vexed issues pushing the world towards more turbulence and instability. But as others have also observed, it overemphasises the role of domestic factors and ideology as drivers of a new cold war.

Doyle clearly comes down on the side of greater engagement between the US and China, agreeing with other authors and experts about the danger of collision between them. Rudd made the case for "managed strategic cooperation", Mahbubani for the two powers to seek areas of convergence based on their core interests, while Letwin called for "peaceful competition".

One of the most influential books on this subject, published in 2017, was *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides' Trap?* by Harvard scholar Graham Allison. -- Courtesy Dawn

Cold peace

A broken workforce



Dr Naazir Mahmood

On the UN's Human Development Index, Pakistan occupies a pitiful rank. It perches on one of the lowest rungs on education and health indicators. If our performance in the recent past is any guide, the country is unlikely to progress much even by the end of this decade. On the health front there is an extreme shortage of doctors, nurses and trained paramedical staff across the country. Even in a majority of private clinics and hospitals, one would hardly find properly qualified and trained health professionals and workers.

In this dire state of affairs, the role of lady health workers (LHWs) becomes fairly significant. The credit for the establishment of this workforce goes to the second government of Benazir Bhutto from 1993 to 1994. Being a woman and having

close contact with the people, she knew what it meant for a woman to be in need of health assistance.

Prior to that, no civilian or military government had ever thought of creating a job category that would give employment to women as lady health workers and also cater to the needs of millions of women who had no access to health facilities. Now after nearly three decades of its establishment, this lady health workforce is playing its due role but faces tremendous problems.

LHWs serve women in both rural and urban areas especially in maternal and child health issues. In urban areas they provide health assistance mostly to slum communities by coordinating efforts with traditional birth attendants and midwives.

LHWs try their best to ensure that all mothers and children receive adequate care. Now Public Services International (PSI) has launched Pakistan's first online interactive documentary experience that provides critical insights into the lives of LHWs.

PSI is a global union federation of workers in public services and serves

as an international voice for public services and for workers and unions which deliver these services. There is a need in Pakistan to organize all workers in both private and public sectors.

Forming an integral part of public services, LHWs stand on the frontlines of Pakistan against all infectious diseases and save thousands of lives every day. The documentary about LHWs that PSI has developed highlights that they provide basic healthcare services to underprivileged communities in rural and low-income urban areas.

Their role has been so crucial in polio vaccine dispensation that they have regularly risked their own lives while being a target of militants who do not even hesitate to kill these workers and their security providers. Post-natal awareness and healthcare for rural mothers, with health education and promotion become a primary area of responsibility for these LHWs.

The documentary tells the tale of a woman called Hasena who narrates her story of how she became an LHW against all

odds. The documentary comprises a series of episodes; 'Behind the Mask: Pakistan' is a key episode focusing on the struggle that healthcare workers face especially in Pakistan. The documentary chronicles the challenges and the impact of Covid-19 on the lives of LHWs highlighting the work of Hasena and her colleagues who formed the All Sindh LHW and Employees Union (ASLHWEU) to advocate for better working conditions and wages.

With 'Behind the Mask: Pakistan', PSI is also campaigning for flood relief and the restoration of the health-risk allowance for LHWs. It calls for the provision of a service structure for them which is lacking at the moment. It is so disappointing to note that despite the critical frontline role of LHWs in the fight against diseases such as polio, cholera, and Covid-19, they continue to face harassment and have to function in terrible working conditions and low pay, especially in the face of inflation and wage stagnation. These are the issues that mainstream media rarely pays attention to.

Over the years, many LHWs have retired or left

their jobs for various causes but there has been a lack of new hiring despite increased needs. The silver lining is that despite threats as polio workers, there are girls and women ready to join the LHW workforce, but the governments both at the federal and provincial levels have failed to initiate any new hiring.

Those who are already working have been facing vaccine shortages and gender inequality in terms of wages and working conditions. LHWs also lack adequate recognition from society, and were acknowledged for the fact that they continued working during the Covid-19 pandemic and even during the lockdown periods.

In this context, the 'Behind the Mask: Pakistan' episode focuses on key issues such as access to basic health services including vaccines, and the ILO Convention 190, which seeks to protect people from harassment and violence at work. The problems in hiring and the service structure also get coverage in the interactive documentary.

Since harassment is a major issue that LHWs

have to deal with in their everyday work, watching the movie gives an insight into these problems. These women receive low salaries, and the health-risk allowance that the government offered during the pandemic is no more available to them despite being constantly at risk.

LHWs keep dealing with patients who suffer from infectious diseases, and that is good enough justification to pay them the health-risk allowance. Lack of funding is no good excuse for stopping that allowance that has put these LHWs in an extreme financial condition, and they can barely eke out a living with their meagre salaries.

Our state priorities have been focusing elsewhere, while neglecting people and social service workers alike has placed Pakistan as one of the lowest countries on human development. Recent devastating floods have compounded the problems even more with additional health crises in the affected areas posing new risks for LHWs. -- Courtesy TheNews

Why military trials?



Syed Sheheryar Raza Zaidi

Pakistan's long-running political soap opera continues, adding layers of intrigue with each passing day. Every day, Pakistanis long disenchanted by the shenanigans of the ruling elite, watch from the edge of their seats as the fate of their country hangs in the balance between the Supreme Court and the military.

Add to that the distrust that the big three political parties harbour against one another, and you have a riveting political drama, fit for viewing on the OTT platform of your choice. Only this time, nothing is fictional, and it is the common man who stands to lose the most.

The Supreme Court, after repeated attempts by various legal intellectuals, finally decided to take up the challenge against the trial of civilians by military courts. Whatever the fate of the petitions before it may be, one thing is clear, the crisis in Pakistan is far from over and every player in the game knows that.

The only thing left to determine now, is what, if anything, could have compelled the government of the day to fall back on an archaic legal paradigm reserved generally for 'hardcore terrorists' and 'enemies of the state'. For starters, the military courts are seen as a mode of 'speedy justice'. There is little to no argument against that. If history is anything to go by, trials conducted by military courts are con-

ducted in record time.

To draw parallels, the time it takes for a military court to determine the fate of an accused is similar to the time it takes for an ordinary court to serve notices and merely formalise the pre-trial stages of the case at hand.

This in no way reflects on the competence of the judges in these ordinary courts but rather illustrates the neglect with which access to justice has been handled by successive governments, and dare I add, by the top echelons of our judicial elite.

Surprising as it may be to some, Pakistan's judicial system is much more than just the NAB courts, the high courts and the Supreme Court.

The unfancied parts of our judicial system — ie, the courts at the magistrate and district levels, are the primary gateways to justice for 99 per cent of Pakistan's population. They continue to remain overutilised and understaffed.

Perhaps the government was of the view that if it left the fate of all those who allegedly torched state property, albeit in a gesture of adulation towards their beloved leader, to the regular courts, then its short-term ambitions of having the perpetrators brought to task would never be fulfilled. This is where the problem lies.

Instead of setting about to reform the state of the civilian judiciary in Pakistan such that it would allow the trial of these perpetrators in a speedy and effective way all the while guaranteeing the fundamental human right of fair trial, the government has decided to seek aid from the military, this time in the form of military courts.

The problem with the military courts is that irrespective of the facts,

whatever they may be, the general perception is that a military court represents a trial by the military, a trial which is at least in theory deemed a trial conducted in a slipshod manner with guaranteed conviction.

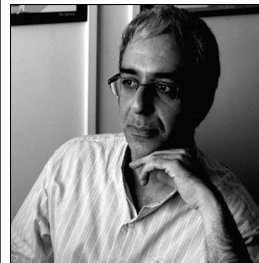
If so, why did the government feel the need to make use of military courts to try civilians? The answer is not so simple and is twofold: either the government feels that the perpetrators are guilty of committing the crime that has been alleged against them and should be firmly punished, or it is using the military courts to further its own petty political agenda.

If the government is, indeed, of the view that the perpetrators of the violence that took place on May 9 deserve to be brought to swift justice, then what better way to do so than have them tried and convicted in the ordinary course of events through regular courts which are perceived to be fair and impartial? This would only further the government's narrative against the former prime minister.

On the contrary, if the government merely wishes to weaponise the military courts to take their political opponents to task, then it would do well to remember the events surrounding former prime minister Imran Khan's ouster as a living testament of how power is never certain.

One believes that it is time for the government to reflect on the implications of its actions on this front. It should be quite clear to those at the helm of affairs that if they bring a class of civilians within the ambit of the military courts on one pretext, it may not be long before some other pretext is used to bring another class within the same ambit. -- Courtesy Dawn

Harnessing the sun



Zarrar Khuhro

Humanity's achievements are limited only by the scope of our imagination and our technological capability to build what we can imagine. Indeed, you could argue that the prime trait that separates us from the rest of creation is that we can imagine what does not yet exist, and then make that imagination a reality.

Sometimes going from imagination to execution takes a while; the first piece of literature that we could safely dub 'science fiction' was written in the second century AD by a satirist named Lucian of Samosata. Titled *A True Story*, this work saw the protagonists travel to the moon and find themselves in the midst of a war between the king of the moon and the king of the sun over who gets to colonise Venus.

Seventeen hundred years later, mankind did set foot on the moon, though we have yet to encounter extraterrestrial life. Even the moon landing may not have been possible without Robert Goddard's development of liquid-fuelled rockets, a result of his lifelong fascination with space exploration; a fascination that was born when he read H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, about a Martian invasion of Earth. Had there been no science fiction, science itself would have suffered.

There are many lesser-known visionaries to whom we owe a debt, visionaries like 19th-century Russian theorist Konstantin Tsiolkovsky who is called 'the father of spaceflight' because of his

theoretical work on space travel and rocket propulsion. He is also credited with the concept of the space elevator, a device that often finds mention in science fiction. That's fitting because he himself was inspired by the works of Jules Verne!

Tsiolkovsky also dreamed of beaming the sun's energy directly down to Earth by deploying a series of mirrors that would beam concentrated sunlight down to Earth. Perhaps this inspired Isaac Asimov, whose 1941 story *Reason* featured a massive space station that would harness energy from the sun and beam it to other planets in the solar system. Just a few decades later, Nasa engineer Peter Glasser developed the first engineering design for what such a station would look like and was granted a patent for his microwave-based method for transferring the power down to Earth.

It makes sense to try; the sun is a gigantic fusion reactor and every second it blasts out a stupendous 384.6 septillion watts of energy into the void of space; every second it produces 120 times the amount of energy that the entire US consumes in a year. Of course, only a fraction — about a billionth — of the total energy produced by the sun ever reaches earth, and out of this only about 48 per cent reaches the ground, with the rest being reflected back to space by clouds or bright surfaces such as ice and snow and some being absorbed in the atmosphere.

The still stupendous amount of energy that does reach the ground is what supports life here, allowing plants to spin sunbeams into sugar through the miracle of photosynthesis and thus sustaining a complex ecosystem and keeping the rest of us alive. More and more of this energy is being harnessed by

solar panels, and energy produced in this way now accounts for 4.4pc of global energy production and is set to rise. In the coming years — as theorised over a century ago — the solar panels may not be on Earth but orbiting around it.

In June this year, the first tantalising proof that this may be possible came when the US-based Space Solar Power project used its Microwave Array for Power-transfer Low-orbit Experiment (MAPLE) to successfully beam solar power to Earth for the first time in history. This portends well for the future of solar energy because space-based solar energy harvesting could potentially yield eight times as much power as surface solar panels.

The US congress has taken note, with one congressman saying "the technology that once made this source of energy the work of science fiction is now much cheaper, and easier to deploy than ever, putting it within reach".

The UK has announced millions of pounds of funding for such projects and Europe is also considering making serious investments. Japan, a leading global technological hub, which had in 2015 successfully managed to wirelessly beam 1.8 kilowatts of power over a short distance, is planning to conduct its own orbital test by 2025 and China, never afraid to go big, is envisioning an orbital power plant that could produce a gigawatt of power. Private companies like space start-ups Orbital composites and Virtus Solis, are also getting into the act by collaborating on building a megawatt-scale orbiting power station that will beam solar energy directly down to Earth. Truly, the seeds of the future are planted in the past and, if we're lucky and know where to look, we can see them sprouting in our present. -- Courtesy Dawn

Punjab Cabinet approves construction of new GOR for homeless govt. employees

Independent Report

LAHORE: The 19th cabinet meeting, chaired by the caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, was held at his office on Monday. The meeting lauded the exceptional cleanliness arrangements implemented by provincial ministers, commissioners, deputy commissioners, and solid-waste companies during Eid al-Adha. Their diligent efforts were commended, and the officials responsible for maintaining cleanliness throughout the province were acknowledged for their

outstanding performance. During the meeting, several decisions were made. The construction of a new Government Officers' Residence (GOR) for homeless provincial government employees was approved, and the chief minister directed timely steps for the development of a new residential colony. Furthermore, the cabinet approved the inclusion of the SL-3 project of Lahore Ring Road and the elevated project from Niazi Chowk to Babu Sabu in the annual development program.

Additionally, the expansion project of Data Darbar was approved, which will feature a state-of-the-art almonry and enhanced facilities for visitors. The chief minister instructed that the owners of the land acquired for the expansion project be compensated at the market rate. Moreover, the cabinet authorized the signing of an agreement between the Local Government Department and the Punjab Information Technology Board for the "Your Municipality, Helpline 1198" project. Amendments to the Punjab

Government Rules of Business, 2011 were approved to facilitate the training of public prosecutors at the Center for Professional Development of Public Prosecutors. Financial assistance was also approved for the affected children and families of deceased children in Ahmadpur East tehsil of Bahawalpur. In a significant decision, the cabinet granted financial autonomy to the medical superintendents of all government hospitals in Punjab.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori addressing a press conference along with different religious leader against the burning of holy Quran outside a Stockholm Mosque at Governor House.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Provincial Ministers Hamid Shah, Rehmat Salam Khattak and officers of Education Department meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali

BISP playing a key role to eradicate poverty from country: Dr. Abdul Aziz

BISP disburses Rs. 44.965m among 49885 women beneficiaries in AJK just before Eid

MIRPUR (AJK): (APP) Regional Director Benazir Income Support Program Dr. Abdul Aziz Qureshi has said that the Government of Pakistan was taking steps to provide relief to the poor and deserving women by utilizing all available resources for the betterment of the BISP beneficiaries. "The BISP is playing a key role to eradicate poverty from the country", he added while addressing a meeting with a delegation led by District Councilor UC Jhandgraan and Secretary General PPP AJK Muzaffarabad Division Ch. Ijaz Iqbal, in BISP Regional Office in the State metropolis on Monday. The meeting discussed the measures taken by the government for the improvement of BISP women's

beneficiaries of far-flung areas in AJK. The Regional Director BISP, while sharing information regarding the remittance of funds in the recent quarter, said that before Eid, 49885 women beneficiaries had received Rs. 44.965 million which, he added, was 50 percent of the total amount disbursed in AJK. He further said that the payment process was being restarted from July 4, 2023. "Now, Benazir Kafaalat and Benazir Taleemi Wazaif educational scholarships will be made by designated retailers of Bank Al-Falah instead of camps", he revealed. Speaking on this occasion, Ch. Ijaz Iqbal District Councilor UC Jhandgraan and Divisional Secretary General PPP AJK, said that the BISP was a source of support for the poor.

KU, Meezan Bank collaborates to enhance Islamic banking education

KARACHI (APP): the MoU, Meezan Bank Limited has pledged to provide financial support to the KU for capacity-building initiatives specifically designed for faculty members. The primary objective of the MoU is to empower the faculty with a comprehensive understanding of Islamic banking principles, practices, and emerging trends. This partnership aims to equip them with up-to-date knowledge and specialized skills, thereby raising the standards of education and research in Islamic banking. On this occasion, the EVP and Head of Shariah Audit of

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ABBOTTABAD: A large numbers of vehicles stuck in traffic jam due to negligence of traffic police staffs and illegal parking, at Galyat area in Abbottabad

Tessori demands Sweden to take action against vandals desecrated Holy Quran

Independent Report

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has demanded of the Sweden government to take strict action against the vandals, who desecrated the Holy Quran. While addressing a press conference at Governor House here on Monday, he said that if the action was not taken against the vandals, the Sweden would have to face a dire reaction. He said, 'The desecration of the Holy Quran will never be tolerated.'

The Governor said that a letter had been sent to the Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan against the vandals. Kamran Tessori demanded of the Sweden government to give an exemplary punishment to the vandals. He said that the response of the Sweden government was disappointing and she should take strict action against those, who were responsible. He further said that the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden had enraged the Muslim Ummah.

200 acres land allocated for new graveyard in Kemari district: Mayor Karachi

Independent Report

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Monday said that the lack of cemetery places in the city will be met as 200 acres of land, has been allocated for the new graveyard in Kemari district, where development works will be started very soon. He said this while presiding over a meeting in his office regarding the current situation of cemeteries in the city and the construction of new cemeteries. He said that a place for another cemetery is being acquired soon in Malir district. On this occasion, Deputy Mayor Karachi

Salman Abdullah Murad, Deputy Commissioner District Kemari Ghulam Qadir Talpur, Focal Person Minister of Local Government Sindh Karamullah Waqasi and other relevant officials were also present. Deputy Commissioner Kemari gave detailed briefing to the Mayor on graveyard. The Mayor Karachi said that the construction of a model graveyard in Kemari will be started soon and preliminary work in this regard is going on. This cemetery will meet the needs of the people of Kemari and other adjacent districts and all the facilities will be provided for burial here, he added.

Sacrifices of martyrs will not go in vain: Baligh

Independent Report

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman while paying tributes to the jawans of Pak army who were martyred during the operation against the terrorists near Turbat said that martyred Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqir Ali sacrificed their lives for maintaining peace in the country. Governor Punjab said that the sacrifices of the martyrs will not go in vain.

Governor Punjab said that the entire nation is united in the fight against terrorism. Governor Punjab extended condolences to the families of the martyrs and prayed that Allah Almighty grant the deceased a place in His mercy and give the courage to the bereaved to bear this loss with patience and perseverance. He also prayed for the speedy recovery of Lance Naik who was injured in this terrorist incident.



KARACHI: A large number of people enjoy in water and get some relief from hot weather at Seaview.

Bilal Afzal urges massive plantation to combat climate change

Independent Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Minister for Planning, Forests, Wildlife and Fisheries Bilal Afzal has said that the region we are living in was the most affected by climate change and that major challenge could be tackled only by planting more and more trees. He was chairing a departmental meeting at the office of DG Fisheries on Monday. Secretary Mudassar Waheed and other officers briefed him on the performance and

problems of the department. Bilal Afzal directed that the punishments for the protection of forests should be made more severe so that those who cut trees can be held accountable. He directed that a comprehensive plan should be drawn up for the success of the upcoming monsoon plantation campaign, likely to begin within a few days. Bilal Afzal, "there are vast opportunities for shrimp and fish production.

Transparent elections, only way to end political instability in country: Kundi

TANK (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi has said free and fair elections were the only solution to economic challenges and political instability of the country. He stated this while talking to media after a public gathering here in Gul-e-Imam area in which local leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf announced to join PPP. On this occasion, the state minister was accompanied by PPP District President Sardar Hidayt Ullah Khan Gandapur, Divisional General Secretary Fateh Sher and other party representatives.

Faisal Kundi, who is also Central Information Secretary of PPP, said that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) believed in democracy and support in time elections in the country. He said that his party has started its preparations for elections across the country after the announcement of party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during his visit to Swat. He vowed that PPP would succeed in the upcoming elections and make governments in center as well as in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said the previous government played an active role in making the IMF program a failure. However, he added, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar finalized a deal with IMF through a team work. He said PPP, if succeeded to make government in center, would try to move the country towards development without the dependency on IMF. Replying to a question, the state minister said it would take time to clean the wrong doings of

the previous government. To another question, he said the workers of PPP never crossed the red line even then when the party's founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was judicially murdered and his daughter Benazir Bhutto were assassinated in Rawalpindi. He said the PPP always preferred national interest and said that democracy was the best revenge. The incumbent government inherited the inflation due to the wrong policies of the previous government, he said and added that the steps were being taken to give relief to the people by ending inflation. Replying to a question about PTI, Faisal Kundi said that PPP was not in favor of banning any political party. About Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), he said that 32,000 families of Tank were currently benefiting under this program.



MULTAN: Members of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration to condemn the latest incident of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, held in Multan

Secretary Housing reviews preparations for Monsoon

RAWALPINDI (APP): Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Punjab, Sajid Zafar Dall here on Monday reviewed the preparations finalized by Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) for Monsoon. During the visit, the Secretary also inspected the cleaning work of Nullah Lai at Gwalmandi bridge. After the recent forecast from the meteorological Department, all the departments concerned need to be alert, said Sajid Zafar Dall. He said that WASA Rawalpindi had made extensive preparations for the Monsoon, including timely cleaning of major drains and sewage lines of the city along with Nulla Lai.

Sharjeel pays tribute to Pak Army soldiers martyred in Balochistan

KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has paid tribute to the soldiers of security forces who were martyred in Balochistan. In a statement issued here on Monday, Sharjeel Memon expressed his condolences and solidarity with the heirs of Major Saqib Hussain Shaheed and Naik Baqir Ali Shaheed.

Sharjeel Memon said that the morale of the soldiers of the Pakistan Army cannot be weakened by such cowardly acts. A handful of terrorists cannot shake our national resolve and commitment, Sharjeel Inam Memon said. Sharjeel Memon while paying tribute to the martyred soldiers said that the nation will never forget the sacrifices of its benefactors and martyrs.

NA achieves milestone by successfully completing parliamentary year: Abbasi

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi Monday said that the ruling coalition led by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has achieved a significant milestone as the National Assembly has successfully completed its parliamentary year ahead of schedule. In a tweet, Minister Murtaza stated that the government's constitutional tenure extends until August 12. He further said that surpassing the requirement of 130 days of sessions as mandated by parliamentary rules, a total of 138 days of sessions have been conducted thus far. The minister stated that the current session is

still in progress and there is a strong possibility that the parliamentary year will exceed the target by an additional 15 days, fulfilling the requirements of the constitutional term. Regarding the Senate's parliamentary year which commenced on March 12, the sessions have been held for 31 days, and it is anticipated that the Upper House will easily achieve its target before March 11, 2024. Murtaza Javed Abbasi said. He expressed confidence in the government's commitment to upholding parliamentary supremacy and emphasized that the coalition government prioritizes legislative measures over the implementation.

CPI inflation slides down to 29.4pc in June: Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar said on Monday that the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation came down to 29.4 percent during the month of June 2023 as compared to 38 percent recorded during May 2023.

“As per the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the CPI inflation for Jun 2023 clocked in at 29.4 percent compared to 38 percent YoY for May’23,” the federal minister said in a tweet. Ishaq Dar said the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) had also performed well “as 2,334 points were

added to the index by 1:00 p.m on Monday whereas at the exchange rate of Pak Rupee vs Dollar in open Market was recorded at Rs.270/272.”

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported that the CPI-based inflation reached 29.4 percent on a year-on-year (YoY) basis in June 2023 as compared to 38 percent in the previous month and 21.3 percent in June 2022.

On a month-on-month basis, it decreased to 0.3 percent in January 2023 as compared to an increase of 1.6 percent in the previous month (May 2023) and an increase of 6.3 percent in June 2022.

On a year-on-year basis, the top few food commodities that witnessed an increase in prices as compared to the corresponding month of last year included cigarettes (129.20 percent), Tea (113.09 percent), Wheat Flour (89.89 percent), Rice (72.83 percent), Potatoes (64.69 percent), Wheat (62.27 percent), Chicken (57.72 percent), Wheat Products (56.81 percent), Pulse Moong (50.50 percent), Pulse Mash (49.92 percent), Beans (47.60 percent), Ready-made Food (43.04 percent), Sugar (41.64 percent), Fresh Fruits (40.31 percent), Beverages

(38.17 percent), Eggs (36.96 percent), Bakery and Confectionery (36.83 percent), Gur (36.60 percent), Milk Fresh (31.8 percent), Condiments and Spices (30.04 percent), Gram Whole (28.42 percent), Pulse Gram (24.14 percent), Cooking Oil (19.62 percent), Meat (18.50 percent), Fresh Vegetables (13.71 percent), Vegetable Ghee (8.90 percent) and Mustard Oil (5.97 percent), while tomatoes came down by 29.57 percent and onion 16.53 percent.

The non-food commodities that witnessed an increase during the period on a YoY basis included



KARACHI: Pakistani brokers and traders monitor the shares at the Stock Exchange (KSE) as Pakistan Stocks Surge Most after the approval of IMF Loan to Pakistan.



LAHORE: Central Joint Secretary of Anjuman-e-Tajran (Lahore) Umer Butt addressing press conference along with others at Press Club, to condemn the burning of Quran Pak in Sweden.

Pakistan earns US \$881m from travel services' export in 10 months: PBS

ISLAMABAD (APP): The country earned US \$881.250 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the first ten months of the fiscal year 2022-23.

This shows a growth of 90.29 per cent as compared to the US \$463.100 million worth same services provided during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year 2021-22, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the period under review, personal travel services increased by 89.80 per cent, from US \$460.820 million last year to US \$874.640 million during July-April 2023.

Among the personal services, the exports of health-related expenditure surged by 16.23 per cent to US \$3,580 million from US \$3,080 million while the education-related expenditure also rose by

0.32 per cent from US \$ 9.430 million to US \$9.460 million.

Meanwhile, the PBS data revealed that the exports of business services grew by 189.91 per cent, from US\$ 2.280 million to US\$ 6.610 million. It is pertinent to mention here that the exports of services from the country, witnessed an increase of 1.46 per cent during the first ten months of the current financial year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, it added.

The exports of services during July-April (2022-23) were recorded at US\$ 6,009.87 million against the exports of US\$ 5,923.19 million during the same period of last year.

The imports of the country witnessed a decline of 39.70 per cent, falling from US\$ 10,635.72 million last year to US\$ 6,413.32 million during the period under review.

SCCI rejects imposition of new taxes Rs415billion in 2023-24 budget

PESHAWAR (Online): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry categorically rejected imposition of new taxes worth Rs415billion in 2023-24 budget on behalf of the IMF, terming it as venomous for the national economy, businesses and industries.

In a statement on Monday, the SCCI acting president Ijaz Khan Afridi said the additional burden of taxes will bring a new storm of inflation in the country that could not only affect the trading community but people from different walks of life miserably.

He urged the government to revisit its decision and withdraw it in the best interest of the national economy, businesses, industries and trade.

Ijaz Afridi warned

that SCCI along with traders' community will strongly agitate if the government didn't withdraw additional taxes that were imposed through the new budget 2023-24.

He was of the view that imposition of new taxes was tantamount to pushing the further crippling economy into severe danger situations.

He stated traders' community has already suffered a lot owing to anti-business policies of the present government.

The SCCI acting chief said it was completely unjust to impose Rs415billion on inflation stricken people by following the directions of IMF, which was unacceptable so we reject it completely.

He expressed serious apprehensions about a hike in electricity.



ISLAMABAD: An elderly person busy in making duplicate key at Aabpara Market.

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships namely, Lotus-A, FMT Efes, GC-Beryl and Isabella Kosan carrying Containers, Palm oil and Chemicals, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Katsuyama and Chemroad Hope with Palm Oil and Chemicals also arrived at the outer anchorage of Port Qasim during the last 24 hours.

A total of 08 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, EM Astoria, Maersk Chesapeake and FMT Efes sailed out to sea Monday morning on Monday and two more ships, Lotus-A and Isabella Kosan are expected to sail on today.

The cargo throughput of 131,621 tonnes, comprising 83,783 tones imports Cargo and 47,838 tonnes of export cargo.

HCCI President terms IMF agreement encouraging for country

HYDERABAD (APP): President Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI) Adeel Siddiqui has said that agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) was encouraging for the country as it could address some economic issues confronting the country's economy. He, however, emphasized that future caretakers and the new government should have to continue with this programme.

He urged Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to take the IMF programme as the last one and focus revival of the economy around the clock failing which Pakistan would be borne \$ 8 billion in losses every year and remain dependent on foreign loans.

Pak, Syria to enhance industrial cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Damascus Chamber of Industry, Ghazwan al-Masry during a meeting with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Syria, Shahid Akhtar, discussed means of enhancing and developing industrial cooperation between the two countries.

According to the SANA news agency, during the meeting held at the Chamber's building in Damascus, Al-Masry stressed that the chamber was ready for full cooperation with the Pakistani side.

He said the chamber would also facilitate communication between businessmen and industrialists in both countries and provide everything necessary for raising economic relations

in a way that reflects positively in the interest of the two sides.

The chamber's Chief appreciated Pakistan's stances in support of Syria and its just issues, it added.

On the occasion, Ambassador Akhtar said that the meeting aimed to discuss issues related to the development of industrial and commercial cooperation and the establishment of partnerships and joint investments between the two countries.

He pointed out the possibility of benefiting from the progress achieved by his country in the manufacture of medicines, medical materials and surgical tools, including dental ones, in addition to agricultural tools, equipment, heavy machinery and sports equipment.

PCJCCI urges govt to invest in solar PV projects

LAHORE (APP): A Chinese delegation discussed the importance and need of advancement in solar projects with office-bearers of Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) here at the joint chamber's Secretariat on Monday.

PCJCCI President Moazzam Ghurki said that currently, out of US\$144 million foreign investment in solar PV plants in Pakistan, US\$125 million was from China, accounting for nearly 87 per cent of the total investment. Among the 530MW cumulative generation capacity in Pakistan, 400MW (75 per cent) was generated from Quaid-i-Azam Solar Park, the first-ever power plant capable of generating solar

energy in Pakistan, owned by the Punjab government, and built by a renowned Chinese company.

Chinese companies were also major suppliers to many PV projects in Pakistan such as Mini Solar grids in KP and ADB Access to Clean Energy Programme. He added that Pakistan solar energy market was expected to record a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 2.5 per cent from 2022 to 2027.

One of the representatives of delegation said that until now, the average utilisation rate of the operational solar PV plants was merely 19 per cent, far from the over 95 per cent utilisation rate in China, representing huge opportunities to be tapped.

LCCI strongly condemns Holy Quran's desecration

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) on Monday strongly condemned desecration of the Holy Quran and urged the government to raise the matter at international fora.

“It is a vile act of racism, the business community strongly condemns this tragic incident and urges the international community to take a strong stand against it as this is not the freedom of expression but the terrorism,” LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan

Khalid Butt said in a statement issued here.

They said that it was a good omen that the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) immediately convened a meeting but a unanimous strategy by the world was direly needed to stop such vile acts.

The LCCI office-bearers said that desecration of the Holy Quran or any other holy book was a crime. They said that racism and xenophobia should not have any place in any part of the world. The Muslims respect everyone and everyone should respect Muslims, they added.

Romi demands charter of economic plan for progress, prosperity

MULTAN (APP): Renowned industrial Khawaja Jalaluddin Romi demanded all political parties and other stakeholders to sit together and made a ten-year charter of the economic plan in order to put the country on the path to progress and prosperity.

They should also devise a comprehensive strategy for the success of the charter of the economy plan. He expressed these views while talking to media men here on Monday.

Jalaluddin Romi hailed the incumbent government over the staff-

level standby agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He said that the agreement would help to accelerate business activities besides this the government has also got an opportunity to do reforms regarding the restoration of the economy on a sustainable basis.

Romi also thanked Pakistan's friendly countries on behalf of the entire nation for their efforts related to the agreement. He said, “The current agreement with the IMF will also improve the value of the rupee against the dollar and restore.

AJK offers massive investment opportunities for investors: Barrister Sultan

MIRPUR [AJK] (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, while referring to massive investment opportunities in Azad Jammu Kashmir, has said that the government was ready to provide all kinds of facilities to the investors.

He expressed these views while talking to a Hong Kong delegation that called on him under the leadership of the Presidential Adviser Lal Dino Baloch at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis on Monday.

The delegation was comprised Madam Soo, Chaudhry Allah Ditta,

Chaudhry Zahid, Faisal Lal and others.

Speaking on the occasion the AJK President said that the liberated territory, a treasure trove of natural resources, offers huge investment opportunities to foreign investors.

“Azad Kashmir has vast investment opportunities in hydro, tourism, information technology, minerals, mining and precious stones and other sectors”, he said.

Barrister Chaudhry further said that Azad Kashmir would be transformed into a model state, where foreign investors would feel secure to invest their capital.

He said that in his peaceful and investment-

friendly environment provides investors with unique opportunities for good returns.

He said that investors should not worry about of anything as the AJK Government was ready to cooperate with them besides providing other facilities. He said that the government's aim to turn the region into a business hub would ultimately help to control growing unemployment among the people besides improving their quality of life.

On this occasion, the head of the delegation Lal Dino Baloch informed the President about the progress in the field of information technology regarding investment in his previous meeting.

SCCI condemns desecration of Holy Quran

SIALKOT (APP): Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) President Abdul Ghafoor Malik strongly condemned the desecration of Holy Quran outside the main mosque of Stockholm (Sweden) and said that there was a need to take collective measures at the international level to prevent recurrence of such like incidents in future.

In a statement issued here on Monday, the SCCI President said that Muslims could not tolerate desecration of their religion and the Holy Quran.

Malik said that Muslim world should not accept Swedish government's condemnation of the incident until it takes practical steps to punish those involved in the heinous conspiracy.

SBA with IMF crucial for economic stability; RCCI

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has termed the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with International Monetary Fund (IMF) crucial for economic stability and welcome news for Pakistan's ailing economy.

The yield will not only send a positive message to investors but the risk of default had also been averted, said RCCI President Saqib Rafiq in a statement.

He also applauds the PM office and Finance Ministry's engagements with IMF and after their tireless efforts, Pakistan managed to secure an IMF deal.

Saqib Rafiq further remarked that the SBA of \$3 billion will not only

provide a breathing space in the recovery of Pakistan's creditworthiness but also enable the resumption of dollar inflow from various bilateral and multilateral lenders.

He said that the business community hopes that the industry reforms introduced by the government in the budget would be implemented.

The framework for the development of five Es, Energy, E-Pakistan, environment, equity and empowerment would be shared with the business community and stakeholders will be taken on board, he added.

However, Chamber President urged the government to improve financial management and discipline.



LARKANA: Labourers busy in unloading mangoes from a delivery truck at Fruit Market.

Saudi extends oil production cut as Russia reduces exports

RIYADH (AFP/APP): Saudi Arabia said on Monday it was extending a voluntary oil production cut of one million barrels per day, and Russia said it was slashing exports by 500,000 bpd.

The moves were the latest attempts by major producers to stabilise markets rocked by factors including continued fallout from the Russian invasion of Ukraine and China's faltering economic recovery. The cut by Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude exporter, was first announced after a June meeting of oil producers and took effect at the weekend. Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman noted at the time that it was “extendable”.

IUB, SBP sign MoU for mutual cooperation in academia, industry

BAHAWALPUR (APP): A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The agreement was signed by the Vice Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob and Chief Manager State Bank of Pakistan Abdullah Khan.

On this occasion, the Dean Faculty of Management Sciences Prof. Dr. Jawad Iqbal, and Dr. Areba Khan were present as the focal persons. Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob expressed his vision regarding mutual cooperation between academia and industry and

appreciated the efforts of Dr. Jawad Iqbal and Dr. Areba Khan in implementing this cooperation. Mujibur Rehman Assistant Chief Manager State Bank of Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Amjad Dean Faculty of Engineering, Prof. Dr. Shazia Anjum Dean Faculty of Chemical and Biological Sciences, Dr. Owais Shafiq, Dr. Waseem Hameed, Mohsin Mateen, Dr. Muhammad Shafiq, Dr. Hasan Mujtaba, Nawaz Saleem and other faculty members from Faculty of Management Sciences and Commerce participated.

Dr. Areba Khan informed about the mutual cooperation and collaboration between the Islamia University.

Russia says no need for new mobilisation to replace Wagner

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Kremlin authorities Monday said there was no need for further mobilisation in Russia to replace Wagner troops who left the battlefield in Ukraine after a short-lived mutiny. The head of the Wagner mercenary group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, led his forces in a rebellion against Russia's top military brass last month, which was a significant embarrassment for the Kremlin.

several eastern Ukrainian towns, including Bakhmut, after a mass recruitment drive in Russia. Putin has insisted that the mutineers did not galvanise support

during their rebellion. He initially condemned the rebelling Wagner fighters as traitors and vowed tough punishment.

Putin will speak with leaders of China and India in his first summit since the Wagner insurrection

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: President Vladimir Putin will participate this week in his first multilateral summit since an armed rebellion rattled Russia, as part of a rare international grouping in which his country still enjoys support. Leaders will convene virtually on Tuesday for a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security grouping founded by Russia and China to counter Western alliances from East Asia to the Indian Ocean.

This year's event is hosted by India, which became a member in 2017. It's the latest avenue for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to showcase the country's growing global clout.

The group so far has focused on deepening security and economic cooperation, fighting terrorism and drug trafficking, tackling climate change and the situation in Afghanistan after the Taliban took over in 2021. When the foreign ministers met in India last month, Russia's war on Ukraine barely featured in their public remarks but the fallout for developing countries on food and fuel security remains a concern for the group, analysts say.

Prigozhin later abandoned his advance on Moscow and struck a deal with the Kremlin, accepting exile in neighbouring Belarus. Andrey Kartaplov, the head of the State Duma Defence Committee, stated that there is no threat regarding a drop in the combat potential of the Russian military in the mid-term and long-term perspective.



People buy fruits from a street vendor at a market in Gadaref city in war-torn Sudan.

OIC moot demands urgent action to prevent desecration of Holy Quran

Monitoring Desk
JEDDAH: During an emergency meeting the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) stressed the urgent need for collective action to prevent the desecration of the Holy Quran, the holiest book of Muslims. This call for unity comes following a painful incident in Sweden, where the holy book was burned during a protest, causing widespread outrage and concern within the global Muslim community.

necessity of adhering to international law, which explicitly prohibits promoting religious hatred. The incident involved a man tearing up and burning the Holy Quran outside Stockholm's central mosque on the first day of the Muslim Eid al-Azha holidays. This act has particularly outraged Turkey, an OIC member, as Sweden seeks Turkey's support for its entry into the Nato military alliance.

Although Swedish police had granted permission for the protest, the individual liable for the burning was subsequently charged with inciting agitation against an ethnic or national group. This event has led to significant protests in Baghdad outside the Swedish Embassy and has attracted condemnation from the United States and different organisations as well.

Any book considered holy should be respected to respect those who believe in it," the pope said in an interview in the United Arab Emirates newspaper Al Itihad, published on Monday. "I feel angry and disgusted at these actions."

France's mayors call on public to gather in anti-riot display

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: France's mayors have called on members of the public and elected officials to gather at town halls across the country on Monday in a show of mass opposition to violent protests that have dragged on for nearly a week.

In a press release, an association of the country's mayors noted that "communes everywhere in France are the scene of serious unrest, which targets republican symbols with extreme violence."

The government has been battling nightly riots and looting ever since 17-year-old Nahel M. was shot dead by a police officer during a traffic stop in the Paris suburb of Nanterre on Tuesday, reviving longstanding accusations of racism within the French police force.

Seeking to quell what has become one of the biggest challenges to President Emmanuel Macron since he took office in 2017, the interior ministry said it was again deploying 45,000 police and gendarmes nationwide overnight from Sunday to Monday, the same figure as the previous two nights.

The extraordinary call for a "mobilisation of citizens for a return to republican order" came after the home of the mayor of a Paris suburb was rammed with a flaming car in an apparent bid to burn it down, prompting widespread outrage.

As of 1:30am on Monday, 78 people had been arrested in relation to the unrest nationwide, according to the interior ministry — a fraction of the number arrested the night before.

Earlier, on Sunday, the grandmother of Nahel had called for calm.



French President Emmanuel Macron, French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne and Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire attend a government emergency meeting at the emergency crisis center of the Interior Ministry in Paris.

Russia launches the first drone strike on Kyiv in 12 days and all are shot down

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: After a relative lull, Russia launched a drone attack on Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, officials said. It was the first such attack of the war in 12 days.

An exact number of drones that attacked the city. But Ukraine's air force said that across the country, eight Shaheds and three Kalibr cruise missiles were launched by the Russians.

All of the Iranian-made Shahed exploding drones were detected and shot down, according to Serhii Popko, the head of the Kyiv city administration. In addition to the city itself, the surrounding Kyiv region was targeted. Kyiv regional Gov. Ruslan Kravchenko reported that one person was wounded by falling debris from a destroyed drone.

Further south, a 13-year-old boy was wounded in overnight shelling of Ukraine's partially occupied southern Kherson province, said Oleksandr Tolokonnikov, spokesman for the Ukrainian administration of the province.

Officials in the Ukrainian capital didn't provide

The child was wounded when the Russian army shelled the village of Mylove on the banks of the Dnieper River in the Beryslav district, Tolokonnikov said. "The child was hospitalized, there is no threat to his life," Tolokonnikov added," he said on state TV.

Taiwan military holds live fire drills on strategic southern coast

Monitoring Desk
FANGSHAN: Taiwan's military carried out live fire drills on its strategically-located southern coast on Monday, firing missiles from highly mobile armoured cars to destroy targets close to shore in a simulation of repelling invading forces.

ern tip of the island, before firing off US-made TOW anti-tank missiles to destroy static targets near the shoreline.

China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has ramped up military pressure over the past three years to try to assert its sovereignty claim, and the island's armed forces routinely practice seeing off a Chinese attack.

"Most of the drills we carried out today involved live artillery because the defence exercise needs to be similar to actual combat, allowing our army to be confident and have the capability to protect our homeland," Defence Ministry spokesperson Sun Li-fang told reporters.

Camouflaged Taiwan army Humvees roared around the coastal drill area in Pingtung county's Fangshan near the far south-

Pingtung, which looks out on the Taiwan Strait, South China Sea, Pacific Ocean and Bashi Channel that separates Taiwan from the Philippines, is a highly strategic spot to watch Chinese military activity, and a potential landing site in an invasion.



Fanfare, golf and boos have marked July Fourth for US presidents.

Fighting shakes Khartoum as displaced battle disease

Monitoring Desk
KHARTOUM: Fierce fighting between the forces of rival generals shook the Sudanese capital Khartoum on Sunday as disease and malnutrition threatened the rising number of displaced. Khartoum residents said they were shaken awake by warplanes and "violent fighting" between forces loyal to army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

fighter. In central Khartoum, others saw "scores of RSF vehicles" driving towards the vicinity of the "Armoured Corps". Since April 15, the war between Burhan and his former deputy, RSF commander Mohamed Hammad Daglo, has killed nearly 3,000 people and displaced 2.2 million within the country, with another 645,000 fleeing across borders, according to the International Organisation for Migration.

Witnesses told AFP a police base and the state television building in the capital's northwest were under attack by the RSF, who said they had shot down an army MiG

"The situation is grave," the medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said in a statement detailing the hardships of displaced Sudanese stuck in nine camps.

India's monsoon rains cover entire country, but still lower than average

Monitoring Desk
MUMBAI: India's annual monsoon covered the entire country on Sunday, six days earlier than usual, the state-run weather office said, but rain totals are 10 per cent below average so far this season. The monsoon — the lifeblood of India's \$3 trillion economy — delivers much-needed water to farms and restocks reservoirs and aquifers. It also brings relief from the worst of the summer heat.

northwards to cover the entire country by July 8. This year, the monsoon arrived on the coast of southern Kerala state on June 8, more than a week later than normal, and its progress was later stalled by severe cyclone Biparjoy. However, the monsoon made quick progress this week and has now covered the entire country, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

In a typical year, rains usually lash Kerala state, from India's southwest coast, from around June 1 and move

Israel to buy more F-35 fighter jets from US. Deal expands fleet by 50% and deepens partnership

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel will buy 25 F-35 aircraft from the United States, the Israeli Defense Ministry announced Sunday, in a deal that increases Israel's arsenal of the stealth fighter jets by 50%. The F-35 is the world's most advanced fighter jet, and Israel is the only country in the Middle East to fly them. The \$3 billion purchase, which increases the Israeli fleet of F-35 jets from 50 to 75, is set to be finalized in the coming months, the ministry said. It said the deal would be financed through American military aid to Israel and that the maker of the plane.

Israeli troops and drones hit Jenin in major West Bank operation

Monitoring Desk
JENIN: Israeli forces hit the city of Jenin with drone strikes on Monday during one of the biggest West Bank incursions in twenty years, killing at least eight people and involving hundreds of troops and gun battles that lasted into the afternoon.

At times during the morning, at least six drones could be seen circling over the city and the adjoining camp, a densely packed area housing around 14,000 refugees in less than half a square kilometre.

With drones clearly audible overhead and the sounds of gunfire and explosives heard across the city hours after the strikes, the Jenin Brigades, a unit made up of militant groups based in the city's crowded refugee camp, said it was engaging Israeli forces and had shot down one of the unmanned aircraft.

The camp has been at the heart of an escalation of violence across the West Bank that has triggered mounting alarm from Washington to the Arab world, without so far opening the way to a resumption of political negotiations that have been stalled for almost a decade.

Operation of this scale have rarely been seen in the city since the end of the second Intifada uprising two decades ago.

For more than a year, army raids in cities such as Jenin have become routine, while there have been a series of deadly attacks by Palestinians against Israelis and rampages by Jewish settler mobs against Palestinian villages.

Biden to travel to UK, NATO summit, Finland

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden will head to Europe in a week for a three-nation trip, including a NATO summit, focused on reinforcing the international coalition backing Ukraine as it pursues a counteroffensive against Russia.

Sweden asked to join the military alliance in May 2022, three months after Russia invaded Ukraine. Top diplomats from Turkey and Sweden will meet on Thursday, the day after Kristersson's White House visit, at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Biden is set to depart on July 9 for Britain, and then head on to Lithuania's capital Vilnius for the meeting of NATO leaders, followed by a one-day visit to Helsinki for talks with his Nordic counterparts, the White House said Sunday in a statement.

Turkey ultimately dropped objections to Finland joining earlier in the year. But Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan last week denounced Stockholm for allowing a protest during which a man burned pages from the Koran. On Sunday, the Swedish government called the incident "Islamophobic."

The NATO summit comes as the Western military alliance seeks to admit Sweden, whose membership bid has been blocked by Turkey and Hungary, and as Ukraine intensifies its campaign to join amid Russia's invasion.

Western allies and Stockholm have insisted that Sweden has met the terms of a deal to join the alliance agreed to with Ankara last year.

Finland became a full member of the bloc earlier this year. Before heading to Europe, Biden will host Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson at the White House on Wednesday to discuss Stockholm's

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Saturday he wanted his country to receive an "invitation" at the Vilnius summit to join NATO once the war with Moscow is over.

In NATO's new north, fresh chances to contain Moscow

Monitoring Desk
TORNIO: High above a railway bridge spanning a foaming river just outside the Arctic Circle, Finnish construction workers hammer away at a project that will smooth the connections from NATO's Atlantic coastline in Norway to its new border with Russia.

territories and their infrastructure opens ways for allies to watch and contain Moscow, and an unprecedented chance to treat the whole of northwest Europe as one bloc, nearly two dozen diplomats and military and security experts told Reuters.

"We will be removing some 1,200 of these one by one," says site manager Mika Hakkarainen, holding up a rivet. Until February 2022, the 37-million euro (\$41 million) electrification of this short stretch of rail — the only rail link between Sweden and Finland — simply promised locals a chance to catch a night train down to the bright lights of Stockholm. After Russia invaded Ukraine, that changed. Now Finland is part of NATO, and Sweden hopes to join soon.

The Finnish rail improvements around Tornio on the Swedish border are one example. Due for completion next year, they will make it easier for allies to send reinforcements and equipment from across the Atlantic to Kemijarvi, an hour's drive from the Russian border and seven hours from Russia's nuclear bastion and military bases near Murmansk in the Kola peninsula. Among forces based there, Russia's Northern Fleet includes 27 submarines, more than 40 warships, around 80 fighter planes and stocks of nuclear warheads and missiles.

London's expanding clean air zone sparks conomy vs-environment row

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The ring of cameras trained on London's roads to charge drivers of the most polluting vehicles 12.50 pounds (\$16) a day is due to expand next month — and not everyone is happy about it.

the initial ULEZ restrictions, against those who say they can't tolerate another economic hit at a time of soaring living costs.

Mayor Sadiq Khan's plan goes ahead, London's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will become one of the world's largest to tackle air pollution, encompassing 5 million extra people in the capital's leafier and less-connected outer boroughs.

Carl Cristina, a 44-year-old tree surgeon living just outside the boundary, says it will wreck his livelihood.

The expansion has triggered a fierce debate across the city, pitching the mayor and health campaigners, who point to the environmental success of

"I can't afford to buy a new van. I simply don't have the budget," he said, speaking to Reuters at a central London anti-ULEZ demonstration attended by hundreds. He dismisses a scrap-heap scheme which could lower the cost of a replacement vehicle and says his only choice would be to pass the charge on to customers — something he believes would make him uncompetitive and cut his income in half. London's transport authority says only one in 10 cars in outer London are not ULEZ-compliant. But like much of the data around the expansion, that has been heavily contested with some saying the true figure could be higher.

New sun of hope is rising after stark despair: PM

Felicitates business community, nation on unprecedented surge of PSX

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday felicitated the business community and the nation on the unprecedented surge of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX). He said as a result of the staff-level agreement and a \$3 billion standby arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the trust of investors and the business community was rapidly reviving.

After Pakistan's agreement with the IMF, the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) opened with

a surge of 5.38%, or 2,231 points on Monday. The PSX benchmark rose to 43,684 points in the opening session. In a statement issued by the PM Office, Shehbaz Sharif said the government's continued struggle and prudent policies had started bearing fruits as signs of the country's economic revival were rising.

We are resuming the journey of economic development and a decline in the inflation rate from the point where Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had left.

Thank God, the country has been put on the path of development again, he said adding that after severe disappointments, a new sun of hope is rising again.

Praying to Allah Almighty for further successes on the economic front, the prime minister said the seeds of Pakistan's development had started taking root as a result of the government's sincere efforts, honesty and truth.

He said the government once again had embarked upon Quaid Muhammad Nawaz

Sharif's vision of construction, development and people's welfare.

He said just as between 2013 and 2018 the PML-N government succeeded to free Pakistan from the energy crisis, terrorism and other problems, bringing economic development, it would bring Pakistan on the path of development and prosperity with the same spirit.

Shehbaz Sharif vowed to continue the journey of economic stability and national development with the same direction, spirit and struggle.



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Jamat-e-Islami holds protest outside Sweden Embassy against burning of Holy Quran in Sweden.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Danesh Kumar called on the Acting-President, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Elements involved in terrorist attacks do not deserve any concession, Dr. Ruqqiyah

QUETTA (Online): Central leader of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and former Provincial Minister Dr. Ruqqiyah Saeed Hashmi has expressed regret over the martyrdom of security forces personnel in the attacks of terrorists in Shirani and Kech and said that the elements involved in the attack on the check posts of the security forces are also not eligible for discount, strict action should be taken against them.

In a statement issued here, Dr. Ruqqiyah Saeed Hashmi said that the martyrdom of FC and police personnel in the terrorist attack on the FC check post in Shirani is brutal act of terrorism and it should

be condemned at all forums. She said that the terrorists are targeting the innocent security forces personnel to achieve their nefarious goals which cannot be good for the country and the nation in any way.

Paying homage to FC Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqir Ali, who lost their lives in the encounter with terrorists in Kech district, she said that the FC personnel sacrificed their lives for the defense of the country and the protection of the lives and property of the people. She said that the terrorist elements want to create chaos and instability in the country by targeting the personnel of the security forces, but the

people of Pakistan are standing by the side of their security forces and will thwart any conspiracy against the country. Dr. Ruqqiyah Hashmi further said that the security forces personnel who sacrificed their lives for the defense of the country's borders and the protection of the lives and property of the people are our national heroes whose sacrifices will not go in vain, God willing, and the activities of terrorists will be completely eradicated from the country soon. Dr. Ruqqiyah Saeed Hashmi offered condolences to the families of the officers who were martyred in the terrorist attack and prayed for the elevation of their ranks.

YDA expresses concern over threats to doctors

QUETTA: In a statement issued by the Young Doctors Association, it is said that on Friday, June 30, the relatives of the patients in the teaching hospital Khuzdar tortured the doctors in the hospital, threatened to kill them, and vandalized the hospital. On Friday, June 30, at 8 pm, two road traffic accident patients were brought to the hospital in critical condition and the doctors and staff on duty immediately started initial treatment and immediately referred them to Karachi and Quetta, but they suffered severe head

injuries. Due to which one patient died, the family members of the later tortured the doctors and vandalized the government property. Young Doctors Association Balochistan demanded the hospital management, Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar, and higher authorities the miscreants involved in the incident should be arrested and security should be provided to the hospital. PMA Khuzdar and Young Doctors Association Balochistan Khuzdar have jointly announced a boycott of OPD services in Teaching Hospital Khuzdar.

Sheikh questions PPP's silence on IMF deal

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Monday expressed surprise over silence adopted by the Pakistan People's Party, a key coalition partner of the government, on recent loan deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Taking to Twitter, the former interior minister said the PPP had not given any reaction to the deal, saying: "This means there is something wrong with it".

Asad Mehmood says: Accommodation, food centers on Yarik-Hakla motorway soon

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Federal Minister of Communications Mufti Asad Mehmood on Monday said that service areas housing accommodation and food centers would be opened on Yarik-Hakla Motorways, soon, to facilitate motorists. He said accommodation and food centers would be established in the limits of Dera Ismail Khan, Mianwali and Rawalpindi. He said that such a center had already been inaugurated in the limits of Dera Ismail Khan.

He expressed these views while talking to the media and a delegation of party leaders before departing for Islamabad.

He said that the issue pertaining to the land for the facility in Mianwali had been resolved by its deputy commissioner and the revenue department.

He hoped the issues relating to the establishment of food and accommodation centers within the limits of Rawalpindi would also be resolved soon and the public traveling on the route would have all required facilities.

Replying to a question, he said that work has been started on the plan to install an e-tolling system on the motorways and highways across the country.

In the first phase, it has been experimentally started on the Sialkot-Lahore Motorway section. In this regard, the fiber optic lines were being laid on Motorways and cards and number plates would be issued for vehicles.

He said that the entire system would be monitored and for this purpose, the National Highway

Headquarters would have a modern system to keep monitoring all roads.

He said that the system would be put in place with financial assistance from Korea and the amount would be paid in 40 years in the form of a loan.

The communications minister said that the Yarik-Saggu and Saggu-Zhob CPEC project was going to start soon. Unfortunately, work was stopped by the previous government on the project, but now the present government successfully restored trust of China and it would be leading up to Gwadar. He said that such mega-development projects would usher in socio-economic development as Dera Ismail Khan would become the commercial hub of the region after the completion of the project.

Khetran pays homage to FC personnel martyred in Kech terrorism

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Communication and Works, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has paid homage to the Major Saqib Hussain and Naik Baqir Ali who embraced martyrdom while fighting against terrorists in Kech district.

In a statement issued here on Monday, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran expressed grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of FC's personnel and sympathized with the bereaved families.

He said that the martyrs embraced martyrdom while performing duties. He said that their sacrifice would always be remembered.

Sardar Khetran also said that our brave security forces are rendering sacrifices of their lives to foil the nefarious designs of the enemies. He said that the manner FC officer and jawan fought against the terrorists bravely is really commendable. He prayed for the departed souls and early recovery of those injured in the encounter.

Int'l flight operations could not restore from Quetta

QUETTA: Claims to restore the international flight operation of the national airline from the provincial capital Quetta have been phased out.

According to sources, to restore the international flight operation from Quetta, a flight was started from Quetta to Dubai via Karachi last year, but due to a lack of load, this operation was stopped within a few days. It should be noted that the national airline from Quetta, the international flight operation has been closed for a total of 6 years. A few years ago, flights from Quetta to Dubai, Sharjah, Musahad, Najaf, and Kandahar were also stopped. Passengers, visitors, and businessmen are facing problems.

They demanded that the domestic flights from Quetta should be increased while the international flight operations should also be restored.

Flash flooding likely in hill torrents of DGK, Northern Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that flash floodings are expected in the hill torrents of D.G Khan Division (Punjab) and local Nullah's of Northern Balochistan including small Rivers in Bannu, Kohat and D.I Khan Division (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) during July 5th to July 8th.

According to daily FFC report on Monday, low to medium-level flooding is also expected in the Nullah's of Rivers Chenab and Ravi during the said period. A fresh rain bearing system of moderate to heavy intensity is likely to affect the upper catchments of all the Major Rivers along with Suleiman range from July 5th. Currently, all major rivers of Indus River System (IRS) are flowing in normal except for River Kabul.

It was also directed to keep all the necessary machinery in order and stay the concerned staff alert so as to take preventive measures to tackle any emergent situation.

Moreover, it was noted that the emergency would remain enforced in the hospitals in view of the emergent situation.

While on the other hand, the control rooms would be set up in all the divisional offices and districts.

IG Prisons visit different jails, reviews security arrangements

QUETTA: The Inspector General of Prisons Balochistan, Shujauddin Kasi visited different jails of the province on Monday.

During the surprise visit, the Inspector General Prisons inspected the Sibi, Dera Murad Jamali and Dera Allahyar jails. He also reviewed the security arrangements made in the prisons.

During the visit and inspection, Mr. Kasi directed to tougher the security arrangements in all the prisons so as to counter any untoward situation. He also got himself acquainted about the issues being faced by the jail inmates.

Arrangements reviewed for upcoming monsoon season rains in Naseerabad Div.

QUETTA: The arrangements were reviewed for the upcoming monsoon season rains in the Naseerabad division.

A meeting co-chaired by the Additional Commissioner Naseerabad Division, Ali Muhammad Hanbhi and Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad, Ayesha Zehri was attended by the FC's colonel Ahmed Khan, Deputy Commissioner Kachhi, Muhammad Hussain, Deputy Commissioner, Sohbatur, Fayyaz Ali, Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad, Muhammad Ejaz Sarwar and other administrative officers of different districts besides the officers of different concerned departments.

The meeting was briefed about the arrange-

ments made to deal with any emergent situation following the monsoon rains in the Division.

It was stressed that all the divisional and district officers should ensure their participation and presence at their respective duty places.

It was also directed to keep all the necessary machinery in order and stay the concerned staff alert so as to take preventive measures to tackle any emergent situation.

Moreover, it was noted that the emergency would remain enforced in the hospitals in view of the emergent situation.

While on the other hand, the control rooms would be set up in all the divisional offices and districts.

Pakistan, China discuss avenues to further strengthen cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China here on Monday discussed various avenues available for both countries to deepen bilateral relations in economic, trade, and financial sectors to expand the existing cooperation to unprecedented levels. According to a press statement issued by the finance ministry, the discussion was made during a call on the meeting of Charge d Affairs, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Ms. Pang Chunxue with Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

Dar warmly greeted the Charge de Affairs and appreciated the deep-rooted historical bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. He informed the Charge de Affairs about the

progress on the 9th review with International Monetary Fund (IMF) stating that Pakistan has successfully reached the staff-level agreement. He also apprised the Charge de Affairs about stability in the economy and how the government is making efforts to preserve this economic stability and move the economy towards growth. Additionally, he appreciated the Chinese support to Pakistan on multiple fronts and specifically thanked for the cooperation of Chinese Financial Institutions with Pakistan during the last few months.

Dar expressed gratitude to Ms Pang Chunxue for all the support and cooperation Pakistan has always been receiving from the leadership in Beijing.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ms. Pang Chunxue, Charge d Affairs of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

Gwadar's 1.2 MGD water plant completed: GPA

GWADAR (INP): In order to provide clean water to residents of Gwadar, 1.2 MGD seawater desalination plant has finally been completed as per schedule.

Formal inauguration is all set to be executed by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif during his likely visit to Gwadar after Eid Holidays.

Talking to Gwadar Pro, Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) project director Dawood Baloch said water desalination plant has been done and dusted with a grant of Rs. 2 billion from China in collaboration with Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), National Engineering Services Pakistan and China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC).

Along with completion of Civil, mechanical and electrical work, Central room of 1.2 MGD desalination water plant is now

up and running, he informed.

Almost 90 percent manpower and human resource, he said, have been hired from local market of Gwadar and Balochistan.

On a query, he said that all related equipment and apparatus have been installed in befitting manner to keep desalination water plant functional with full capacity.

Alongside construction of 1.2 MGD desalination plant, an around 1 kilo meter long water supply line from plant site to Gwadar city's main water supply network has also been laid down, he added.

Completion of 1.2 MGD Water Desalination Plant, spreading over approximately one acre land area, reflects China's support for poor people of Gwadar desperately longing for clean water over the last many years.

Nation's determination against terrorism is unwavering: Samina

QUETTA: Central Vice President Balochistan Awami Party Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of police and FC personnel who were martyred in the attacks on check posts at in Shirani Dhana Sar area of Northern Balochistan, Turbat and Hoshab yesterday. In her condemnation statement, she condemned the incidents in strong words and termed the incidents as extremely cowardly act and said that the cowardly attacks of terrorists on the

security personnel who are on duty like protecting the homeland is open terrorism. Terrorists want to sabotage the peace of Pakistan, especially Balochistan, with their cowardly acts. The people of the province stand by their army and other security forces in this war against terrorism. She said that the nation is major in the war against terrorists. Nation is proud of the martyrdom of Major Saqib and other martyrs. Martyrs are the assets of the nation and they protected the nation by sacrificing their lives.



Funeral prayer of the martyred policemen being offered in Zhub

Protest holds against desecration of Holy Quran

QUETTA (INP) Central Secretary General Mufti Shafiuddin, Central Information Secretary Syed Haji Abdul Sattar Shah Chishti, General Secretary of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Ideological Pakistan, in the light of the directives of the Amir of Central Maulana Khalil Ahmad Mukhlis, protested against the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden on Friday throughout the country.

All sermons to be celebrated against Sweden and the Netherlands for desecrating the Qur'an, on the order of the Leader of the Central District, to observe a day of protest in all provinces and districts, and to pass a resolution of condemnation in Friday mosques and to record the

protest, said that a message should be given to the disbelieving world in the Sermon Imams of the mosques that Muslims would never tolerate insulting Allah and Islam.

The world of Islam should demand the ruler announce the end of all diplomatic relations with Sweden for insulting the Quran. The ambassadors of Sweden, the ruler of Sweden should be expelled as a protest and take a strong stand against Islamophobia in the OIC meeting and protest at the global level should be announced. Two billion Muslims were hurt by the incident in Sweden. Legislation should be enacted globally and blasphemy that would be completed by death.

72pc work on Kurram Tangi dam completed

PESHAWAR (APP): A senior official of Wapda here on Monday said that 72 percent of construction work on the multipurpose Kurram Tangi dam has been completed and its first stage would be inaugurated by November next year.

Engr Zahoore Hussain, Director Projects, Wapda (North) said that 72 percent of work on multipurpose Kurram Tangi (Stage-I) spread on lands of Bannu and North Waziristan was completed and is expected to be inaugurated in November next year. Former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had laid the foundation stone of Kurram Tangi dam on March 3, 2017. He said the design and feasibility studies of its stage-II was under process that would be completed with a loan assistance.