

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Hub

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XVIII No. 230, Muharrumul Haram 19, 1445 AH Monday August 07, 2023 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

No option for terrorists except to submit to writ of state: COAS

Gen Munir expresses concerns over sanctuaries given to terrorists in Afghanistan; Says Pakistan will spare no effort to dismantle terrorist networks



RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Asim Munir on Monday said the surge in terrorism in the recent past was a futile effort on the part of terrorists to get the talks re-initiated, however, there was no option for them except to submit to the writ of state before they were decimated, if they persisted on their wrong path. The Army

Chief made these remarks during his visit to Peshawar. The COAS laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada at Fort Bala Hisar (Headquarters Frontier Corps Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - North) and offered Fatiha, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The COAS met tribal elders from Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as notables from all walks of life. "With the unflinching resolve of the Nation, Pakistan is successfully countering terrorism to enable a stable and peaceful environment for socioeconomic development in the area," the COAS remarked. "Terrorism has no place in Pakistan and the involvement of Afghan nationals in

terrorist incidents in Pakistan is detrimental to regional peace, stability and deviation from the Doha Peace Agreement by the interim Afghan Government." He also said, "Pakistan has concerns over sanctuaries available to banned outfits and liberty of action they enjoy on Afghan soil. Pakistan will spare no effort to dismantle terrorist networks and protect its citizens at all costs."

During an interactive session, the COAS paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of brave and resilient tribals of Pakistan and appreciated their indomitable resolve for standing shoulder to shoulder with the Security Forces in defeating the menace of terrorism. Tribal elders assured that the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its ideology would never be acceptable to any tribe and they would continue to stand with the state during the thick and thin.

Martyr lawyers of 8th August can never be forgotten: CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has stated that the grief and agony of the martyrs of civil hospital tragedy on August 8, 2016 is still fresh in our hearts and minds, and as such they can never be forgotten.

In a statement issued on the eve of 7th death anniversary of 8th August, 2016 tragedy that had claimed lives of 73 persons including 56 lawyers, two media persons besides others and left around injured, the Chief Minister said that the coward terrorists had targeted the educated and conscious segment of the society.

Expressing solidarity with the bereaved families of the martyrs, the Chief Minister said that people and government of the province shared their grief equally.

He said that the lawyers of Balochistan are ranked among the best lawyers of the country, who have better awareness about law and legal affairs.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presenting awards to heads/representatives of Chinese companies operating in Pakistan under the CPEC.

One window operation facility for Chinese investors to be fully implemented: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday assured the Chinese investors to further simplify the procedures for the companies working in Pakistan, especially under the umbrella of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and implement them in letter and spirit.

He said under the CPEC, the two countries were entering into a new era of cooperation, therefore the government was further streamlining and simplifying the procedures to facilitate the Chinese companies and investors working in the country.

PM Shehbaz assured the Chinese investors that the difficult time for them was now over as "We are going to do this under one umbrella as a one window operation and this I mean in letter and spirit...not just words but true implementation".

Addressing an award ceremony here, Shehbaz Sharif said that the Chinese government and companies had contributed towards Pakistan's industrial promotion in various areas and their contribution had not only led to creating job opportunities and industrial production but also further strengthened the bilateral economic ties.

Earlier the prime minister gave awards to top-performing Chinese companies working especially in projects under CPEC in Pakistan.

He said recently the two friendly countries had celebrated a decade of CPEC under Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI). He said China had so far invested a valuable \$30 billion under CPEC which had really transformed the economic landscape in Pakistan.

"Now we are entering into the second phase of CPEC in which multiple new areas are being incorporated including the green corridor, Information Technology, and Special Economic Zones.

He said the Pakistan government had launched a great initiative "Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC)", which would consist of all main stakeholders including the federal government, all provincial governments, and institutions, particularly Pakistan Army led by General Syed Asim Munir.

He said the Army Chief had personally contributed to this programme in a way that it had no parallel in the past as he was totally dedicated to promoting the cause of Pakistan and the people who had education and talent but no jobs.

Govt. withdraws PEMRA Amendment Bill 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday withdrew the PEMRA Amendment Bill, 2023 under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate, 2012 to further distil the legislation and address matters related to Parliamentary oversight, the Tribunal, Council of Complaints, and proposed amendments.

The information minister introduced the bill which was comprehensively discussed during the meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting, a Senate Secretariat press release said. The meeting was presided over by Senator Fawzia Arshad. Senior journalists from key electronic media organizations in Pakistan and representatives from various media associations attended the meeting to discuss the legislation. During the meeting, the information minister acknowledged the importance of the legislation and emphasized her positive intentions behind proposing it. After careful consideration and receiving 28 amendments from different stakeholders, the sponsor of the bill made the decision to withdraw it to further refine the legislation by incorporating appropriate amendments and allow the new government to take it up in the future.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a meeting with the Omani Chief of Staff of Sultan's Armed Forces, Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis Al-Raisi, who along with the members of his delegation called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Pakistan, Oman for increasing bilateral cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Oman on Monday reiterated the desire to further enhance bilateral relations in all areas of mutual interest.

Both sides also underscored the need to further increase cooperation in the areas of trade, defence and culture.

This was discussed at a meeting between President Dr Arif Alvi and the Omani Chief of Staff of Sultan's Armed Forces, Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis Al-Raisi, who along with the members of his delegation called on the president at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President Secretary Press Wing said in a press release.

Welcoming the delegation, the president said that Pakistan highly valued its ties with Oman as the two countries supported each other on various issues at international fora and were bound together by a common religion, history, and cultural heritage.

He informed the delega-

tion that Pakistan offered investment opportunities in various sectors of its economy, particularly agriculture.

He said that cooperation in the agriculture sector was highly important for the food security needs of the two countries.

He also suggested to start a ferry service between Gwadar and Muscat to bring the two countries further closer.

The meeting admired the leadership of Iran and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman over the normalization of relations, terming it a significant development for the prosperity of the region.

The two sides also stressed the need to increase high-level contacts to further cement bilateral ties.

The president also briefed the delegation about the grave human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf at Parliament House

All political forces need to do positive, constructive politics: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that all political parties of the country need to engage in positive and constructive politics to maintain hope in the youth.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly on Monday, he said the countrymen are fed up with the politics of hatred, enmity and we have to give hope to the youth of the country as it has to lead the country

to serve the masses. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said all the political forces and institutions should either go for a new charter of democracy or sit together under the previous one to engage in a dialogue. He said the sole objective of dialogue should be framing the rules of game and code of conduct to do politics in the country. He said all the institutions also need to honour the domains of one another and refrain from trespassing the sphere of others.

Last session of Balochistan Assembly summoned

Independent Report
QUETTA: The session of Balochistan Assembly is scheduled to be held today (Tuesday) here in Quetta.

According to an official notification issued here by the Balochistan provincial assembly secretariat on Monday, the Governor Malik Abdul Wali Kakar has summoned the session, which is going to be the last one of the incumbent assembly.

As per schedule, the session has been summoned at 04:00 PM today.

It may be mentioned here that the incumbent provincial assembly is completing its due five years tenure on August 12, 2023.

Rubaba Buledi says Compiling 209 year laws; a big achievement of GoB

QUETTA (APP): Parliamentary Secretary Law and Parliamentary Affairs Science and IT Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has said that it is indeed a feather in the cap of the incumbent provincial government to consolidate the 209-year laws of Balochistan's history.

"All the officers of the law department deserve praise, she expressed these views while addressing a simple but dignified ceremony of awarding excellence certificates to the officers of law and parliamentary affairs on Monday.



SIBI: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar cutting ribbon to restore Sibi-Harnai railway section

Governor inaugurates restoration of Sibi-Harnai rail section after 19 years

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar inaugurated the restoration of Sibi-Harnai railway section on Monday.

The inaugural ceremony arranged at the Sibi Railway Station was attended by the parliamentary leader of Balochistan National Party, Malik Naseer Ahmed Shahwani, former Minister and provincial President of PML-N, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, former Provincial Minister, Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal, Divisional Superintendent of Railways Quetta, Faeed Ahmed besides other concerned high ups, administrative officers and elites.

The Federal Minister Railways, Khawaja Saad Rafiq and Federal Minister Narcotics Control, Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti participated in the ceremony through video link.

Speaking at the inauguration of Sibi-Harnai railway section, the Governor said that the restoration of railway track between the twin historic cities of Harnai and Sibi would put positive impacts on the overall economy and agriculture of the area.

He said that the students of Harnai and Ziarat districts would also be able to avail the opportunities of higher education with restoration of the railway track. While on the other hand, the commerce and trade activities would also get tremendous boost in the area after restoration of the communication links with rest of the country and province, adding Governor believed.

The Governor also mentioned that the incumbent federal government is committed to reconstruct the national highways besides restoring the railway lines.

At least 7 including UC chairman killed in Turbat blast

Monitoring Desk
TURBAT: A remote controlled explosion near a vehicle in Balgatar, Turbat killed seven people on Tuesday. The deceased included Union Council (UC) Chairman Ishaq Baloch.

Levies officials said that the explosion took place when the vehicle was passing through Balgatar.

The vehicle was completely destroyed in the explosion. Levies officials said that the explosion was caused by a remote controlled device.

Cop killed, two injured in terrorists' attack

PESHAWAR (APP): A police constable embraced martyrdom and two others were critically injured in a terrorists attack on a police mobile in Badha Bair area here. According to a police spokesman, the attackers in disguise of pedestrians targeted the police van on Afridi road from a close range with automatic weapons while it was patrolling in the area late Sunday night.

As a result of firing constable Yar Muhammad embraced martyrdom on the spot while a police sub-inspector and another constable received critical bullet injuries.

Apex Committee of SIFC approves projects for attracting investments

ISLAMABAD (APP): The third meeting of the Apex Committee of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was held here on Monday to continue the positive momentum to attract investment in various sectors of economy.

The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and attended by Chief of Army Staff, chief ministers, federal and provincial ministers, and high-level government officials.

The prime minister appreciated the expeditious operationalization of SIFC in a short span and its efficient functioning through a collaborative approach.

The Apex Committee appreciated the global impact of the ongoing outreach

strategy through seminars and project inaugurations; which would be augmented by the SIFC's website, being launched shortly.

It gave final approval of the projects, presented by the ministries, for attracting investments from friendly countries, under the umbrella of SIFC, in key sectors of agriculture, livestock, mining, minerals, information technology and energy.

The Apex Committee showed all-out support for successful conduct of the upcoming visit of a high-level delegation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan through the SIFC platform. The prime minister directed to make this inaugural visit a momentous event.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb along with Secretary of Information and Broadcasting & Managing Director PTV Sohail Ali Khan handing over Health Card to Senior Actor Shahzad Raza at Icon Awards 2023 ceremony.

Courts 80% responsible for what is going on in country: Syed Khurshid

SUKKUR (Online): Federal minister Khurshid Ahmad Shah has said the courts are 80 percent responsible for what is happening in the country at present.

A court had awarded punishment to innocent Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, he added.

"We gave five names for care taker Prime Minister (PM) but they did not appear on TV. Rana Sana Ullah knows better than

me. Perhaps he may have known more than me care taker PM is coming who. I pray election are held till November", he said this while talking to media men here Monday.

We gave five names for care taker PM to Shehbaz Sharif through Ayyaz Sadiq and Khawaja Asif.

What names were given by Rana Sana Ullah were not included in the decision of committee, he remarked.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Into the unknown

With the Council of Common Interests unanimously approving the 2023 census on Saturday, the possibility that general elections will not be held on time has grown stronger.

There had been an air of ambiguity surrounding the electoral time frame, because until recently, state functionaries had been saying that the 2017 numbers would be used as several parties had issues with the latest results.

In fact, just a day before the CCI decision, the PPP had strongly opposed using the census issue to delay the polls. However, the prime minister appears to have pulled a rabbit out of his hat during the CCI meeting, resulting in the approval of the 2023 head account.

While the census results merit a separate discussion, a key question arises about the election time frame. With the process of dissolving the National Assembly to begin on Wednesday, the caretaker administration will have a constitutionally mandated period of 90 days in which to hold the polls.

Yet with the approval of the 2023 census, the ECP will have to conduct fresh delimitations; various quarters say this process could mean that polls will not be held until early 2024. This would clearly violate the caretaker set-up's legal mandate. Will the caretaker administration, therefore, operate in a constitutional limbo, just as the interim Punjab and KP governments have done ever since the elected legislatures in these provinces were dissolved in January? As things stand, that appears to be the case.

This paper has consistently argued that there should be no delay in holding the polls and that constitutional limits must be respected. However, it seems that political parties are barely concerned about constitutional imperatives, and are themselves willing to bend and break the rules when they want. Pakistan has long suffered because of a lack of adherence to constitutional norms, and this grim tradition is being upheld by the outgoing government. Provisional census results were ready by May, and if the government had started deliberations then and notified the results earlier, the polls could have been held on time once the legislature was dissolved.

But it appears that the rulers, as well as the establishment, were not keen on holding timely polls lest the PTI made a strong showing. Now that the deed is done, all efforts must be made to hold elections as soon as possible. The ECP needs to complete the delimitation process within a reasonable period, and from thereon no further obstacles should be placed in the way of holding elections. The only democratic solution to our protracted political and economic crises is for a freely elected civilian government with a fresh mandate to take the reins. The first step in that direction is the announcement of a clear time frame for conducting the polls.

Worsening trend



Huma Yusuf

A US Congressman last week introduced a resolution calling for the House to recognise Islam as a major religion in an effort to foster more respect for Muslims within America. That this was needed is a tragic reminder of the global increase in Islamophobia. As a Muslim-majority state, we may consider these external issues that are emotive, but with little direct local relevance. But the domestic ramifications of global Islamophobia deserve attention.

There is no doubt that Islamophobia is a shocking and worsening global trend. The recent events in Sweden and Denmark recall the UN special rapporteur on religious freedom's 2021 finding that Islamophobia had risen to epidemic proportions; for example, anti-Muslim incidents in the UK doubled between 2012 and 2021, and 30 per cent of Americans surveyed in 2017 viewed Muslims negatively. In 2021, the UN was moved to observe the first International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

The notion of Islamophobia as anti-Muslim sentiment in the West is also being broadened to include shifting attitudes in the Global South, with the term equally evoking incidents such as Israeli forces' raids on the Al Aqsa or the shuttered doors of mosques on the outskirts of Delhi following communal violence.

Pakistan's response is often multifaceted, balancing its position as the second-largest Muslim majority country in the world and the need to

manage hurt religious sentiment at home. This usually takes the form of diplomatic ire and the organisation of local protests. We saw this last month in response to anti-Muslim incidents in Sweden, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

There is, however, one element missing from this approach — a revision of Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy. This is important because there are inevitable links between global Islamophobia and domestic militancy. Islamophobic incidents, and the emotion and outrage they provoke create a fertile recruitment ground for militant groups, and validate violent extremist responses, which are framed as proportionate in the face of growing onslaughts against Muslims.

Sadly, this is a vicious cycle that is all too familiar to Pakistanis. More than 680 people have been killed in 232 militant attacks this year already. The attacks recall the dark almost-decade from the mid-2000s onward in which over 66,000 Pakistanis are said to have lost their lives, with targets ranging from security forces to police, tribal leaders to politicians.

The uptick in militancy in Pakistan is largely driven by developments in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime, and the more conducive atmosphere for the outlawed TTP and IS-K. But militant narratives continue to rely on a demonisation of the West and other governments that fail to stem anti-Muslim sentiment and attacks. In these narratives, the democratically elected governments of Muslim countries are often portrayed as complicit, failing to do enough, or kowtowing to the West by continuing to work within secular frameworks (the OIC, for instance, is calling for the UN to condemn Quran

desecrations in Sweden and Denmark in the context of UN Human Rights Council resolutions regarding religious freedom and the hate speech limitation to freedom of expression). Not without precedent, this very logic was evoked by the IS-K to justify its recent attack in Bajaur against the JUF, with the former accusing the latter of hypocrisy for donning a religious identity yet cooperating with the government and military.

Pakistan's approach to the militant threat continues to be largely securitised, with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari recently threatening military action in Afghanistan if the Afghan Taliban failed to clamp down on cross-border terrorism. More holistic counterterrorism approaches that include the creation of educational and employment opportunities, inclusive local government and compelling counter-narratives — including those that acknowledge the hurt caused by global Islamophobia to stem radicalised and violent responses — remain in draft form. Incidentally, a broader counterterrorism approach focused on inclusion and prosperity would also stem the tide of asylum seekers on Western shores where immigration is a highly politicised and toxic issue. This would be the start of a virtuous cycle that would benefit everyone. Acknowledging the interconnectedness of global and regional trends will help develop more holistic approaches that tackle both global Islamophobia and domestic militancy. And there is cause for hope: the US this year reported the first decline in anti-Muslim incidents since it started tracking the data in 1995, likely due to the Biden administration's more inclusive messaging. There's still a long way to go but a concerted effort has to be the first step. — Courtesy Dawn

Rehashing GDPR



Samar Masood

Despite numerous attempts to introduce a robust data protection law that values the privacy of individuals and encourages growth, the proposed law does not make any distinction for the type of activity for which the data is required, nor does it specify what is personal data. Though the definition provides for the data to be able to identify a person, it is silent on how much data is needed for identifying the data subject or what is needed for it to meet the threshold to be categorised as personal data. Nor does it answer the question of what is complete data or misleading data. If you see an advertisement for chocolates based on your search from the previous night and you begin a diet the next morning, is it incomplete or misleading data in so far that it does not show your preference reflected through your choices made on a search engine? These questions, though basic, make the cracks in the law obvious.

Another example is processing the data of children. The law requires that data controller/processor obtain the permission of the parent/authorised guardian of any person below the age of 18. The debate about age limit aside, how would data controllers be expected to reach out to parents or confirm guardianship? In what cases would the costs outweigh the benefit of paternalistic surveillance? For instance, would it be feasible in the case of a 17-year-old signing up for an Instagram account?

These are only some issues with the structure of the law. The primary issue is that it fails to keep up with developments in the sector. The law should have regulated the mechanism for obtaining con-

necessarily expensive.

Take the example of the right to correction. The right empowers a person to whom the data relates (data subject) to require the data processor/controller to rectify personal data if it's inaccurate, incomplete, misleading, or outdated. The proposed law does not make any distinction for the type of activity for which the data is required, nor does it specify what is personal data. Though the definition provides for the data to be able to identify a person, it is silent on how much data is needed for identifying the data subject or what is needed for it to meet the threshold to be categorised as personal data. Nor does it answer the question of what is complete data or misleading data. If you see an advertisement for chocolates based on your search from the previous night and you begin a diet the next morning, is it incomplete or misleading data in so far that it does not show your preference reflected through your choices made on a search engine? These questions, though basic, make the cracks in the law obvious.

Another example is processing the data of children. The law requires that data controller/processor obtain the permission of the parent/authorised guardian of any person below the age of 18. The debate about age limit aside, how would data controllers be expected to reach out to parents or confirm guardianship? In what cases would the costs outweigh the benefit of paternalistic surveillance? For instance, would it be feasible in the case of a 17-year-old signing up for an Instagram account?

These are only some issues with the structure of the law. The primary issue is that it fails to keep up with developments in the sector. The law should have regulated the mechanism for obtaining con-

Commerce News

Amin launches Pakistan's first ever communication application "Beep Pakistan"

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque on Monday launched Pakistan's first ever communication application "Beep Pakistan".

The Federal Minister for IT inaugurated the new Web version of E-office.

National Information Technology Board (NITB) prepared the Beep Pakistan application to optimize communication and

operational efficiency within the government organisations.

Addressing the ceremony, Syed Amin Ul Haque said that the Beep Pakistan application comprises features including document sharing, secured messaging, quick audio, video and conference calls, adding that its data will be securely hosted in Pakistan.

He said that initially after one month test run it

will be open for use for all government officers and officials. Unsuccessful use at government level, the application will also be open for the masses after one year, he added.

He said that Beep Pakistan application is aimed at to secure and efficient digital communication among the government officers and the employees.

Syed Amin Ul Haque said this application

strives to revolutionize the way government employees communicate and enhance their productivity through the adoption of modern and efficient e-governance practices. He delighted to announce that the ministry is taking another stride towards more efficient and sustainable government.

The Federal Minister for IT also lauded the efforts of National Information Technology.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired the meeting of the Cabinet committee on Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions (CCoIGCT).



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque launching Pakistan's First Communication APP "beep".

PCGA to provide assistance to TCP for cotton procurement

MULTAN (APP): Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) will provide all possible support to the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) regarding the procurement of cotton.

PCGA Chairman Chaudhary Waheed Arshad expressed these views during a meeting held at PCGA House, Multan in which members of TCP, Agriculture department, Punjab and Central Executive Committee of PCGA participated. General Manager, the

regional office of TCP Lahore, Israr Ahmed Sodhar told the participants that TCP has to buy one million bales of cotton as per the decision of the government of Pakistan.

He said that they came to pay visits to various ginning factories to assess possible difficulties during procurement of cotton under the directions of chairman TCP.

He said that they will also need the support of PCGA in this regard.

PSX loses 199 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Monday, losing 199.47 points, a negative change of 0.41 percent, closing at 48,386.25 3 points against 48,585.72 points the previous trading day. A total of 381,855,144 shares were traded during the day as compared to 331,132,473 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs14,528 billion against Rs 12,500 billion on the last trading day. As many as 354 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 104 of them recorded gains and 225 sustained losses.

Punjab govt delegation led by CM visits Agro Cluster and Textile Unit

LAHORE (APP): A high-level delegation led by Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Monday visited Agro Cluster and Cotton Textile Unit in Bukhara, Uzbekistan.

The delegation was briefed on cotton production, processing and value added textiles in Bukhara Agro Cluster, said a handout issued here.

The delegation observed the process of garments preparation and inspected printing, dyeing,

pressing and other sections at the Agro Cluster.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi inspected the high yielding cotton plants. He said that Punjab and Uzbekistan had immense opportunities for agricultural technology exchange and investment, and this visit was of great importance for the agro-economy of Pakistan. He said that this visit had paved the way for stronger agricultural relations between the two countries.

Secretary agriculture says: Farmers following IPM model getting good cotton production

MULTAN (APP): Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ali Ateeel said on Monday that farmers who were following Integrated Pest Management (IPM) technology were getting significantly good production results from their cotton crop. Presiding over a meeting at agriculture secretariat Multan, he ordered officials to compile

error-free data of IPM demonstration plots in Punjab so as to finalize best crop management strategy to benefit farmers.

He appreciated director IPM for his contributions adding that the crop-friendly pests being nurtured in biological laboratories and their on time supply to cotton fields helped a lot in controlling enemy pests.

South Africa's HC for strengthening bilateral trade relations

LAHORE (APP): In a bid to foster stronger economic ties between Pakistan and South Africa, High Commissioner Mthuzuzeli Madikiza made his third visit to the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Monday.

During his address to the business community, Madikiza underscored the need for collaborative efforts to address challenges faced by the business community and enhance trade cooperation.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Honorary Consul General of South Africa Syed Shahid Ali, LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry

and Executive Committee members were also present.

Madikiza highlighted the importance of understanding the unique opportunities and complexities that Africa presents for trade and investment.

He commended the presence of an Africa Desk at the LCCI and acknowledged the commendable initiative of the government of Pakistan, "Look Africa", aimed at bolstering economic relations with the continent. Madikiza said the two countries suffered during the Covid-19 pandemic and stressed the need for diversification and expansion of trade beyond coal, urging

stakeholders to analyze the progress made and work towards increasing trade volumes. In his address, LCCI President Kashif Anwar expressed optimism that the meeting would pave the way for stronger bilateral economic relations. He emphasized the significance of South Africa in the African continent, with its impressive GDP of over \$400 billion and diverse economy, and highlighted the mutual benefits that closer cooperation could bring.

He said participation in trade fairs, exhibitions and exchange of trade delegations play a fundamental role in boosting two-way trade.

Gold rates decrease by Rs 1,100

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 1,100 and was sold at Rs. 221,700 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs 222,800 on the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs. 943 to Rs. 190, 072 from Rs. 191,016 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 Karat gold declined to Rs. 174,233 from Rs174,076.

1st ASEAN-Pakistan Business Opportunity Conference ends

LAHORE (APP): The historic "ASEAN-Pakistan Business Opportunities Conference 2023" came to a successful close here Monday, marking a significant step towards strengthening economic ties between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Pakistan.

The event featured the commencement of the visit by a 50-member

delegation from various ASEAN countries. The conference was the starting point for a series of impactful engagements aimed at enhancing trade collaboration and fostering mutual growth between the participating nations. With a record-breaking turnout, this event witnessed the largest-ever delegation from ASEAN to grace Pakistan's business landscape.

Inter-religious moot stresses global law to ensure respect for all religions

LAHORE (APP): An "Inter-religious Harmony Conference" was held here on Monday under the aegis of the Pakistan Ulama Council and Saint Anthony Catholic Church.

Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman and President International Interfaith Harmony Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmoud Ashrafi, Archshobop Dr. Sebastian Shaw, Reverend Emmanuel Sardar Khokhar, Pir Allama Zubair Abid, Maulana Muhammad Aslam Siddiqui, Maulana Muhammad Asim Makhdoom and other scholars and priests said that the Constitution of Pakistan is a complete

protector of the rights of minorities in the country, adding that Muslims and non-Muslims living in Pakistan are equal citizens." The Christian community has immensely served Pakistan," they added.

The religious leadership also condemned terrorism incidents in Bajaur, Khyber Masjid, Quetta, and at other places, stating that legislation should be made at the world level to ensure respect for the holy things of all heavenly religions and also announced supporting and endorsing the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Councils of the

Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations Organisation.

The religious leadership also stated that the Muslim and Christian leaders would celebrate the Independence Day of Pakistan in a befitting manner.

The religious leadership said, "We established Pakistan and make it a prosperous and progressive country." The religious leadership also stated that the Constitution of Pakistan provides equal rights to the followers of all religions. "No enemy of the country will be allowed to disturb peace in the country."



KARACHI: Many passengers are stuck at Cantt Station because of the derailed Hazara Express near Nawabshah.

Abbasi inaugurates Rs 292 mln project to revamp KKH

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi Monday inaugurated a transformative project valued at Rs 292 million, the initiative focuses on the maintenance and comprehensive reconstruction of Karakoram Highway (KKH) from Haripur to Abbottabad city.

Commending the commitment to progress, Federal Minister

Murtaza Javed Abbasi expressed heartfelt appreciation towards Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Federal Minister for Communications for their substantial contributions.

Shedding light on the financial allocations, Abbasi revealed that Rs 55.4 million has been dedicated to the maintenance and reconstruction of (KKH), spanning from Haripur to Abbottabad Interchange.

Senate approves annual budget of Haripur, Swat universities

PESHAWAR (APP): The caretaker minister for Law and Higher Education Justice @ Irshad Qaiser on Monday presided over two separate senate meetings to review and approve annual budgets for the University of Haripur and the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Swat. In both meetings, the members of the Senate of the respective universities attended. The senatemeeting unanimously approved the annual budget 2023-24 for the University of Haripur. Provincial Minister of Higher Education Justice @ Irshad Qaiser appreciated the surplus budget and performance of the University of Haripur. He emphasised that the university should take more steps to increase its income so that it becomes financially stable. The Senate meeting was told that steps are being taken to establish more departments at the university in the future. Apart from this, the Senate meeting of the Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Swat, was held.



LAHORE: A delegation of Chinese Consulate led by the Chinese Consul General, Zhao Shiren in a group photo with Governor of Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

Punjab Governor says: Pakistan-China ties deep roots and based on mutual respect, trust and love

LAHORE (Online): A delegation of Chinese Consulate led by the Chinese Consul General, Zhao Shiren met the Governor of Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman here today at the Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, issues of mutual interest, promotion of bilateral relations, especially ongoing development in CPEC were discussed. During the meeting, the Chinese Consul General also invited the Governor of Punjab to

the National Day of the People's Republic of China in October. Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Pakistan-China relations have deep roots and are based on mutual respect, trust and love. He said that people to people contact between Pakistan and China will be strengthened. Governor Punjab said that Pakistan values China's cooperation in education, health, energy, infrastructure and other sectors.

Meeting held to eradicate ghost schools in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The high-level first meeting of the Liaison Committee of the Education Department was held under the chairmanship of the Advisor to the Caretaker Chief Minister on Primary and Secondary Education Rehmat Salam Khattak to eradicate ghost schools in the province.

The meeting was also attended by Abdul Akram Additional Secretary (General), Sheikh Fakhar Alam Communication Specialist, Education Department Chairman of all boards, Tanzila Sabahat MD Private School Regulatory Authority, and Director of Education.

CM meets Governor Bukhara during Uzbekistan visit

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi had a fruitful meeting with the Governor Bukhara Mr Botir Zaripov in Uzbekistan on Monday, during which a consensus was reached on the proposal to declare Bukhara and Multan as sister cities.

The meeting involved an exchange of ideas regarding declaring both Multan and Bukhara as sister cities, and consensus was also reached on taking necessary steps in this regard, said a handout issued here. While conversing with Governor Botir Zaripov, the CM said, "Sufism is our shared

heritage and linking Multan and Bukhara as sister cities would further promote Sufism and religious culture." Pakistan and Uzbekistan were bound by historical, religious, and cultural ties; he added and mentioned that Uzbekistan had strengthened its economy through revolutionary reforms in the agricultural sector. Pakistan, especially Punjab, would benefit from Uzbekistan's agricultural initiatives, he expressed. He emphasized utilizing Uzbekistan's experiences in developing improved seeds for cotton and wheat cultivation.

Funeral prayers offered for 13 killed in train accident

TANDOADAM (APP): The funeral prayers of 13 people who died in a deadly train accident near Nawabshah were offered here on Monday and later buried in their native graveyards. According to a report, 13 people including five women of Tando Adam were also killed in a fatal train incident that occurred on Sunday. Funeral prayers were attended by the Chairman Municipal Committee Ghulam Murtaza Junejo, Vice Chairman Malak Zulfiqar Ali, Lala Ayoub, Abdul Rehman Ansari.

Iranian Minister for increase in tourists' between Iran & Pak

LAHORE (Online): The Minister for Tourism, Archeology and Handicrafts of the Islamic Republic of Iran Syed Ezzatollah Zarghami, who is currently visiting Lahore, has emphasized that the number of tourists between Pakistan and Iran should increase as both are neighboring Muslim countries. "At least one million Pakistani and two lac Iranian tourists should visit each other's countries", he said.

He was addressing the Pak-Iran Tourism Forum held under the auspices of the Punjab Tourism Department at a local hotel as a chief guest for the promotion of bilateral tourism on Monday.

Punjab Mohsin Naqvi was represented by Minister Specialized Healthcare and Social Welfare Prof Dr Akram Javed in the ceremony. Punjab Tourism Secretary Asif Bilal Lodhi, Iran Tourism Department Deputy Director General Mohammadi Qasmi, Iranian Consul General Lahore Mehran MohdFar, Tourism Department officials, tour operators and others also participated.

Iranian Minister for Tourism Syed Ezzatollah Zarghami said that the purpose of organizing the Pakistan-Iran Tourism Forum is to increase facilities for tourists. He said that last year 93 lac 11 thousand foreign tourists visited Iran.



LAHORE: Advocate members of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest demonstration against arrested former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan, outside Supreme Court Registry.

Dr Jamal inaugurates case response anti polio campaign

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare and Population Welfare, Punjab Dr Jamal Nasir on Monday said that the presence of polio virus in the environmental samples of Tehsil Taxila was alarming and a seven-day special anti-polio campaign had been launched in the high-risk areas of the district to eradicate this deadly virus. He said this while inaugurating a case response anti-polio campaign at Rural

Health Center Khayaban e Sirsyed, by administering drops to a child under five years of age. The minister said the campaign will continue till August 13 to cover over 669,412 children in five tehsils of Rawalpindi, including Rawalpindi Cantonment, city, Taxila, Gujjar Khan and Potohar town. Dr Jamal informed that 2835 teams, including 674 area incharges, 269 fixed points and 189 Union council medical officers were participating in the drive.

International News

Russia blasts Saudi Arabia talks on ending war in Ukraine after Moscow gets no invitation to attend

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russia's Foreign Ministry on Monday chided efforts by international officials meeting in Saudi Arabia to find a peaceful settlement for the war in Ukraine, saying the talks don't have "the slightest added value" because Moscow — unlike Kyiv — wasn't invited.

Senior officials from around 40 countries gathered Sunday in Jeddah for a two-day meeting that aims to agree on key principles about how to end the conflict that has raged for more than 17 months.

But without Russia's participation and without taking into account

Moscow's interests, the meeting was pointless, a Russian Foreign Ministry statement said. It repeated previous assurances that Russia is open to a diplomatic solution on its terms that ends the war and is ready to respond to serious proposals.

But Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Zelenskyy, ruled out Moscow's previous demands that would give Russia time to dig deeper in the parts of Ukraine it has occupied. He said on X, formerly known as Twitter, that Russian forces must fully withdraw from the occupied areas and there would be no Kyiv compromise on that.

Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Security Service announced Monday it had detained an alleged Russian informant who gathered intelligence about Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's trip to the southern Mykolaiv region last month.

It claimed the woman "was collecting data for an airstrike during Zelenskyy's visit." The woman attempted to establish Zelenskyy's route, times and visits in the region. She was detained when she tried to pass the information to the Russians, the statement said, without providing evidence.



Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian speak during their meeting in Tokyo.

Japan raises concerns over Iran's nuclear enrichment and drone supplies to Russia for Ukraine war

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japan expressed concern on Monday over Iran's advancing uranium enrichment program and the Middle East country's suspected supplying of combat drones to Moscow for Russia's war on Ukraine.

Japan's Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi raised the two issues during talks with his visiting Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amirabdollahian, the foreign ministry in Tokyo said. A statement from the ministry said Hayashi

appealed for Iran to act constructively in the matter but did not elaborate.

Iranian drones have been a key element of Russia's continued war on Ukraine. Tehran has offered conflicting accounts about the drones — first denying Iran has supplied them to Russia and later claiming the unmanned aircraft were only sold before the Russian invasion.

However, the number of Iranian-made drones used in the conflict shows a steady supply of the bomb-carry-

ing weapons. In June, the White House said Iran was providing Russia with materials to build a drone manufacturing plant east of Moscow as the Kremlin looks to lock in a consistent stream of weapons. As U.S. ally and a member of the Group of Seven advanced nations, Japan has joined sanctions against Moscow while providing Ukraine with humanitarian support and non-lethal defense equipment, largely because of fear that Russia's invasion could embolden an already assertive China in Asia.

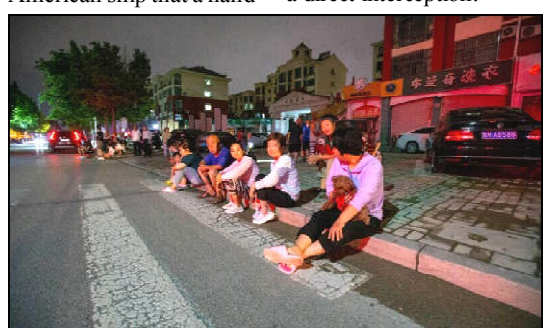
China tells Philippines to remove grounded warship in South China Sea

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China told the Philippines on Monday to remove its grounded warship from the Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea after blocking two Manila supply ships with water cannons over the weekend as both sides asserted their claims of the area.

The Philippines accused the Chinese coast guard of blocking and water-cannoning a Philippine military supply ship on what it said was a routine troop rotation and resupply mission on Saturday for the Philippine warship, a rusty World War Two-era American ship that a hand-

ful of troops live aboard. China said it had earlier told Manila not to send ships to the Second Thomas Shoal and not to send "construction materials used for large-scale repair and reinforcement" to the warship after it learned of this recent supply plan, the Chinese coast guard said in a statement on Monday.

China also urged the Philippines to restore the Second Thomas Shoal and said it had allowed transport of daily necessities including food to the grounded ship, according to the Chinese statement, adding that it had used the water cannon to avoid collision from a direct interception.



People gather on a street in Pingyuan county, Dezhou city, in China's eastern Shandong province, following a 5.4-magnitude earthquake that shook eastern China.

Iran building collapse death toll rises to five; 11 injured, more feared trapped

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: At least five people succumbed to traumatic injuries caused by falling rubble and debris, while 11 others were hospitalized after several buildings collapsed in Iran's capital on Monday, according to local media. Iran's ISNA news agency reported that two policemen were also among the victims as they were accompanying fellow officers in securing the planned demolition on Sunday of "unauthorised buildings" in Tehran's southwest.

Jalal Maleki, a spokesperson for Tehran's fire department, told local media that the overall "toll from the collapse" has reached five while, according to ISNA, rescue operations were underway to find others who may be trapped under the rubble.

According to AFP, authorities had begun the demolition of one building when five others collapsed. Photographs from the scene issued by Tasnim showed rescuers and heavy equipment working below a pile of debris and twisted metal several metres (yards) high, with other unfinished and partially damaged buildings around them.

Tens of thousands of young scouts to evacuate world jamboree in S. Korea as storm Khanun looms

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: South Korea will evacuate tens of thousands of scouts by bus from a coastal jamboree site as Tropical Storm Khanun looms, officials said Monday. More than 1,000 vehicles will be used starting Tuesday morning to move 36,000 scouts — mostly teenagers — from the World Scout Jamboree in the southwestern county of Buan, according to Kim Sung-ho, a vice minister at South

Korea's Ministry of the Interior and Safety. Most of the scouts, who come from 158 countries, will be accommodated at venues in the capital city, Seoul, and the nearby metropolitan area, he said. Officials were trying to secure spaces at government training centers and education facilities as well as hotels. Kim said it would take six hours or more to evacuate the scouts from the campsite.

3 killed when firefighting helicopters collide in Southern California, officials say

Monitoring Desk
CABAZON: Two firefighting helicopters collided while responding to a blaze in Southern California, sending one to the ground in a crash that killed all three people on board. "Unfortunately, the second helicopter crashed and tragically all three members perished, which included one Cal Fire Division chief.



British scout members leave the World Scout Jamboree campsite in Buan, South Korea.

16 dead, dozens missing in shipwrecks off Tunisia, Western Sahara

Monitoring Desk
TUNISIA: Sixteen migrants have died in shipwrecks off the coasts of Tunisia and Western Sahara, officials said on Monday, as North Africa faces a spike in Europe-bound sea crossings.

Much of the North African coast has become a major gateway for irregular migrants and asylum seekers primarily from other parts of the continent, attempting perilous voyages in often

ricketty boats in the hopes of a better life.

At least 11 migrants died in a shipwreck off the coast of Tunisia's second city of Sfax, said local court spokesman Faouzi Masmoudi, revising an earlier toll of four fatalities.

Another 44 are missing while two others were rescued from the boat that had 57 people on board, all of them from sub-Saharan African countries, Masmoudi added.

Shooting kills 2 men and a woman & wounds 2 others in Washington, DC, police chief says

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A shooting on a street in the nation's capital left three people dead and two others hospitalized Saturday night, police said. Officers responded to the sounds of gunshots around 8 p.m. in the 1600 block of Good Hope Road Southeast and found five victims who had been shot. Two men and a woman were pronounced dead at the scene and two men were transported to area hospitals.

Peace, stability, persistent policies mandatory for strong economy: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Monday said that peace, stability and persistent policies were mandatory for a strong economy.

Addressing a ceremony here, he said, "We should not make any compromise on these three things and continue our journey towards economic restoration for the next five to ten years to come out of difficulties permanently."

He said that the country paid a heavy price of former premier Nawaz Sharif's disqualification as it shook the confidence of our friends and investors in our system. He said that no country could succeed

without foreign investment in present times. He said, "We are a nation of 240 million people whereas the foreign investment is only 1.5 billion dollars."

The minister questioned why the foreign investment did not come to Pakistan, and said that every investor looked for peace, stability, persistent policies and the judicial system which would give protection to him. While questioning decisions like disqualification of Nawaz Sharif, he said, "We need to reform our judicial system as it is the most necessary to strengthen our economy." To a question, he said that the nation was aware of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) performance. He

said that the country was facing a number of problems, when the PML-N assumed power in 2013, but it overcame the problems and put the country on development track.

However, after it, an experiment was made and a man was put into power, who did not have any experience of running the government, and it led to devastation of the economy, he added.

He said, "When the coalition government took power almost 14-months back, we made hard decisions to put the economy back on track and accepted conditions set by the International Monetary Fund in the light of the agreement made by the previous PTI government."



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Apex Committee of Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Kaira inaugurates Gilani's corner at National Monument Museum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira on Monday inaugurated Hurriyat Leader Shaheed Syed Ali Geelani's corner at National Monument Museum here to pay tribute to his struggle for independence from India illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK).

Talking to media, the Adviser acknowledged Shaheed Syed Ali Geelani's contribution and services for the Kashmir cause and termed him a great Kashmiri leader.

He said the inauguration of the corner would provide an opportunity to highlight Geelani's struggle and achievements to appreciate the general public regarding the towering stature of the great Hurriyat leader.

He further said that Pakistani people and Kashmiris would never forget the Hurriyat leader and would remember him for the decades to come. He appreciated the efforts of all officials in establishing the corner at the National Monument Museum Islamabad.

The Adviser said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari were effectively highlighting the Kashmir issue at all available forums including the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

Bilawal Bhutto attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) conference in India and highlighted its atrocities and barbarism against innocent Kashmiris.

"Pakistan is politically, morally, and diplomatically supporting the Kashmir indigenous movement as the Kashmiri people are rendering supreme sacrifices for decades," he maintained.

76 percent of children exposed to extreme high temperatures in South Asia: UNICEF

ISLAMABAD (APP): With heat and high humidity in South Asia, the United Nations International Fund for Children (UNICEF) urged the local authorities, frontline health workers and caregivers to help vulnerable children and families. South Asia has the highest percentage of children exposed to extreme high temperatures, compared to all other regions, according to a UNICEF analysis. UNICEF estimates that 76 percent of children under 18 in South Asia - 460 million - are exposed to extreme high temperatures where 83 or more days in a year exceed 35°C. This means that 3 in 4 children in South Asia are already exposed to extreme high temperature compared to only 1 in 3 children (32 per cent) globally. The analysis is of 2020 data, the latest available.

In addition, the data also show that 28 per cent of children across South Asia are exposed to 4.5 or more heatwaves per year, compared to 24 per cent globally. July was the hottest month ever recorded globally, raising further concerns about a future where children, including those living in South Asia, are expected to face more frequent and severe heatwaves, largely due to climate change.

"With the world at global boiling, the data clearly show that the lives and well-being of millions of children across South Asia are increasingly threatened by heat waves and high temperatures. Countries in the region are not the hottest in the world right now but the heat here brings life-threatening risks for millions of vulnerable children," said Sanjay Wijesekera, UNICEF Regional Director for South Asia. "We are particularly concerned about babies, toddlers, malnourished children and pregnant women as they are most vulnerable to heat strokes and other serious effects." According to UNICEF's 2021 Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI), children in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, and Pakistan are at 'extremely high risk' of the impacts of climate change.

In parts of Pakistan's southern Sindh province, including Jacobabad, the world's hottest city in 2022, temperatures were in their 40's in June, exposing 1.8 million people to severe short- and long-term health risks. The scorching heat came less than one year after the devastating floods which left most parts of southern Sindh under water in August 2022. More than 800,000 children in flood-affected areas were at risk of severe heat stress in June 2023. Even in the rainy season, the heat can exacerbate the situation for children. Since children cannot adapt quickly to temperature changes.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Anjad Khan Niazi exchanges views with Chief of Staff Sultan's Armed Forces (COSSAF) Oman, Vice Admiral Abdullah Bin Khamis Al Raisi during meeting held at Naval Headquarters.

Governor Balochistan calls for producing modern skilled persons in society

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stressed the need to produce the modern skilled persons in society to meet the future requirements of skilled human resource in the province and country.

The Governor was speaking to the Vice Chancellor of Mir Chakar Khan Rind University (MCKRU) Sibi, Professor Dr. Qadir Bakhs Baloch, who called on him here at the Governor's House on Monday.

During the course of

meeting, the performance of the University as well as the matters related to methodology of the teaching, modern skills and future course of action were discussed. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that there is a dire need to create collaboration between the academic and market. In this regard, we have to introduce the departments of livestock management, animal husbandry, engineering & technology departments especially in Mir Chakar University Sibi.

He said that at the

moment, we direly need the skilled persons in the society. He also stressed that the role of all public sector universities is very important in increasing the number of skilled persons in the province.

He said that the students of Harnai and Ziarat would also have access to the University after restoration of Sibi-Harnai railway section. The Governor on the occasion appreciated untiring efforts of Professor Dr. Qadir Bakhs and his team for the cause of higher education in the area.



SANJAVI: Senior Provincial Minister Haji Noor Muhammad Dummer laying foundation stone of Quaid-e-Azam Cadet College Ziarat

Secretary Finance dismayed over absence of officers & staff at Quetta Treasury

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Secretary Finance Department, Balochistan, Zahid Saleem has expressed his annoyance over absence of District Accounts Officer and other staff at the Quetta treasury here on Monday.

The Secretary Finance was on surprise visit of the Treasury office on Monday morning.

During the visit, the Secretary Finance was angered over non-presence of the officers and staff at the Treasury.

However, he met the people came to the Treasury for resolution of their related issues.

He got himself acquainted about the problems of people approaching the Treasury.

Expressing his annoyance over absence of the concerned officers and staff, the Secretary Finance sought explanation from the absentees.

He also directed all the concerned to improve the service delivery and performance.

Somia Asim, wife of civil judge arrested in house maid torture case

ISLAMABAD (Online): District and Sessions Court Islamabad has cancelled bail of Somia Asim wife of civil judge in house maid torture case and ordered to arrest her.

Police have taken her to custody from court's premises.

The bail before arrest plea in respect of Somia Asim accused in house maid Rizwana torture case came up for hearing before duty judge, additional sessions judge Farrukh Farid Baloch.

Accused Somia Asim appeared in the court with her lawyers. The lawyers from the side of affected house maid Rizwana also appeared in the court.

Police presented the record in the court.

On the request of lawyer of the accused, interval was made till 10 a.m.

Judge Farrukh Farid Baloch remarked decision will be made after hearing arguments at 10 a.m.

Serious concerns voiced by ECP on LG amendment delay

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) expressed serious concern about the delay in approving the amendment in Section 17 of the local government act and urged the Interior Secretary to promptly arrange for the approval of the allocation of reserved seats and the necessary amendment to the local government act.

The primary objective of the meeting chaired by Nisar Ahmed Durrani, a

distinguished member of the Commission, was to determine the date for local government elections.

During the meeting, which included Commission members, the Election Commission's Secretary, Special Secretary, and other senior officials.

The commission emphasized the importance of receiving a written update from the Ministry of Interior regarding their progress and stance on the matter.

Omani Military Chief lauds PAF's exceptional professionalism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces of Oman, Vice Admiral Abdullah Bin Khamis-Al-Raisi called on Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu at Air Headquarters on Monday and lauded the exceptional professionalism of the PAF personnel.

During the meeting, key areas of mutual interest, geo-political environment and regional developments were discussed, a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) news release said.

The Chief of the Air Staff briefed the visiting dignitary as regards to the overall framework of PAF's modernisation drive through smart procurements, induction of niche technologies and revamping of training in line with contemporary trends.

The Air Chief reiterated his sound determination to further elevate the existing ties in areas of military cooperation and training, especially in the domains of cyber, electronic warfare, space and computing.

Pak-China Friendship Hospital Gwadar unveils 37 job openings

GWADAR (INP): Pak-China Friendship Hospital Gwadar has unveiled 37 job openings.

Pak-China Friendship Hospital in Gwadar is a state-of-the-art medical facility that not only provides free and high-quality treatment for the local residents but also offers employment opportunities to the coastal community.

The hospital extends an invitation to individuals driven by excellence and guided by vision to join its team, contributing to the

advancement of this noble endeavor, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro. The hospital has unveiled 37 vacancies across various departments, encompassing roles such as senior consultants, registrars, specialists, and junior technicians. Gwadar Development Authority (GDA)'s Pak-China Friendship Hospital is a state-of-the-art health facility under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), serving the people of Gwadar and Balochistan.

Policy Dialogue on MHM Tax Reforms Speakers suggest measures to ensure gender equality

QUETTA (APP): In a momentous event aimed at advancing menstrual hygiene management and promoting gender equality, a Policy Dialogue on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Tax Reforms was held in Quetta.

According to press release issued here on Monday, joint organized by UNICEF, Qatar Charity, and MHM Working Group (MHMWG) Balochistan.

The event brought together policymakers, experts, advocates, and stakeholders to address critical

issues related to MHM and propose transformative tax reforms that can positively impact women's health and well-being. The policy dialogue successfully highlighted the urgent need for comprehensive MHM measures, ensuring a brighter future for all women and girls in the region.

The event commenced with an insightful sharing of views by the worth speakers, followed by panel discussions and engaging workshops that fostered a collaborative atmosphere to explore innovative

solutions including advocacy and awareness campaigns.

Participants discussed challenges related to affordability, accessibility, and stigma surrounding menstrual products, while deliberating on the role of tax reforms in addressing these issues.

The policy dialogue also focused on the inter-sectional of MHM with education, health, and women's empowerment, recognizing its integral contribution to sustainable development.



QUETTA: Secretary Information Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat, DGPR Kamran Asad, former DPR Munir Jan, Nasrullah Kakar, President DGPR Officers Association Inayatullah Rehman and President All Pakistan Technical Employees Union Shamsullah addressing a ceremony held in honour of retired officers

MQM delegation thanks PM for addressing reservations

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement led by Convener Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Monday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here. The delegation included Dr. Farooq Sattar, Federal Minister for IT, Syed Aminul Haq and Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori.

The members of the delegation thanked the prime minister for addressing their party's reservations on the seventh digital census.

CM grieved over loss of lives of 2 levies personnel in Musakhail

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has expressed heartfelt grief and sorrow over martyrdom of two Levies personnel in the crackdown against anti-social elements in Rada Sham area of Musakhail district.

In a statement issued here on Monday, the Chief Minister was also grieved over the injuries caused to two other Levies personnel in the incident.

He said that the Levies force is rendering valuable services for establishment of peace in the province, and the Levies personnel are rendering sacrifice of their lives for the cause of protection of life and property of the masses. The people of the province are proud of the levies force, he commented.

Chinese company lauds multiple incentives at Gwadar Port Free Zone

BEIJING (APP): The Pakistani government is very supportive of Chinese enterprises investing in Gwadar Port and has given multiple preferential policies including tax-free incentives, said Liu Hui, deputy general manager of China Linyi Trade City Co., a Chinese enterprise which has been operating in Gwadar Port Free Zone for many years.

Before 2015, the Gwadar Port Free Trade Zone was just an idea. Now, the FTZ has attracted some 20 companies in banking, insurance, logistics and food processing with a combined investment of \$420 million, from China and Pakistan, and it has generated 1,200

jobs. Inside the FTZ, China Linyi Trade City Co., a merchandising firm, invested in warehousing facilities. "We have fully undertaken warehousing services of the Gwadar Port - Afghanistan fertilizer transfer trade since September 2020. It has completed the storage services of 800,000 tons of fertilizer by March 2023". In 2021, our warehousing service promoted the re-export trade by \$60 million, highlighting the role that Gwadar Port has played in connecting surrounding landlocked countries." Liu Hui said in an interview. The company's project in FTZ consists of a commodity exhibition center and bonded warehouse.



SIBI: Federal Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique addressing a ceremony of restoration of Sibi-Harnai railway section through video link.

Buddy Bear installed in Quetta to celebrate Pakistan-Germany ties

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The completion of 70 years of the diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Germany was marked by placing the Berlin Buddy Bear at the main intersection of Quetta city

lin Buddy bear has been installed to mark the celebrations of 70 years diplomatic relations between their country and Pakistan.

He said that the Buddy Bear has arrived in Quetta after a long dis-



On Monday afternoon. The milestone of 70 years' diplomatic bonds between the two countries was also indicated by naming the GPO chowk on main Zarghona road after Quetta-Berlin Friendship Square.

The Consul General of Germany based in Karachi, Dr. Rudiger Lotz formally inaugurated the installation of Berlin Buddy Bear and Quetta-Berlin Friendship Square, along with the Administrator Quetta Metropolitan Corporation, Abdul Jabbar Baloch and honorary Consul General of Germany in Quetta, Murad Baloch.

Speaking on the occasion, the Consul General of Germany said that the Ber-

lin Buddy bear has been installed to mark the celebrations of 70 years diplomatic relations between their country and Pakistan.

He said that the Buddy Bear has arrived in Quetta after a long dis-

He on the occasion thanked the Administrator Quetta for installing Buddy Bear in Quetta and name the intersection after Quetta-Berlin Friendship Square.

Dr. Lotz said that installation of Buddy bear has immense importance for the Pak-German friendship.

Earlier, the Administrator of Quetta, Abdul Jabbar and Honorary Consul General of Germany Murad Baloch also addressed the occasion.