

Independent

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Vol. XIII No. 239 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Saturday August 12, 2023, Muharramul Haram 24, 1445 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

Terms it unconstitutional SC declares Review of Judgments and Orders Act null and void

Power to invalidate any law should be exercised with utmost care and a law should not be declared invalid when its provisions have compatibility with the Constitution

ISLAMABAD (APP): A three member bench of the apex court on Friday unanimously declared the Supreme Court Review of Judgments and Orders Act 2023 as null and void.

The court issued a written order of 87 pages in the case and said that the Parliament has no powers for legislation against the constitution. The bench issued a detailed decision containing 51 pages while Justice Munib Akhtar wrote an additional note containing 30 pages.

The judgment said that the power to invalidate any

law should be exercised with utmost care and a law should not be declared invalid when its provisions have compatibility with the Constitution.

It stated that the said act was clearly contradicting the Constitution of Pakistan and it was not possible to declare this law as compatible with the Constitution. We have taken an oath to protect and defend the Constitution, it said, adding that the courts are empowered to establish the rule of the Constitution.

The verdict said that this judicial power had to

be exercised with great care to determine whether the law is according to the Constitution or not? The legislation for Supreme Court Reviews of Judgments and Orders Act is beyond the power of Parliament. The court said that there was no ambiguity in the Supreme Court decisions on the scope of revision, adding that Article 188 and the implementation of judicial decisions on it was binding on all. It said the Parliament knows that appeal and revision are two different things.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with Beat Reporters at Prime Minister's office.

Development in society possible only with better governance: President

Urges civil servants to improve service-delivery, ensure good governance

LAHORE (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has urged civil servants to work with dedication and commitment to improve service delivery and ensure good governance in the country. He also underscored the need to take timely and swift decisions to keep pace with the rest of the world.

Addressing the successful graduates of the 118th Senior Management Course (SMC) and 33rd National Management Course (NMC) at the National School of Public Policy here on Friday, he said that Islam was a community-based religion and it emphasised serving the poor and showing utmost compassion to them.

"A civil servant must interact with the public and be easily accessible to them in order to address their problems. This principle has been practised by great caliphs of Islam," Dr

Alvi said, adding that welfare of the community should be the first priority of a civil servant.

He said that brilliant civil servants were an antidote to the state's ills and that people with the right attitude could change the world around them. He remarked that the country needed such people more than before as the country was faced with multiple challenges. Dr Alvi urged the civil servants to follow in the footsteps of the former great civil servants and become a source of resistance against hypocrisy and corruption, besides ensuring good governance.

The president said that keeping pace with modern knowledge was also vital to national progress and the bureaucracy must play its role in steering the country out of problems, and put it on the path to progress.

No restriction on Nawaz after completing 5-year disqualification: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said there was no restriction on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Supremo Nawaz Sharif to contest the election as he had completed his five-year disqualification period.

"As far as Nawaz Sharif is concerned, that law is in the field now under which the maximum disqualification period is five years.

There is no restriction on Nawaz Sharif as he has completed his five-year disqualification," the prime minister said in an interview with a private television channel (Samaa News).

He said the new law promulgated by the Parliament had overruled the previous law which the Supreme Court has not yet annulled.

"Inshallah, I am sure that he will return by next month... He will face the law. The nation will receive him warmly... He will run

the election campaign and all of us will be with him," he stated.

Commenting about the Supreme Court's decision on the Supreme Court (Review of Judgments and Orders) Act 2023, the prime minister said the legislature had all the powers of law-making.

"This is the first time in the history. I have not seen it happening anywhere in the world that legislation is stopped in anticipation," he remarked.

and said the legislation was the job of Parliament, not the Supreme Court. Regarding the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief, he said the court would decide his fate as he had no role in that regard.

However, he said the NAB-Niaz nexus victimised him and his family, Nawaz Sharif and his daughter, and sister of Asif Ali Zardari when they were also denied bail. Contrarily, the PTI government obtained stay orders in the cases of the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit), wheat

and sugar scandals. He told the interviewer that inflation touched 12.5% during the previous government which stood at just 3.5% during Nawaz Sharif's tenure.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said his government reduced oil prices based on international rates after regular reviews, but had to increase them due to global market fluctuations. He said the government spent Rs 40-50 billion for distributing free flour during Ramadan to support the poor. Additionally, it also provided cross-subsidy to those consuming up to 200 units of electricity per month.

However, he said, it was unrealistic to expect economic growth amidst incidents like the one on May 9, which was treason against Pakistan, the Pakistan Army, and the Chief of the Army Staff." To a question, he said the controversy over the appointment of the army chief was not a positive tradition. In other countries, such appointments were not publicized.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing a ceremony in connection with celebration of Minorities' Day event, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Governor dissolves Sindh Assembly

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori on Friday dissolved the Provincial Assembly on the advice of Chief Minister Sayed Murad Ali Shah.

Governor, in the exercise of powers, conferred to him under Article 112(1) of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, dissolved Sindh Assembly with immediate effect.

Earlier, Chief Minister Sayed Murad Ali Shah sent advice to Governor Sindh for the dissolution of the provincial Assembly.

Meanwhile, Sindh Law and Parliamentary Affairs and Criminal Prosecution Department also issued a notification in this regard.

US, Pak honor 75 years with a commemorative stamp

ISLAMABAD (APP): The U.S. Mission to Pakistan culminated its year-long campaign marking 75 years of relations with Pakistan with a reception to honor Pakistan's issuance of a commemorative stamp.

The event was held at the U.S. Ambassador's residence and included Chief Guest Foreign Secretary Dr Asad Majeed Khan as well as other prominent figures from the Pakistan government, academia, and civil society, said a press release issued here by the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad on Friday.

U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome highlighted the long friendship saying, "This stamp, which highlights both country's symbols of freedom, not only marks the first 75 years of friendship but manifests a vision for our future partnership in many arenas of shared purpose.

It shows that we can accomplish great things when we work together."

Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Secretary Dr Asad Majeed said, "Pakistan values its long-standing and broad-based relationship with the United States adding that the "U.S. has been our key economic and developmental partner for over seven decades."

Decision on caretaker PM likely today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed the hope that the decision on name of caretaker prime minister would be finalised by Saturday.

The prime minister, in a farewell interaction with the PM beat reporters here, said he would meet the heads of coalition parties on Friday night to discuss the matter which would follow his meeting with Leader of the Opposition Raja Riaz on Friday or Saturday.

He explained that in case of their inability to evolve consensus on a single name, the matter would be referred to the parliamentary committee with a mandate to dispose it of within three days. In case of no agreement at that committee level, the matter would be taken up by the Election Commission who would have to take the final

decision within two days.

Responding to a question about the letter written by President Arif Alvi to him and the opposition leader to finalise the name by August 12, the prime minister said the procedure was very clear in the constitution.

He said the 16 months of his stint were the most difficult time of his 38-year political career.

However, consequent to the teamwork and efforts of all the stakeholders made the government achieve success on different fronts.

He said the government machinery worked round the clock during the floods and Rs100 billion was disbursed by the previous government, besides the ones distributed by the provinces and the relevant departments.



ISLAMABAD: United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan, Julien Harnois called on Chairman Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, at Zardari House in Islamabad.

May-9 vandalism: ATC dismisses interim bail of Imran in 7 cases

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday dismissed the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan over non-appearance in seven cases pertaining to May-9 vandalism.

ATC Judge Ijaz Ahmad Buttar conducted the proceedings on the pre-arrest bail petitions of Imran Khan in seven cases, registered under Anti-Terrorism Act, including the Jinnah House attack case.

Earlier, Imran Khan's counsel argued before the court that bail petitions could not be dismissed over non-appearance. He submitted that as per the Su-

preme Court judgments, the bail petitions could not be dismissed on technical grounds. He pleaded with the court to grant some time for preparation in this regard.

However, the court dismissed the plea and asked the counsel to advance his arguments on the law point.

The counsel submitted that convicts and accused were regularly produced on the court orders and pleaded with the court to summon the PTI chairman as well. At this, the court observed that the convicts were not produced and their interim bail was also dismissed, adding that it could not form a new law.

PM telephones Nawaz to discuss interim setup

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Shareef contacted his elder brother and Party Supremo Nawaz Shareef before holding consultation with Allies on interim setup.

According to source both leaders discussed appointment of interim prime minister.

Nawaz Shareef directed Shahbaz to take all allies in confidence over interim setup issue.

KS relief ensures food security for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): King Salman Humanitarian Aid & Relief Centre (KSrelief) is pleased to announce the successful completion of the first phase of our food security project for the year

2023-24 in Pakistan. In collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), we have distributed a total of 26,400 food packages, weighing (2,508) tons, to flood-affected and deserving individuals residing in 12 districts (Jaffarabad, Usta Muhammad, Sohbatpur, in Baluchistan, Rajgal, Karak, Banu, Upper Swat in KP, Rajanpur and DG Khan in Punjab, Iarkana and Umerkot in Sindh) across Pakistan.

The first phase of this initiative has greatly impacted the lives of 184,800 beneficiaries throughout the country.

Security forces kill two terrorists in Kech operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces have killed two terrorists and injured one during a successful intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Mazaband Range area of Kech District, Balochistan in the wee hours of Friday.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on Friday, a big cache of arms and ammunition was also recovered during the operation.

The killed terrorists were involved in targeting of innocent civilians and law enforcement agencies.



MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF
Prime Minister of Pakistan



MS. MARRIYUM AURANGZEB
Ex. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting

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Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
Saturday August 12, 2023

A fresh start

It ended in circumstances as controversial as the ones that gave birth to it. The 15th National Assembly — formed following the chaotic general elections of 2018 — stood dissolved on Thursday on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's advice, merely two days before it was to complete its constitutional, five-year tenure. Over its term, it saw two prime ministers sworn into office. One was constitutionally removed for his mismanagement of the economy; the other is about to leave Pakistani democracy considerably compromised. In roughly the same period, two former prime ministers were handed disqualification and jail terms for "corrupt practices".

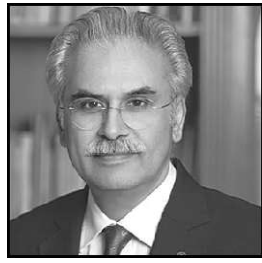
And, over the entirety of this period, Pakistan was run less like the democratic parliamentary republic envisaged in the Constitution and more like a hybrid system in which elected representatives took most of the blame while their 'handlers' took most of the decisions.

Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi is perhaps not wrong in regretting that the outgoing Assembly may have been "the worst in Pakistan's history". It not only failed in its fiduciary duty under two separate governments, but it also actively undermined Parliament by ceding unprecedented power to unelected quarters. Former prime minister Imran Khan set the tone by outsourcing his government's control to the intelligence apparatus. The latter whipped up votes and coddled or coerced the PTI's coalition partners when the prime minister himself was not in the mood to play nice.

The then opposition, too, did not help matters by creating what was sometimes an overly hostile environment, pushing the thin-skinned PTI leadership to opt for ordinances to execute its legislative goals. The PDM tenure saw a continuation of the same once the new government realised that it, too, had little patience or will to play by the rules when 'easier' solutions existed.

The transference of power from elected to unelected decision-makers intensified following the May 9 violence this year, as extensive control over internal affairs was handed over to the security establishment. Its influence has now crept into economic decision-making, industry, and, lately, legislative business.

But the 15th Assembly is no more, and the upcoming elections offer an opportunity to undo its mistakes. The aspirants to the 16th National Assembly must demand that the polls follow the constitutionally defined schedule and be conducted in a free and fair environment. They owe this to their constituents. The next setup must avoid the controversies that dogged the last one if it is to return any stability to the country. Any attempts to extend the tenure of the caretaker government or influence election results through pre-poll engineering should be resisted across the board. If the last five years have taught us anything, it is that tinkering with the democratic process is a recipe for disaster.

**Zafar Mirza**

Diabetes is on a rampage in Pakistan. We are now a country with the third largest population of diabetic adults after China and India. According to the 10th edition of an atlas produced by the International Diabetes Federation in 2021, Pakistan has 33 million adults with diabetes. This comes to approximately one in four adults above 20 years of age. Even more alarmingly, if we do not take remedial action in terms of prevention and treatment, by 2030 this number is projected to swell to around 43m and, if negligence continues, by 2050, the diabetic population will rise to 62m. Currently, 8.9m people are also estimated to be undiagnosed and another 11m adults have impaired glucose intolerance, ie pre-diabetes.

In 1990, diabetes didn't even appear among the 25 leading causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) in Pakistan; ie, years of life lost due to premature death plus years lived with disability. By 2019, however, diabetes had jumped to become the eighth leading cause of DALYs. In the decade between 2009 and 2019, death and disability due to diabetes increased by 87 per cent in Pakistan. The trends are dire.

Why is there such a huge number of patients and how to stop this onslaught?

But before that, a word about diabetes, which is commonly known in Pakistan as sugar-kee beemari. In medical science, it is known as diabetes mellitus. Etymologically, both these words are of Greek origin — 'diabetes' means excessive urine and 'mellitus' means sweet. The disease has been known for millennia but the breakthrough came as recently as 1921-22, when a group of researchers in Toronto purified insulin for clinical use. The WHO describes diabetes as "a chronic disease that occurs either when the

pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood glucose. Hyperglycaemia, also called raised blood glucose ... is a common effect of uncontrolled diabetes and over time leads to serious damage to many of the body's systems, especially the nerves and blood vessels."

Insulin is essential for the entry of glucose — the ultimate source of energy for us — into cells. In Type 1 diabetes, for unknown reasons, the pancreas no longer produces insulin. The disease requires insulin on a daily basis. Type 1 diabetics cannot survive without insulin. Before the discovery of insulin, Type 1 diabetes was almost a death sentence.

Type 2 diabetes prevents our body from using insulin properly, which can lead to high levels of blood sugar. If not treated properly, it leads to serious physical damage, especially to the feet, eyes, kidneys and heart but, generally, it affects the whole body. Diabetics are also more prone to developing de-

pression. The 33m diabetics in Pakistan actually have Type 2 diabetes. Type 1 diabetes, or insulin-dependent diabetes, affects a relatively minuscule number of people.

So, what has changed in Pakistan that we have such a huge growth in diabetes? Bhutta, Haq and Basit, in an article in The Lancet last year, discussed the 'crisis'. The causality is multifactorial, and a result of coexisting genetic and environmental factors. But then, how have genetics and the environment changed to give rise to the current crisis situation? Let's break it down.

Genes with diabetes association and their wide spectrum of variants have been identified. Genetic factors become more significant due to repeated marriages among close relatives; ie consanguinity. Due to high consanguinity in Pakistan, the probability of genetic expression increases. So, repeated marriages within the family increase the chances of diabetes.

But the real issues lie on the environment side. The drastic, negative changes in our lifestyle and diets are considered to be

the main culprits behind the high prevalence of diabetes. Along with other non-communicable diseases (NCDs), also called chronic diseases — such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease — diabetes has a strong link with environmental and behavioural factors like unhealthy diet (malnutrition), lack of exercise (obesity), smoking, high blood pressure, air pollution and stress. All these are considered high-risk factors. Rural-urban transition has also played a major role in epidemiological transition to NCDs. Tracing 30-year trends in estimated deaths due to major disease groups in Pakistan reveals it was around 2010 when, for the first time, more deaths in the country happened due to NCDs rather than infectious diseases.

What is to be done? Prevention, early diagnosis through mass screening, and proper management are vital — which is easier said than done as it requires a comprehensive health system response. This includes integrated delivery of preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative health services at all levels

of the healthcare system, but most importantly at primary healthcare level. The onslaught of NCDs, including diabetes, cannot be dealt with at big hospitals. It requires a strong PHC with full involvement of trained community health workers and a life-long continuum of care. Our health system is not equipped to deal with the epidemic of diabetes. It needs sustained and coordinated whole-of-government and societal efforts. The private health sector also has to be taken into the loop.

Professor Abdul Basit, head of the Baqai Institute of Diabetes and Endocrinology, is an authority on diabetes in Pakistan and he is working hard to turn the tide. He has led national diabetes surveys, registry and research, and contributes immensely at national and international levels. He has developed a plan to establish a national diabetes network consisting of 3,000 NDN clinics across the country through private providers. These clinics will provide the best possible care to diabetics without discrimination. -- Courtesy Dawn

Bitter sweet**The 5Es framework****Ahsan Iqbal**

Given that elected governments in Pakistan tend to have a short-policy horizon, they are often criticized for not developing long-term policies and plans. In sharp contrast to that, PML-N governments have always prioritized long term planning by providing long-term policy documents such as Vision 2010 and Vision 2025. As the current term in government, which came with huge socio-economic and constitutional challenges ends, I am pleased to share that a long-term policy framework called the 5Es Framework has been developed. The framework offers a tangible pathway for economic revival in five priority areas: exports, e-Pakistan, environment and climate change, energy and infrastructure, and equity and empowerment. Through simultaneous progress on these 5Es, I strongly believe that we can put the country on a steady course to sustainable and long-run economic progress.

To develop a broad consensus in our polarized society, we opted for a deliberative and consultative process to develop 5Es framework. In this regard, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives organized the

Pakistan Turnaround Conference in June 2022 under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. This conference provided us with broad contours to develop a framework for the economic recovery.

The Planning Commission chalked out the concrete 5Es Framework on the basis of deliberations at the conference and additional input from the relevant ministries, departments and academia. The framework comprises multi-pronged strategies and a variety of initiatives to put Pakistan on a sustained growth trajectory in the short to medium term. Most of these strategies and initiatives are already in the implementation phase, and have been included in the Public Sector Development Program 2023-24.

To state the obvious, the PTI regime had left Pakistan with an unprecedented economic crisis, including large current account and fiscal deficits, double-digit inflation, massive depreciation of domestic currency and dwindling foreign exchange reserves. Economic revival has been the government's topmost priority since assuming office in April last year. Through extensive consultations with an array of stakeholders, the root causes of the persisting economic crisis were identified. Chief among them was the structural problem of boom-bust cycles, where every boom was followed by a balance of payments challenge. Consumption-led high growth episodes were financed by borrowed resources. Consequently, the economy continued to face twin deficits, causing stag-

gered growth.

Exports is the first E of this framework due to its critical value. All successful economies in the Global South — for example, China, Vietnam and South Korea — have opted for an export-led growth model. Pakistan has historically relied on import-based consumption, which has led to imbalances in its payments. Now we have to shift towards this export-led growth model to tackle the chronic boom-and-bust cycles by addressing foreign currency liquidity challenges, and keep the economy competitive by laying emphasis on productivity enhancement, product and market diversification, brand development, trade facilitation and linking production networks with global value chains.

The outgoing government launched several initiatives to boost exports, including the National Productivity Master Plan in collaboration with APO and KDI to enhance productivity, trade agreements with Central Asian and Gulf states, and establishment of a border market with Iran to improve intra-regional trade, rationalization of tariff, launch of the Export Readiness Program, promulgation of GI Law for Trade Mark registration, e-Tijarat and E-Commerce Export Framework to boost the exports of Information and Communication Technology products, and the Board of Investment's Pakistan Regulatory Reform Initiative to improve the ease of doing business in Pakistan.

The second E is e-Pakistan, which recognizes the transformative power of

information and communication technology and hence aims to build a digital economy and enhance digital infrastructure in Pakistan. Currently, ICT exports are estimated to exceed \$2.5 billion, significantly low as compared to regional competitors. The current workforce employed in the IT sector is around 625,000 including freelancers. Universities produce 25,000 graduates approximately every year. The global market size of robotics and artificial intelligence alone is projected to exceed \$563 billion by 2030.

To create a holistic digital ecosystem with infrastructure and institutional frameworks for rapid delivery of innovative digital services, the government has taken several steps like formulation of the E-Commerce Policy, establishment of the National Information Technology Board, National Incubation Centres, National Centre of Robotics and Automation, National Centre for Cyber Security, Centre for Excellence in AI. These measures will boost the IT sector, improve service delivery, and drive economic prosperity.

The third E — environment and climate change — highlights the importance of addressing environmental challenges and climate change. Pakistan faces significant challenges in ensuring the sustainability of its environment, water resources, and food security. In recent years, the impact of climate change has worsened these challenges. The devastating floods of last year clearly manifested why Pakistan was ranked as the eighth most vulner-

able on the Climate Risk Index of 2021. Due to a rising population and lack of water resource governance, Pakistan will soon face a water security crisis. Moreover, the frequency of droughts has increased over the past decade, posing immediate food security risks.

The outgoing government adopted several measures to mitigate the effects of climate change. Salient among them are the Clean Green Pakistan Initiative, National Clean Air Policy 2023, the 4RF Strategy, the Sindh Coastal Resilience Project, Green Infrastructure for Resilient Cities, Rural Development and Climate Resilience in Gilgit-Baltistan, Resilience Enhancement, and Livelihood Diversification in Balochistan. Food and water security projects included: vertical farming, regenerative farming, productivity enhancement of rice, sugarcane and wheat, the Naulong Dam Project, the Sindh Water and Agriculture Transformation Project, and wastewater treatment through bioremediation.

The fourth E is energy. Energy shortages have long plagued Pakistan's socio-economic stability. From 2013 to 2018, Pakistan undertook an ambitious initiative under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to meet these shortfalls, adding 12,230MW to the energy mix. In addition to electricity generation projects, the flagship 660 KV HVDC Transmission Line Project from Matiari to Lahore for generation of 4,000MW capacity has enhanced the grid infrastructure. The government has made significant investments in electricity

generation, including coal, hydro, and renewable sources. Initiatives such as green building codes and climate-resilient infrastructure will ensure affordable and sustainable energy solutions.

The government is also making concerted efforts to diversify its energy mix by investing in renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and hydro power. In this regard, the Alternative and Renewable Energy Policy provides a supportive environment for renewable power projects, and increases the share of green energy capacity to 20 per cent by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030 through attracting private capital in the area of green energy. Consequently, this nudge has shown positive results.

In short, the 5Es Framework provides a comprehensive approach to turn Pakistan's economy around. Pakistan has the potential to overcome its economic challenges and emerge as a vibrant and prosperous nation on the global stage. By focusing on export-led growth, digital transformation, environmental sustainability, energy diversification, and inclusive growth, the country can achieve sustainable economic development.

Implementing the 5Es requires strong commitment from all key stakeholders. We need to go beyond divisive, polarized and hate-based politics and must remain committed to implementing the necessary structural reforms that will guide Pakistan on to a sustainable path of economic prosperity. -- Courtesy TheNews

Energy Projects Energising CPEC**By Kamran Raja**

Energy has remained the core focus of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and helped to reduce power shortage in Pakistan. CPEC is expected to have a significant impact on the energy sector in Pakistan. The corridor includes a number of energy projects, including hydropower plants, coal-fired power plants, and wind farms.

These energy projects have a number of benefits for local people. First, they are helping to reduce Pakistan's reliance on imported energy. Currently, Pakistan imports a significant amount of its energy, which is a drain on the country's economy. The energy projects under CPEC will help to reduce this reliance, which will save the country money.

Second, the energy projects under CPEC are creating jobs. The construction and operation of these projects require a large number of workers, which will provide employment opportunities for local people.

Third, the energy projects under CPEC are helping to improve the lives of people in rural areas. Many people in rural areas do not have access to electricity. The energy projects under CPEC have helped to bring electricity to these areas, which will improve the quality of life for many people.

In addition to these

benefits, the energy projects under CPEC are also expected to have a number of positive social changes. For example, they are expected to help to reduce poverty and improve education and healthcare.

Overall, the energy projects under CPEC are expected to have a significant positive impact on the lives of local people in Pakistan. They will help to reduce reliance on imported energy, create jobs, improve access to electricity, industrial growth and bring about positive social changes.

CPEC is making ways for Pakistan to achieve its sustainable energy needs, especially to build its renewable energy power generation capacity from the current 4 per cent to 30 per cent in 2030. The energy cooperation on CPEC is ongoing between China and Pakistan. Overall, there are 21 energy projects under this fate-changing project initiative between both countries. Among these, around a dozen have been completed, and the rest are in the process of completion and are at different stages of development.

In fact, Pakistan was a country that experienced an acute energy crisis previously. Electricity shortages exceeded 7,000MW in the year of 2011. The energy shortage emerged because Pakistan had lacked the power generation capacity. The energy shortfall emerged largely due to the failure of attracting the in-

vestment at a level required for expansion and maintenance of power generation on pace with the growing demand.

However, after the launch of CPEC, Pakistan has constructed new power generating plants which has drastically enhanced the country's energy generation capacity. At present, Pakistan has acquired the capacity to produce more electricity than its requirement. According to the statistics of Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-2020, Pakistan acquired the installed capacity of 35,972MW in 2020. In the same year, Pakistan's consumption capacity stood around 25,000MW. Previously, the primary structural problem of power sector was expansion of power generating units which has already been addressed under the CPEC energy framework and installation of power plants outside of CPEC cooperation.

In total, around 12,000 megawatts of energy would be generated through 21 energy projects envisioned under the ambit of CPEC energy projects. The 21 energy projects will cost around USD \$25 billion. At the moment, over a dozen energy projects have been completed and operationalised at full capacity.

Energy projects completed under CPEC featuring advanced technologies and lower cost not only provided a solution to

Pakistan's electricity shortage, which was a historic achievement for the country but also helped Pakistan improve its energy structure and reduce the cost of power generation.

According to official sources, the total installed capacity of CPEC energy projects, including that of coal, wind, solar and hydro power, stands at 6,570 MW. They generated 28,549.94 Gwh and 25,772.48 Gwh power respectively in FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22, accounting for 22.03% and 18.37% of the total generation in Pakistan.

As the CPEC energy projects replaced the costlier energy production from furnace oil and diesel to coal and renewable energy resources in the last five years, the energy needs of Pakistan have been fulfilled at lower prices, driving growth in the export-oriented industries.

The Karot Hydropower Plant, the first hydropower investment project under CPEC, and the second phase of the Tar Block II power station project both went into commercial operations in succession in year 2022. The hydropower plant provides Pakistan with clean yet low-priced electricity while the coal-power projects tap into Pakistan's coal resources for power generation, economizing local precious foreign exchange resource.

Additionally, there are many other hydropower projects which are under

construction. Suki Kinari Hydropower project with an installed capacity of 870MW is almost complete and will be operational at the end of this year.

Other CPEC-related hydropower projects include Kohala Hydropower Project and Azad Pattan Hydropower Project. Furthermore, Diamer Bhasha, Neelum Jehlum, Mohmand, and Dasu Dams are also contributing towards Chinese commitment to provide clean and affordable energy in Pakistan.

When renewable energy is talk of the town across the world, Belt & Road Initiative of China is not behind in contributing towards green revolution. On similar lines, CPEC energy investments from China are now focusing on green energy. It won't be an exaggeration if we say that 2023 brought a new era in Sino-Pak cooperation in renewable energy, as we have witnessed extremely encouraging signs in green energy sector between the two friendly nations.

Until now, renewable energy sources make up a very minor fraction of Pakistan's overall power generation mix. According to a recent report of the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority, the installed capacity for wind and solar accounts for roughly 4.2% (1,831 MW) and 1.4% (630 MW) of a total of 43,775 MW, respectively.

China is already the

biggest investor in green energy in Pakistan. Currently, out of the \$144 million in foreign investment in solar PV plants in Pakistan, \$125 million is from China, accounting for nearly 87% of the total.

Thanks to Chinese investments, a few weeks ago Federal Power Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan inaugurated two new wind energy projects in Jhimpir, Thatta District, Sindh, with an aim to produce cheaper and clean electricity through indigenous energy sources. Wind projects in this region have been one of several renewable energy projects to have received Chinese investment in recent years. Around 90 kilometers from Karachi, Jhimpir is the heartland of the country's largest 'Wind corridor', which has the potential to produce 11,000 megawatts (MW) of energy from green resources. Another major development took place in Wind Energy promotion when Beijing-based multinational wind turbine manufacturer, Goldwind Corporation launched the first-of-its-kind solution factory in Pakistan. The Solution Factory aims to develop localized solutions for Pakistani wind power plants. In conclusion, CPEC energy projects have improved the power industry in Pakistan and contributed to economic growth by increasing power supply with high efficiency at lower cost.

CM reviews arrangements for Independence Day

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, during a meeting held at CM's office on Friday, reviewed arrangements for celebrating Independence Day. Acting upon directives from the caretaker CM, Independence Day festivities are set to be marked with a blend of grandeur and patriotic fervor, as extensive plans have been finalized for Punjab's jubilant observance.

At night on August 13, a vibrant display of fireworks is scheduled to illuminate the skies. Simultaneously, on the morning of August 14, flag-hoisting ceremonies will be held in unison across all divisional and district headquarters throughout Punjab. On the evening of August 14, national songs and anthems will be presented to the public in special events. Renowned singers will perform. All government and private buildings will be lit up across the province.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Muhsin Naqvi conferring the Gold medals and presenting certificates to position holders of Secondary School Examination, at local hotel in Provincial Capital.

Nasir Shah inaugurates Sabzwari Triangle Park, Wall of Lyari Gate

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Minister for Local Government (LG) Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has said that Lyari is the stronghold of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). He said that under the directives of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the guidance of Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, ongoing development projects in Lyari were being completed rapidly.

Nasir Shah said this while inaugurating Sabzwari Triangle Park and the Wall of Lyari Gate along with Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab. On the occasion, former Test cricketer Younis Khan, Hockey Olympian Wasim Feroze, Senator Yusuf Baloch, leader of PPP Nabil Gabol, Javed Naguri, Khalil Hot, Karamullah Waqasi, Chairman Lyari Town Nasir Karim Baloch, Town



RAWALPINDI: Leader of the Transgender Association Saba Gull leads the protest of transgender for the rights, outside press club in city.

IG Punjab says: Security of all religious places top priority

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the security of all the religious places including mosques, imambargahs, shrines is the first priority.

The security measures will be improved with the effective use of modern technology and available resources.

He expressed these views while meeting the delegation of Muttahida Ulema Board Punjab at the Central Police Office here on Thursday.

The delegation led by Chairman Muttahida Ulema Board Dr. Raghib Hussain Naemi included Moulana Muhammad Hussain Akbar, Mufti Muhammad Ramzan Sialvi, Moulana Syed Ziaullah Shah, Moulana Hafiz Zubair Hassan, Moulana Muhammad Ali Naqshbandi, Moulana

National flags will be displayed at prominent places in all cities.

Famous singer Rahat Fateh Ali Khan will perform at the Gaddafi Stadium. Fireworks will be set off at Minar-e-Pakistan and other places. The day will witness a ceremonial flag hoisting at Huzuri Bagh at 8 am, followed by similar observances at landmarks such as Multan Ghanta Ghar. Firework displays and musical performances will grace the night in Multan, where the Metro route will also be illuminated. In the spirit of rejuvenation, the occasion will also see the planting of saplings.

Reflecting the luminance of unity and patriotism, the canals of Lahore and Faisalabad will shimmer with the glow of lit lamps. The CM passionately acknowledged Pakistan's genesis as a product of immense ancestral sacrifices, with a reminder that independence was secured through the crossing of rivers of fire and blood by Muslims.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali along with Chairman Higher Education Commission Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed distributing certificate of electric wheelchairs among the special children/students of the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Cabinet members return to people with respect, dignity: CM Murad

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presiding over his farewell cabinet meeting at CM House said that he, his cabinet members, and all the MPAs of his party were going back to the people with dignity and respect because they stood by them at a difficult time and served them to the best of their abilities.

The meeting was attended by all the ministers, advisors, special assistants, coordinators, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, PSCM Fayaz Jatoi, Secretary Finance Hassan Naqvi, and others.

He said that at the start of his government tenure in 2018, the federal

government [PTI] was not ready to cooperate and tried to destabilize the PPP government in Sindh. He further said that under the guidance of former President Asif Zardari and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, he kept serving our people steadfastly.

Murad Shah said that conspiracies from the federal government were still in progress when the fatal pandemic - COVID-19 hit hard. "It created a wave of fear and insecurity among the people," he said and added that his government took concrete steps to face the situation and save the people.

He said that the province was still

surviving the COVID losses when the floods of 2022 swept almost across the province. "I had almost lost hope to drain out such a deluge of the water but the cabinet members, party workers, and the leadership supported him and finally the water was disposed of, and wheat crops were sown," he said.

Murad Shah said that they have harvested the bumper crop and achieved more than their requirement and now a record cotton crop is being reaped. "We all - the party leadership, ministers, advisors, special assistants, coordinators, MPAs, and party workers remained shoulder by shoulder with the flood-

affected people," he said and added that the houses destroyed by the floods were being reconstructed along with giving the title of the land to the affected people.

Mr Shah said we were going back to our people with respect, dignity, and a feeling of satisfaction that we served the people.

The chief minister thanked his cabinet members, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput and former chief secretary Syed Mumtaz Shah for their support and cooperation. He also thanked the secretaries, heads of provincial government institutions, staff of the CM House.

CM extends condolences to family of youth killed in dacoity

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday met the family of young Ahmed Afsar, who tragically lost his life during a dacoity incident a few days ago at a clinic in Gulzar Quaid, Airport Housing Society, Rawalpindi.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed his grief and sorrow to the widow, uncle, and other relatives of the deceased youth Ahmed Afsar over the tragic incident. He expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the bereaved family and recited Fatiha for the deceased youth. He consoled the widow and uncle and expressed his compassion towards the children.

The Chief Minister received details about the tragic incident from CPO Rawalpindi. He said that the wrongdoers committed a heinous crime by killing a father of three children. "Punjab Government is with your family, will take complete care of your family," he added.

Bridegroom kills 3 nephews in marriage firing in NW

PESHAWAR (APP): Three young-age boys were killed and two others injured when their uncle fired at them during his marriage ceremony in Chota Dattakhel Barkili area of North Waziristan, the other day.

Police said the accused bridegroom started indiscriminate firing on his nephews during his marriage rituals, killing three of the children and injuring two others. The deceased children were aged from 8 to 14, the police said. The injured children were shifted to Doaba Hospital, Hangu.

Relatives of the accused told police that the mental condition of the accused was not stable. However, he succeeded in fleeing the area after the killing spree.

Meeting on social interaction held

DIR LOWER (APP): A meeting under the provincial government's policy "Interaction with Civil Society", adhering to the directives of Deputy Commissioner Dir Lower Ifikhar Ahmad, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Relief & Human Rights) Tariq Hussain was held with District Public Prosecutor, Wajid Ali, Child Protection Officer Muhammad Tayyab here on Friday.

The theme of the meeting was "Awareness Raising Campaign Against Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants and Child Protection Concerns".



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a farewell cabinet meeting at CM House.

KP Governor distributes electric wheelchairs among disabled students

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Friday said that the guardianship of special children is the responsibility of the entire society.

Addressing as a chief guest at a grand ceremony of distribution of electric wheelchairs among the special children/students of the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here, he said that the provision

of electric wheelchairs will increase the self-esteem of special children. Chairman Higher Education Commission Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Vice Chancellors,

Secretary Higher Education Department Anila Durrani, students and parents participated in the ceremony. The Governor distributed electric wheelchairs among 30 disabled students of 11 universities of the province under the Prime Minister's Electric Wheelchairs Project.

He said that he salutes those parents who have made their special children complete the journey from first grade to higher education.

He directed the vice chancellors of the universities to waive the fees of special children studying in their educational institutions

and take measures to provide them with jobs.

The Governor distributed electric wheelchairs among 30 disabled students of 11 universities of the province under the Prime Minister's Electric Wheelchairs Project. On this occasion, the Governor praised the academic spirit, courage and dedication of the special students and went to the children and met them and encouraged them.

Addressing the ceremony on the occasion, Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed said that under the project, electric wheelchairs have been given to 610 disabled children in three phases.

PHC, LAS ink MoU for provision of legal aid to minority communities

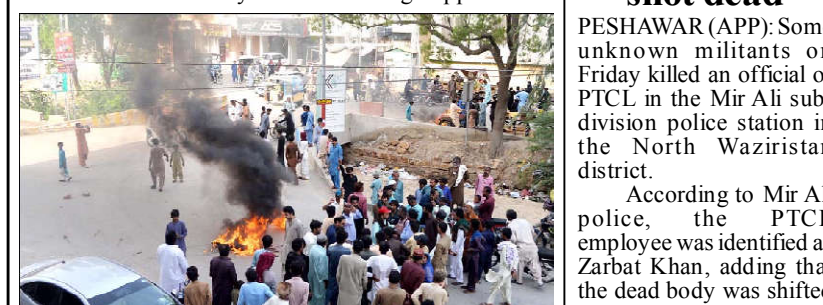
KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Hindu Council (PHC) and Legal Aid Society (LAS), on Friday, inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for strengthening access to justice by extending legal support to Hindu and other non-Muslim communities across Sindh.

The MoU was signed by Secretary General PHC Parshotam Ramani and Chief Executive Officer LAS Barrister Hayya Emaan Zahid here at a ceremony in the presence of Chairman PM's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism and Patron-in-Chief of PHC Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani and other representatives of both the organisations.

The signing ceremony was specifically organised on the International Day of

Minorities to highlight the significance and role of minority communities in the development, progress and prosperity of the country while a cake was also cut at the occasion to mark the day. According to the MoU both organisations will work jointly for ensuring access of minority communities to justice in criminal as well as civil matters and safeguarding the rights of marginalised communities across Sindh. As part of the collaboration, PHC will refer cases of the Hindu community to LAS, disseminate Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) material prepared by LAS among its communities.

On the other hand, LAS has pledged its unwavering support.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Qasimabad hold a protest to block Wadhu wah road against bad situation cleaning in their locality.

KP CM stresses on civil servants to work for people's welfare

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister, Muhammad Azam Khan here Friday stressed on public servants to work tirelessly for resolution of people's problems and their welfare.

Addressing the completion of 33rd Senior Management Course (SMC) ceremony as a chief guest here at National Institute of Management (NIM), the caretaker chief minister said that great responsibilities rest on public servants by adopting highest standards of professionalism, management skills and work with utmost dedication imperative for swift resolution of people's problems and welfare of masses.

Congratulating the 34

passed out officers of the SMC, the chief minister said that public servants and officers could not afford leniency in dispensation of official duties.

He directed them to decide cases swiftly on merit and treat general public politely.

He said Pakistan had been created after a lot of sacrifices by our forefathers and the country's problems could be addressed by taking guidance from the teachings of the father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

He said Pakistan could achieve all heights of success if the entire nation strictly acts on the guiding principles of unity, faith and discipline of the great Quaid.



KARACHI: Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, Chairman PM's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism and Patron-in-Chief Pakistan Hindu Council, cutting the Cake Independence day celebration after witnessing MOU signing ceremony between the Pakistan Hindu Council & the Legal Aid Society (LAS).

Sindh Info Minister hands over Rs 50m grant cheque to KPC President

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Minister of Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon here on Friday handed over a cheque of Rs 50 million to President Karachi Press Club (KPC) Saeed Sarbazi in the Sindh Assembly as an annual grant from the Sindh Government to KPC.

The provincial Minister of Local Government Sindh Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Minister for Excise and Taxation Mukesh Kumar Chawla, Member of Sindh Assembly Owais Qadir Shah, Director Information Administration Yusuf Kaburu, Director Press Information Hasan Asghar

Naqvi and former president of KPC Fazil Jamili were also present.

On this occasion, Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Sindh government had taken historic steps for the welfare of journalists. From the provision of plots for the residence of journalists to financial assistance for their medical treatment, grants have been provided to journalists' organizations and press clubs, he said.

The Sindh government has also excelled in legislation to protect journalists and Sindh Commission for the Protection of Journalists and Media Practitioners has also been established, he added.



GILGIT: Deputy Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Sadia Danish in a meeting with her district people at Assembly Secretariat.

IGP for merger of small police stations into big police stations

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon on Friday announced committees for integration of small police stations into bigger ones, turning the small police stations to check posts or reporting centers.

Presiding over a meeting for the purpose of reorganization of police stations in Karachi, the IGP Sindh constituted a committee headed by Additional IGP - Karachi Javed Alam Odho for police stations of Karachi range.

For the other ranges, DIGPs concerned were to head the committees for integration of small police stations.

IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon said the affairs of policing in police stations should not only be improved but also all positive and fruitful measures should be expanded.

He said in order to increase or strengthen the efficiency of the police, we have to expand the administrative and financial affairs.

Merged areas' police end polio duty boycott

PESHAWAR (APP): After a successful round of dialogue between police officers from the settled areas and merged districts, the police in merged areas have assured to end their boycott and join the security duties with the polio teams. Police sources informed on Friday that officers of different ranks from the merged district held a meeting with IGP KP, Akhtar Hayat Khan, CCPO, Ashfaq Anwar and others and discussed various issues.

At the meeting, the merged districts informed the KP police chief regarding issues of service structure, appointment of children of the police martyrs in the police force and pension of the former Khassadar Force of the merged districts. The police officers of the merged districts also requested the IGP KP to constitute a committee for forwarding the recommendation regarding appointments of kin of the forces' martyrs.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Minorities Alliance Akmal Bhatti led the rally on occasion of World Minorities Day.

Grannas says: Pakistan must take proactive approach to build its resilience, support vulnerable communities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany Alfred Grannas on Friday said Pakistan must take a more proactive approach to build its resilience against climate change and support communities more vulnerable to environmental degradation and adverse global warming impacts. The youth are the leaders of tomorrow and it was necessary to begin the change for their future.

He expressed these views during his keynote address at an event in connection with the International Youth Day organised by the Pakistan-German Climate and Energy Partnership (PGCEP), in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC).

The event, titled "Youth 4 Climate Action: Young Voices, Bold Solutions", was held here to harness the energy and creativity of young individuals towards addressing the pressing challenges posed by climate change under the auspices of GIZ (German Development Agency). The conference was a colorful convening that included

panel discussions on pertinent topics and a theatre play by Loksath highlighting gender inequalities during climate crisis was showcased before the participants. Ambassador Alfred Grannas said the conference was intended to address important youth role in climate action. He congratulated the MoCC and GIZ team for organising the event and said that the German mission would achieve meaningful results through Pakistani youth engagement in climate action. "Climate Change is a global phenomenon and it affects the entire world. This event will provide Pakistani youth to imagine new ideas for addressing climate change," he said.

He added that Germany has been a reliable partner of Pakistan and had a 60-year-old partnership which was strengthened through the iconic Pakistan-German Climate and Energy Partnership (PGCEP). Through the Pakistan-German Climate and Energy Partnership both the friendly countries were working on just energy transition and mitigation of environmental degradation and global warming impacts.

He added that Germany through the partnership was also assisting Pakistan to meet its national determined contributions (NDCs) pledged under the Paris Agreement.

He mentioned that the devastating floods of 2022 inflicted unprecedented damage to various provinces of the country and it was yet not able to overcome the destruction as more monsoon rainfall started playing havoc in vulnerable areas.

"So far some \$10 billion global funding has been extended to Pakistan and out of it \$220 million alone has been given by Germany for flood disaster management. Around 500 million Euros project has been designed to address climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience of Pakistan," he informed. The German envoy told the participants that the first concrete approach on loss and damage fund at the COP-27 Sharm El-Sheikh was the result of a very good cooperation of MoCC and the German delegation led by Sherry Rehman the then Climate Change Minister of Pakistan and the German side represented.



ISLAMABAD: A view of the empty Utility Store at Sitara Market as workers are sitting free due not visiting of customers following the ending of the subsidized prices of grocery after ending of the Prime Minister Scheme later than dissolving of the National Assembly.

Dualization, upgradation of Old Bannu Road nearing completion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Highway Authority (NHA) has been working on the dualization and up-gradation of 83 kilometer Old Bannu Road in Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province which is nearing completion. An official of NHA told APP on Friday that the project was part of Indus Highway and the first package of the project, 40 kilometer Domail-Khurram portion was awarded to the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) at the bid price of Rs 7.132 billion.

The work on the project was started in February 2018 and so far, about 68.75 percent of physical progress has been achieved mainly due to lack of funds availability, the official added. He said its second package, the 35 km Khurram-Karpa portion costing Rs 5.927 billion was awarded to the FWO. Its work was started in February 2018 and so far about 67.15 percent of physical progress has been achieved.

The third package of Old Bannu road, 8 kilometer Gaandi Chowk-Sarai Naurang section was awarded to M/S NCC-IKAN-HRPL joint venture at the bid price of Rs 0.718

billion. Work on the package also started in February 2018 and it has already been accomplished. He further said that the existing road was single carriageway which was being dualized and improved. He said the project would provide the heavy traffic movement on Indus Highway (N-55) with an alternate route thus sharing the traffic burden with Indus Highway.

The NHA official said that infrastructure development in the less developed areas would contribute to their economic uplift through accelerated trade activities.

National Minority Day observed with traditional fervour of inclusivity, equity

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Minority Day was observed on Friday across the country in general and the federal capital in particular with an aim to highlight their religious and socio-economic rights amid traditional fervour of inclusivity and equity.

Different events and seminars were held across the country to highlight the message of the Father of the Nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who had pronounced equal rights to all citizens of Pakistan.

On the occasion, the political leadership in the country also appreciated the contribution of religious minorities and vowed on the equality and protection of the rights of minorities.

The Sikh community arranged an event at Gurdwara Panja Sahab at Hassan Abdal to honour the services and sacrifices rendered by religious minorities for the country.

The President in his message said, "On the occasion of this happy day today I am in the process of nation-building. Want to highlight the important role of minorities, we acknowledge and appreciate the role of minorities in the development of the country."

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif highlighted the pivotal role played by non-Muslim Pakistanis in the overall development and progress of the nation.

The National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez

Ashraf extended heartfelt tribute and profound appreciation to all Pakistani Minorities for their exceptional contributions and unwavering dedication towards the cherished homeland. He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to ensuring the full realization of rights for other fellow citizens, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan, notably with Article 36.

The Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, has stated that only his party can put an end to the politics of hatred and division in the country and bring social justice to all disadvantaged sections, including minorities.

PM pays tribute to minorities for their contribution in nation-building

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday paid tributes to the minorities for their contribution in nation-building and socio-economic development of the country.

"On the National Day of Minorities, I join the nation in paying rich tributes to our non-Muslim citizens for their valuable contributions in nation-building and assure them of the government's consistent and unwavering commitment to protecting their rights," the prime minister said in a message in connection with the Day.

He said today the nation

celebrated the role and contributions of the non-Muslim citizens for peace, progress and prosperity of Pakistan on the National Day of Minorities.

"Our minority communities are part and parcel of the Pakistani nationalism.

From the freedom struggle to this day, they have contributed meaningfully to building the country. From defence to education to health to social service, there is no walk of life where our non-Muslim brothers and sisters have not played their role in the socio-economic development of the country," he added.

President acknowledges minorities role in country's development

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday acknowledged the important role of the minorities in development of the country.

Highlighting the role of the minorities in nation-building, He in a message on the occasion of International Day of Minorities said the Constitution guaranteed political, economic and social rights to all citizens irrespective of their religious beliefs or race.

Islam taught us to protect the rights of minorities and equality among all people, he added.

President Alvi said Pakistan always took measures to ensure welfare of the minorities and to encourage their active participation in political and economic development of the country. He also reiterated his unwavering resolve to protect the religious, economic, social and political rights of the minorities.

Safe City conducts evaluation of 1600 private cameras in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Technical Team of the Safe City Islamabad Command and Control Center conducted a survey of 1600 private security cameras installed in various areas of Islamabad.

Police said that the technical team surveyed 1600 private security cameras installed at Koral Chowk, Khanna Pul, Express Highway, Aabpara, Melody, Poly Clinic, G-9 Center, F-10 Center, I-10 Green Belt near Sabzi Mandi, I-16 Center, and G-13 Road in Islamabad.

The aim of the survey is to ensure access to

Islamabad Police in urban as well as rural areas in order and enable effective handling and monitoring of incidents or events.

Moreover, private security camera owners were also requested to ensure the proper functioning of their cameras at all times and to provide timely CCTV footage to the police when required in order to assist in crime prevention and investigation.

Police have urged citizens to collaborate in eradicating criminal elements and provide strong support to the force.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic Dr. Ramez Alraeen presenting the Medal of Gallantry to Air Commodore (R) Abdu Sattar Alvi during a ceremony at the Embassy of Syria.

Police must protect Constitutional rights of minorities: Dr Shoib

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of One-Man Commission on Minorities Rights, Dr Shoib Suddle on the occasion of National Minority Day, organized by National Police Bureau here on Friday said the Constitution of Pakistan guaranteed basic rights to all citizens including religious minorities and the Police had an important role to play in the protection of these rights.

Addressing the National Minority Day celebrations, the One-Man Commission Chairman further said that minorities form an integral part of Pakistan's diverse society and have immensely contributed to the social and economic development of

Pakistan, a news release said. Suddle said the Constitution of Pakistan, especially Article-25 categorically recognizes the equality of citizenship for all citizens and also stresses on equal protection of all citizens by law.

He informed participants that the Commission has so far made progress in the implementation of the Supreme Court Judgement of 19 June on Minority rights in terms of recovery of communal property, removal of hate material from textbooks, and implementation of a five per cent minority job quota. He however stressed that policing could be further made responsive to the issues of religious minorities.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan is meeting with the delegation of Shell Global Nature Based Solutions.

CDA, Hashoo group plant saplings along Srinagar Highway

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) in collaboration with Hashoo Group planted saplings at Rest Area G-11 Srinagar Highway here on Friday to ensure a clean and green environment in the federal capital.

Chairman CDA Captain @ Noor-ul-Amin Mengal speaking on the occasion said environment-friendly measures were being taken in collaboration with the private sector. It was imperative for the private sector to actively participate in eco-friendly summer in Islamabad.

AIOU regularizes 34 employees under PM Family Assistance Package

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has regularized the family members of 34 employees who passed away during service. This regularization has been made under the Prime Minister's Family Assistance Package. Moreover, 1881 employees have also been upgraded through the recent upgradation and dispensation policy of the Federal Government.

Employees Welfare Association of AIOU organized a ceremony yesterday regarding the distribution of letters of upgradation and permanent appointment.

Speaker NA expresses deep gratitude to all Pakistani Minorities

ISLAMABAD (Online): On the auspicious occasion of National Minorities Day observed each year on 11th August, Hon'ble Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf has paid rich tribute and expressed deep gratitude to all Pakistani Minorities for their commendable sacrifices and services for the beloved motherland.

Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that Pakistan is fully committed to ensure provision of all rights to our brothers and sisters, as

enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan, particularly in Articles 36. He also added, "Pakistan is home to every citizen living within its boundary and it does not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, colour and religion", as emphasized by Quaid-e-Azam in his speech on 11th August, 1947, in which he said "We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another."

Kashmiris to observe Aug 15 as Black Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmiri people living on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) and the rest of the world would observe India's Independence Day on August 15 as Black Day.

Kashmiris observe Aug 15, Indian independence day, as a black day to reiterate ever-lasting hatred against India and to register strong protest over Delhi's forced Aug 05, 2019, sinister action of scrapping the special status of the internationally recognized

Jammu and Kashmir state, a private news channel reported.

Kashmiris observe India's all national days including independence day as black day to condemn India for constantly denying Kashmiris' birth right to self-determination and to apprise the external world of India's ongoing worst reign of state terrorism making people of occupied Jammu Kashmir state besieged, at gunpoint by the Indian military and Para military troops.



ISLAMABAD: A painter is teaching the painting to the girls at his pavilion in Weekly Friday Market at Sector H-9 in Federal Capital.

Radio Pak airing special programmes in connection with Independence Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Radio Pakistan has been airing a series of special programmes in connection with the Independence Day celebrations to highlight the progress made by the country in different fields since its inception.

The programmes also aim at sensitizing the young generation about the rationale behind the creation of Pakistan, and promoting patriotism and national harmony.

The programmes include talk-shows, interviews, reports, documentaries, quiz competitions and excerpts from the speeches of the Founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and other eminent leaders of the Independence Movement.

Through these programmes, the news and current affairs and programme wings are highlighting the history of Pakistan, important events, achievements and noted personalities in different fields over the past 75 years. Radio Pakistan is

airing different programmes on the subject from all its stations and units across the country. Radio shows will be held as part of the Independence Day celebrations. Azadi Melas in connection with the Independence Day celebrations are also going to be held all over the country in Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pashto, Saraiki, Brahvi, Hindko, Balti, Shina and Pahari languages. Thematic dramas on patriotism, social harmony and national integrity are being broadcast on weekly basis, and it will continue till August this year. Special Mushaira will also be aired on 14th August, where eminent poets will present their masterpieces to pay tribute to the nation and its heroes. On August 14, Radio Pakistan Lahore will broadcast a 20 minutes special documentary titled "Constitutional Development of Pakistan from 1947 to 1973" at 4.05 p.m., while Radio Pakistan Islamabad will air a special documentary.

Promote inter-religious harmony, Masood Khan urges faith leaders

WASHINGTON (APP): With hate speech on the rise worldwide, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, has called for collective efforts to promote inter-religious harmony when he met faith and community leaders on Thursday. "It is our collective responsibility to combat intolerance, xenophobia, fanaticism and religious hatred worldwide," he said at the meeting, held at the Pakistani embassy, while reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to promote inter-faith harmony.

Representatives of various faiths and members of the Pak-American community attended the meeting, with Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Ali, Chairman of the

Muslim Institute, as the chief guest.

They included, Reverend Canon Justin Murff, Executive Director of the Anglican Office for Government & International Affairs; Muhammad Usman Noori of the Al-Mustafa Trust; Yahya Hundi, Director of the Muslim Life and Chaplaincy at Georgetown University, Dr. Maqsood Chaudhry, an interfaith activist, Imam Naeem Baig, Outreach & Interfaith Director Dar Al-Hijra Islamic Centre. "Sufism has a great history in Pakistan and it has always worked to connect communities and integrate them as one humanity," the Pakistani envoy told the gathering.

"A cradle of multiple civilizations for centuries, Pakistan's respect for cultural and religious diversity is part of its national psyche and mores. "We will continue to nurture that time-honored tradition," he added.

Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Ali said that Sufi saints in subcontinent had played a vital role in transformation of society.

During thousand years of Muslim rule, he said there had never been any religious conflict among Muslims, Sikhs, and Buddhists, Christians and Zoroastrians and others. Sufism had also helped protect the society from the scourge of terrorism, citing two major fatwas against suicide attacks and terrorism.



ISLAMABAD: Traders hold a National flag at Blue area during huge national flag ceremony in Federal Capital.