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Pakistan always been of great importance to Iran; Iranian FM

KARACHI (APP): Foreign Minister of Iran Dr Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Friday said Pakistan, as a neighbouring and a Muslim country has always been of great importance to his country, stating many historical, religious and cultural commonalities have made the connection between the two countries stronger.

Addressing a conference titled Economic and Investment Opportunities between Iran and Pakistan at a local hotel, he said in recent years various measures have been taken from both sides to expand the bilateral relations, particularly in the economic sector, said the Foreign Minister of Iran.

He said Iran and Pakistan had entered into dif-

ferent agreements such as Belt and Road initiative, as both have strategic geographic positions and are located on the path of international transportation corridors.

Dr Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said geographical locations of two ports, Chabahar in Iran and Gwadar in Pakistan have capacities that could be exploited in order to increase bilateral and regional economic cooperation between the two countries.

He said Pakistan can cover Iran's cultural market and Iran can help Pakistan meet its energy demand, for this purpose Iran Pakistan's gas pipeline has been extended by the government of Iran.

He concluded that Iran's electricity export to Pakistan is also on the rise.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori meets with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Mahdi Safari and Governor of Sistan Muhammad Kumari at the Governor's House.

Sindh Assembly completes term successfully, Sharjeel Memon

Independent Report
KARACHI: Minister of Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon has stated that the Sindh Assembly was poised to successfully complete its term.

The provincial Assembly has passed a historic number of legislations during this period, and its performance is marked by several groundbreaking initiatives, notably in flood management.

Speaking to journalists at the Sindh Assembly Media Corner on Friday, Sharjeel Inam Memon mentioned that we all collaborated under the guidance of Sindh Chief Minister

Murad Ali Shah during the challenging flood situation and extended relief to the victims to the best of our abilities, all institutions also fulfilled their role effectively and continue to do so.

Memon said that he was attending a ceremony that had media representatives. During the event, I was questioned about the silence of the Sindh government regarding the case of the innocent girl Rizwana.

He clarified that the Sindh Govt emphasized that the incident of torture against Rizwana did not occur within our jurisdiction, and the act of violence did not transpire within our boundaries.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister of Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon addresses to media persons during press conference, at Sindh Assembly in Karachi.

Shazia Marri says: BISP committed to fulfill BB's vision of empowering underprivileged sections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Shazia Marri Friday said that extending a helping hand to labour and underprivileged sections of society had always been a dream close to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's heart.

She was speaking at a special ceremony organized by the All Pakistan BISP Employees Coordination Committee.

The event, held at the Benazir Income Support Programme headquarters, was a heartwarming gesture to acknowledge and thank the dedicated efforts of the BISP chairperson to address the long-standing issues of BISP within the organization.

During her address as the chief guest, Shazia Marri spoke passionately about the programme's commitment to fulfilling the vision of the late Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto of empowering the weakest segments.

Commending the employees of BISP for their remarkable service, the minister acknowledged their steadfast dedication over the course of 15 years, even in the absence of basic benefits.

She emphasized that the employees, through their relentless efforts, have been instrumental in catering to the needs of 9 million families across the nation.

Expressing her concern over the neglect of the just demands of BISP employees, Shazia Marri noted that their hard work often went unnoticed.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif along with Services Chiefs and Federal Ministers inaugurating National Aerospace Science and Technology Park in Rawalpindi.

Pakistan's scenic beauty can be turned into a great opportunity: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that being rich with immense scenic beauty, particularly the Northern Areas, Pakistan could turn the resources into a great opportunity.

The prime minister blessed our country with great natural resources of scenic beauty all over Northern Areas, which can be converted into a great opportunity," he remarked.

In his address, Advisor to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Tourism and Sports Awn Chaudhry said to promote the soft image of the country worldwide, the PTDC had developed a well-coordinated strategic approach for best utilization of the available resources with focus on building the image of Pakistan as one of most tourist

friendly countries in Asia. He said the launching of Tourism Brand for Pakistan was an important step in achieving the goal. The name "SALAM PAKISTAN" is selected as Tourism Brand for Pakistan.

The objectives of Tourism Brand of Pakistan include building the image and perception of Pakistan as a safe, secure, friendly and hospitable nation, promoting the country as an attractive tourist destination, especially for international tourists, projecting recreational, mountaineering, adventure, cultural, religious, historical, cuisine, geographical and other tourism related aspects of Pakistan and highlighting diversities of the provinces, regions, cities etc., variety of food, accommodation, travel, communication and infrastructure facilities etc.

The portal contains information about the top 20 tourist destinations of Pakistan, including K2, Gwadar, Ziarat Valley, Uch Sharif, Deosai National Park, Kalash Valley, Takht Bhai, Hingol National Park, Shandur Pass, Kambhar Lake, Fairy Meadows, Ratti Gali, Lahore Fort, Makli Graveyard, Derawar Fort, Rohtas Fort, Kumrat Valley, Hunza Valley and Mohenjo-Daro.

It guides the tourists about the beaches and waterfalls, nature and landscape, festivals, spiritual tourism and eco-tourism.

Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran Sayyed Ezzatollah Zarghami and Ambassador of Iran Reza Amiri Moghaddam and diplomats from different countries also attended the ceremony.

Governor terms step of Aug 5 as black stain on India's democracy

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has called India's step of August 5 as a black stain on her (India's) democracy.

While condemning the Indian government on the occasion of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) Exploitation Day here on Friday, he said that the world was protesting against the illegal Indian step of August 5.

CTD arrests 13 illegal Afghan nationals in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) arrested and handed over 13 illegal Afghan nationals living in Karachi during an information-based operation, source said on Friday.

According to a CTD spokesperson, the information-based operation was carried out in the suburbs of Maripur and Machhar Colony.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of experienced CTD officers with the help of the Talash App.

Kashmir Exploitation Day to be observed in Karachi on Aug 05

KARACHI (APP): Like elsewhere in the country, Youm-E-Istehsal "Kashmir Exploitation Day" will also be observed in the metropolis on August 5, to mark 4th anniversary of India's annexation of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The Kashmir Exploitation Day will be observed on the completion of four years of illegal and brutal military siege by the Indian government in IIOJK. One minute silence will be observed on the Day to express support for the right of self-determination of the people of IIOJK.

The flags of Pakistan and Kashmir will also be hoisted together at prominent places in the metropolis.



KARACHI: Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, along with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, unveils a plaque designating the Old Clifton Road as "Shahra-e-Imam Khumani".

Sindh Info Secy visits Karachi Press Club

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Information Secretary Nadeem-ur-Rehman Memon Friday met President Karachi Press Club (KPC) Saeed Sarbazi and Secretary Shoaib Ahmed.

Director Press Information

has constituted a committee comprising the representatives of all relevant institutions and the president and secretary of KPC in this regard, he added.

The Information Secretary said that the purpose of his visit to KPC as the chair-



man of the committee was to consult with the President and Secretary of KPC before convening the first meeting of the committee. The participants of the meeting have decided to call the meeting of the committee in the next week, he said. The matter regarding steps for allotment of plots to the remaining KPC members, removal of encroachments from Journalist Colony Scheme 42.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) Convener, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui along with others addresses to media persons during press conference, at Pakistan House in Karachi.

IHC sets aside trial court verdict declaring PTI chief's Toshakhana reference 'maintainable'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday dismissed the decision of the trial court regarding the admissibility of toshakhana criminal case and remanded the case back to the additional session court for re-hearing.

The court also rejected the appeals seeking to stay the proceeding in toshakhana case and the shifting of case to another court. The bench also served notices to the respondents on another appeal regarding production of witnesses and seeking to restore the right of defence of the accused.

Chief Justice Aamer

Farooq issued the written order regarding the termination of lower court's verdict pertaining maintainability of the criminal case against the former prime minister. The court also instructed the trial court to also give answers to the question raised in the appeal while announcing its fresh verdict about the admissibility of the case.

The court rejected the appeal for transfer of the criminal case to another court and said that as per the verdicts of the high courts in similar matters a case could only be shifted to the alternative court on the basis of solid reasons.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi welcomes the Iranian Minister for Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Syed Ezzatollah Zarghami, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Iranian Foreign Minister unveils plaque to rename Old Clifton road as Shahra-e-Imam Khomeini

KARACHI (APP): Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Friday unveiled a plaque for renaming the Old Clifton road as Shahra-e-Imam Khomeini here.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab, officials of the Iranian Consulate and other dignitaries were also present while the Old Clifton road was decorated with the flags of Iran and Pakistan on the occasion of the inauguration.

Speaking on the occasion, the Mayor Karachi ex-

pressed gratitude to the Iranian FM for participating in the opening ceremony. Pakistan has historical and cultural relations with the neighboring country Iran, which have increased with the passage of time. In order to further strengthen this relationship the historic road of Old Clifton in Karachi has been renamed as Shahra-e-Imam Khomeini, he added.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab pointed out that the Clifton Garden located on Old Clifton has been attributed to Hazrat Salman Farsi.

Sherry Rehman calls for timely elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman reiterated on Friday that the elections should be held on time.

Expressing her views, Sherry made it clear that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) wanted the timely elections in the country.

Speaking about the torture of the teenage maid Rizwana, Sherry said: "So far, no court has taken notice of the incident of Rizwana's torture".

She lamented that the teenage girl was subjected to "torture by the civil judge's family".

Last week, PPP leader Faisal Karim Kundi said his party's position was that elections should be held within 60 days.

Addressing a public gathering, Kundi asserted: "Nine million people are being helped through the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP)."

Under the BISP, poor families are provided Rs 9,000 each."

He recounted the role played by the PPP leadership, saying, "The party is having a rich history of sacrifices for the sake of the country".



KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman addresses during the protest demonstration against non-availability of water in city, outside Water Board in Karachi.

Education minister for timely resolution of issues of department employees

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Education and Culture, Syed Sardar Ali Shah on Friday, directed the concerned officers to promptly resolve the issues of employees of the school education department.

The minister issued the directives during a surprise visit to the School Education Department at Sindh Secretariat.

He visited various sections of the School Education department and re-

viewed the performance. Syed Sardar Shah also met people present in the secretariat, listened to their problems and issued on-the-spot instructions in this regard.

He stressed the resolution of matters related to School Education at the earliest and said that matters related to salary, pension, deceased quota, biometric and other necessary issues should be solved on priority.

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Saturday August 05, 2023

Road to peace

It is a time of transition in the subcontinent, as general elections will throw up the next dispensation. Only a few days remain for the Pakistani government's tenure to end, with caretakers shortly taking over and paving the way for general elections and a new administration. Meanwhile, India goes to the polls next year.

The changing situation presents an opportunity for new administrations in both states to restart the peace process. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif set the tone for better ties when, speaking at an event in Islamabad on Tuesday, he said that war was no longer an option with our "neighbour", a thinly veiled reference to India.

Mr Sharif added that "abnormalities" cannot be removed in the bilateral relationship unless "serious issues are ... addressed through peaceful and meaningful discussions".

With the curtain falling on the PDM government, the next dispensation, whether it consists of old faces or new, should carry forward these "meaningful discussions", with the hope that it will find a responsive partner in New Delhi.

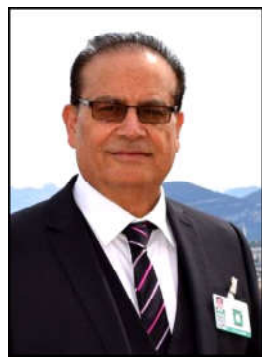
Bilateral relations have been in deep freeze since India controversially revoked held Kashmir's special constitutional status four years ago. To be fair, attempts have been made by the outgoing administration to mend ties with India. But the response from our eastern neighbour has been the repetition of the 'do more' mantra where militancy is concerned.

This is despite the fact that Indian officials themselves have admitted that cross-border infiltration is down, while the LoC remains largely quiet, especially after the ceasefire was revived in 2021. Therefore, the impression is that the Modi administration is not serious about peace with Pakistan, and wants to burnish its credentials amongst its rabid support base by appearing tough on Islamabad.

But while the Sangh Parivar may dream about 'Akhand Bharat' and re-establishing ancient India's supposed glory through the sword, saner minds across the border have counselled restraint. For example, former Indian army chief retired Gen M.M. Naravane warned against a "two-front war" pitting India against Pakistan and China, while calling for a diplomatic solution to disputes.

The months ahead will show how strong the desire for peace is on both sides. While common friends — the US, European states, the Gulf countries — can help facilitate talks, Pakistan and India will have to do the heavy lifting themselves if they are to achieve a breakthrough.

In Pakistan, the new civilian government, as well as the gentlemen in Rawalpindi, will both need to endorse a fresh peace proposal. Meanwhile in India, whether the BJP returns or the INDIA alliance manages to trounce the Hindu nationalist juggernaut, the new dispensation should respond in earnest to Pakistan's peace overtures. Once the election dust settles in both countries, back-channel talks can get the ball rolling.



By Qamar Bashir

On August 5, 2019, the Indian government repealed Article 370, which prohibited the Indian Parliament from applying certain laws to Jammu and Kashmir without the state's consent, as well as Article 35A, which empowered the Jammu and Kashmir state legislature to define and grant special rights and privileges to "permanent residents" of the state. This illegal, unethical, and unconstitutional decision precipitated a massive political and security crisis in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K), resulting in a five-year-long brutal military siege in which communications were cut off, restrictions on freedom of movement were imposed, and people were denied easy access to food, medicine, and other critical supplies.

The use of extreme tactics such as arbitrary detentions, torture, and extrajudicial killings has degraded Kashmiris' fundamental rights. Businesses have been shut down, schools have been closed, and healthcare facilities have been disrupted. People are unable to communicate with their families and friends, and the occupying forces have recently begun using disturbing and inhuman tactics that have never been used in many other conflict zones, such as refusing to return the bodies of martyred civilians to their families, denying them funerals, and denying their families the ability to fulfill their religious obligations.

The deployment of over one million heavily armed troops over a civilian population of only 12 million which is even far less than the population of Karachi has turned the IIOJ&K into the most militarized Zone of the world having no parallel in the current world history.

This equates to one soldier for every ten civilian Kashmiris. There is only one comparable case of Palestine, which has been under Israeli blockade since 1967, but it is likewise dwarfed when compared to IIOJ&K. On a combined population of 5 million, Israel has stationed roughly 60,000 troops in the West Bank and 15,000 in the Gaza Strip, resulting in one soldier for every 83 civilians, compared to one soldier for every ten civilians in IIOJ&K. This high level of militarization wreaked havoc on the lives of the people who reside there. The forces are frequently viewed as an occupying force, and their presence has resulted in extensive human rights violations including as arbitrary detentions, torture, and extrajudicial killings, in addition to wreaking havoc on the economy and infrastructure.

According to numerous credible reports, India's draconian illegal rule over a UN-mandated disputed region has killed 96,225 innocent civilian Kashmiris, tortured 7,297 Kashmiris, imprisoned 168,202 civilians without recourse to justice, and destroyed 110,500 homes and businesses. An estimated 100,000 widows confront severe difficulties in providing for themselves and their families. In Indian-controlled Kashmir, an estimated 50,000 half-widows married to men who have disappeared or been arrested and are subjected to sexual violence and harassment. The violence has impacted an estimated 2 million children in Indian-controlled Kashmir. Many of these children have lost one or both of their parents, and they may have also been subjected to violence, displacement, and trauma. 20,000 women had been raped, gang raped, or molested, according to the International People's Tribunal on Kashmir (IPTK).

These casualties greatly outnumber those in Palestine, where as of December 2022, 21,104 Palestinians had been dead, including 12,191 civilians, including 3,125 children. These casualties are also significantly bigger than the casualties of the Afghan war, in which at least 47,368 Afghan civilians, including 16,440 children, were killed as of January 2022, according to the Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs at Brown University.

Many reports and research have documented human rights breaches in IIOJ&K: "Kashmir: A Year of Darkness" (2020) was released by Human Rights Watch. Amnesty International released a report titled "India: Kashmir: Clampdown on Dissent and Media Freedom" in 2021. The International Commission of Jurists produced a study paper titled "Kashmir: The Impact of the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act, 1990" (2018), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published a report on the human rights situation in Kashmir" (2018). The Asian Centre for Human Rights published "Kashmir: The Human Cost of Conflict" in 2017. These papers and studies detail a wide range of human rights breaches in IIOJ&K, including arbitrary detentions under the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (AFSPA), in which thousands of people have been jailed without charge or trial. There have been numerous reports of torture and ill-treatment by Indian security forces, as well as hundreds of extrajudicial deaths. Indian security forces have used sexual violence against women and girls. The Indian government has restricted freedom of expression in Kashmir, including a prohibition on public gatherings and the use of social media.

The International Crisis Group's (ICG) Conflict Tracker ranks the Kashmir conflict as "High" based on a number of indicators such as the number of people murdered, the number of people displaced, the level of violence, and the level of instability.

The Kashmir dispute is ranked 143rd out of 163 countries in the Global Peace Index (GPI), an annual index that analyses the level of peace in countries throughout the world. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), a research project that collects data on political violence around the world, ranks the Kashmir conflict as High Intensity.

The Indian government has put a number of limitations on freedom of movement in Kashmir, including a curfew and a ban on travel between regions. For reporting on sensitive themes, journalists have been arrested, detained, and harassed. The government has banned the coverage of public gatherings and their reporting on social media. Journalists have been arrested and incarcerated for reporting on sensitive themes under the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (AFSPA). Police and security forces have harassed journalists for reporting on sensitive topics and visiting particular areas of Kashmir or meeting with certain persons. In 2019, the government restricted access to Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms. Journalists have found it difficult to report on the situation in Kashmir as a result of these restrictions and have made it difficult for Kashmiris to obtain reliable information about what is going on in their own land.

The rise of violence against the civilian Kashmiri people, particularly after August 5, 2019, has been widely condemned. The US Department of State found the Indian government to have arrested hundreds of Kashmiris without charge or trial, and to have subjected them to torture, including beatings, electric shocks, and sexual assault, in its annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices released on March 8, 2023. According to the report, Indian security forces have killed dozens of Kashmiris without due process, have limited freedom of expression in Kashmir, notably by prohibiting public meetings and restricting the media, and have restricted freedom of movement by imposing curfews and checkpoints. The UN has consistently urged a halt to human rights violations in Kashmir. Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated in 2019 that the situation in Kashmir is "deeply concerning" and that there is a "serious risk of further violations." The European Union has also demanded that human rights atrocities in Kashmir be stopped.

The EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, stated in 2020 that the situation in Kashmir was "of great concern" and that the EU was "monitoring the situation closely." The US has also raised alarm about human rights abuses in Kashmir. The US State Department stated in 2021 that it was "deeply concerned" about "ongoing restrictions on freedom of movement, communications, and assembly" in Kashmir. China has also criticised India's violations of human rights in Kashmir. In 2021, the Chinese Foreign Ministry stated that India's "activities in Kashmir are a severe violation of human rights" and that they "endanger regional peace and stability."

Undaunted by international condemnation and rebukes, the BJP government views the Kashmir crisis primarily through a security lens, ignoring the situation's political and humanitarian aspects in order to deploy more troops across the region while wearing the blinkers of its Hindu nationalist ideology.

After nearly five years of siege, it is apparent that the BJP government's iron-fist policy is failing. While New Delhi appears unwilling to stray from its current course, the government would benefit greatly from acknowledging the political roots of the Kashmir crisis and approaching it as a multi-dimensional problem, rather than framing it as a security crisis fueled by Pakistan that must be solved with greater and greater use of force.

All nations committed to peace, particularly the United States and the European Union, have a critical role to play. They should encourage the Indian government to re-engage with Kashmir's political leaders, emphasizing that the government's unrelenting onslaught on Kashmiri civil society is only fueling dissatisfaction and increasing the risk of militancy. They should make it clear that success on distinct matters, such as returning the corpses of deceased

fighters to their families, may boost India's foreign image and soothe public resentment. They should also address the problem of harassment and abuse of journalists and human rights activists in bilateral talks on a regular basis.

The entire Muslim world should unite and boycott Indian products and services, downgrade their diplomatic ties and put in abeyance all trade and investment agreements until India reverses its illegal action of 5th August, 2019.

India, instead of changing the demographics of the region, should address the issue through a series of public consultations, and to lend credibility to this process, it should roll back its constitutional coup of August 5th and restore articles 35A and 370 to their original positions, repeal all draconian laws specific to Kashmir, stop crackdown on political activity, allow free expression and peaceful dissent, and release Kashmiri politicians.

Then it should into a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan to decide the modus operandi to hold free fair and transparent plebiscite under the auspices of United Nation to give inalienable right to the Kashmir to decide their fate in accordance and aspiration of Kashmir people. If the Modi's hindutva inspired Kashmir strangulation continues unabated it would only fuel resentment of the IIOJ&K, motivating even more youth to join the militants' ranks.

The only way to find a long-term solution in Kashmir is to implement several UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions calling for a peaceful end to the conflict and a plebiscite to determine the region's future, or else Kashmiris will have to wait for another Mohammad Bin Qasim to rescue them from Raja Dahar's iron fist. --- *The writer is Former Press Secretary to the President; Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC*

generation of Pakhtun youth who, since the onset of the 'war on terror' more than 20 years ago, has been made pawns in unending strategic games. We have reached a point where even the pro-'jihad' JUI-F is targeted in bloody attacks, yet there is no sign that the establishment or the parties that rule in its name will be held to account.

In the ethnic peripheries and metropolitan Pakistan alike, IMF-mandated subsidy cuts — petroleum, electricity, gas and whatever else our rulers can think up to keep donors happy — wreak havoc on working people. Remarkably, many who were celebrating the receipt of \$3 billion from the IMF a few weeks ago are lamenting price hikes now.

Meanwhile, the sale of land, minerals, mountains, coastlines and more to the highest foreign bidders continues with reckless abandon. They tell us that foreign investment is necessary at all costs, whether the sacrificial lamb is Karoonjhar in Sindh or the Hindu Kush/Karakoram in Gilgit-Baltistan. The choreographers talk of 'dust to development' and label anyone who disputes this narrative anti-state.

At a molecular level, the epidemic of sexual violence and patriarchal suffocation intensifies with each passing day. The scandal at Islamia University in Bahawalpur was only the most recent of its kind. This was followed by news of the young minor girl, Rizwana, almost tortured to death allegedly by the wife of a serving judge. We are an increasingly brutalised and repressed society, and our law-enforcement apparatus is itself at the heart of the epidemic while our media and political mainstream blame the victim.

There is more. But the real question is if and how there is a way out. Principled objectors and political organisers are doing

Kashmir: A bleeding Paradise

Mystical doors



Jan-e-Alam Khaki

People approach religion with multiple perspectives, based on their inclinations, interests, backgrounds, and perspectives. John Renard tells us that there are "Seven doors to Islam". Looking at history, one would be inclined to believe that there may be 70 or even 170 ways Islam could be interpreted. Maulana Rumi stretches it to as many as there are human beings.

In the 'House of Islam', one can categorise three major doors of entry. One is esoteric, which adheres to literal truths, with a strong focus on external performances, and consistency in ritual performances, refusing to admit any inner dimensions or interpretations of faith. The second is the rational door, interpreting Islam through rational processes. It claims that Islam can be better understood through applying a rational approach. Defenders of Reason in Islam demonstrates the perspectives of this approach.

There is the third door, that is often described as mystical, spiritual (ruhani), esoteric (batini), or gnostic (irfani). This approach sees faith as essentially spiritual, and has to be approached as something more esoteric that requires an additional effort beyond the literal. Traditionally, this door has been called the 'path' or 'tariqa'. It leads to unity (wahda), wherein the 'lover' (ashiq) and 'beloved' (ma'shuq) are fused at the stage of 'fana' (annihilation) leading to 'baqa' (affirmation) or 'Fana Fillah Wa Baqa Billah'

(Mystical Dimensions of Islam).

Many thinkers have tried to connect these major paths through different angles. In his Reconstruction, Iqbal divides religious life into three periods: faith, thought and discovery. In the first period, "... religious life appears as a form of discipline which the individual or a whole people must accept as an unconditional command without any rational understanding of the ultimate meaning and purpose of that command". The second stage, Iqbal thinks, is characterised by a perfect submission to discipline, and is "followed by a rational understanding of the discipline and the ultimate source of its authority".

In the third period, Iqbal argues, "metaphysics is displaced by psychology, and religious life develops the ambition to come into direct contact with the Ultimate Reality. It is here that religion becomes a matter of personal assimilation of life and power; and the individual achieves a free personality, not by releasing himself from the fetters of law, but by discovering the ultimate source of the law within the depths of his own consciousness".

Similar to these categories, Sufis, too, divide religious life into three stages: sharia, tariqa, and haqiqa. Still more interesting is the Christian tripartite division to which Annemarie Schimmel gives a larger canvas. She argues: "...mystics in every religious tradition have tended to describe the different steps on the way that leads towards God by the image of the Path. The Christian tripartite division (for example) of the via purgativa, the via contemplativa, and the via illuminativa is, to some extent, the same as the Islamic definition of sharia, tariqa and haqiqa". This means that religions tend to reflect often similar,

though not necessarily the same, stages of development.

Iqbal pushes spirituality to a deeper level still. He argues that, "as in the words of a Muslim Sufi — 'no [true] understanding of the Holy Book is possible until it is actually revealed to the believer just as it was revealed to the Prophet [PBUH]'. Iqbal explains this further in some of his verses, of which only one is quoted here. "Tere zameer pe jab tak na ho nazool-i-Kitab/ Girah kusha hai na razi na sahib-i-kashshaaf" meaning unless it is revealed to your consciousness as was revealed to the Prophet, no razi, no sahib-i kashshaaf is able to untie the knots (of the secrets), referring to Fakhruddin Razi and Zamakhshari, the writer of Tafsi-r-i Kashshaaf, both renowned commentators of the Quran. To Iqbal, the Quranic revelation is not just a revelation, but an experience.

For Sufis, this is music to their ears, because they also emphasise experience of the heart, not just literal or philosophical debates. It is the inner experience, the irfan, the ma'rifa, the ilm-i ladunni (Quran, 18:65) that enables one to grasp the true meaning of faith.

Echoing this perspective, in the preface of Light Within me, Allama Mohammad Hussain Tabatabai says: "Gnosis (ma'rifa or irfan) is a perfect way of worship, based on love (ishq), not on fear or hope. It is a way of understanding the inner facts of religion instead of being contented with its outward and perceptible form."

The author continues to argue that, "Among the followers of all revealed religions, ... there are individuals who follow the path of gnosis." In sum, spirituality is akin to religion, not an add-on. -- Courtesy Dawn

Where are we going?



Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

Democracy is dead! Long live democracy! In the space of 16 short months, the PDM government has put paid to the notion that the PTI's 'hybrid' regime was the worst thing that could happen to Pakistani politics. With no clarity on when elections may be held, the outgoing coalition comprising our most hallowed 'democrats' has bulldozed a series of bills through parliament to cement the power and plunder of Pakistan's two main arbiters — foreign states/capital and the military establishment.

There are still some who labour under the delusion that all is well because Imran Khan and the former top brass of the military are no longer ruling the roost. Khan is facing disqualification, his party in tatters. The generals who patronised him are gone. But for all that changes, much remains the same.

Take Baloch youth who have been screaming at the top of their lungs about the pillage of Reko Diq, Saindak and Gwadar. About enforced disappearances. About majoritarian tyranny and demographic change. The passing of a bill to establish the 'Pak-China Gwadar University' in Lahore and the naming of Gwadar airport after Feroz Khan Noon is like rubbing salt in a deep wound.

Also in Balochistan, the Hazara community has lost young men to target killers over successive days in Quetta this past week. Is another wave of genocidal violence against Hazaras on the cards? Then there is the

generation of Pakhtun youth who, since the onset of the 'war on terror' more than 20 years ago, has been made pawns in unending strategic games. We have reached a point where even the pro-'jihad' JUI-F is targeted in bloody attacks, yet there is no sign that the establishment or the parties that rule in its name will be held to account.

In the ethnic peripheries and metropolitan Pakistan alike, IMF-mandated subsidy cuts — petroleum, electricity, gas and whatever else our rulers can think up to keep donors happy — wreak havoc on working people. Remarkably, many who were celebrating the receipt of \$3 billion from the IMF a few weeks ago are lamenting price hikes now.

Meanwhile, the sale of land, minerals, mountains, coastlines and more to the highest foreign bidders continues with reckless abandon. They tell us that foreign investment is necessary at all costs, whether the sacrificial lamb is Karoonjhar in Sindh or the Hindu Kush/Karakoram in Gilgit-Baltistan. The choreographers talk of 'dust to development' and label anyone who disputes this narrative anti-state.

At a molecular level, the epidemic of sexual violence and patriarchal suffocation intensifies with each passing day. The scandal at Islamia University in Bahawalpur was only the most recent of its kind. This was followed by news of the young minor girl, Rizwana, almost tortured to death allegedly by the wife of a serving judge. We are an increasingly brutalised and repressed society, and our law-enforcement apparatus is itself at the heart of the epidemic while our media and political mainstream blame the victim.

There is more. But the real question is if and how there is a way out. Principled objectors and political organisers are doing

Naqvi inspects work on Ring Road Southern Loop-3 project

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the Ring Road Southern Loop 3 project near Multan Road Maraka today to inspect the ongoing work. During his visit, Chief Minister Naqvi provided instructions to the concerned authorities, emphasizing the importance of completing the project promptly.

CM Punjab said that the Ring Road Southern Loop 3 project, which began after a hiatus of 12 years, aims to provide the people with improved transportation facilities. Chief Minister Naqvi expressed confidence that the project would be completed by December 31.

He informed the

media that the Lahore Ring Road Southern Loop 3 project is expected to be finished in just 5 months. Previously, there were court cases surrounding the project, but they have now been resolved, clearing the way for its progress.

The project's path through Bahria Town received tremendous support from the housing society. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi assured that all obstacles have been removed, and the entire area for the project is now clear. He emphasized that the project would be executed with the highest quality standards.

The completion of the Ring Road Southern Loop 3 will significantly ease traffic congestion for those

travelling from South Punjab to Lahore, relieving pressure on Thokar and Canal Road. The residents of all Housing Schemes around Multan Road will also benefit from the project.

Addressing concerns about his intentions, Chief Minister Naqvi clarified that he is solely committed to serving the people and not seeking votes. He highlighted the efforts being made by the entire team to provide maximum relief to the public.

In response to inquiries about the Islamia University Bahawalpur incident, Chief Minister Naqvi said that a judicial commission will be formed and the Punjab government will submit a detailed report to the commission.



SUKKUR: Water level increases while high grade flood water reaches at Sukkur Barrage into River Indus due to heavy downpour of monsoon season, in Sukkur.

12 dead, 1,263 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 12 people were killed and 1,263 others injured in 1,161 road traffic crashes in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 639 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 624 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by rescue medical teams.

The analysis showed that 649 drivers, 34 underage drivers, 147 pedestrians, and 479 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 256 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 289 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 81 in Faisalabad with 78 victims and at third Multan with 76 accidents and 81 victims.

National Police Martyrs' Day observed in provincial metropolis

LAHORE (APP): National Police Martyrs' Day was observed in provincial metropolis on Friday to pay tribute to great martyrs, brave fighters of the nation while expressing solidarity with their families. "In night, we sleep good due to the vigilant police, who at the time of need, had combated and defeated the cowardly

terrorists and robbers including the scourge of terrorism in a befitting manner," Muhammad Rauf, a retired elderly police officer told APP.

"Our brave police have a wide range of experience to deal with any aggression or the menace of terrorism and the entire world could learn from Pakistan.



LAHORE: Inspector General Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar presenting gifts to the orphans of the Martyrs Police Soldiers during ceremony at Al-Hamara Hall in Provincial Capital.

Federal Ombudsman stresses need for speedy implementation of decisions

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi here Friday said that swift resolution of people's complaints was the topmost priority of his department and asked employees of all the federal government organizations to double their efforts for speedy resolution of masses complaints and implementation of the decisions made by his office.

Chairing a high-level meeting here at Federal

Ombudsman Office Peshawar, Ejaz Qureshi said that access of people to the Federal Ombudsman office has been made easy and comfortable and complaints could be registered through a simple application or submitted online.

He said it has been mandatory that all complaints were disposed of in 60 days. Urging the Govt departments to swiftly implement the decisions of the Federal Ombudsman Office, Ejaz

Ahmad Qureshi said that advisers and consultants were hired on merit while facilitation centres were established for the assistance of the complainants.

He said that 18 offices of his organization were working in all provinces of the country including in Peshawar, Abbottabad, Swat and DI Khan for speedy disposal of cases and implementation of the Federal Ombudsman Office's decisions at people's doorsteps.

Indian persecution can't stifle voice of Kashmiris: Baligh

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that state persecution by the Indian rulers can not stifle voice for freedom of the Kashmiri people. In a message on the occasion of Kashmir Exploitation Day here on Friday, he said August 5, 2019 is the darkest day in the history of Kashmir when India abolished special status of Kashmir by usurping human rights through illegal action.

"Persecution and violation of rights of Kashmiris in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) is condemnable," he said, adding that India could not suppress the spirit of freedom of Kashmiris despite so much persecution.

He said Kashmiri people are constantly making sacrifices for the legitimate right of self-determination and India is continuously violating human rights in illegally Occupied Kashmir, adding that United Nations (UN) and international community should take cognizance of human rights violation in IOJK. He said Kashmiris should be given their right of self-determination according to the UN resolutions and international community should take notice of the inhumane atrocities on the oppressed Kashmiris. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman emphasized that peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue in the light of UN resolutions is very important for durable peace in the region.



PESHAWAR: Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, Shah Fahad administrating polio-vaccine drops to a child during inauguration ceremony of anti-polio immunization campaign, in Peshawar.

Internship programme concludes at ICCBS-UoK

KARACHI (APP): The 16th Summer Internship Programme-2023, the country's largest internship programme has successfully completed at the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi (UoK) on Friday.

This year, the internship program provided 180 students, belonging to various academic and research institutions of all four provinces, quality training in various fields of Biological and Chemical Sciences, Plant Biotechnology, Engi-

neering, Information Technology, Food Sciences, Library Sciences, ISO and Marketing, Diagnostic Labs, IAC, CBSCR, etc.

Addressing the certificate distribution ceremony of the summer internship program 2023, held at the Golden Jubilee Hall of the ICCBS, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Director of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, and Coordinator General COMSTECH, highlighted the significance of scientific research in today's fast-paced and competitive world, and

how it is important for a developing country like ours.

He said, "The prime objective of this internship is to motivate students towards scientific research that attempts to explore and understand the working of the physical world."

He said that internships provide students with hands-on experience, enabling them to enter the real-work scenario with practical skills. ICCBS has contributed to the global human resource development in the frontier fields of sciences, he said, adding

that the 16th summer internship program, organized by ICCBS, University of Karachi, was a great opportunity for talented students who sought to get exposure to working in the world-class research and academic institution.

He underlined the importance of kindness for students, and said, "Benevolence improves people's way of living and it brings people and society together and decreases hatred, negativity, and jealousy in the society."

Prof. Choudhary congratulated Prof. Dr. Asmat

Salim and her team for the successful completion of the 16th summer internship program.

Prof. Dr. Asmat Salim, a senior scientist at Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research (PCMD) and the organizer of the internship program, said this internship program was initiated in the year 2008, and since then we have organized it regularly every year. This year, around 2000 students, who are in their final year of graduation from institutions all over the country, applied for the training program.

International News

Russia says thwarted Ukraine attacks on Black Sea naval base, Crimea

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia said on Friday it had thwarted Ukrainian sea and air drone attacks on a naval base in the Black Sea and the Crimean peninsula.

The number of attacks in the sea has increased from both sides since Moscow exited a deal last month that had allowed Ukrainian grain exports via the shipping hub during the conflict between the two countries.

"Tonight, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with the use of two unmanned sea boats, attempted an attack on the Novorossiysk naval base of the Russian Armed Forces," the defence ministry said on Telegram.

Russian ships destroyed the naval drones, it said. It was the first such attack targeting the port city.

The Black Sea port of Novorossiysk hosts the terminus of a pipeline that carries most Kazakh oil exports through Russia.

The fuel artery's operator Caspian Pipeline Consortium said it was continuing to ship oil to moored tankers at the terminal, Russian state media reported on Friday. But "a temporary ban has been established on the movement of ships in the port", said the company, as quoted by Interfax news agency. Russia's Black Sea Fleet has been

targeted since the beginning of Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine more than a year ago, but attacks have increased in recent weeks. On Tuesday, Russia's defence ministry said it foiled a Ukrainian drone attack targeting patrol boats in the Black Sea. Three drones were trained on ships navigating in waters 340 kilometres southwest of Sevastopol, the base of Russia's Black Sea fleet in Crimea. A similar attack was repelled a week earlier. The ministry also said on Friday it had downed 13 drones over the Crimean peninsula. There were no casualties or damage in either attack, the ministry said.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken stands at a podium as he holds a press conference, during a meeting of the United Nations Security Council where he presides as president.

US to keep Russia's food exports flowing if grain deal revived, Blinken says

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United States would continue to do "whatever is necessary" to ensure Russia can freely export food if there was a revival of a deal allowing the safe Black Sea export of Ukrainian grain, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday.

Russia last month quit the July 2022 deal brokered by the United Nations and Turkey aimed at easing a global food crisis after Russia's invasion of Ukraine five months earlier.

Ukraine and Russia are both leading grain exporters.

"In the event of return to the agreement, of course, we'll continue to do whatever is necessary to make sure that everyone can export their food and food products freely and safely to include Russia," Blinken told reporters at the United Nations.

"We want to see that food on world markets. We want everyone to benefit from the lower prices," he said after chairing a U.N. Security Council meeting on food insecurity caused by conflict. Many countries at

the gathering expressed disappointment that Russia had quit the deal and urged them to reconsider. To convince Russia to agree to the Black Sea deal, another pact was also struck in July 2022 under which U.N. officials agreed to help Russia get its food and fertilizer exports to foreign markets.

While Russian exports of food and fertilizer are not subject to Western sanctions imposed after Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Moscow has said restrictions on payments.

US Congress urged to recognise Islam as great religion

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Congress has taken a significant step towards recognising Islam as a major religion, emphasising its role in promoting peace and harmony.

The resolution — introduced by Representative Al Green of Texas and backed by Representatives Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib, and Andre Carson — comes at a time of renewed effort to brand Islam as a radical faith and would discourage anti-Islamic deeds like the desecration of Holy

Quran. Mr Green, a Texas Democrat, is also a member of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus. He opposed President Trump's order to ban immigration from Muslim countries and a 2015 move to brand Islam as a radical faith.

The House received the resolution, which aims to foster better understanding and respect for the Islamic faith within American society, on July 28 and referred it to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.



Students stage a walk out from Hillsborough High School to protest after Florida education officials voted to ban classroom instruction on gender identity and sexual orientation in all public school grades, expanding on a law signed by Republican Governor Ron DeSantis that barred such lessons for younger students and was derided by critics as the "Don't Say Gay" bill in Tampa, Florida, U.S.

India's top court suspends Rahul Gandhi's defamation conviction

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's top court on Friday suspended the defamation conviction of Rahul Gandhi, a decision that could pave the way for the senior opposition politician to return to parliament after his disqualification. Gandhi, 53, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in March in a case that critics have said showed threats to the rule

of law in the world's largest democracy.

He was turfed out of the legislature as a result but has stayed out of jail while appealing the case up to the supreme court in New Delhi. A justice there said that the initial trial judge had failed to justify imposing the maximum sentence on Gandhi for his comments, made during a campaign rally four years ago.

52 hurt in clashes at Stockholm festival

Monitoring Desk
STOCKHOLM: More than 50 people were injured and dozens detained in Stockholm on Thursday as clashes broke out at an Eritrean pro-government festival, police and health officials said, with anti-government protesters trashing property at the site. "Another public gathering took place close to the festival site, during which a violent riot broke out," police said, adding in a statement they had detained "around a hundred people".



Rescue workers sift through wreckage at the accident site of a three-train collision near Balasore, about 200 km (125 miles) from the state capital Bhubaneswar.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait reject Iran's claims to gas field

Monitoring Desk
RIYADH: Saudi Arabia and Kuwait said on Thursday they had sole ownership of a disputed gas field also claimed by Iran, in an escalating feud after Tehran threatened to pursue exploration.

The offshore field — known as Arash in Iran and Dorra in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia — has long been focal point of contention between the three countries.

The Kuwaiti and Saudi authorities said in a joint statement published

on Thursday that "we alone have full sovereign rights to exploit the wealth in that area".

The two Gulf states renewed "their previous and repeated calls to the Islamic Republic of Iran to negotiate" the demarcation of their maritime borders to settle the issue, according to the statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency.

Iran and Kuwait have held unsuccessful talks for many years over their disputed maritime border area, which is rich in natural gas.

Former Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny sentenced to 19 years in prison

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: A Russian court Friday sentenced former opposition leader Alexei Navalny to 19 years in prison after he was found guilty on a series of new charges including extremism, according to his spokesperson. In his judge, Navalny stood before the judge, grinning and interacting with another prisoner. Navalny is already serving jail time on embezzlement charges which are regarded as politically motivated according to his friends.

Global food prices rise after Russia ends grain deal and India restricts rice exports

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Global prices for food commodities like rice and vegetable oil have risen for the first time in months after Russia pulled out of a wartime agreement allowing Ukraine to ship grain to the world, and India restricted some of its rice exports, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization said Friday.

The FAO Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of commonly traded food commodities, increased 1.3% in July over June, driven by

higher costs for rice and vegetable oil. It was the first uptick since April, when higher sugar prices bumped up the index slightly for the first time in a year.

Commodity prices have been falling since hitting record highs last year in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Disrupted supplies from the two countries exacerbated a global food crisis because they're leading suppliers of wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other affordable food products, especially to nations in parts of Africa.

Planning Minister launches Rs 25 bln fund to address out-of-school children issue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday formally inaugurated the Rs25 billion "Performance-based Challenge Fund" for out-of-school children, and to promote early childhood education across the country.

The launching ceremony, held here in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, was attended among others by dignitaries, officials and education experts.

Addressing the ceremony, the minister highlighted the critical importance of ensuring stability and continuity of policies in the country's development agenda. He emphasized the need to differentiate between political changes and the national agenda, urging all stakeholders to work together for the betterment of the nation.

He said the country needed a charter of economy to ensure consistency and continuity in policies. "Stability and continuity are pre-

requisites for development, and without them, progress remains elusive. India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Korea, China, and Turkey, among others, have achieved remarkable success due to their sustained policies over the years. We must follow suit and provide a consistent direction for our country's growth." Ahsan Iqbal stressed the importance of knowledge exchange and innovation for Pakistan's progress in the modern world.

He highlighted the significance of early childhood education and its role in fostering creative thinking, critical analysis, and collaborative skills in the young minds of the nation.

"The future belongs to those who embrace knowledge and innovation," he asserted, adding "We need to nurture inquisitive and creative minds through quality education. Critical thinking, reflective learning, and collaboration are the key elements that will propel our children towards a brighter future."

The Rs25 Billion Per-

formance-based Challenge Fund aims to address the issue of out-of-school children and promote early childhood education initiatives across the country.

The fund encourages collaboration between the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, and the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training to facilitate innovative programs and projects for enhancing educational opportunities.

"This is a historic opportunity for us to collaborate and invest in the future of our nation," he said, adding "Through this challenge fund, we are determined to make a significant breakthrough in the education sector, ensuring that every child in Pakistan has access to quality education."

The ceremony concluded with optimism and a sense of collective responsibility as the government, education experts, and stakeholders pledged to work hand in hand to overcome educational challenges and empower the young generation of Pakistan.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori participates in a conference on "Opportunities and Challenges of Economic Relations between Iran and Pakistan".

Pakistan, Iran agree to strengthen cultural, people-to-people linkages

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Iran on Friday agreed to strengthen cultural linkages and people-to-people contacts to further bring the two brotherly countries closer.

Both sides also emphasized the need for taking measures to enhance cooperation in the area of tourism to its fullest potential.

The bilateral relations were discussed in a meeting between President Dr Arif Alvi and the visiting

Iranian Minister for Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyed Ezzatollah Zarghami, who along with the members of his delegation, called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam was also present on the occasion.

Welcoming the delegation, the president said that Pakistan greatly valued its relations with Iran, which were based on historic, cultural and religious bonds.

PM inaugurates Aerospace Science & Technology Park

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday inaugurated the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) established with the collaboration among the government, international companies and private sector.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, he appreciated the leadership of Pakistan Air Force for initiating the project, which augured well for activities related to the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

Chief Executive Of-

ficer of NASTP Air Commodore Dr Liaquatullah, in his briefing, told the participants that the PAF had achieved numerous successes in the field of aerospace technology.

He said the institution had established research and development centers for the capacity building of new generation.

"This is a project of national and strategic importance and will provide ecosystems, besides providing multifaceted benefits."

He said the project, which had been completed

in record time, would prove to be a milestone for the country's self-reliance in aerospace technology.

He said the Pakistan Air Force was pursuing the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to achieve self-reliance.

The project comprised three campuses with the first one housing private sector companies, second one featuring cyber, AI and IT companies, and the third one was meant for aircraft, space, sensors and Expo center, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Incumbent Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs, Qamar Zaman Kaira addresses press conference.

India cannot suppress legitimate struggle of Kashmiris: Kaira

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira Friday said India cannot suppress the legitimate struggle of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Addressing a press conference, he said Pakistan will not allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs to turn the Muslim majority into the mi-

nority in the IIOJK.

Flanked by Kashmiri leaders, he said Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari presented the Kashmir cause in a befitting manner at all international forums even during his visit to India.

The Advisor to Prime Minister said the Kashmir dispute was not an issue between Hindus and Muslims, rather it was a just freedom cause of the people residing over there.

Shehbaz summons CCI meeting today

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has summoned Council of Common Interests (CCI) meeting today (Saturday).

The meeting will be headed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at 12 (noon). Chief ministers of the four provinces and federal ministers will participate in the meeting.

A report regarding the new digital census recently conducted in the country will be presented during the meeting. The provinces will present their stance on the digital census.

Sindh health minister inaugurates BIUT in Nawabshah

HYDERABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Health Dr Azra Fazal Pechohu on Friday performed the opening of Benazir Institute of Urology and Transplantation (BIUT) at Nawabshah—a project on kidney diseases.

The minister while addressing the ceremony said it was a top priority of the Sindh government to

ensure state-of-the-art health facilities to the people of Sindh and BIUT was the first link of the series.

She said BIUT was a gift by the Sindh government to the residents of Shaheed Benazirabad and its adjoining areas as earlier the kidney patients had to travel to Karachi and other cities for treatment.



LARKANA: President Press Club Ghulam Murtaza Kalhoro addressing to a seminar on the mark Youm-e-Istehsal (Exploitation Day) on August 5 to show solidarity with Kashmir People at Press Club.

KU postgraduate entry test on Aug 06

KARACHI (APP): The entry test for postgraduate admissions to the University of Karachi will be held on August 06.

The candidates are directed to report at their respective departments and centers at 9:30 am along with their admit and computerized national identity cards and the Convener Postgraduate Admission Committee 2023 Professor Dr Anila Amber Malik said on Friday. She mentioned that this year, 3011 candidates applied for admission in different departments and centers for M.Phil, M.S., Ph.D, MS (Surgery), MD (Medicines), and LLM programs.

She added that Postgraduate Admission Committee 2023 had issued admit cards to 2847 appli-

cants, which are uploaded on their admission portal, while 164 applications were rejected due to various reasons.

According to her, the KU has also received applications from 12 foreign students in different programs of M.Phil, Ph.D, MS (Surgery), and MD (Medicines).

She shared that the admission committee received four applications from Yaman, three from China, two from Afghanistan, and one from US, Sudan, and Bangladesh.

The KU Convener Postgraduate Admission Committee 2023 Professor Dr Anila Amber Malik mentioned that the entrance test would start at 10 am sharp.

Sindh Police observes Police Martyrs Day

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Police on Thursday observed Police Martyrs Day (Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Police) to pay tribute to the sacrifices of policemen laid their lives in fight against crimes. In this connection, Quran Khuwani was held at different police stations and other venues across the city.

Senior Police Officers visited the residences of martyrs and met their families. The officers distributed gifts among the families.

Banners and flags were displayed on police mobiles, vehicles and others.

Sugar prices surge in Karachi again

KARACHI (INP): Karachi is witnessing yet another increase in sugar prices, causing concern among consumers and traders alike. The price of sugar has soared by Rs 8, bringing it to Rs 155 per kilogram.

In the wholesale market, the impact has been significant, with a 100-kilogram bag of sugar witnessing a staggering increase of Rs 800 within just two days.



KARACHI: A view of the massive traffic jam at Old Vegetables Market Road in Provincial Capital.

Allied parties fully empower PM for decision about caretaker PM

Names of Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Aslam Bhootani, Fawad Hassan Fawad and Hafiz Sheikh came under consideration for caretaker PM slot

ISLAMABAD (Online): Allied parties have fully empowered Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif in connection with decision for caretaker PM.

The meeting of heads of allied parties of ruling coalition for deciding about caretaker PM concluded under the PM Shehbaz Sharif Friday.

The one point agenda about caretaker PM came under consideration in the meeting that took place

through video link.

The names of Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, former speaker Balochistan assembly Aslam Bhootani, former bureaucrat Fawad Hassan Fawad and technocrat Hafiz Sheikh came under consideration.

After a prolonged consultation, the heads of allied parties expressed full confidence on PM Shehbaz Sharif and gave full powers to him to decide about caretaker PM.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Goth Gillu Nonari are holding protest demonstration against killing of Mohsin Ali Nonari and Irshad Ali Nonari and demanding justice for them, at Hyderabad press club.

Khursheed Shah seeks Chair's ruling to ensure implementation of Special Committee on Affected Employees' recommendations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Water Resources Syed Khursheed Ahmad Shah on Friday sought the Chair's ruling to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the National Assembly Special Committee on Affected Employees.

Speaking on a point of order in the National Assembly, he said that a committee was set up in light of the resolution passed by this august House to provide relief to the sacked employees under the chairmanship of Qadir Khan Mandokhail. However, he regretted that 80 percent of its recommendations were not yet implemented.

He went on to say that Parliament was a supreme body and no one was above this august forum. However, he said that despite of

the orders of the committee, the secretaries were creating hurdles in the implementation of its directives.

Khursheed Shah urged the Chair to give a ruling and take strict action against those who were not giving due respect to the Parliament.

In response to the point raised by Khursheed Shah, Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani, who was chairing the National Assembly session, in his ruling, directed all public sector departments to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Affected Employees, instantly.

He warned that the Parliament would take strict action if orders of the Committee on the Affected Employees were not implemented.

Kaira briefs PM about activities planned for Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira on Friday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here.

He briefed the prime minister about the planned activities for Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir to be observed on August 5, including seminars and awareness drives, particularly the ceremonies scheduled to be held at Pakistan's diplomatic missions across the world.

Khursheed Shah to distribute laptops among IBA students

SUKKUR (APP): The Federal Minister for Water Resources, Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah will distribute the laptops to the selected students of Sukkur IBA University on Monday under Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme.

The Vice Chancellor (VC), Professor Dr Asif Ahmed Shaikh and Pro Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Syed Mir Muhammad Shah being present at the ceremony will add significance and honor to the occasion, said a press release issued here on Friday.

Karamullah Waqasi appointed as PPP Chief Whip for KMC

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh Chapter's President Nisar Ahmed Khuro has appointed Karamullah Waqasi as PPP Chief Whip for Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC).

The appointment was made with the approval of PPP leadership. Khuro also appointed Juman Darwan and Dil Mohammed as Deputy Parliamentary leaders of PPP for KMC. The PPP Sindh President has issued a notification in that regard.

Man kills himself after fatally wounding woman

HYDERABAD (APP): A young man allegedly took his life after fatally injuring a young woman with a gunshot wound in an area of Kotri town of Jamshoro district on Friday.

The police informed that slain Muhammad Asif Brohi wanted to tie the marital knot with the injured woman Gauri Kolhi, who was shifted to Liaquat University Hospital in critical condition. According to the police, Brohi's brother Sikandar Brohi reported the matter to the police.

The police have recovered the weapon used in the incident.

Talents like you make us all proud; COAS tells World Junior Squash Champ

Army will continue to support young talent



RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Friday met World Junior Squash Champion Mohammad Hamza Khan here at General Headquarters (GHQ).

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the COAS congratulated the young champion for his outstanding achievement that brought honour for the country.

Malaysia to open trade office in Karachi, commence direct flights: CG Herman

KARACHI (APP): Consul General of Malaysia, Herman Hardynata Bin Ahmad, on Friday, said that his country was keen to enhance trade and investment ties with Pakistan and efforts were underway to open a trade office in Karachi and commencing direct flights from Kuala Lumpur.

An 18-member Malaysian trade delegation, comprising representatives from food, agriculture, cosmetics, textiles and other sectors, will be arriving in Karachi next week to explore possibilities of enhancing trade ties, he in-

formed during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). The consul general said that Malaysian trade office will be activated in Karachi by the end of the year and presence of Malaysian trade representative would result in improving trade ties with the business community of Karachi which is very important to Malaysia.

A Malaysian Airline will also be commencing direct flights between Kuala Lumpur and Karachi for promoting trade ties and also opening up tourism opportunities.

Activists of Qaumi Awami Tehreek a protest demanding stop cutting of Karoonjhar mountains outside HPC.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Qaumi Awami Tehreek a protest demanding stop cutting of Karoonjhar mountains outside HPC.

Tanzila Umi Habiba says: Sindh Government launches skill development IT trainings in higher learning institutions

HYDERABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Chief Minister Sindh on Information, Science and Technology Tanzila Umi Habiba has said that the provincial government has launched skill development trainings to youth in educational institutions of the province aimed to prepare the future generation to meet the challenges of the modern world.

She stated this while attending briefing on pilot skill development training course initiated under IT Industry Academia Bridge Programme at University of Sindh Jamshoro on Friday. She also visited the Isra University and Government College University Hyderabad where she held

meetings with the students who successfully completed their training courses under the said programme.

Speaking on the occasions, she said that the purpose of this programme was to bridge the gap between universities and industries and provide trained youth to the private organizations, which will benefit the industrial institutions on the one hand and provide jobs to the youth of Sindh on the other hand.

"This will help in reducing poverty in the province", she said and added that the provincial government did not have enough jobs to provide employment to every youth.