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General elections to be held in last week of January 2024: ECP

Says initial list for the delimitation of constituencies will be published on September 27; seeks DCs help in election preparations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has decided to conduct the general elections in the last week of January 2024, following the completion of delimitation processes. In a statement, an ECP spokesperson mentioned that the commission will publish the definitive list of constituencies on November 30. Subsequently, the general election schedule, spanning 54 days, will be announced in preparation for the elections.

In a Thursday meeting, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) reviewed the progress made by the constituency delimitation committees and decided to publish the preliminary list of constituencies on September 27.

INP adds The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday announced that general elections would be held in the last week of January 2024.

The timeframe that was announced by the ECP lacks a specific date for the elections. It also exceeds the Nov 6

cut-off date suggested by President Arif Alvi by more than two months.

In a statement, the election commission said that it reviewed work on delimiting constituencies and decided that the initial list for the delimitation of constituencies would be published on September 27.

After hearing objections and suggestions regarding the exercise, the final list would be issued on November 30, the commission said. It said that polls would be held in the last week of January following the completion of a 54-day election campaign programme.

The announcement comes a day after the ECP said it had scheduled a meeting with political parties next month to discuss the code of conduct for general elections.

According to the ECP, a draft code of conduct has been shared with political parties to get their feedback before finalising the rules of the game.



NEW YORK: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in a meeting with Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in New York.



ZIARAT: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki presiding over a meeting regarding Ziarat Development Package and law and order situation

Disappointed over pace of work: CM directs to start work on Master Plan of Ziarat Dev. Package without any delay

Independent Report

QUETTA: While expressing dissatisfaction over pace of work on the Ziarat Development Package, the caretaker Chief Minister has directed the concerned authorities to start work on the Master Plan of Development Package without any delay after acquiring land at the earliest.

The caretaker Chief Minister was chairing a meeting on the development projects and law and order situation in Ziarat on Thursday.

Those who were in attendance at the meeting were included caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries, Prince Ahmed Ali, Secretary Health, Asfandyar Kakar, DIG Police, Pervez Khan Umrani, Deputy Commissioner Ziarat, Muhammad Ramzan Palal, Project Director Ziarat Package, Nisar Ahmed Kakar,



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai talking with mediapersons. DGPR Kamran Asad is also present

Balochistan Digital Youth Program eing launched, says Jan Achakzai

Independent Reporter QUETTA: The caretaker provincial Minister for Information, Jan Muhammad Achakzai has announced that the Balochistan Digital Youth Programme is being launched in the province with the aim to provide opportunities of livelihood to youth through internet.

This was announced by the Information Minister while addressing press conference at the Directorate General Public Relations on Thursday. Also present on the occasion was Director General Public Relations, Kamran Asad.

The Minister Information maintained that the plan of establishing digital

PM updates Guterres on India's human rights violations in IIOJK

NEW YORK (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar met the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and briefed him on India's ongoing human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

In a meeting held on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, the Prime Minister highlighted India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, where it had abolished the status of Kashmir.

Kakar called for the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

The prime minister thanked the Secretary-General for his unwavering support during last year's floods and for co-hosting the Geneva Conference on Pakistan's Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework (4RF).

Recognizing the grave threat of climate change, the prime minister stressed the importance of the fulfillment of climate finance commitments by developed nations.

Nationwide anti-polio drive to kick off next week

ISLAMABAD (INP): The nationwide polio eradication campaign will kick off on September 25 after the polio virus was detected in environmental sites in different cities.

The campaign will be launched in three phases across the country, say sources, adding that the first phase will be launched from September 25, the second from October 2 and final phase will be kicked off from October 9 to 13.

The five-day campaign called Outbreak Response (OBR) will be held in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa districts. Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan Saturday vowed that his ministry was providing and utilising all available resources to eradicate polio from Pakistan permanently till the end of the year 2023.

"Polio-free Pakistan" is a national goal which is now close to our mission of ending polio", he said while talking to a private news channel.

PM apprises IMF chief of gov't measures to revive, stabilise economy

NEW YORK (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held a meeting with International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and apprised her of various measures taken by the Government of Pakistan to stabilize and revive the country's economy.

The meeting was held on Wednesday on the sidelines of 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The prime minister expressed gratitude for the IMF's approval of a US\$ 3 billion Stand-By Agreement (SBA) to support Pakistan's economy.

He affirmed that the initiatives taken by the government aimed to create a stable and conducive environment for sustainable economic growth and investment.

Elimination of extremism, prejudices cornerstone of Pakistan ideology: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that the elimination of extremism and all types of prejudices was not only part of Islamic religious norms and Islamic history but it was also a cornerstone of Pakistan's ideology.

In his speech at the International Peace Festival here, he said that National Counter Terrorism Authority had taken important steps to eliminate extremism and terrorism from the society.

The minister said that

Pakistan, China express strong resolve to enhance mutual cooperation for dev., security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China have reiterated their strong resolve to further enhance the existing excellent cooperation between the two countries.

This was expressed in a bilateral meeting between caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti and his Chinese counterpart Wang Xiao Hong, Member of the Secretariat of CPC Central Committee, State Councilor and Minister for Public Security in Lianyungang City on the occasion of Global Public Security Cooperation Forum 2023 here Thursday.



LIANYUNGANG: Federal Minister for Interior, Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti shaking hands with Wang Xiao Hong, Chinese State Councilor and Minister for Public Security in Lianyungang.

Pakistan ready to work with US, all partners for prosperous future, says Caretaker PM

Says peace, stability-a key prerequisite for economic prosperity of Pakistan, region

NEW YORK (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said that Pakistan desired to have peaceful relations with all countries in the region and beyond as peace and stability in its neighbourhood was an essential prerequisite for economic prosperity and social order development.

"We do not wish to join any camp politics as Pakistan has successfully maintained good relations with both the US and China in the past, and would continue to do so. Rather than seeing these relationships as a zero-sum game, we believe that both relationships can coexist and flourish simultaneously," he said while speaking at a session titled "Pak-US Partnership:

A Sheet Anchor for Peace, Security & Prosperity", organized by the think-tank "Council on Foreign Relations".

He said the world's security challenges had grown increasingly complex. "We are witnessing shared threats and challenges that transcend borders such as military conflicts, terrorism, climate change, food insecurity, rising number of refugees, growing economic divide between the rich and the poor, and the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. These grave issues continue to affect billions of lives worldwide and undermine global peace and security."

The shared challenges, he added, provided a new and urgent impetus for Pakistan and the United States

to strengthen their partnership in pursuit of mutually agreed and mutually beneficial solutions.

The prime minister said both the countries had prospered whenever they had worked together.

"We share common values and are committed to the same national and international goals,"

he said, adding the bilateral agenda encompassed security cooperation, trade and investment, IT, energy, climate change, agriculture as well as overall connectivity and enhanced people-to-people linkages through greater education and cultural exchanges.

"Our joint efforts such as the Green Alliance Framework will help counter climate change,

build resilient infrastructure, improve public health, and combat food insecurity."

On economic collaboration, PM Kakar said the revival of the Pakistan-U.S. Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIIFA) had recently been witnessed after a gap of eight years. The forum had taken momentous decisions for now and future which should pave the way for enhanced investment in Pakistan.

"The United States is our largest export destination. Over the past year, Pakistan's total exports to the US reached an impressive US\$ 8.4 billion. We need to work on US investment in Pakistan," he added.



QUETTA: Provincial General Secretary PML-N and former Speaker Balochistan Assembly Jamal Shah Kakar meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

President urges world to take notice of Indian involvement in Sikh leader's murder

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has strongly condemned the involvement of India in the murder of Canadian Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar and urged the world to take serious note of the state-sponsored killing on the Canadian soil.

The President in a statement said that it had been the policy of India to persecute and eliminate the leadership of minority groups in India and outside world.

He said the brutal murder of the Sikh leader exposed the real face of India that has been intolerant towards the minority groups.

The President said that India had unleashed a reign of terror against the Muslims in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and other minority communities for decades. He regretted that the silence and inaction of the world over the atrocities being committed by India in the IIOJK and the persecution of minorities and demolition of their places of worship emboldened India to carry out such operations on foreign soil.

The President said it is an open secret that India is the major source of trouble and de-stabilization in the region using the soil of neighboring countries against Pakistan, false flag operations.

Life getting difficult due to lack of basic facilities in remote districts of Balochistan, regrets Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has regretfully pointed out that remote districts of Balochistan are comparatively more backward where the life is getting difficult due to lack of basic facilities.

He noted with concern that the complaints about absenteeism is increasing in the educational institutions. The ratio of maternal and infant mortality has reached to a sorrowful extent.

The only solution to these issues is that all high ups, administration and heads of the departments

may pay surprise visits to check the real performance of every department, attendance of staff and other related issues.

This and similar other views were expressed by the Governor while speaking to different delegations from Loralai, Turbat, Mastung, Ziarat, Dolani and Murgha Faqirzai who called on him at the Governor House on Thursday.

Speaking to the delegation, Governor said that the dream of developed province cannot be materialized without making all departments and their branches fully functional in all districts of the province.

Federal govt. to be approached for removing complaints about low gas pressure in Ziarat & Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that there are complaints about low gas pressure in Ziarat and Quetta and as such the federal government would be approached to remove these complaints. The caretaker Chief Minister was speaking to the media persons during his visit in Ziarat on Thursday.

He said that medicines have not been provided in the public sector hospitals of the province for last two

years. The matter is being probed, while the medicines would be provided in all district headquarter hospitals and rural health centers of the province in next 8-10 days, the caretaker Chief Minister maintained.

Mir Ali Mardan Domki said that some 700 doctors are being posted in rural and urban areas of the province in order to provide basic medical treatment facilities to the masses. With this, there would be marked improvement in health sector of the province, he maintained.

Daily Voice of Masses
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What next?

A crack of the whip was all that was needed. The dollar, which had lately been racing to a new high each day, has now reversed course thanks to an army-sanctioned operation against hoarders and black marketeers.

Local media reports that confidence in the rupee has strengthened and that now there are more sellers than buyers in the market.

Meanwhile, social media has been flush with accounts of unscrupulous elements being arrested with breathtaking stashes of foreign currencies, which have subsequently been confiscated by the state.

It remains difficult to sift truth from fiction, however: after all, the state has not shared how this crackdown was planned and executed, who was targeted, and precisely what role the suspects arrested so far played in manipulating the exchange rate.

While the sharp improvement in exchange rates cannot be denied, the citizenry also deserves to know how and why the market was rigged in the first place.

One wonders that if administrative measures were all that were needed to arrest the rupee's sorry slide, why were they not taken sooner? Why did the finance minister in the PDM government not consider this option as he struggled and failed for months to keep the exchange rate in check?

After all, the cost to the country of rounding up a few dozen big fish involved in the currency market racket would have been far lower compared to the lasting cost of creating distortions in the economy by placing artificial and unsustainable controls on the exchange rate.

The same question can also be extended to ask why the civil administration was never utilised during the PDM era to control market manipulation in other segments of the economy either. Why were the country's regulatory authorities not mobilised to safeguard the interests of common citizens pleading for support under record inflation?

It seems that when economic historians sit down to reflect on the PDM era, they will find themselves hard-pressed to say anything charitable about the competence of the people at the helm during one of the country's worst crisis periods.

That is not to say that the current lot offers much hope. The country is presently managed by a caretaker set-up, but its ministers' promises seem to betray a wider mandate. Yet they seem to be in very little hurry to take the 'difficult decisions' that are supposed to justify them overstaying their welcome.

Successful though it may be, a crackdown against currency dealers can only create limited breathing space. The situation demands that an empowered government, elected by the people, take over post-haste so that responsible decisions can be taken to protect the public's interest.

Alas, this more permanent solution seems to be unacceptable to the wise souls managing Pakistan's affairs these days.

Sworn in, not at



F.S. Aijazuddin

It was a first in Pakistan. Begum Sarina Isa stood next to her husband Qazi Faez Isa while he was being sworn in as the 29th chief justice of Pakistan on Sept 17 by President Arif Alvi. It was a small step for her gender. It was a giant leap backwards for President Alvi.

In 2019, President Alvi, on the orders of his PML leader prime minister Imran Khan, had filed a presidential reference against Justice Isa, citing misconduct and non-disclosure of assets abroad held by his wife.

At first glance, the image of a couple standing side by side might have appeared a reenactment of the practice in the American White House, where wives stand next to their husbands while they are being sworn in as president. Begum Isa's presence next to her husband had another deeper significance. They stood avenged, their joint snub to judicial persecution.

In June 2020, seven judges of a 10-judge bench of Justice Isa's peers had quashed that presidential reference against him. However, in an unbecoming move, the bench ordered the Federal Board of Rev-e-nue "to conduct an inquiry into the judge's family members' foreign assets and submit a report to the Supreme Judicial Council".

Appearing in person before the same lordships who are now CJP's Isa's colleagues, she told them that the presidential reference had caused her to be "killed a thousand times". In 2022, a contrite Imran Khan admitted that the filing of a presidential reference was a 'mistake'. (Ironically, the accused is now CJP, and his accuser a convict in Attock jail.)

On March 30, 2023, the PDM Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ordered the withdrawal of the curative review reference against Justice Isa. He said the Isa family had been "harassed and defamed under the guise of a presidential reference".

The former chief justice, Umar Ata Bandial, served for 22 months. In one early hearing, soon after taking over, he quoted a paragraph from this column, published on Feb 17, 2022. The paragraph anticipated that "his priority in office will be to reduce the backlog of pending cases inherited from his predecessors. In 2001, there were 13,000, 20,000 in 2011, rising to 53,000 in 2022". When he left office, the number had risen alarmingly to 56,544.

CJP Isa will have an even shorter tenure. He has only 13 months left before his retirement on Oct 25, 2024. Will he have time to heal the fractured Supreme Court, or will his stewardship, like his swearing-in, be remembered more for its symbolism than its substance?

The chief justice has appointed a woman Jazela Aslam — another first — as registrar, the key portal for admission of cases for hearing before the Supreme Court.

His first day as chief justice proved another first. He arrived without an armed escort. (His predecessors were always accompanied by a phalanx of guards, even when one of them inspected the former Lahore Lunatic Asylum.)

He then convened a full 15-member bench to hear a set of petitions challenging the contentious Supreme Court

(Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023 — a sad example of the 'bitter' constitutional litigation CJP Bandial complained had impacted adversely the Supreme Court's performance.

The proceedings were televised live — another first. Justice was being seen to be done. It is a novel form of Pakistani soap opera. But such exposure carries consequences. Schemis in the bench soon became apparent. The chief justice had all too often to remind his colleagues that they were paid by the public to adjudicate swiftly and fairly. Each day spent on word-fencing would add 200 new cases to the backlog.

Parliamentary proceedings have been televised for years. They have, however, gradually degenerated from hyperactivity to grandstanding into farce, and now tedium.

CJP Isa will also have to contend with a political patellar reflex, the knee-jerk reaction of every political party to seek redress directly from the Supreme Court, instead of addressing each other.

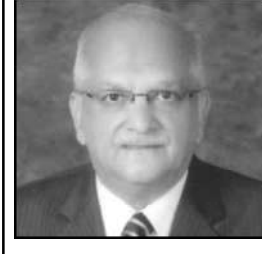
He should not expect anything from the present interim government — a forlorn hope of wannabes — "without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity" (Ignatius Donn-elly).

It appears determined to have its constitutional tenure of 90 days extended, if necessary by judicial dispensation.

How soon after his return will the ECP announce the date of the next general elections? Does it really matter, when the result is already in the ballot box?

Incidentally, Agatha Christie conceived her mystery novels backwards. She knew their denouement before she started writing. -- Courtesy Dawn

ILO's advice



Parvez Rahim

The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) was constituted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to review compliance with two of its conventions ratified by Pakistan in the initial years. These are the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No 87) and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No 98).

The CEACR, hereafter referred to as the committee, has carried out a detailed analysis of all provisions of the federal Industrial Relations Act, 2012 (IRA) besides the review of four Acts, promulgated by the respective provinces. The committee endorses 29 changes to the Act so it conforms with the ILO's constitution. Provisions of the federal and the provincial laws are mostly based on the Industrial Relations Ordinance, 1969, generally accepted in Pakistan by employers' and workers' federations.

If the tripartite constituents in Pakistan agree to some of the committee's recommendations, basic amendments will have to be brought into existing provisions of the IRAs. Five recommendations are as follows:

a) The committee recommends deleting section 8 (2) (b) of the Act of 2012: "A trade union ... shall not be entitled to registration ... where there are two or more registered trade unions in the establishment ... unless it has as its members not less than one-fifth of the total number of workmen employed in such establishment..."

When the first PPP government nationalised most industries in 1971, there were hardly one or two unions in each establishment. Some even imposed curbs on union activities, and they existed only in name. However, the situation took a drastic turn after nationalisation. There was a mushroom growth of unions in the state enterprise in Lahore, where I worked. In a few months, it had 17 registered unions, each with some eight to 10 office-bearers who would stop work on the pretext of raising issues with the management. Consequently, out of a workforce of around 2,500 workers, over 150 became non-productive. If the management took disciplinary steps, they responded with accusations of unfair labour practices. A similar situation prevailed in other state enterprises where productivity began to decline rapidly, becoming the government's reason to restrict unnecessary proliferation of unions by law. Now the ILO committee states "it is important for workers to be able to change trade unions or to establish a new union for reasons of independence, effectiveness, or ideological choice".

b) The committee has recommended that the distinction between the Collective Bargaining Union (and minority unions) should be limited. The term 'minority unions' does not refer to unions with members from ethnic or religious minorities, but unions other than the CBA. Besides, rights given to CBA under the law, the committee wants to grant the right to call a strike to other unions in an establishment. Presently, the CBA can go on strike only when there is a failure in the settlement of an industrial dispute. If this right is given to other unions, it will imply that the sword of strike will hang over an employer's head at all times, despite a peace settlement with CBA.

c) The committee believes that the current rule — any strike can be prohibited by the government after 30 days — is not aligned with freedom of association. The decision to suspend or prohibit industrial action should not lie with the government but with an independent body. If the latter is nominated by the government, it's advisable for the law to remain as it is for expeditious decision-making.

d) The committee recommends that federal and provincial legislation be amended to protect workers from penal sanctions. Present acts provide punishments of fine, imprisonment and dismissal for those supporting illegal strike or a go-slow, and for violations of the NIRC. I believe peaceful protests should not face punishment.

e) The committee has recommended collective bargaining rights to existing trade unions with less than one-third of the total number of employees, jointly or separately, at least on behalf of members. As the representative union, CBA should not have less than one-third of the total workforce in the establishment. The ILO has given Pakistan until February 2026 to report on the recommendations of their committee. The government has indicated to the ILO that these will be reviewed by the tripartite constituents, comprising government officials, employers and workers. As all critical provisions of the IRA, 2012, are to be reviewed on the basis of the committee's recommendations, this laborious task must be undertaken urgently to meet the ILO's deadline. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM encourages world's leading mining firm to invest in Pakistan

NEW YORK (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq on Thursday highlighting the SIFC as a one-window platform to facilitate the investors, encouraged Rio Tinto Group — a global leader in mining and minerals — to invest in Pakistan. The prime minister, in a meeting with CEO of Rio Tinto Group Jakob Stausholm highlighted the country's vast untapped mineral reserves, valued at over \$6 trillion, which included substantial deposits of gold, copper, and rare earth metals. The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The prime minister

outlined Pakistan's robust economic vision, emphasizing the government's commitment to sustainable growth through efficiency enhancement, reduced business costs, regulatory improvements, increased productivity, and higher investments.

He underscored the role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), which acted as a single-window platform, simplifying procedures and fostering an investor-friendly environment. He emphasized the significance of the mining sector as a priority for FDI, leveraging Pakistan's abundant natural resources, including

copper, gold, lead, zinc, and rare earth minerals. He also underscored that the Government of Pakistan's objective was to keep the people of Pakistan's interest foremost while having win-win cooperation with companies like Rio Tinto.

The prime minister extended an invitation to Rio Tinto Group's CEO and their team to visit Pakistan and explore investment opportunities further. CEO of Rio Tinto Group thanked the prime minister for the invitation and assured that his team would liaise with the relevant authorities to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's mineral and mining sector.



QUETTA: Brigadier Azhar Munir of DHA Quetta addressing during his visit to Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Ambassador Mitsuhiro says: Japan keen to develop trade ties with Pakistan

SIALKOT (INP): Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Mitsuhiro Wada has said that his country is keen to boost trade ties and enhance trade volume with Pakistan. He said this while addressing a meeting of Sialkot exporters held at Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) here on Thursday. The meeting was attended by SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President (SVP) Wahub Jahangir, Vice President Amer Majeed Sheikh, and delegations of

PSX stays bullish, gains 107 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday and gained 107.28 points, showing growth of 0.23 percent, closing at 45,910.47 points against 45,803.19 points the previous trading day. A total of 117,145,448 shares were traded during the day as compared to 103,494,874 shares, whereas the trading value of shares was recorded at Rs 4.110 billion against Rs 3.296 billion on the last trading day.

Natural disasters in Morocco & Libya PTCL Group extends a compassionate hand to Pakistani affected

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunication and integrated ICT services provider, PTCL Group (PTCL and Ufone 4G) has launched a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative in response to the devastating natural calamities across the North African countries,



Regional Director, International Finance Corporation (IFC) for the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Khawaja Aftab Ahmed called on Caretaker Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed.

Commerce minister engages leading retailers to boost exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries and Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz on Thursday engaged in productive dialogue with leading retailers to strengthen Pakistan's retail sector to boost exports.

The minister chaired a meeting with prominent retailers from across Pakistan to discuss strategies aimed at enhancing the retail market conditions and improving the nation's exports, said a

press release issued here. The collaborative effort between the government and retailers reflects a shared commitment to achieve economic growth and prosperity. During the meeting, the retailers expressed their strong desire to contribute to Pakistan's export industry.

They emphasized the role they can play in expanding the nation's reach in global markets. Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz affirmed the government's dedication to curbing smuggling activities and ensuring that trade operates through legitimate channels.

He stated, "We believe in you and we appreciate the vital role you play in the economy. The government is committed to providing the best opportunities for retailers to export their goods and expand their domestic market presence."

Pak imported food items worth Rs374.98bn in two months

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan imported food items worth Rs378.98 billion in the first two months of the current FY 2023-24, according to the data shared by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). According to the PBS data, Pakistanis imported tea worth Rs31.64 billion in two months as compared to imports of Rs20.23 billion during the same period, last year.

Pak imported food items worth Rs374.98bn in two months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Thursday strongly denied the false propaganda circulating on social and national media, evidently aimed at maligning the organization and diverting attention from its actions against illegal and malicious activities of illegal smuggling of Iranian oil and use of flare gas.

OGRA strongly rejects misinformation campaign

The OGRA remains unwavering in efforts to ensure safety, compliance and fairness for all stakeholders and the nation. He urged the public and media to seek accurate information and refrain from spreading harmful misinformation that could damage the reputation of an institution dedicated to safeguarding Pakistan's energy consumers and promoting a responsible oil and gas sector.

Govt to set up 5,000 joint E-working centers for freelancers: Dr. Umar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications Dr. Umar Saif has said that steps are being taken to attract global investors in the proposed venture capital for startups.

The minister said he will also visit Saudi Arabia soon while the government is going to set up 5,000 joint e-working centers for freelancers.

Dr. Umar Saif said that interest-free loans to establish the joint E-Working Centers and to facilitate freelancers, resulting in millions of

employment opportunities in the country. He said that there was a positive discussion with the Caretaker Finance Minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar on a 5-point agenda related to the IT Sector.

The issue of dollar retention to the IT industry was discussed in detail and will give good news in this regard soon. This move will not only transfer overseas IT accounts to Pakistan and restore investor confidence, but also accelerate the flow of dollars in the country and increase the volume of IT exports immediately.



CEO of Rio Tinto Group Jakob Stausholm calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in New York.

India destabilizing region to establish its hegemony: SAPM

FAISALABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights & Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick condemned on Thursday India's destabilizing activities in the region through state-sponsored terrorism, aimed at establishing its own hegemony.

Speaking to the media after participating in a Mehfil-e-Milad at Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF) on Thursday, she asserted that India was engaged in disseminating venomous propaganda against Pakistan. This was occurring despite India's own involvement in recent terrorist activities, as

revealed in Canada, where RAW officials were reported to have been involved in the killing of a Khalistan movement activist.

Mushaal went on to highlight India's support for extremist organizations like the RSS, which she claimed was also collaborating with the Indian government and RAW in developing nuclear weapons. She stated that the RSS and RAW had an extensive global network and were allegedly involved in the harassment of Kashmiris and Sikhs not only in Pakistan but also in Australia and Europe.

However, she welcomed Canada's strong response to the killing of a Sikh leader, asserting that

this incident had exposed India's darker side, as well as the malicious intentions of the Modi government. Mushaal claimed that the Indian government was not only supporting terrorists but also promoting terrorism to suppress the movements for Khalistan and Kashmir freedom.

She emphasised that Kashmiris had been struggling for their right to self-determination for the past 75 years, while India continued to use force to deny them their fundamental and constitutional rights. She expressed regret over the silence of the world's human rights advocates on the pressing issue, describing it as deeply unfortunate.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in a group photo with Dir Bala Public Jirga during meeting at Governor House.

Punjab Govt upgrades 20 high schools to model status in Bhakkar

BHAKKAR (INP): The Punjab government has upgraded twenty government High Schools in Bhakkar district to model schools and entrusted their special ownership to the deputy commissioner.

According to media reports, the deputy commissioner, Dr. Noor Muhammad Awan, recently paid a special visit to Government Secondary School Kotla Jam and Government Model Secondary School Kahwar Kalan to review the performance of the

teachers, education system, cleanliness, discipline, students' uniforms, school washrooms, and computer lab.

Dr. Awan said that all available resources are being utilized to raise the quality of education in the 20 model schools across the district and make them prominent.

He also distributed hundreds of free saplings to school students to promote plantation and urged them to plant these saplings in their homes and take care of them.

Police foil counterfeit currency smuggling attempt

PESHAWAR (INP): In a successful operation, Police have foiled an attempt to smuggle counterfeit currency, resulting in the arrest of a suspect found in possession of Rs. 296,000 worth of fake Pakistani currency notes.

Acting on secret information provided by SHO Jamrud, Shamsad Khan, the vigilant team at the Karkhano Market checkpoint intercepted and detained the suspicious individual, identified as Sikandar, son of Saeed, hailing from Abbottabad.

A thorough search of the suspect revealed the discovery of counterfeit currency notes in his possession.

Punjab Governor says: Goals of economic dev can be achieved only by creating harmony with IT

Independent Report LAHORE: A delegation of entrepreneurs associated with the IT sector met Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman here today at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, the delegation informed the Governor Punjab about the problems faced by the IT industry. Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the goals of economic development can be achieved only by creating harmony with information technology and innovation. He said that IT education equips the youth with the skills to earn money through on line jobs. Governor Punjab said that he has formed a consortium on IT in universities. He added that

as Chancellor, he has directed the universities to organize IT trainings for students in collaboration with Punjab Information Technology Board. Governor Punjab said that it is very important to give information technology and vocational training to the youth. He said that a large number of vocational courses were started between 2013 and 2018. Governor Punjab said that IT and vocational training create employment opportunities. On this occasion, the delegation told the Governor of Punjab that IT exports can be increased significantly with the support of the government. The delegation also informed the Punjab Governor about the various problems faced by the IT industry.

Fatima murder case: ATC grants 5-day physical remand of accused

KHAIRPUR (INP): An anti-terrorism court on Thursday granted five days physical remand of accused Asad Shah and co-accused, Imtiaz Meerasi in the murder case of child maid Fatima Phurro.

The investigation officer produced accused Asad Shah and his facilitator Imtiaz Meerasi before the court of Badar Qazi today. The investigation officer pleaded for 15 days' physical remand of the

accused. However, the ATC judge approved a five-day remand of the accused in the murder case.

The police on Wednesday released four accused including, SHO Ameer Chang, Dr Fatah Memon and Dr Ali Hasan Watan. In the murder case of Fatima Phurro who died in the Haveli of Ranipur. The investigating officer claimed that the suspects were set free as they were not named in the FIR.

Two dead, seven injured as pick up overturns on M2

PINDI BHATTIAN (INP): Two passengers were killed while seven others wounded after a pick up they were travelling in turned side down on Motorway 2 near Pindi Bhattian on Thursday, rescuers and police said.

The ill-fated vehicle was heading to Sargodha from Lahore at the time of the incident.



KARACHI: Members of Islami Jamiat Tulba are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use and petroleum products, inflation price hiking and the highly inflated electricity bills, held at Shaheen Complex in Karachi.

Irshad commends PDMA performance

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Justice (R) Irshad Qaiser, the Provincial Minister for Rehabilitation and Resettlement, Social Welfare, Special Education, Women Empowerment, and Prisons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, paid a visit to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) headquarters. During this visit, Director General PDMA, Jannat Gul Afridi, provided a comprehensive briefing to the caretaker provincial minister regarding the various divisions and the performance of PDMA. Several PDMA directors and officers were also in attendance. In his briefing, DGP

PDMA Jannat Gul Afridi mentioned that PDMA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa annual prepares Monsoon Contingency Plans, Heat Wave Plans, and Winter Contingency Plans in collaboration with stakeholders. These plans classify sensitive districts and ensure that relief materials are pre-positioned in these areas.

Furthermore, during the briefing, it was highlighted that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faced significant losses due to floods in 2022. However, due to improved strategies and systems, over four lakh people were successfully relocated to safe areas.

Charsi Tikka owner arrested for 'molesting' foreign tourists

PESHAWAR (INP): The owner of one of the most famous eateries in Pakistan, Charsi Tikka, Nisar Charsi has been arrested by police for molesting foreign tourists.

Several videos of Nisar Charsi, the owner of the famous Peshawar-based eatery 'Charsi Tikka' in Namak Mandi Food Street, went viral on social media in which he was misbehaving with women tourists from foreign countries.



KARACHI: Patients are sitting after operation during the three-day free eye medical camp organized by Pakistan Insaan Dost Party, at Saddar Regal Chowk in Karachi.

International News

South Korean leader warns Russia against weapons collaboration with the North

Monitoring Desk UNITED NATIONS: South Korea's president sounded a warning to fellow world leaders Wednesday about the recent communication and possible cooperation between North Korea and Russia, saying any action by a permanent U.N. Security Council member to circumvent international norms would be dangerous and "paradoxical."

Speaking before the U.N. General Assembly, Yoon Suk Yeol invoked North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's visit last week to Russia, which is one of the five permanent members of the council, the

U.N.'s most powerful body.

Kim met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Russia's far east. The two said they may cooperate on defense issues but gave no specifics, which left South Korea and its allies — including the United States — uneasy.

"It is paradoxical that a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, entrusted as the ultimate guardian of world peace, would wage war by invading another sovereign nation and receive arms and ammunition from a regime that blatantly violates Security Council

resolutions," Yoon told fellow leaders on the second day of the U.N. General Assembly's annual gathering of leaders. He had been expected to raise the issue.

Yoon said that if North Korea "acquires the information and technology necessary" to enhance its weapons of mass destruction in exchange for giving conventional weapons to Russia, that would also be unacceptable to the South. "Such a deal between Russia and the DPRK will be a direct provocation threatening the peace and security of not only Ukraine but also the Republic of Korea."



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau holds a press conference on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York, U.S.

Saudis, Houthis hold talks to end Yemen war

Monitoring Desk RIYADH: Saudi Arabia and the Iran-backed Houthis rebels put a positive spin on historic but inconclusive talks in Riyadh on Wednesday as diplomatic efforts increased to end Yemen's bitter war.

The five days of talks were "positive", Saudi officials and a senior Houthi said, after the rebel delegation ended the first public visit to the Saudi capital since hostilities broke out between the two sides. Underlining the change in atmosphere, the delegation included Hosain Homood

Ala'zi, who in 2017 appeared on a Saudi list of wanted Houthis with a \$5 million reward for information leading to his arrest.

Riyadh mobilised an international military coalition against the Houthis in March 2015, months after the northern fighters with links to Tehran had seized the capital and threatened to overrun the country bordering southern Saudi Arabia.

Hundreds of thousands have died in the fighting or from its impacts, including famine, and millions have been displaced in what the United Nations calls one

of the world's worst humanitarian crises. As the Houthis left, the top diplomats of the United States, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — a key coalition member, and influential in Yemen's government-held south — met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in his meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and the UAE's Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, welcomed the Riyadh talks "aimed at achieving a roadmap to end the conflict."



Syria's President Bashar al-Assad and his wife Asma are welcomed upon their arrival at Hangzhou airport.

Syrian President Bashar Assad is in China on his first visit since the beginning of war in Syria

Monitoring Desk BEIJING: Syrian President Bashar Assad arrived in China on Thursday on his first visit to the country since the start of Syria's 12-year conflict, one in which Beijing has been one of his main backers.

China's Foreign Ministry said Assad would join other foreign leaders attending the opening ceremony of the Asian Games, an international sports event beginning Saturday in the eastern city of Hangzhou. China has been ex-

panding its reach in the Middle East after mediating a deal in March between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and it continues to support Assad in the Syrian conflict, which has killed half a million people and left large parts of the nation in ruins.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Assad's visit would "further deepen political mutual trust and cooperation in various fields between the two countries and push bilateral relations to a new level."

Mexican president eyes Washington meeting with Biden in November

Monitoring Desk MEXICO CITY: Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said on Thursday he had proposed a visit to Washington in November to meet with U.S. President Joe Biden, and had also invited Biden to visit Mexico.

Speaking at a regular government press conference, Lopez Obrador said that he planned to discuss migration, drug trafficking, violence and trade with his U.S. counterpart.

He said he had proposed Washington because he was no longer going to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco in November, citing Mexico's lack of diplomatic relations with Peru, the APEC forum's next chair.

India stops new visas for Canadians, asks Ottawa to downsize missions

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: India on Thursday suspended new visas for Canadians and asked Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence in the country, sharply escalating a spat triggered by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's accusations linking New Delhi to a Sikh separatist's murder. The Indian foreign ministry said Canada has not shared any specific information in connection with the allegations Trudeau made and that New Delhi was willing to look at it if provided.

A blanket suspension of new visas by India for a Western country is unheard of and marks the lowest point of India-Canada relations. The announcement came hours after Canada's high commission in India said it would temporarily "adjust" staff presence in the country after some diplomats received threats on social media platforms.

But Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said Ottawa had been asked to reduce numbers.

Poland is done sending arms to Ukraine, Polish leader says as trade dispute escalates

Monitoring Desk WARSAW: Poland's prime minister said his country is no longer sending arms to Ukraine, a comment that appeared aimed at pressuring Kyiv and put Poland's status as a major source of military equipment in doubt as a trade dispute between the neighboring states escalates. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said in an interview late.

Canada's Trudeau wants India to cooperate in murder probe, won't release evidence

Monitoring Desk NEW YORK: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday called on India to cooperate with an investigation into the murder of a Sikh separatist leader in British Columbia and said Canada would not release its evidence.

Trudeau said on Monday that Ottawa had credible allegations linking Indian government agents to the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June, prompting an angry reaction from New Delhi. Nijjar, 45, was a Canadian citizen.

"We're not looking to provoke or cause problems.

But we are unequivocal around the importance of the rule of law and unequivocal about the importance of protecting Canadians," Trudeau told a news conference in New York on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

"That's why we call upon the government of India to work with us to establish processes to discover and to uncover the truth of the matter."

Trudeau sidestepped several questions about when Canada might release the evidence it had, saying merely that the decision to share the allegations had not been made lightly.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is escorted by Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives Hakeem Jeffries as he arrives to meet privately with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and other congressional leaders on a visit to the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

Italy PM Meloni's party irks bad loan investors with new proposal

Monitoring Desk ROME: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's party has filed a new proposal to protect borrowers if they fall behind in repaying their bank debt, another move that investors said stoked risks for the country's 307 billion euro (\$328 bln) bad loan market.

Italian lawmakers upset bad loan investors last month by proposing to give borrowers the right to repay their original loan at the discounted price at which the creditor bank

sold it, plus a 20% premium. To dispel concerns, Meloni said on Sept. 7 that there were no measures "on the launch pad" for non-performing loans.

However, lawmakers from Meloni's Brothers of Italy party have now put forward to parliament another rule that would make it easier to apply their initial proposal.

"The latest amendment aims to help borrowers buy back loans," Senator Renato Ancorotti, one of the promoters of the measure, told Reuters.

PM lauds China's unflinching support to Pak socio-economic development

NEW YORK (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has appreciated China's unflinching support to Pakistan's territorial integrity, sovereignty and socio-economic development.

The Prime Minister and Vice-President of China Han Zheng met at the sidelines of UNGA Summit in New York on Thursday.

The Prime Minister noted that China's firm opposition to holding any G20 meeting in the disputed region of Jammu and

Kashmir reflected China's principled stance for upholding international law and UN resolutions.

The conversation was marked by traditional warmth and cordiality that has been the hallmark of Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

During the meeting, the two leaders exchanged views on the entire gamut of bilateral relationship including CPEC and bilateral economic and financial cooperation.

In his remarks, Vice-President Han Zheng said that Pakistan-China friendship is unique and has withstood the vicissitude of time due to deep fraternal ties between the peoples of two nations.

He said as a close neighbor and iron-brother, Pakistan occupies a special position in China's neighbourhood diplomacy and that China would continue its efforts for safeguarding Pakistan's core interests and for the economic development and prosper-

ity of the people of Pakistan. Expressing satisfaction at the steady development of CPEC projects in Pakistan, the two sides agreed on the centrality of CPEC for Pakistan's socio-economic development and expressed their firm commitment to continue working together for realizing its shared objectives.

The two leaders also expressed satisfaction at the celebratory events held in both countries to mark the 10th anniversary of CPEC.



NEW YORK: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in a meeting with Vice-President of China Han Zheng at the sidelines of UNGA Summit in New York



ZIARAT: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki talking with students during his visit of Government College Ziarat.

Caretaker govt empowered under law to expedite privatization process: Fawad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Privatization Fawad Hassan Fawad, out rightly rejecting any special agenda, said on Thursday that the caretaker government was fully empowered under law to expedite the process for privatization of loss-making state-owned

enterprises (SOEs), initiated way back in 2001-02.

Addressing a news conference along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, he clarified that no

addition was made to the privatization list, which was updated by the last successive elected governments.

He said the previous elected government had made necessary amendments in the relevant law empowering the caretakers to carry forward the



privatization process of SOEs, which was initiated by the last government but their transactions were not yet finalized. The minister said that a time-frame was duly fixed to carry out the privatization of each loss-making entity that could not be skipped.

He, however, dispelled the impression that he had been given a special task to shut down the operations of a certain organization.

He said that the Privatization Commission was taking steps to reduce the losses of certain SOEs, which were a burden on the national exchequer.

Fawad said when he took over the office, it was told that the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) was facing financial crisis and needed funds to fully restore its flight operations, which were provided within 48 hours.

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Govt started implementation on 100-day plan of action for promotion of education: Domki

Caretaker CM directs to release funds for making lab of DHQ Hospital fully functional

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the interim provincial government has started implementation on the 100-day plan of action for promotion of education in the province.

He was speaking on occasion of the visit of Government Degree Boys and Girls Colleges, Ziarat on Thursday.

The Principal of College, Professor Nageebullah Kakar briefed the caretaker Chief Minister about the functioning of college.

He said that the classes for girls and boys are conducted in the same building. The classes for girls are conducted in evening while classes for boys students are conducted in the morning, the Principal informed.

He also informed that 529 students including 346 male and 183 female are enrolled in the college.

The caretaker Chief Minister on the occasion directed Secretary Education to provide academic staff and basic facilities in the college.

He also directed to ensure recruitment of lecturers of all subjects in the

Inefficient SOEs inflict Rs500b loss to national kitty in 2022: Shamshad

ISLAMABAD (INP): Owing to inefficiencies and mismanagement, the deficit State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) incurred overall losses of around Rs500 billion to the national exchequer during last year (2022), Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Dr Shamshad Akhtar said on Thursday.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said there were also profit-making enterprises, which earned an aggregate profit of Rs330 billion out of which Rs185 billion was made by oil and gas companies. In past, the minister said, the governments had established a range of SOEs with good objectives and these promoted economic development besides providing essential public services.

She said, these enterprises spanned over energy, telecommunications, transportation, trade, marketing and financial sector. However, she added, these entities suffered due to lack of autonomy, external interference, weak management, limited accountability, inappropriate boards, which she said resulted in financial losses and decline in quality of services. "There has been massive drain in public resources." However, the minister added, when privatized, the banking industry was one of the biggest success stories in Pakistan which transformed from loss-making to profitable. The overall performance of SOEs was not very healthy what she called "contrary to the expectations" adding that some of these were marred by inefficiencies.

He also assured that the issue of shortage of medicines in DHQ Hospital Ziarat would be resolved soon.

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SC dismisses appeal pertaining to refund of income tax under tribal areas' special status

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Thursday dismissed an appeal in a case pertaining to income tax refund under the special status of tribal areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A three-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa heard the case. During the course of proceedings, Riaz Hussain, the petitioner's counsel, adopted the stance that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and the Customs Department had issued notifications related to tax refunds for tribal people.

The CJP questioned whether the petitioner wanted issuance of separate notifications for the tribal areas vis-a-vis all laws of Pakistan.

He visited different

parts of the Quaid Residency and planted a sapling in its premises. He also wrote his comments on the register.

While speaking on the occasion, Mir Ali Mardan Domki said that Quaid's affection with people of the province was evident from the frequent visits he had paid to the province before and after inception of the country.

He said that Quaid-e-Azam had started paying visit to the province in the middle of 1934. He also said that the demand about reforms in Balochistan was also included in the famous 14 points of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Earlier, the caretaker Chief Minister was presented guard of honour upon his arrival at the Residency.

CM terms Quaid-e-Azam Residence of Ziarat as great asset of people of Balochistan

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Complain cell set up: Commissioner releases detail of action taken against profiteering, encroachments

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Commissioner Quetta Division has released detail of the action taken against the profiteering, encroachments, illegal crush plants as well as the petrol pumps and vehicles in the division.

According to the detail, different teams of administration conducted inspection of different areas and made 95 arrests on different charges during the period from September 13 to 19, 2023.

Similarly, in all 57 shops were sealed with Rs. 164,000 fine also charged to the shopkeepers on violation of certain code.

Moreover, the administration teams also seized 750 tons of sugar and 1,000 tons of Urea. Meanwhile, a divisional complaint cell has been established for the general public at the commissioner office on Thursday.

The Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Quetta Division, Muhammad Hanif Kibzai has been appointed the Incharge of complaint cell. The general public may submit their complaints about Tehsil/Revenue staff or revenue affairs, DC office, settlement office, sub-registrar office, Regional Transport Authority and other public issues in the complaint cell.



QUETTA: Activists of Pashtunkhwa Mili Awami Party (PKMAP) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, outside Customs office in Quetta.

Umair visits Zinc & Lead project in Duddar, Kanraj

ISLAMABAD (APP): The caretaker Information Minister of Balochistan, Jan Achakzai, engaged in a fruitful meeting with Umar Farooq, the CEO of Tech Valley, a Google Education and Google Workspace Partner in Pakistan. He appreciated the efforts of Tech Valley and Google in bringing capacity building projects to Balochistan, especially the Google Career Certificates program.

The Google Career Certificates program is a flexible, self-paced online training program that can prepare learners for careers in various high-growth fields, such as IT support, project management, and data analytics. The program is taught by Google experts and includes specialized training, assessments, mentorship sessions, and hands-on practical experience. Mr. Achakzai was particularly impressed with

the fact that the Google Career Certificates program is accessible to everyone, regardless of their background or experience. He believes that the program can play a vital role in empowering the youth of Balochistan and helping them to develop the skills they need to succeed in the digital economy.

In addition to the Google Career Certificates program, Tech Valley is also working to digitize the

information that the company management is also working for welfare of the community under corporate social sector responsibility on directions of the Lasbele administration.

The Advisor said that Chinese engineers are working as per the capacity of processing designed in the Duddar Zinc and Lead mine project with assistance of the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation.

He on the occasion vowed to strength the China-Pakistan economic social relations further.

Meanwhile, Umair Muhammad Hassani also inspected the Duddar mining command and control operation system.

Anti-smuggling Coordination & Monitoring Center established

ISLAMABAD (APP): The anti-smuggling Coordination and Monitoring Center has been established at the Customs House Quetta on Thursday. The Chief Collector Customs, Abdul Qadir Memon formally inaugurated the center.

Also present on the occasion were the senior officers of Pakistan Customs and other concerned.

Man dies, four injured in Mach road mishap

QUETTA (APP): A man died while four injured when a vehicle overturned on National Highway at Gashari near Mach area of Bolan district on Thursday.

According to Levies sources, the victims were on way to somewhere in a vehicle as it turned turtle on National Highway due to over speeding. As a result, one of them died and four other sustained injuries. The body and the injured were rushed to nearby hospital where the treatments of the injured were started.

Saudi Chief of General Staff lauds exceptional progress of PAF thru indigenization

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of General Staff Saudi Armed Forces, General Fayyadh bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili on Thursday called on Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu here at Air Headquarters.

Leading a high level delegation, the Saudi Chief of General Staff expressed his admiration for the exceptional progress made by the Pakistan Air Force (PAF), particularly in the area of indigenisation and lauded the professionalism of PAF personnel during the meeting whereas the delegation also underscored discussion on several key

areas of mutual interest, defence co-operation and geo-strategic situation, a PAF news release said.

On his arrival, a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented General Fayyadh bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili the guard of honour. Later, the visiting dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers. During the meeting, the Chief of the Air Staff shared his pragmatic policy decisions aimed at modernizing PAF through the smart acquisition of niche technologies with a special focus on artificial intelligence, cyberspace, and electronic warfare.

Ahmed Ali says: Agriculture Dept backbone of our provincial economy

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Caretaker Minister of Industry and Commerce, Excise and Taxation and Energy, Prince Ahmed Ali Ahmadzai on Thursday said that the agriculture sector is the backbone of our provincial economy which could not be ignored under any circumstances.

As 70 percent of the population's livelihood is related to this sector, steps are being taken under comprehensive planning for its improvement, he said.

He said that due to drought and load shedding of electricity, the difficulties faced by our landlords and farmers while the provincial government is fully aware of this. The Minister said that the provincial government under the leadership of Caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki is taking concrete steps for a sustainable solution to this issue in the jurisdiction of the provincial government. Prince Ahmed Ali Ahmadzai said that there is a need to develop the agricultural sector.

Caretaker Information Minister Balochistan appreciates Tech Valley & Google's Initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Google Career Certificates program is a flexible, self-paced online training program that can prepare learners for careers in various high-growth fields, such as IT support, project management, and data analytics. The program is taught by Google experts and includes specialized training, assessments, mentorship sessions, and hands-on practical experience. Mr. Achakzai was particularly impressed with

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QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Capt. (Retd) Muhammad Zubair Jamali in a meeting with Caretaker Education Minister Abdul Qadir.

Coordinated efforts always improves internal and external defense: Rizwan

FC Balochistan visits emergency services headquarters and academy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Secretary, the Emergency Services Department Dr Rizwan Naseer saluted to all forces working on borders and ensuring security of the Country. He also emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts to ensure the internal and external defence of any country.

He expressed these views while addressing 121 Junior Commissioned Officers of Frontier Corps Balochistan during their study tour of the Emergency Services Headquarters and Academy.

The Secretary, Emergency Service also shared the development of Rescue 1122 which today is an integrated Emergency Services model for South Asia. Rescue 1122 had provided a sense of safety to citizens of Pakistan by strengthening

emergency response capacity for managing all kinds of complex emergencies and disasters. He also shared the new initiative of raising a Rescue Scout

Corps to establish safe & sustainable communities in Pakistan.

Earlier, the delegation of Frontier Corps of Balochistan witnessed ongoing specialized training activities of Fire, Rescue, Medical, Deep Well Rescue, Burn House, Fire Fit Challenge, Height Rescue, Water Rescue, Swimming, Urban Search & Rescue and physical fitness training. The delegates also visited the Medical, Fire and Rescue Labs where they briefed about the appropriate use of rescue equipment in rescue operations as well as its usage in Emergency Services Academy for training purposes.

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