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Govt to come up with out-of-box solution on power sector for public relief: PM

Expresses hope that foreign investment projects worth \$25 billion each from Saudi Arabia and the Middle East would realize in a time span of two to five years

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday assured that his government was exploring realistic options to come up with out-of-box solutions to provide relief to electricity consumers.

The prime minister, in an interaction with foreign media representatives, said the government would make informed decisions to satisfy the masses on the issue of electricity bills without deviating from the country's commitments with the international financial institutions.

Mentioning the issues of circular debt, power theft and taxes, the prime minister said the government would introduce short-term solutions to the issue without undermining the agitating people.

He assured that the

caretaker government was mandated to facilitate holding the general elections as early as possible while observing the constitutional obligations.

He said the Constitution called for carrying out the delimitation of constituencies following the population census.

Prime Minister Kakar said without redesigning the government structure, the interim setup was mainly focused on rearranging the fiscal and monetary policies to build an edifice for economic revival.

Calling the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) a strategy for economic revival, he said it focused on agriculture, mines and minerals, defence production and information technology.

However, he also spelled out the economic

reform agenda of his government, saying that the imminent steps included the privatization of two or more power distribution companies.

He said the reforms needed in taxation and power sectors, and his government would leave behind a basis for mid-level reforms.

Kakar said the government was pursuing a policy of doing the double and providing a strategic direction to economic planning.

To a question, he said all the registered political parties would be provided a level playing field to contest the general elections without any discrimination.

However, he said in certain instances, political behaviour turned into vandalism and the country's law was already in vogue to deal with such conduct.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting regarding power sector in Islamabad

President, PM, others express grief 3 Pakistan Navy personnel martyred in Gwadar helicopter crash

ISLAMABAD (INP): Two Pakistan Navy officers and one soldier were martyred on Monday in a helicopter crash in Balochistan's Gwadar, a spokesperson for the navy said.

According to media reports, the spokesperson

said that the helicopter crashed during a training flight in Gwadar. "The helicopter crashed during the flight due to a possible technical fault," the spokesperson said. "As a result of the accident, two officers and one jawan of the Pakistan Navy lost their lives," the spokesperson added.

The spokesperson added that an investigation had been launched into the incident.

President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday expressed deep sorrow over the loss of precious lives in a helicopter crash in Gwadar.

He condoled the martyrdom of Pak Navy officers and Jawans in the helicopter crash, and prayed for elevation of ranks of their souls in paradise.

He also paid tributes to the services rendered by the martyrs for their motherland.

The president expressed sympathies with the bereaved families and prayed for grant of courage to them to bear this loss with equanimity.

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the tragic incident of navy helicopter crash in Gwadar.

Condoling the martyrdom of three personnel of Pakistan Navy, the prime minister prayed to Allah Almighty to grant courage to the bereaved families to bear the loss with equanimity.

IMF rejects Pakistan's power relief plan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has turned down

Pakistan government's proposal designed to provide relief to the impoverished for exorbitant electricity bills, sources in the Finance Department said Monday.

They said a consensus could not be achieved with the IMF over the relief plan.

In the proposal, the IMF was informed by the Pakistan government that relief provision would have an impact of less than Rs6.5 billion. The IMF, however, put the impact at about Rs15 billion, and dismissed the plan as a result.

The IMF has now reportedly sought a proposal on how Pakistan intends to cover this fiscal gap of Rs.15 billion.

Once the new plan is shared with the global lender, the Finance Ministry and IMF authorities will head into talks again.

PM orders immediate action against power thieves, defaulters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday ordered immediate action against those involved in power theft in the country and asked relevant authorities to submit reports in this regard on the daily basis.

Chairing a meeting, the prime minister also directed to take swift action against electricity defaulters, saying there should not be any leniency towards electricity thieves and the defaulters.

During the meeting, the prime minister was briefed in detail about all sections of the energy sector.

The meeting was informed about the total installed capacity, actual generation and overall energy supply during various seasons.

The prime minister was also informed about the energy mix in power production.

PM Kakar stressed that in future, renewable and hydel sources of energy should be given top priority to produce inexpensive and green energy in the country.

He also directed to take effective measures to reduce the line losses of the power distribution companies.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar exchanging views with Mustafa Kamal and Anis Qaimkhani, Leaders of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) during meeting held in Islamabad.

Turkish CG calls on Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Turkish Consul General Cemal Sangu Monday called on Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab along with a delegation and discussed matters of bilateral interest.

Turkish Consul Commercial Attache Eyyup Yildirim and Hilal Ibrahim accompanied the Turkish Consul General on this occasion.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab welcomed the Consul General of Turkey and his delegation on their arrival at the KMC head office.

He said that the relations between the Repub-

lic of Turkey and Pakistan were a great example of long-standing friendship.

Turkey provided co-operation in various fields, the people of Pakistan are proud of their deep friendship with Turkey, he said.

He said that the relations between Pakistan and Turkey would become more stable with the passage of time.

He informed the Turkish Consul General in Karachi about the local government system and said that facilities were being provided to the citizens by developing the basic infrastructure.

Pakistan-KSA joint exercise on counter terrorism concludes

RAWALPINDI (APP): The closing ceremony of Pakistan-KSA Joint Exercise in Counter Terrorism domain, AL BATTAR-I, was held at Cherat on Monday.

The two-week long exercise commenced on August 22 with the participation of Special Forces contingents from two brotherly countries, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Nawaf Saeed Al Malkiy along with senior military leadership, witnessed the final day activities of the exercise.

Combat Aviation along with the Special Forces of both countries, displayed their professional excellence. The Exercise concluded with the Fly Past.



ISLAMABAD: Italian Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Andrea Ferraresse called on Dr. Gohar Ejaz, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries and Production.

Sindh sends officers' list to ECP for bureaucracy reshuffle

KARACHI (INP): Major reshuffle in Sindh's bureaucracy has been on the cards as the caretaker provincial government has prepared a list of officers on Monday.

Caretaker government has sent the list of officers to the election commission for transfers and postings in Sindh, sources said.

Present Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners in Sindh will be changed and a notification to this respect could be issued by this evening, according to sources.

Chief Election Commissioner had asked Sindh's Caretaker CM in

a letter in last week to dispatch proposals to the election commission with regard to transfer of officers within one week.

CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja in a letter addressed to Caretaker Chief Minister of Sindh retired Justice Maqbool Baqar wrote that the election commission had directed provincial governments for transfer of administrative officers.

"The election commission had instructed for transfer of commissioners, deputy commissioners and additional commissioners in the province," CEC wrote in letter.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Ahmed Irfan Aslam called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President calls for upholding supremacy of constitution

Lauds PM Kakar's statement on general elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday appreciated the statement made by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar that his government would abide by the Supreme Court's judgement on the matter of general elections.

The president said this in a meeting with Caretaker Federal Minister for Law and Jus-

tice, Ahmed Irfan Aslam, who called on him here.

The meeting discussed many issues related to the holding of general elections in the country.

President Alvi emphasized the need for upholding the supremacy of the Constitution, adding that decisions should be taken in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution.

Interim CM expresses grief over death of Justice @ Ali Nawaz Chohan

KARACHI (APP): Interim Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar has expressed grief and sorrow over the death of Justice (Retd.) Ali Nawaz Chohan.

He said that the deceased will always be remembered in golden words in judicial history.

He offered his condolences to the bereaved family. He also prayed for forgiveness and high rank of late Justice (Retd) Ali Nawaz Chohan in Jannah.

US dollar reaches Rs330 in open market

ISLAMABAD (INP): In a relentless surge, the value of the US dollar against the Pakistani rupee continued to rise, reaching an unprecedented high of Rs330 in the open market on Monday.

On the first day of the business week, the inter-bank market saw the dollar's value increase by 53 paisas, while in the open market, it surged by 2 rupees.

The staggering climb to Rs330 in the open market is a new record that has left traders and the public grappling with the implications. Last week had witnessed a slight dip in the dollar's value in the inter-bank market, as it had depreciated by 7 paisas, closing at Rs305.47 according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Communications, Railways and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar visiting DS office in Karachi.

Home minister visits control room established for Chehlum Imam Hussain

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Home Minister Brig. (Rtd) Haris Nawaz on Monday said the government would fully cooperate with the Jaffaria Alliance Pakistan and would be given a walkie-talkie system.

He stated this while talking to the media during his visit to the control room established by the Jaffaria Alliance Pakistan (JAP) at the Nishtar Park for Chehlum Hazrat Imam Hussain (R.A).

He said the enemy was round the

clock trying to take advantage of our weakness.

The minister said the accused, the principal of private school involved in harassing women in Gulshan-e-Hadeed, would be taken to task and the case would be investigated transparently.

Haris Nawaz also said there would be no compromise on operation in Katcha Area and street crimes. Strict action will be taken against drug mafia and gutka factories.

Minister directs to seal unregistered school over Principal's indecent viral video

KARACHI (APP): Interim Sindh Minister for Education Rana Hussain while taking notice of an indecent viral video of an unregistered private school's principal, has directed to seal and take legal action against the incident in the school.

The private school is located in Gulshan-e-Hadeed area of the city.

The Directorate of

Private Institutions on the directives of the provincial minister, has written a letter to Deputy Commissioner Malir to seal the building of the unregistered private school until the matter is investigated.

The district administration has been directed to take legal action on the incident in the unregistered school.

Four sentenced to death in blasphemy case

RAWALPINDI (APP): The District and Sessions Court Rawalpindi on Monday sentenced four accused to death in a blasphemy case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Ahsan Mehmood Malik pronounced the verdict after recording evidence from the witnesses and final arguments from both sides.

The convicts Faizan Razaq, Amin Rais, Muhammad Rizwan and Wazir Gul were found guilty of blasphemy under Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

The court also gave seven years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 100,000 to another accused Usman Laiqat under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act.

Sugar price reaches up to Rs195kg in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Sugar price on Monday hiked up to an all-time high in Karachi to Rs195 per kg as weekly inflation continues to accelerate. According to details, the sweetener is being sold between Rs185 to Rs195 in Karachi's retail market, while the rate in the wholesale market has decreased to Rs178 per kg from Rs180. Despite the decrease in the wholesale market price of sugar, the retailers are selling the same at their desired rate.



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy officials handing over the seized Narcotics to ANF officials, in Karachi.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Stymied growth

A new report, published by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, shines a light on the multiple obstacles hampering the growth of the country's fledgling engineering industry — and, by default, its small and medium enterprises.

The study, based on a survey of 328 engineering firms, apparently operating in the SME sector, points out unreliable electricity supply, lack of access to formal bank credit, exclusion from global supply chains, branding, pricing, product quality, informality, etc. as major factors affecting the growth and productivity of such enterprises. These issues are faced by SMEs in every sector. The report underlines that a majority of industrial units — 83pc — in the country do not have plans for future expansion, owing primarily to the non-availability of electricity. A few entrepreneurs, however, intend to invest in technology, machinery, land, and skilled labour to boost their business prospects. Likewise, the lack of access to credit for most of these firms, owing to inadequate collateral, is highlighted as another major snag in the realisation of their potential. The report underscores the significance of addressing these challenges, recommending that the engineering firms adopt international and national quality standards. The study also emphasises the importance of strong ties between businesses and the government, adding that political instability and unfavourable economic policies have led to mistrust and dissatisfaction among business owners. SMEs, especially in the engineering sector, are globally regarded as the backbone of economies. Their crucial role in fostering growth, creating large-scale employment opportunities and reducing poverty is universally recognised. Hence, successive governments here have repeatedly pledged to boost the 'ease of doing business' for them since the 1990s so that they can help boost overall economic growth.

However, practically speaking, little has been done to solve their problems. For example, the SME policy of 2021-25, which was widely welcomed because of its generous incentives, such as tax reductions and a Rs60bn bank credit line for collateral-free loans offered to small and medium entrepreneurs, is yet to be implemented. Already faced with formidable challenges, SMEs are believed to have been affected the most by the ongoing economic slowdown and surging inflation. Numerous units have already closed down because of financial troubles caused by increased costs, and thousands of workers have been fired by others to minimise losses as industries struggle to survive the present crisis.

For long-term economic stability, more exports and greater job creation for millions of individuals entering the labour market each year, Pakistan's policymakers need to immediately focus on addressing the long-standing issues holding SMEs back from realising their full potential.



Dr. Noman Ahmed

In the recent past, Karachi has experienced several unfortunate, infrastructure-related accidents that impacted human lives and assets. The list is long: nine people were injured in a sewer gas explosion in Lasbela. Its intensity caused panic among residents and passersby, who thought a bomb had gone off. A man died when a signboard fell on him in Nazimabad. Uncovered sewers have taken scores of lives, including those of two siblings, who fell to their death through a manhole in Malir.

Other common infrastructure hazards include electrocution, especially during the monsoons. Fires at various premises are regular occurrences, often ignited by faulty electric fixtures, wiring and devices. Not too long ago, malfunctioning oil pipes caused an oil spill in Korangi.

Traffic accidents pose a constant and common danger to ordinary folk and broken infrastructure, such as dilapidated pedestrian bridges without handrails and balustrades, is a hazard for pedestrians, especially women and children. At the other end, there has been an unceasing rise in Karachi's street crime, and the media is rife with clips of mugging and theft. A most unexpected passersby in the city was a big cat on Sharea Faisal; it evaded capture for many hours in the haphazard infrastructure of the metropolis.

Whenever one has brought the grave realities of a fractured infrastructure and poor urban

Infrastructure risk

governance to the notice of the city and provincial leadership, investment figures set aside for mega projects have been rattled off. Take the much-trumpeted 'safe city' project; five years on, there is negligible progress. Media reports say it overshot the original spending target and has exceeded Rs40 billion, perhaps higher than the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's annual budget. Also, how the mere installation of CCTV cameras will ensure safety for pedestrians and passengers is unclear, as merging this network with law-enforcement agencies and their response teams requires detailed, foolproof planning.

Another multimillion-rupee project, S-III, is also ongoing. It aims to take the bulk of wastewater to treatment plants, for purified water to be released into the environment. But wastewater management in Karachi has many dimensions — storm water drains and nullahs have become secondary, with tertiary sewers with wastewater being randomly disposed in these conduits, and unregulated development with scarce application of planning and engineering wisdom resulting in sewage flowing into lanes and streets across the city.

Moreover, when unplanned construction covers wastewater conduits, it traps harmful gases, and their accumulation leads to explosions. Therefore, mapping the existing wastewater disposal situation, identifying bottlenecks and other snags, population projections and redevelopment of sewers are some of the more common remedies for the entire city.

Many central corridors of movement are dug up for the BRT corridor. On University Road, mighty cranes are at work with dubious safety measures,

and often workers are seen waving red flags at motorists, but an alternative plan for travel is absent. Billions of rupees have been spent on subsidy-driven transportation initiatives. The Karachi BRT is a classic example of wasteful expenditure of public funds. It is estimated that if and when all seven BRT corridors operate, they will not carry more than nine per cent of the total passenger load.

The adjustments for these are already creating congestion, as many lanes of movement will be lost to make way for BRT buses. There is a plethora of new institutions to manage the BRT at the federal and provincial levels, with huge administrative costs. In these times of grave economic crises, exacerbated by World Bank and ADB loans, one is forced to question the technical and financial merits of exorbitant projects, with minimal benefits to the commuters.

Karachi's populace deserves better. Our civic institutions, land management agencies and utility organisations require enormous reforms so that they are able to resolve contemporary challenges. It will be prudent to include independent and experienced experts in governing bodies and management boards.

For instance, while there is a provision for an oversight committee in the building control authority, since its creation in 1979, this committee has rarely been notified. When active, it provided objective appraisals of building control activities that led to many useful procedural reforms. It requires firm will on the part of governments to create such oversight entities in order to avert a collapse of governance, glimpses of which are commonly observed in our civic affairs. — Courtesy Dawn

Mentoring in school



Neda Mulji

Walking past a noisy classroom where a teacher was screaming to get her students' attention, the principal turned around and said: "This teacher needs help." She was spot on. In the absence of policies and mentoring programmes, teachers use a variety of methods to control their classes, mostly guiding only those students who are easy to communicate with.

Professional development of teachers is not just about upgrading teaching skills. There are many fantastic teachers, with expert subject knowledge, who struggle in other aspects of their work lives. There are avenues of growth that require focused attention, such as teacher motivation, relationship management with colleagues, and collaboration with the school management. While informal approaches to mentoring are prevalent in schools, structured programmes are lacking in most schools.

Ad hoc ways of colleagues gathering together to resolve issues over a cup of tea may be an excellent way of improving camaraderie among staff members, but carry the dangers of momentary firefighting. Often, these informal routes result in setting up cliques of school staff that stick together due to common struggles. It perpetuates a 'culture of complaining' that can become an obstacle to their enjoyment and appreciation of work life. Many narratives abound, ranging from discontent with the management to a lack of agency in decision-making, perceived absence of au-

tonomy and general inertia. Sustainable mentoring programmes can be a positive intervention.

While mentoring programmes cannot re-solve every issue that arises — and certainly not eradicate conflict from the school environment — there are many benefits to initiating systematic intervention by trained school leaders. Sustained conversations over a period of time, with members of the school's senior management, can do wonders to bridge the gap between hierarchies and give teachers an opportunity to be heard and feel valued. These conversations must follow a framework with clearly identifiable goals, a two-way exchange of ideas and a solution-focused goal.

When teachers complain about a 'thankless' job, the feeling is usually born out of a need to be recognised individually for their efforts and a desire to be included as contributors to school policies, ethos and day-to-day operations. Very few teachers change jobs due to low remuneration; most switch in search of an institution where their efforts are regarded as more than just a drop in the ocean.

A school-wide programme that offers guidance, advice, feedback and support can help early-career teachers develop confidence in their ability to have a positive impact on students and colleagues. It also helps their relationship management with parents, who are a vital cog in the school support system. Besides developing trust and confidence amongst colleagues, a mentoring programme can provide the tools for resilience, adaptability to changes within the school context and self-reflection. Many teachers face common problems, such as students' unruly behaviour, and usually apply tools that come intuitively to them. In many cases, the

differences between teachers' own behaviour and attitudes is enough to confuse children. This is why we see students behaving well with one or two teachers and not others.

Consistent policies for addressing student attitudes and parental concerns can help schools establish a culture of positivity where students and teachers alike are encouraged to seek help. Many schools send a student handbook at the start of a new academic year, but very few have such a handbook for teachers.

In a classroom, every teacher is a leader, a shepherd and a mentor. However, they cannot do justice to this leadership role in isolation. When they collaborate through a teacher-mentoring programme, they often find that many others are in the same boat, and consistent communication and ways to address challenges create a positive climate for teachers and students alike. Change often starts at the top, and the impact of great leadership trickles through the echelons of a school system, right down to students, school support staff and externally to the parents and society at large.

The teacher who screams in a noisy classroom to get her students' attention also uses a few choice words that sound like dire warnings. She believes that 'tough love' is what the children of today need and haven't been accustomed to. In her mind, she is 'helping' — not hindering — their ability to regulate their own behaviour. She clearly needs pastoral care from her own leadership and mentors that may steer her in the direction of using a positive approach to make a positive impact. After all, students often mirror their teachers. Eventually, society reflects what's happening in the classrooms, and vice versa. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Over 7.846 mln metric tons of wheat available for local consumption

ISLAMABAD (APP): Strategic wheat reserves of the country during the start week of the current month (September) were recorded at 7.846 million metric tons, which is enough to fulfill the local requirements and maintain stocks for keeping the demand and supply smooth in domestic markets.

The government had procured about 5.879 million metric tons of wheat during the crop procurement campaign for the year 2023-24, said Food Security Commissioner in the Ministry of National Food

Security and Research Initiative Ali Gopang.

Talking to APP here on Monday, he said that grain procurement targets for the current season were fixed at 7.800 million tons as out of the total fixed targets about 75 per cent was accomplished, adding that Punjab completed 87 per cent of its procurement targets as it procured 3.921 million metric tons, Sindh 56 per cent to procure 777.394 metric tons respectively.

Meanwhile, Balochistan had procured 50,000 metric tons,

whereas Pakistan Agriculture Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) had completed 63 per cent of its assigned task as it procured 5.879 million tons of wheat, he added.

Food Security Commissioner informed that local carry-forward stocks of wheat in the country were recorded at 1.570 million metric tons, which further strengthened the local reserves of grains, adding under import of 2022, the government had also imported about 375,589 metric tons of wheat.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Finance Dr. Shamsad Akhtar called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Huawei cloud launches services in Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Huawei Cloud on Monday announced launch of the Huawei Cloud Riyadh Region, going live immediately. Unveiled at the Huawei Cloud Summit Saudi Arabia 2023, the new Riyadh region will help promote digital-led economic growth in the country, said a news release.

The launch of the Huawei Cloud Riyadh Region announced that Saudi Arabia Region will be Huawei Cloud's focus in serving the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa, providing innovative, reliable, secure, and

sustainable cloud services. The achievement underscores Huawei CLOUD's unwavering dedication to supporting Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, aligned with the nation's ambitious technological advancement, leadership, and innovation goals.

Vice Minister at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) in Saudi Arabia Eng. Haitham bin Abdul Rahman Al-Ohali, shared his perspective on this monumental achievement: He said "Huawei is a proud partner in our country's technological

progress having worked with the Ministry, service providers, enterprises, universities in various collective efforts towards digital transformation. We look forward to the transformative impact the HUAWEI CLOUD Riyadh Region will have on our digital ecosystem, creating new avenues for innovation and growth."

The Riyadh Region provides several benefits to customers. First, this region translates our global expertise on digital transformation into industries' excellence, making innovation easier and faster.

SIFC continues to steer investment related initiatives at fast pace

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) continues to steer investment related initiatives at fast pace through exhaustive engagements involving all stakeholders.

Accordingly, 4th meeting of its Executive Committee (Functional Tier) was held on Monday with the objectives to remove bottlenecks and improve overall investment environment.

The meeting was chaired by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and

attended by the National Coordinator for SIFC, federal and provincial ministers concerned, and high level government officials, a press release said.

The ministries concerned presented progress on various aspects and highlighted areas needing special focus.

The committee showed its satisfaction regarding the ongoing outreach strategy of the SIFC and directed to further build on it by engaging business community and missions abroad.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan H.E. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Caretaker Federal Minister for Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali.

Trade deficit narrows by 40% in two months

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trade deficit contracted by 40.29 per cent during the first two months of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Monday.

The Trade deficit during July-August (2023-24) was recorded at \$3.763 billion as against the deficit of \$6.302 billion in July-August (2022-23), showing negative growth of 40.29 per cent.

During the period under review, the exports declined by 6.38 per cent to \$4.431 billion compared to

the exports of \$4.733 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to latest PBS data.

On the other hand, the imports narrowed by 25.75 per cent and were recorded at \$8.194 billion compared to \$11.035 billion last year.

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the exports from the country declined by 4.83 per cent in August compared to the exports of the same month of last year. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.363 billion as against the exports of \$2.483 billion in August 2022.

ICCI demands removal of small pharmacies from Tier-1 Retailers category

ISLAMABAD (INP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that small pharmacies are facilitating customers in payment through debit/credit card, but FBR have grouped them in Tier-1 Retailers category for heavy taxation due to which they are facing many problems and urged that FBR should remove them from Tier-1 category to ease their difficulties.

This was stated as him while talking to Pakistan Chemists and Druggists Association Islamabad Tariq Saeed who

called on him on Monday and informed him about the key problems of his sector and emphasized the importance of their quick redress.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar said that the chemists and druggists are performing an important national service by providing timely medicines to patients, but like other businesses, the business community of this sector is also facing many problems due to which their business activities are suffering. He stressed that the government should solve the issues of this sector for

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships namely, MSC Denise, Marlen, Erietta and Falcon Royal carrying Container, Palm oil, Coal and Gasoline, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Bulk Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Sunday.

A total of 10 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of two ships, Maersk Phuket and Marangas Aseleptus sailed out to sea on Monday (today) morning, while two more ships, Mari Blue and New Liberty are expected to sail on same day afternoon.

KP govt assures SMEDA of close coordination for SME development

LAHORE (APP): The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government has assured the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) of close coordination for implementation of the National SME Policy 2021 and coordination for small and medium enterprises development in the province. A spokesperson said

here on Monday that SMEDA had made great strides towards implementation of the National SME Policy 2021 in an effective manner despite numerous challenges and constraints. He said that it had been acknowledged by the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government through a letter written by Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry that irrespective of scarcity,

Gold rates decline by Rs. 700

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.700 on Monday and was sold at Rs. 239,100 as compared to its sale at Rs. 239,800 the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.600 to Rs.204,990 from Rs.205,590 whereas the rate of 10 gram 22 karat went down to Rs. 187,907 from Rs.188,457, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.



QUETTA: A delegation of Police Plaza Traders led by Haji Malook Agha meeting with Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

Punjab Governor says: Vast opportunities for Pakistani businessmen to export in ASEAN countries

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended the Trade and Tourism Conference on ASEAN at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry today as a special guest. Ambassadors of ASEAN countries, President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kashif Anwar, and officials and executive committee members of the Chamber were present in the conference.

Addressing the conference, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that

there are vast opportunities for Pakistani businessmen to export in ASEAN countries. Similarly, businessmen from ASEAN countries can invest in Pakistan in various sectors. He said that the government has taken various measures to provide facilities to foreign investors. ASEAN member countries can benefit from these facilities, he added. He said that he warmly welcomes the honourable ambassadors of ASEAN countries present in the conference and expressed hope that this conference will play a significant role

in the promotion of trade and tourism relations between Pakistan and ASEAN countries. He said that Pakistan has vast business opportunities for ASEAN countries in various sectors including tourism, agriculture, and export of halal products. He said that Pakistan has a unique position in the world in terms of its natural scenery, cultural heritage, and hospitality. He said that the landscapes of our country have all the features, adding that investment and proper promotion can make Pakistan the centre of tourism.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan Addressing a press conference.

Inspects development projects in city Naqvi directs acceleration of work on Nawaz Sharif interchange underpass project

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Shahdara flyovers and the Nawaz Sharif Interchange Bedian Road underpass projects to assess the progress.

The Shahdara flyovers project is approximately 84 percent complete, while the Nawaz Sharif interchange Bedian Road underpass project has seen about 40 percent of its work finished.

During his visit to the Shahdara flyovers, Mohsin Naqvi closely examined the construction of protective walls and met with the project workers, urging them to continue their hard work diligently. He expressed satisfaction with the progress and instructed the creation of an alternative service road to facilitate traffic flow from Gujranwala. He emphasized the need to elevate the service road to improve traffic management and provided necessary directives to the Director General Lahore Development Authority (LDA) and the contractor to ensure timely

completion of both projects within the specified time frame. This project would permanently resolve traffic issues at entry and exit points of the provincial metropolis, he noted.

Commissioner/ DG LDA Mohammad Ali Randhawa, chief engineer LDA and contractor briefed that work on the Shahdara flyovers projects continues round the clock to achieve timely completion, which will significantly improve daily traffic flow for 300,000 vehicles.



HYDERABAD: Members of Sindh Sabha are blocked road as they are holding protest demonstration for demanding the release of Hindu people kidnapped in Kashmir by dacoits, at Bypass road in Hyderabad.

Ghazanfar says: IRD launched at regional office of Federal Ombudsman

FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Ombudsman was making strenuous efforts to facilitate the masses and in this connection, the regional office had focused on Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) to pass on benefits to the grieved sectors of the economy, said Incharge Regional Secretariat of Federal Ombudsman Faisalabad Syed Ghazanfar Mehdi. Talking to APP

Under-training police officers delegation visits PSCA

LAHORE (APP): A delegation comprising police officers, undergoing training at the Chung Training Centre, visited the Punjab Safe Cities Authority here on Monday.

The delegation was briefed by the Safe Cities officers about working of the authority. The visitors were informed about the operations and monitoring centre, 15 emergency help centres, call dispatch control centre and also briefed about the e-challenging system.

The delegation was told that the PSCA electronic data analysis centre has provided digital evidence in more than 20,000 cases.

The police officers said the Safe City cameras were providing full support in police operations and investigations. The plan is very important for guiding law-enforcement agencies. For that, the scope of the Safe Cities project would be extended to the whole of Punjab.

Situation in GB is completely peaceful

GILGIT (APP): The situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is completely peaceful, Business life is going on as normal in commercial centres and bazaars. According to a statement issued by the Information Department of Gilgit-Baltistan, thousands of tourists from home and abroad are coming to enjoy the natural environment of Gilgit-Baltistan.

According to the statement, anti-national and evil elements are trying to give a negative colour to the peaceful protest by some religious parties in Gilgit-Baltistan on social

Heavy quantity of 'Gutka' seized

FAISALABAD (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) seized a heavy quantity of 'Gutka' (betel quid) and imposed fine on shopkeepers over violation of the laws. A PFA spokesman said here on Monday that a team conducted checking of a grocery store and cold drinks corner near Novelty Bridge Dijkot Road and found 1,100 packets of prohibited 'Gutka' (Rattan and OneZone). Both shopkeepers had stored the prohibited item at secret places of their shops. The PFA team imposed fine on the shopkeepers and warned that they would be sent behind bars.

Minister performs ground breaking of 'Isolation Hospital' at Lahore airport

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Dr Nadeem Jan said on Monday that integrated strategy had been formulated to protect people from diseases and epidemics. He was addressing the ground-breaking ceremony of the 'Isolation Hospital' at Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore.

The minister said that the government was determined to strengthen the

KP CM, US CG discuss collaboration for regional development

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan, held a meeting on Monday with the newly appointed US Consul General, Shante Moore, in Peshawar.

During the meeting, they discussed mutual interests and matters related to cooperation and collaboration between the provincial government and United States' development agencies in various sectors.

Muhammad Azam Khan stated that the KP provincial government viewed cooperation with the US government and agencies in different



KARACHI: Commuters are facing inconvenience during traffic jam due to construction works of new development projects, as slow pace of construction work is creating problems for residents and they demand to concerned department to complete work as soon as possible, located on University road in Karachi.

Minister performs ground breaking of 'Isolation Hospital' at Lahore airport

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International News

Putin denies new grain deal after meeting with Erdogan

Says he won't renew the grain deal until the West meets his demands

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday that there will be no new grain deal in the Black Sea until the West meets his demands.

These comments, reported by the Associated Press, came after he met with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who hoped to restart the agreement that previously allowed Ukraine to export grain and other goods.

Russia halted its war-time Ukrainian grain export deal in July that allowed wheat and other food products to be exported from Ukraine to countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The agreement was brokered by Turkey and the United Nations a year earlier and was critical in sup-

plying wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other commodities that developing nations rely on.

Putin also said Russia was close to finalizing a deal that would provide free grain to six African countries, the AP reported.

In opening remarks, Erdogan said "everyone is looking at the grand corridor issue." Putin also acknowledged this, saying that "issues related to the Ukraine crisis" would also be discussed between the two leaders.

"I know you intend to raise questions about the grain deal. We're open to negotiations on that subject," Putin said to Erdogan.

Since Russia withdrew from the agreement, Erdogan has vowed to help restart the grain initiative

that aimed to avoid a food crisis in parts of African, the Middle East and Asia.

The U.S. has also criticized Putin for leaving the deal. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken challenged countries at a UN Security Council meeting to tell Russia to stop using the Black Sea and Ukraine's grain as "blackmail," and to halt treating those who are hungry and vulnerable as leverage in its "unconscionable war."

The meeting comes as Ukraine has launched a counteroffensive against Moscow's invasion. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced Sunday that he would be replacing Defense Minister Oleksii Reznik, saying the position requires "new approaches."



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during their meeting at Russia's Black Sea resort of Sochi, Russia.

Greece is working with Israel on AI technology to quickly detect wildfires

Monitoring Desk
NICOSIA: Greece is working with Israel on developing artificial intelligence technology that would help in early detection of dangerous wildfires, the Greek prime minister said Monday.

After talks with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu and Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides in the Cypriot capital of Nicosia, Kyriakos Mitsotakis also said that Israel could be

brought into the European Union fold when it comes to civil protection initiatives to better coordinate firefighting efforts.

Israel and Cyprus are among several countries that have dispatched firefighting aircraft and crews to help battle wildfires in Greece that consumed vast tracts of forest over the last two months, including the EU's largest such blaze on record that claimed the lives of 20 people.

Mitsotakis said Greece could act as a proving ground for Israeli AI technology in early detection of wildfires.

"We are already talking to Israel about AI-based solutions that will offer us early detection capabilities," said Mitsotakis.

Netanyahu said the three leaders discussed "going well beyond" dispatching firefighting aircraft and crews by deploying AI systems for early detection.

Pope insists Vatican-China relations are on track but says more work is needed

Monitoring Desk
ABOARD THE PAPAL PLANE: Pope Francis insisted Monday that the Vatican's relations with China were going well but said work must still be done to show Beijing that the Catholic Church isn't beholden to a foreign power.

Francis spoke about the Holy See's dealings with China during a press conference en route home from Mongolia, where Beijing and its crackdown on religious minorities overshadowed an otherwise historic first papal visit to the majority Buddhist nation.

Francis sent a telegram of greetings to Chinese President Xi Jinping as his aircraft flew through China's airspace coming and going to Mongolia. The pontiff also gave a special shout-out to the Chinese people at the end

of his main Mass in Ulaanbaatar. He brought up to the altar the current and retired bishops of Hong Kong to demonstrate his "warm" affection for the Chinese people.

But relations remain strained, particularly over a 5-year-old agreement on nominating Catholic bishops.

The 2018 accord aimed to unite China's estimated 12 million Catholics, who have been divided between an official church and an underground church loyal to Rome.

The latter emerged when the Communists came to power and diplomatic relations between the Holy See and China ruptured.

On Monday in Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning was asked about the pope's Sunday greeting to the Chinese people.

Algiers says Moroccan jet skiers shot after 'refusal to comply'

Monitoring Desk
ALGIERS: Algeria said on Sunday its security forces had opened fire this week on a group of jet skiers from Morocco after they refused to comply with orders to stop.

"During a security patrol inside our territorial waters, a coastguard unit intercepted on Tuesday at 7:47pm, three jet skis that clandestinely entered our territorial waters," a defence ministry press release said. "After issuing an audible warning and ordering them to stop several times, the suspects refused to comply and fled," it added of Tuesday's shooting incident, in which two tourists were killed. The defence ministry said that after several warning rounds, "shots were fired, forcing one of the jet skis to stop, and the other two fled."

Biden 'disappointed' that Xi set to miss G20 summit in India

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden on Sunday expressed disappointment that Chinese leader Xi Jinping would not attend the G20 summit in India this week, as Washington seeks to repair relations with Beijing. Asked about Xi reportedly not planning to join the gathering in New Delhi, Biden told reporters, "I am disappointed, but I am going to get to see him," without elaborating.

Bilateral ties between the United States and China face a long list of problems,

from trade disputes to Taiwan's future to the expansive Chinese presence in the South China Sea.

The United States has been working to restore a more effective working relationship, sending a series of senior officials to China in recent months despite continuing friction. On Thursday, a senior EU official said that Xi would not be at the G20, represented instead by Premier Li Qiang. Xi and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held rare face-to-face talks.

Russia attacks Danube port, on border with Romania

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russian drones targeted Ukraine's southern Odesa region in the early hours of Sunday, with Moscow hitting a Danube port on the border with NATO member Romania in an attack condemned by Bucharest. The attack came on the eve of a summit in Russia between Vladimir Putin and Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who hopes to revive the Black Sea grain deal. Ukraine said Russia had hit the Odesa region with a barrage of drones.

Air strike in Khartoum kills 20 civilians

Monitoring Desk

WAD MADANI: Residents of Khartoum awoke on Sunday to artillery and rocket fire, hours after an air strike in the city's south killed at least 20 civilians including two children, according to Sudanese activists.

"The death toll from the aerial bombardment" in southern Khartoum "has risen to 20 civilian fatalities," according to a statement by the neighbourhood's resistance committee.

They are among many volunteer groups that used to organise pro-democracy demonstrations and now provide assistance to families caught in the crossfire between the army and paramilitary fighters.

In an earlier statement, they said the victims included two children, and warned that more fatalities went unrecorded, as "their bodies could not be moved to the hospital because they were severely burned or torn to pieces in the bombing".

Since war began between the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces on April 15, around 5,000 people have been killed, according to estimates from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

The Sudanese Armed Forces control the skies and have carried out regular air strikes while RSF fighters dominate the streets of the capital.



Pope Francis attends a meeting with charity workers and the inauguration of the House of Mercy in Ulaanbaatar.

Sweden, EU confirm Swedish national has been held in Iran since last year

Monitoring Desk
STOCKHOLM: Sweden on Monday said a Swedish citizen in his 30s was arbitrarily detained in Iran last year and called for his immediate release.

The Swedish government didn't identify the man, but the New York Times said he was Johan Floderus, a Swede who had been working for the European Union's diplomatic corps. Citing anonymous sources, the newspaper said Floderus was arrested on a private trip to Iran for possible use by Tehran as a bargaining chip in efforts to

seek concessions from the West.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanaani, told the semi-official Fars news agency that he had no information on the case. The Swedish Foreign Ministry said the man was detained in Iran in April last year but declined to give details.

"The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Sweden in Tehran are working very intensively on the case and are maintaining close contact with the EU," the ministry said in an email.

PM for promoting PPP to reduce govt expenditures, improve performance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said promoting public private partnership in the country could curtail government expenditures and improve performance of the projects.

He stressed the need to further promote public private partnership with respect to the construction of motorways and highways across the country.

Chairing a high level meeting of Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPA), the prime minister said with infrastructure development, the connectiv-

ity of different areas of the country would be improved, thus strengthening the national integration.

He directed the relevant authorities to present a comprehensive plan with respect to the East-West connectivity to provide better access between Western and Eastern areas of the country.

He said additional opportunities were required with respect to the promotion of public private partnership.

During the meeting, it was informed that projects worth Rs 646 billion were launched in the last two

years under public private partnership.

Direct savings of Rs 150 billion were ensured in terms of government subsidies through the approved projects of public private partnership, the meeting was told.

The meeting was further informed that Sialkot-Kharan Motorway, Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway, Kharian-Rawalpindi Motorway, Karachi Circular Railway and outsourcing of Islamabad International Airport were among the top Public Private Partnership Authority projects. "Edu-

cation, information technology and export sectors are also among the priorities," it was added.

It was informed that the PPPA was working to increase awareness about the public private partnership, training programmes, and enhancing capacities.

The meeting was attended by Caretaker Federal Minister for Planning Sami Saeed, Advisor to the prime minister Ahad Cheema, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Muhammad Jehanzeb and other relevant government officials.



KARACHI: Activists of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Women Wing are holding rally on the eve of International Hijab Day, at Karachi press club.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting on Public Private Partnership Authority.

Quran to guide human mind until end of time; says Aneeq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Monday said the Quran would continue to serve as the guiding light for the human mind throughout eternity.

In a briefing held at the Ministry's Research and Reference Department, he made a significant announcement and also issued directives regarding the upcoming Seerat Conference.

During the briefing, the minister expressed the belief that Islam was a comprehensive and all-encom-

passing religion.

He stressed the importance of addressing contemporary issues and modern challenges while remaining firmly rooted in the teachings of Islam.

He stated that their love for religion was unwavering, but to provide guidance to the world, they must harness the knowledge found within the Quranic sciences.

Furthermore, Minister Aneeq highlighted the need for greater Muslim involvement in the fields of modern science and ongoing research.

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Finance Minister chairs ECNEC meeting

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs and Privatisation Dr. Shamsah Akhtar chaired the meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), today.

Mr. Sami Saeed, Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Mr. Shahid Ashraf Tarar, Minister for Communications, Maritime Affairs & Railways, Mr. Muhammad Ali, Minister for Power & Petroleum, Mr. Ahmad Rasool Bangash Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Excise & Taxation KPK, Mr. Muhammad Younas Dhaga Minister for Finance, Revenue Sindh Government, Mr. Amjad Rasheed, Minister for Fi-

nance & Revenue Balochistan, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers from Federal Ministries and Provincial departments participated in the meeting.

The ECNEC considered and approved project of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination titled "Emergency Plan for Polio Eradication (3rd revised)" at a cost of USD 1784.93 million including grant from GPEI partners of USD 1197.93 million, Islamic Development Bank loan of USD 552 million and AFD loan of USD 35 million.

The project will supply polio eradication vaccines all over Pakistan and will be executed by WHO and UNICEF.



LARKANA: Heirs of Waqar Khichi are holding protest demonstration for demanding immediate recovery of Waqar Khichi, who was missing since 7th June, at Larkana press club.

Milk retailers protest for price hike in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): After the sugar and vegetables crisis, Karachi is likely to witness a milk crisis as well on Monday. Milk vendors across the metropolis have announced the suspension of milk purchases, following the tensions escalating between milk sellers and dairy farm owners.

As per the details, the milk vendors "in protest" announced to suspend the milk procurement from Monday [Today] as the price hike decision - which was delayed on July 01 by the milk sellers and dairy farm owners - is not being reversed. Last week, the Karachi Milk Retailers Welfare Association announced to close the sale points across the metropolis from Monday for an indefinite period for demanding a price hike.

The retailers have announced to stop the sale of loose milk across Karachi from Monday for an indefinite period. The milk retailer association staged a protest at the Karachi Press Club (KPC) today and demanded a hike in the milk price. The association gave a 72-hour ultimatum to the local administration to make a decision regarding the milk price.

The protesters said that they could not sell milk at the current prices after purchasing the stock from dairy farmers at high rates.

The association's office-bearer said that the dairy farmers were selling milk to the retailers at Rs214 to Rs218 per litre and the shop owners should get the least margin of Rs20 per litre.

SHC orders to send corruption reference against Dr Asim back to NAB chairman

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh High Court on Monday ordered to send the corruption reference against PPP leader Dr Asim Hussain back to NAB chairman, says in media reports.

A two-member bench headed by Justice KK Agha pronounced the decision while hearing the corruption reference of Rs17 billion against Dr Asim Hussain and others in the high court.

The Sindh High Court accepted the petition of Dr Asim Hussain and others regarding the jurisdiction of the accountability court. In the court, Dr Asim's lawyer Farooq H. Naik took the stance that a reference had been made against Dr Asim as a minister accusing him of giving gas to companies of his choice.

ing the world, they must harness the knowledge found within the Quranic sciences.

Furthermore, Minister Aneeq highlighted the need for greater Muslim involvement in the fields of modern science and ongoing research.

Karachi police arrests four 'street criminals'

KARACHI (INP): Sindh police conducted an operation at Karachi's Bilal colony and arrested four suspected individuals on Monday.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in his statement claimed that all four arrested individuals were involved in street crime activities in the metropolis.

Karachi police, arrests, four street criminals

"The suspects used to open fire, if the victim resisted during robbery, and often used police caps during their criminal activities," SSP maintained.

The accused had also robbed Special Branch official Tanveer, and snatched his mobile phone, official weapon and flee from the scene.

Tanveer's mobile phone has also been recovered from the possession of the arrested accused.

Karachi likely to face water crisis as power breakdown hits Dhabeji

KARACHI (INP): Karachi's Dhabeji pumping station on Monday experienced a power breakdown, affecting water supply in the metropolis.

According to the details, the Dhabeji pumping station - responsible for supplying water across Karachi - experienced a power breakdown due to which the citizens of Karachi are likely to face a shortage of water.

The spokesperson of Water Corporation stated that due to the power outage the 72-inch diameter line, designated as line number 5 is affected.

The spokesman stated that the water corporation officials are at the site and conducting a thorough inspection of the affected line, seeking to identify the root cause of the problem.

Sindhi for enhancing Pak-Turkiye cooperation in education, culture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi Monday emphasized enhancing cooperation between Pakistan and Turkiye in the fields of culture and education.

He was speaking during the event titled "One Hundred Years of Magnitude: Pak-Turk Affinity," organized by the National Institute for Historical and Cultural Research (NIHCR), Quaid-i-Azam University, and the Yunus Emre Institute, Turkish Cultural Center. The minister stated that the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Turkiye were an unprecedented manifestation of brotherhood and love, which cannot be compared. He said that the Muslims of the subcontinent actively participated in the Khilafat Movement and added that the new generation should be aware of their cultural identity.

"We are proud that our region is home to the great civilizations of the world. Thousands of years ago, when the world was plunged into darkness, the civilization of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa were the

cradles of knowledge and wisdom" he said. Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah while addressing the event said that a talented and creative mind was the hallmark of any nation. It is through the promotion of literature and art that nations come closer to each other and the intimacy between them increases.

The guest of honor, Ambassador of Turkiye, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Picaci said that Turkiye values and respects the evergreen relationship with Pakistan. In every field of life, both of them have supported each other wholeheartedly.

He said, "We should increase cooperation in education, health, tourism, and other matters of mutual interest so that the effectiveness and recognition of this relationship may become deeper and stronger." Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor, Quaid-i-Azam University, Professor Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar (SI) elaborated on the profound connection between Pakistan and Turkiye, rooted in the concept of "Tawheed" a connection transcending time and space.



HYDERABAD: Members of Sindh Sabha are blocked road as they are holding protest demonstration for demanding the release of Hindu people kidnapped in Kashmir by dacoits, at Bypass road in Hyderabad.

DC reviews arrangements made for Chehlum Shuhada-e-Karbala

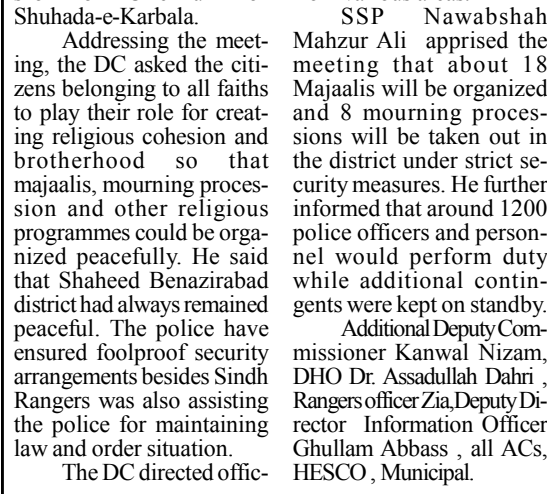
HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Shariyari Gul on Monday presided over a meeting to review arrangements made for maintaining law and order in the district and ensure cleanliness in the limits of mourning processions and majalis on the occasion of Chehlum of Shuhada-e-Karbala.

Addressing the meeting, the DC asked the citizens belonging to all faiths to play their role for creating religious cohesion and brotherhood so that majalis, mourning procession and other religious programmes could be organized peacefully. He said that Shaheed Benazirabad district had always remained peaceful. The police have ensured foolproof security arrangements besides Sindh Rangers was also assisting the police for maintaining law and order situation.

The DC directed officers of Municipal committee and all town committees to ensure cleanliness and lighting arrangements on Chehlum. He asked officers of the Health department to set up medical camps and availability of ambulances on the routes of mourning processions to be taken out from various areas.

SSP Nawabshah Mahzur Ali apprised the meeting that about 18 Majalis will be organized and 8 mourning processions will be taken out in the district under strict security measures. He further informed that around 1200 police officers and personnel would perform duty while additional contingents were kept on standby.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Kanwal Nizam, DHO Dr. Assadullah Dahri, Rangers officer Zia, Deputy Director Information Officer Ghulam Abbass, all ACs, HESCO, Municipal.



KASHMIRE: Members of Hindu Panchayat are blocked road as they are holding protest demonstration for demanding the release of Hindu people kidnapped in Kashmir by dacoits, at National Highway of Sindh-Punjab, Balochistan.

Admiral (ret) Asif Sandila calls on PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Admiral (Retd.) Muhammad Asif Sandila called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday and discussed matters relating to mutual interests.

Asif Sandila congratulated the prime minister on assuming the charge of his office and expressed best wishes for him.

PM Kakar appreciated the services of "Moawin Foundation", which was working for the welfare of marginalized segments of rural areas under the leadership of Asif Sandila.

ing the world, they must harness the knowledge found within the Quranic sciences.

Furthermore, Minister Aneeq highlighted the need for greater Muslim involvement in the fields of modern science and ongoing research.

16 months' performance of Interior Ministry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's governance trajectory observed a major shift in the midst of constitutional, political and economic chaos in last five years but yet achieved county's name cleared from Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in October 2022, through effective diplomacy and hard work.

SIFC continues to steer investment related initiatives at fast pace

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) continues to steer investment related initiatives at fast pace through exhaustive engagements involving all stakeholders.

Accordingly, 4th meeting of its Executive Committee (Functional Tier) was held on Monday with the objectives to remove bottlenecks and improve overall investment environment.

The meeting was chaired by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and attended by the National Coordinator for SIFC, federal and provincial ministers concerned, and high level government officials, a press release said.

The ministries concerned presented progress on various aspects and highlighted areas needing special focus.

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The committee showed its satisfaction regarding the ongoing outreach strategy of the SIFC and directed to further build on it by engaging business community and missions abroad.

At the end, the committee recommended measures to further improve the ecosystem for investment in the country with focus on, inter alia, policy interventions, visa facilitation for investors, dispute management / resolution mechanism, and technical refinement of approved projects in agriculture, IT, minerals and energy sectors.

The matters recommended by the Executive Committee will be presented at the Apex Committee Meeting, to be chaired by the prime minister, for their approval and implementation.

Sindh DG health orders action against sale of medicines at exorbitant rates

KARACHI (INP): Sindh's Directorate General (DG) Health on Monday took note of drug price hikes and issued police supervision against illegal marketing.

According to the details, Sindh's Directorate General (DG) of Health expressed concern about the price increase of medicines and penned down a letter to the Drug Inspector.

In the letter, DG health directed the District Health Officer (DHO) to take immediate actions under police supervision against illegal marketing of drugs.

DG Health in his letter sought a report from the drug officer for non-supply of medicines and sales of medicine in black-market.

There are many medicines which are not available in the market.

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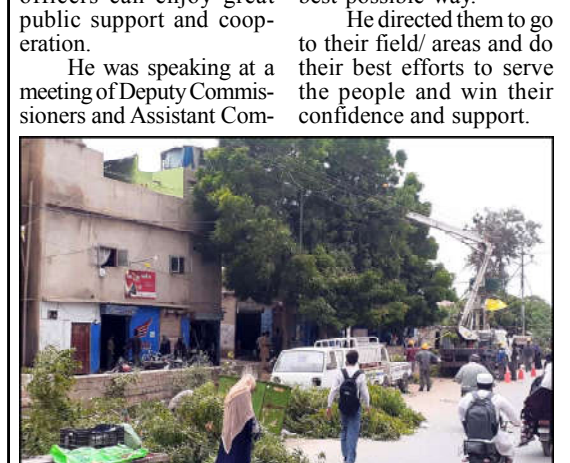
Commissioner Sukkur vows to provide better services to people

SUKKUR (APP): Commissioner Sukkur, Ghulam Mustafa Phull on Monday directed the district administration officers including deputy commissioners and assistant commissioners to improve liaison with the people and provide better services to them so that the officers can enjoy great public support and cooperation.

He was speaking at a meeting of Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners of the Sukkur, Khairpur and Ghotki districts at his office.

The Commissioner emphasized that officers of district administrations would have to rebuild public confidence in them by showing their commitment to serve the people in the best possible way.

He directed them to go to their field/ areas and do their best efforts to serve the people and win their confidence and support.



KARACHI: Workers of Karachi Electric (KE) are chopping branches of a tree to save KE supply transmission lines, at Malir area in Karachi.

Director Russian Friendship House for support to MSAP in chess promotion

KARACHI (APP): Director Russian Centre of Science & Culture (Friendship House) R. M. Prokhorov has reiterated his continued commitment to Mind Sports of Chess in arranging chess events and other facilities required to hold chess events.

He recommitted the support of Grand Master / ex-world champion & trainer Anatoly Karpov for training Pakistan National Masters.

He said this while inaugurating Engro Women Training Program here, said a statement on Monday. Mind Sports Association of Pakistan (MSAP) holding the program as part of women empowerment.

Around 25 women training program including some students of Karachi.

CEO MSAP Tariq Rasheed Khan complimented Prokhorov for his support for this program and plans for arranging ex Russian chess star Anatoly Karpov for training Pakistan chess masters.

Pakistan's chess star Apparent Grand Master Mahmood Lodhi is chief instructor with FIDE Master Omer Khan and Muhammad Waqar - both qualified trainer and coaches.

MSAP's Syed Akhtar Sami is supervising overall program.

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