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COAS underscores \$100bn investment potential in talks with business leaders

Assures that money exchanges would be brought under the purview of taxation, fostering transparency in dollar exchange and interbank rates

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar alongside prominent business figures met with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir, here on Sunday.

Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi also attended the meeting in which country's economic trajectory was discussed in detail. LCCI spokesman confirmed this to the media.

During the meeting, General Asim Munir highlighted the pivotal role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC),

emphasizing its potential to attract substantial investments of up to 100 billion dollars from countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and others. To bolster economic decision-making, he revealed the formation of task forces focused on economic matters and different sectors.

Kashif Anwar, in alignment with the broader business community, recommended active engagement with all chambers to incorporate diverse perspectives into the task force's agenda.

Addressing critical issues faced by the public,

Kashif Anwar proposed a reduction in income and sales tax rates on electricity bills. He noted that the populace grapples with the burden of high taxation on electricity, impacting daily lives, businesses and common people. Additionally, Kashif Anwar introduced a pragmatic approach to fuel adjustment charges, advocating for their collection during the winter months when electricity consumption is lower, alleviating financial stress on consumers.

Recognizing the pivotal role of exchange rates in Pakistan's economic

landscape, the LCCI President called for greater control over the rates of the US dollar in both interbank and open markets.

The COAS General Asim Munir responded positively, assuring that money exchanges would be brought under the purview of taxation, fostering transparency in dollar exchange and interbank rates.

President LCCI also pointed out that the disparity between the State Bank's rate and the Hundi rate often leads to the preference for Hundi channels

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KARACHI: Activists of Pakistan Central Muslim League hold a protest in favor of their demands outside press club, in Provincial Capital.



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi talking to media persons at Karachi Press Club.

Domki emphasizes upon taking steps to improve state of cleanliness on war footing grounds in Quetta

Independent Report
QUETTA: Welcoming the initiation of measures for improvement of Quetta city by the district administration, the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has directed all concerned departments to prepare coordinated course of action for restoration of traditional beauty of Quetta city.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, the Chief Minister said that Quetta is face and identity, therefore, it is welcoming to start anti-encroachment and cleanliness in the metropolis.

The caretaker Chief minister said that Quetta city has suffered numerous problems due to lack of interest and planning by the concerned departments.

He stressed the need to take steps for bringing improvement in the overall cleanliness situation of Quetta city on war footing grounds.

He regretfully pointed out that shortage of water is serious issue in Quetta, the solution of which is priority of the provincial government.

In addition to this, the caretaker Chief Minister also directed to the Com-

missioner to bring stability in the prices of daily used commodities.

Referring the Quetta development Package, Mir Ali Mardan Domki said that early completion of Quetta Development Package would be ensured. He said that there would be marked improvement in the situation of Quetta after completion of the projects included in the Quetta package.

The Chief Minister assured that the Commissioner and his administration team would be fully patronized for resolving the issues of Quetta city.



KARACHI: Insan Dost Welfare Chairman, Qais Mansoor Sheikh is providing freepetrol to motorcyclists amid rising inflation, at a fuel station located on Orangi Town.

Shaan-e-Pakistan CM Balochistan Awards to be held on Sept. 5, announces Jan Achakzai

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Government has announced to honour the "extraordinary heroes" in recognition of their meritorious services in different sectors in the province by conferring them awards.

Announcing this, the caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai said that the Shaan-e-Pakistan Chief Minister Balochistan would be conferred to the otherwise unsung heroes in a special ceremony to be held on September 5, 2023.

These heroes would be paid rich tributes at the ceremony to be hosted by the Culture department, Government of Balochistan in collaboration with the Balochistan Youth Empowerment Society and Balochistan TV.

These awards, as mentioned above, would be given to those individuals and organizations who have

rendered remarkable services in education, health, sports, arts, culture, social services, business and law and order in the province.

He said that these awards are actually a way to acclaim achievements of our heroes and celebrate them.

Jan Achakzai said that these stars of the province are working hard and with devotion to change the outlook of Balochistan. He also said that these awards speak high about capabilities of our people. He said that he encourage every one and urged the people of Balochistan to appreciate these awards and ceremony to be held in this regard.

Meanwhile, the caretaker Minister Youth Affairs and Sports, Jamal Raisani has also welcomed the CM Balochistan Awards and termed it an improvement development towards encouragement of our talented youth.

Jaranwala tragedy Investigation reveals incident pre-plan

FAISALABAD (Online): In the Faisalabad tragedy of Jaranwala, the investigation of the accused who desecrated the Holy Quran and blasphemy has been completed. The personal grudge of two Christians became the cause of the incident, one of them was planned to be murdered.

Sources told Online that according to the report of the investigation team, the arrested accused Parvez Kudu prepared a horrible plan to trap the rival.

The accused Parvez suspected that Raja Umair was having a relationship with his wife, Allah Dutta, who took money from Parvez Kudu to trap and blaspheme the Quran to kill Raja Umair, is in custody.

On the identification of Parvez, the rope used to hang the pages of the Holy Quran in the street has also been recovered.

Further investigation is going on in this regard and the report of the investigation team will be submitted to the higher orders soon.

IMF conditions, govt considers Rs.5 price hike electricity tariff

ISLAMABAD (Online): The federal government is considering increasing the basic electricity tariff by Rs 4.96 paise per unit during this month to meet the terms of the agreement with the IMF, which will be borne by the consumers.

According to media reports, the federal government will decide to impose basic tariff and additional electricity burden on consumers after receiving subsidy concession from IMF.

The decision taken by NEPRA (National Electricity Power Regulatory Authority) on the request of electricity distribution com-

panies, if the decision is implemented, the domestic consumers will have a slab-wise burden.

The tariff of 100 units per month will be increased from 13 point four to 18 point 36 rupees per unit without taxes and surcharges.

The bill of a user using 100 units will be Rs 1836. The tariff for 200 units per month will be Rs 23.91 per unit and the bill will increase from Rs 3700 to Rs 4700 per month.

The electricity bill of those using 300 units per month will increase from 6,000 to 8,000.



LAHORE: US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Bloom meeting with Pakistan Muslim League Chief organizer and vice president Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Maryam praises US role in providing critical supplies amid floods, corona era

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League chief organizer and vice president Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with the US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Bloom Sunday.

During the meeting, both sides discussed importance of historical and bilateral relations between both countries.

Earlier, Pakistan, USAID Deputy Adminis-

tration, security, peace and regional stability was also emphasized.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif also appreciated the efforts made by the American government during the most difficult conditions of COVID-19 pandemic and floods.

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Record surge in rates of sugar in Quetta

Independent Report
QUETTA: Record increase has been witnessed in the price of sugar in retail market of Quetta city on Sunday.

According to the market sources, the sugar price crossed double century of rupees and was sold at Rs. 210 per kilogram in the open retail market and shops.

The sharp increase of Rs. 20 rupees was recorded in price of sugar during last two days. The sugar, which was available at Rs. 190 on Friday last, was sold at Rs. 210 on Sunday.

The data of price of sugar available shows that it is the highest ever price of per kilogram sugar recorded in Quetta in the history.

While per kilogram sugar was available at Rs. 210 per kilogram in the main and other parts of the city, the same was being sold at Rs. 220 per kilogram in the outskirts of Quetta, the sources informed.



QUETTA: Relatives of Missing persons hold a protest in favor of their demands outside press club, in Provincial Capital.

May 9 was an attempt to stage a coup: PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar has said that what happened in the country on May 9 this year was an attempt to stage a coup and civil war.

In a programme of a private news channel, he said that the target of the May 9 incidents was the current Army Chief and his team.

The caretaker prime minister said that he did not want to give the impression that any revenge was being taken on the May 9 accused.

"But, if action is not taken according to the law against the political party willing to resort to violence and violate the laws of the country, [then] we will be seen as a party to this matter," he stated.

"Electricity is not an issue on which there should be a wheel-jam strike. We have a lot of sympathy for the segment of the society that is burdened with electricity bills," he remarked.

He said that the decision regarding closing the shops at night would be taken by taking the provinces into confidence.

"The implementation of the decision will soon be witnessed. We do not want to take a decision in haste on the issue of electricity. We do not want to take such a decision that should be taken back," he added.

Interim Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar has said that as per the law, deciding the date for general elections was the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) preroga-

tive. The caretaker premier gave this statement during his first interview after assuming the top office on media — aired on Sunday — when asked about the ambiguity on whether the authority to decide and announce the poll date rested with the president or ECP.

The issue arose after President Dr Arif Alvi invited Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja last month for a meeting to "fix an appropriate date" for general elections.

This was after the ECP expressed its inability to hold elections within the constitutionally mandated period following the notification of the latest 2023

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Four persons burnt alive as vehicle catches fire in Nushki

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least four persons including women were burnt alive after the vehicle they were traveling in caught fire near Nushki town in Balochistan on early Sunday morning.

According to police sources, the incident occurred in Nushki where two vehicles collided with each other. As result, both vehicles caught fire wherein four people were burnt alive, a private news channel reported on Sunday.

Police and rescue workers put out the fire, besides retrieving the bodies from the wreckage of the vehicles.

Protest demo held for recovery of missing persons

Independent Report
QUETTA: The protest demonstration was held under the auspices of Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) outside the Quetta press club on Sunday afternoon.

The families including women and children of the missing persons as well as well office bearers of VBMP and political leaders of different parties participated in the demonstration.

They were carrying portraits of their dear ones allegedly disappeared from different parts of the province.

Islamia University's obscene videos scandal declared 'baseless'

MULTAN (INP): The inquiry commission has declared the Islamia University's obscene videos scandal baseless.

According to sources, the inquiry commission stated that no videos have been found in the security officer's phone and the videos have no connection with Islamia University. The forensic report of the video has also been issued.

CM Domki thankful to PM for 100 Green buses for Quetta

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has thanked the caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar on announcement about giving 100 green buses for Quetta.

In an official statement issued here on Sunday, the caretaker Chief Minister said that we are thankful to Prime Minister who announced to give 100 green buses to Quetta.

He said that the modern travelling facility would be provided to the citizens

by starting Green bus service on other routes of Quetta city.

It may be mentioned here that the Green bus services were launched by the previous government in Quetta.

Initially, eight Green buses were started on route starting from Balchi to Sariab road.

The caretaker Chief Minister had also traveled on the Green bus after assuming the office. He had appreciated the initiative of former government in this regard.



QUETTA: Senior Columnist Tariq Khan Tareen meeting with Caretaker Provincial Home Minister Mir Zubair Jamali.

Murtaza Solangi says: Situation in GB completely peaceful

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Sunday that situation in Gilgit-Baltistan was completely peaceful and speculative news about deployment of Pakistan Army were completely baseless. In a post on his X account, quoted a statement released by the Home Department of Gilgit-Baltistan which said "it has been clarified that the situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is completely peaceful."

All roads, trade centers, business activities and educational institutions in Gilgit-Baltistan are open as usual, Solangi said in the statement. The services of Pakistan Army and Civil Armed Forces have been requisitioned only to maintain law and order on the eve of Chehnam of Hazrat Imam Hussain (A.S).

The minister said that services of the Pakistan Army and the civil armed forces had been requisitioned "only to maintain law and order" on the eve of the chehnam. "Moreover, special measures have been taken for the security of the procession routes and imambargahs as per past practice," he said. The minister said that the GB home department had also stated that Section 144 had been imposed across the region to maintain law and order, protect lives and property of the people and avoid any untoward incident. Moreover, special measures have been taken for the security of the procession routes and imambargahs as per the past practice, he maintained. It has been further stated by the GB Home Department that Section 144 of CrPC 1898 has been imposed across the region to maintain law and order, protect the lives and property of the people.

Miraz, Shanto, Shoriful help Bangladesh ease past Afghanistan to keep Super 4 chances alive

LAHORE (APP): Centuries from Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Najamul Hasan Shanto and 4-fer from Taskin Ahmed helped Bangladesh ease past Afghanistan by 89 runs to keep their hopes alive of making to the Super 4 stage of the Asia Cup 2023 at the Gaddafi stadium on Sunday night. Taskin Ahmed claimed four wickets while Shoriful Islam bagged three wickets to help Bangladesh restrict Afghanistan to 245 runs in 44.3 overs. Hasan Mahmud and Mehidy Hasan Miraz claimed one wicket each to keep Bangladesh's hopes of qualifying for the Super 4 stage of the Asia Cup 2023 alive. Afghanistan lost their way in the beginning of the chase after fire-brand wicket-keeper batsman Rahmanullah Gurbaz fell cheaply off Shoriful Islam. Ibrahim Zadran 75 (74) and Hashmatullah Shahidi 51 (59) hit half-centuries but the batsmen could not keep pace with the mounting pressure of a big total above 300.

Earlier, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Najamul Hossain Shanto scored individual centuries in an unbroken partnership of 196* runs for the fourth wicket on a placid pitch to help Bangladesh post mammoth 334-5 runs in the group stage of the Asia Cup 2023. Mehidy 112 (119) and Shanto 104 (105) got together with the team reeling at 63-2 and went on to build a remarkable partnership on a hot and humid afternoon with the mercury reaching 37 degree celsius. Both the batters kept the Afghan spin bowling trio of Rashid Khan, Mujeeb ur Rehman and Muhammad Nabi at bay and scored at will during the unbroken partnership which was halted only after Mehidy Hasan had to retire hurt due to cramps. The weather took its toll on the players' fitness as the players resorted to three short water breaks besides the two official water breaks. The second water break was taken even earlier after 31 overs instead of the 33. The Afghanistan bowlers could claim only two wickets with Mujeeb ur Rehman and Gulbadin Naib claiming one wicket each while three batsmen were run out including Najamul Hossain Shanto 104 (105), Mushfiqur Raheem 25 (15) and Shamim Hossain 11 (6).

Miraz played a fighting knock as he suffered from severe cramps during latter part of his innings and had to ask for treatment on three different occasions during his memorable knock of 119 runs. Mujeeb ur Rehman was the other bowler to complete his quota for 62 runs while Gulbadin bowled eight overs. Fazalhaq Farooqi was the most expensive among the bowlers as he conceded 53 runs off his 6 wicketless overs, while Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi conceded 66 and 50 runs respectively off their quota of 10 overs.

Karim Janat was somewhat economical as he conceded 39 runs off six overs. Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam were the pick of the bowlers among the Bangladesh bowling line-up and they claimed four and three wickets respectively for 36 and 44 runs. Hasan Mahmud and Mehidy Hasan Miraz claimed one wicket each. Shakib Al Hasan and debutant Shamim Hossain conceded 10 runs off the only over he bowled while Afif Hosain gave away 6 runs off the one over. Afghanistan did not start well in pursuit of 335 after Rahmanullah Gurbaz fell for 1 (7) in the 3rd over of the innings. Ibrahim Zadran Ibrahim Zadran was the most successful batsman for Afghanistan who scored 75 (74) while Hashmatullah Shahidi played a captain's knock 51 (59) in an effort to overhaul the total but fell to Shoriful Islam off a miscued hit in the 38th over with the team total at 196.



KARACHI: Members of Pakistan Young Hindu Forum are holding protest demonstration for demanding the release of Hindu people kidnapped in Kashmir by dacoits, at Teen Talwar in Karachi.

Sutlej water drops to low flood at Ganda Singh Head works

HAVELI LAKHA/BAHAWALNAGAR (NNI): Sutlej River water has dropped to low flood at Head Ganda Singh on Sunday with water level as high as 17 feet. The water inflow has been 38,966 cusecs at Ganda Sindh Wala Headworks in Sutlej river. The water flow in river has returned to normal at Sulemanki with 40,389 cusecs inflow and 26,467 cusecs outflow. Sutlej has been in low flood at Bhookan Pattan, district administration Bahawalnagar has said. "Around 1,66,000 people have become homeless and evacuated in 150 kilometers river belt in flooding," district administration shared. "Crops standing over 1,60,000 acres have destroyed, while 17,549 houses have fully destroyed or partially damaged," according to figures. "Floodwater affected 157 villages and swept away scores of temporary dykes and link roads." "Lank link of over 100 settlements has been disrupted, while dozens of settlements are still flooded," according to district administration report. "Around 143 schools in the river region have been affected and power supply disrupted at 18 feeders in flood-hit areas." "The rescue teams evacuated 13,000 people, stranded in floodwater, to safer places," administration stated. District administration has setup 30 flood camps with necessities. Evacuees facing severe hardships, according to the district report. Ferocious flow of the river water has swept away protective dykes and roads in Sutlej belt.



LAHORE: Bangladesh's Mehidy Hasan Miraz plays a shot during the Asia Cup 2023 one-day international (ODI) cricket match between Bangladesh and Afghanistan at the Gaddafi Stadium, in Provincial Capital.

COAS underscores..

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economy, Kashif Anwar proposed an innovative approach. He recommended incentivizing the grey economy to transition into the formal, white economy, offering a strategic solution to combat this pervasive issue. President LCCI said that the expansion of the tax base would remain elusive as long as the grey economy remains unincorporated, unable to contribute to the formal, white economy. This gathering exemplified the shared dedication of both the business community and the military leadership to work collaboratively in addressing pressing economic challenges and propelling the nation toward growth. As Pakistan continues to navigate economic complexities, this constructive dialogue signifies a promising step toward finding practical solutions and fostering economic prosperity for the nation, he concluded.

When it comes to remittances. He emphasized that if these rates were aligned, remittances would naturally flow through the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Kashif Anwar emphasized the importance of an enhanced and sustained interactive dialogue between the business community and relevant authorities. He expressed concerns over the prevailing lack of responsiveness to suggestions put forth by the business sector. Furthermore, Kashif Anwar called for a unified commitment from political parties, suggesting the signing of a charter of the economy as a precondition before any upcoming elections. Expanding on General Asim Munir's earlier remarks regarding the existence of a grey economy, accounting for 2 to 3 times of the overall documented

PTI Chief is responsible for economic crisis: Talal

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Talal Chaudhry said that Imran Khan is responsible for the economic crises and disaster in the country. Reacting to Sheikh Rasheed's statement, he recommended that he should advise state terrorist Imran Khan to accept his wrongdoings instead of defending himself in international courts. He denied going into any negotiation with Imran Khan who is a watch thief, a cipher conspirator and May 9 perpetrator. He said that the criminals of May 9 and those who threw petrol bombs at the police are talking about peace today which is a shameful act. He also taunted Sheikh Rasheed for his hiding and urged him to appear before the court and join his 'Boss' [Imran Khan] in jail. He said that with each passing day, Imran Khan, his domestic and international facilitators and their agenda are becoming clear. He blamed Imran's children are growing up at Goldsmith's house and funding for his party has come from Israel and India.

PPP not to form alliance with others: Nisar

THATTA (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh President, Nisar Khoro, declared during a press conference in Thatta that the PPP will not form any alliances with other parties, including the PML-N. He emphasized that the PPP will contest the general elections independently on its own platform. Khoro stated that the introduction of a presidential system in the country would require constitutional amendments. If anyone is daring enough to challenge the constitution, he should demonstrate conviction by bringing forward the presidential system, he warned. He admitted that opposition alliances have been forming against the PPP, but remarked that such unity is a sign of desperation before the elections. Khoro warned the caretaker government against attempting to rule for an extended period, as it would undoubtedly trigger a strong reaction from the people. Furthermore, he expressed that the People's Party is not opposed to accountability, but believes that cases should be proven in court.

HEC bars universities from direct agreement with foreign NGOs

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has barred universities from making direct agreements with international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). As per details, in a letter to Vice Chancellors and heads of educational institutes, Chairman HEC Dr Mukhtar Malik stopped the universities from signing contracts with international NGOs without the permission from foreign ministry. He stated that universities are working with international organizations on sensitive and political matters which does not portray a positive image of Pakistan. Earlier, the federal cabinet approved the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Amendment Bill 2023.



QUETTA: Members of Tanzeem Hidayat Noor League are holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden and Denmark, at Quetta Press Club.

Maryam praises US..

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affected individuals to assist in their recovery, risk reduction, and resilience. The assistance will address worsening food insecurity and malnutrition and help curb the spread of disease. In addition, this funding will support humanitarian partners to provide nutritious food to mothers and their children, help families rebuild local infrastructure to protect them from future disasters, and increase protection services to prevent gender-based violence and support survivors. This new funding will reach over 20 million flood-



KARACHI: Inspector General (IG) Sindh, Riffat Mukhtar presides over a high-level meeting, at CPO Headquarters in Karachi.

PIA offers connected flights to 16 destinations in China via Beijing

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has introduced connected flights between Pakistan and 16 captivating cities of China via Beijing in partnership with Air China, PIA Country Manager, Bilal Afzal said on Sunday. These Chinese cities include Guangzhou, Wuhan, Urumqi, Shenzhen, Xian, Shenyang, Shanghai, Ningbo, Nanjing, Harbin, Hangzhou, Hohhot, Dunhuang, Chengdu, Changchun, and Chongqing, he told APP on the sidelines of China International Fair for Trade in Service (CIFTIS) in Beijing. PIA has set up a

booth in Pakistan Pavilion at CIFTIS to showcase its accomplishments, particularly the role played by the national flag carrier to promote people-to-people contacts between the people of Pakistan and China. He said that the passengers could also travel from 16 cities in China to Islamabad by availing of this offer. "PIA is currently operating one weekly flight on the Islamabad-Beijing-Islamabad route every Sunday but working on a plan to add a new direct flight between the two countries."

About discounts, he said, "PIA offers a 20 percent discount for students with free baggage of 80 kgs for economy class and 100 kgs for executive economy respectively on flights between Pakistan and China." "The passengers can avail further discounts if tickets are purchased online," he said. "We have also offered discounts on cargo from China to Pakistan and vice versa and businessmen and traders could benefit from it," he added. "Pakistani community especially businessmen and students living in China have expressed pleasure over discounts."

Talking to APP, Ali Imran, a Pakistani educationist in Hangzhou said, "The connected flights to different destinations in China are a big relief and it provides great convenience to the passengers traveling between the two brotherly countries." He said that the discount on fare and cargo service would greatly facilitate Pakistani professionals and students to meet their families more frequently. The passengers could also avail increase in baggage allowance during their travelling between the two countries.

Pakistan trade deficit worsens by 30% in August

ISLAMABAD (INP): Compared to July, Pakistan's import bill has reached \$4.5 billion in August registering an increase of 21 percent. As the volume of imports has increased, the trade deficit has also worsened to \$2.13 billion registering an increase of 30%. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, compared to July 2023, the exports registered an increase of 14.30% on Month-on-Month in August. Meanwhile, compared

to August 2022, exports decreased by 4.83% Year-on-Year and stood at \$2.36 billion. On MoM, exports in August 2023 increased to \$2.36 billion compared to \$2.07 billion in July 2023. Meanwhile, the imports increased by 21.2% MoM in August 2023 and stood at \$4.49 billion compared to imports which stood at \$3.71 billion in July 2023. On YoY, the imports registered a decrease of 26% and stood at \$4.49 billion as compared to August 2022 in which imports stood at \$6.1 billion.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab take part in cycling after inauguration of Girls Cycling Parade organized by Town Municipal Corporation Lyari in connection of Defence Day coming ahead.

World weightlifting championship 2023 to kick off today in Riyadh

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 2023 World Senior Weightlifting Championship will kick off later today, Sunday at the Ministry of Sports Hall, situated within Prince Faisal bin Fahd Olympic Complex. The event will witness the presence of the President of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Mohammed Jalood, and the heads of the national federations participating in the tournament. The championship's organizing committee has concluded all the preparations for the opening of this unprecedented global event in the history of weightlifting, as participation in this edition is mandatory for qualification for the Paris 2024 Olympics. The championship will see the participation of 2,500 athletes, representing more than 170 countries from across the globe. The organizing committee started its preparations for the championship over a year ago.

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LAHORE: Rangers and police personnel stands alert outside Gaddafi Stadium during the Asia Cup 2023 one-day international (ODI) cricket match between Bangladesh and Afghanistan at the Gaddafi Stadium, in Provincial Capital.

May 9 was an attempt to stage a coup: PM..

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digital census, citing the need for fresh delimitation of constituencies under Section 17(2) of the Elections Act. In his letter to the CEC, the president quoted Article 244 of the Constitution, saying he was duty-bound to get the elections conducted in the 90 days' prescribed period once the National Assembly is dissolved prematurely. "Whereas, the National Assembly was dissolved on the advice of the prime minister by the president on August 9. Whereas by virtue of article 48 (5) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the president is obliged to appoint a date not later than ninety days from the date of dissolution for the holding of the general elections," the president's letter said. But a recent amendment to the Elections Act 2017 empowered the ECP to announce the dates for polls unilaterally without having to consult the presi-

dent. Citing this change to the law, the CEC responded to the president, saying that participating in a confab with him to decide the election date would be of "scant importance". Subsequently, the president sought the law ministry's advice on the matter. And the ministry communicated to the president that the powers to announce the poll date rested with the ECP. Kakar has the same position. "The law of the land says that the Election Commission of Pakistan has to decide [the date]," the interim PM said during the. However, he added, if the matter was taken to the superior judiciary where various constitutional experts give their interpretations of the law and the Constitution, the "legal consequence [of this process] will be binding on us". "But until such a judgement comes, we are compelled to operate as per the [existing] law." Asked whether the in-

terim setup would abide by the superior judiciary's decision if it concluded that elections were to be held within 90 days of the dissolution of assemblies, Kakar said: "No one should have any doubt about this." "Whatever the Supreme Court decides, it will be acceptable to us. It is for the judges to judge," he asserted when asked about the courts deciding against polls being held after the 90-day period. PM Kakar also assured that the caretaker setup term would not be extended unconstitutionally. "We are an order of a constitutional continuation and will not stay [in government] even a moment beyond the period mandated under the Constitution and law. "But this [time frame] will be decided by the law and it is linked to the announcement of polls' schedule by the election commission," he said. Energy conservation On the prospect of early closure of markets,

the interim premier said steps would be implemented to conserve energy soon. "You will soon see an execution plan on this," he said, adding that the only factor barring the plan was that the Centre had yet to reach an agreement with provinces. When asked about the recent increase in the power bills and the consequent mass protests, PM Kakar said the state was constrained by its commitments to multilateral international financial institutions which it had to follow through at any cost. In this regard, he also highlighted issues in the country's taxation and electricity production and distribution mechanisms. Regarding his recent comments in which he seemed to be downplaying protests and the scale of the issue, the prime minister said the words "wheel, jam and strike" were attributed to him even when he did not use them. He clarified that he only disagreed with the analysis that the

protest would lead to a civil war. "Yes I think there is a social class which is under immense burden," he said, adding that the entire situation was a multidimensional issue on which he and his cabinet had had multiple meetings. The prime minister said his financial and power teams were looking into the "nitty gritty" of the issue to recommend short-term solutions in a manner so that the government did not have to roll them back later on. The PM said some news may come soon on the matter. In response to a question about Pakistan's policy failing with regard to terrorism and Afghanistan, the premier said the US leaving behind equipment of war in the war-torn country had a greater role in the recent surge in militancy than the Taliban coming to power in Kabul. He also warned that this rise in terrorism would not be restricted to Pakistan but would spread throughout the region.

SAPM vows to address public grievances, boost overseas employment opportunities

ISLAMABAD (INP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik has expressed his resolve to address the public grievances and boosting overseas employment opportunities.

The SAPM on Sunday visited the autonomous bodies of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development including Employees Old Age Benefits Institution (EOBI), Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC), and Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment (BE&OE), an attached department.

On the occasion, he was briefed by head of each organization about their working mechanism on public complaints and their resolution. The SAPM also

interacted with concerned officials dealing with public grievances and enquired about the attending and disposal method of complaints.

Reiterating the vision of the Prime Minister to accord priority to resolve public grievances particularly public grievances, Jawad Malik urged the management to ensure timely delivery of old-age pension for retired workers, alleviating any hurdle in receiving their rightful and other legal benefits.

He asked the Managing Director, OEC and Director General Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment to explore new avenues for employment abroad for Pakistanis along with making efforts to increase export of workforce to the existing destinations which will not only help to mitigate unem-

ployment but also generate remittances for our fragile economy.

The Director General, Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment was also asked to ensure early digitization of different emigration related process to facilitate intending migrants. SAPM particularly emphasized the Director General Bureau of Immigration & Overseas Employment and Managing Director, Overseas Employment Corporation to intensify their efforts and focus on to increase the export of manpower from Pakistan.

Jawad also stressed upon the Director General Bureau of Immigration & Overseas Employment for digitization of protector process on priority to ensure transparency in visa protection & smooth export of manpower.



ISLAMABAD: SAPM Jawad Sohrab Malik visits EOB, Emphasizes Resolve to Address Public Grievances, and Boost Overseas Employment Opportunities.

GPEI strategy body officials discuss matters with Minister

ISLAMABAD (INP): Global Director for Polio Eradication at World Health Organization (WHO), Aidan O'Leary, met Caretaker Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on the visit of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's (GPEI) Strategy Committee.

This was the first engagement between senior GPEI officials and the caretaker government.

In a meeting held at the Health Ministry, Dr Jan said, "It is important for us that our country and global partners and donors stand together in this final leg of

the eradication journey."

The Strategy Committee of the GPEI, chaired by O'Leary, is an executive committee set up to oversee the management and execution of the Polio Endgame Plan, that aims to achieve eradication by 2026.

"There is no time to waste. The Health Ministry will support any measure to interrupt wild poliovirus transmission by the global deadline at the end of 2023," the minister added.

"I am a polio worker at heart. I will ensure that

not only does polio remain a priority at all tiers of governance, but efforts are more targeted and intensified," he stated.

Speaking after the meeting, O'Leary said, "Political will and commitment to get the job done is absolutely critical to the success of the programme."

"We have been particularly impressed by the Health Minister's very immediate and hands-on engagement with the Polio Programme."

"We certainly look forward to continued advocacy and support."



ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer Dr. Akbar Naseer Khan presided over a high-level crime and security meeting held at the Central Police Office.

High level crime, security meeting reviews performance of Police Officers

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer Dr. Akbar Naseer Khan presided over a high-level crime and security meeting on Sunday which was held at the Central Police Office, a public relations officer said. He said that the ICCPO reviewed the performance of the officers separately.

The meeting was attended by CPO Operations, SSP CTD, SSP Operations, SSP Headquarters, AIG Operations, SSP Investigation, all Zonal DPOs, SDPOs, and all incharge police stations.

The performance of all divisions was critically evaluated, and each officer was individually scrutinized. Incharges of Aabpara, Shehzad Town, Ramna, Shalimar, and Industrial Area police stations with weak performance were given a 15 days deadline to improve their performance.

The ICCPO appreciated all officers for their exceptional commitment to ensuring public safety during different law and order events in the city. He emphasized the need to enhance the security of government, police, and other private important installations and to make the city's patrolling system more effective, and conduct a weekly review of Dolphin's performance.

He further stated that all senior officers should personally supervise investigations of the case adding that the challan of the cases should be completed purely on merit and submitted in the relevant courts in the given time frame.

Dr. Akbar Naseer Khan also ordered to expedite crackdowns against proclaimed offenders and court absconders while a secure parking system for curbing car theft should be implemented.

He issued further instructions to cooperate with the CTD in conducting operations against terrorism and extremism supporters adding that the performance of the Minority Protection Unit should be assessed and the concerned DPOs will hold meetings with representatives of minority communities to address their issues on a priority basis.

He reiterated that a comprehensive security plan for the upcoming chehluam procession should be devised at the earliest. Complaints should be registered at 1715, and after evaluating these complaints, citizens' issues should be resolved on a priority basis.

In conclusion, he urged all officers to fulfill their duties with utmost vigilance and courage. You are all part of an exemplary police force, and your every action has national and international significance."

Masarrat appeals world HR organizations to raise voice against Indian atrocities

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Illegally detained Chairman of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Masarrat Aalam Butt Sunday appealed to the world human rights organizations to raise their voice against the Indian atrocities in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK).

The world's criminal silence has emboldened India to continue its repression in IOJK, he said in a message from New Delhi's Tihar Jail, Kashmir Media Service reported.

Masarrat Aalam said the Narendra Modi-led Indian government is using its military might to sup-

press the Kashmiris' struggle for right to self-determination but will never succeed in its nefarious designs.

He pointed out that India has waged a war on the unarmed people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the Indian atrocities witnessed an upsurge after 5 August 2019.

The APHC Chairman said the Kashmiris have been facing the Indian brutalities for the last seventy-six years just for demanding their right to self-determination adding he said the Indian repression cannot force the Kashmiri people to give up their just demand.

Motorway Police reunite runaway teenagers with families

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Motorway Police reunited two runaway teenagers with their families here on Sunday.

According to details, the Motorway Police during checking a Lahore bound bus coming from Peshawar at Islamabad Toll Plaza found two teenagers in it. During inquiry, the youth failed to satisfy police after which they were off-loaded of the vehicle.

Later, families of both teenagers stated to be neighbours and they were handed over to them with guidance and suggestions to avoid such actions in future.

Financial support to terrorism Cell set up in Islamabad Police to investigate cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): A special investigative cell in the Anti-Terrorism Department of Islamabad Capital Police has been set up which will investigate cases related to financing terrorism and extremism.

On the special directions of Federal Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti, Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Naseer Khan has taken the initiative to set up this special cell.

A police spokesperson said, "The in-charge of this cell will be an officer in Grade 17 and it will operate under the supervision of SSP CTD."

The ICCPO has stated, "This cell will function in accordance with international standards and will also seek cooperation from other law enforcement agencies in matters of special investigations."

He further said, "Robust legal actions will be taken against the individuals involved in the financing of terrorism and extremism."

Previously, ICCPO Dr Akbar Naseer Khan had established an anti-terrorism and extremism unit in CTD which was the first one of its kind in Pakistan. In this unit, Islamabad Capital Police teams are working to combat extremism in educational institutions and schools.

Furthermore, the Anti-Extremism Unit monitors sermons in mosques, reviews political, linguistic, religious, and sectarian content on social media and websites, and identifies individuals involved in extremism-related crimes.

ISLAMABAD (APP): A surveyor busy in survey of road during expansion work of Club Road in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Surveyor busy in survey of road during expansion work of Club Road in the Federal Capital.

AC conducts crackdown against Dengue violators in Secretariat Subdivision

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to curb the spread of dengue, the Assistant Commissioner Secretariat conducted a surprise inspection of various locations in the Secretariat Sub-Division here Sunday.

The inspection team sealed four factories, stores, and dustbins for violating dengue SOPs, while the managers were taken into custody, while other infringers were fined and warned, ICT Spokesman said.

The AC Secretariat, Syed Faizan Ali, led the inspection team, which comprised of officials from the health department, the municipal corporation, and the police. The team inspected workshops, tyre stores, nurseries, dustbins, and other facilities.

The inspection team found that four factories were not following the dengue SOPs. The factories were storing water in open

containers, which is a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

The team also found that the tyre stores were not disposing of used tyres properly. The used tyres can also collect water and become breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

AC also ordered the factories and tyre stores to be sealed immediately. The managers of the factories and stores were also taken into custody.

The inspection team fined several other violators of the dengue SOPs. The team also warned them to comply with the SOPs in the future.

The inspection was part of the government's efforts to curb the spread of dengue. He said that the government would not tolerate any violations of the dengue SOPs, he added.

He urged the people to cooperate with the government's efforts to control dengue.

HEC announces scholarship program for GB students

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has announced a scholarship program for outstanding students of Gilgit-Baltistan who wish to pursue undergraduate studies at top Pakistani universities or institutions.

According to HEC, the scholarships are being offered for the academic year 2023-24 in all areas of study or disciplines.

The HEC set criteria for scholarship is to be a domiciled in Gilgit-Baltistan, have a Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) or equivalent, be 22 years old or younger as of the closing date for applications and not be currently enrolled in any other scholarship program.

The scholarship covers tuition fees, hostel fees, and other charges up to Rs. 240,000 per year. It also includes a stipend of Rs. 15,000 per month and

books and traveling allowances of Rs. 30,000 per annum.

Candidates will be shortlisted based on their scores in an aptitude test to be conducted by the Education Testing Council (ETC), HEC. They must also secure at least 50% marks in their academic credentials.

Students who are already enrolled in a BS program at a public sector university or institution prior to the advertisement or announcement of the scholarship may also apply.

The award of the scholarship is purely merit-based and is not based on gender, caste, race, or religion.

The application can be submitted online through the HEC website: <http://portal.hec.gov.pk>. The last date for submission of applications is September 30, 2023.

Govt taking numerous steps to promote religious tourism

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has already taken numerous measures to promote religious tourism in the country as this sector can play an important role in reviving the national economy.

According to the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) spokesperson, a total of 480 tourist destinations exist in the country, out of which 120 are religious sites.

He said that Pakistan is blessed with multiple religions such as Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and due to its magnificent blend of cultural, religious and natural tourism opportunities. He added that almost 0.9 million international tourists visit the recreational and historical sites across the country annually.

CDA plans to develop several new parks

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is planning to develop several new modern parks in the federal capital to provide better recreational facilities to the residents of the city.

"The civic authority has already developed around 37 public parks in the federal capital during the last ten years and is working on a policy to increase their number in the coming years," official sources in the CDA told APP.

"We need three to four

Hot, humid weather expected

ISLAMABAD (INP): Mainly hot and humid weather is expected in plain areas of the country during the next twenty-four hours.

However, rain-thunderstorm is expected at isolated places in upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pothohar region, Islamabad, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Temperature of some major cities recorded on Sunday morning.

Islamabad and Peshawar twenty-five degree centigrade, Lahore and Karachi twenty-eight, Quetta twenty-three.

PIDE releases report on unraveling state of industry in country

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has unveiled a groundbreaking report shedding light on the challenges faced by the engineering industry in Pakistan. The comprehensive study, conducted by a team of esteemed researchers led by Dr Nadeem ul Haque, and including Dr Usman Qadir, Dr Abid Rehman, and Mr Mohammad Armughan, delves into the realities faced by engineering firms and provides valuable insights into the state of the industry, according to a press release issued here on Sunday.

The report is based on an extensive survey of 328 engineering firms from across the Golden Triangle of Lahore, Gujrat, and



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters jumping and bathing in water channel of Rawal Dam to get some relief from hot weather in the Federal Capital.

exacerbate the challenges by increasing the risk of machinery malfunctions and damage, affecting 68% of the firms. The financial strain of arranging alternate supply, amounting to PKR 71,000 per unit annually, adds to the burden on firms' operations, impacting 72% of the surveyed companies.

The report underscores the significance of addressing these challenges. It recommends that engineering firms adopt international and national quality standard certifications to maintain quality standards, a move endorsed by 89% of the surveyed firms.

Moreover, the government is urged to focus on enhancing the electricity supply in industrial areas, with smaller firms exploring backup power options to ensure uninterrupted operations, a sentiment echoed by 76% of the respondents.

An interesting finding of the report is the lack of an online presence among Pakistani engineering enterprises. With a surprising 63% of surveyed firms lacking any online presence, there is an urgent need for businesses to establish themselves online to reach a wider customer base and enhance engagement.

The study also reveals that while a significant portion of firms (63%) show no intent to expand in the coming years, a proactive minority plans to invest in advanced technology, machinery, land, and skilled labor to boost their business prospects.

Another critical issue highlighted in the report is the lack of access to credit for the majority of firms.

The majority of firms lack adequate collateral to secure loans due to their small size. This reduces their marketability to commercial lenders and has resulted in only 5% of surveyed companies having loans or lines of credit. Limited access to finance hampers the industry's growth potential. To address this, the report suggests that financial institutions introduce special credit schemes for small and medium-sized enterprises to encourage business expansion and development.

The research also explores the complex landscape of international trade for Pakistani engineering firms, revealing obstacles related to tax implications, product quality, branding, and pricing.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used for expansion work of Club Road during development work in Federal Capital.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Monday September 04, 2023

More action, please

The caretaker prime minister has faced a major challenge managing public expectations over the past week or so. When protests over the significant increase in electricity tariffs had first broken out, Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar moved quickly to assuage the public's concerns, promising the people he would secure some manner of relief. It appears he hadn't done his homework on the state of the country's finances. Having received a reality check from his cabinet and the IMF, he is now telling the people that they "have to pay the bills". But many of those bills had already been burnt. Many are also likely to have become overdue, incurring additional penalties as citizens waited for the PM to deliver. It is a bad look for Mr Kakar, who has inadvertently ended up causing more trouble rather than solving anything. Perhaps the episode should serve as a lesson on how even the best of intentions can end up exacerbating public harm.

It may not be within Mr Kakar's means to deliver any instant 'relief', but he is still responsible for steering the country during these fraught times. Instead, as the man tasked with 'taking care' of Pakistan till elected representatives are sworn in, he seems a little detached from ground realities. On Friday, Mr Kakar told a delegation of journalists and TV anchors that he sees the breakout of public protests against rampant inflation as a manoeuvre orchestrated by political parties. "I realise their position. If I were to contest the [upcoming] election, I would have done the same," he is reported to have said. If nothing else, the statement speaks volumes about the perspective with which the PM is assessing the situation. But the desperate citizenry is no opportunity for politicians to squeeze for electoral gain; it is a grave threat to the country's stability.

Mr Kakar need only read the Ministry of Finance's Fiscal Risk Statement 2023-24 to understand how big a risk inflation poses to the country's external stability. The report highlights that uncertainty surrounding energy prices is "the main upside risk" to Pakistan's inflation outlook. In simpler terms, unless the dollar somehow stops appreciating and global fuel prices suddenly decline, the people in charge in Islamabad need to work very hard to keep the Pakistani economy from imploding. With the cost of living having already risen to an unbearable level for most citizens, the government can no longer consider their daily challenges 'non-issues' in its larger game plan. Sustained adversity in economic conditions may trigger wider social unrest, which in turn will make economic management an even more difficult task than it already is. Before the country enters that vicious cycle, the decision-makers should act. This is no longer a political problem but an existential one.



Muhammad Amir Rana

Initially eager to see the Afghan Taliban take control in Afghanistan, Pakistan now grapples with unmet expectations. Two years on, issues like cross-border terrorism remain unresolved and pose significant security risks. Afghanistan's other neighbours are also unhappy with the growing aggressive posture of the Taliban leadership over security, border management, and the diversion of water resources.

Pakistan has to understand the Taliban mindset, which is at play in dealings with Afghanistan's immediate neighbours, and see how it shapes its relationship with them and their approach to resolving bilateral disputes. The situation

Taliban and their neighbours

may not appear entirely gloomy, but it does require nuanced strategies to address the emerging challenges. The first step is to engage with the Taliban through formal channels, whether the issues are related to terrorism threats, border security, trade and economy, or transnational mega projects. Verbal commitments and vague statements from the Taliban leadership will not be binding and will not change the dynamics. Taliban apologists in Pakistan were jubilant over a religious decree concerning jihad in foreign lands issued by the Taliban's supreme leader. However, this has not changed anything; terrorist attacks are still rising in Pakistan. The martyrdom of nine soldiers in a suicide attack recently in Bannu District should serve as a reminder that security challenges cannot be dealt with through ambiguous religious decrees.

To anticipate future challenges, Pakistan should consider the Taliban's relations with their other neighbours. Experts suggest that the Taliban could potentially spark a regional water conflict. The group's approach to water re-

sources has already escalated tensions with Iran and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan and Iran have a long-standing water dispute, exemplified by the Afghan-Iranian Helmand River Water Treaty of 1973, which was never fully ratified or implemented. Despite this, both countries maintained a somewhat balanced relationship through diplomacy. The Taliban's accelerated dam projects have exacerbated border tensions with Iran. If water security issues are not managed carefully, they could expose deeper conflicts between Iran and the Taliban, such as ideological differences and anti-Shia sentiment.

Uzbekistan has maintained a pragmatic relationship with the Taliban, focusing on economic and trade cooperation. After Pakistan, it was the most optimistic country about the potential of the Taliban regime to facilitate connections with landlocked regions. However, this optimism was tempered when the Taliban initiated the Qosh Tepa Canal project to divert water from the Amu Darya, affecting multiple Central Asian states. This led to strained relations and

even a temporary cut in electricity supplies from Uzbekistan to Afghanistan, which were later restored. Despite these complexities, Uzbekistan has agreed with Afghanistan and Pakistan on a tri-nation railway. The \$5 billion project aims to connect Mazar-i-Sharif in Afghanistan to Pakistan's Kharlachi border crossing, passing through Termez in Uzbekistan and Logar province in Afghanistan. This railway is viewed as a significant step towards enhancing regional connectivity and trade.

The original plan was to build the railway line from Mazar-i-Sharif to Kabul, and then to Torkham on the border with Pakistan. However, the route has been modified to go through Kurram instead. The reason for this was that the Taliban regime wants to develop the eastern and central provinces of Afghanistan, which are currently underdeveloped, and have a strong support base for their movement. China wants to formally bring Afghanistan into its Belt and Road Initiative and tri-nation railway to make it a part of the BRI. However, the project is still in the

early stages of planning. Pakistan's economic situation may cause further delays in the implementation, but this also depends on the Taliban's attitude on how it will deal with other disputes with Uzbekistan, mainly the Amu Darya diversion and the Taliban's lack of water experts and experienced diplomats. The Central Asian states, Pakistan and Afghanistan have bitter memories of many transnational energy and infrastructure projects that have not yet materialised — such as the CASA-100 electricity project connecting Central Asia to Pakistan, and the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. These initiatives were delayed mainly because of security concerns and complicated regional strategic scenarios. The Taliban can ensure the security of transnational projects, but it may not be enough to create a conducive strategic and political environment for such initiatives. Pakistan also shares the Kabul river with Afghanistan, but they don't have a water-sharing agreement. In the past, water security had created tensions between both coun-

tries, and now local Taliban officials have started threatening river diversion initiatives and dam construction. The Indus is Pakistan's lifeline, and any diversion to its flow would be a nightmare for the country. Though this is a costly affair, and the Taliban regime cannot implement it all alone, or get any international assistance, they have revealed their intentions.

China has been the most adept in its diplomatic engagement with Afghanistan. It has not only maintained a functional bilateral relationship with the Taliban, but also established trilateral and quadrilateral channels that include Pakistan and Uzbekistan. While the SCO serves China's multilateral interests, the country remains cautious in expanding its economic ties with Afghanistan. Pakistan needs to re-evaluate its approach towards the Taliban, who have shown unpredictability in their diplomatic dealings. There is a noticeable assertiveness in the Taliban's diplomatic expression, which raises concerns among its neighbours. Pakistan must plan its responses accordingly. — Courtesy Dawn



Ghazi Salahuddin

Have you watched 'Mughal-e-Azam'? This question, posed to any cinema enthusiast, would readily invoke a reference to that epic movie made by K. Asif, himself a 'mogul' in the annals of Bollywood. There is a treasure of trivia about how this blockbuster was made, remaining in production for a number of years. Yes, the film was released more than sixty years ago, though a colour version made in 2004 became kind of its revival. Anyhow, what has not diminished in any sense is that song that may be defined as a lover's anthem: 'Jab pyaar kiya to darma kya'. Its picturization was considered magical in those times when the technology now available was non-existent.

But why am I talking about an old movie and

what is the need for dwelling on its merits now? Well, one of the most exciting experiences I have had during my present sojourn in southern California was that I had an opportunity to see 'Mughal-e-Azam'. And I did that not in a cinema but at a theatre — not the movie but the musical.

True, the musical is totally based on the movie — a tribute that matches the stature of K. Asif's cinematic achievement. Quite appropriately, it is billed as 'a cinema on stage'. I must confess that I was not aware of the remarkable success of this visual spectacle, conceived and staged on the lines of a Broadway musical. That is why I was a bit intrigued by the thrill and anticipation it had created in the South Asian community here about the arrival of the musical in Long Beach. It happened last weekend, with two shows.

The buzz had been building up because the musical was on its North American tour for more than three months, visiting major cities. The tour ended in Long Beach, in Los Angeles county, and I attended its finale on Sunday that was marked by much emo-

tion and ceremony. An excellent theatre with the capacity of more than 1700 was overflowing with applause and excitement.

Now, I intend to use this memorable encounter as a peg for my thoughts that were prompted by the fact that a major Indian show was celebrating the glory of the Mughal Empire in the times of Narendran Modi. As would be expected, the audience in Long Beach, as it would be in other cities, was overwhelmingly Indian — and the Indian diaspora is happily wedded to Modi's Hindutva crusade.

I concede that a fictional love story that is situated in the court of Akbar the Great has no obvious political undertones and catered mostly to the nostalgia that the older generation of the expatriates feeds on. But, in any case, 'Mughal-e-Azam' is about the golden period of Muslim rule in India and it romanticizes that age, with hints about the religious harmony that Akbar promoted. Still, the glory of the Mughals is not likely to retain its glimmer in the history that the Hindutva fanatics are now re-writing.

An interesting point here is that Emperor Akbar

is considered by some Indian scholars and liberal intellectuals as the personification of India's secular heritage, an antithesis of the country's present drift. I would particularly want to refer to the views expressed by Amartya Sen, India's leading public intellectual who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economic Sciences for his contribution to social science theory in 1998.

Before doing that, I should again admit that the stunning musical that I saw is not about the rule and the life of Akbar, though it deserves a comment in the context of popular entertainment. While director Feroz Abbas Khan's musical is a tribute to the movie, K. Asif himself was inspired by the 1922 play 'Anarkali' by Intiaz Ali Taj. It may also be noted that like the movie, the musical is projected in a grand style, being the most expensive production in the history of Indian theatre. As many as 150 members of the cast and crew travelled with the troupe. The songs were performed live with a pre-recorded orchestra.

It is hard to imagine that Bollywood would at-

tempt a serious biopic of Akbar like, for instance, Hollywood's 'Oppenheimer' or soon to be released 'Napoleon'. But the Mughal king is certainly worthy of such treatment. From our perspective, a study of how the Muslim, particularly Mughal, rule affected the freedom movement during the Raj. One also thinks about the comparative assessment of the rule of Akbar and Aurangzeb.

Coming back to Amartya Sen, I am tempted to quote an entire paragraph from his book 'The Argumentative Indian': "To widen the path of economic development, one has to expand the democratic system, which provides for greater liberalisation of political rights. This has been our heritage for a long time. Mughal emperor Akbar tried this exchange of opinion in the 16th century when in Europe, the likes of Giordano Bruno were being burnt to death".

Sen is extremely critical of the 'exclusionary' thinking of the Hindutva movement. Besides Akbar, his heroes are Asoka and Buddha. These are figures that Sen re-

turns to again and again. He argues that tolerance of heterodoxy was also present in Islamic India, particularly among Sufis. He writes at length about the "tolerant multiculturalism" of Akbar's court.

There are, no doubt, many critics of Sen's views in India and some of them are rather harsh and xenophobic in their rejection of any thought that Islam believes in religious tolerance. This is how Hindutva has spread its anti-Muslim narrative in a country that professes, constitutionally, to be a secular democracy — the largest in the world, at that.

'Mughal-e-Azam', the musical, was first staged in 2016 and has by now been on tour in many countries of the world. The finale I attended was preceded by a recorded message of the late Lata Mangeshkar in which she mentioned comments made about her singing of that Naat for the movie, being herself a Hindu: "Bekas pe karam kijiye Sarkar-e-Madina". In Modi's India, something like this would very likely create a rumpus. — Courtesy TheNews

Mughal-e-Azam vs Modi

A sorry incident



Muna Khan

What purpose do rape scenes serve on screen? Are they necessary to plot points, when most of the studies show their harmful impact and how, as Laura Hudson wrote in Wired in 2015, they feed "into real-life misconceptions about sexual assault that are often used to deprive rape survivors of legitimacy or justice"?

I thought of this while reading the reactions on social media on Monday about a new drama, Hadsa (incident), which is 'not based on the gang rape of a woman in September 2020'.

I asked my editor if I could write about why dramas need to show sexual violence against women and what impact fictionalised stories of real incidents have on societal attitudes, but then this controversy took a new turn and Hadsa was banned.

Before writing this piece, I watched a few episodes before weighing in. Hadiqa Kiani plays a progressive, strong-willed, fierce female role I rarely see on TV. She's an unapologetic feminist. She is sexually assaulted on a motorway, and I understand how upsetting that must be to the survivor of rape, who reached out to a journalist to share her anguish. There is no responsible way to show rape.

The producers and Kiani have denied their drama is about the motorway case, but many folks are not buying it.

This provided an opportunity for debate on a host of issues regarding the portrayal of sexual violence

and its survivors, and how much agency a survivor has to their stories being made public. Should audiences be warned about content? Should such content be aired at a particular time?

Many Western crime shows on TV are often based on real life, and come with warnings about the nature of content, and issue an "all persons fictional" disclaimer.

The American show Law and Order SVU has fictionalised famous cases, from Dominique Strauss-Kahn to Bill Cosby, Michael Jackson to the 2015 case of a Stanford student assaulting a girl when she was unconscious. I appreciated the decision by the producers of Delhi Crime not to show the sexual violence committed on 'Nirbhaya', the name given to the woman gang-raped in 2012. The true crime genre in audio and documentary is hugely popular.

None of this prepares anyone for seeing a sliver of a resemblance of themselves on screen.

Rape should never feel like entertainment on screen. We must condemn shows where the use of sexual violence is exploitative and gratuitous. The entertainment industry has profited from the pain of survivors — all for the sake of ratings or public awareness, when it's just regurgitating terrible tropes and stereotypes, like whether a woman's choice of clothing provoked her rape.

However, as problematic as such story-lines are, a ban is not a response. This enforces a regulator's control on people's choices. To shield folks from pain and complaints, many progressive voices have landed in the same camp as the right wing, which routinely call for bans on content that does not adhere to their moral code. To those who lauded this decision, know it is a temporary win. The

same tools will soon be applied to other storylines that supposedly harm Pakistan's image in the world.

Also, rapists (and their protectors) as well as censors do the most harm to the country's image.

If and when rape survivors speak up, they are punished for doing so. The legal system is stacked against them, they are portrayed as victims and powerless. "If you survive, you have to prove it was that bad; or else, they think you are," Roxane Gay wrote in her book Not That Bad.

I know from my time in the newsroom how hard it is to get staff to report on the sexual violence man-ner, minus words attached to honour and minus judgement. It is frustrating to get them to just use the word 'rape', especially when we have adapted so many English words into our reporting. There is much work to be done. Perhaps the drama industry needs to own up to its failings. They can read the massive amount of literature on how fictionalised rape scenes impact survivors and audiences. One in three college men in an American 2015 study, for example, said they would rape women if they knew they would not face consequences. Here, not everyone is willing to agree on the definition of rape.

I think rape can be used to make a big point about Pakistani society, but I think we should close the lid on rape as a cinematic subject. This should not be confused with me calling for a ban. Bans serve no purpose. Just like rape scenes serve no purpose. What does serve purpose is complaints, critiques, pressure groups, calls for, and conversations with, filmmakers, artists, educators, journalists to do better. Even the feminist mother in Hadsa could have done better — but I'll never know whether she did. — Courtesy Dawn

Expanding BRICS



Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

BRICS, which seeks to promote cooperation amongst Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, is expanding its ambit. The recently held summit in Johannesburg (Aug 22-24) invited Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE to join BRICS. Three questions are dominating the discourse on this development: will an expanded BRICS enable the Global South to counter-balance the Western-dominated world of politics, trade and finance? How will India reconcile its presence in BRICS with its strategic partnership with the US? And, what does BRICS Plus mean for Pakistan?

Geopolitics: There is no denying that the rise of China, India and other Asian economies has brightened prospects for the Global South to challenge Western dominance in the prevailing world order. Since the 1960s, the developing world has aspired to a new international economic order. G77 and the Non-Aligned Movement were large, unwieldy groups, unable to accomplish much for the Global South. An expanded BRICS, which represents a sizable percentage of the world's population and economic growth, seems better poised to represent the interests of the Global South.

However, it would be naive to expect a diverse group like BRICS Plus to be anti-West or even a serious challenge to the latter's dominance. For instance, dollarisation may be an aspiration of some BRICS

countries, but the actual shift towards other currencies would require more time and effort. Nearly \$5 trillion is held in overseas central banks, including almost \$1tr in the Bank of China. Likewise, global supply chains remain critical for the economic health of all countries. The leading lights of the expanded BRICS are also members of G20, which will be meeting in a summit shortly under India's presidency. For their part, Western countries are also inclined towards de-risking their economies rather than decoupling from China.

India: Despite its differences with China, India has chosen to play along with BRICS because it coincides with its long-cherished desire to assume the leadership of the Global South. When Chandrayan 3 landed on the moon, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attributed this success to the Global South. India is, however, in a bind. Over the past two decades, it has deepened its partnership with the US and built high stakes in the US-led Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Quad. On the other hand, it often takes positions unfavourable to the West, such as in the Russia-Ukraine war. So far, India has played a balancing act, citing strategic autonomy, but tough choices may lie ahead.

Pakistan: The people of Pakistan are disappointed their country did not receive an invitation to the Johannesburg Summit and was not included in BRICS Plus. The Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson responded to their queries on Aug 25, stating that "Pakistan will examine the latest developments and make a determination about its future engagement with the group". She added: "Pakistan is an ardent supporter of multilateralism..." If that be the case, it would make sense for Pakistan to be a member of the expanded BRICS, which is a rising multilateral organisation

within the Global South.

Last year too, Pakistan's absence was noted at the high-level development dialogue on the eve of the BRICS summit hosted by China. Two dozen countries attended. Pakistan's participation was blocked by BRICS member India. The FO at that time had expressed the hope that future engagement of the organisation would be based on the principle of "inclusivity". However, this year, while over 30 other countries were invited to attend the summit, mostly from the Global South, Pakistan was not. Nevertheless, Pakistan — an was invited to a seminar ahead of the summit, where Senator Mushahid Hussain represented its desire to be a part of BRICS Plus.

India's hostility to Pakistan is painful but understandable. India's leadership has often used Pakistan to fetch votes in Hindu-majority areas by whipping up a threat perception around cross-border terrorism. It would be safe to conclude that even if Pakistan had applied for BRICS membership, India would have opposed it.

Another factor that undermines the prospects of Pakistan joining BRICS is its own dire economic situation, coupled with political instability, violent extremism and weak law and order. The countries in the BRICS family will stand up to Indian objections when they determine that Pakistan has something tangible to bring to the table. There is no doubt that Pakistan is situated at the centre of the expanded BRICS' economic geography. Pakistan can, for instance, become a genuine hub connecting South Asia with Western and Central Asia. However, for that to happen, Pakistan must first pull up its own economy and consider opening its doors to east-west connectivity, which would complement north-south connectivity well. — Courtesy Dawn

Sindh Governor says: We facing several crises because we have not adopted and spread the message of Sufi and saints

3-day celebration of 280th Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai concluded

BHITSHAH (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori has said that Sindh was the land of saints and sufis and Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai was also among them who always taught lesson of love, peace, sincerity and devotion. He expressed these views while talking to media after laying chaadar on the shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai in the concluding ceremony of 280th Urs of Gear Saint.

Governor said that although we belong to the land of saints but are facing several crises because we have not adopted and spread the message of Sufi and saints.

He said that it was

moment of immense pleasure for him that around 500000 devotees were visiting Urs celebration daily basis.

Governor said that this Urs was being celebrated after 4 years which was hampered due to Covid restrictions and people also earn their livelihood as usual.

In reply to a question about meeting with PML(N) leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the Governor said that it was a part of political wisdom as we want to maintain our political relationship with key political parties.

He said that various problems related to the economy, particularly the energy crisis facing Sindh were discussed in the meeting. Tessori said that such a crisis could not be resolved by a single political party but could be tackled collectively.

Governor further said that Sindh was badly affected in last year's flood catastrophe and people of Sindh were still facing its aftermath. He urged all political parties to shun their differences to resolve the problems of the masses and for this purpose he could also consult with political leaders including Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.



BHITSHAH: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori laying wreath on the grave of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai on the occasion of 280th urs celebrations.

Naqvi says: Need of time to establish latest graveyards with increase in population

CM visits 'Shehr-e-Khamoshan', reviews facilities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Shehr-e-Khamoshan [graveyard], being built at Sundar Road Raiwind, here on Sunday. He reviewed facilities being provided for burial at Shehr-e-Khamoshan and inspected various sections of the project including waiting area, ablation place, funeral place and ambulance.

Mohsin Naqvi stated that burial facilities in

Shehr-e-Khamoshan had been provided in an organised manner, adding that it would be built in other cities as well on the pattern of Sundar Road Raiwind. He underscored that it was need of the time to establish the latest graveyards with increase in population, adding that all requirements with regard to the latest graveyard had been fulfilled at Shehr-e-Khamoshan.

It was informed during the briefing that a

model graveyard comprising 127 kanals of land had been built at the Sundar Road Raiwind. A four wall, funeral place ablation place along with an ambulance had been provided in the model graveyard.

A capacity of more than 12 thousand graves had been kept in the model graveyard. The burial fee in the model graveyards had been reduced from rupees 10 thousand to rupees 3500.

Tribute paid to martyrs, ghazis at SCCI Defence Day ceremony

SIALKOT (APP): A ceremony in connection with Pakistan Defence Day was held at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) Auditorium.

The ceremony was organized by the Child and Social Development Organization (CSDO), a social wing of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI).

President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik participated in the ceremony as the chief guest. It was attended by President CSDO Shahid Raza, former President SCCI Major (Retd) Mansur Ahmed, Senior Vice President Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS) Gulzab Waqas Awan, Vice President WCCIS Madiha Faisal, Dean Faculty of Sciences, University of Sialkot (USKT) Dr. Aslam Dar, SCCI Executive Committee Members, WCCIS Executive Committee Members, students and teachers of CSDO schools.

The students of CSDO schools delivered speeches and presented national songs. They highlighted various aspects of the sacrifices rendered by hundreds of thousands of people of Pakistan and the bravery of the people and armed forces of Pakistan during the 1965 Indo-Pak war. The students also presented tableaux to mark Defence Day. The participants saluted the Shuhada and Ghazis of the 1965 war.

Addressing the participants in the ceremony, President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik said that Defence Day reminds us of the indomitable courage and unmatched sacrifices of our gallant men who proved to the world that the defence of Pakistan is unassailable.



KARACHI: September 03 - Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhvi during a meeting with the Senior Journalists at Karachi Press Club (KPC).

Haris Nawaz says: Preparations underway to launch major operation

THATTA (INP): Caretaker Home Minister Haris Nawaz on Sunday said preparations being made for major operations in Karachi and interior of Sindh, ARY News reported.

Talking to media at Makli Bypass here, Haris Nawaz said that the operation will be launched as new officers will come today or the next day.

Home minister said that Sindh the peace will return to Sindh after posting of good officers. Sindh will turn into a cradle of peace, he said.

"Preparations have been completed for an

operation in Ghotki, Kashmore, Jacobabad and Kandhkot," Haris Nawaz said.

"Operation will be conducted at all places in Katcha and Pacca areas," caretaker home minister of Sindh said.

"We are not going to initiate political victimization against anyone," he said.

"Action being taken against those having NAB or other cases against them," he said. "We will hold free, fair and transparent election and will issue instructions as and when the election date given," he added.

Officers of art councils removed over negligence

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Minister for Information and Culture Amir Mir has taken decisive action against proliferation of obscene dances in Gujranwala and Faisalabad and orders have been issued to remove directors of the arts council in these cities over their failure to curb performance of indecent performances in local theaters. Furthermore, theaters in Faisalabad and Gujranwala that were showcasing such lewd performances have been promptly shuttered.

Amir Mir emphasised that the two arts council directors were protecting individuals perpetuating obscenity under the guise of art. After dismissal of officers, new officers have been appointed.

Minister underscores government's commitment to promote tourism in region

NATHIAGALI (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister for Information, Tourism, and Culture, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Sunday emphasized that the establishment of peace and security in the province remains the top priority of the government.

To combat the menace of terrorism effectively, the Counter-Terrorism Force (CTF) has been equipped and strengthened.

He expressed these views while addressing a five-day educational tour organized for visually impaired students at the scenic tourist spot of Nathiagali.

The minister expressed unwavering

determination to bring terrorism under control promptly. He acknowledged the unparalleled natural beauty of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and underscored the government's commitment to promoting tourism in the region.

He said that efforts are underway to curb illegal constructions and ensure the preservation of forests in the province.

Notable tourist destinations such as Nathiagali, Thandiani, Naran Kaghan, among others, are being closely monitored for the unauthorized allocation of government guest houses, hotels, plots, and lands to favoured persons, he said.

Haleem Adil, brothers booked in fraud case

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Haleem Adil Sheikh and his three brothers have been booked in a fraud case.

A fraud case was lodged against the PTI leader Haleem Adil Sheikh and his three brothers at the Memon Goth police station over a citizen's complaint.

The complainant claimed that Haleem's brother Aleem had promised to give the ownership of a plot in a housing society after receiving Rs60 million on November 26, 2019.

Govt providing all facilities to investors in Sindh: Tessori

KARACHI (INP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori has said that the government was providing possible facilities to investors in the province.

This was stated by him while talking to President of Fincantieri Group of Italy General Claudia Graziano who called on him at the Governor House in Karachi on Sunday.

During the meeting, the investment opportunities in Sindh, Pak-Italy relationships and other matters of mutual interest came under discussion. Kamran Tessori invited the Fincantieri group to invest in the vast business opportunities present in the province especially Karachi, which is an economic hub of the country.

Italian Ambassador Andreas Ferraarese and Consul General Danilo Glurdanella were also present on this occasion.

Indonesian diplomatic reception held

KARACHI (APP): The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Karachi, under the leadership of Dr June Kuncoro Hadiningrat, hosted a Diplomatic Reception in commemoration of the 78th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Indonesia.

The event was held at a local hotel and attended by the diplomatic corps in Karachi, representatives of the Sindh Government, business, education and media communities and Pakistani colleagues.

The caretaker Minister of Home and Prison, Bring (retd) Haris Nawaz as chief guest joined the event along with officials from the Sindh Government and Diplomatic Community in Karachi.

The event shows a celebration of cultural diversity, strengthening diplomatic ties and fostering goodwill between Indonesia and Pakistan.

The Indonesian Consul General, Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat delivered a heartfelt speech.

Constable embraced martyrdom during police encounter

MULTAN (APP): A police constable embraced martyrdom during an exchange of fire with criminals on the premises of Makhdoom Rasheed police station, here Sunday. According to a police spokesman, taking action on the directives of the court.

Sanitary workers deployed in 795 villages

FAISALABAD (APP): Sanitary workers have been deployed in 795 villages of 189 union councils in district Faisalabad under 'Ab Gaon Chamkain Gae' programme.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Abdullah Nayyar Sheikh, in a statement issued on Sunday, said that implementation of the Ab Gaon Chamkain Gae programme was in full swing. Under the programme, loader rickshaws had also been purchased to ensure complete cleanliness at village level.

Giving some details, he said that sanitary workers were appointed to 174 villages of 59 union councils in tehsil Sadar, to 257 villages of 59 union councils of tehsil Jaranwala, 116 villages of 26 union councils of tehsil Samsundri, 181 villages of 31 union councils of tehsil Tandlianwala and 67 villages of 14 union councils of tehsil Chak Jhumra.

He said that data of sanitary workers and their loader rickshaws was uploaded on the portal and now these workers would ensure cleanliness in these villages on daily basis.

GCWUF to start tree plantation drive today

FAISALABAD (APP): The Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF) would kick off tree plantation drive here on Monday, Sept 4, 2023. A spokesperson for the university said here on Sunday that the Department of Public Administration GCWUF would organise a 'Plantation Activity' to contribute towards greener and more sustainable future for the nation. Vice Chancellor GCWUF Prof Dr Zill-i-Huma Nazki would preside over the event while Kashif Raza Awan.

Minister directs to complete ongoing development schemes

HYDERABAD (APP): Sindh Caretaker Minister for Irrigation Ishwar Lal has directed all chief engineers and project directors and other relevant officers.

He directed the relevant officials to expedite the process of sending emergency schemes to deal with the possible emergency situation caused by expected floods and heavy rains. The minister assured the officers that no transfers/postings



KARACHI: Relatives of Missing persons hold a protest in favor of their demands outside Sindh Assembly, in Provincial Capital.

Droughts, flooding make women, children more vulnerable to insecure livelihoods, poverty

LAHORE (APP): Experts have highlighted a pressing concern regarding the vulnerability of women and children in Pakistan to the adverse health effects of climate change.

This heightened susceptibility primarily arises from the precarious nature of their livelihoods and their enduring struggle with income poverty. When confronted with episodes of food scarcity, drought, or flooding, women and children are disproportionately burdened by hunger and an array of vulnerabilities, as pointed out by the Climate

Change Division in 2013. The urgency of taking action in this context cannot be overstated.

The experts emphasize that addressing this critical issue necessitates extensive collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, national societies, the private sector, civil societies, NGOs, and our entire community. The enormity of the challenges posed by climate change and the exacerbated risks faced by vulnerable populations make it clear that no single

organization can effectively combat these threats in isolation. It is only through collective efforts that these entities can mitigate the direst consequences of the climate crisis.

Environmental advocate Khalid Mahmood Qamar underscores the alarming global temperature rise, which has been accelerating for decades. The annual mean global temperature has surged by 0.57°C in the last century, with both maximum and minimum temperatures showing an upward trend. Qamar notes

that hot days have become even hotter, while cold days have become warmer. In Pakistan, regions such as the hyper-arid plains, and coastal areas, and mountainous terrain have experienced a temperature increase ranging from 0.6-1.0°C between 1960 and 2007.

Drawing from a recent Asian Development Bank report, Qamar warns that Pakistan's current temperatures are projected to continue rising. By 2100, the mean temperature is anticipated to soar within the range of 3-6°C, with a particularly

steep rise expected after 2050. This projection surpasses the global average, and certain regions within Pakistan will witness even more substantial temperature increases.

Muhammad Irfan, the dedicated manager for a resilient and greener future at WWF, emphasizes the likely impact of climate change on agricultural yields in Pakistan. Factors such as droughts, land availability, and shifting crop seasons are poised to render farmers, particularly women and children, increasingly

vulnerable to the health and livelihood repercussions of climate change. Over 80 percent of farmers in the country are smallholders, with approximately one-third of the land relying on rainfed agriculture. Irregular rain patterns and unpredictable weather changes have disrupted agricultural livelihoods, making them uncertain and challenging to sustain.

Irfan further notes that the agriculture sector's low adaptive capacity stems from the limited transferability of livelihood skills. Livestock also plays a pivotal role in

the livelihoods of the impoverished farmers, rendering them highly susceptible to water scarcity, heat stress, and reduced fodder availability. These challenges not only deprive them of immediate income and nutrition but also have ripple effects on the non-farming sector. As the expansion of the non-farming sector is closely tied to agricultural development, the potential loss of livelihoods among farmers could undermine purchasing power and indirectly impact this sector. Therefore, climate change casts a profound

shadow over the lives of the impoverished masses, farmers, and the broader economy, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive and collaborative action. In urban areas, the adverse effects of climate change, such as heat stress and urban flooding, are particularly impacting the lives of residents. These challenges are forcing many people into substandard living conditions with inadequate sanitation facilities. According to a report from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) focused on Pakistan

Govt taking steps to boost foreign investment in tourism industry: Wasi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah Sunday said that his government was taking significant steps to enhance foreign investment for the tourism industry and boost investors' confidence to explore the tourism potential of Pakistan which will promote the soft image of the country at the international level.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that efforts are being made to promote and showcase Pakistan's rich tourism heritage at all international forums with the active participation of public-private stakeholders.

He said that the foundation stone of the first theme park in Skardu will be laid soon.

The Minister of Tourism said that all possible measures will be

taken to provide the best ever facilities to tourists, adding that the tourism sector will actively promote to strengthen the national economy and lead the country to progress and prosperity.

Minister said the growth of the travel industry must also benefit local communities and create an environment while enhancing the tourist ecosystem.

Replying to a question, he said Pakistan has great potential to attract a huge number of foreign tourists and expatriate Pakistanis to explore and witness the country's culture, ecotourism and religious tourism.

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RAWALPINDI: A view of deserted pirwadhai bus stand in the city. As Transport fares soared for the second time in less than a month in the Rawalpindi district on Friday as prices of petrol and diesel cruised past the psychologically significant Rs300 mark.

Development of SAARC countries linked with durable peace: Iftikhar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Iftikhar Ali Malik has said that economic growth, prosperity, and development for all countries of South Asia is linked with durable peace in region.

While chairing a virtual conference titled "The role of Afghanistan for durable peace in the region" here on Sunday, he said, "South Asia has long been plagued by instability and conflicts that have hindered the region's progress and potential."

Iftikhar Ali Malik said, "One of the major concerns contributing to this instability has been the presence of terrorist sanctuaries on Afghan soil, which have posed a severe threat not only to Afghanistan but to neighboring countries, including

Pakistan." "Counter-terrorism cooperation and collaboration closely with regional and international stakeholders, especially Pakistan, to eliminate terrorist sanctuaries on Afghan soil, can help eradicate the breeding grounds for extremist elements and bring about much-needed stability," he added.

About economic integration, he said, "We must embrace economic integration initiatives within the South Asian region and enhanced economic cooperation can create an environment conducive to peace, prosperity, and development for all."

Former President SCCI said being trade leader of South Asia he firmly believed that by taking these steps, the Afghan Taliban government could play a pivotal role in shaping

Farmers advised to start cultivation of sugarcane

FAISALABAD (APP): Experts have advised farmers to start the cultivation of sugarcane immediately and complete it on a priority basis during current month for obtaining bumper production. According to a spokesman for the Agriculture (Extension) Department, the sugarcane crop cultivated during September was ready for harvest early and would give more yield than the crop cultivated during October and November. He said that sugar was an important commodity which played a pivotal role in catering to food requirements of people whereas its crop could also

help the growers in mitigating their financial constraints due to its attractive market value. Therefore, the farmers should bring maximum land under sugarcane cultivation and use latest technologies for crop sowing and its harvesting as latest techniques would also play a dynamic role in increasing per acre yield. He also advised the growers to select healthy seed for crop cultivation as health seed was the most important factor in enhancing production. In this connection, the growers should also use hybrid and approved varieties.



PESHAWAR: Vendors sell bananas to earn their livelihood for support their families, at Fruit Market in Peshawar.

Gold prices see upward trajectory

LAHORE (APP): Amid the upward trend in the international market, gold prices in Pakistan witnessed a big single-day hike on Sunday, while the local currency is sliding to an all-time low.

According to Local Gold and Sarafa Market sources, gold prices saw an upward trajectory in Pakistan on Sunday, as the yellow metal increased more than Rs10,000/tola in a couple of days.

The gold rate in the country for a single tola of 24-karat is Rs242,600, sources said. Similarly, the gold price for 24-karat was recorded at Rs207,990 per 10g as per bullion market sources.

It is worth mentioning here that the gold price in Pakistan fluctuates several times as per the international market, so the price is never fixed.

Al-Khidmat Foundation women's wing organizes "Sasta Bazar"

HYDERABAD (APP): The Al-Khidmat Foundation women's wing organized a "Sasta Bazar" in Crescent School Unit no.10, Latif Abad, on Sunday.

Apart from essential items, clothes and shoes were also available in the market and about 300 families benefited through this discount market.

According to a statement, a representative of the Al-Khidmat Foundation women's wing Farah Naz said that like every time, this time too, the Al-Khidmat Foundation, affiliated with the Jamaat-e-Islami had been working for the welfare of the people.



SIALKOT: President Chamber of Commerce Abdul Ghafoor Malik addressing a special ceremony in connection with Pakistan Defence Day organized by CSDO a social wing of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) held at SCCI Auditorium.

Ambassador Haque says: CIFTIS to support Pakistan in increasing services export

BEIJING (APP): The ongoing China International Fair for Trade in Service (CIFTIS) in Beijing will support Pakistan in increasing services exports, especially in Informational Technology (IT), e-commerce, finance and logistics, said Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque.

The exhibition will also help promote regional connectivity with the presence of NLC and PIA in the exhibition, he told APP after inaugurating the 'Pakistan Pavilion' at the

CIFTIS. Commercial Counselor, Ghulam Qadir, Science and Technology, Counselor Khan Muhammad, and representative of Pakistani companies were also present.

Some prominent Pakistani enterprises including Technology Zone Authority (STZA), Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), NETSOL, ISBEL, National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), National Logistic Corporation (NLC), Fb Enterprises, and others have set up their

booths at Pakistan Pavilion to attract international investors during the event.

Ambassador Haque emphasized that the Pakistan Pavilion provides a platform for Pakistani businesses to showcase their capabilities and explore new avenues for trade and investment. "This initiative reflects Pakistan's commitment to strengthening economic ties with China and other countries, and further positioning the country as a hub for service-oriented enterprises in the region," he added.

WIPO registers Sindhri, Chaunsa mango as Pakistan's products

HYDERABAD (APP): The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has registered a Geographical Indication of Sindhri and Chaunsa varieties of mangoes which have been recognized as the products of Sindh, Pakistan.

Mehmood Nawaz Shah, Vice President of Sindh Abadgar Board, which spearheaded the activity for the registration around a year ago, informed here on Sunday that the crucial milestone had been achieved thanks to the cooperation of IPO Pakistan. He apprised that a meeting was also held in this regard through a video

link, attended by IPO Pakistan's Chairman Farukh Aamil, Consultant WIPO Noor Asifa, Mohsin Bullo of Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and office bearers of SAB.

Shah said the meeting discussed the export-related benefits of the geographical indication. The meeting was told that no other country could lay a claim on Sindhri and Chaunsa varieties of mango other than Pakistan.

The meeting, according to Shah, referred to the ongoing dispute over Basmati rice between Pakistan and India.

Over 3m bales of cotton arrival recorded at ginneries

MULTAN (APP): Seed Cotton (Phutti) equivalent to over three million (30,41,104) bales have reached ginning factories across Pakistan till Aug 31, 2023.

According to a fortnightly report of Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) issued to media on Sunday, Punjab ginning factories recorded a cotton arrival figure of 10,68,796 bales while arrivals to ginneries in Sindh recorded at (19,72,308) bales including 11,84,243 reaching ginneries in Sanghar district alone. Arrivals in Baluchistan were recorded at 70,600 bales.



CHINIOT: Farmers busy in thrashing rice in a field near Jhang road.

Coordinator to FTO greets people of Kyrgyzstan on 32nd independence day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House and Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis Sunday extended warmest greetings and heartfelt congratulations to the resilient people of Kyrgyzstan on their 32nd anniversary of hard-won independence from the Soviet Union.

Speaking at an Independence Day celebration of Kyrgyzstan here today on behalf of the Kyrgyzstan Trade House

he said, "This significant milestone not only marks your steadfast commitment to freedom but also symbolizes the remarkable journey of growth and progress that Kyrgyzstan has undertaken," said a press release.

He said, "As we commemorate this special day, it is our privilege to emphasize the importance of promoting bilateral trade and economic cooperation between our two Muslim countries."

Excise dept extends deadline for payment of property tax

MULTAN (INP): The Excise and Taxation Department in Multan has extended the deadline for payment of property tax to September 30, with a 10% rebate for payments made through the E-pay system.

According to media reports, Deputy Director Admin/ETO Property Tax Khalid Hussain Qasoori said that the department has so far distributed 150,000 out of 160,000 property tax challans across the district. He urged the business community and domestic

Business community vows to continue protests till power tariff hike withdrawal

KARACHI (INP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has pledged to carry on protests until government withdraws unprecedented hike in power bills and rising fuel cost.

The FPCCI's Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar stated that the inflated power bills triggered country-wide protests, demanding that the government to abolish imposed taxes on electricity, saying that increase in electricity bills is unbearable and demanded relief from the government.

In July, the then federal cabinet gave its go-ahead to a massive increase in the base tariff of electricity by up to Rs7.50 per unit against the national average tariff determination of Rs4.96 by the power regulator

National Electric Power Regulatory Authority. The regulator had hiked the tariff to increase revenue collection for the loss-making power distribution companies during the current fiscal year. According to a Nepra statement, the revised national average tariff for the 2023-24 fiscal year has been determined at Rs29.78 per unit kWh, which is Rs 4.96 per unit higher than the previously determined national average tariff of Rs24.82.

While the regulator cited the rupee's devaluation, high inflation and interest rates, the addition of new capacities and overall low sales growth as reasons behind the increase, it was actually hiked to meet one of the conditions set by the International Monetary Fund of introducing structural reforms in the energy sector.



HYDERABAD: Retailer Milk Seller Welfare Association Chairman, Abdul Rehman Nagori addresses to media persons during press conference, at Hyderabad press club.

CM orders preparation of package for farmers

LAHORE (APP): In the direction of Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, a special package would be prepared to provide facilities to farmers of the province.

In this regard, the CM sought comprehensive recommendations for preparation of the special package. Chairman Planning & Development Board, secretaries Agriculture, Livestock,

Irrigation, Finance and a team comprising officials of Punjab Bank would prepare recommendations for the package.

Mohsin Naqvi also sought a durable plan for the establishment of a Model Agricultural Market in every division. Pesticides, agricultural equipments, fertilisers and seeds would be available in the Model Agricultural Market.

Shaikh Shariq says: NBP offers financial services to promote international trade

BEIJING (APP): The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) has set up a stall in the Pakistan Pavilion at the China International Fair for Trade in Service (CIFTIS) to offer financial services to more and more clients in China and other countries to promote trade among them.

Chief Representative, Shaikh Muhammad Shariq said on Sunday.

"CIFTIS is one of the largest exhibitions in China and we are participating in the exhibition by setting up our stall. With this exhibition, we want to connect more and more businessmen and traders and the financial institutions to expand our business and offer our services to more and more clients," he told APP.

He said that this

exhibition is related to trade in services which is one of the major components of the economy of any country. Hence, this exhibition will play a significant role in increasing the bilateral trade and investment between Pakistan and China as well as other countries.

Shaikh Shariq informed that the bank is already providing a number of financial services to customers not only in China but in 17 countries around the globe. Pakistani firms like Special Technology Zone Authority (STZA), Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), NETSOL, ISBEL, National Logistic Corporation (NLC), Fb Enterprises and others have also set up booths to attract investors at CIFTIS.



SARGODHA: Labourer busy in work on their workplace at wooden market.

Freelancing revolution: A beacon of hope for Pak economic revival

ISLAMABAD (APP): In an era of rapid technological advancement, Pakistan is witnessing a transformative shift in its economic landscape. While the country has long relied on traditional labour and industrial markets, a remarkable change is underway as it emerges as one of the top five nations embracing the freelance revolution.

Pakistan has firmly secured its position as the fourth fastest-growing freelance market globally, a recognition bestowed by the prestigious Oxford International Institute through its Online Global Index. Esteemed international organizations

have consistently advocated for harnessing the immense potential that Pakistan possesses, thanks to its youthful population, with a remarkable 64 percent being under the age of 30. In Fiscal year 2022, Pakistan's fragile economy received a much-needed boost as it generated a staggering almost \$ 400 million in export-related income through freelancing. This financial injection underscores the immense potential of this sector to revitalize the nation's economic prospects for the benefit of its people.

National Skills University (NSU) is at the forefront of equipping Pakistan's workforce with the skills required for the freelance industry. Offering courses in graphic design, video editing, cyber security, and more, these programs are tailored to meet the demands of the digital economy.

Dr. Shahid Anwar, an assistant professor at NSU, proudly shares success stories of students securing positions abroad, emphasizing the potential of this industry to create international job opportunities. Tahir Nadeem, an individual with multiple freelance certifications, emphasizes that it's never too late to learn, highlighting the importance of upskilling in this evolving landscape.

Kazim Mushtaq, a freelance professional, attests, "freelancers are their own bosses and true power of freelancing lies in its flexibility." This newfound autonomy not only brings relief but also substantial earnings, as some individuals are earning over Rs 300,000 monthly. The ability to work on one's terms represents a game-changing shift in the traditional employment paradigm, he remarked. "Despite its potential, there exists a gap between academic learning and practical application in freelancing," Ms. Huma Israr, a lecturer at NSU, acknowledges the need to bridge this gap and

endorses courses offered by various universities as a means to prepare students for real-world challenges. These programmes equip students with the skills necessary to thrive in the freelance ecosystem.

Dr. Shahid Anwar offers a cautionary note on the potential pitfalls of freelancing. He highlights the prevalence of online scams, the aftermath of the PayPal crisis, and a lack of awareness among the masses. He advises freelancers to exercise caution, emphasizing the importance of maintaining clear communication through freelancing platforms.

North Korea simulates nuclear missile attack in warning to US

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea announced Sunday that it conducted simulated nuclear missile attacks as a warning to the United States, emphasizing the perceived "nuclear war danger."
The country launched a series of cruise missiles, some of which were equipped with imitation nuclear warheads. The state media outlet, KCNA, described this exercise as a simulation of a "tactical nuclear attack" aimed at alerting the US to the potential consequences of their actions.
According to KCNA, these exercises took place at dawn on Saturday and involved "two long-range strategic cruise missiles with mock nuclear warheads." The simulated

nuclear attack was a response to joint military exercises conducted by the United States and South Korea earlier in the week, as reported by KCNA.
The Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea, as cited by KCNA, stressed the importance of these exercises through a "written drill order." The missile sub-unit involved in the exercise executed the mission successfully, with missiles following a specific flight pattern and warheads detonating at a predetermined altitude.
"The missile sub-unit involved... successfully carried out its nuclear strike mission by making sure that missiles flown along the pattern '8' flight track simulating the distance of 1,500 kilometres (about 1 mile) for 7.672 to 7.681 seconds re-

spectively and warheads detonated at a preset altitude of 150 meters above the target island," the state-run media reported.
This latest missile exercise is part of a series conducted by North Korea this year. It marks the country's 18th missile test in 2023, a significant increase compared to four tests in 2020 and eight in 2021.
The exercise coincided with the commencement of annual joint military drills between South Korea and the United States, aimed at improving their preparedness against potential threats from North Korea.
The joint military drills are seen as a demonstration of the strong military alliance between the two nations, with the exercises focusing on counter-attacking invading forces.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspects the Pukjung Machine Complex and a major munitions factory in an undisclosed location in North Korea in this picture released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Armenian PM says depending solely on Russia for security was 'strategic mistake'

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Armenia's prime minister has said his country's policy of solely relying on Russia to guarantee its security was a strategic mistake because Moscow has been unable to deliver and is in the process of winding down its role in the wider region.
In an interview with Italian newspaper La Repubblica published on Sunday, Nikol Pashinyan accused Russia of failing to ensure Armenia's security in the face of what he said was aggression from neighbouring Azerbaijan over the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region.
Pashinyan suggested that Moscow, which has a defence pact with Armenia and a military base there, did not regard his country as sufficiently pro-Russian and said he believed Russia was in the process of leaving the wider South Caucasus region.

Yerevan was therefore trying to diversify its security arrangements, he said, an apparent reference to its ties with the European Union and the United States and its attempts to forge closer ties with other countries in the region.
"Armenia's security architecture was 99.999% linked to Russia, including when it came to the procurement of arms and ammunition," Pashinyan told La Repubblica.

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Russian Security Council says 280,000 soldiers recruited since January

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Dmitry Medvedev, the former president of Russia and the deputy chairman of the Security Council, said on Sunday that Moscow had enlisted some 280,000 people in the army since the year began. As its Ukraine war enters its 19th month, Russia has refrained from announcing another mobilisation, which is viewed as a controversial move. Instead, it has actively promoted recruiting additional soldiers into the military. "According to data

from the ministry of defence, 280,000 people have joined the Russian army on contracts from January 1," Medvedev said, according to the TASS news agency.
"Part of them were in the reserves, part of them volunteers and other categories," he added, during a visit to the Far Eastern Russian island of Sakhalin. In early August, Medvedev said the army had recruited around 230,000 people since the start of the year but these numbers have not been verified, according to AFP.

Mission accomplished, India puts moon rover to 'sleep'

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India switched off its moon rover, the first craft to reach the lunar south pole, after it completed its two-week assignment conducting experiments, the country's space agency said.
The Pragyan rover from the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft was "set into sleep mode" but with batteries charged and receiver on, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, late on Saturday.



Pope Francis attends the Holy Mass in the Steppe Arena, during his Apostolic Journey in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

Erdogan's Russia visit vital for grain deal, Turkish leader's chief aide says

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin will focus on the Black Sea grain deal during their meeting on Monday as Turkey seeks to bring Moscow back to the deal, Erdogan's chief foreign policy advisor said.
"We play a leading role here. We see strong support from all around the world for the realisation of the grain corridor," Erdogan's chief foreign policy and security advisor Akif Cagatay Kilic told an interview on A Haber television channel.
"The current status (of the grain deal) will be discussed at the summit on Monday. We are cautious, but we hope to achieve success because this is a situation that affects the entire world," Kilic said.

Russian drones hit Danube River port infrastructure that is critical to Ukraine's grain exports, injuring at least two people in the attack on southern parts of the Odesa region on Sunday, Ukrainian officials said.
The Danube has become Ukraine's main route for exporting grain since July, when Russia quit a U.N. and Turkey-brokered deal that had given safe passage to Kyiv's exports of grains, oilseeds and vegetables oils via the Black Sea. Ankara acknowledged the technical complexities surrounding the agreement, particularly concerning Russian grain and payment mechanisms, Kilic said. The issue also involves international payment systems such as SWIFT, posing a multifaceted challenge, Kilic added.

Iran sentences two female journalists for 'conspiracy' and 'collusion'

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran has sentenced two female journalists, Negin Bagheri and Elnaz Mohammadi, to a three-year partly suspended prison term for alleged "conspiracy" and "collusion."
As reported by local media on Sunday, the journalists will serve a portion of their sentences, equating to approximately one-fortieth of the term, which amounts to less than a month in prison. The remaining part of the sentence is suspended for five years, during which they are mandated to undergo "professional ethics training" and are prohibited from leaving the country. Their lawyer, Amir Raisian, provided these details to the reformist Ham Mihan daily newspaper.



People attend a protest against the meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen and his Libyan counterpart Najla Mangoush in Tripoli, Libya.

India PM Modi urges UN to rethink priorities for the 21st century

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi called on the United Nations to reform in line with 21st-century realities to ensure the representation of voices that matter, according to an interview published on Sunday.
A "mid-20th century approach cannot serve the world in the 21st century", Modi, who will host a summit of the Group of 20 big economies from next weekend, told the Press Trust of India news agency.
Modi, leader of the world's most populous country and aspirant to be-

come a permanent member of the UN Security Council, is seeking to boost India's status and promote its causes, such as relief for unsustainable debt, using the global pulpit of the G20 summit starting on September 9. He reiterated his support in the interview for the African Union to become a full member of the G20.
The two-day summit will showcase India's highest-profile guest list ever, from US President Joe Biden to French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Students transform drab dorm rooms into comfy living spaces

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: From \$300 studded headboards and \$100 coffee table books to custom-made cabinets to disguise your mini-fridge, students are spending big bucks to decorate their dorm rooms, adding yet another layer to the soaring costs of college.
Some are even going so far as to hire interior designers to beautify their 12 feet by 20 feet of space.
Lesley Lachman, 18, planned her furnishings for her dorm room with her roommate immediately after deciding to attend the University of Mississippi back in May.

UK orders review into police 'political activism'

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: UK interior minister Suella Braverman said on Saturday she has ordered a watchdog to review "political activism and impartiality" in the police after an independent review found the force racist, sexist and homophobic.
Braverman, who has earned criticism since taking up the post nearly a year ago with her "anti-woke" rhetoric and hardline stance on immigration, commissioned the probe to "explore impacts of police taking part in political matters". The interior ministry cited officers policing gender-critical views on social media, their conduct at political marches and some taking the knee in public as examples of how public confidence in police may have been "damaged".
The review by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services comes ahead

of a general election expected next year and prompted immediate criticism it was a politicised move.
Braverman's ruling Conservatives, in power since 2010, have been trailing the main Labour opposition by double digits in the polls for more than a year. They have been accused of increasingly stoking so-called culture war issues — such as those linked to immigration, transgender rights and social justice — to reverse sliding fortunes.
Conservatives and others have hit out at police in recent years after some officers made public demonstrations of support for social justice issues, such as taking the knee to protest against racism.
However, UK police forces have also been embroiled in numerous scandals involving racism, sexism and corruption, in particular London's Metropolitan Police Service, the country's largest.

Two Chinese killed in attack on DRC gold convoy

Monitoring Desk
BUKAVU: Two Chinese nationals and two others were killed in an attack on a convoy carrying gold in the Democratic Republic of Congo's lawless east, local authorities said on Saturday.
Friday's ambush targeted a four-vehicle convoy belonging to TSM Mining which was carrying gold from a site near the Kimbi river in the Fizi region of South Kivu province.
The attackers "stole parcels of gold which they took away into the bush," said Sammy Badibanga Kalondji, the top local official in Fizi.
The two others killed were a Congolese soldier and a driver. Kalondji said three others were wounded in the attack — a Chinese mine employee and two locals: a soldier and a mine worker.

Taiwan suspends work, transport and classes as Typhoon Haikui slams into the island

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Much of southern Taiwan came to a standstill Sunday as Typhoon Haikui churned over towns and farmland. Residents were urged to stay home and flights, rail transport, ferry services, classes and outdoor events were suspended, but there were no reports of injuries or serious damage.
The storm made landfall in Taitung county on the Pacific-facing east coast around 3 p.m. (0700 GMT) Sunday, bringing sustained winds of 155 kph (96 mph) and gusts of 190 kph (120

mph). The winds and driving rains forced in unsecured doors, uprooted trees — at least one of which crushed a parked minivan — and caused flooding in some low-lying areas. By Sunday evening, almost 4,000 people had been evacuated from mountain communities that are at high risk of landslides and flooding, according to the Interior Ministry. Families brought sleeping mats and other necessities to school gymnasiums and public meeting halls, where they were provided with food and drink.

Cyprus police make more arrests in racism-fuelled violence

Monitoring Desk
NICOSIA: Police in Cyprus have made 20 arrests after a spate of racism-fuelled violence against migrants which erupted last week in the west of the island and spread at the weekend to the southern city of Limassol.
Storefronts belonging to migrants in the island's second city were smashed and Asian delivery drivers assaulted in a string of violent incidents which started on Friday night and continued until the early hours of Sunday.

Iran adds Russian combat jets to air force

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran's air force has received a batch of advanced Russian combat trainer jets to "improve the training and combat capability of the air force", local media reported on Saturday.
"A number of Yak-130 training aircraft entered the country and joined the Shahid Babaei Air Base in Isfahan" in central Iran, according to Tasnim news agency.
The agency, quoting the army's public relations department, said the arrival of the Yakovlev Yak-130 came as part of the Islamic republic's "arms contracts with the Russian Federation".
Russia and Iran are both under international sanctions that restrict trade, but have over the past year forged strong ties in various sectors including military cooperation.
In March, Iran an-

nounced that a deal had been reached to buy Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets from Russia. Ukraine and many of its Western allies have accused Tehran of supplying Moscow with weapons for use in its war against Kyiv. Iran has consistently denied the allegations.
In May, the United States said Iran and Russia are "expanding their unprecedented defence partnership." US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said at the time that Iran had delivered more than 400 drones to Russia since August last year. He added that Tehran was seeking to buy attack helicopters, radars and Yak-130 aircraft from Russia.
Iran currently has mostly Russian MiG and Sukhoi fighter jets that date back to the Soviet era, as well as some Chinese aircraft, including the F-7.

Ukraine troops are 'moving forward', Zelenskiy says in rebuff to critics

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Saturday that Kyiv's troops were "moving forward" in their counteroffensive against Russian forces, rebuffing Western officials who say that Ukraine is gaining ground too slowly.
The much-vaunted counteroffensive, which is nearing the three-month mark, has retaken more than a dozen villages but no major settlements with soldiers hampered by vast Russian minefields and defensive lines. This week, unnamed US officials vented frustration at the slow progress of the operation and even faulted Ukrainian strategy, according to Western reports that drew Kyiv's ire.
"Ukrainian forces are moving forward. Despite everything, and no matter what anyone says, we are advancing, and that is the

most important thing. We are on the move," Zelenskiy wrote on the Telegram messaging app. Some fear the West's support could begin to falter as colder and wetter weather slows progress on the battlefield later in the year. The West has poured in many billions of dollars to help the counteroffensive and Kyiv says it needs more.
Ukrainian battlefield momentum has picked up slightly in one part of the southeastern Zaporizhzhia front where Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar said on Friday that Kyiv's troops had broken through the first line of Russian defences. The White House said there had been "notable success" by Ukraine in the area, although Maliar warned that Kyiv's troops had reached even more heavily fortified positions on the other side after breaking through.

Clashes in Iraq's Kirkuk over handover of police HQ to Kurds leave 1 dead, several injured

Monitoring Desk
BAGHDAD: Demonstrations in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk over the handover of a key facility from federal to local Kurdish authorities turned violent Saturday, and one protester was killed and several were injured, witnesses and local officials said.
Clashes broke out around the planned handover of the Iraqi federal police headquarters to the Kurdish Democratic Party in the city, which is home to a mixed population of Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen.
Federal forces seized Kirkuk and the surrounding oil fields in October 2017 after Kurdish regional authorities organized a symbolic but controversial referendum for Kurdish independence. The KDP vacated its headquarters in the city at the time.
The agreement to form the current government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, included a provision for the return of the Kurdistan Democratic Party to the

province.
Last week, a group of Arabs from Kirkuk closed the Kirkuk-to-Erbil highway in protest over the reopening of the KDP headquarters in Kirkuk. On Saturday, Kurdish residents demanded the reopening of the highway, sparking tensions between the protesters and security forces.
Al-Sudani issued a directive instructing security forces to impose a curfew in Kirkuk as clashes erupted Saturday between KDP supporters, Arab and Turkmen protesters and security forces.
In a statement, Masoud Barzani, the former president of the semi-autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq, decried the violence directed against Kurdish protesters and expressed disappointment with security forces.
"It's surprising that in the past few days security forces in Kirkuk did not prevent the violence and illegal behavior of some groups but today the Kurdish protesters were faced with violence and (the) blood of Kurdish youth was spilled."

Still reeling from flooding, some in Vermont say something better must come out of losing everything

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Seven weeks after catastrophic flooding in Vermont destroyed their mobile home, Sara Morris and her family don't yet know what they will do for housing long-term. She and her husband, their three kids and his mother have been staying with Morris' mother since the flooding mangled their home, boring a hole through the side and leaving it tilted in layers of mud.
With winter fast approaching, some Vermonters hit by the July flooding are still deep in the throes of flood recovery, whether finding a place to live or repairing their homes or businesses.
So far, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has determined more than 2,900 homes in the state had some type of damage, based on applications and housing inspections, including 530 designated as having major damage and 14 destroyed.

About 1,280 households have received rental assistance from FEMA, which may be an indication of how many people cannot currently live in their homes, according to the governor's press secretary.
The flooding has exacerbated Vermont's existing housing crisis, which is the biggest challenge the state faces in the flood recovery right now, Republican Gov. Phil Scott said. "It's a big puzzle but we are actively pursuing this every single day," said Scott, adding, "It's what keeps me up at night." FEMA is bringing in manufactured homes and searching for apartment buildings it can lease and repair to house flood victims. The agency says about 225 people are eligible for the temporary housing but half of them have found other housing solutions. After Toshi Gilmore's home flooded in Johnson, she hung a sheet on her house spray-painted with the message.



Sara Morris and her children stand outside their flood-ravaged mobile home in Berlin.

PPP asks ECP to unfreeze development schemes' funds

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to unfreeze the funds for development schemes.

PPP senior leader Senator Taj Haider wrote a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and demanded to take back its decision to ban the disbursement of funds for the development schemes ahead of elections.

The political party criticised the freezing of funds for the development schemes aiming to provide relief and welfare to the masses.

"Orders of the Election Commission of Pakistan to freeze Development Funds in the Province of Sindh, including those allo-

cated in the provincial budget for providing flood resistant houses to families devastated in last year's floods and for solar panels to provide relief to the poorest of the families from hours of load-shedding and exorbitant electricity bills are shocking to say the least," the letter states.

It stated that the ECP took the surprise decision to freeze the funds for a solar panel scheme amid worst loadshedding and inflated electricity bills issues.

"Inmates of 200, 000 houses that have remained in darkness for generations have been provided solar panels so that they too can benefit from one of the so many bounties of Allah which none of us can deny."



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor University of Balochistan Dr. Shafiq ur Rehman administering the oath of newly elected President Kaleemullah Barch and office bearers of Academia Staff Association UoB.

Quran, Sunnah only solution to sufferings of countrymen: Aneeq

KARACHI (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed has said that teachings of Holy Quran and Sunnah are only solution to the socio-economic and moral problems faced by the countrymen.

This was stated by him while addressing a ceremony organized in Karachi on Sunday.

Bringers of Imran now struggling to save him: Sanaullah

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Punjab and former interior minister, Rana Sanaullah has alleged that backers of PTI Chief Imran Khan are struggling to save him.

In a statement on Sunday, he declaring Imran "laadla" of judicial system said why he felt need to reach out to the people abroad.

Rana Sanaullah said moving International Court of Justice means making Pakistan stand in the international dock as a convict and only the enemies of the country and their operatives did such heinous acts.

Those who wanted to bring terrorists back to Pakistan, release them and re-settle them are now show-

ing a new path to the terrorists, he added.

The PML-N Punjab President further claimed that the ones who brought Imran Khan to power were now trying to save him.

"First, he was made a hero, received foreign funding, brought to power and after bringing him to power destroyed Pakistan's economy and foreign relations. Inflation caused a civil war-like situation."

He alleged said that the minds of the youths were corrupted so they could turn into violent mobs.

The former minister further said that by taking Pakistan to the international court, the usurpers of the rights of Kashmiris and Palestinians have become happy.



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan National Party (BNP-Awami) Women Wing are holding protest demonstration against hand grenade attack on the residence of Former Provincial Minister Asad Baloch, at Quetta press club.

Amanullah says: GoB would provide more facilities to the sportsmen for representing country

Balochistan has equal potential and talented youngsters as other provinces

Independent Report QUETTA: Deputy Director Sports Balochistan Amanullah on Sunday said that the province had equal potential and talented youngsters as other provinces.

He called for provision of more extended facilities to make the younger generation healthy and provide an opportunity to exhibit their abilities.

He said the province had the honour to produce international players who brought laurels to the country and the government would create more opportunities and provide facilities to the sportsmen for representing the country.

He appreciated the Islamic Relief Pakistan on organizing a three-day cricket tournament at Hanna Urak to provide healthy activities to the youth of the flood-affected area.

Amanullah said while addressing the players and sports lovers on the occasion of the final match of the cricket tournament at Sahar Awan Cricket Ground at Hanna Urak on Sunday.

The final match of the tournament was played between the teams of Spartan Hanna and Green Hanna, which was won by Spartan Hanna after an interesting competition.



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed addresses to teachers, students at Jamia Banoria Almia.

Calls for accountability in Jaranwala incident Interfaith Harmony Conference promotes unity and tolerance among religions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Religious leaders and scholars from diverse religious backgrounds converged at the Interfaith Harmony Conference recently held at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts in the federal capital.

The conference, organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, served as a platform for prominent figures to advocate for unity, peace, and tolerance among different religious communities.

Minister of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed, opened the conference with a powerful message of unity. He strongly condemned any distortion of faith and emphasized the need for all religions to come together. He shed light on the recent tragic incident in Jaranwala, expressing his belief that such incidents should never have occurred.

Minister Aneeq also pointed out that neighbouring India had witnessed even worse atrocities against various communities, highlighting that the lives lost among Christian brethren in India were not just Christians but "our brothers."

Mahmood Ashrafi, who also serves as the President of the International Interfaith Harmony Council, shared valuable insights on the importance of religious cohesion. He emphasized that the teachings of Islam inherently advocate for peaceful coexistence among all communities.

Madad Ali Sindhi pledges to assess ability of teachers to improve educational system

KARACHI (APP): Interim Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi has vowed to evaluate the ability of teachers to correct the educational system in the country. He said that the educational system would be put on the right track.

While talking to media persons during his visit to the Karachi Press Club (KPC) here Sunday, the minister said that the education and ability of the teachers would be checked in the educational institutions including the universities of the country.

He said that a grand provincial meeting had also been convened to discuss the matters of education and vowed to improve the quality of education.

Replying to a question, he said that education was the provincial subject after the 18th Amendment. He said that Sindh, Punjab and other provinces had reservations over history subjects and they wanted to put the personalities, they considered to include them in the curriculum.

Speaking on the private schools, he said that the fees of the private schools must be reasonable.

Replying to another question, he said that the Federal Urdu University was facing crisis and many employees of the University were not receiving pen-

sions. Earlier, speaking about the issues of the journalists, he advised his interim government to announce a permanent fund for the journalists, who give their twenty years to a media outlet, to meet their expenses as a 'Guzara Allowance'.

He said that he would ensure the provision of scholarships to the children of the journalist community. Madad Ali Sindhi said that he considered the Karachi Press Club as his home and would make all-out efforts to get the issues of journalists resolved.

KPC President Saeed Sarbazi and Secretary Shoaib Ahmed were also present on the occasion.

3.1 magnitude earthquake jolts Quetta

QUETTA (INP): A mild intensity earthquake on Sunday jolted the areas of Balochistan bordering Afghanistan.

According to seismological departments, tremours measuring 3.1 in Richter scale were felt in border areas of Balochistan.

The epicentre of quake was stated 79 kilometer North-West of Quetta, at depth of 56 kilometer inside earth.

However, no causality or property damages were reported due to quake.

Five killed including two women, child in Mardan

PESHAWAR (INP): Five persons including two women and a child were killed in a house Par Hoti area Kacha Sarak, said 1122 on Sunday. Rescue teams reached the incident place and shifted the bodies to a nearby hospital. The deceased were identified as Waqar, his wife, mother and four-year-old Azan son of Waqar.



QUETTA: President All Pakistan Labour Federation Sultan Muhammad Khan and others addressing regarding awareness-raising workshop on Trade Union Platforms for promoting Occupational Safety and Health.

Party's joining ceremony: PkMAP would continue to raise voice for rights of oppresses people: Leaders

Independent Report QUETTA: The politics of Pashtoonkhw Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) is based on human bonds and believes in humanity remaining above all kinds of prejudices. We have always raised voice for the rights of oppresses masses following the principles of humanity, and would continue to do so in future.

This and similar views were expressed by the provincial president of PkMAP, Nasrullah Zairay, secretary, Faqir Khushhal Kasi, Ali Tareen, Professor Asad Tareen and other leaders while addressing a party's joining ceremony at Sheikhana regional unit on Sunday.

Some 150 people led by Javed Nazir Gill and 40 led by Tahir Jonson announced to join the party.

Also participated in the joining ceremony was by Qayaz Afghan, zonal organizer of PSO Latif Kakar and others.

Nasrullah Zairay on the occasion said that it is a matter of pleasure that the people from every religion,

colour, faith and nationality are joining the party in large number.

He expressed the hope that the party would be included in the most favourite parties by serving the people without any discrimination.

Mr. Zairay said that the ruling elite has always created differences among the people by spreading prejudices and that on the basis of religion and faith.

He said that the country's establishment also played the role of "rented sepoy" for their own interests and imposed war in the neighbouring country in the name of Jihad. Afterwards, the war in Afghanistan was spread in the whole region and then world and affected our country even, he charged.

He also criticized the record inflation and law and order issues prevailing in the country. Nasrullah Zairay and other PkMAP leaders vowed to expedite political and democratic struggle for the rights of oppressed people of the province and country.



SIBI: Deputy Commissioner Mansoor Ahmed Qazi in a group photo with Staff Levies Officers and Revenue Department employees.

US official Pak needs energy sector reforms to get rid of debt

WASHINGTON (Online): Senior US official Elizabeth Horst has said that Pakistan needs to reform the energy sector and choose renewable energy sources.

The reforms proposed by the IMF will help Pakistan get out of the debt and external financing trap, she added.

According to media reports, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Horst, who heads the Bureau of South and Central Affairs at the US State Department, stressed the need to implement reforms to meet future challenges.

Elizabeth Horst said that this is a difficult economic situation, this is the situation in Pakistan, in America and in the whole world. How can America help Pakistan to avoid economic disaster? We are working every day to help Pakistan advance economic reforms that will make it more competitive and better prepared to meet future challenges.

The U.S. official highlighted recent U.S. efforts to help ease the pressure of the economic downturn and aid to victims of last year's devastating floods, including emergency shelter, flood relief and food aid which is more than \$21 million.

She said that at the same time we are building the future to help Pakistan move towards building resilience against natural disasters after recovery from disasters.

Through the Pak-US Green Alliance, we are making strategic investments in the energy, water and agriculture sectors, which will strengthen climate resilience, bring innovation in the energy sector and promote inclusive economic growth, she added.

Stressing the need to encourage foreign investment in Pakistan, Elizabeth Horst said that we want to see Pakistan succeed in the competitive US trade and investment market, it is no secret that when US companies Investing in Pakistan is very beneficial for both countries.

She maintained that US investment in Pakistan creates high-paying 21st century jobs, provides training and upskilling for workers and helps ensure compliance with international labor standards.



QUETTA: Activists of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products, inflation price hiking and the highly inflated electricity bills, at Quetta Press Club.

JI announces protests against IMF agreements and electricity price hike

LAHORE (INP): The chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, Siraj-ul-Haq announced filing a petition in the Supreme Court of Pakistan under the Right to Information Act to seek the details of the agreements with the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) of IMF, which he alleged had benefited the corrupt elite at the expense of the people.

He held a press conference at the party's headquarters in Lahore on Sunday, where he thanked the business community, transporters and people for participating in a peaceful strike against the government's economic policies.

He also announced that Jamaat-e-Islami will hold sit-ins at the four governor houses in the country and launch a campaign against the electricity bills from today.

"We will stage sit-ins in front of governor houses in all four provinces and observe wheel-jam strike along with traders and transporters, if the government refused to reduce electricity bills," the JI Emir said.

He warned that if the government does not withdraw the increase in petrol, diesel and electricity prices, then the business community and transporters may resort to a wheel jam strike.

He said that the strike was a clear message to the government that the people of Pakistan do not accept the agreements that the previous government signed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which have caused

inflation and hardship for the masses.

He criticized the Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) for issuing an order to cut off the meters of defaulters and said that JI will not allow any company to remove people's meters.

"When government purchases expensive electricity itself, why it shifts its burden on general public.

Theft committed by you and the public bear the brunt, it won't happen now. We reject these agreements with the IPPs," JI leaders said.

He said that electricity is cheaper in Bangladesh, India and Afghanistan than in Pakistan, and accused the caretaker Prime Minister of being a spokesperson of IMF.

4 killed, one injured as passenger car falls into Neelum river

MIRPUR (AJK): (APP): At least four people, including a woman, were killed and one injured as a passenger car skidded off the road and fell into Neelum river near Pathika on Neelum valley late Saturday night.

Talking to APP, Station House Officer (SHO) the area's Panjral Police Station Sub Inspector Mir Mushtaq Ahmed told that the ill-fated car (FX - 286 ICT) moving from Pihika village for local Develiyian village met the accident by skidding off the road due to heavy rainfall and fell into the river at about 10.30 p.m from over 2500 feet height from the road leaving four persons dead and injuring one belonging to a local family. Those ill-fated lost lives were identified as Arif son of Rehman Ullah, Zameer son of Din Muhammad, Adil son of Aslam.

in Gujarat with the conviction of co-accused, more than 1 billion was allegedly distributed in development contracts, favored contractor Azmat Hayat was used for bribes in contracts.

The accused received commission from the full payments to the contractors even before the construction work started.

Parvez Elahi corruption case, NAB also arrests Muhammad Bhatti

LAHORE (Online): In the alleged corruption scandal of Chaudhry Parvaizalhi, NAB (National Accountability Bureau) has also arrested the Principal Secretary of the former Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Khan Bhatti.

According to media reports, Muhammad Khan Bhatti was arrested by NAB Lahore on the charge of corruption of 1 billion in construction contracts.

The accused is accused of being involved in illegal recruitments in Gujarat and other cities by missing powers.

Meher Azmat Hayat along with other accused persons were recruited in the Punjab Highway Department as an agent and used them.

Accused Muhammad Khan Bhatti got 116 development schemes approved