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

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

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

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

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PM orders immediate action against power thieves, defaulters

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

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

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

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

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

Pakistan-KSA joint exercise on counter terrorism concludes



RAWALPINDI (APP): The closing ceremony of Pakistan-KSA Joint Exercise in Counter Terrorism domain, AL BATTAR-1, was held at Cherat on Monday.

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

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

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

The exercise was aimed at further harnessing the historic military-to-military relations between both brotherly countries, including nurturing of joint employment concept against counter-terrorism and identifying areas of mutual interest for future military collaborations.

Issue of missing persons more important than inflation:

Article 6 should be applied on those responsible for delay in elections: Mengal

Independent Report QUETTA: The President Balochistan National Party (BNP), Sardar Akhtar Mengal has stated that no one is safe in the circumstances being created in the Balochistan province. He said that the issue of missing persons is more critical



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) President Sardar Akhtar Mengal addressing a press conference.

Shaan-e-Pakistan CM Balochistan Awards to be conferred on unsung heroes today

Independent Report QUETTA: The Shaan-e-Pakistan Chief Minister Balochistan Awards ceremony is scheduled to be held today (Tuesday) at the Noori Naseer Khan Complex here.

The awards ceremony is being held to honour the "extraordinary heroes" in recognition of their meritorious services in different sectors in the province.

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 today.

These heroes would be paid rich tributes at the ceremony to be hosted by the Culture department, Government of Balochistan in collaboration with the

than the issue of price hike and law and order.

He also said that we have already described the present rulers as undertakers instead of caretakers.

This and similar other views were expressed by the BNP chief while addressing a press conference.

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US dollar reaches Rs. 330 in open market

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

On the first day of the business week, the interbank market saw the dollar's value increase by 53 paise, while in the open market, it surged by 2 rupees. The staggering climb to Rs330 in the open market is a new record that has left traders and the public grappling with the implications.

Last week had witnessed a slight dip in the dollar's value in the interbank market, as it had depreciated by 7 paise, closing at Rs305.47 according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

However, the respite was short-lived as the dollar bounced back, reaching an all-time high of Rs305.54 in the interbank market, surpassing the previous week's high of Rs301.

Economists are attributing this rise in the dollar's value to various factors. Firstly, the conclusion of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) standby program has led to increased pressure on the dollar, with imports and exports being impacted.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over meeting of Secretaries Committee



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

IMF rejects Pakistan's power relief plan

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pakistan has assured the IMF that providing relief for inflated power bills will not result in a budget

deficit, sources added.

The IMF was requested to approve a plan seeking payment of electricity bills by consumers in installments over the course of four months.

The interim government devised a strategy to provide relief to power consumers on exorbitant electricity bills, with a reduction of Rs3000 for users consuming 300 units.

Reports suggest that bills for power consumers using 300 units in September will be decreased by the aforementioned amount.

The government, a few days ago, shared a plan with the IMF seeking relief for the impoverished people in connection with electricity bills.

The government held out an assurance that none of the targets agreed upon by the previous government would be compromised.

Caretaker Minister for Finance Dr Shamsad Akhtar said a team comprising Pakistani authorities met with IMF officials.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries Prince Ahmed Ali Baloch meeting with Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai

Pak Navy's helicopter crash in Gwadar: Governor, CM pay rich tributes to martyrs sacrificing their lives in line of duty

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has expressed deep grief and sorrow over martyrdom of two officers and a jawan in the helicopter crash took place in Gwadar.

In a condolence statement issued here on Monday, the Governor prayed for the departed souls of the Navy officers and jawan in the helicopter mishap.

He also prayed that may Allah Almighty give enough strength and patience to the bereaved families to bear the tragic loss.

Continued on page 2

Four sentenced to death in blasphemy case

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

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

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

The court also gave seven years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 100,000 to another accused Usman Laiqat under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act. The convict would have to spend six more months in prison in case of non-payment of the fine. The case was registered against the convicts by the Federal Investigation Agency Cyber Crimes Circle Rawalpindi.

President calls for upholding supremacy of constitution

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

The president said this in a meeting with Caretaker Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Ahmed Irfan Aslam, who called on him here.

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

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

He also paid tributes to

the services rendered by the martyrs for their motherland.

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

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

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

Interim Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti expressed grief and sorrow on the sad incident of Naval Helicopter Crash in Gwadar on Monday in which two officers and one soldier embraced martyrdom.

In his condolence message, the minister prayed for the departed souls and the bereaved families.

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

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

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

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

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

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

He also paid tributes to

the services rendered by the martyrs for their motherland.

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Caretaker minister drives forward 'Private Hajj Scheme' with strategic meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed, spearheaded a pivotal gathering on Monday to discuss the Private Hajj Scheme's future.

The meeting brought together key players from diverse Hajj groups and representatives of the Hajj Organizers Association of Pakistan (HOAP), with the joint secretary of Hajj delivering a comprehensive briefing.

The focal points of the discussion included Saudi companies' facilities, the sponsorship Hajj scheme, service visas, and more.

Minister Aneeq emphasized the need for private Hajj companies to adhere to Saudi directives re-

garding the allocation of Hajj quotas adding that Saudi authorities had advised reducing the number of Hajj companies, recommending a range of 2,000 to 3,000 pilgrims per company.

He issued instructions for private Hajj companies to submit sponsorship fee details well in advance of the deadline and called for enhanced monitoring and complaint handling to elevate the overall Hajj pilgrimage experience.

The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to addressing concerns and reservations of Hajj companies during the upcoming Kingdom's visit and pledged to mobilize all available resources to ensure a seamless experience

for pilgrims. He commended the services offered by most private Hajj group operators and proposed measures to further strengthen trade relations.

The briefing disclosed that a total of 901 Hajj companies were registered under the Private Hajj Scheme, but corrective action was deemed necessary as 102 companies failed to upload the required data on the Ministry's portal.

In line with new Saudi directives, the HOAP committed to presenting their recommendations on the cluster system to the ministry within 24 hours, reinforcing their dedication to facilitating a smoother Hajj experience.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Finance Zahid Saleem presiding over a meeting regarding Additional Security Agreement Uch Power Private Limited

Defective tracks forced PR to increase traveling duration of passengers' trains

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Railways (PR) has further increased traveling duration of all the passenger trains that coming or going for Karachi owing to the defective condition of main line 1 (ML-1) Railways tracks running between Karachi and Sukkur divisions.

The increased running time of all the trains was one hour and five minutes as this strange tactic adopted owing to engineering restrictions of Karachi Division and Sukkur Division. The sources revealed that Divisions issued these restrictions due to the poor conditions of railways tracks.

By increasing the running time, the vehicles running on the above mentioned tracks would reach their destination by taking one hour and five more time, but the time limit of the passenger trains could be shown accurate in related papers.

Now after the increased

of traveling duration the Green Line train travel time will be increased by 23 hours and 25 minutes instead of 22 hours and 20 minutes and the minimum time from Karachi to Lahore will increase to 18 hours and 15 minutes. Traveling time has been increased by 30 minutes in Karachi Division and 35 minutes in Sukkur Division. According to documents available to this news agency Pakistan Railways has increased the running time of all passenger trains from Karachi to the interior and from the interior to Karachi by one hour and five minutes has been added, due to which the trains will reach the destination one hour and five minutes late. By adding one more hour in the timetable, the vehicle will reach within the specified time. Among the passengers' trains that could be affected the Mulat Express will complete its journey be-

tween Karachi and Lala Musa in 25 hours and 10 minutes instead of 24 hours and 5 minutes. Zakaria Express will complete its journey in 16 hours and 15 minutes instead of 17 hours and 20 minutes, Shalimar Express 19 hours instead of 17 hours 55 minutes, Pakistan Express 28 hours, 55 minutes instead of 27 hours 50 minutes, Rehman Baba 29 hours 15 minutes instead of 28 hours 10 minutes, Sukkur 12 hours 50 minutes instead of 12 hours, Allama Iqbal Express instead of 24 hours 15 minutes, 25 hours 20 minutes, Hazara Express 34 hours 5 minutes instead of 33 hours, Karachi Express 19 hours instead of 17 hours 55 minutes, Pak Business 18 hours 15 minutes instead of 17 hours 10 minutes, Farid Express 26 hours 5 minutes.

Governor, CM pay rich tributes...

Continued from page 1

Meanwhile the caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has expressed sorrow over the mishap of Pak Navy's helicopter in Gwadar on Monday.

In a condolence statement issued here, the caretaker Chief Minister expressed condolence and sympathy with the bereaved families of those martyred in the helicopter crash.

Mir Ali Mardan Domki said that he was moved over the tragic helicopter crash in Gwadar.

He said that those who are rendering sacrifices of their lives in the line of duty are our heroes.

He prayed for the departed souls of jawans. He also prayed that may Allah Almighty give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family members to bear the tragic loss of their dear ones.

It may be mentioned here that two officers and a jawan of Pak Navy embraced martyrdom in the crash of helicopter in Gwadar on Monday morning.

The Pilot of helicopter

Article 6 should...

Continued from page 1

A lawyer Ibrahim Lehri dressing a scheduled press conference at his residence on Monday afternoon.

A lawyer Ibrahim Lehri Advocate announced to join the BNP along with his companions.

Welcoming the new joiners in the party, Sardar Akhtar Mengal said that the party would be strengthened further with their joining.

Referring the issue of missing persons, the BNP president said that we have been raising the issue of missing persons since 2006, and we have talked about it at every forum since then.

He said that the issue (of missing persons) is more severe than the inflation and law and order, and as such it must be resolved.

About the general elections, he said that the same should be conducted within 90 days of the dissolution of assemblies, and if these are delayed then Article 6 should be applied on those responsible for the delay.

Earlier, announcing to join the BNP, Ibrahim Lehri said that the BNP has always highlighted the issues of the people of province in forceful manner, and waged struggle for their resolution too.

He vowed to play his role being part of the BNP to secure rights of the people from platform of the party.



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

Martyred Kashmiri leader Geelani commemorated in UK

BIRMINGHAM (INP): The life and legend of Shaheed Syed Ali Geelani was commemorated during a one-day conference in the United Kingdom to recall the contributions of the veteran Kashmiri resistance leader.

Hosted by Tehreek-e-Kashmir (TeK) UK, the speakers during the conference paid tributes to Geelani, who attained martyrdom on September 1, 2021, in Indian custody at his residence in Hyderabad where he was under illegal house arrest.

"Shaheed Geelani Sahab made it amply clear to the brave Kashmiri nation that India can never be our friend," TeK President Fahim Kayani told the conference, which saw wide participation.

The life and legend of Shaheed Geelani recalled Kayani, "is based on faith of Islam and resistance to illegal and ugly Indian occupation".

"It is incumbent upon us, in Kashmir and outside, to follow his words, which he proved right with his own life that India is hell bent on erasing Kashmiris from the Indian-occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir," said Kayani.

Asif Luqman Qazi, chief guest on the occasion recalled Geelani's love for the cause of Islam, freedom of Kashmir and Pakistan.

"The legend of Shaheed Geelani shows that with strong faith and commitment, any military might will bow down to the will of people," Qazi told the conference.

Expressing unflinching support to Kashmiris in their battle against India, Qazi said: "The resistance against India needs a strong character and that is what Shaheed Geelani showed."

Muhammad Afsar Shahid, former minister of AJK said: "No international law allows abduction of dead people. What occupying Indian forces did with the body of Geelani is shame and remorseful".

Nazir Ahmed Qureshi, Muhammad Ghalib, Dr Riaz Ahmed and Dr Hamad Lodhi also spoke on the occasion and demanded that the body of Geelani be returned to the Kashmiri nation for respectful final rites.

"Only a coward nation like India can be fearful of dead people," they said.

Reiterating their call for an end to illegal Indian occupation of Kashmir by India, the speakers said: "The rank and file of Kashmiri resistance groupings must stand steadfast against the Hindutva ideology."

"Times change and time will change for better days for Kashmiris and we will see India vacating Kashmir soon," they added.

GB Home Minister warns elements to desist from disrupting peaceful atmosphere

GILGIT (APP): GB Minister for Home Shams Lone on Monday said that at present there was peace all over the Gilgit-Baltistan region and warned the elements to desist from creating any law and order situation.

Flanked by Advisor to the Chief Minister on Information Iman Shah, the home minister told a press conference that the peaceful atmosphere of the region had been disturbed due to some extent due to the speeches of religious scholars of respective sects.

"The state wants all the issues to be resolved through understanding and efforts in this regard are being made at all levels," he added.

The minister said they had invited some leading scholars of both sides from other parts of Pakistan to sit with the local Ulema and they were hopeful an amicable solution of the problem would be found.

Shams Lone requested the religious scholars to preach the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) teachings of peace, brotherhood and unity from the pulpit.

"Peace can only be maintained if we respect each other's beliefs and faiths, which will ultimately help realize the dream of development in the region," he added. The minister also appealed to all the residents of Gilgit-Baltistan to play their positive role in the current situation and not to fall prey to the enemy's propaganda.

No issue in...

Continued from page 1

Governor about the issues and hardships of the people of Panjgur and its adjoining areas.

They said that the people of Panjgur are deprived of the basic facilities of life in the present developed era.

They demanded of the Governor to take steps for ensuring presence of doctors and teachers in their area.

The Governor gave patient hearing to the issues and assured them of his every possible cooperation to resolve them.

The Governor also assured that he would visit Panjgur very soon.



QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Lt. (Retd) Saad bin Asad presiding over review meeting of EPI Task Force

Government to come up with...

Continued from page 1

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

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

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

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

Calling the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) a strategy for economic revival, he said it focused on agriculture, mines and minerals, defence production and information technology. However, he also spelled out the economic reform agenda of his government, saying that the imminent steps included the privatization of two or more power distribution companies.

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

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

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

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

Talking about the terror attacks by the TTP, the prime minister drew attention to the leftover military equipment by the United States and allied forces back in Afghanistan, which, he viewed, were becoming a threat to peace thus necessitating a coordinated approach to deal with the challenge.

He said the foreign forces left Afghanistan after losing interest but "we are here to defend our home, children, mosques and places of worship."

He said the Pak-Afghan ties were deeply rooted in cultural and faith-based linkages as well as social integration. Pakistan showed magnanimity to the Afghan refugees and the government was coming up with a policy to address the challenge of illegal immigrants, he added.

Responding to a query, the prime minister said the government had an "excellent working environment" with the Pakistan Army and both were working together, also for economic revival.

Prime Minister Kakar said regardless of any political association, the people of Balochistan welcomed every project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which had entered the second phase.

He reiterated the government's resolve to go to any extent to protect the Chinese workers taking part in the CPEC projects.

Referring to the massive reserves worth \$6 trillion of copper and gold in Balochistan, the prime minister said the Reko Diq project was about to start soon.

NLC to open land routes of Pakistan to China to materialize CPEC prospects

BEIJING (APP): The National Logistic Cell (NLC) is trying to open the land routes of Pakistan to the Central Asian states through China to materialize the prospects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) flagship project, said Director General, NLC, Major Gen. Farrukh Shahzad Rao.

"We're trying to open the land routes of Pakistan to Central Asia especially through China to materialize the prospects of China Pakistan Economic Corridor," he told APP on the sidelines of the China International Fair for Trade in Service (CIFTIS) in Beijing.

The NLC has set up a booth in the Pakistan Pavilion at CIFTIS to showcase their accomplishment particularly their role in promoting trade between the regional countries.

He informed that the NLC has been able to open trade route from Kashgar, Xinjiang to Karachi and has joint ventures with Chinese logistic companies.

"So not only loads from Western China, we are getting loads from Shanghai, which are being brought either to Tashkurgan or

Urumqi or Kashgar and then we are taking those loads to Karachi," he added.

Farrukh Shahzad said that the NLC is also helping in boosting trade between the regional countries and added, "We are moving now cargo from Afghanistan to Kashgar and Kashgar to Kabul."

He said that in the bigger context, the company is now having trade convoys going to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan through Afghanistan for the first time.

"We are also providing facilities to our traders to go to Turkey and we are doing round trips and we are planning to go via road to Moscow very soon," he added.

The director general expressed confidence that the NLC will integrate the whole region as far as the regional trade is concerned.

"The NLC is taking the lead in that and once we are able to establish these trade lines, we will also be looking for multimodal transport," he added.

Farrukh Shahzad said that the government of Pakistan is working to bring out the real potential of Pakistan as a transit trade hub.



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor Shania Khan meeting with Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai

Shabbir Shah decries worsening HR situation, drug menace in Kashmir

SRINAGAR (INP): Senior APHC leader Shabbir Ahmed Shah has voiced grave concern over the continued bloodshed and human rights violations at the hands of Indian occupation forces in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In his message from New Delhi's Tihar jail, the detained leader, while referring to the recent acts of state terrorism in which innocent youth were killed in the Kashmir valley, said that during so-called operations innocent civilians particularly youth were deliberately targeted after being labeled "militants".

"On the one hand, Indian government has let loose its forces to kill Kashmiris while NIA has been given a free hand to target and silence political activists and members of civil society who have refused to accept the government dictates, on the other," Shah said, adding that attachment and confiscation

of properties of Hurriyat leaders was part of the apartheid regime's clampdown campaign to silence legitimate political voices in Kashmir.

Shabbir Shah said that in pursuit of the Israeli settler colonialism model the Modi regime continues to confiscate the Kashmiris' lands and properties. "Houses, lands, offices of the Kashmiri people are seized to create an environment of fear and force them to subjugation", he said, adding that government employees were being terminated on flimsy grounds. He, however, maintained that such mean tactics by New Delhi won't deter Kashmiris from pursuing their collective cause of freedom.

The Humiyat leader urged the world human rights organizations to take effective notice of the bloodshed and violence, persecution and victimisation of political leaders and activists in the territory.



QUETTA: Member Commission for Human Rights Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb photographed with players during inaugural ceremony of DG Sports Women Football Tournament

IHC instructs FIA to arrest policemen involved in illegal arrest of citizens

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday instructed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to arrest the personnel of Capital Police named in a case pertaining to illegally detaining the citizens in police stations for ransom.

Justice Babar Sattar, who heard the case, was informed by an FIA official that the police personnel were not cooperating for the investigation.

The court asked that whether the arrest warrants of the accused personnel had been issued. The accused must be arrested if they were not joining the investigation process as law was equal for everyone, it added.

Advocate Tahir Kazim, counsel for the Inspector General of Police Islamabad, informed the

court that the IGP had suspended four police personnel, including an assistant sub-inspector, who were involved in the raid, and proceedings against them were underway at three forums.

The court, however, noted that the senior officials involved in the matter were not suspended.

The contempt of court proceedings, lodging of an first information report and departmental action could be initiated at the same time, it added.

The court questioned whether the comments had been submitted against the show-cause notice, observing it would hear this matter on next hearing if the answer was not found satisfactory.

The case was then adjourned.



ISLAMABAD: End TB Celebrity Ambassador Sania Saeed and Sarmad Khoosat addressing a press conference about Mobilizing Leadership for the UN High Level Meeting on TB.

AC launch crackdown on price hiking, encroachment, and professional beggars

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Assistant Commissioners of Islamabad have launched a crackdown against price gouging, encroachment, professional beggars and other societal issues in their respective areas.

In a series of operations, they have fined shopkeepers for overcharging, sealed two shops, arrested one person and eight professional beggars, and taken action against illegal clinics and shisha cafes. The ICT spokesman Abdullah Tabasum said on Monday.

launched on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon. The Assistant Commissioners conducted inspections at 105 places and imposed fines of Rs. 10,000 on shopkeepers who were found overcharging, while two shops were also sealed.

Moreover, one person was arrested for selling prohibited polythene bags and eight professional beggars were also arrested. The action was also taken against illegal clinics and shisha cafes.

OPF establishes OWFDs at all Intl airports of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) has established One Window Facilitation Desks (OWFDs) at all International Airports of the country to facilitate Overseas Pakistanis on their arrival from various countries. An official source told APP here on Monday, that OWFDs are located at each terminal (International arrival/departure) for the assistance of Overseas Pakistani passengers round the clock. To a question, he said that courteous and trained officials were deputed at OWFDs to ensure the provision of high-quality

facility and assistance to overseas Pakistanis. The existing infrastructure at OWFDs has been upgraded by the previous regime to address the problems of expatriates.

Besides additional facilities, the service delivery at facilitation counters at various airports has also been improved with added staff/services. He said that necessary assistance to the overseas Pakistanis has been ensured at the time of arrival and departure. Coordination among various agencies/departments functioning is also ensured at the airport for smooth arrival and departure.



ISLAMABAD: Guest of honor Ms. Ismat Gul Khattak, Director General Pakistan National Accreditation Council addressing at International Training Course for Assess of the Productivity Specialists Certification Program.

Experts stress availability of cessation services for effective tobacco control

ISLAMABAD (APP): Effectively reducing the prevalence of tobacco along with offering cessation services in healthcare centers, and robust advocacy efforts to counter innovative misinformation marketing tactics of novel smokeless tobacco products was the key to stemming the growing use of smoking products, said tobacco control experts at a webinar on Monday.

The webinar was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute and The Union for Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, a news release said.

Head, the Centre for Health, and Policy Innovation, SDPI, Syed Ali Wasif Naqvi remarked that although WHO Framework

Convention on Tobacco Control mandates states to establish tobacco cessation services, only 30% of people out of the 780 million smoking quitters have access to such services.

Counseling and assistance can double the chances for a person to quit tobacco consumption and these must be provided by states to improve health indicators and reduce tobacco prevalence, he added.

Senior Technical Advisor, The Union for Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, Khurram Hashmi expressed that high prevalence of tobacco consumption exerts significant strain on healthcare systems and regional collaboration must be leveraged to achieve for sus-



ISLAMABAD: MQM leaders Mustafa Kamal and Anis Qaimkhani called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Pakistan's Coastal NCB urges attention to depleting marine resources

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN-Pakistan) Monday organised the 22nd meeting of the National Coordinating Body (NCB) of the coast to discuss issues and depleting coastal resources, especially in the wake of climatic impacts, calling for the need to create more marine protected areas in Pakistan. The NCB meeting was a key feature of one of IUCN's long-running Mangroves for the Future Programme that ended in 2018, and has thereafter been supported by IUCN

in partnership with organizations such as Engro Foundation, Monaco Foundation and other funding sources, a news release said. Distinguished experts in the meeting included representatives from the government line departments, coastal agencies, Pakistan Navy, as well as from civil society organizations and academia. Stakeholders emphasized the urgent necessity of designating marine and coastal areas as Protected Areas. "Presently, less than 1% of the coast enjoys protection, and Pakistan, as a dedicated CBD

signatory, needs to declare at least 30% of its coast as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) under the 30x30 agenda," said Country Representative of IUCN, Mahmood Akhtar Cheema.

In pursuit of this urgent need for MPA declaration, the NCB platform, through its IUCN-MFF programme, established a dedicated sub-committee which identified coastal and marine areas suitable for MPA designation including Ras Malan, off Pasni, Kalamat Hor, Chama Island, Miami Hor, and Jewani, explained the Inspector General of Forests.

IHC stops arrest of Imaan Mazari

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Monday conditioned arrest of Advocate Imaan Mazari with informing the court in any other case.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the case seeking provision of cases detains against Advocate Imaan Mazari. Additional Attorney General Munwar Dogal said that the details had been sought from the provincial governments on the direction of this court.

He said that the accused should avoid the statement against the state.

Concern expressed over Kashmiri detainees' plight in jails

ISLAMABAD (APP): All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders Khawaja Firdous, Syed Bashir Andrabi and Muhammad Shafi Lone have expressed concern over the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leader languishing in different jails of India and the territory. According to Kashmir Media Service, the APHC leaders in a joint statement issued in Srinagar lamented that the Modi's government is using illegal and crude tactics to prevent Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders from the freedom movement.

They said Kashmiri leaders have been illegally arrested and imprisoned for demanding their rights and urged the international community to take notice of the plight of Kashmiri leaders and help in their immediate release. The Hurriyat leaders said the Indian troops have been committing atrocities on the innocent people in occupied Jammu and Kashmir for the past seven decades. It should be raised in the Security Council and the human tragedy happening in occupied Jammu and Kashmir should be stopped, they added.



ISLAMABAD: Women activists from Jamaat-e-Islami take part in a pro-hijab rally on the eve of "International Hijab Day" outside National Press Club in Federal Capital.

3 killed in a collision between two cars in Gujrat

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least three people including a woman were killed and three others were injured in a collision between two cars near Gujrat Saroki Bridge. According to details, rescue sources said the collision occurred due to over-speeding, a private news channel reported. Police and other rescue workers immediately reached the accident site and recovered the bodies. The accident was so severe that three people died before receiving medical treatment.

Int'l workshop on "Advances in Nuclear Medicine & its Applications" from Sept 19

ISLAMABAD (APP): OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) in collaboration with Pakistan Nuclear Society (PNS) and Pakistan Society of Nuclear Medicine (PSNM) has planned to arrange an International Workshop on "Advances in Nuclear Medicine and its Applications" from September 19-20. According to the COMSTECH, the international and local experts of nuclear medicine and its applications will present lectures during the workshop while local faculty and researchers will share their research findings as contributed talks.

The theme of the workshop would be on the changing horizons of Nuclear Medicine, incorporating the translation of basic laboratory research to clinical practice, establishment of clinical and technical standards, and the translation of molecular technological advances in diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine.

Nuclear technology has transformed health sector by advancements in diagnostic and therapeutic modalities for non-communicable pathologies.

Hybrid imaging, especially PET-CT has altogether changed the diagnostic horizon, especially in the management of cancer patients. However, not only Pakistan but most of the OIC countries are still lagging behind in hybrid imaging facilities, especially PET-CT imaging. The indispensable role of PET-CT and hybrid imaging needs to be highlighted for the benefit of various stakeholders and patients. Furthermore, the emergent role of theranostics and advanced radionuclide therapies using alpha and beta emitters has given new insights in cancer treatment paradigms. These rapid advancements in the field of nuclear medicine warrant continual education of referring physicians, oncologists, nuclear physicists, medical physicists and technologists from OIC.

Dr Jamal directs twin cities administration to expedite anti-dengue surveillance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health Dr Jamal Nasir on Monday directed the officials of Rawalpindi/Islamabad administration to conduct anti-dengue activities on bordering areas of twin cities through joint operations three to four days a week. Presiding over a meeting to review anti-dengue arrangements along with Commissioner Rawalpindi Laiqat Ali Chatta, he said that anti-dengue activities must not be compromised due to Anti-Polio campaign started today.

Dr Jamal said that Rawalpindi's graveyards had been outsourced, adding Director General Rawalpindi Development Authority would not disburse payment to the contractor till the third party validation of the work done on the graveyard and Nullah Lai.

Commissioner Rawalpindi on the occasion said that 19 private hospitals had been mandated to establish dengue wards to deal with the increasing number of patients. He directed the officials of Health Care Commission to visit the private hospitals and ensure setting up of dengue wards.

Laiqat further directed the officials to expedite anti-dengue surveillance and ensure strict compliance to anti-dengue SOPs.

Station Commander Rawalpindi Cantonment Board Brigadier Salman while taking part in the meeting directed the officials to ensure the cleanliness of offices, in-house and outdoor settings and leave no place wet or with stagnant water as puddles of water were the leading cause of mosquitoes breeding. He also directed the officials of the relevant departments to cut grass, bushes and trees from the educational institutions.

On the occasion, health official briefed the meeting that around 272 dengue cases had been reported in the district so far out of which 232 discharged after treatment while 40 confirmed patients were under treatment in public hospitals. He informed that indoor and outdoor surveillance was being carried out regularly while during indoor surveillance, the anti-dengue teams had checked around 4.6 million houses.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister Jamal Shah chairing 59th meeting of Governing Body of Iqbal Academy Pakistan at National Heritage and Culture Division.

MQM leaders call on Anwaar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leaders Mustafa Kamal and Anis Qaimkhani called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday and discussed matters relating to mutual interests.

During the meeting, both leaders discussed the problems of Karachi with the prime minister and thanked him for taking steps to resolve those issues, a press release issued by the PM Office Media Wing said.

Sanjrani expresses sorrow over tragic crash of helicopter in Gwadar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Monday expressed deep sorrow on the sad incident of Naval Helicopter crash in Gwadar, which resulted in loss of precious lives.

The chairman Senate in a condolence message extended his heartfelt sympathies to the families of the martyrs and offered prayers that Allah Almighty to elevate the ranks of those who lost their lives in the crash and grants patience to their loved ones.

Sanjrani saluted the courageous lives who laid down their lives while performing their duties.

Police get three days physical remand of Ali Wazir

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Islamabad on Monday granted three-day physical remand of former Member of the National Assembly Ali Wazir to police in a case of alleged financing to terrorists.

ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas heard the case wherein Ali Wazir was produced before the court. The prosecution prayed to the court to grant physical remand of Ali Wazir for investigation into the charges against him. He also read out the contents of the first information report (FIR) registered against him.

Underprivileged class Zong 4G & Sehat Kahani to offer complimentary medical consultations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, the leading telecom company in Pakistan, and Sehat Kahani, a pioneering digital healthcare platform, have extended their partnership to provide free medical consultations on the Sehat Kahani app to underprivileged people.

The exclusive partnership aims to combine the strength of technology and telecommunications to provide users with up to 10,000 free medical consultations, fostering improved healthcare access across Pakistan, said a news release. Users of the Sehat Kahani retail app and Zong 4G subscribers can avail the free consultations using the promo code 'ZONGSEHAT'.

"This is a testament to both organizations' shared commitment to prioritize the health and well-being of Pakistan's citizens." "Our partnership with Sehat Kahani is a testament to our commitment to making health inclusive for all strata of the society. Our connectivity is not only empowering people, but it is ensuring, the services like health and education are accessible for everyone," said the spokesperson of Zong 4G.

The spokesperson said the company was committed to supporting sustainability causes and would continue to develop and provide innovative solutions that could help create a more sustainable future for all. "Zong 4G's support has made it possible for an accelerated growth in the number of consultations that Sehat Kahani has provided in the past and we are confident that we will be able to help those in need even more with the latest collaboration," said Founder & CEO of Sehat Kahani Dr Sara Saeed Khurram.

ISLAMABAD: A view of the accidental cars at Srinagar Highway in Federal Capital.

Gulzar thanks Pakistan for observing Gilani's martyrdom anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) senior vice Chairman Ghulam Ahmed Gulzar has said the way Kashmiris observed Syed Ali Gilani's 2nd martyrdom anniversary and paid rich tributes to pioneer of freedom movement time and again proved that he will remain always alive in the hearts and minds of Kashmiri and Pakistani people. Ghulam Ahmed Gulzar in a statement in Srinagar said, "It also demonstrates the love which great leader command because of his sincerity, steadfastness and bravery. Mission of this legendary

leader will be accomplished at any cost." While thanking Kashmiris and Pakistanis all over the world for observing the 2nd martyrdom anniversary with solemn commitment, enthusiasm and great passion he said that Gilani will be regarded as protagonist of freedom movement who has championed the cause of Kashmir in every nook and corner with his blood.

He saluted the people of IIOJK, Azad Kashmir, Pakistan and Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora for arranging different programs on large scale for highlighting the services of veteran leader and exposing Indian hypocrisy.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Professor Sajid Mir, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

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Stymied growth

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

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

However, practically speaking, little has been done to solve their problems. For example, the SME policy of 2021-25, which was widely welcomed because of its generous incentives, such as tax reductions and a Rs60bn bank credit line for collateral-free loans offered to small and medium entrepreneurs, is yet to be implemented. Already faced with formidable challenges, SMEs are believed to have been affected the most by the ongoing economic slowdown and surging inflation. Numerous units have already closed down because of financial troubles caused by increased costs, and thousands of workers have been fired by others to minimise losses as industries struggle to survive the present crisis. For long-term economic stability, more exports and greater job creation for millions of individuals entering the labour market each year, Pakistan's policymakers need to immediately focus on addressing the long-standing issues holding SMEs back from realising their full potential.



Malecha Lodhi

Pressure is mounting on the caretaker government and the establishment on multiple fronts — political, economic and legal. Several developments have fuelled more uncertainty at a time when the country is already in a tense and unsettled state. This has created the prospect of greater instability ahead. The conflation of crises could even push the country towards a tipping point.

Nationwide street protests by traders and members of the public over the sudden and excessive rise in electricity bills have confronted the government with a challenge. It is now struggling for a response that can quell the protests but also not upend the stand-by agreement with the IMF, which provided the financial bailout the

country needed to avert a debt default.

While talks with Fund representatives are underway to find a way to provide 'relief' to consumers, protests continue across the country.

These protests come on the back of a cost-of-living crisis fuelled by record inflation — mostly the result of economic mismanagement by governments in the recent past. This has worsened people's plight in a deteriorating economic environment and bred widespread public discontent.

It was always a question of not if but when this discontent would spill over into the streets. The spark was provided by the exorbitant hike in utility charges. These protests can snowball into wider social unrest if other issues of public grievance — there are many — kick in. Such a potentially explosive situation would be beyond the interim government's capacity to control.

When people see no hope of improvement in their economic condition, it is hard to douse the flames of their anger. What has contributed to public rage is the fact that they are being

asked to bear the burden of governance failures — mismanagement of the power sector by successive governments, failure to deal with its inefficiencies, and lack of reform.

Added to this is a glaring inequity. Certain sectors are exempt from additional electricity taxes, while several categories of state officials receive preferential treatment by way of free electricity. There cannot be a more telling example of a policy that only privileges the elite while the public pays the price. With the rise in petroleum prices and more painful measures ahead, public discontent is likely to intensify, not dissipate.

Already, cities across the country have seen a complete shutter-down strike by retail establishments in response to a call by the traders' association. Such strikes have obvious economic consequences.

Meanwhile, political pressure is growing for elections to be held in 90 days, as stipulated by the Constitution. Last month, the Election Commission of Pakistan ruled this out when it issued a schedule indicating it needed four

months for fresh delimitation of constituencies, which it said it would complete in mid-December. This followed approval of the new population census, secured by the PDM government from the Council of Common Interests in its final days in power. The ECP's decision to delay general elections and not specify a date prompted speculation that the polls could be pushed to February and even beyond. Uncertainty was also fuelled by installation of a gratuitously large caretaker government that began to act as if it were anything but a short-duration arrangement.

The election delay predictably provoked an outcry from several political parties, as well as a spate of legal challenges. Imran Khan's PTI and the PPP demanded elections within the 90-day time frame. The PPP was party to the unanimous CCI decision on the digital census. Its latest stance suggested it has doubts on whether elections will even be held after completion of the delimitation process. Its U-turn is also an effort to distance itself from its former

coalition partner, PML-N.

A cynical explanation is that PPP is mounting pressure in response to administrative actions taken against some of its sympathisers, hoping the establishment will remedy this. In any case, this has left PML-N isolated as the only major party that wants a delay in elections. This signals a lack of confidence in its electoral prospects, especially after Shehbaz Sharif's lacklustre tenure.

The Supreme Court Bar Association has filed a constitutional petition in the apex court that seeks suspension of the ECP decision to hold elections on the new census. It points to the ECP's responsibility to convene elections within 90 days of the Assembly's dissolution. The Bar Council of Pakistan has made a similar demand. PTI and Jamaat-i Islami also filed petitions in the top court seeking general elections within 90 days as mandated by Article 224(2) of the Constitution.

While a legal battle looms, it also puts pressure on the interim government to weigh in on this even though that decision is for its patrons to

take. The government's response through the law ministry to President Arif Alvi's letter to ECP asking for an election date questioned his authority to do this. But it skirted around the issue of when the polls should be called. During a meeting with journalists, Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar simply said it was for ECP to decide the timing.

Not announcing an election date has become a source of growing political controversy and legal contention. Doubts persist that elections may not even be held by February/March. This is deepening polarisation in the country and having a damaging fallout on the economy. More uncertainty will raise the cost to an economy that is already on life support.

It will continue to produce instability in the capital market, vitiate the investment climate, encourage capital flight and delay any significant economic policy decisions. Whether or not the authorities realise this, it puts Pakistan's economic future at grave risk. -- Courtesy Dawn

Bridging the gaps in the region



Dr Khalid Jarral

The recent Iran-Saudi Arabian rapprochement has taken place against the backdrop of America's evolving role in the Middle East and deepening strategic partnerships between China and the Gulf states. Pakistan is centrally located between, and closely linked to, China and the Middle Eastern states. It is endowed with unique advantages to function not only as a figurative bridge between these states but also as a land link connecting their trade.

Pakistan's geographic and historical linkages are split between a variety of countries and regions, including Afghanistan, China, India, Iran, and the Middle East. Its location and geostrategic relevance is therefore somewhat problematic for strategic planners and scholars alike.

Because Pakistan is located within the orbit of the Middle East and has strong ties with Arab states and Iran, it defines a region that is sometimes referred to as the Greater Middle East. As the Sino-Middle Eastern engagement deepens, Pakistan, China's backyard neighbour, will be increasingly clubbed together with these regional partners.

In the last decade or so, the US has become a leading net exporter of oil and gas, hence a competitor to OPEC countries in the global energy market. With an exponential rise of this sector in the US, the historical American interest in the security of international access to the energy sources in the Middle East has ostensibly waned.

This perception was strengthened by a palpable absence of tangible American protection, for the first time since the petrodollar agreement of 1973, when oil facilities and transport vessels were under Houthi attacks in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. It has also been suggested that it is about time for international stakeholders to proportionately share the responsibility for the security of international

oil trade routes.

This implies that China, since it has replaced the US as the largest importer of oil from the Gulf countries, should contribute to the security of the energy trade routes. Meanwhile, the American threats of withdrawal of military support to Saudi Arabia and expression of opprobrium concerning their longstanding ally exacerbated the already strained relations between the two countries. Saudi Arabia vehemently rebuffed these coercive tactics of its ally and stepped out to assert its strategic and political centrality in the region and beyond.

These factors have ultimately diminished the effectiveness of the US-Saudi Arabia strategic alliance of the cold war era and set in motion a historical geopolitical and geostrategic repositioning in Riyadh.

Under the leadership of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the country has charted an independent path for its socio-economic transformation and has since departed from its exclusive reliance on the US, actively pursuing a diversification of its strategic partnerships.

With a recalibrated foreign policy and a flurry of diplomatic initiatives, the Saudi crown prince has taken centre stage in international diplomacy, proving that the 'international pariah' denunciation was a sheer misjudgement on the part of the American leadership. It only served to unleash the potential of Saudi diplomacy.

These policy shifts have opened the door to China's deeper strategic engagement with Saudi Arabia. But China's competitive relationship with the US, the ongoing tensions in the South China Sea, and its quest for safer alternatives to the Malacca Strait trade route — through CPEC and other alternatives — make it a tricky proposition.

These Saudi policies of diversification and strategic repositioning have set the stage for the enhancement of Pakistan's defence and economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia. China's strategic partnerships with Iran and Saudi Arabia and the Iran-Saudi rapprochement have already removed the bottlenecks of strategic economic and defence cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Negotiations are currently underway between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for an all-encompassing strategic cooperation agreement as an instrument for a comprehensive defence relationship. In this regard, another important consideration would be the position of India, which is a major consumer of Saudi oil. Defence and security cooperation is also on the agenda of the Saudi crown prince's upcoming visits to Pakistan and the UK.

Against this background, the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) of Pakistan has emerged as a vehicle for defence diplomacy initiatives. The council capitalises on the prestige of Pakistan's defence institutions to pull in foreign investment from the Gulf states. In August, the council launched its investment drive with a conference to attract investment in Pakistan's underexplored mineral wealth.

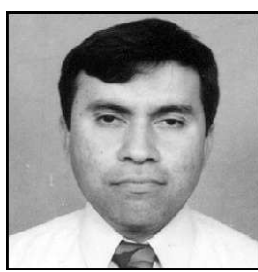
For Iran, these regional adjustments are conducive to contriving alternative solutions to its economic development agenda, gridlocked by the US sanctions. In addition to enhancing bilateral trade with

Pakistan, Iran could work with Pakistan and China to explore ways to subsume the dormant Iranian projects, such as the Pakistani section of the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline, into CPEC or other BRI framework.

Iran is currently grappling with India's diverging interests in its strategic economic cooperation with Iran and a patchy commitment to the development of the Chabahar Port and the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Whereas India seeks to exploit Iran's connectivity advantages to bypass Pakistan for access to Central Asia, its Quad membership and its ambitious vision of technology transfer from the West drive its divergence with Iran and Russia.

Meanwhile, Iran's strategic partnership with China and recent detente with Saudi Arabia have prepared the ground for Iran to overcome the divergence with India on the INSTC and the Chabahar Port by seeking convergence with the Gulf states, Pakistan, and China. The views expressed in this article are personal. -- Courtesy TheNews

Infrastructure risk



Dr Noman Ahmed

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

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

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

Whenever one has brought the grave realities of a fractured infrastruc-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mentoring in school



Neda Mulji

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

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

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

making, perceived absence of autonomy and general inertia. Sustainable mentoring programmes can be a positive intervention.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Addressing the conference, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that there are vast opportunities for Pakistani businessmen to export in ASEAN countries. Similarly, businessmen from ASEAN countries can invest in Pakistan in various sectors. He said

that the government has taken various measures to provide facilities to foreign investors. ASEAN member countries can benefit from these facilities, he added. He said that he warmly welcomes the honourable ambassadors of ASEAN countries present in the conference and expressed hope that this conference will play a significant role in the promotion of trade and tourism relations between Pakistan and ASEAN countries. He said that Pakistan has vast business opportunities for ASEAN countries in various sectors including tourism, agriculture, and export of halal products. He said that Pakistan has a unique position in the world in terms of its natural scenery, cultural heritage, and hospitality. He said that the landscapes of our

country have all the features, adding that investment and proper promotion can make Pakistan the centre of tourism. Punjab Governor emphasized that the expertise of ASEAN countries should be utilized for the development of Pakistan's tourism sector and with their support and guidance, better policies should be formulated to improve basic infrastructure and attract foreign tourists. He further said that new avenues of trade and economic cooperation can be explored within the ASEAN region. He said our presence here today reflects the importance we attach to fostering robust relationship and creating synergies that can pave the way for mutual growth and prosperity.



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

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

KARACHI (APP): Private Institutions on the directives of the provincial minister, has written a letter to Deputy Commissioner Malir to seal the building of an unregistered private school's principal, has directed to seal and take legal action against the incident in the school.

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

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

Ghazanfar says: IRD launched at regional office of Federal Ombudsman

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

Talking to APP during an exclusive meeting here, he said that Federal Ombudsman had launched IRD program during April 2022 which had provided tangible results. Therefore, this mechanism was also introduced in regional

secretariat Faisalabad so that the people could be provided speedy and free justice.

He said that regional office had so far received four complaints under IRD. The IRD had no need of fee payment to any pleader or bear the brunt of litigation or face long judicial procedure rather this program helped in resolving the dispute through an arbiter at preliminary stage, he added. He said that Federal Ombudsman had so far resolved more than 2275 disputes under IRD whereas 127 cases were under progress across the country.



SIALKOT: Deputy Commissioner Adnan Mehmood Awan is addressing the convention of District Numberdars titled "Ab Gaon Chamkein Gay".

Special measures being taken to improve cleanliness: Sec LG South

MULTAN (APP): Local Government South Punjab, Amin Owaisi, said that special measures were being taken to improve cleanliness of city of Saints. He expressed these views during visit to Multan Waste Management Company (MWM) office here on Monday.

Chief Executive Officer MWM Shahid Yaqub gave briefing on sanitation situation.

New board of directors has been formed for the improvement of the

company's affairs and capacity of the company will also increase.

Amin Owaisi directed officials to place containers and dust bins at central places of the city in order to provide pleasant environment to citizens. Company was performing well despite limited resources.

He also ordered to fix place for new landfill sites and transfer stations.

Earlier, CEO Shahid Yaqub said that merit policy was implemented to improve the performance of the company.

CM extends sympathies to heirs of martyrs

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has expressed a deep sense of sorrow over the Pak Navy helicopter crash in Gwadar.

In a message, he extended heartfelt sympathies to the heirs of two officers and a jawan who embraced martyrdom.

LHC orders to produce Parvez Elahi on Sept 5

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday ordered district and sessions judge Attock to recover former chief minister Punjab Parvez Elahi from Attock jail and produce him tomorrow (Tuesday).

The court also issued a notice to the inspector general of police Islamabad for September 8 and sought explanation over the arrest of Parvez Elahi.

Justice Muhammad Amjad Rafiq passed the orders while hearing two separate petitions filed by Qaisara Elahi, wife of Chaudhry Parvez Elahi, for the production of her husband and contempt proceedings against Punjab police officials.

The court heard the petitions at different intervals during the day.

Under-training police officers delegation visits PSCA

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

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

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

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



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman addressing the Trade and Tourism Conference on ASEAN at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Inspects development projects in city Naqvi directs acceleration of work on Nawaz Sharif interchange underpass project CM Punjab overflies Ring Road Southern Loop-III project for inspection

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

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

During his visit to the Shadara flyovers, Mohsin Naqvi closely examined the

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

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

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

Situation in GB is completely peaceful

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

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

misleading public opinion through fake news and propaganda.

In any places in Gilgit-Baltistan, no shots were fired and no damage was done to private or government property during the peaceful protest against religious and communal response.

According to the statement, the Gilgit-Baltistan government is implementing coordinated measures with the cooperation of all stakeholders for the development and development of the region, religious tolerance and co-existence.

Heavy quantity of 'Gutka' seized

FAISALABAD (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) seized a heavy quantity of 'Gutka' (betel quid) and imposed fine on shopkeepers over violation of the laws. A PFA spokesman said here on Monday that a team conducted checking of a grocery store and cold drinks corner near Novelty Bridge Dijkot Road and found 1,100 packets of prohibited 'Gutka' (Rattan and One2One). Both shopkeepers had stored the prohibited item at secret places of their shops. The PFA team imposed fine on the shopkeepers and warned that they would be sent behind bars.



KARACHI: Women supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami participate in a rally to mark International Hijab Day in Provincial Capital.

CM's aide says: Govt to utilize all resources for supplying clean drinking water

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to KP Caretaker Chief Minister on Public Health Engineering (PHE) and Communications & Works, Dr. Syed Sarfaraz Ali Shah Monday said all resources will be utilized for uninterrupted supply of clean drinking water to the people across the province. He expressed these views during a briefing regarding the Public Health Engineering Department here. Besides, Additional Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Chief Engineers and Executive Engineers of the department were present on the occasion.

The advisor directed the up-gradation and activation of all completed schemes on an emergency basis besides modern training of staff including the timely release of funds and approval of new projects under public-private partnership and practical steps and initiating of practical steps for the achievement of the recovery of the water charges. He also directed for bringing further improvement in the monitoring system of the ongoing development projects and their completion within the stipulated time period.

Director Technical Waseem Marwat while giving a briefing said that there are 7991 water supply schemes in the settled districts of Khyber.

Latest screening system installed at Lahore airport

LAHORE (APP): In an important development in connection with the start of flights from Pakistan to the UK and the European Union (EU) countries, a state-of-the-art screening system has been installed at Allama Iqbal International Airport.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) sources told APP on Monday that the system has been installed with the cooperation of the UK government.

Last month, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) had passed an initial audit by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), bringing the national flag carrier one step closer to resuming flights to the UK. The UK's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy officials handing over the sized Narcotics to ANF officials.

KP CM, US CG discuss collaboration for regional development

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

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

Muhammad Azam Khan stated that the KP provincial government viewed cooperation with the US government and agencies in different sectors as of great importance.

He emphasized that the US government would continue to strengthen cooperation with the province.

The chief minister stressed the need for increased cooperation with friendly nations and donor agencies in the tribal areas, which had lagged

behind in development for decades.

He also highlighted the special need to focus on building basic infrastructure in these war-torn regions and placed particular emphasis on road infrastructure development.

He further noted that improving the police infrastructure in the merged districts was essential to ensure peace and security.

The promotion of girls' education was among the provincial government's top priorities, the chief minister said.

He expressed the willingness of the KP provincial government to welcome American cooperation in these sectors and provide any necessary assistance.

Shante Moore, assured that the US government would continue to work closely with the provincial government and the public to carry on the work of public welfare.



PESHAWAR: US Consul General Mr. Shante Moore meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor House.

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

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Dr Nadeem Jan said on Monday that integrated strategy had been formulated to protect people from diseases and epidemics.

He was addressing the ground-breaking ceremony of the 'Isolation Hospital' at Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore.

The minister said that the government was determined to strengthen the border health services to deal with any sudden outbreaks as epidemics had no borders limits, adding that surveillance mechanism at international airports of the country were being improved to tackle the situation.

Dr Nadeem Jan said that the government was ensuring implementation of international health recommendations.

He announced that a conference on Global Health Security Agenda was going to be held in

Pakistan and this was for the first time that this kind of international conference was being arranged in Pakistan in which public health experts from all over the world would participate. He recalled that it was a matter of prestige that Pakistan would host such international conference.

He was of the view that by organising such international conference in Pakistan, it would pave the way for improvement, modernisation and development in the health sector of the country.

Meanwhile, a delegation of pharma exporters called on Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan in Lahore and discussed various issues related to pharma sector. The meeting decided to create a comprehensive strategy to increase exports of pharma drugs as Pakistan's pharma sector had lot of potential.

The health minister emphasised the need for quality of medicines as per international standards in order to increase exports.



HYDERABAD: Civil society, different political and nationalist parties activists, advocates and people from different walks of life block bypass against kidnapping of Hindu businessmen and children in Kashmir.

KP CS orders IBO against smuggling of essential commodities

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary on Monday directed intelligence-based operations against smuggling and hoarding of essential commodities.

He gave the instruction while presiding over a meeting of the provincial task force on anti-smuggling and hoarding of essential commodities and other items. The Chief Secretary said that, constituted on the direction of the Prime Minister, the task force would ensure that smuggling and hoarding of essential commodities are halted and strict action is taken against violators as per law. The forum was

apprised that sufficient stock of sugar was available in the province, which would last until the start of the sugar crushing season in mid-November, provided that smuggling and hoarding of the commodity was controlled. To stop currency smuggling, scanning and full body searches at airports and border points are standard procedures. It was further informed that 21 provincial joint check posts had been established in border districts, manned by officials of the agriculture and food department, the police, and the district administration. The Chief Secretary stressed upon the authorities to work in close coordination to tackle the sugar crisis.

Over 7.846 mln metric tons of wheat available for local consumption

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

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

Talking to APP here on Monday, he said that grain procurement targets

for the current season were fixed at 7.800 million tons as out of the total fixed targets about 75 per cent was accomplished, adding that Punjab completed 87 per cent of its procurement targets as it procured 3.921 million metric tons, Sindh 56 per cent to procure 777,394 metric tons respectively.

Meanwhile, Balochistan had procured 50,000 metric tons, whereas Pakistan Agriculture Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) had completed 63 per cent of its assigned task as it procured 5.879 million tons of wheat, he added.

Food Security Commissioner informed that local carry-forward

stocks of wheat in the country were recorded at 1,570 million metric tons, which further strengthened the local reserves of grains, adding under import of 2022, the government had also imported about 375,589 metric tons of wheat.

So far, the government has released 762,471 metric tons of wheat for grinding, adding that private sector procurements had recorded at 3.590 million tons, of which 2.656 metric tons had been grinded. It is worth mentioning here that wheat production targets during 2022-23 were fixed at 28.37 million metric tons, whereas local grain output was estimated at 28.185 million metric tons.



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

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

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

This was stated while talking to Pakistan Chemists and Druggists Association Islamabad Tariq Saeed who called on him on Monday and informed him about the key problems of his sector and emphasized the importance of their quick redress.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar said that the chemists and druggists are performing an important national service by providing timely

medicines to patients, but like other businesses, the business community of this sector is also facing many problems due to which their business activities are suffering. He stressed that the government should solve the issues of this sector for the convenience of the patients. He said that he is well aware of the problems faced by chemists and druggists and will be their voice from the platform of the Chamber and will highlight them at every relevant forum for redress on priority basis.

President of Pakistan Chemists and Druggists Association Islamabad, Tariq Saeed, while speaking on the occasion, said that in view of the sky-high inflation, like other industries and businesses, the chemists and druggist sector is also facing great difficulties. The increase in prices is making it so difficult to buy and sell the raw materials.

Mian Zahid says: Value of dollar can't be reduced by Rs50 via political stability

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that most of the finance ministers have tried to prove themselves as the Messiah instead of correcting the economic corruption.

Talking to businessmen here on Monday, he said that these finance ministers have caused irreparable damage to the economy in a bid to gain popularity.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that instead of increasing exports, boosting the tax-to-GDP ratio, and luring foreign investment, the finance ministers have been busy tampering with the exchange rate and interest rate, giving the impression

of artificial growth. The foreign ministers' gimmicky remained counterproductive and damaged our relations with the IMF and other international institutions, he added. The business leader said that after signing any agreement with the IMF, we cheated the institution by reducing the prices of gasoline and electricity against the agreement, which worsened the situation.

In the past several decades, assurances have been given to the people and international institutions to sell off failed government institutions, implement necessary reforms, provide relief to taxpayers, bring non-taxpayers into the tax net, reduce deficits, and end smuggling, but this is not the case, he observed.

In order to reduce the budget deficit, action is taken against taxpayers instead of tax evaders.



LAHORE: Woman selecting and purchasing old clothes at Landa Bazaar.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

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

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

Cargo throughput of 94,821 tonnes, comprising 66,436 tonnes imports Cargo and 28,385 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,057 Containers (552 TEUs Imports and 1,505 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are six ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them a gas carrier FSM & two more container ships, Lisa and America carrying LPG and Container are expected to take berths at Engro Terminal and Container Terminal respectively on today Monday, 4th September, while two more container ships, MSC Lisbon and Maersk Hartford are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Tuesday.

Rupee sheds 18 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Monday witnessed a devaluation of 18 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs305.64 against the previous day's closing of Rs 305.46.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs331 and Rs334 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.48 to close at Rs330.04 against the last day's closing of Rs 331.52, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).



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

Huawei cloud launches services in Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Huawei Cloud on Monday announced launch of the Huawei Cloud Riyadh Region, going live immediately.

Unveiled at the Huawei Cloud Summit Saudi Arabia 2023, the new Riyadh region will help promote digital-led economic growth in the country, said a news release.

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

The achievement underscores Huawei CLOUD's unwavering

dedication to supporting Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, aligned with the nation's ambitious technological advancement, leadership, and innovation goals.

Vice Minister at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) in Saudi Arabia Eng. Haitham bin Abdul Rahman Al-Ohali, shared his perspective on this monumental achievement:

He said "Huawei is a proud partner in our country's technological progress having worked with the Ministry, service providers, enterprises and universities in various collective efforts towards digital transformation. We look forward to the transformative impact the HUAWEI CLOUD

Riyadh Region will have on our digital ecosystem, creating new avenues for innovation and growth."

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

Huawei Cloud Saudi Region is located in Riyadh and through a 3AZ (availability zone) architecture, it will provide highly available and secure cloud services, ensuring the stable operations of various services.

In addition, the Region can provide full stack cloud services, including infrastructure, databases, containers.

KP govt assures SMEDA of close coordination for SME development

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

A spokesperson said here on Monday that SMEDA had made great strides towards implementation of the National SME Policy 2021 in an effective manner despite numerous challenges and constraints.

He said that it had been acknowledged by the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government through a letter written by Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry that irrespective of scarcity of financial and human resources, the organisation had initiated many projects such as National Ideas Lab (NIL), SME One Window (SOW) and SME Database Development.

The SMEDA also achieved remarkable progress in a number of other areas in a short span under leadership of Farhan Aziz Khawaja, as the chief executive officer (CEO). Besides,

Gold rates decline by Rs.700

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.700 on Monday and was sold at Rs. 239,100 as compared to its sale at Rs. 239,800 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.600 to Rs.204,990 from Rs.205,590 whereas the rate of 10 gram 22 karat went down to Rs. 187,907 from Rs.188,457, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price per tola silver and that of ten-gram silver remained unchanged to close at Rs 2,900 and Rs 2,486.28 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$5 to \$1,940 from \$1,945.

SIFC continues to steer investment related initiatives at fast pace

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

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

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

The ministries concerned progress on various aspects and highlighted

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

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

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



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

Trade deficit narrows by 40% in two months

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

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

During the period under review, the exports declined by 6.38 per cent to \$4.431 billion compared to the exports of \$4.733 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to latest

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

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the exports from the country declined by 4.83 per cent in August compared to the exports of the same month of last year. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.363 billion as against the exports of \$2.483 billion in August 2022. On the other hand, the imports during August 2023 were recorded at \$4.489 billion compared to the exports of \$6.054 billion in August 2022, showing decline of 25.85 per cent, according to the data.

Special care for cotton during September stressed

MULTAN (APP): Secretary, Agriculture for South Punjab, Saqib Ali Ateel Monday highlighted critical significance of September in shaping Pakistan's agricultural sector especially in terms of cotton crop.

During a technical consultation session held to discuss the acceleration of flowering of cotton crop, he stressed the need for careful cotton management. Saqib Ateel emphasized that the cotton crop was currently at a

delicate stage and could not withstand stress.

In addition to this, he noted the emergence of whitefly hotspots, mullay bugs, and pink bollworm, all of which require effective management strategies. To address these challenges, a technical session was convened to formulate recommendations for pest control and balanced nutrition. The recommendations include a focus on efficient water usage.



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

PM directs devise effective strategy for eco. stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday directed the Ministry of Finance to devise an effective strategy to bring economic stability in the country.

The prime minister said this in a meeting with Interim Finance Minister Shamshad Akhtar who called on him here.

Training course for assessors of productivity specialist's certification prog inaugurated

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO), Pakistan, in partnership with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) headquartered in Tokyo, Japan on Monday announced the commencement of an International Training Course for Assessors of the Productivity Specialists Certification Program. Scheduled from September 4th to September 8th, 2023, this event was inaugurated at a local hotel in Islamabad.

This essential training program is set to welcome 17 esteemed overseas participants representing 10 APO member countries, alongside 5 local participants.

The course curriculum will be expertly delivered by renowned international resource speakers hailing from Singapore, Malaysia, and Mongolia.

The primary objectives of this intensive workshop are to nurture and equip proficient

assessors within National Productivity Organizations, who play pivotal roles as APO-accredited certification bodies. Participants will be intimately acquainted with the requirements for Productivity Specialists, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the methods, criteria, and competencies essential for conducting assessments leading to the certification of productivity specialists.

ADC Revenue chairs district price control magistrates' meeting

NAROWAL (APP): Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Revenue Rana Amjad Ali chaired a meeting of the district price control magistrates, here on Monday. District Officer (DO) Industries Zeeshan Niaz briefed the ADC Revenue about the activities carried out by the magistrates on a daily

basis. Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Revenue Rana Amjad Ali said that the common man could not be left on the mercy of profiteers and hoarders. He said cases should also be lodged against such elements. Rana Amjad Ali said that special price control magistrates should conduct inspections on a daily basis.

the last trading day. As many as 313 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 187 of them recorded gains and 105 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 21 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were Al-Shaheer Corp with 11,268,667 shares at Rs 10.48 per share; WorldCall Telecom with 11,211,536 shares at Rs 1.17 per share and Dewan Motors with 8,848,489 shares at Rs 16.41 per share.

against Rs 4.464 billion on

Putin denies new grain deal after meeting with Erdogan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides, center, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, right, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu join hands, after their meeting at the presidential palace, in Nicosia, Cyprus.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The 2018 accord aimed to unite China's estimated 12 million Catholics, who have been divided between an official church and an underground church loyal to Rome. The latter emerged when the Communists came to power and diplomatic relations between the Holy See and China ruptured.

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

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

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

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

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

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden on Sunday expressed disappointment that Chinese leader Xi Jinping would not attend the G20 summit in India this week, as Washington seeks to repair relations with Beijing.

Asked about Xi reportedly not planning to join the gathering in New Delhi, Biden told reporters, "I am disappointed, but I am going to get to see him," without elaborating.

Bilateral ties between the United States and China face a long list of problems, from trade disputes to

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

The United States has been working to restore a more effective working relationship, sending a series of senior officials to China in recent months despite continuing friction. On Thursday, a senior EU official said that Xi would not be at the G20, represented instead by Premier Li Qiang. Xi and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held rare face-to-face talks at the BRICS group summit in South Africa last month, but tensions also remain high between the Asian giants.

Russia attacks Danube port, on border with Romania

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russian drones targeted Ukraine's southern Odesa region in the early hours of Sunday, with Moscow hitting a Danube port on the border with NATO member Romania in an attack condemned by Bucharest.

The attack came on the eve of a summit in Russia between Vladimir Putin and Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who hopes to revive the Black Sea grain deal. Ukraine said Russia had hit the Odesa region with a barrage of drones, saying it downed 22 of them.

Air strike in Khartoum kills 20 civilians

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

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

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

In an earlier statement, they said the victims included two children, and warned that more fatalities

went unrecorded, as "their bodies could not be moved to the hospital because they were severely burned or torn to pieces in the bombing".

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

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

Western countries have accused the paramilitaries and allied militias of killings based on ethnicity in the western Darfur region, and the International Criminal Court has opened a new probe into alleged war crimes.

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

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

The Swedish government didn't identify the man, but the New York Times said he was Johan Floderus, a Swede who had been working for the European Union's diplomatic corps.

Citing anonymous sources, the newspaper said Floderus was arrested on a private trip to Iran for possible use by Tehran as a bargaining chip in efforts to seek concessions from the West.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanaani, told the semi-official Fars news agency that he had no information on the case.

The Swedish Foreign

Ministry said the man was detained in Iran in April last year but declined to give details.

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

"The Swedish citizen has been arbitrarily deprived of his freedom and should therefore be released immediately. This has been conveyed to the Iranian authorities," it said.

"To avoid complicating our efforts and for reasons of secrecy, we cannot go into any more detail at present."

The New York Times said Floderus had held several positions in the European Union's civil service, including in the European External Action Service.

Seoul's spy agency says Russia has likely proposed North Korea to join three-way drills with China

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Russia has likely proposed that North Korea participate in three-way naval exercises with China, according to a lawmaker who attended a closed-door briefing with the director of South Korea's top spy agency Monday.

The briefing came days after Russia's Ambassador to North Korea, Alexander Matsegora, told Russian media that including North Korea in joint military drills between Russia and China "seems appropriate." Matsegora added it was his own point of view and that he wasn't aware of any preparations, according to Russia's Tass news agency.

According to lawmaker Yoo Sang-bum, when South Korean National Intelligence Service Director Kim Kyoo-hyun was asked about the possibility of such drills, he said Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu likely proposed holding trilateral naval exercises with North Korea and China while meeting North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in July.

Kim Jong Un invited

Shoigu to a major military parade in Pyongyang in July while vowing to expand military cooperation with Moscow, which U.S. officials say could involve North Korean supplies of artillery and other ammunition as Russian President Vladimir Putin reaches out to other countries for support in his war against Ukraine. Last week, the White House said Kim and Putin exchanged letters as Moscow looked to Pyongyang for more munitions.

Amid deepening nuclear tensions with Washington, Seoul and Tokyo, Kim Jong Un has been trying to boost the visibility of his partnerships with Moscow and Beijing as he seeks to break out of diplomatic isolation and have Pyongyang be a part of a united front against the United States. Diplomacy between Pyongyang and Washington has stalled since 2019 over disagreements over the crippling U.S.-led sanctions against North Korea and the North's faltering steps to wind down its nuclear weapons and missiles program.

UK govt vows action over schools' crumbling concrete scandal

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The UK government vowed on Sunday to "do what it takes" to ensure pupils' safety, after scores of schools were forced to shut buildings made with an aerated concrete prone to collapse.

As many as 104 schools and colleges containing Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) have been ordered not to reopen buildings this coming term, in a growing scandal dating back years.

More than 50 other education sites have already been forced to put "mitigations in place" this year due to the presence of RAAC. Structural experts have warned it is likely to be found within many other sites, including hospitals, courts and some public housing, and they may also have to close for remedial works. RAAC — a cheap, lightweight form of concrete — was widely used

in parts of building construction across Britain from the 1950s to the mid-1990s, with concerns about its risk of collapse emerging since 2018. That year the roof of a primary school in Kent, southeast England, collapsed without warning.

"The government will take action immediately when we know there is any kind of risk," finance minister Jeremy Hunt told Sky News as he faced a barrage of questions about the issue. "We will do what it takes to make sure that children are safe," he added, amid public outcry as millions of pupils return to school from summer holidays.

"We will prioritise spending money to sort out these problems where that needs to happen." Hunt said officials had initiated a "huge survey" of every single school in the country to identify where RAAC is in place.

UN now expects 1.8 million people to flee Sudan by year-end

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The U.N. refugee agency on Monday said it expected over 1.8 million people from Sudan to arrive in five neighbouring countries by the end of the year and appealed for \$1 billion to help them amid reports of rising disease and death rates.

The estimate for those fleeing violence is about double what UNHCR projected in May shortly after the conflict began and an increase of 600,000 from an interim estimate.

Already, more than 1 million people have left Sudan to neighbouring states of Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Central African Republic amid fighting between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the capital Khartoum and beyond.

Curfew lifted after deadly unrest in Iraqi city

Monitoring Desk
KIRKUK: A curfew was lifted in the multi-ethnic Iraqi city of Kirkuk on Sunday after protests turned violent and led to the deaths of four people.

Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani imposed the curfew on Saturday evening after rival protests — between Kurdish residents on one side and Turkmen and Arabs on the other — descended into deadly unrest despite a security presence.

Tensions had been brewing for nearly a week in Kirkuk, a northern city which has historically been disputed between the federal government in Baghdad

and authorities in the autonomous Kurdistan region of the north.

The curfew "has been lifted," General Kawa Gharib, the police chief in Kirkuk, said. "The situation is now stable throughout the city," Sudani called for a commission of inquiry into the incident.

Four Kurds were killed and 15 people wounded during Saturday's violence, according to the latest toll issued on Sunday by Amer Shuani, the local police spokesman.

At least three of the four victims were shot dead, health officials said, but it was unclear who was responsible.

Invasive species costs global economy \$423 bln per year: UN

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Fishing grounds choked by water hyacinths. Songbird eggs gobbled up by rats. Power plant pipes clogged by zebra mussels. And electrical lines downed by brown tree snakes.

These are just a few examples of the environmental chaos sown by invasive species, whose spread around the world has seen economic damages quadruple every decade since 1970, scientists said on Monday.

The team of 86 researchers from 49 countries released a four-year assessment of the global impacts of some 3,500 harmful invasive species, finding that economic costs now total at least \$423 billion every year, with the alien invaders playing a key role in 60% of recorded plant and animal extinctions.

"We also know this is a problem that is going to get much, much worse," said ecologist Helen Roy, co-chair of the United Nations Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report. Warmer temperatures under climate change are expected to further drive the expansion of invasive species.

Invasive species are plants or animals, often moved around by human activity, that take hold in an environment with deleterious effects.

Japan fishermen, locals seek halt to Fukushima water release

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: More than 100 fishermen and locals living near Fukushima will file a lawsuit this week seeking to stop the release of wastewater from the stricken Japanese nuclear plant, they said on Monday.

Twelve years after one of the world's worst nuclear accidents, Japan began on August 24 discharging treated cooling water diluted with seawater into the Pacific, insisting it was safe. Many Japanese fishermen have been against the release, fearing that it will undo years of efforts to improve the

industry's image in the wake of the 2011 catastrophe.

More than 100 plaintiffs in Fukushima and neighbouring prefectures will file the lawsuit in the Fukushima District Court on Friday, Sugie Tanji, a member of the group's secretariat, told AFP. "The government failed to keep to its promise of gaining agreement from fishermen before taking such a decision to release," she said. "This is a wrong policy as it ignores strong opposition from not only the Fukushima fishermen's cooperative but also from cooperatives across the country."



Protesters block a road following protests in the multi-ethnic Iraqi city of Kirkuk.

Thousands stuck in mud at US festival, one dead

Monitoring Desk
BLACK ROCK CITY: Tens of thousands of festival-goers were stranded on Sunday in deep mud in the Nevada desert after rain turned the annual Burning Man gathering into a quagmire, with police investigating one death.

Video footage showed costume-wearing "burners" struggling across the wet grey-brown site, some using trash bags as makeshift boots, while many vehicles were stuck in the sludge.

All events at the counterculture festival, which drew some 70,000 people, were cancelled after rain tore down structures for dance parties, art installations and other entertainment. Police said they were probing one death, without giving further details. Road gates in and out of the Black Rock City venue were closed, but some desperate attendees trudged on foot for hours to reach the nearest road and hitch a lift out.

"It was an incredibly harrowing 6 mile (10

kilometre) hike at midnight through heavy and slippery mud, but I got safely out," lawyer Neal Katyal said on social media.

"It is very slippery and the mud is like cement and sticks to your boots.

"No one should try this unless in good shape and part of a group. These are dangerous conditions to hike and will likely get worse." Festival crowds were asked to shelter in place and conserve food and water after the heavy rains started on Friday night, with more downpours forecast on Sunday.

"You can't really walk or drive," a young woman with dreadlocks named Christine Lee, a circus performer, said on TikTok. Internet service was not available or patchy, she said. "My boots are five inches deep, and the mud became five inches so I was kind of on stilts," Lee said, adding people were being told they may be stuck until Tuesday.

Speakers says Chaghi, Panjgur potential to produce thousands of MW renewable electricity

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan's Chaghi and Panjgur districts have the potential to produce thousands of megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity (RE) from wind and solar energy but financial, administrative and political problems are hampering this potential from becoming a reality. These views were expressed by speakers while addressing a consultative conference held in Quetta on Monday.

They highlighted various electricity problems faced by the people of Balochistan, such as low levels of access to electricity, high electricity costs and long hours of load-shedding, and said that the most effective option to address these problems is to produce electricity from renewable sources close to where people need it.

They also underscored the fact that Balochistan-based electricity projects in general and renewable energy projects being planned in the province, in particular, get neglected because of the fragile law and order

situation, lack of policy preparation and policy planning at the provincial level and the absence of coordination between the provincial and federal authorities.

The conference, titled Balochistan's Renewable Energy Journey: Making accessible, affordable and sustainable power in the Province, was organized by the Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP), a non-governmental organization working in Balochistan since 1998.

It was helped in this endeavour by two Islamabad-based think tanks, Renewables First and Policy Research Institute for Equitable Development (PRIED).

Rabia Mirani and Zubair Khan, two young researchers working with ISDP on a draft renewable energy policy for Balochistan, told the participants of the conference that the governments as well as the private sector are highly reluctant to invest in the province's electricity sector.

"This reluctance owes to many factors including extremely low recovery of electricity bills, especially from the owners of agricultural tube-wells, and the requirement to lay very long transmission and distribution networks to take electricity to the highly dispersed and sparse provincial population," they said.

Ammar Qaseem, a researcher associated with Renewables First, briefed the conference on how the federal government's planning document for the energy sector, Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP), is made and how its low focus on renewable energy is hurting Balochistan's interests.

"Not a single renewable energy project from Balochistan has been included in the latest edition of IGCEP. This means that no renewable energy project will be installed in Balochistan in the next ten years unless the makers of IGCEP change their policy focus and prioritize renewable energy over other sources of energy," he said.



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

Introductory meeting with high ups: Jamali directs to make short & long term plans for effective policing

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Zubair Jamali has stressed the need to make short and long term planning for successful and effective policing.

He said that it is requirement of the present era to ensure information technology based policing in the province so as to achieve the desired goals of law and order. He stressed adding moreover, we would also have to take steps for welfare of the masses and make the police their friendly. The caretaker Minister Home was in an introductory meeting with the Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Deputy Inspector General of Police and Superintendents of Police here on Monday.

Also present on the occasion were the Additional Chief Secretary Home, Saleh Muhammad

Nasar, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat, Special Secretary Home, Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Additional Secretary Home and other concerned high ups. The meeting was briefed about the law and order situation in different areas of the province. In addition to this, the meeting was also briefed about the special steps taken and being taken on behalf of Hazra Imran Hussain (RA).

Addressing the meeting, the Minister said that we have to deliver the services to the masses. He exhorted the law enforcement agencies to perform their duties as service.

In order to bring improvement in the policing, we have to use modern techniques of modern era, he stressed adding moreover, we would also have to take steps for welfare of the masses and make the police their friendly.



QUETTA: Quetta Administrator, Jabbar Baloch addresses to members of Metropolitan Corporation Tanzeemi Ittehad after successful negotiations with them during their protest, in Quetta.

Sardar Ejaz Jaffar exhorts PHE officers to ensure supply of clean water to people

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Ejaz Ahmed Khan Jaffar has emphasized that it is responsibility of the concerned officers of department to ensure supply of clean water to the masses with good intention and honesty.

He said that the officers would perform their duties with honesty would be respectable to him and honourable. No relaxation would be given to the officers to be indulged in illegal and negative acts at all.

The caretaker Minister

was speaking during the briefing about performance of the PHE and other related matters.

The Secretary PHE, Saleh Muhammad Baloch briefed the Minister in detail.

Also present on the occasion were the Additional Secretary PHE, Abdul Qadeer, Chief Engineer and other senior officials of the department.

Sardar Ejaz Jaffar said that he has served as Secretary of the department, so he knew well all affairs of the department.

He announced to visit to the water supply

Jan Jamali saddened over loss of precious lives in heli crash

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali has expressed sorrow over the loss of precious lives in helicopter crash in Gwadar.

In a statement issued here on Monday, the Speaker expressed heartfelt condolence and sympathy with the bereaved families of the martyrs.

He prayed for the departed souls and the heirs that may Allah Almighty give them patience to bear the tragic loss of lives of their dear ones.

Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali said that the country is surviving just because of the sacrifices of the brave soldiers of the nation.

CG Japan, President PJCA condole demise of former judge

Independent Report
QUETTA (APP): Consul General of Japan Syed Nadeem Alam Shah and President of Pakistan Japan Cultural Association Quetta Syed Feroze Alam Shah on Monday condole the demise of former Judge International Court of Law Hague, Justice (retired) Ali Nawaz Chauhan.

Expressing deep grief and sorrow over the death of the former judge, they said Pakistan has lost an expert jurist, thinker and patriot.



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

PM for promoting PPP to reduce govt expenditures, improve performance

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

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

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

country would be improved, thus strengthening the national integration.

He directed the relevant authorities to present a comprehensive plan with respect to the East-West connectivity to provide better access between Western and Eastern areas of the country. He said additional opportunities were required with respect to the promotion of public private partnership.

During the meeting, it was informed that projects worth Rs 646 billion were launched in the last two years under public private partnership.

Direct savings of Rs

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

The meeting was further informed that Sialkot-Kharan Motorway, Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway, Kharan-Rawalpindi Motorway, Karachi Circular Railways and outsourcing of Islamabad International Airport were among the top Public Private Partnership Authority projects. "Education, information technology and export sectors are also among the priorities," it was added.

Quran to guide human mind until end of time: Aneeq

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

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

During the briefing, the minister expressed the belief that Islam was a comprehensive and all-encompassing religion.

He stressed the im-

portance of addressing contemporary issues and modern challenges while remaining firmly rooted in the teachings of Islam. He stated that their love for religion was unwavering, but to provide guidance to the world, they must harness the knowledge found within the Quranic sciences.

Furthermore, Minister Aneeq highlighted the need for greater Muslim involvement in the fields of modern science and ongoing research. He expressed concern that the Quranic perspective on cosmic control seems distant from the Muslim community in today's world.

Pakistan Navy siezed 9.5 tons of narcotics at sea

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Navy and Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in an intelligence-based joint counter-narcotics operation on Monday seized 9.5 tons of narcotics and over 10 thousand bottles of Liqueur at sea. The apprehended drugs were stowed in hidden compartments of a fishing boat that was successfully intercepted by a Pakistan Navy Ship, a Pakistan Navy news release said. The estimated value of seized narcotics is US \$ 112 million in the international market. The seized drugs were subsequently handed over to the Anti-Narcotics Force for further legal proceedings.



QUETTA: President Civil Secretariat Officer Association Balochistan Abdul Malik Kakar meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Perform duties of Anti-Rape Crisis Cells 18 districts get police surgeons & medical legal officers

Independent Report
QUETTA: In all 34 police surgeons and medical legal officers have been posted in the government hospitals of 18 districts of Balochistan province.

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Provincial Health Department, Government of Balochistan.

According to the notification, the police sur-

geons and MLOs would perform their duties of Anti-Rape Crisis Cells under Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act 2021, with immediate effect and until further orders.

The doctors would also be responsible to prepare reports on medical legal investigations in the crimes, accidents and post-mortem, adding the notification mentioned.

Iran, Pakistan have huge potential for cooperation in energy sector: Ali Reza

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Caretaker Federal Minister for Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali on Monday in Islamabad. Both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and promotion of brotherly relations between two countries.

The Energy minister welcomed the Iranian ambassador and expressed his resolve for further strengthening the ties. Ambassador extended his good wishes for the minister upon assuming new portfolio.

Muhammad Ali remarked that Iran and Pakistan have huge potential for cooperation in energy sector. "We are keen to explore all options and work together," reiterated the Energy minister. The increasing energy needs of Pakistan present an opportunity of cooperation with neighboring country Iran which is rich in energy reserves. The ambassador appreciated minister's interest in the regional cooperation and affirmed his full support. He presented his good office for any assistance needed by the Pakistani side.

Admiral (ret) Asif Sandila calls on PM

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

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

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

SCBA to host farewell dinner in honour of outgoing CJP on Sept 13

ISLAMABAD, (INP): The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) will host a farewell dinner in honour of outgoing Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Umar Ata Bandial on September 13.

The valedictory dinner will be attended by the Supreme Court judges, retired judges, and senior lawyers.

Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial is retiring on September 16.

Sindhi for enhancing Pak-Turkiye cooperation in education, culture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi Monday emphasized enhancing cooperation between Pakistan and Türkiye in the fields of culture and education. He was speaking during the event titled 'One Hundred Years of Magnitude: Pak-Turk Affinity,' organized by the National Institute for Historical and Cultural Research (NIHCR), Quaid-i-Azam University, and the Yunus Emre Institute, Turkish Cultural Center.

The minister stated that the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Türkiye were an unprecedented manifestation of brotherhood and love, which cannot be compared.

He said that the Muslims of the subcontinent actively participated in the Khilafat Movement and added that the new generation should be aware of their cultural identity.

"We are proud that our region is home to the great civilizations of the

world. Thousands of years ago, when the world was plunged into darkness, the civilization of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa were the cradles of knowledge and wisdom" he said.

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

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

He said, "We should increase cooperation in education, health, tourism, and other matters of mutual interest so that the effectiveness and recognition of this relationship may become deeper and stronger."



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Education Minister Qadir Bakhsh meeting with Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai

Advisor for Irrigation vows to play role to resolve problems of masses

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister for Irrigation, Mir Danish Langove has assured that he would play wholehearted role for resolving the basic issues of general public taking deep interest.

He said that he and other members of the interim cabinet are well aware of the issues being faced by the people, and as such he is committed to play their part in resolving them.

This and similar other views were expressed by the Advisor to Chief Minister while speaking to different delegations who called on him here at his office on Monday.

The members of delegations greeted Mir Danish Langove on becoming Advisor to the interim Chief Minister.

He said that although the duration of interim government is brief, however, he is firm to resolve the issues of common men remaining in the mandate given.

The Advisor further said that development of irrigation has priority in production sector. He said that he doesn't claim to bring revolution in the Irrigation department, but assure that he would play his role in maintaining quality of work in all development projects, he maintained.

Raids dairy farms; Quetta administration recovers adulterated milk and 50 bottles of oxytocin

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Quetta district administration launched crackdown against the adulterated milk at the dairy farms located in various parts of the city.

The Assistant Commissioner Sadar Flt. Lieutenant (Retd) Khalid Shams raised different dairy farms along with the high ups of Balochistan Food Authority (BFA).

During the raids, the

team seized around 100 liters powdered milk and discarded it, around 50 bottles of prohibited chemical oxytocin were also recovered.

A person using the same was arrested and Rs. 50 fine was also charged.

Meanwhile, the administration and BFA team also visited different areas to check the plantation of different vegetables and crops through use of contaminated sewer water.



QUETTA: Senator Danesh Kumar meeting with Caretaker Finance Minister Amjad Rasheed and Advisor to Chief Minister Danish Lango

Finance Minister chairs ECNEC meeting

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

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

Balochistan, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers from Federal Ministries and Provincial departments participated in the meeting. The ECNEC considered and approved project of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination titled "Emergency Plan for Polio Eradication (3rd revised)" at a cost of USD 1784.93 million including grant from GPEI partners of USD 1197.93 million, Islamic Development Bank loan of USD 552 million and AFD loan of USD 35 million. The project will supply polio eradication vaccines all over Pakistan and will be executed by WHO and UNICEF. The ECNEC after discussion extended the duration of umbrella PC-1 of the project to three years.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Ahmed Jaffar being briefed by Secretary PHE Saleh Muhammad Baloch about departmental affairs