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West "over-obsessed" to contain Pakistan's "all-weather friend" China: PM Kakar

Pakistan was focusing on its own interests without choosing sides in the great power competition

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that Pakistan was focusing on its own interests without choosing sides in the great power competition, and that the West was "over-obsessed" with efforts to contain China.

The prime minister, in an interview with Washington Post during his visit to New York to attend the 78th United Nations General Assembly session published on Wednesday, said Pakistan intended to stay

"neutral" on Russia's war with Ukraine and saw China as its "all-weather friend" and "strategic partner."

"It's not a Cold War. There is no Iron Curtain here. It's not that opaque. Everybody sees what is happening," the prime minister said. He said that the West was "over-obsessed" with efforts to contain China.

He told the interviewer that Pakistan was charting a path, designed to avoid getting caught up in the

competition between the West and Russia and China. He said Pakistan had no intention of committing to either camp in the growing US-China rivalry.

By siding with the West against the Soviets and again after 9/11, Pakistan paid a high price, Kakar said. "Pakistan in the last 30 years, has been treated unfairly by the West," he told the interviewer.

"Every nation for itself... Why should we be worried about this competition?"

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PM Kakar arrives in Madinah Munawwarah



MADINAH MUNAWWARAH (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar arrived here on Wednesday on his private visit to Saudi Arabia.

Upon arrival, he was warmly received by Governor Madinah Faisal Bin Salman along with other senior officials of the Pakistani Embassy and Jeddah Consulate General at the Madinah Airport. The prime minister will leave for Makkah Mukarrah today to perform Umrah.

1400 personnel to be deployed for security: Jamali calls for especially focusing on security on 12th Rabiul Awwal

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali has underlined the need to especially focus on the security of 12th Rabiul Awwal particularly in the sensitive areas and districts of the province.

He said that it is our collective responsibility of all to ensure foolproof security on 12th Rabiul Awwal all over the province.

The Minister Home was addressing the meeting held to review the security arrangements on eve of 12th Rabiul Awwal, anti-polio campaign besides overall

law and order, here on Wednesday.

The Additional Inspector General of Police, Jawad Ahmed Dogar, Commissioner Quetta, Hamza Shafiqat, Additional Secretary Home, Abdul Salam Jogezi, DIG Police, SSP Special Branch, Deputy Commissioner Quetta and Director General Levies force, Naseebullah.

The Commissioner Makran, Commissioner Sibi, Commissioner Loralai, Commissioner Rakhshan, representatives of the Corps Headquarter, Frontier Corps South, and other concerned high ups participated through video link.



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan National Party (BNP) holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Quetta press club.

Caretaker Minister Home appreciates police: Major attempt of terrorism foiled in Quetta; recovers explosive material, arms, ammunition

QUETTA: The police force foiled a major bid of terrorism in the provincial metropolis after it recovered huge quantity of explosive material a vehicle parked in the local parking located in Eastern bypass area on Wednesday. According to the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali, the police raided a car parked in a parking on a secret information received from the sources.

The police recovered the explosive material weighing 30-35 kilogram from the car parked in the parking area.

The bomb disposal squad of the special branch was called on the spot,

which defused the explosive material.

Later, police impounded the vehicle seizing the explosive material.

Moreover, two Kalashnikovs and 14,000 rounds of bullets were also recovered from another vehicle parked in a parking at Circular road the same morning.

Meanwhile, the caretaker Provincial Minister Home congratulated the police team who successfully foiled the attempt of terrorism. The Minister also announced to give commendation certificates to the concerned personnel.

He said that the police force saved the city from big destruction by carrying out timely action.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi: President approves 90-day remission in sentences of prisoners

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday announced a special remission of 90 days in sentence of prisoners on the eve of Eid Milad un-Nabi.

The remission will be applicable for male prisoners above 65 years of age and women inmates over 60 years, who have completed one-third of their imprisonment.

The persons under 18 years who have served their one-third sentence will also get the benefit of remission.

President Alvi approved the remission for prisoners in accordance with Article 45 of the Constitution, the President's Office said.

The reduction in sentence will not apply to the prisoners involved in murder, espionage, and anti-State activities.

The other categories without remission include convicts of adultery, theft, dacoity, kidnapping, and terrorism. Also, the remission will not be applicable on those involved in financial crimes and the ones who incurred losses to the national exchequer.

Kamran Asad as Director: Noor Muhammad Khetran posted as acting DGPR

QUETTA: The Director Public Relations, Noor Muhammad Khetran has been posted as the acting Director General Public Relations (DGPR) with immediate effect.

This was announced in an official handout issued here on Wednesday.

According to the handout, acting DGPR Kamran Asad had been posted as the Director Public Relations.

Similarly, Director General Fisheries Department, Saifullah Khetran has been directed to report in the S&GAD and Muhammad Younas Sanjrani awaiting posting orders has been posted as DG Fisheries.

Court reopens NAB reference against Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Accountability Court has reopened the reference against the former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi for the misuse of power in appointing Managing Director, PSO Imran-ul-Haq.

The court stated in its order that the reference had been reopened in accordance with the directives of the Supreme Court.

It added that the hearings would resume on October 24 from the point where it was previously halted.

In this regard, the court issued notices to Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and other accused.



PESHAWAR: Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir attending meeting of Provincial Apex Committee.

We have to synergise efforts for peace and prosperity of Pakistan: COAS

Says Pakistan Army will continue to play role in ensuring peace, stability in KP; Urges women to take part in KP's 'progress, development'

PESHAWAR (APP): Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir has reiterated Pakistan Army's unflinching resolve to continue its role in ensuring peace and stability in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for providing a secure environment for economic development.

He was speaking during Provincial Apex Committee in Peshawar on Wednesday.

The army Chief called for synergizing efforts for peace and prosperity of the country. During the meeting, he was briefed about overall security situation including initiatives against smuggling, hoarding and drug trafficking.

The participants of the meeting affirmed that state institutions and people are united for the protection of

life and property of citizens.

The participants paid rich tribute to the Shuhada and their families.

Meanwhile Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday visited Peshawar and had an interactive session with the respectable women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) during 'KP Women Symposium - 2023'.

The Army Chief encouraged the women to take part in the progress and development of KP and Newly Merged Districts (NMDs), an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The COAS also attended a meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee along with Caretaker Chief Minister

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QUETTA: Station Commander Pakistan Navy Quetta Captain Muhammad Abdullah Siddiqui meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

We have to make hard decisions to come out of tough economic conditions, says Governor

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stressed that we have to make hard decisions to come out of the toughest economic conditions, Pakistan is going through presently.

The Governor said that the prevailing economic crisis can't be resolved by bringing minor reforms like increasing prices of daily commodities, taxation and saving food. He, however, insisted that all economic hardships can be resolved by putting the blue economy in Balochistan on modern lines.

The Governor stated so while speaking to the station commander Pakistan Navy Quetta, captain Muhammad Abdullah Siddiqui who called on him here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

Meeting chaired by CS reviewed preparations of general polls in Balochistan



QUETTA: An important meeting was held to review the preparations of general elections in Balochistan here on Wednesday.

The Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presided over the meeting, which was attended by the

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ECP issues preliminary delimitation report in significant step towards polls

The publication of the preliminary constituencies will continue for 30 days from Sept 27 to Oct 26; Number of seats in the national and provincial assemblies will remain the same

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued preliminary list of new delimitations ahead of general polls.

The chief election commissioner (CEC) and ECP members approved the preliminary list of new delimitations under the 2023 digital census data.

President stresses exploring trade, cultural opportunities with Bangladesh

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday stressed the need for exploiting opportunities with Bangladesh in areas of trade, investment and culture.

The president expressed these views in a meeting with the country's ambassador-designate to Bangladesh Syed Ahmad Maroof here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President Alvi mentioned that huge potential in trade existed between Pakistan and Bangladesh, which he said, needed special attention.

He said the two countries enjoyed the commonalities of religion and history and emphasized the need to strengthen people-to-people and cultural ties.

The president expressed best wishes for the envoy-designate and urged him to work towards bringing Pakistan and Bangladesh closer during his stint in Dhaka.

Five children among 8 killed in rocket launcher shell explosion in Kandhkot

KANDHKOT (APP): Eight people, including five children, lost their lives while five others sustained injuries after a rocket launcher's shell exploded in a house in Sindh's Kandhkot district on Wednesday.

Kandhkot Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rohail Khoso said that the incident took place in a house in the Ghora Ghat of kutchha (riverine) area.

According to the police, the preliminary investigation revealed that the rocket launcher was found by children on an agricultural land which they brought home — where it exploded.

The rescue personnel shifted the bodies and injured people to the hospital as soon as the incident was reported, said the law enforcement agency, adding that an investigation into the matter has been started. Following the incident, Sindh caretaker Chief Minister Maqbool Baqar took notice of the event, seeking a detailed report from Inspector-General (IG) Dr Riffat Mukhtar.

The interim CM questioned how the rocket launcher reached the village.

After CEC's approval, the commission issued the initial list of the delimitations on its website.

Yesterday, the delimitation process of for the national and provincial assemblies entered its final phase and the ECP decided to approve initial delimitations.

For the National As-

sembly (NA), the voter quota for Punjab province was fixed at 905,595, 913,000 for Sindh, 907,913 for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 930,900 for Balochistan and 787,954 for Islamabad.

The voter quota for the Punjab Assembly will be

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ISLAMABAD: President, Dr. Arif Alvi exchanging views with Syed Ahmad Maroof, Pakistan Ambassador-Designate to Bangladesh during meeting held at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad.

Turbat would prove to be future silicone city of country: Jan Achakzai

Provincial Caretaker Information Minister announces 400 scholarships and 50 laptops for UoT's students

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Muhammad Achakzai has stated that Turbat is going to be the future silicone city of the country.

The Minister said that the southern Balochistan is rich in resources besides having the educated human resource that can be beneficial for the CPEC projects.

Jan Achakzai was speaking to the faculty members and students during his visit to the Turbat University on Wednesday.

The Vice Chancellor Dr Jan Muhammad, administration and faculty members welcomed the caretaker Minister upon his arrival in the Turbat university.

He noted with pleasure that Turbat University is

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TURBAT: Vice Chancellor Dr. Jan Muhammad presenting a shield to Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai during his visit to University of Turbat

More than 100 dead, 150 injured in Iraq wedding inferno

Monitoring Desk

IRAQ: More than 100 people were killed and 150 injured in a fire at a wedding party in Hamdaniya district in Iraq's Nineveh province that left civil defence searching the charred skeleton of a building for survivors in the early hours of Wednesday.

Nineveh Deputy Governor Hassan al-Allaq told Reuters that 113 people had been confirmed dead, with state media putting the death toll at least 100, with 150 people injured.

The fire ripped through a large events hall in the north-eastern region after fireworks were lit during the celebration, local civil de-

fence said, according to state media.

"We saw the fire pulsating, coming out of the hall. Those who managed got out and those who didn't got stuck. Even those who made their way out were broken," said Imad Yohana, a 34-year-old who escaped the inferno. Video from a Reuters correspondent at the site showed firefighters clambering over the charred wreckage of the building, shining lights over smouldering ruins. Preliminary information indicated that the building was made of highly flammable construction materials, contributing to its rapid collapse, state media said.



HYDERABAD: Pakistan cricket team landed in India's Hyderabad to participate in the ICC World Cup 2023

'Culture Caravan' best way to explore rich regional history

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah on Wednesday said that 'Culture Caravan' was arranged to explore the rich history of the region and engage with experts to provide insight into the significance of Gandhara heritage.

He made the remarks while addressing the Caravan on World Tourism Day 2023 at Taxila, organized here by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with its partners.

The minister, who is also Chairman of PTDC, said World Tourism Day is celebrated every year on September 27 under the auspices of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to create awareness of and importance of tourism in the international community.

Wasi Shah said the government was taking significant steps to enhance foreign investment in the tourism industry and leaving no stone unturned to revive this sector. Pakistan had great religious and cultural tourism potential which needed to be explored by devising tourism policies, he said. "Our country has seen an increase in the number of foreign tourists during the last few years and it is high time that we tap into this opportunity and provide them updated facilities like 'theme parks'."

He said the Day would

promote tourism and the social and cultural values besides its effects on political and economic aspects should be kept in mind as well. Visiting Taxila Museum and Julian, he said, "The place we are standing today is the 22-hundred-year-old Taxila University, which is considered one of the first universities in the region and the oldest in the world. I decided to celebrate World Tourism Day at this place this year so that our friends in the country and abroad to give a message that the civilization that Pakistanis are inheritors has been the beacon of knowledge since 2200 years ago." He said the other purpose of celebrating World Tourism Day in Taxila was to convey the message that Pakistan is also the inheritor of Harappa civilization about 5,000 years old and Mehrgarh about 5,000 years old.

Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan said that the provincial government was taking numerous steps to promote tourism as an industry.

In a message issued in connection with World Tourism Day being observed across the world including Pakistan on September 27, he said that the provincial government was effectively working under an integrated strategy to provide all facilities to domestic and foreign tourists.

Govt to offer interest-free loans for establishing 5,000 E-Working Centers: IT minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications Dr Umar Saif Wednesday said that the government would provide interest-free loans for establishing E-Working Centers to facilitate freelancers.

Dr. Saif, speaking to the media person said that each freelancer would receive financial assistance of Rs 100,000 to set up their E-Working Center, with the freelancer contributing the remaining funds needed.

This initiative aimed to address the current challenge faced by approximately 1.5 million freelancers who lacked suitable workspaces.

Dr. Saif emphasized the potential economic impact of this move, estimating that each freelancer could earn between \$25,000 to \$30,000 annually, significantly contributing to the national economy. He projected that these measures could increase IT sector exports by \$3 billion. Additionally, the government is working to facilitate access to loans and investments for IT startups, with expectations of attracting external investments totaling \$1 billion within the next six months.

In addressing the skill gap within the IT workforce, Dr. Saif revealed that Pakistani universities currently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT graduates, but only 2,000 to 2,200 of them secure employment.

Touchdown Hyderabad: Pakistan squad lands in India for World Cup

HYDERABAD: The Pakistan squad landed in India's Hyderabad on Wednesday to participate in the ICC World Cup 2023.

The national team flew to India via Dubai and landed at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. A video shared by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) showed the squad exiting the plane.

Confirming the development, the Press Trust of India said this is Pakistan's first visit to the neighbouring country in seven years. The Green Shirts previously traveled to India in 2016 for the T20 world cup.

The Indian government had on Monday issued visas for the Pakistan squad after multiple delays. The development came after the PCB wrote a letter to the International Cricket Council expressing concerns over the visa issue.

The World Cup is scheduled to take place from Oct 5 to Nov 19 in India. Pakistan's opening match in the tournament is set for Oct 6 against the Netherlands in Hyderabad, while the highly anticipated match against arch-rivals India will take place in Ahmedabad on Oct 14.

The national team will play two warm-up matches — against New Zealand on Sept 29 and Australia on Oct 3. Earlier, the team was scheduled to leave for Dubai on Sept 25 and stay there for two days.

The 15-member squad for the mega tournament was announced last week by Cricket Chief Selector Inzamam-ul-Haq. It notably includes bowler Hasan Ali, and excludes star pacer Naseem Shah, who was injured in the Asia Cup.

West "over-obsessed" to contain ...

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tion? It's between two great powers, two great civilizations, and the implications [affect] 150-plus countries. And Pakistan is just one of them," PM Kar remarked.

Mentioning Pakistan's "neutral" stance on Ukraine, the prime minister said: "This crisis is creating challenges and at the same time it is creating opportunities also within the region, and we are looking at it both ways."

Prime Minister Kar flatly denied the allegations in a media report of Pakistan moving any munitions to Ukraine saying, "We have not gone for any sale

Saudi envoy highlights Kingdom's transformative reforms, global influence under 'Vision 2030'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki said under the wise leadership of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and the dynamic vision of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Kingdom had emerged as a beacon of progress and prosperity.

Addressing an event in connection with the 93rd National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia here, he said their commitment to economic diversification, social reform, and global engagement had charted an inspiring path towards a brighter future.

Welcoming all the distinguished guests on the occasion, Ambassador Al-Malki said it was a day to

celebrate the Kingdom's significant contributions to regional stability, technological advancement, and cultural preservation.

"The wise leadership's unwavering dedication to diplomacy, science, and innovation has not only transformed Saudi Arabia but has also resonated on the global stage," he maintained.

Appreciating the historical ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, Ambassador Al-Malki said the diplomatic relations between the two countries were nothing but sincere Islamic brotherhood and pure love for each other.

Saudi Press Attaché Dr. Naif Al-Otaibi, in an exclusive talk with APP, said that King Salman bin Abdulaziz

and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had made remarkable achievements across multiple fronts, showcasing Saudi Arabia's rapid transformation and global influence within a relatively short span of time.

He said under their leadership, Saudi Arabia had played a pivotal role in regional diplomacy, promoting stability in the Middle East. He said initiatives like the Arab coalition in Yemen and efforts to resolve the Gulf crisis reflected their commitment to regional peace.

Dr. Al-Otaibi said the crown prince's Vision 2030 plan had ushered in a wave of economic and social reforms, diversifying the Saudi economy, reducing its

dependency on oil, and fostering entrepreneurship and innovation.

He said the Kingdom had invested significantly in research and development, leading to the establishment of advanced technological centers and initiatives. He said Saudi Arabia was also home to NEOM, an ambitious futuristic city project aimed at becoming a global technology and innovation hub.

He said hosting major events like the Formula 1 Grand Prix and the Dakar Rally, and investing in sports infrastructure, had positioned Saudi Arabia as a vibrant destination for sports and entertainment, opening up new avenues for tourism and cultural exchange.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir addressing the participants of interactive session with the women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during 'KPK Women Symposium - 2023'

Ahmad stresses significance of KP Highway Authority's role in Road infrastructure development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Engineer Ahmed Jan Khan, the Minister for Communications and Works and Irrigation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, emphasized the pivotal role played by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority (KP HA) in the construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of major highways within the province. He underscored the authority's commitment to maintaining high construction standards in its projects and urged an increase in its productivity. The minister pledged efforts to bolster this vital institution and enhance its effectiveness.

These remarks were made during a meeting regarding the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority held in the committee room of the Department of Communications and Works. The meeting was chaired by Engineer Ahmed

Jan Khan and attended by Engineer Adnan Khan, Project Director of Swat Expressway, Engineer Barkatullah, and other officials. The caretaker minister received a comprehensive briefing on the ongoing highway construction projects carried out by KP HA in the province, including updates on the status of these projects.

During the meeting, it was explained to the caretaker minister that the government had established this institution to oversee the planning, design, construction, improvement, and maintenance of provincial highways. Currently, the authority has successfully constructed 53 highways across the province, and it has also completed 444 km of highways in the merged districts. Notably, KP HA has generated approximately Rs 218 million in revenue from various

sources, including toll tax and other avenues, as of June 2023. The authority manages 39 ongoing and 6 new projects under the Annual Development Program (ADP), as well as 8 ongoing projects under the Accelerated Implementation Program for the merged districts. Additionally, 2 ongoing projects are part of the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP).

The minister was further informed that KP HA has constructed around 80 bridges in the province, converted 309 kilometres of provincial highways into two-lane roads, and reconstructed 720 kilometres of existing highways. Furthermore, the first phase of the Swat Motorway has been completed, and work has commenced on planning and designing the 80 km long Phase 2 of this highway under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement.



ISLAMABAD: 2nd Session of 5th Executive Committee Meeting of SIFC.

Turbat would prove to...

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providing higher educational facilities to the youth of Kech and other areas of the province.

He said that the ratio of literacy is higher than other areas of the province, and adding hoped that the students would brighten the name of country after getting education.

He praised the University for imparting higher education to the students in Kech district.

He stressed the need to focus on the sectors which provide maximum opportunities of employments.

He pointed out that there is much room of acquiring livelihood in the IT sector, so our youth should acquire digital skills to earn livelihood.

Appreciating the performance of the University he said that the University of Turbat was playing a very important role in promoting quality education in this region. He emphasized that we should pay more attention to open employable teaching departments so that the graduates of our universities do not face any difficulty in finding employment after their education.

Appreciating the building of the University, the Caretaker Provincial Minister said that Turbat can be the gateway in this region for creating qualified human resources. He emphasized that we should keep our youth engaged in such activities that can increase their digital skills and capabilities.

He said that this is the era of IT, e-commerce, e-employment, and artificial

intelligence, therefore, the development of information technology in the province is our top priority.

Addressing the university administration on this occasion, he said that in the coming times, there is large-scale investment potential in the mineral sector in Balochistan and the university administration should take advantage of these opportunities by establishing a Mineralogy Department at the University in order to enable the youth of Balochistan to find jobs in projects related to mineral sector like Reko diq, Sandak and other projects.

He assured to provide equipment for the Mineralogy Department. He also assured to provide support in the establishment of a Business Incubation Center at the University so that the inclination toward self-employment can be promoted among the youth of Balochistan. He said that the youth of Balochistan are second to none in terms of talent, but we should guide them in the right way so that they can get respectable job opportunities.

Earlier, apprising the Caretaker Provincial Minister about the achievements and problems of the university, the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jan Muhammad said that thousands of male and female students have been equipped with digital skills in the university in collaboration with the Virtual University.

He said besides connecting the university with fiber optics, we have also completed the solar system project of 500 kilowatts,

ECP issues preliminary....

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429,929, 428,431 for the Sindh Assembly, 355,270 for the KP Assembly and 292,047 for the Balochistan Assembly.

The election commission will address the objections from October 28 to November 26, whereas, the objections could be filed against the delimitations from September 27 to October 26.

The hearing on the pleas against the delimitations will be conducted till November 25. The ECP will unveil the final delimitations on November 30.

After the publication of the final delimitations, a 54-day election schedule will be announced and general polls will be held in the first week of January 2024.

APP adds: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) posted the initial constituency report and Form 5 list on its website, www.ecp.gov.pk, on Wednesday for public access. According to ECP spokesman, the website also provides access to the preliminary constituency maps. The publication of the preliminary constituencies will continue for 30 days, commencing on September 27 and concluding on October 26, 2023.

Voters within the relevant constituency have the opportunity to submit



LAHORE: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Chief, Siraj-ul-Haq addresses to media persons during press conference, at Mansoorah in Lahore.

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KP, Muhammad Azam Khan.

While addressing the participants of the women symposium, the COAS said that women have played a positive and an important role in the progress of the country throughout the history of Pakistan. He highlighted that women's role in Pakistan's progress and development was quintessential and most important.

COAS remarked that the women of KP have continued to face multi-faceted challenges due to the prolonged fight against terrorism, however, they have proven their resilience, commitment and bravery at the face of all odds.

LUAWMS conducts trials for PM Talent Hunt Youth Sports Drive at Quetta

QUETTA (APP): The Prime Minister Talent Hunt Youth Sports Drive, in collaboration with Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water, and Marine Sciences (LUAWMS), has conducted trials for the badminton league of men and women to choose talented players from Balochistan.

The Prime Minister Talent Hunt Youth Sports League for men and women in badminton unveiled a new generation of rising stars here on Thursday at Tameer-i-Nau Public College Quetta, according to a news release.

Trials were conducted under the supervision of President Balochistan Badminton Association Malik Nasir Shahwani and Principle Tameer-i-Nau Public College Professor Abid Maqsood.

The event is aimed at preparing young, talented players from backward areas of the

country. While addressing the event, Professor Abid Maqsood said that it is very important to organise sports for the reconstruction of a healthy society. He underlined that the PM Talent Hunt Drive would bring out talented players not only in badminton but also in other sports.

Sports should be actively played by students for their physical and mental growth. He said that trials had been set up to bring the participants' latent talents to light and help them grow. He appreciates the efforts of the Higher Education Commission and the Prime Minister's Office for the promotion of sports activity among the youth in the region. Around 200 male and 100 female players from different schools, colleges, and universities in Quetta got an opportunity to showcase their skills in badminton trials.



QUETTA: Members of newly Regularized Employees Joint Action Committee are holding protest demonstration for regularized appointment letters

BISP plays pivotal role in supporting disadvantaged segments: Chairperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib Wednesday said the Programme was playing a pivotal role in extending crucial support to disadvantaged individuals and families, enabling them to access essential resources and opportunities for personal and socio-economic development.

He was speaking during a meeting with a delegation of Ministers from Gilgit Baltistan including Minister for Tourism, Minister of Finance, Minister of Food, Chief Secretary and Addl. Secretary Gilgit Baltistan.

Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmed, was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting,



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong calls on Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif.

IG NH&MP pledges to ensure complete safety, timely assistance

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to improve the safety and efficiency of traffic on motorways and national highways, Inspector General of Motorways Police Sultan Ali Khawaja pledged to ensure timely assistance to road users, reduce accidents, and improve traffic monitoring system during his recent visit Multan.

During his visit, he held meetings with officials from the National Highways Authority (NHA) and Frontier Works Organization (FWO) to discuss measures to improve the traffic monitoring system. He also

met with officers of the Motorway Police to review their performance and direct further improvement, public relations officer said on Wednesday.

In addition, IG Khawaja attended a public meeting where he listened to the concerns of employees and issued instructions on the spot to resolve their problems on priority.

IG Khawaja emphasized the importance of following traffic rules to reduce accidents. He also stressed the need for timely assistance to road users in need.

7th Belt & Road teenager maker camp and teacher W'shop to be held in Nov

ISLAMABAD (APP): Students from Pakistan, like other countries, will participate in the "7th Belt and Road Teenager Maker Camp and Teacher Workshop" being organized by the Children and Youth Science Center (CYSC) of the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) in the cities of Ningxia and Chongqing of China in November.

The event is co-organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology, People's Republic of China (MOST) and supported by ECO Science Founda-

tion, (ECOSF), Pakistan, InterAcademy Partnership Science Education Program (IAP SEP), and Network of African Science Academies (NASAC). According to an official of ECOSF, two teams (one team for one city) are being selected by ECOSF from Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan respectively to attend the camp and the workshop in Chongqing and Urumqi cities.

Each participating team will comprise up to five junior high school science students (aged 13-15) and up to two teachers.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan Frederico Silva taking interest in paintings during exhibition by Raja Chengez Sultan at Tanzara Art Gallery in Federal Capital.

Doctor terms pink eye curable disease

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adenoviral conjunctivitis, commonly known as pink eye, is a viral infection of the eye that often resolves on its own within one or two weeks without medication. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, Consultant Eye Surgeon at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital Dr. Inam Ul Haq Khan said that the public need not panic about pink eye, as it is not a pandemic and occurs periodically throughout the year. He said that in most cases, patients recover fully without any specific treatment as the immune system fights off the infection.

Elaborating on the early symptoms, Dr. Inam said that pink eye involves itching, watery discharge, redness, and pain in the affected eye. He said that sometimes only one eye is infected initially, while the other eye later becomes involved as the virus spreads.

He explained that the viral infection can also cause systemic symptoms like cough, fever, diarrhea, and swollen lymph nodes in the neck or around the ears which reflects the body's overall immune response.

To aid recovery, Dr. Inam recommended building up one's natural immunity through proper nutrition including soup, boiled eggs, and adequate hydration. "Gentle eye rinsing with clean water and artificial tears can provide symptomatic relief, but home remedies should be avoided as they may worsen the condition", he added.

Antibiotic eye medications are often prescribed by the consultants, Dr. Inam said adding that such medicines do not treat the underlying virus directly.



Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib, Chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) met to a delegation of Ministers, Secretary and Addl. Secretary from Gilgit Baltistan. Secretary BISP, Mr. Amer Ali Ahmed is also present in the meeting.

Waste neglected area in Pakistan since no agency compiles data impeding policy endeavours: Goheer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Head Coordination Global Climate Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC) and Member of UNFCCC Consultative Group of Experts, Muhammad Arif Goheer on Wednesday said waste was a neglected area in Pakistan since there was no agency compiling its data, due to which, the centre faced difficulties in GHG inventory compilation due to paucity of data.

A round table on "waste management, data needs and challenges" was organized by Global Climate Change Impact Studies Centre here, a news release said.

The activity was organized under "Third National Communication

Project' with the objectives to assess status of waste data - availability, gaps and constraints, identify data providing institutions/departments and formalize institutional arrangements, and establish a framework for data management at national level.

The experts from various federal and provincial government's departments, private organizations, waste companies, academia and civil society participated in the event.

Muhammad Arif Goheer talked about various approaches used in waste inventory preparation that were mainly Bulk Approach and Life Cycle approach.

He apprised the audi-

ence that the Centre besides preparing the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventories had laid out a comprehensive plan for the capacity building of provinces supporting them in preparation of Provincial and Sectoral inventories and establishing GHG baselines.

Further, GCISC is also working for preparing a coherent institutional setup well aligned to National Inventory Management system housed at GCISC.

He announced the establishment of a dedicated expert group on waste for future guidance from the experts meeting every three months.

Goheer assured the participants that GCISC

would keep providing quality research based inputs for climate change related decision making and keep preparing GHG inventories and supporting Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination in the preparation of National Adaptation plans and Nationally Determined Contributions for onward submission to UNFCCC.

He also talked about the recently established Climate Transparency Platform and the transparency forum which was convened in Islamabad from September, 19 to 21, 2023. He thanked the participants and wished for promising outcomes from the roundtable.

Islamabad admin conducts operation against encroachment, begging

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad administration here on Wednesday conducted an operation against price rise, encroachment, dengue SOPs violations and professional begging on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon.

According to an ICT spokesperson Dr Abdullah Tabasum, Assistant Commissioners conducted inspections at 108 locations regarding price hikes, in which a fine of Rs. 18,000 was imposed, three shops were sealed.

PMD announces exit of monsoon

ISLAMABAD (APP): The official exit of monsoon season in Pakistan with another rain spell accompanied by snowfall in hilly areas from Thursday to Saturday announced by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) is a clear indication of the transition from the summer to winter season.

This rain spell, expected in the parts of Islamabad, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, and Gilgit Baltistan will further decrease the temperatures in the country compelling the citizens to bring out the woollies with the arrival of the winter season.



ISLAMABAD: An eye catching view of the OGDCI Tower illuminated with colorful decoration lights for the celebrations for Eid-e-Milad an-Nabi with great Zeal in Federal Capital.

Security personnel prepared for effective duty in high security zone

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Security personnel stationed within the High Security Zone have undergone comprehensive briefings to enhance their preparedness in handling potential security incidents promptly.

During this initiative, SP (Security) conducted visits to various checkpoints within the high security zone and provided essential briefings to the Islamabad Capital Police personnel responsible for security duties.

The High Security Zone encompasses critical government and private establishments, diplomatic missions, and other vital assets, making it imperative for security personnel to maintain constant vigilance in safeguarding these assets.

Security personnel have been advised to refrain from using mobile phones

while on duty and to ensure they are equipped with bulletproof jackets and helmets at all times. Officials are expected to remain highly alert during their shifts, keeping a keen eye on suspicious vehicles and individuals.

SP (Security) emphasized the importance of upholding the highest standards of diligence and professionalism among personnel on duty. Additionally, they encouraged security personnel to build positive relationships with citizens within the area.

Furthermore, citizens are urged to play an active role in ensuring security by promptly reporting any suspicious activity or individuals to the dedicated helpline, "Pucar-15." This collaborative effort aims to maintain a safe and secure environment within the High-Security Zone.

IHC merges Bibi's audio case with former CJ son's case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday merged the audio leaked case of the PTI Chief's wife Bushra Bibi with the son of the former chief justice, Najam-ul-Saqib case.

Justice Babar Sattar heard the petition of Bushra Bibi against the summon notice in the audio-leaked case.

On behalf of the federal government, Additional Attorney General Manawar Iqbal Dogal appeared and apprised the court that the police had asked FIA to record a voice sample of Bushra Bibi.

502 cases registered against traffic rule violators in Islamabad

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police have taken proactive measures to address serious traffic violations by registering cases against offenders and also cancelled multiple driving licenses. A police spokesman said that a total of 502 First Information Reports (FIRs) have been filed across various police stations under the jurisdiction of the Islamabad Capital Police against individuals involved in diverse traffic violations.

Russia-Ukraine Conflict taking huge toll on food, energy: Speakers

ISLAMABAD (APP): A news release said. The Speakers said that the Russian invasion has weakened the supply chain drastically, and the same cannot be recovered until the war comes to an end. Ships with perishable products laden on them are stranded at more than 12 ports of Ukraine, and so is the case with impediments in supply of oil and gas to the region and beyond. They estimated that the total loss in the last 16 months is over \$137 billion, and owing to Russian highhandedness, the Black Sea Grain Deal is in limbo.

They noted that 25 million tons of grain was shipped under the deal, before it got ruptured, and likewise Russian cruise missiles attacks on ports and energy projects have taken a definite toll, with natural gas prices rising to over 130%

in Europe.

The session was presided over by Amb. Dr. Raza Muhammad, President, IPRI. Other speakers were Petro Burkovskiy, Executive Director, Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF); Maj. Gen. @ Zahid Mubashir Sheikh, former ambassador of Pakistan to Ukraine; Ambassador Volodymyr Lakomov, former ambassador of Ukraine to Pakistan; Maj. Gen. @ Wajahat Mufti, former ambassador of Pakistan to Ukraine; Dr. Maria Bogonos, Head of the Center for Food and Land Use Research (KSE Agrocenter) Kyiv School of Economics; Dr Farah Naz, Assistant Professor, Department of Government and Public Policy, NUST; Dr. Olena Pavlenko, President and co-founder of the

DiXi Group, Kyiv, and Dr. Ashfaq Hasan Khan, Principal of School of Social Sciences & Humanities.

The speakers noted that both the countries have a lot of potential to bilaterally interact in new spheres of developmental cooperation, and added that they have played a stabilizing role in the region.

"The need is to keep in mind national interests and espouse a policy that is well-coordinated in an interdependent world," Petro Burkovskiy observed. He said that one of the key observations of aggression is the undeniable fact that the European Union and NATO failed to see the real Russian aggressive designs.

He also noted that Pakistan and Ukraine must learn from this episode, and create new domestic energy and food markets.



Senator Manzoor Ahmed, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development presiding over a meeting of the Committee at Parliament House Islamabad

IT Ministry plans to digitize Hajj operations

ISLAMABAD (INP): The next year's Hajj operation will be fully digitized in collaboration with the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications to make Hajj pilgrims aware of all issues in time and resolve any kind of complaints immediately.

The decision was taken on Wednesday at a meeting of the special committee constituted under Prime Minister directive earlier this month, said a news release.

The meeting was chaired by caretaker Minister for IT & Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif, while co-chairman Religious Affairs Minister Aneeq Ahmed also attended the meeting.

The meeting was briefed by concerned officials about the system used so far in the Hajj operation.

Dr. Umar Saif said

that as per the directives of the Prime Minister, a Smart Phone Application and Web-portal would be developed while whole Hajj operation would be digitized to have independent reviews from the Hujjaj, on the analogy of leading platforms dealing with housing and hospitality.

Through this system, pilgrims will be able to give their feedback digitally regarding Hajj operations and facilities.

Dr. Umar Saif directed National Information Technology Board (NITB) to immediately upgrade the existing system of Hajj operation till the completion of the digitization process and remove its shortcomings and directed the Chief Executive Officer of NITB to deploy an expert team in the Ministry of Religious Affairs to monitor the system.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov presenting book Chief Guest Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed during the book presentation ceremony titled "The History of Patriotic War- Personality Factor" at the Azerbaijan Embassy.

RTI laws crucial to promote transparency in govt: Info Commissioners

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Information Commissioner of the Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) Ijaz Hassan Awan and both Information Commissioners Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui and Huzafa Rahman have underscored the pivotal significance of Right to Information (RTI) laws in fostering transparency within government institutions.

In a media statement issued in relation to Universal Access to Information Day being observed on September 28, the commissioners emphasized that Article 19-A of the Constitution granted the fundamental right of access to information to all the citizens which was however subject to certain limitations.

They stated that this constitutional provision was the cornerstone of a democratic society, enabling citizens to stay informed and hold government bodies accountable for their actions.

They elaborated on the vital role of RTI laws in empowering citizens to actively participate in the democratic process.

When citizens have access to information, they can make informed decisions, engage in constructive dialogue, and ultimately contribute to better governance and the right to vote, they added.

The commissioners emphasized that RTI laws were a tool to ensure that government institutions remained transparent, responsive, and accountable to the people they served.

They stressed that these laws provided a mechanism for citizens to obtain information and documents from public bodies, thereby reducing the opacity that could often surround government operations.

They reassured that the Pakistan Information Commission was committed to upholding the principles of transparency through access to information enshrined in the country's Constitution.

The officials affirmed their dedication to assisting citizens in their pursuit of information and ensuring that public bodies adhere to the requirements of the RTI laws.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Rohiat Hilal Committee Pakistan, Khatib and Imam Badshahi Masjid Lahore Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad in meeting with Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan at his Office.

Pakistan and Qatar strengthen cultural ties at ICESCO conference

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan and Qatar pledged to further enhance bilateral cultural ties during a meeting between Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah and Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrehman bin Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani on the sidelines of the 12th Conference of the Culture Ministers of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) of OIC held in Doha, Qatar. The two ministers discussed ways to promote cultural cooperation between their countries, including through joint exhibitions, cultural exchanges, and training programs. They also agreed to work together to protect and promote Islamic cultural heritage.

Minister Shah thanked Minister Al Thani for Qatar's hospitality and expressed his hope that the two countries would continue to strengthen their

cultural ties in the years to come.

The ICESCO conference is a major gathering of culture ministers from around the Islamic world. It provides a platform for ministers to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing Islamic culture and to develop strategies for promoting cultural cooperation and dialogue.

Jamal Shah underscored that Pakistan attached importance to its longstanding and brotherly ties with Qatar that were based on common interests and shared values. They emphasized the importance of advancing negotiations on the proposed Pakistan and Qatar cultural exchanges. The federal minister also interacted with media along with Qatari counterparts. In his speech during two days conference, Jamal Shah focused on helping Palestine and Kashmir. It was stressed that in order to help their cause and struggle.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Thursday September 28, 2023

More desecration

The far right, particularly in Europe, has been carrying out a sustained campaign of desecrating Islam's holiest symbols.

Over the past few months, there have been numerous instances where the Holy Quran has either been burnt or desecrated in European states.

While earlier instances occurred mostly in Sweden and Denmark, the latest outrage took place in the Netherlands on Sept 23, when the leader of the Dutch wing of Pegida, a notorious pan-European hate group, desecrated the Holy Book outside a number of Muslim embassies.

These included the missions of Pakistan, Turkiye and Indonesia. Before the Quran burnings, there was a wave of offensive caricatures, and if one is to travel back in time, there were Orientalist tropes demeaning Islam and its sacred figures in the name of 'scholarship'.

Clearly, these attacks on the Islamic faith are not motivated by an attachment to free speech, but by raw hatred. It should be noted that many of the hatemongers involved in these heinous acts belong to the same violent white nationalist ideological spectrum that spawned the killers who massacred Muslims in Christchurch, Oslo and Montreal.

Islamophobia is, therefore, not about intellectual notions of free speech, but about condoning and advocating real-world violence against Muslims. And it is not just Western extremists who use Islamophobia to target Muslims; the Sangh Parivar in India has been indulging in anti-Muslim violence for decades, now apparently with the state's blessings.

But one positive development in this regard was witnessed at the UN General Assembly last week, where leaders from the Muslim world — showing rare unity — spoke with one voice to condemn Islamophobia.

Turkish President Recep Erdogan said "a plague" of racism was afflicting the West, while Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi commented that the acts of desecration were "not worthy of human dignity". Pakistan has also consistently spoken up against Islamophobia at global forums.

Beyond condemnation, practical steps are needed, particularly in the states where repeated acts of desecration have occurred, to put an end to these provocations.

Both Denmark and Sweden are reportedly considering banning the desecration of religious texts on security grounds. These steps should help curb this menace and need to be ratified at the earliest.

Just as Europe has taken a consistent approach against anti-Semitism — after millions of Jews were massacred on European soil over six decades ago — so too must Western states take a firm stand against Islamophobia. Just as questioning the Holocaust is a crime in many Western states, similarly, acts of hatred targeting Islam or any other religion must be outlawed.

A new compact is needed between civilisations based on mutual respect and tolerance. This cannot be achieved if the most sacred symbols of one of the world's largest faiths are constantly attacked and desecrated.



Zahid Hussain

He is an interim prime minister with a difference. Anwaarul Haq Kakar's actions have appeared to go beyond his limited role as a non-partisan caretaker prime minister whose job is to lead the country to fair elections.

But, since taking over, the caretaker prime minister has appeared on most TV channels holding forth on subjects ranging from politics to the economy and foreign policy; one gets the distinct impression that he is attempting to present himself as a man who knows it all.

Last week, he flew to New York to attend the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session. On the way, he reportedly stopped in Paris to show the Eiffel Tower to his family. There

was certainly nothing important that needed his participation at the global forum. In fact, not many important world leaders attended the annual conclave of the multilateral forum this year. Reading from a prepared text to a half-empty hall, his address hardly mattered.

There were also very few meetings on the sidelines of the UNGA, none of them of any significance, and there was no separate meeting with the official US delegation. Few are likely to take an interim leader meant to govern for just a few months seriously. But it appeared that the most discomfiting moment was to come at the Council on Foreign Relations, one of America's most prestigious independent think-tanks.

His comments there exposed a limited understanding of international affairs. While the prime minister's remarks on China's strong ties with Pakistan — to illustrate which he referred to the US support enjoyed by Israel — evoked a strong public reaction on social media, his comments on Pak-Afghan relations were more unbelievable.

Responding to a question on whether there was any silver lining in Pakistan's relationship with the Afghan Taliban regime, he referred to post-war US-Japan relations. "And after Pearl Harbour, the kind of relation US and Japan enjoys does give me reason for all the silver linings and being hopeful."

There were more pearls of wisdom as he elaborated: "And when I think about the German occupancy of Eastern Europe, and then its western neighbourhood also, and when I see EU as a bloc, it multiplies and amplifies my silver lining."

All that leaves one wondering whether he even understood the discourse. Comparing the border tension with Afghanistan with the World War II situation in Europe shocked the audience.

Indeed, one should not expect an interim prime minister to be well-versed on the subject, so it is not for a holder of that office to speak on complex foreign policy matters which don't come under his domain.

It was not only such utterances on foreign affairs but also his controversial

comments on domestic politics in interviews to the American media that have drawn criticism. For instance, the remark that 'fair elections' were possible even without PTI chairman Imran Khan and other jailed party workers raises justifiable questions about the impartiality of the caretakers. The comments came days after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced that elections would be held in the last week of January next year. The statement went beyond the role of an interim administration, and, by many, was also seen as interference in the electoral process. For instance, in a statement, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan said that such claims "are anti-democratic and ill-judged". And that it was "not for him or his government to decide unilaterally what constitutes a 'fair' election".

What is happening under the interim administration has reinforced doubts about the holding of fair elections. The crack-down on the PTI has intensified under the current set-up, backed by the security establishment. To many, it is clear that the leaders of the caretaker administration

are just a civilian face for the actual powers. That makes the prime minister's actions all the more controversial. If there is a purpose behind such projection in the national and international media, it seems to have failed.

Under the 1973 Constitution and Election Act, 2017, the main objective of the interim government is to guarantee polls that are characterised by openness, equity and clarity. The interim government has the duty of overseeing an electoral procedure that is just and unbiased. That encompasses the enforcement of steps to hinder any fraudulent activity related to voting and verifying the precision of the voter registries.

In 2023, the law was slightly adjusted to give the interim administration the authority to work with donors and other countries on economic and financial issues. It allowed the caretakers to use their authority for ongoing plans, but not for making new deals. Yet when a set-up such as the current one appears to have breached this specified constitutional role by making political statements, one is left with a strong impres-

sion of bias against certain political forces in the country.

It is the responsibility of the Election Commission of Pakistan to take notice of such remarks by an interim government which raise doubts about the fairness of the electoral process.

Meanwhile, one can hardly come across instances in the past when an interim prime minister has taken such high-profile foreign trips. From New York, he went to London on an unofficial trip. Was there any need to take these extravagant foreign tours that bring no benefit to the country?

It is not only the systematic dismantling of the PTI but also the growing curbs on the media and the suppression of freedom of expression that have negated claims of producing a level playing field. It is an extremely worrying situation, especially with the approach of elections.

It is for the ECP and the judiciary to ensure the holding of fair elections and also to safeguard the limits of the constitutional framework, so that no one oversteps their mandate. -- Courtesy Dawn

Beyond their mandate

Lawyering and its discontented



Salaar Khan

In Pakistani litigation, the concept of the penniless apprentice practitioner is a constant. To such a person, so too is that of the prosperous penny-pinching partner at a top law firm. This person's intuitive understanding of why more of those pennies don't end up in their powerless pockets is just that: they are powerless.

Law schools produce far more students than employers are willing to absorb. And the regulator does little to ensure that the numbers aren't bloated by those who don't even have the necessary skills expected of them. So, many work extended periods for no money at all. Many who do still don't make minimum wage. The small silver-spooned sliver — right at the top — is fortunate to start at about fifty thousand rupees

a month, with fewer still able and free to supplement this with some kind of side-income.

But few employers are candid enough to admit that they don't pay because nothing compels them to. Instead, there are reasons such as the Argument From Transgenerational Trauma: we endured the same, so suck it up. Hunger, in all senses of the word, is a lost virtue. Another argument is that you are being paid; you just don't know it. You are being paid in the one currency that is impervious to even depreciation: Learning (™). And finally, there is the easiest of them all: we have no money to pay you.

Some practices may well not be able to afford all the people they still insist on 'hiring'. But the fancier firms can't say this with a straight face. No matter their justifications, the fresh-faced first-year hears: "It's my money and I don't need to give it to you".

A few days ago, Feisal Naqvi Sahab wrote an op-ed in these pages titled, 'Lawyering and its Discontents'. The piece is interesting because it seeks to provide an 'alternative perspective' — at least to the extent of the fancier firms. (And

Consequently, what they are paid is also 'fair' (implicit).

There are other ideas in the piece, but we have already heard those. What seems to be new is also what is doing much of the heavy lifting: that until year two, most associates are a net loss. So, let's consider this.

But first, a word on fairness. Fair compensation, in this analysis, is not measured by the amount of work that the associate puts in: it is measured only by the amount of time it saves the partner. Enough has, otherwise, been written to critique such estimations of value. Let's instead consider this idea from within its own sterilised framework: the utilitarian calculus.

You are a partner in a law firm. As a partner, you are the face of the firm, and it is your face that brings in the clients. One such client brings you a case. It's a simple enough matter, but a judge is more likely to grant relief if yours is the face he sees. So, you will be arguing the case.

You charge them a million rupees, lump-sum. This amount is supposed to cover everything: the drafting, the printing, the arguing in court, and so on. This is

so whether you have to spend ten hours on the case or a hundred. On your own, you might spend about twenty hours on this case. So, in agreeing to take the case, you are pricing your time at fifty thousand rupees an hour (ignore the overheads for now).

For the sake of simplicity, let's say your only employee is a first-year associate. Let's say they've been around for about six months (closer to day zero than the two-year checkpoint). You give the associate several tasks that would have taken you about three hours. You spend about fifteen minutes explaining the task.

Of course, the conclusion only follows if the assumptions are realistic. The partner may argue that it takes longer to explain and review. Or that they also put in time to 'train' you otherwise. Indeed, an associate may just as well argue that even these assumptions are too generous. They will work on more than four briefs a month, even as their salary is fixed. Also, many tasks they are given don't require much intellect; they are simply a function of time. They may also object that the senior associate does

most of the 'training' and review (with the senior associate's time being less valuable than the partner's). They may wonder if all of this is not just the Argument for Payment in Learning, with extra steps. Why else would no discussion of a figure be necessary, unless any compensation is fair compensation?

The young associate's indignation stems from an experiential agreement with this math. For some practices, it may well be wrong. To the extent that the partner's personal abilities affect the numbers, someone like Feisal Sahab is a prime candidate for a deviation from the norm. But this is about how the argument applies across the board. And for it to apply as a rule, the numbers must be off by a factor of over eight. If you, as an employer, think you can demonstrate such an error, and wish to convince your young associates, then run the numbers for them. Make this part of their Learning. You don't have to, of course. But this, I submit, is what it will take. And if all of this seems like too much work, fear not. There's probably a hungry first-year out there who will do it for you for free. -- Courtesy TheNews

Life is elsewhere



Masood Lohar

Historian Will Durant once stated, "A great civilisation is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself with-in." The patterns and characteristics leading to the downfall of great civilisations, empires, and states are remarkably consistent. This self-destruction is evident in the narratives of civilisations like Egypt, Mesopotamia and our own Indus Valley. Even the modern-day story of the mighty Soviet Union doesn't deviate much.

With sociocultural decay, corruption, escalating poverty, ethnic and sectarian strife, and a constant economic crisis, Pakistan's case is unique. However, a distinctive factor exacerbating these challenges is the 'life is elsewhere' mentality fostered by dual citizenship.

Pakistan's dual citizenship policy, allowing its citizens to hold passports from 21 countries, including developed nations, has created a disconcerting trend. The elite — rulers, business tycoons, retired army chiefs and bureaucrats, etc — often aspire to maintain their connections with Pakistan while residing elsewhere. This dual identity erodes patriotism, fostering an attitude that nurtures ad hoc decision-making and mediocrity.

Pakistan has, in essence, become the proverbial golden-egg-laying duck for its elite. Those in positions of power amass wealth with the intention of relocating abroad, exploiting the nation's resources for personal gain all the time. The prevailing

attitude is one of self-interest, where everyone seems intent on maximising their personal wealth, often at the expense of national welfare. The moment these elites exit power or retire, their focus swiftly shifts elsewhere, leaving behind a void in the leadership.

India has taken a different approach. India does not allow dual citizenship. Instead, it offers the status of Overseas Citizenship of India to its citizens who acquire foreign citizenship. The OCI card comes with several benefits, including a lifelong free travel visa to India, and the freedom to live, work, conduct business, and own assets/properties there. However, OCI cardholders do not have an Indian passport, the right to vote or hold public positions, and are subject to restrictions on purchasing agricultural land.

The question of dual citizenship's impact on a developing country like ours is complex. On the one hand, it can lead to 'brain drain', as skilled individuals may permanently reside in their second country, resulting in a loss of talent. Dual citizens may also have divided loyalties, potentially causing a conflict of interest in politics and business. Their involvement in domestic politics can contribute to political instability, and overreliance on remittances from dual citizens can create economic vulnerabilities. Additionally, governments may worry about the loyalty and security of dual citizens, especially during times of political unrest or conflict.

It is imperative to reflect on the role of dual citizenship in exacerbating Pakistan's myriad challenges. The 'life is elsewhere' mentality among the elite must be addressed. Re-evaluating the dual citizenship policy could potentially compel the

nation's well-educated and influential figures to invest in Pakistan's prosperity, rather than viewing the country as a stepping stone to personal enrichment abroad.

Many dual-national Pakistanis are diverting remittances to real estate, rather than productive areas such as industry and infrastructure. This shift hinders industrial and service sector investment, redirecting working capital and concessional finance into real estate. Speculative real estate investments drive up housing prices, worsening wealth inequality and failing to address the need for affordable housing.

Banning dual citizenship could prompt positive change by necessitating elite commitment to national prosperity. Despite corruption, it could redirect the focus towards domestic investment, benefiting industry and development. While not the sole cause of Pakistan's issues, dual citizenship fosters self-interest. Re-evaluating this policy could rejuvenate national development commitment, pushing leaders, including the military, politicians and businessmen, to prioritise their homeland's well-being. Coupled with proactive policies, it could steer Pakistan towards recovery and prosperity.

The quick-profit-making spree of the elite must know the old way of Eskimos killing wolves. The Eskimo coats a knife blade with animal blood, allowing it to freeze in layers. When a wolf finds the blood-scented knife and licks it in frenzy, it eventually exposes the sharp blade. The wolf's intense craving for blood blinds it to the pain of the blade, leading to its demise. The 'wolf' here is definitely licking its own blood now. Time to wake and howl. - - Courtesy Dawn

Age-old dilemmas



Mahir Ali

It seems likely at this juncture that the next presidential contest in the United States will once more pit Joe Biden against Donald Trump. Biden will be almost 82 years old at that stage, while Trump will be 78. Opinion polls suggest almost 70 per cent of Democrat-aligned voters consider Biden too old to be a viable contestant. Yet the party hierarchy appears not to have considered any viable alternatives.

At 80, Biden is already the oldest president the US has ever had. Ronald Reagan was 'only' 77 when he passed the baton to George H.W. Bush, and it emerged only after his presidency that there was some evidence of dementia while Reagan held what is seen as the most powerful post in the world.

The founding fathers of the US, many of whom were not yet 40 when they signed the Declaration of Independence, did not consider age or term limits. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson set the precedent for no more than two-term presidencies, but it wasn't until after the thrice re-elected Franklin Roosevelt died early into his fourth term that the constitution was amended to restrict presidencies to eight years.

No age barrier was decreed, however, let alone limits on senators or congressmen. That's why Americans still have to contend with the likes of Mitch McConnell, the 81-year-old Senate minority leader who has exhibited more than one

'senior moment', and the 90-year-old Democrat senator Dianne Feinstein, who frequently seems to be unaware of her surroundings, let alone her tasks.

Almost 20 other senators and members of the House of Representatives are in their 80s. This level of decrepitude is unprecedented in US history. It is partly a consequence, obviously, of the steady increase in life expectancy since the previous century, reflected in the rising retirement age across many parts of the world.

No one can seriously claim that age takes its toll uniformly. Nor would it be fair to say that younger US voters take their cues entirely from the decades-long gap between themselves and their electoral choices. After all, youth support was crucial to the presidential runs of independent senator Bernie Sanders — now 82 — in both 2016 and 2020. The outcome of the primaries in both those years may well have been very different had the Democratic establishment not intervened decisively.

Young Americans rallied to Sanders' cause precisely because he addressed some of their biggest concerns and offered viable alternatives, instead of offering to stick to the status quo (Hillary Clinton), or to return to it (Biden). A Sanders presidency might have been a disaster in either of those instances in the face of bipartisan congressional resistance to his progressive agenda, but at least it would have helped to clarify the foibles and fallacies of America's democratic pretensions.

In all too many ways, the prospect of a re-contest in November 2024 between the incumbent and his predecessor — the first time in more than 100 years when two presidents would be in the fray — demonstrates the deficiencies of American democracy. A majority of the electorate is wary of both

potential contenders, but that doesn't seem to matter.

It is hardly surprising that substantial numbers of young Americans can't be bothered to vote, or that older generations have fewer concerns about backing older candidates — even though the average age is now being taken to extremes. Even Nancy Pelosi, the 83-year-old former speaker of the House of Representatives, intends to run again — for what could be her 19th term. One can only wonder whether such tenacity is intended to somehow serve the public interest, or to find a slot in the Guinness World Records.

The question of age and cognitive decline is a tricky one. It's taken for granted that intellectual capacity declines with the decades, but its effects are disparate. There are people in their 90s whose minds remain sharp, and some whose physical agility can be envied by far younger folks. Others can't disguise their decrepitude. The retirement age has steadily been rising in many parts of the world, sometimes in the face of stiff resistance (ask Emmanuel Macron), but the general rule of a cut-off age is widely accepted. Not so, however, for US politicians. Or judges. A respected court of appeals judge recently had to be suspended for refusing to cooperate in an investigation into her competence at the age of 96. It's hard to imagine why anyone would be unwilling to comfortably take a backseat once they hit their mid-60s or 70s. And while this isn't US democracy's biggest shortcoming (or indulgence), it occasionally has its entertainment value — such as when Trump (who shouldn't have been a presidential candidate at any age) tried to diss Biden by claiming he threatened to take America into World War II. Perhaps he was confusing the incumbent with Roosevelt. - - Courtesy Dawn

Naqvi spotlights health concerns and spurs immediate upgrades

Visit to Govt girls' higher secondary school Ravi Road

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi embarked on an extensive visit to the Government Girls Higher Secondary School on Ravi Road today. During his inspection, Chief Minister Naqvi toured the classrooms and interacted with both boys and girls. His visit was marked by concern upon witnessing children affected by conjunctivitis in the classrooms.

announced a statewide holiday for schools in Punjab tomorrow, prioritizing the safety of the students. He underscored that schools would remain closed on the day following Eid Milad-ul-Nabi, as well as on Saturday and Sunday, in observance of public holidays. Chief Minister Naqvi expressed hope that a four-day respite for the children would lead to a reduction in the spread of conjunctivitis, with the situation anticipated to improve come Monday.

Chief Minister Naqvi noted with concern that in every class, 6 to 7 students were affected by conjunctivitis, and even some teachers had been afflicted. The school's computer lab housed outdated, non-functional computer systems dating back to 2009, and the classrooms lacked adequate lighting and fans.

Promptly addressing the issue, Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi immediately summoned the Secretary Schools Education and EDO

Schools. On the instructions of Chief Minister, Provincial Minister School Education Mansoor Qadir also reached the school. Chief Minister also ordered to buy new computers and increase the number of lights and fans in the classrooms. He further emphasized the need for a fresh coat of paint and the assurance of basic amenities in the classrooms. The Chief Minister paid visits to the principal's office and the staff room.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman inaugurated a guided tour on the occasion of World Tourism Day at Governor House Lahore. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi and members of the Caretaker Cabinet are also present on this occasion.



MOHENJO DARO: A delegation of Czech Republic tourists are visiting and expressed keen interest in the historical ruins of the World Heritage Monuments of Mohenjo Daro.

CM reviews progress of flood rehabilitation projects

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice @ Maqbool Baqar while reviewing the progress of Sindh Flood Rehabilitation Projects has directed the P&D dept to expedite the ongoing works so that not only the restoration of damaged infrastructure could be restored but it would generate economic activities at a local level.

The meeting was attended by Chairman P&D Shakeel Mangnejo, PSCM Hassan Naqvi, Secretary Finance Kazim Jatoi, and Secretary Planning Asghar Memon. Chairman P&D Shakil Mangnejo through a presentation told the CM that the floods-2022 had submerged 70 percent of the province with water, therefore 24 districts out of 30 were declared calamity-hit areas. The floods killed 1090, injured 8,422, washed away standing crops over 3,777,272 acres, displaced 12.36 million people, damaged 2.1 million houses, perished 436,435 livestock, and damaged 8,463 km of roads.

An amount of \$1.5 billion was required for the rehabilitation of affected people, crops, and infrastructure, for which \$773 million was arranged, including \$500 million from the World Bank, and the provincial government shared \$227 million.

The World Bank has been approached for \$2.5 million so that requirement could be met. At this, the CM directed the P&D department to prepare a comprehensive case of the flood-affected people and present it to the World Bank so that it could be approved at the earliest.

The CM was told that the progress of the projects launched for flood-affected people includes the launching of multi-hazard resilient housing structures, community engagement and empowerment, environment sustainability, and capacity building and knowledge transfer. The projects also include rehabilitating damaged irrigation infrastructure, rehabilitation of damaged roads and water supply infrastructure.

LG Minister visits WSSP Head Office

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Engineer Amir Nadeem Durrani, the Caretaker Minister for Local Government and Public Health Engineering, paid a visit to the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) Head Office here on Wednesday.

Secretary Local Government, Muhammad Daud Khan, and other officials accompanied him. During the visit, Dr. Hasan Nasir, CEO WSSP, provided a detailed briefing to the delegation on WSSP's operational, financial, and administrative matters, as well as its achievements and current challenges.

In attendance were GM Planning and HR Syed Zameer-ul-Hasan, Chief Financial Officer Hyder Ali, GM Operations Syed Tarab Shah, and GM Projects Dr. Mahboob Alam.

The Caretaker Minister was informed that technology has been harnessed to enhance the

delivery of civic services and improve their quality. Multiple measures have been taken to reduce expenses, with approximately 50 tube wells being transferred to an automated system.

Further plans are underway to install systems in more tube wells. To address sanitation issues, a sanitary landfill cell has been constructed at the dumping site, which is based on scientific principles.

A public awareness campaign is being conducted, and a community outreach wing have been established to foster relationships between traders, educators, students, elected representatives, and the community.

In various areas, a house-to-house waste collection initiative has been launched. Efforts are being made to provide clean drinking water to consumers, control leakages, and improve billing processes.

Four dead, 1147 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least four people were killed while 1147 injured in 1106 road accidents in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours.

Of them, 576 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 571 victims with minor injuries were treated on the spot by Rescue Medical Teams.

Analysis show that 536 drivers, 44 underage drivers, 164 pedestrians, and 451 passengers were among the victims of road crashes.

Statistics show that 272 road accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 261 people placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by 80 in Faisalabad with 87 victims and at third Multan with 76 road accidents and 78 victims.

According to the data, 957 motorbikes, 86 auto-rickshaws, 83 motorcars, 25 vans, 15 passenger buses, 23 trucks and 120 other types of auto vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road accidents.

3 non custom paid vehicles with articles worth Rs 30m seized

DG KHAN (APP): In a successful operation, Border Military Police (BMP) seized three non-custom paid vehicles along with different articles worth Rs 30 millions during a raid conducted at Tuman Khosa area in Dera Ghazi Khan.

Political Assistant Koh-e-Suleman Mushtaq Ahmed supervised the raid. Non custom paid vehicles were transporting parts of different machineries, cigarettes, dried milk and some other items.

Political Assistant Mushtaq Ahmed affirmed the government's commitment to eradicating smuggling and criminal enterprises from the area. He emphasized that these operations are not isolated incidents but part of a sustained effort to ensure the safety and prosperity of the region's residents. Mushtaq Ahmed vowed that the crackdown.

CM KP Azam says: KP govt to promote tourism as industry

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan has said that the provincial government is taking steps to promote tourism as an industry.

In a message issued in connection with World Tourism Day being observed across the world including Pakistan on September 27 each year, he said that the provincial government is working under an integrated strategy to provide all facilities to domestic and foreign tourists.

The purpose of celebrating this day is to raise awareness about the importance of tourism and its promotion.

He said that millions of domestic and foreign tourists come to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and enjoy its natural beauty and hospitality. He said that so far, more than 11 million domestic and foreign tourists have visited Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the current calendar year.

The caretaker chief minister added that the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the province need to be effectively utilized for tourism. He said that Pakistan and especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has immense opportunities for tourism. Muhammad Azam Khan said that by promoting tourism.



KARACHI: People are filling their water cans from public tap as they facing shortage of drinking water in their area, at Lyari area in Karachi.

US DCM visits Peshawar, reaffirms support to fight militancy

PESHAWAR (APP): U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Schofer visited Peshawar the Inspector General of Frontier Corps at the historic Fort Balahisar and announced a new \$250,000 program to enhance the Frontier Corps' nighttime operational capabilities.

During the visit, he also reaffirmed U.S. commitment to border security and continued support for Pakistan in the fight against militancy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said a press release issued here by the US Consulate on Wednesday.

DCM Schofer also met with Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat and delivered \$350,000 worth of safety and security equipment to enhance the safety and effectiveness of police forces conducting perilous counter-terrorism operations.

In a roundtable discussion with youth, women, minorities, and persons with disabilities, DCM Schofer learned how USAID's \$40.7 million Merged Areas Governance Program for KP improves lives and livelihoods. In direct response to community needs, DCM Schofer provided sewing machines and solar fans.

To bolster trade and economic ties between the United States and Pakistan, DCM Schofer also engaged with local business leaders, including entrepreneurs and representatives of the KP Economic Zones Development and Management Company and the KP Information Technology Board.

In addition, he made a stop at the National Incubation Centre where he met startup entrepreneurs to discuss their projects and listen to their ideas.

For the first time inner part of Governor House opened for general public: Baligh

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman inaugurated a guided tour on the occasion of World Tourism Day at Governor House Lahore today. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi and members of the Caretaker Cabinet were also present on this occasion.

Talking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the Governor House is a historical building and a national heritage.

He said that for the first time, the inner part of the Governor House is going to be opened for the general public. He said that

people would be able to visit the Governor House by taking guided tours. Governor Punjab said many historical things are present in Governor House, adding that the Governor House has paintings of the famous artist Ustad Allah Baksh, as well as those of Abdul Rahman Chughtai, which have been given the form of an art gallery. He further said that Quid's wing and rooms where foreign personalities like Queen Victoria had stayed are present in the Governor House. Governor Punjab further said that he would especially appreciate Director General World City Kamran Lashari, Secretary Tourism Punjab,

concerned officers of these departments and officers of Governor Secretariat as they have done a great job to materialise the concept of guided tours. He said that students of schools, colleges, general public, local and foreign tourists, can benefit from guided tours. In response to a question, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman while explaining the guided tour procedure said that the Walled City Authority has created an app through which pre-booking for the guided tours will be done. He said that the people will be able to access not only the external but also the internal part of the Governor House in a systematic way.

Three dacoits killed in shootout

FAISALABAD (APP): Three armed bandits were killed in a shootout with Thikriwala police near Sadhar bypass, Jhang Road on Wednesday.

Police took all the three bodies into custody and shifted to the mortuary at Allied Hospital.

According to police here, five armed dacoits were looting a passerby at a picket near Sadhar bypass, Jhang road when someone informed the police. A heavy contingent of police forces reached the site and encircled the outlaws. The dacoits opened fire on the police team and during exchange of gunshots, three dacoits were killed on the spot while the other two managed to escape.

Minister announces arrests in Avastin injection scandal

LAHORE (APP): In a significant development, Dr. Jamal Nasir, the Punjab's Minister of Primary and Secondary Health, revealed that two individuals involved in filling and selling Avastin injections in small syringes have been apprehended. This revelation comes as part of an ongoing investigation into the potentially harmful injections.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, Dr. Nasir disclosed that the initial phase of the inquiry concerning the impact of these injections on patients' vision is nearing completion. The Primary Health Department has commenced the collection of patients' records on a

dedicated dashboard. The exact number of affected patients will be determined and announced once the dashboard information is processed. As of now, 68 patients are on record, and this figure may rise by an additional 10 to 15 cases.

Regarding the impact of the injections on patients' vision, Dr. Nasir explained that the true condition of patients' eyes will only become clear once the infection is under control. He provided an update on the situation at Mayo Hospital, where 20 patients are being treated. Out of these, 18 have already undergone eye cleaning procedures, and infection treatment is ongoing.



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

Mehfil-e-Samaa held at Alhamra

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Arts Council, in connection with Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH), arranged a Mehfil-e-Samaa, to express deep love and admiration for the Messenger of God (PBUH).

Prominent Qawwal Tahir Parvez, along with his colleagues, bestowed the audience with the divine melodies of qawwali. Their performance not only rekindled the faith of those in attendance but also received wholehearted applause from the captivated audience. The air was filled with the fragrance of greetings and salutations, a touching gesture by Alhamra, which was met with heartfelt appreciation.

The young talents of the Alhamra Academy of Performing Arts, enthusiastically participated in a Naat gathering. On the occasion, the Executive Director of Alhamra Tariq Mehmood Chaudhry emphasized the profound love that today's youth have for their beloved Prophet.

IGP visits Police Smart Center in China

LAHORE (APP): Chinese police. Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar arranged a visit during his visit to China, in continuation of which the IG Punjab visited the smart center of the Chinese police.

A diligent squad of Chinese police welcomed the Punjab Police delegation and presented salutations. Led by IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, Punjab Police delegation reviewed the emergency response mechanism of Chinese police special forces and also inspected the Chinese command and control center equipped with modern technology. Punjab Police delegation was briefed about modern monitoring and communication equipment, drone technology, raid response facilities.

Officers of the Punjab police delegation carefully reviewed the latest weapons, IT-based logistics and analytical technology used by the

The Chinese police have decided to provide training and technical facilities including modern weapons to the Punjab police.

On this occasion, the provision of weapons used by the Chinese special police forces to the Special Forces of Punjab Police including Elite Force and Special Protection Unit of the Punjab Police was also discussed.

The IG Punjab further said that the operational and crime control strategy, monitoring and surveillance system of Punjab Police are being further improved with the cooperation of Chinese police. At the end of the meeting, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar was also presented with a souvenir by the Chinese police.



GILGIT: Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Nazir Ahmad Advocate chairing a meeting regarding NATCO issues at Assembly Secretariat.

Badge pinning ceremony held at NAB Lahore

LAHORE (APP): A badge pinning ceremony was held at National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Lahore to pin-up the recently promoted Police Officers and Officials, deputed at NAB Lahore region.

The DG NAB congratulated and extended his best wishes for the officers on the occasion of their promotion. He also advised them to observe human rights with true letter and spirit by adopting public friendly behavior with general masses.

Inspector (ASI) Ahsan Nawab, Assistant Sub-Inspector Rauf Yousaf, ASI Muhammad Saleem, ASI Muhammad Parvez and ASI Liaquat Ali.

The DG NAB congratulated and extended his best wishes for the officers on the occasion of their promotion. He also advised them to observe human rights with true letter and spirit by adopting public friendly behavior with general masses.

Finance Minister reviews Raast implementation

Highlights importance of public-private partnership

ISLAMABAD (APP): Reviewing implementation status of RAAST, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamsad Akhtar on Wednesday highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships in achieving sustainable development goals and inclusive growth.

During a meeting with Country Lead (Pakistan), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF),

Syed Ali Mahmood, Chief Executive Officer, Karandaaz, Waqas ul Hasan, she welcomed the contribution of their organizations in this regard. The minister highlighted government's commitment to fostering inclusive economic growth, attracting investments, and addressing socio-economic challenges in the country.

The Minister thanked the BMGF for its assistance on RAAST and the integrated social safety

net programme and welcomed the idea of signing a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize the future support on Digital Pakistan Stack. The meeting was aimed at reviewing the implementation status of Raast-Pakistan Instant Payment System support provided by the BMGF, integrated social safety net programme and BMGF's offer for assistance on the Digital Pakistan Stack.

Other potential areas

of collaboration including climate finance and upscaling conditional cash transfers to integrated social payments also came under discussion.

On the occasion, Waqas ul Hasan, CEO Karandaaz briefed the Minister on Raast-Pakistan Instant Payment System support provided by the BMGF through Karandaaz and outlined the key features of the Digital Pakistan Stack i.e. next generation of Raast.



The caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Dr. Shamsad Akhtar meet the Country Lead (Pak), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) Syed Ali Mahmood and CEO Waqas ul Hasan at Finance Division.



ISLAMABAD: CEO National Steel along with delegation from the steel industry called on Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries, Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz at the Commerce Ministry.

Commerce Minister reiterates commitment to support steel industry

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Commerce, Dr. Gohar Ejaz on Wednesday reiterated his commitment to support the steel industry and ensure its growth for industrial growth in the country.

Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz firmly stated that the path forward for the steel industry and other sectors in Pakistan lies in relying on indigenous raw materials, which aligns with the government's broader vision of self-sufficiency and economic growth, said a press release issued here.

Zaigham Adil Rizvi, CEO of National Steel along with a delegation from the steel industry called on the Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries & Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz at the Commerce Ministry.

The purpose of this meeting was to address and resolve impediments to the growth of the steel sector,

a vital component of Pakistan's industrial landscape.

In the context of safeguarding local industry, the Commerce Minister also discussed the possibility of tariffs on imported steel products, indicating a willingness to explore this option.

He stated, "I will help you find marketplace solutions for your problems." The Minister stressed the importance of sourcing raw materials locally to reduce the financial burden on the national exchequer and promote self-reliance in the steel industry.

Dr. Ejaz further emphasized the need for value addition in all sectors and outlined plans to enhance the competitiveness of Pakistan's exports. "We will make our exports highly competitive and focus on industries in which Pakistan has a comparative advantage."

USAID-ERDA empower women entrepreneurs through business proposal training

ISLAMABAD (APP): In an effort to uplift women-led businesses and startups in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its Newly Merged Districts (NMDs), USAID's Economic Recovery and Development Activity (USAID-ERDA) organized a two-day "Training on Business Proposal Writing" for women entrepreneurs and startups.

This initiative aims to address the increasing access to finance challenges and gender gaps faced by women entrepreneurs in the region, said a press release.

Women entrepreneurs have significant untapped potential in this region, but they face various challenges, including limited access to finance and inadequate business proposal writing skills.

The training empowers women-led

enterprises to craft compelling business proposals, thereby enabling them to secure funding to accelerate and expand their ventures and make a significant impact in the private sector.

Vice president of Women Chamber of Commerce and Industries (WCCI), Anila Khalid (WCCI), Anila Khalid besides other steps to boost local trade. The meeting was also attended by Senior Vice President of the Dir Lower Chamber of Commerce Khalid Iqbal, Haji Hussainullah, Executive Members Abdullah, Sajjad Ahmed, delegation of Dir Chamber and Commerce. In the meeting, the delegation gave a detailed briefing to the Chamber and Commerce. The delegation thanked Deputy Commissioner Dir Lower for listening to their problems and giving assurance.

"Our goal is to enhance the technical knowledge and capacity of women entrepreneurs and startups in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and NMDs.

Agriculture Consultative Committee meeting held

SARGODHA (APP): A joint meeting of Agriculture consultative Committee and Agriculture Task Force was held under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Umar Farooq at his office here on Wednesday.

Director Agriculture Shahid Hussain, fertilizer dealers, representatives of farmers and officers of various departments.

The meeting reviewed the Agriculture department performance, ongoing schemes, farmer training program, Subsidized Agriculture machinery and equipment, present condition of fertilizers and their rates, fines impose on dealers for selling sub-standard pesticides and cases registered against them.

The Director Agriculture Shahid Hussain said that while briefing the meeting that there was no shortage of fertilizers in the division whereas the urea fertilizer was available at fixed rates set by government.

Dir Lower traders hold meeting with DC

PESHAWAR (APP): Under the provincial government's policy interaction with Civil Society, Deputy Commissioner Dir Lower Muhammad Fawad held meeting with President Dir Chamber of Commerce Noor Alam Badshah and discussed in detail promoting local handicraft besides other steps to boost local trade.

The meeting was also attended by Senior Vice President of the Dir Lower Chamber of Commerce Khalid Iqbal, Haji Hussainullah, Executive Members Abdullah, Sajjad Ahmed, delegation of Dir Chamber and Commerce. In the meeting, the delegation gave a detailed briefing to the Chamber and Commerce. The delegation thanked Deputy Commissioner Dir Lower for listening to their problems and giving assurance.

FAO assistance sought for capacity building of agriculture experts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for National Food Security and Research Dr. Kausar Abdulla Malik Wednesday sought support from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to enhance assistance in capacity building of Pakistani experts in the field of agriculture, livestock, and fisheries.

Ms Florence Rolle, a Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Pakistan called on Dr. Kausar Abdulla Malik and discussed matters relating to agriculture development.

Dr Kausar Malik while welcoming Ms. Florence Rolle highlighted the longstanding partnership between the Government of Pakistan and the FAO of the United Nations and appreciated its assistance in ensuring food security and agriculture production in the country.

He said that the prevailing collaboration between FAO and Pakistan to end hunger and achieve sustainable agriculture

yield is very satisfactory.

He emphasized the importance of agriculture and the role of FAO in bolstering the agriculture sector of the country.

He said that FAO may provide training opportunities specifically for the staff of the Ministry of National Food Security & Research and provincial governments to understand the wider concepts of food security.

He also sought support on bringing improvement in the beef sector.



ISLAMABAD: Florence Rolle Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) called on Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Dr. Kausar Abdulla.

Efforts on to broaden tax base: CC IR

FAISALABAD (APP): Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue (IR) FBR Faisalabad Zubair Bilal said on Wednesday the FBR had expedited efforts to broaden tax base by utilizing data of 30 major departments and banks.

Addressing a meeting of business community in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he said that in the first phase, notices would be issued only to the individuals executing big transactions which would ultimately convince other potential taxpayers to join the tax net. He said there was a trust deficit between the taxpayers and the tax collectors which could be dispelled by promoting reliable and friendly linkages. He acknowledged the importance of taxpayers and said that

they were actually partners in national uplift and we must remove their apprehensions so that they could enter into the tax net with their own sweet will.

About trust deficit, he said that its root cause was lack of transparency and accountability. "Every Muslim fulfills his religious obligation of Zakat by calculating and paying it in-time without any coercion as he has confidence that this amount would be utilized judiciously. "On the other hand, while paying tax, he feels pain as he has suspicions about the spending of his hard earned tax money", he added.

He said: "Tax evaders are also part of our society and we must convince them to fulfill this national obligation with full responsibility.

Pak-Afghan Expo to open doors of economic uplift: UNHCR

PESHAWAR (APP): Head of Sub-Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Kofi Dwomo has said that Pak-Afghan Expo will certainly open the doors of economic development for both Afghans and Pakistanis.

He expressed these views during a meeting organized under the auspices of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) here on Wednesday.

Besides, the Regional Coordinator FPCCI KP Region, Sartaj Ahmad Khan, the officials of UNHCR, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment & Trade (KP-BoIT) and Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (WCCI) Peshawar also attended the meeting.

The Head of UNHCR Sub-Office said that they believe in the restoration, strengthening and promotion of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He said that finding opportunity for joint work will be a matter of joy for them. The UNHCR official said that the provision of strong support to Afghan refugees and people of Afghanistan is their mission.

SECP issues standardized constitutive documents for registration of Private Funds

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued standardized formats of documents, along with step-by-step guidance, for the registration of private fund as a notified entity.

The standardized documentation, available at SECP's website in editable formats, would promote consistency, encourage harmonized disclosures, and reduce the turnaround time required for the registration of a private fund, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

The documents include, Trust Deed and Private Placement

Memorandum (for registration of a fund in trust structure), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Agreement, Custodian Agreement and Private Placement Memorandum (for registration of private fund in LLP structure).

Notable interest has been observed in the registration of private funds over the last couple of years; however, constitutive documents containing varying disclosures being used by private fund management companies were the cause of the delay in registration and subsequent launch of funds.

PTCL Group collaborates with ConnectHear to conduct sign language training

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunication operator, PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone 4G) collaborated with ConnectHear, a social enterprise working to empower persons with hearing impairment, to organize a sign language training session for its Customer Service Center

session that included a variety of activities and real-life case studies designed to sensitize the PTCL Group customer service staff to the unique needs of Deaf customers.

The session is a pioneering initiative in Pakistan's telecom industry that mirrors PTCL Group's strong focus on promoting the

inclusivity of differently-abled persons. Inclusion has always been a cornerstone of the Group's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies and by providing sign language training to its customer service representatives, PTCL Group reaffirms its commitment to creating a more accessible environment for all its customers.

Shops representatives from the North region. Coinciding with the International Day of Sign Languages, the training aimed to promote inclusivity and enhance the accessibility of PTCL and Ufone 4G services for customers with hearing impairment.

CEO/Co-founder ConnectHear, Ms. Azima Dhanjee led the engaging and interactive training

ICCI for enhancing role of pharmacists for economic growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Wednesday stressed the need to enhance the role of pharmacists in the economic growth and development of the country.

The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with the Pakistan Pharmacists Association (PPA)

organized a ceremony to celebrate World Pharmacist Day.

Kamran Rehman Khan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination Islamabad was the chief guest. The event was attended by the members of PPA, ICCI and other dignitaries, said a press release issued here.

Speaking on the occasion,



QUETTA: A delegation led by All Balochistan Transport Action Committee led by its President Haji Habibullah Badaezi meeting with Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

Speakers urged green investments in tourist destinations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers urged the authorities concerned and the tourism management companies to prioritize green investments in services and infrastructure at tourist destinations across the country.

The seminar was organized by Devcom-Pakistan, ICLC and National Skills University (NSU) here on Wednesday to mark World Tourism Day, themed on "Tourism and Green Investments".

Using non-timber fuel, alternate energy, water conservation, solid waste management and environment-friendly practices shall be promoted to ensure sustainable eco-tourism.

Managing Director Pakistan Tourism

Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab ur Rehman Rana was the chief guest. The guest speakers included Vice Chancellor NSU Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar, President of Rural Development Foundation (RDF) Brig. Retd Muhammad Khan, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, Secretary ICLC Sibtain Raza, CEO Apex Adnan Saeed, Sumera Raza and Rana Tariq Javed.

Aftab ur Rehman Rana said the country's tourism and hospitality industry contributes 3.5 per cent to the country's GDP. Most of which is contributed by the domestic tourism that has flourished in recent years. About 6.5 million people

are directly or indirectly engaged in the industry. This is quite unfortunate that only a few know or are willing to invest in green practices.

The federal government has taken the provincial authorities on board to ensure sustainable ecotourism models, he said adding that more awareness campaigns and stakeholders' engagement is desired to control the undue interventions.

Prof. Dr Muhammad Mukhtar urged the youth to travel across the heavenly land of Pakistan which is full of diverse cultures and landscapes. Outdoor is an open book that makes travellers learn about the cultural and heritage assets of the country.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed urged the authorities to control the damage to the green cover that is being done by the environment, unfriendly structures, housing societies, timber mafia, littering and unmanaged solid waste. He said local communities are the main stakeholders of the tourist destinations. They shall come up to form their associations to raise their voice against the exploitation of their homelands.

Munir Ahmed said Pakistan has immense potential to spread the hospitality and tourism industry to 50-70 per cent of the GDP, adding that it would create a mess if the full potential is realized

without any green investments and nature conservation. Authorities shall take stern actions against the vested interests of the mafias, illegal and undue structures and mushroom growth of housing societies and hospitality outlets. We have many policies that remain unimplemented, he added.

Retd Muhammad Aslam supported the idea of community-based tourism in their own locally managed houses. So that the visitors could learn about the life they live, their hardships and their culture. It would add more to the livelihood of the locals without compromising the natural resources.



KARACHI: Member (R&S), Board of Revenue Sindh Syed Ahmed Ali Shah and Director General (e-Governance), Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) signing the service level agreement for launching e-Registration & e-Mutation System of properties in Sindh.

China to step up anti-graft efforts for better economic development, says Xinhua

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China will step up anti-corruption efforts in state-owned companies and the financial sector to increase their economic contributions, state news agency Xinhua reported on Wednesday, citing a politburo meeting chaired by President Xi Jinping.

The remarks from the politburo, a top decision-making body of the ruling Communist Party, come a day after party inspection teams concluded investigations into dozens of state-owned enterprises.

"(We) need to...promote those who do not dare to, cannot and do not want to (en-

gage in) in corruption," the Xinhua readout of the politburo meeting said.

"The meeting emphasized that (we) should continuously enhance the...core competitiveness of state-owned enterprises, and...increase the efforts of financial enterprises to serve the real economy and national strategy."

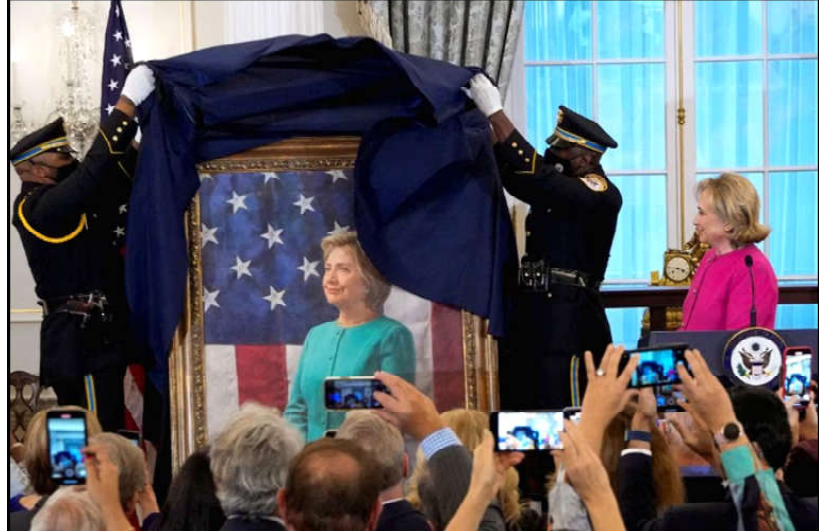
The Chinese government has experienced a turbulent time with the disappearance of former foreign minister Qin Gang and defence minister Li Shangfu.

The vanishing of officials in China is often followed by the announcement of investigations into suspected disciplinary infractions but Beijing has yet to explain why Qin and Li remain out of public sight.

Qin has been missing for three months and Li for one month.

With tensions over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and over U.S. export controls that target the Chinese military and advanced tech sector, Xi's rule has been marked by a focus on national security risks within the party, government, and large industries.

"It is necessary to...establish a mentality of red lines and (willingness) to be extreme, take effective measures to prevent and resolve major risks, and firmly maintain the bottom line of safety," the politburo was quoted as saying.



Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton looks at her portrait during its unveiling, at the State Department in Washington, U.S.

25 killed in Damascus clash between Syrian, Kurdish forces

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Fighters loyal to the Syrian government clashed with Kurdish-led forces in a mainly Arab district of eastern Syria, leaving 25 people dead in two days, a war monitor said on Tuesday.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who are backed by Washington, said they had "driven out the regime gunmen who had infiltrated the Deir Ezzor province in the week battles which erupted on Monday.

Earlier this month, the same area saw 10 days of fighting between the SDF and armed Arab tribesmen in which 90 people were killed. Britain-based monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the latest clashes erupted when

Turkey will back Sweden's NATO bid if U.S. keeps promise on F-16 sale - Erdogan

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkey's parliament will keep its promise to ratify Sweden's NATO bid if U.S. President Joe Biden's administration paves the way for F-16 jet sales to Ankara, President Tayyip Erdogan said on Tuesday, according to Turkish media. Speaking to reporters on his flight back from Azerbaijan, Erdogan said that Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussed Sweden's NATO membership bid last week in New York.

The U.S. administration is linking F-16 fighter jet sales to Turkey with Ankara's ratification of Sweden's bid, Erdogan said.

"If they (the U.S.) keep their promises, our parliament will keep its own promise as well. Turkish parliament will have the final say on Sweden's NATO membership," he said.

UN peace envoy, Egypt working to restore calm along Gaza fence

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: International mediators have stepped up efforts to prevent a new round of armed confrontation between Israel and the Islamist Hamas group, which runs Gaza, amid an escalation in violent protests along the border fence.

"The United Nations is talking to and working with all concerned to improve the lives of people in Gaza, particularly the most vulnerable," U.N. Middle East peace envoy Tor Wennesland said on social media platform X on Wednesday, a day after he met Hamas officials in Gaza.

"The situation inside the Strip is dire and we must avoid another conflict that will have grave consequences for all. The people of Gaza have suffered enough and deserve more than a return to calm."

A regional diplomat said Egypt, which brokered numerous truces between Israel and Gaza militants in the past, had also stepped up its efforts to prevent a slide into another war.

Palestinians in Gaza have held protests along the fence for nearly two weeks, breaking from a period of relative calm.

Gazans say they are protesting over issues including the treatment of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and Jewish visits to the Al Aqsa mosque compound, a site holy to both Muslims and Jews, who know it as the Temple Mount.

Youths have thrown stones and improvised explosive devices at Israeli troops, who have responded with live fire, killing one Palestinian and wounding dozens of others.

Trump 'liable for fraud' for lying about net worth

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Donald Trump and his family business were found liable for fraud on Tuesday by a New York judge in state Attorney General Letitia James' civil lawsuit, accusing the former US president of illegally inflating his assets and net worth.

The decision was issued by Justice Arthur Engoron of the New York state court in Manhattan.

James sued Trump in Sept 2022, accusing him and the Trump Organisation of lying for a decade about asset values and his net worth to get better terms on bank loans and insurance. She has said Trump inflated his net worth by as much as \$2.23 billion, and by one measure as much as \$3.6 billion.



Workers unload fishing coolers at a port in Masinloc, Zambales province, Philippines.



South Korea's deputy foreign minister for political affairs, Chung Byung-won, Japan's Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Funakoshi Takehiro, and China's Assistant Foreign Minister, Nong Rong, pose for photographs during their meeting in Seoul, South Korea.

Russia accuses Ukraine's Western allies of helping attack its Black Sea Fleet headquarters

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russia on Wednesday accused Ukraine's Western allies of helping plan and conduct last week's missile strike on the Black Sea Fleet's headquarters on the annexed Crimean Peninsula.

"There is no doubt that the attack had been planned in advance using Western intelligence means, NATO satellite assets and reconnaissance planes and was implemented upon the advice of American and British security agencies and in close coordination with them," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a briefing.

Moscow has repeatedly claimed that the U.S. and its NATO allies have effectively become involved in the conflict by supplying weapons to Ukraine and providing it with intelligence information and helping plan attacks on Russian facilities.

Unconfirmed news reports said Storm Shadow missiles provided to Ukraine by the U.K. and France were used in the attack on the headquarters.

There was no comment from the U.K. Ministry of Defense, which in the past has declined to discuss intelligence-related matters.

India would look into any 'specific' info on Sikh separatist killing in Canada: Jaishankar

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's foreign minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said on Tuesday that India has told Canada it was open to looking into any "specific" or "relevant" information it provides on the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said last week that Ottawa had credible intelligence linking Indian agents to the murder, prompting an angry initial reaction from New Delhi, which denies the allegation.

Asked about the allegations at a Council on Foreign Relations event in New York, Jaishankar detailed India's response in diplomatic engagements.

"One, we told the Canadians that this is not the government of India's policy," he said. "Two, we told the Canadians saying that look, if you have something relevant, you know, let us know — we are open to looking at it."

India last week suspended new visas for Canadians and asked Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence in the country.

Biden to host top EU officials on Oct 20

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: U.S. President Joe Biden will host European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel on Oct. 20, with steel tariffs among the bilateral issues to resolve.

The United States previously agreed to suspend tariffs on EU steel and aluminium imposed by former President Donald Trump, with a deadline of the end of October to reach a deal to promote green production and tackle overcapacity.



International Space Station (ISS) crew members, Roscosmos cosmonauts Sergey Prokopyev, Dmitry Petelin and NASA astronaut Frank Rubio, rest in chairs after landing in the Soyuz MS-23 space capsule in a remote area near Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan.

China urges countries to boycott Hong Kong media freedom event - document

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: China is pressuring countries to boycott a British-organised event at the United Nations in Geneva on media freedom in Hong Kong with the son of a jailed media tycoon, a letter showed and four diplomats confirmed on Tuesday.

The event on Wednesday titled "Media Freedom in Hong Kong" is being held on the sidelines of the five-week meeting of the U.N. Human Rights Council. Among the speakers is Sebastian Lai, the son of Jimmy Lai who this week marked his 1,000th day in a Hong Kong prison on charges related to the former British colony's national security law and sedition. In a letter circulated widely among diplomats at the U.N. in Geneva, China's mission asked countries "to refrain from participating in this event in any way".

"Hong Kong-related issues are China's internal affairs that brook no external interference," said the diplomatic note reviewed by Reuters. Four diplomats confirmed having received it and three of them said that Chinese diplomats had also been contacting some countries individually to not attend or support the event in any way.

Ukrainian captain sentenced to five years over deadly Budapest boat accident

Monitoring Desk
BUDAPEST: A Ukrainian captain of a cruise liner was sentenced to five years in prison in Hungary on Tuesday for his role in a 2019 accident in which his boat hit and sank a smaller boat on the River Danube, killing 25 South Korean tourists and two crew.

In the worst disaster on the Danube in more than half a century, the smaller tourist boat called Mermaid, with 35 people on board, sank after being hit by the cruiser under a bridge in Budapest during heavy rain. Twenty-five of those killed were South Koreans. The Mermaid's captain and its crew member also died and one Korean is still unaccounted for.

Water-sharing protests disrupt India's tech hub of Bengaluru

Monitoring Desk
BENGALURU: Police detained protesters on Tuesday in India's tech hub of Bengaluru after one tried to commit suicide and another was injured while demonstrating against the sharing of water from a river that flows through two states, media and officials said.

Farmers' groups called the protest, which forced employees of multinationals such as Walmart (WMT.N) and Alphabet's Google (GOOGL.O) to work from home.

At one protest site called Freedom Park, a demonstrator tried to commit suicide while another farmer was injured, a domestic news channel said, with police detaining others.

Earlier, a senior police officer, K. Santosh Babu, said emergency orders had been imposed.

Schools and colleges were shut in the capital of the southern state of Karnataka, home to more than 3,500 tech companies.

Some farmers vowed to keep up the protests and widen them across the state this week, however.

India resumes internet ban in restive Manipur after protests

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India has reimposed an internet ban on the restive Manipur state after violent protests erupted following the circulation of photographs of two dead students killed during the months-long conflict, officials said.

More than 150 people have been killed in the remote northeast state since armed clashes broke out in May between the predominantly Hindu Meitei majority.

Several hundred Wagner fighters return to Ukraine, impact limited - Kyiv

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Several hundred members of Russia's Wagner private mercenary group have returned to eastern Ukraine to fight but are not having a significant impact on the battlefield, a Ukrainian military spokesperson said on Wednesday.

Wagner fighters played an important role in Russia's capture of the eastern city of Bakhmut in May after one of the longest and fiercest battles of Moscow's 19-month war in Ukraine.

They left Bakhmut after the battle and some went to Belarus under a deal that ended a brief mutiny by Wagner in June, during which it took control of a Russian military headquarters and marched on Moscow.

Since Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin was killed on Aug. 23 when a private jet in which he was traveling crashed in unexplained circumstances, the Kremlin has sought to bring the group under tighter state control. Russian military bloggers have reported that some Wagner fighters have been returning to Ukraine.

"We have recorded the presence of a maximum of several hundred fighters of the former Wagner PMC (private military company)," Serhiy Cherevatyi, spokesperson for the eastern military command, said.

He added that Wagner fighters were scattered in different places, were not part of a single unit, and had had no significant impact.

Azerbaijan says 192 of its troops were killed in last week's offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: A total of 192 Azerbaijani troops were killed and 511 were wounded during Azerbaijan's offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh last week, the country's Health Ministry announced on Wednesday. It also said that one Azeri civilian died in the hostilities.

Nagorno-Karabakh officials said earlier that at least 200 people on their side, including 10 civilians, were killed and over 400 were wounded in the fighting. The military operation allowed Azerbaijan to reclaim full control over the breakaway region that was run by separatists for about 30 years. Tens of thousands of ethnic Armenians — more than a third of the region's population — have already left. More are likely to follow after separatist troops agreed to lay down arms and Azerbaijan lifted a 10-month blockade of the road linking the territory to Armenia.

Azerbaijan and separatist officials have held two rounds of talks on the "reintegration" of Nagorno-Karabakh and its ethnic Armenian population into the mainly Muslim country, but how exactly it would happen remains unclear.

Nagorno-Karabakh is a region of Azerbaijan that came under the control of ethnic Armenian forces, backed by the Armenian military, in separatist fighting that ended in 1994. During a six-week war in 2020, Azerbaijan took back parts of Nagorno-Karabakh along with surrounding territory that Armenian forces had claimed during the earlier conflict.

Earthquakes hit Italy super volcano, raising spectre of evacuations

Monitoring Desk
ROME: A leading volcanologist has warned that mass evacuations might be needed in a town close to Naples, which sits on a so-called Super Volcano that has been hit by hundreds of small earthquakes in recent weeks.

A 4.2 magnitude earthquake struck the area early on Wednesday, the strongest jolt in 40 years to rattle the volcanic field, known as the Campi Flegrei or Phlegraean Fields from the Greek word for burning.

Campi Flegrei sits across the bay of Naples from Pompeii, where thousands were incinerated by Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. However, it is a much bigger volcano than Vesuvius and if it ever exploded at full force could kill millions.

Experts say there is no imminent threat of an eruption, but Giuseppe De Natale, the former head of the Vesuvius Observatory at the National Institute for Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV), called for urgent checks on buildings after repeated seismic activity that is pushing up the ground by 1.5 cm (0.59 inches) a month.

Speaking in a personal capacity, De Natale said the last time Campi Flegrei suffered a similar burst of earthquakes in the 1980s, some 40,000 people were temporarily evacuated from nearby Pozzuoli. The town now has a population of more than 80,000.

"Currently, I believe the more immediate risk is seismic. But it is clear that one must also consider the possibility of an eruption," he told Reuters.

He said if there was an eruption, it would be a phreatic, or steam-blast eruption—which are generally relatively weak and devoid of new magma—at least initially.

There was no sign of structural damage in the area after Wednesday's tremor.

De Natale confirmed a report in Corriere Della Sera newspaper that he had written to the government last week suggesting possible evacuations. A local official said his recommendation was being reviewed. The Campi Flegrei are similar to the Yellowstone caldera in the U.S. state of Wyoming but of more concern because they are in an area populated by around 3 million people in the Naples hinterland.

Napolitano laid to rest in Italy's first secular funeral

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy held its first non-religious funeral for a head of state on Tuesday with a secular service in parliament for Giorgio Napolitano, a two-time president who died last week aged 98.

Napolitano was the first former communist to become president and the first person to be elected twice to the post, which he held from 2006 to 2015.

"He fought good battles and supported wrong causes, trying, little by little, to correct mistakes and explore new paths," his son Giulio told dignitaries, including Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, French President Emmanuel Macron and German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

At least eight former Italian prime ministers were also present.

"He couldn't stand demagoguery, the spirit of faction, the reduction of political debate to shouting and invective," Giulio Napolitano said.

Italian presidents are mostly ceremonial figures, but admirers credit Napolitano with having saved the country from financial ruin in 2011 when he persuaded the then-prime minister Silvio Berlusconi to resign during a debt crisis, opening the way for a technocratic government that placated the markets.

Critics accused him of orchestrating a coup d'etat. Berlusconi died in June, but one of his closest advisers, Gianni Letta, told mourners he hoped the two men would make up their differences in heaven.

"I like to imagine that when they meet up there, they can say to each other what they didn't say down here, and, with every controversy settled, they can clear things up and reunite in the light," Letta said in a brief speech.

CNS calls for recommitting to principles of maritime safety, marine conservation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, in his message on World Maritime Day, demanded the nation to recommit to the principles of maritime safety and marine conservation and reaffirm its solemn pledge to the maritime world that "our commitment goes on", both in spirit and in action.

"I look forward to a profound and cumulative response by all stakeholders," the Naval Chief said. World Maritime Day, a significant reminder of maritime safety, security, and environmental conservation, is marked annually, urging nations to work together for sustainable maritime practices, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

Under the aegis of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), this year holds special significance as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

Accordingly, this year's theme 'MARPOL at 50 - Our Commitment Goes On' is intended to pay tribute to our efforts under IMO's long history of protecting the environment from pollution through the impact of shipping via a robust regulatory framework and emphasis on its ongoing commitment to prevention of our oceans from pollution.



MARPOL's legacy stretches over five decades, symbolizing our collective efforts against marine pollution emphasizing the duty we all hold to protect the lifeblood of our planet. The Naval Chief said, "As we reflect on the journey, the statistics remain alarming; marine pollution's ripple effects on ecosystems, economies, and livelihoods of coastal communities urge us to take more concerted actions. Pakistan Navy stands at the forefront to conserve the maritime environment. In alignment with MARPOL principles, we have instituted measures to curtail emissions, enhance energy efficiency and, in earnest, implement pollution prevention strategies. Our ongoing efforts against marine pollution bear testimony to our unwavering commitment."

On this World Maritime Day, he said as we look back to our shared maritime heritage and achievements, ensuring food security and stabilizing prices by minimizing the gap between the wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities.

She added that policy and fiscal coordination between the federal and provincial governments is pivotal for economic prosperity and sustainable growth. Dr. Shamshad Akhtar underscored that there is a huge potential for rationalizing the public expenditure arrangements between the federal and provincial governments for promoting efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure, as well as prioritization for speedy and smooth implementation of the projects under public sector development programs.

The meeting was aimed at reviewing the spending patterns of PSDP, controlling prices of essential commodities, enhancing the quality of services in education and health sectors, and providing relief to the general public by strengthening the social safety nets. The Finance Minister emphasized that the provinces are the interface with the public and have a major role to play in improving social services as well as

ensuring food security and stabilizing prices by minimizing the gap between the wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities.

The meeting was held in a hybrid format, where the respective Provincial Ministers joined through the video link.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Minister of Sindh, Finance Ministers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Balochistan, besides the Federal and provincial Finance Secretaries, Federal Secretary of Planning, as well as senior government officials.

The Federal Minister of Finance held a meeting with the Provincial Finance Ministers at the Finance Division, according to a press release issued here.

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The Federal Minister of Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Division Dr. Shamshad Akhtar held a meeting with the Provincial Finance Minister at the Finance Division.

Finance Minister reviews spending patterns of PSDP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister of Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs Division Dr. Shamshad Akhtar on Wednesday reviewed the spending patterns of the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) and controlling prices of essential commodities.

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ensuring food security and stabilizing prices by minimizing the gap between the wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities.

Pak-Qatar culture ministers discuss bilateral relations, cultural issues

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah called on Qatar Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrehan bin Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani on the margins of the 12th Conference of the Culture Ministers of Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organiza-

tural issues of mutual interest. Speaking on the occasion, Jamal Shah underscored that Pakistan attached importance to its longstanding and brotherly ties with Qatar that were based on common interests and shared values. The two Culture Ministers stressed the need



to further strengthen cultural ties between Pakistan and Qatar. They emphasized the importance of advancing negotiations on the proposed Pakistan and Qatar cultural exchanges.

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HUB: Canadian High Commissioner in Pakistan Leslie Scanlon visiting Bela HUB.

Pakistan committed to goal of a world without nukes, peaceful S. Asia: Munir

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Reaffirming its commitment to the goal of a nuclear weapons-free world, Pakistan told the U.N. that India was responsible for introducing nuclear weapons in South Asia with a test of an atomic device in 1974, forcing Pakistan to follow suit.

"In South Asia, nuclear weapons capability was introduced by one state

in 1974," Ambassador Munir Akram said, without naming India.

"That state also initiated the South Asia nuclear weapons explosions in 1998," he said, adding, "Pakistan was compelled to follow suit in order to restore strategic stability and deter the aggression against it." Following the South Asia nuclear tests, Ambassador Akram said that Pa-

kistan proposed the establishment of a Strategic Restraint Regime (SRR) in South Asia, to be premised on three interlocking and mutually reinforcing elements of conflict resolution, nuclear and missile restraint and conventional arms balance. The Pakistani envoy, who was speaking at an event to commemorate the 'International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons',

QDEG says: Stern action to be taken against non-functional schools & absentee teachers

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The Quetta District Education Group (QDEG) has decided to take stern action against the absentee teachers and the closed and non-functional schools in the district.

This was decided in a meeting of the QDEG, which was held with Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Muhammad Anwar Kakar in the chair on Wednesday.

The District Education Officer (Male), DEO (Female), representatives of UNICEF and other concerned officials were in attendance at the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the situation regarding the closed and non-functional

schools besides absentee and attached teachers in the schools.

A committee was also formed to collect and compile the data of absentee and attached teachers as well as about the schools, which are closed or occupied in the district by October 2, 2023.

The committee would present its report in next meeting of the District Education Group.

In view of the report, certain important decisions would be made, it was decided further in the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, ADC General asserted that no negligence would be tolerated on the matter of absentee teachers and non-functional schools.



NASEERABAD: CEO of Chattar Wasila Rah and famous singer Hadiqa Kiani along with FC Balochistan 72 Wing Chattar, Colonel Ahmed Khan cutting ribbon during handing over of houses built for flood-affected families, held in Kundi area.

In all 4017 connections found involved in theft: Over Rs. 533 million recovered from power pilferers & defaulters as crackdown continues

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: Over 533 million rupees have so far been recovered from the electricity pilferers and defaulters during the crackdown launched by the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) in the province.

According to the spokesman of QESCO, Rs. 473 millions have been recovered from the defaulters of the electricity dues and Rs. 60 millions recovered from those involved in the pilferage of electricity in the province.

The amount was recovered on charges of the fine from the electricity thieves, the QESCO spokesman mentioned.

He informed that in all 4017 power connections were found involved in the pilferage of electricity in the province while 1180 applications have been submitted in different police stations in this regard.

Out of them, 339 FIRs have been chalked against the power pilferers in different thanas of the province, he mentioned

Virtual University deployed Mobile Bio Lab in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): In a significant stride towards enhancing educational opportunities in underprivileged regions of the country, the Virtual University of Pakistan has deployed the first-ever Mobile Bio Lab at the University of Turbat, Gwadar, and high schools.

The students of Balochistan received the lab with enthusiasm, and gratitude, expressing their heartfelt appreciation to the government for making this pioneering endeavor possible, said a news release.

The Mobile Bio Lab offered a diverse range of practical experiments, enabling students to gain hands-on experience in various biological disciplines. The innovative initiative seeks to bridge the educational gap and foster scientific curiosity among students in Balochistan.

Dr. Arshad Saleem Bhatti Rector Virtual University of Pakistan said "We are committed to expanding educational horizons and empowering students in every corner of Pakistan. This Mobile Bio Lab in Balochistan is a testament to our dedication to promoting science and knowledge in underprivileged regions." The lab has already witnessed students eagerly engaging in numerous experiments, fostering a spirit of exploration and inquiry.

The IHHN is a cred-

ible and renowned leading charity hospital network in Pakistan that brings a high standard of health services to local communities in both urban and rural locations. Apart from offering primary healthcare through a team of doctors and community workers, the Mobile Medical Unit also houses a lab and pharmacy with essential medical supplies. "This mobile clinic will provide much-needed healthcare to the local communities in and around Nokkundi temporarily until we can set up the Indus Hospital facility at Nokkundi. Once the Nokkundi hospital is up and running, it will replace the mobile clinic and locals will have a permanent medical facility to serve them in the area," said Ali Ehsan Rind, the Country Manager of RDMC. As with all other social investment projects funded by RDMC, this mobile clinic project also has the support and buy-in of the local Community Development Committee (CDC) which comprises local community representatives.

adding that 124 persons were also arrested on the same charges. All power thieves were charged fine of over Rs. 100 million on the charges of power pilfering, the spokesman maintained. Moreover, 13 transformers running illegally and those of the defaulters were also removed in different areas of the province. The QESCO spokesman asserted that the crackdown against the power pilferers and defaulters would remain continued in future as well.

Minorities in India under attack, direct state involved in HR violations: Khalil

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George Wednesday said that Pakistan was far better than India for securing minorities' rights as India's religious minorities were under attack and state was direct involved in human rights violations.

Talking to PTV news channel, he said that the rights of minority communities were fully protected in Pakistan and several measures had been taken for their welfare, adding, Pakistan always protected the rights of people from all minorities, including Christians, Sikhs, Hindus and Parsis, and would ensure a secure environment for

them in future as well. "Pakistan will move forward according to teachings of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Muhammad Iqbal, who called for peace and brotherhood among all religions" he added. He reminded that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in his speech on August 11, 1947, gave a clear message about the equality of rights of minorities. He said people of all religions in the country had equal constitutional and political rights, and they were allowed to take part in all fields of life.

Replying a question, he said Indian government had proven themselves unwilling to protect minority religious communities.

DC Ziarat chairs meeting to improve law & order situation

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Ziarat Muhammad Ramzan Palal on Wednesday chaired a meeting of Levies Force officers regarding the improvement of law and order situation. Assistant Commissioner Ziarat Mohammad Hanif Noorzai and other officials concerned participated in the meeting. A briefing was given to Deputy Commissioner Ziarat regarding law and order situation in the area. In the meeting, the DC strictly instructed the in-charges of Levies Force stations to ensure their presence and the support staff at their places of posting.



QUETTA: Additional IG Police Jawad Dogar and others meeting with Caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Muhammad Zubair Jamali.

District Chagai gets first Indus Mobile Health Clinic

QUETTA (APP): The collaboration between Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC) and Indus Hospital & Healthcare Network (IHHN) resulted in district Chagai receiving its first Indus Mobile Health Clinic last week.

The IHHN has donated this Mobile Clinic to the district to provide healthcare for an interim period of three months while the RDMC-funded Indus Hospital at Nokkundi is being set up. This will ensure that basic health care is made available as a priority while permanent infrastructure can be developed.

The Indus Hospital Mobile Clinic, which was inaugurated by the RDMC Country Head and members of the Community Development Committee (CDC), will be located in six identified places across Nokkundi to create better access to healthcare facilities. The mobile clinic is an innovative Mobile Medical Unit set in a state-of-the-art bus run and managed by the Indus Hospital.

The IHHN is a cred-

ible and renowned leading charity hospital network in Pakistan that brings a high standard of health services to local communities in both urban and rural locations. Apart from offering primary healthcare through a team of doctors and community workers, the Mobile Medical Unit also houses a lab and pharmacy with essential medical supplies. "This mobile clinic will provide much-needed healthcare to the local communities in and around Nokkundi temporarily until we can set up the Indus Hospital facility at Nokkundi. Once the Nokkundi hospital is up and running, it will replace the mobile clinic and locals will have a permanent medical facility to serve them in the area," said Ali Ehsan Rind, the Country Manager of RDMC. As with all other social investment projects funded by RDMC, this mobile clinic project also has the support and buy-in of the local Community Development Committee (CDC) which comprises local community representatives.

He said that work is continued under the programme in different rural areas of the province.

Jan Achakzai praised the role of NRSP for development of the social sector and hoped that other private sector would also follow the footsteps of NRSP and play role in development of the province.

Meanwhile, Mr Jan also visited the Makran Medical College in Turbat the same day.

The principal of college, Dr Afzal Khaliq received him and apprised him the issues before faced by the college.

Jan Achakzai visits NRSP office & Makran Medical College

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai visited the office of National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) in Turbat on Wednesday.

During the visit, the Incharge of NRSP informed the Minister information about different projects of NRSP.

He said that work is continued under the programme in different rural areas of the province.

Meanwhile, Mr Jan also visited the Makran Medical College in Turbat the same day.

The principal of college, Dr Afzal Khaliq received him and apprised him the issues before faced by the college.

JAS leaders say: Eid Miladun Nabi (SAW) to be celebrated with religious zeal & fervour

Procession to be taken out from Bacha Khan chowk

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The leaders of Jama'at Ahle Sunnat (JAS) have announced that the Eid Miladun Nabi (SAW) would be observed with due religious zeal and fervour in the provincial metropolis on Friday.

The main procession marking the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) would be taken out from the Bacha Khan Chowk where almost 30 small processions would gather before.

This was announced by the leader of JAS, Pir Syed Habibullah Chishti while addressing press conference at the Quetta Press Club on Wednesday.

Also present on the occasion were other leaders of JAS Balochistan.

Pir Syed Habibullah

Chishti said that the main procession would pass through the Liaquat bazar, junction chowk, prince road, Masjid Road, Shahrah-e-igbal and terminate at the Manan chowk.

He said that the procession would not go to the Suraj Ganj bazaar because of the time of Jumma prayer.

He on the occasion said that it would be difficult to make the security plan successful without their consultation.

He charged that the caretaker provincial government appears to be in deep slumber over the great day of Eid Miladun Nabi (SAW). He, however, thanked the Metropolitan Corporation for the cleanliness arrangements made on route of the Eid Milad procession.



QUETTA: Jamaat Ahlesunnat Balochistan Leader, Habibullah Shah Chishti addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

Govt taking steps to protect rights of children, girls: Fuazia

QUETTA (APP): Senior Advisor Child Grievance Commissioner Federal Ombudsman Secretariat Fuazia Nasreen presided over meeting to review of stakeholders at Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan Headquarters. In which proposals were considered regarding children's rights, education, health and other issues in the province during the meeting.

On this occasion Fuazia Nasreen said that the government of Balochistan province is taking all pos-

sible measures to protect the rights of children and girls. She said that the tribal traditions of the province are a source of pride and satisfaction to see children and girls with respect.

She said that all the stakeholders along with the central and provincial ombudsman need to pay more attention to issues like prevention of early marriage of girls, education of children, health, food, child labor so that the architect of our future can contribute to the development of the country.



QUETTA: Commissioner Child Protection Federal Ombudsman retired Ambassador Fouzia Nasreen talking with different stake holders regarding protection of children.