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Pakistan, China jointly call for ceasefire to end Israel-Palestine tension

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China on Friday expressed deep concern over the current escalation of tensions and violence between Palestine and Israel, and called for an immediate ceasefire. In a joint statement issued at the conclusion of Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar's visit to China, both sides reiterated that the fundamental way out of the conflict lied in implementing the "two-state solution and establishing an independent State of Palestine."

The joint statement called for the cessation of hostilities and every possible effort to protect civilians and avert an even worse humanitarian disaster in Gaza.

The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and to jointly upholding the international system with the United Nations at its core, the international order underpinned by international law, and the basic norms governing international relations underpinned by the purposes and principles of

the UN Charter. "Both sides stand for unity and cooperation of the international community, oppose hegemonism and power politics, adhere to true multilateralism, and promote humanity's common values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom," it said.

Pakistan and China agreed to actively promote the implementation of the Framework Agreement on Industrial Cooperation to support the industrialization, and encourage Chinese companies to set up manufacturing facilities in Pakistan. The two sides reiterated that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was an open and inclusive platform for win-win cooperation.

The corridor welcomed third parties to benefit from investments in CPEC cooperation priority areas such as industry, agriculture, ICT, science and technology.

During the visit, Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar met President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and Li Xi, member of the

Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Secretary of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

In a warm and cordial atmosphere, leaders of the two countries had in-depth exchanges of views and reached extensive consensus on strengthening the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, practical cooperation in various areas, and international and regional issues of mutual interest.

The two sides reaffirmed that mutual trust remains at the core of China-Pakistan relationship.

The two sides agreed that China and Pakistan are All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners and iron brothers, friendship between the two countries is time-tested and unbreakable.

The Chinese side reiterated that the China-Pakistan relationship was a priority in its foreign relations. The Pakistani side underscored that the Pakistan-

China relationship was the cornerstone of its foreign policy.

The two sides will continue to view the relationship between China and Pakistan from a strategic and long-term perspective, move forward together on the path of development, and accelerate the building of an even closer China-Pakistan Community with a Shared Future in the new era. The two sides reaffirmed their support for each other on issues concerning their respective core interests and major concerns. The Pakistani side reaffirmed its firm commitment to the One-China Principle and that Taiwan was an inalienable part of China's territory, and Pakistan firmly supported the Chinese government's efforts to achieve national reunification, and opposes any form of Taiwan independence. Pakistan firmly supports China on issues concerning the South China Sea, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Xizang. The Chinese side reiterated its support for Pakistan in safeguard-

ing its sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity, in pursuing a development path of economic stability suited to Pakistan's national conditions, in fighting terrorism, and in playing a bigger role in regional and international affairs.

The Pakistani side warmly congratulated the Chinese side on its successful organization of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. The Chinese side commended Pakistan's consistent support for and participation in Belt and Road cooperation.

The two sides recognized that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) "is a strong driver of world economic growth, provides a platform for international economic cooperation, opens up space for common development around the globe, and has become a widely welcomed international public good as well as an important practice in building a community with a shared future for mankind".



URUMQI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar interacts with the students of Xinjiang University.

Federal govt forms committee on Balochistan education issues

QUETTA (APP): Caretaker Federal Education Minister Madad Ali Sindhi on Friday said that on the directives of Caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan Anwaarul Haq Kakar, a committee has been formed to look into the financial and administrative issues facing the universities of Balochistan. "Now, time has come to remove politics from our universities," he said while addressing a consultative meeting held at BUIITEMS on the issues, challenges and future road map for the uplift of the education in Balochistan.

Caretaker Finance Minister Amjad Rasheed, Regional Director Higher Education Commission Zahoor Bazai, VC, BUIITEMS Khalid Hafeez, VC University of Lorelai, Ehsanullah Kakar, VC, University of Mekran Malik Tareen, VC, University of Khuzdar Dr Maqsood Ahmed, VC Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University Dr

Sajida Noreen, Registrar Bolan Medical College Oranzeb Shah were present on the occasion while Chairman HEC Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, VC University of Gwadar Abdul Razaq Sabir, VC University of Turbat Jan Mohammad and Lasbella University Dr Dost Mohammad Baloch attended the meeting through video link.

Addressing the high-level meeting, the federal minister said the caretaker government is committed to lay a strong foundation of education during its short tenure. "Leaving behind our differences, it is now time to move forward and take practical steps for the betterment of the education and shining future of our generation to come," he emphasized.

He noted that on the directives of PM Kakar, he is in Balochistan on his four-day visit. The purpose of the visit was to meet educationists, intellectuals and concerned officials of the provincial government and

finalize the recommendation for the education uplift in the province.

After Balochistan, the minister said, he will visit other provinces and present his report on challenges and way out to the Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar.

He assured that a meeting of the VCs of universities in the province will be arranged with the PM so that the issue of funds and pensions could be resolved amicably.

Earlier, Chairman HEC Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, expressing his views via video link said that quality and governance were the biggest issues than funds facing the universities across the country.

"The HEC has issued Rs 223 million addition grant to the universities of Balochistan," he maintained.

Earlier, the participants presented their recommendation to the federal minister for the betterment of the education sector.

CM Domki visits Technical Training Center; directs to introduce modern trades

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki visited the Technical Training Center located in the Industrial area of Quetta on Friday morning. He inspected different sections of the Training Center and reviewed the opportunities of learning being provided to the youth. The Chief Minister also distributed laptops among the position holders of Information Technology sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki said that hundreds of youngsters are getting opportunities of livelihood every year through training being imparted to them in different trades at Technical Training Center.

He on the occasion directed the concerned high ups to introduce new modern trades in the TTC and hire services of experts in these trades so as to impart training to the students.

Mr. Domki on the occasion noted with contentment that 50 percent of the students have got livelihood after their graduation from the Training Center.

He said that the role of TTC is very important with regard to provide jobs and livelihood to the students.

Chief Minister on the occasion assured that all available resources would be mobilized to put the TTC on modern lines.

In addition to the TTC, similar centers should also be made operational at the district level, adding he directed.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki being briefed by Principal Shoaib Anwar Shirazi during his visit to Technical Training Center

Sri Lanka Army chief praises Pakistan's role for regional peace

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commander of the Sri Lankan Army Lieutenant General H L V M Liyanage called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir at the General Headquarters (GHQ) on Friday. During the meeting, matters of professional interest, and ways for enhancing bilateral defence ties were discussed, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The Sri Lankan Army Chief praised the Pakistan Army for its professionalism and successes in the ongoing operations for bringing peace and stability in the region.

The COAS highlighted that Sri Lanka had historic relations with Pakistan and its armed forces, particularly in the fields of defense and training cooperation.

The visiting dignitary will also witness the Passing Out Parade at the Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul on Saturday. Earlier on arrival at the GHQ, the Sri Lankan Army Commander laid a wreath at the Yaggar-e-Shuhada. A smartly turned out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the dignitary.

4 terrorists killed, one held by security forces

RAWALPINDI (APP): Four terrorists were killed and one was apprehended in injured position by the security forces after an intense fire exchange during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in general area Semu Wanda, Lakki Marwat District, on the night of October 19 and 20.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the terrorists remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as target killing of innocent civilians. A cache of arms, equipment and explosives was also recovered during the operation.

Pakistan desirous of promoting cooperation with Britain in media sector: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Friday that Pakistan was desirous to promote cooperation with Britain in the field of media.

During a meeting with the Political Counsellor of the British High Commission Miss Zoe Ware, the discussion was held on Pak-UK relations, hate speech, misinformation, elimination of disinformation, promotion of cooperation in media sectors and the Safe Digital Environment Programme of UNDP.

The minister said that Pakistan highly valued its relations with Britain.

He expressed the hope that UNDP's Safe Digital Environment programme will help counter misinformation and hateful narratives.

The project, he added will further improve the knowledge, capacity and skills of key government agencies and officials in

identifying false and hateful narratives in the online space.

The minister said that misinformation, disinformation and fake news was a problem of the whole world which should be controlled.

The biggest challenge on social media was fake news, he opined.

He said that help would be taken from the UK's Modern Media Curriculum for providing training to journalists and Information Service Academy will play an important role in this regard.

He said that awareness sessions on hate speech and misinformation would be organized at the ICA.

Cooperation between Pakistan and Britain in the fields of film and drama was also discussed in the meeting.

"Film and drama play an important role in highlighting the culture and positive identity of any country," Murtaza Solangi remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Political Counsellor of the British High Commission Miss Zoe Ware meeting with Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi



RAWALPINDI: Commander of the Sri Lankan Army Lieutenant General H L V M Liyanage meeting with Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir in Rawalpindi

Government of Balochistan shows concern about long march of BNP

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QUETTA: The spokesman, Government of Balochistan has expressed concern about the long march of Balochistan National Party (BNP).

In a statement issued here on Friday, the spokesman of provincial government reacted on the long march of BNP and said that it (long march) should not be held. He said that the provincial government has great concern over the BNP long march due to the security apprehensions.

He said that it is responsibility of the provincial government to protect the masses and establish law and order in the province.

Jan Achakzai welcomes reduction in prices of different edibles after decreasing of petrol prices

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Government determined to provide relief to general public, protect rights

come down to Rs. 290, he added.

Moreover, the price of different vegetables have also been decreased considerably, Jan Achakzai mentioned adding that it is our moral responsibility to reach the fruits of reduction in prices of petrol to the masses.

He appreciated the cooperation of traders community in this regard besides praising the efforts made by the local administration.

He said that the role of traders is important to control inflation.

The Minister Information said that the interim government is determined to provide relief to the masses.

PM arrives in Islamabad after concluding his visit to China

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar arrived here on Friday after concluding his five-day visit to China.

During the visit, the prime minister addressed the Third Belt and Road Forum held in Beijing. On the sidelines of the Forum, he also met with the leaders of different countries, including Russia, Kenya and Sri Lanka.

He also held meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang as well as the senior leadership of the Communist Party of China and discussed the ways forward to deepen bilateral relations.

Heads of various Chinese companies also called on the prime minister wherein the two sides explored opportunities to strengthen trade and investment cooperation.

On the last leg of the visit, the prime minister visited Urumqi and met Member of Politburo of CPC's Central Committee Ma Xingrui, besides addressing the students at Xinjiang University.

During the visit, the two sides signed 20 agreements and memorandums of understanding, covering cooperation on the BRI, infrastructure, mining, industry, green and low-carbon development, health, space cooperation, digital, development cooperation and export of agricultural products to China.



QUETTA: Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi presiding a meeting of Vice-chancellors of public sector Universities of Balochistan at BUIITEMS.

PkMAP rally in support of Palestinians: Solution to issue of Palestine unavailable for peace of world: Mehmood Achakzai

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Palestinians.

Addressing the rally, Chairman PkMAP said if United Nations can't stop war in Gaza then there's no use of it.

He stressed that the world community should find out the way to stop the war in the name of humanity.

He also stressed that independent states of Palestine and Israel should be set up through dialogue.

If there was no ceasefire then it is feared that it may not turn in the regional war, adding Chairman PkMAP said.

Meanwhile, the participants of rally were carrying the banners inscribed with the slogans against Israel's aggression and barbarism on the Palestinians in Gaza.

QUETTA: The Chairman of Pashtoonkhw Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Mehmood Khan Achakzai has stressed that it is unavoidable to find solution to the Palestine issue for the peace of world.

The Chairman PkMAP was addressing the protest rally taken out by the PkMAP here in the provincial metropolis on Friday.

The rally was led by Chairman PkMAP and participated by a number of party leaders including Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal, Dr Hamid Khan and others.

A large number of party workers and others also participated in the rally that condemned the Israeli naked aggression against



QUETTA: Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Chairman Mehmood Khan Achakzai led the solidarity rally with Palestinian people.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

CPEC's potential

Pakistan is the 'key link' in Beijing's multi-trillion-dollar transactional Belt and Road Initiative and, therefore, one of the few participating countries that have gained the most from Chinese investments under this global cooperation umbrella. However, Sino-Pakistan cooperation on CPEC — BRI's flagship project, which seeks to connect countries across continents via rail, road and maritime routes — has remained restricted to Beijing's investments in energy and transport infrastructure projects in Pakistan over the last one decade.

Chinese firms invested over \$25bn in infrastructure development in Pakistan at a time when investments from elsewhere were drying up. But no progress has been made in industry and agriculture to boost productivity and exports.

While physical infrastructure is crucial to trade development and economic growth, it is vital for Pakistan to increase productivity and exports through foreign investment and technology transfer for tackling its perpetual balance-of-payments and debt crises.

That is precisely why many maintain that Islamabad has failed to fully realise CPEC's promise, and missed a golden opportunity to fix its economy.

China's renewed push for BRI global cooperation at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held this week to mark the first decade of BRI's launch has afforded Pakistan yet another chance to expand bilateral economic ties with Beijing beyond debt-creating energy and transport schemes. Thus, we may take heart from the multiple agreements reached between the two countries to expand CPEC's scope, and expand bilateral economic and investment cooperation to industry, mining, agriculture, livelihood projects, science and technology, education, etc. Simultaneously, Beijing has agreed to finance and upgrade the rail track from Peshawar to Karachi at the reduced cost of \$6.7bn and to invest \$1.5bn in the refinery business here. These agreements were signed during interim Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar's Beijing visit to participate in the forum where he also met President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Qiang. In the past, bilateral cooperation in these important areas was set back by multiple factors: irresponsible statements by PTI ministers against CPEC investment, bureaucratic impediments, painfully slow progress on Special Economic Zones for creating industrial infrastructure to facilitate the relocation of Chinese industry, poor regulatory and policy regimes, the dollar liquidity crunch and the like. At the same time, the Covid pandemic, Beijing's tensions with the West, and its concerns over security for Chinese nationals working in Pakistan also slowed momentum on BRI and CPEC. That President Xi told the forum that China is moving from "sketching the outline" towards "filling in the details" shows that Beijing is reasserting its position as leader of "economic multilateralism and globalisation".

Reach the masses



Zubeida Mustafa

Recently, I attended the Urban Resource Centre's Forum on the urban poor and land use management in Karachi. NED University's Prof Noman Ahmed spoke on the subject. This was followed by observations from the audience comprising mainly young and intelligent university and college students fully engaged with public issues. The URC was set up in 1989 and is the brainchild of architect and town planner Arif Hasan.

The URC is not the only institution educating the people on issues that have a bearing on their lives. The Irtiq Institute of Social Sciences, a think tank founded in 1993 by progressive academics, is doing the same. Of late, social activist Kaleem Durrani has revived it, attracting young and old alike to its fold.

Yet another group is the newly founded Concerned Citizens Alliance, which was set up in response to the economic and political crisis that has gripped the country since 2021. Its objective is to mobilise experts from various walks of life to discuss the country's multifarious problems and suggest solutions they hope the rulers will adopt. Azhar Jameel, a co-founder, was a political activist but the Alliance has no political agenda.

There are a number of other similar groups working to educate people and create public awareness. Such bodies are rendering a useful service in a society where the free dissemination of information on sensitive and controversial issues is not en-

couraged. The establishment is on the defensive if it is criticised and its knee-jerk reaction is to clamp down on the free expression of opinion. The media has always been in chains in Pakistan even in the days when the country supposedly was democratic. As for the academia and the publishing industry, who hasn't heard of teachers and writers meeting a sorry end because of their liberal views? The banning of books is still a phenomenon not unheard of in Pakistan.

Political parties whose job it is to educate the people politically and tell them about their problems and how they can be resolved do not take this function seriously. They are devoid of statesmanship and lack an intelligent understanding of national issues. It is beyond them to study these issues and look for solutions. Being power-hungry, they seek to get into office by hook or by crook.

Hence issues such as the history of the Freedom Movement, the emergence of Bangladesh, the role of the army in Pakistan's politics, the use of religion to promote political interests and our ties with India are hardly open to an objective and non-partisan discussion in academia. This gives an open field to the pulpit that has made matters worse by spreading obscurantist views in the garb of faith. Any criticism of the founder of the nation, the defence forces and faith-related matters makes one liable to punishment. In such an environment, the organisations mentioned enable a sane and sensible debate on otherwise 'taboo' subjects.

The problem is that these institutions can reach only a limited audience. Given Pakistan's low rate of education and high level of poverty, such think tanks will have to reach out to the masses to make knowledge and

information widely accessible. Hence events such as the URC Forum will have to become a regular exercise that go beyond converting the already converted. The need is to be inclusive and widen the reach of their activities by going to the masses who are handicapped by illiteracy and poverty. People may be open to intelligent discourse but lack the resources to come to their hosts. Their interest in such matters is evident from their participation in Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, etc.

Is it not possible to mobilise the youth who attend the URC Forum and organise and train them to form study circles in low-income localities? By holding interactive meetings with their counterparts in various areas, privileged youth will also gain knowledge of the other half. They would be paying back to society what they have gained over the years. In the process, many of the uneducated will be learning something.

The URC can go further. Following the dictum of Paulo Freire, the author of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, these study circles can provide the youth an opportunity to acquire literacy skills as well. Freire used such occasions to impart literacy to adults with whom he interacted. He observed that they were so keen to learn while discussing their problems that their progress was phenomenal. He described his pedagogical method as "dialogical".

Such an exercise would benefit the youth from the URC too. Learning is a two-way process and both sides would benefit. While the underprivileged youth would gain access to information, URC educators would win the goodwill of the huge majority we call the masses. -- Courtesy Dawn

Not worth it?



Nazir A. Jogezi

The appointment of caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar from Balochistan kindled hope for some measure of equity for the largest, rich-in-natural-resources, but most cash-strapped province. It has also revived the debate around the creation of smaller provinces, a realisation rooted in the Baloch feeling abandoned, helpless and perpetually on the receiving end of injustice.

The stark reality of Balochistan's marginalisation is visible in its sparse population, dismal literacy rate and an inadequate administrative infrastructure. As a result, this vast land is marginally developed. However, its situation does not make it insignificant; such an interpretation reflects a subjective orientation in denial of established global parameters. In the modern era, the size of a country or its population do not determine its worth. A region's value is defined by resources, human capital and productivity.

Singapore, a small country with 728 square kilometres of land and a population of 5.6 million, attained the status of a rich nation in 2011 and has since ranked among the world's high-income economies. In 1957, South Korean income levels were comparable to newly independent Ghana and development economists believed that Ghana had brighter prospects. Today, South Korea is among the top-performing economies in the world. We consider population to be the primary criterion for wealth distri-

bution, which is an impediment in the pursuit of prosperity. We are unable to provide basic amenities, education and skills in a country where a baby is born every seven seconds. There are 17,726 births and 4,351 deaths, along with 454 migrations per day, resulting in a net daily change of 12,920. Pakistan is also expected to surpass Indonesia as the most populated Muslim country in 2048.

Population-based resource distribution has stimulated population growth and raised vested interests in voter pool and new constituencies. Considering this, the voices of most of Balochistan's political leadership are audible in the recent census. But they were silent on education which, despite the provincial constitutional mandate, is a federal issue. Also, the province possesses mineral reserves estimated to be worth \$1 trillion, yet it is unable to contribute to the economic well-being of its populace.

This wealth of national resources can be termed a 'natural resource curse', where countries and regions have performed more poorly than those without such wealth. Technically, it is high costs upfront, lengthy production timelines, site-specificity, scale (sometimes referred to as high rents), price and production volatility, non-renewable resources, and industry opacity. Regions afflicted with this 'curse' are more susceptible to exploitation and are mostly politically, financially and culturally managed, leaving little room for real leadership to emerge and for regional prosperity.

For instance, Balochistan's known natural gas reserves have been more or less exhausted. An erudite friend's response to the lack of access to gas in major parts of the province was shocking: "What was the benefit of providing gas to Balochistan's scattered locations with fewer consumers?" In his province, a few districts with the same number of consumers as Balochistan's entire population were deemed to benefit more from the gas. Such a mindset showcases our inability to distinguish between fundamental rights and commercial parameters. States are not corporations. They are guardians of the rights of citizens.

Regardless of our interpretations, history teaches us that a region's prosperity and dominance are not subject to its size or population. Small countries have proved more capable of experimenting with new policies and institutions, whereas larger ones have come close to economic default. However, this progress depends on the space available to establish their own objectives, priorities and decisions.

Whether or not a Baloch caretaker prime minister represents an equity measure is a critical aspect to explore. Some may argue that Balochistan has more representation in the existing national legislation landscape, and rightly so, but the province is far from affluent. This reinforces the fact that allocating resources on the basis of population or emphasising statistical representation are inappropriate solutions. What matters is a leadership that originates from within and is truly representative of the province's people. A transition from centralised, top-down governance to a more decentralised, bottom-up approach that ensures accountability is the need of the hour. Leaders will not only be accountable but also transparent in their actions, which guarantees empowerment for the people. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM emphasizes enhanced trade, cultural ties between Xinjiang, neighboring Pakistani regions

URUMQI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday emphasized the need for deepening trade, connectivity and cultural ties between Xinjiang and neighbouring regions of Pakistan.

The prime minister said this in a meeting with Li Yifei, Deputy Party Secretary of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China and the Party Secretary of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC).

Appreciating warm sentiments of the Chinese people for Pakistan, Prime Minister Kakar thanked the CPC leadership for its firm support for Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and economic development.

Recalling his recent meetings with the Chinese leadership in Beijing, the prime minister highlighted that Pakistan and China were iron brothers, trusted partners and reliable friends.

He noted the cultural and historical linkages between Xinjiang and Gilgit-Baltistan and underscored the importance of Xinjiang as the starting point of CPEC.

Commending XPCC's strong institutional linkages with Pakistan and its role in the peace and development of Xinjiang, the prime minister invited XPCC to explore business and investment opportunities in Pakistan in industrial development, tourism,

agriculture and minerals and mining sectors. Deputy Party Secretary Li Yifei said that China regarded Pakistan as an important economic partner and would continue its efforts to further deepen trade and connectivity linkages.

He added that the Government of Xinjiang region looked forward to working with Pakistan to facilitate trade, connectivity and people-to-people ties via Khunjerab-Sost border crossing.



URUMQI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets with the Deputy Party Secretary of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps Mr. Li Yifei.



ISLAMABAD: People busy in selecting and purchasing old shoes from vendor along expressway.

Govt. taking vigorous steps to provide maximum facilities to telecom sector: Secretary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary for IT and Telecom Hassan Nasir Jamy on Friday said that the government was taking vigorous steps to provide maximum facilities to the telecom sector.

Caretaker IT Minister Dr Umar Saif has special interest in promoting IT and Telecom sector in the country and recently approved

infrastructure sharing framework and the proposed spectrum sharing mechanism are important milestones to reduce operational cost of telecom operators, he expressed while talking to Head of Asia Telenor Group Borre Furberg.

The Secretary further said that the country had 190 million cellphones, 127 million mobile

broadband subscribers and 130 million broadband users, reflecting its potential in the sector.

They also discussed issues relating to upcoming IMT Spectrum Auction and business and investment opportunities in Pakistan. Mr. Petter-Borre Furberg, EVP and Head of Asia, Telenor Group said, "We are proud of the contributions Telenor has made since 2004.

Over 200 Chinese, Pak businessmen discuss ways to foster closer ties

BEIJING (APP): More than 200 Chinese and Pakistani prominent business leaders gathered during an interactive session here to foster closer ties and explore new avenues of collaboration.

The event organized by CZK Group which was attended by Caretaker Minister for Commerce and Industry, Dr Gohar Ijaz, Caretaker Minister of Energy, Power and Petroleum, Muhammad Ali and Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development &

Special Initiatives, Muhammad Sami Saeed. The event provided a platform for Pakistani businessmen to share their success stories and experiences of doing business with their Chinese counterparts.

The business leaders expressed their interest in capitalizing on the vast potential that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offers to further solidify China-Pakistan economic relations.

FII foundation to discuss economic impact of global conflicts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Future Investment Initiative (FII) Foundation will discuss the economic impact of global conflicts at its seventh edition, to be held from October 24 to 26 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The FII conference will bring together leaders from finance, technology, and government to address the most pressing economic

challenges facing the world today.

In a virtual press conference held on Friday, Executive Chairman of the Future Investment Initiative Foundation Richard Atlas stressed that the conference would focus on "important issues, including the economic impact of the current conflicts in the world, climate change and artificial intelligence strategies.

PSX contuse with bullish trend, gains 366 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Friday continued with bullish trend, gaining 366.72 points, a positive change of 0.73 per cent, closing at 50,731.87 points against 50,365.15 points the previous day.

A total of 430,052,557 shares valuing Rs 14.611 billion were traded during the day as compared to 427,476,593 shares valuing Rs 14.593 billion the previous day.

As many as 350 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 188 of them recorded gains and 145 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 17 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were Pak Refinery with 42,467,382 shares at Rs 18.13 per share, K-Electric Ltd with 35,749,829 shares at Rs 3.26 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 31,023,989 shares at Rs 1.28 per share. Pak Hotels XD witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 35.72 per share price, closing at Rs 512.25, whereas the runner-up was Murree Brewery XD with a Rs 18.67 rise in its per share price to Rs 267.66.

PTA triumphs at LEAD awards 2023 for Child & Youth Safety Online

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) emerged victorious at the LEAD Awards 2023 in recognition of its commitment to ensuring child and youth safety online.

The award was received by Director PTA (Head of Child Online Protection Committee) in a ceremony held in the UAE by SAMENA Telecommunications Council said a news

release. PTA's significant achievements in this domain includes MoU with UNICEF, the allocation of an emergency short code (1121) for reporting child abuse, and carrying out Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) survey by UNICEF Global as part of the 'Disrupting Harm Programme'.

Pakistan has become the 12th country to conduct the KAP survey.

Zong 4G signs MoU with LCCI to strengthen city's business ecosystem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, a Pakistan's leading digital network, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industries (LCCI) to revolutionize the landscape of communication and digitalization.

Through this strategic alliance, Zong 4G's Enterprise Solutions will play a pivotal role in meeting

the evolving communication needs of LCCI and its esteemed members, as it aims to foster collaboration and synergies between LCCI and its member companies, said a news release on Friday.

Speaking on behalf of Zong 4G, the official spokesperson expressed unwavering commitment to advancing the digitalization of Pakistan's corporate sector.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman addressing a seminar at Government Graduate APWA College for Women.

Situation in Palestine is painful: Governor Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman on Friday attended a seminar on the role of different governments in national consolidation and foreign policy at Government Graduate APWA College for Women as Chief Guest. Secretary Higher Education Sajid Zafar Dal, DPI Colleges Syed Ansar Azhar, Director Colleges Lahore Division Muhammad Zahid Mian and Principal APWA College Professor Dr. Naima Khurshid and education expert Muzamil Mahmood Butt and others were present in the ceremony. Addressing the ceremony, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the situation in Palestine is painful. He said that bombs are being dropped on innocent children, women, and civilians in Palestine, adding he said that the weapons of the so-called developed countries of the world are being used. He said that the sad thing is that the countries that advocate human rights

are vetoing the ceasefire resolution. He said whole humanity is like a body, if one part of the body suffers, the rest of the human beings should also feel it. He said that our religion has ordered to take care of humans as well as animals, birds and the environment. He said that eternal success lies in truth. He stressed that understanding other's viewpoints with tolerance is very important. He said that disinformation is spread on social media and people accept it without verifying. He added that it is forbidden in our religion to believe a rumour and spread it further. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman further said that education is very important to take the country forward. We increased the budget of higher education from 34 billion to 120 billion, which yielded positive results. Unfortunately, after 2018, the funding of higher education was reduced to 60 billion.

Secretary Economic Affairs Division calls on CM KP

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan was called on by Federal Secretary for Economic Affairs Division Dr. Kazim Niaz and a representative of the Asian Development Bank for Pakistan here on Friday. Various matters related to foreign-funded projects being executed in the province especially in the Newly Merged Districts came under discussion. Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and Additional Chief Secretary Imtiaz Hussain Shah were also present on the occasion. It was agreed that special steps would be taken to accelerate the pace of work on the ongoing foreign-funded projects in the province to ensure their completion in the stipulated time frame. It was decided that the caretaker Chief Minister will hold monthly progress review meetings in order to speed up work on these projects. The Chief Secretary will make arrangements for the funding gap of these projects.

Railway employees stage protest, observe hunger strike

Independent Report
PESHAWAR (APP): The Railways Employees in Peshawar staged a protest demonstration besides sitting up for a hunger strike camp in front of the Peshawar Press Club on Friday. Protest and hunger strike camp of railway employees in favour of their demands as the employees are waiting for their salaries and pension. The employees in a protest wore black bands as well. The employees have locked their mouths as a sign of a hunger strike.

Caretaker CM's inspection leads to addition of 36 beds at Children's Hospital

Independent Report
LAHORE: Responding swiftly, 36 beds were promptly added within 48 hours on the ground floor of the Children's Hospital, effectively augmenting pediatric treatment capacity and efficiently managing the influx of patients. Late at night, Chief Minister personally inspected the medical emergency section on the ground floor, the newly established baby ward on the first floor, and the emergency section still under construction. In line with the Chief Minister's directives, the existing space within the medical emergency was optimised to accommodate the additional beds. Expressing his satisfaction at the immediate implementation of this initiative, CM Mohsin Naqvi announced plans to further increase the emergency bed capacity to 150.



PESHAWAR: A representative delegation of Chitral Students Association meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali.

Amir Mir clarifies eviction policy targets no specific nationalities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Amir Mir refuted claims of targeted legal action against specific nationalities residing illegally in Punjab, emphasizing that the government's focus is on foreign elements contributing to terrorism in the country. He clarified that the recent measures do not exclusively target Afghans, but encompass all unlawfully present foreigners. While acknowledging the involvement of Afghans in recent anti-state activities, Minister Mir stressed that the said policy aims to deal with all foreign individuals residing illegally in Pakistan. Notably, the 1.4 million Afghan refugees, who have received temporary authorization from NADRA, are not included in this initiative. These refugees, of which 1.64 million reside in Punjab.

IPC playing effective role for national harmony: Masood

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The KP Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination Masood Ahmed has said that his department has developed ideal coordination with the federal and other provincial governments while due to close support from the federation and other units, long-standing problems being resolved apart from the economic problems of the province. Mohsin Naqvi

CM, Turkiye's consul general discuss investment opportunities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Durmus Bastug, the consul general of Turkiye, stationed in Lahore, held a meeting with Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at the Chief Minister's Office on Friday. The discussions encompassed a range of topics, including mutual interests, intensifying cooperation across diverse sectors, and bolstering bilateral investments. Mohsin Naqvi emphasized the deep-rooted bond of fraternity between the peoples of Pakistan and Turkiye, emphasizing the critical need to further strengthen relations as per the Lahore and Istanbul Sister Cities Agreement. He expressed eagerness to elevate engagements with Turkiye in various domains and assured Turkish investors of receiving full-fledged support for their ventures in Punjab.

Gomal university to celebrate golden jubilee in 2024: VC

Independent Report
DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Vice-Chancellor of Gomal University Professor Dr. Shakibullah has said that elaborate arrangements are being made to celebrate the golden jubilee of the university in 2024. In this regard a consultative meeting with Gomal University alumni forum Islamabad was held to discuss plans for the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the university. The meeting was attended by Gomal University Alumni Forum Convener Director Pharmacy Services Polyclinic Dr. Amina Khan, Senior Gomalian Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto University, Dr. Syed Ghulam President Alumni Forum Farid Khan.

Minister orders crackdown on substandard beauty products in Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir has ordered a crackdown on those producing and trading substandard beauty products in the province. He issued directives during a review meeting with district drug quality control boards' secretaries on Friday. He ordered a crackdown on unauthorised individuals administering beauty injections, stressing the use of only Drug Regulatory Authority-approved injections for beauty and skincare. Dr. Jamal highlighted that only qualified skin specialists and surgeons should administer these injections, and ordered strict action against unqualified individuals violating the rules. Additionally, he addressed the issue of substandard beauty creams, which could pose serious health risks, including cancer. He said that stringent policies would be implemented to regulate non-standard cosmetics and beauty creams. Standard operating procedures for cosmetic cream preparation would be established, and licences would be issued to cosmetic cream manufacturers.

International News

Xi says China to work with Egypt to help stabilise Middle East

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping told Egypt's prime minister on Thursday that their countries should work together to bring "more stability" to the Middle East, as the Israeli aggression on Gaza casts a shadow over the region. China has repeatedly backed a vague two-state proposal on the decades-long deadlock, but it has historically been sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. Xi met Egypt's Mostafa Madbouli in Beijing on Thursday, repeating China's support for a "two-state solution... to realise the peaceful coexistence of Palestine and Israel", according to multiple state media outlets. "China is willing to enhance cooperation with Egypt... and inject more certainty and stability into the region and the world," Xi was reported as saying. Beijing was also willing to work with Cairo to "jointly safeguard international fairness and justice as well as the common interests of developing countries", he said. China "appreciates the important role played by Egypt in de-escalating the situation and supports Egypt's efforts to open humanitarian corridors", Xi

told Madbouli. "It is crucial to prevent the situation from expanding or even losing control and causing a serious humanitarian crisis," Xi said. "The top priority is to cease fire and stop war at an early date," he added. And after the United States vetoed a UN Security Council resolution on Wednesday calling for a "humanitarian pause", Beijing reiterated those calls for a cessation of violence. "China is deeply disappointed in the United States' obstruction of the Security Council's adoption of a draft resolution on the Palestinian issue."



Members of the military stand guard as people take part in a protest in support of Palestinians, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in Old Cairo, Egypt.

China and Russia find common cause in Israel-Hamas crisis

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: With anger building across the Middle East over Israel's strikes in Gaza, China and Russia are finding common cause with countries across the region in support of the Palestinians. For Moscow and Beijing, Israel's bombardment of Gaza following the Hamas attacks that killed 1,400 Israelis presents an opportunity to burnish their credentials as the champions of the developing world, in contrast with the United States, which has put its support squarely behind ally Israel. China has consistently called for restraint and a ceasefire but has also sharpened its criticism of Israel. "Israel's actions have gone beyond the scope of self-defence," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said this week, calling on it to stop its "collective punishment" of Gaza residents. Chinese state media reported.

Canada cuts some consular services in India amid row over Sikh leader's murder

Monitoring Desk
OTTAWA: Canada on Friday said it was temporarily suspending in-person operations at consulates in several Indian cities and warned of visa processing delays amid a diplomatic dispute over the murder of a Sikh separatist leader in British Columbia. The announcements affecting consulates in Bengaluru, Chandigarh, and Mumbai came hours after Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said Canada has withdrawn 41 diplomats from India. Separately, Indian government sources said New Delhi is not planning to impose any measures to curb imports or investments from Canada despite the dispute. New Delhi last month asked Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited what he said was credible evidence of a potential link between Indian agents and the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un welcomes Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Pyongyang.

Russian FM thanks North Korea for support over Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has met North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Russia's foreign ministry said on Thursday, as the two countries forge closer ties in the face of what they see as a hostile and aggressive US-led Western camp. Russian state-run TASS news agency reported that Lavrov's meeting with Kim had lasted over an hour but the ministry did not provide further details. Lavrov, who arrived in Pyongyang on Wednesday, earlier thanked North Korea for backing Russia's military actions in Ukraine and pledged Moscow's "complete support and solidarity" for Kim, Russia's foreign ministry

said. Lavrov's visit is seen as setting the stage for a visit by President Vladimir Putin, who has stepped up cooperation with politically isolated North Korea. Speaking at a reception hosted by the North on Wednesday, Lavrov said Moscow strongly valued Pyongyang's "unwavering and principled support" for Russia in the Ukraine war, which it calls a "special military operation". "Likewise the Russian Federation extends its complete support and solidarity with the aspirations of the DPRK," Lavrov said, according to the transcript of the speech released on his ministry's website. DPRK are the initials of the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. After talks with North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui, Lavrov later told reporters that increased military activities by the United States and its allies Japan and South Korea were a cause for concern, Russia's state-run RIA news agency reported. The US and South Korean navies on Thursday joined those of four other countries — Canada, Belgium, New Zealand and the Philippines — for an anti-naval mine exercise off South Korea's south coast, the South Korean defence ministry said. A US B-52 bomber made a rare landing in South Korea on Thursday to underline the two countries' alliance against North Korea's rising nuclear threats, South Korea's military said.

Brutalities expand to West Bank as Israel kills 12 in refugee camp

Monitoring Desk
RAMALLAH: The Israeli forces on Thursday extended atrocities to the occupied West Bank, killing 12 Palestinians and pounded a military base in Syria as calls for humanitarian aid swelled for the helpless people of Gaza Strip. At least 78 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops or settlers in the West Bank since the Hamas raid on Oct 7, the Palestinian health ministry said, as the death toll in Gaza soared to 3,785. The deaths occurred during an Israeli attack on Nur Shams refugee camp, the Palestinian Authority (PA) said. The Wafa news agency reported that seven of the dead had been transported to hospital, while five others were in a mosque inside the camp. The authority said it had been informed of "other martyrs who could not be transferred by ambulance to hospital". In separate clashes earlier in the day, Israeli forces shot dead a 17-year-old in Dheisheh refugee camp, near Bethlehem, and a 32-year-old in Budrus, to the west of Ramallah.

People take part in a rally in support of Palestinians on Thursday in Chicago.



People take part in a rally in support of Palestinians on Thursday in Chicago.

Ukrainian parliament gives initial approval for 2024 budget increasing army funding

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's parliament gave initial approval on Thursday for the 2024 budget, which will increase funding for the army and national defence because of the war with Russia. Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko said the government's priorities next year included accumulating funds for defence and security, and securing social payments for the population "to bring Ukraine's victory closer." The budget law, which was approved in its first reading, sets budget revenues at 1.7 trillion hryvnias (\$46.4 billion), and spending is targeted at 3.3 trillion hryvnias, lawmaker Yaroslav Zhelezniak said on the Telegram messaging app. The budget deficit is expected to be about 1.6 trillion hryvnias, he said. Officials have said that about half the state budget is planned to go to the defence sector next year. Marchenko told Reuters last week that donor "tiredness" was growing as the war with Russia dragged on but that he would continue working with international partners to raise the necessary funds to close the budget gap. Ukraine has attracted nearly \$34 billion in Western financial aid so far this year after receiving \$31 billion in 2022. Last year, the economy shrank by about one-third as millions of people fled the war, towns and cities were bombed, logistics routes and supply chains were disrupted.

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Opposition to Israeli attacks in Gaza is growing in the United States where a State Department official has resigned over additional US military aid to Israel and a group of progressive lawmakers have introduced a "ceasefire now" resolution in Congress. Also, the US media reported on Thursday that Capitol police have arrested hundreds of Jewish peace activists for holding anti-war protests inside the Capitol building. On Wednesday evening, Josh Paul, who was director of congressional and public affairs at the department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, posted his resignation letter online in a rare act of public dissent against the Biden administration's pro-Israeli policies. Japan's foreign minister to attend Cairo meet

US official resigns over military aid to Israel

Monitoring Desk
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Japan's foreign minister to attend Cairo meet

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa said she would visit Egypt to attend an international conference on Saturday that will discuss ways of tackling humanitarian and safety issues stemming from the Israel-Hamas conflict. "I plan to visit Egypt to take part in the Cairo Peace Summit, which will be hosted by the Egyptian government to discuss the situation surrounding Israel."

President for enhanced collaboration of Pakistani varsities with Rhodes Trust

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday stressed the need to enhance collaboration and cooperation between Pakistani universities and the Rhodes Trust at the University of Oxford.

The president, in a meeting with a delegation of Rhodes Trust, headed by former Senate Chairman Waseem Sajjad and CEO of Rhodes Trust of UK, Elizabeth Kiss, also

urged the Pakistani universities to strengthen their linkages with world-famous institutions, particularly the University of Oxford.

He said the provision of scholarships as well as the support and counselling of Pakistani students by the Rhodes Trust was appreciable.

The president said the counselling of the students would help enrich their capabilities.

The Rhodes Trust CEO apprised the President of the education sector and the provision of scholarships to Pakistani students.

She said the Rhodes Trust desired to enhance the linkage between Pakistani universities and Oxford University.

She said the foreign education would enable the students to bring positive changes in the society.

The Rhodes Trust CEO said the Pakistani students had availed scholarships in the fields of politics, law, science, arts and governance.

Besides, various prominent Pakistani personalities including former Senate Chairman Waseem Sajjad, Islamabad High Court Judge Babar Sattar and Shahid Javed Burki, had benefited from the Rhodes scholarships.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Rhodes Trust, United Kingdom led by CEO of Rhodes Trust, Dr Elizabeth Kiss, and former Chairman Senate and Acting President of Pakistan, Mr Waseem Sajjad, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf addressed the participants of 25th National Security Workshop at Naval Headquarters.

Solangi dispels notion of any delay in election

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, dispelling the impression of a delay in election, said on Friday that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was performing its duties diligently to further electoral process in a responsible way.

He said the ECP had already announced that the election would be held by the end of January.

The minister was talking to private television channels in two separate

programmes on current affairs.

"The Election Commission will announce final dates for the election and it is our responsibility to provide financial, administrative, and security assistance to the ECP for the purpose," he said.

Solangi said the ECP was implementing its schedule and the political parties would be granted 54 days for conducting election campaign.

He said the caretaker government, which had limited powers and tenure, was

bound by the Constitution and law.

The ECP was responsible for holding the elections in a transparent, free and fair manner and the government which was a constitutional one would provide all-out assistance in that regard.

To a query, he said the Law Ministry would consult with the ECP on the petition seeking elections within 90 days and present its stance in the Supreme Court that had ultimate authority to decide on the matter.

Domki terms SOS Village pride of society: Govt to extend every possible cooperation to SOS Children village-like institutions: CM

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the social welfare institutions like SOS Children Village are pride of our society, and the provincial government would extend every possible cooperation to them.

The Chief Minister was on visit to the SOS Children Village here on Friday.

The Chief Minister was welcomed by the head of SOS Children Village and former Federal Minister, Senator (Retd) Mrs. Roshan Khursheed

Bharucha and other staff.

Mrs. Bharucha briefed the visiting Chief Minister about the overall working of SOS Children Village and the facilities available to the children staying in the village.

The Chief Minister appreciated the SOS Children Village for the social services being performed for the orphaned children there. He said that the services being rendered by the institution are commendable. He also termed SOS Village as pride of the society and adding assured that every possible cooperation would be extended to the institution by the provincial government.

Dr. Alvi expresses condolences to families of martyrs in Zhub attack

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Dr. Arif Alvi has expressed his condolences over the phone to the families of the martyrs of the attack in Zhub, Balochistan on October 8.

According to the statement issued by the President's Media Wing, the President of the State condoled with the heirs of Major Syed Ali Raza Shah and Havaladar Nisar Ahmad over the phone.

The President said that meeting a brave person like Major Syed Ali Raza Shah Shaheed in the past was a proud moment for me.

The President also spoke to the family members of Havaladar Abdul Sattar, who was martyred in the terrorist attack in Zhub on September 28.

He paid tribute to the martyrs for sacrificing their lives for the sake of the country.



WASHINGTON: Ambassador Masood Khan congratulated Fajer Pasha, Executive Director Pakistan Alliance for Girls Education, who called on him at the Chancery. He also felicitated the entire team of PAGE, terming their efforts as 'a great contribution to the increasing literacy in Pakistan.'

BFA fines 18 shops on substandard of items in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) imposed fines on 18 including 7 food establishments respectively for violating the rules during the operations in Tehsil Jiwani District Gwadar and Dera Murad Jamali area of Nasirabad.

According to the BFA spokesperson, 7 general stores, 3 hotels and 1 bakery were among the centres fined in Jiwani during operation.

A large quantity of over-expired and prohibited items were recovered from the general stores, which were confiscated and later destroyed, the spokesman said.

The items destroyed included packets of spices, Namco, biscuits, tetra pack milk, chips, Jackie & custard powder and baby food products.

The action was taken against the bakery for dirt in the baking premises, rusty machines and baking trays, improper arrangements for preventing insects and use of unhealthy sweets by a team of BFA in operation.

The spokesman said that the cleanliness and storage arrangements in the hotels were unsanitary and Chinese salt was being used in the dishes.

Apart from this, action was taken against 4 spice shops, 2 hotels and 1 bakery for violation of hygiene rules in the Dera Murad Jamali area of Nasirabad district. The spokesman said that action was taken against the spice shops for various reasons including inadequate cleaning arrangements, and keeping open spices outside the shops.

Nawaz's return will create hope for improvements: Shah

HYDERABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (N) Sindh President, Shah Muhammad Shah Friday said that Mian Nawaz Sharif was neither afraid of jails nor could be intimidated, he has made a deal with the people.

Talking to the media at the Hyderabad railway station while going to Lahore to welcome party leader Mian Nawaz Sharif.

A special train, which departed from Karachi to transport party workers to receive Nawaz Sharif, reached Hyderabad, where PML-N supporters accorded a warm welcome. According to the party sources workers from Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Tharparkar, Mirpurkhas, Badin and Sajawal.

Poverty increases in Pakistan during the last financial year: report

KARACHI (Online) Poverty in Pakistan is estimated to have increased during the last fiscal year due to record high food and energy prices, weak labor markets and damage caused by floods. According to the report, the Macro Poverty Outlook prepared for the recently concluded annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF in Morocco indicated that without significant positive growth rates in food and energy. High prices can cause social decay.

It may particularly affect the well-being of already disadvantaged households, whose savings are already depleting and incomes are falling.

The report stated that

high inflation coupled with worsening wage and employment situation has severely affected purchasing power, due to which poverty is estimated to increase. Inflation rate is expected to be 26.5 percent during fiscal year 2024, which is likely to be 17 percent in FY 2025 after a reduction.

The report noted that higher petroleum levies and energy tariff adjustments would maintain domestic energy price pressures, and increase social and economic insecurity. Despite the signing of a \$3 billion short-term loan agreement with the IMF this year, foreign exchange reserves are expected to remain less than one month's worth of imports during the next fiscal year.

NOC issued to special plane of Nawaz Sharif

ISLAMABAD (Online): Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has issued NOC to special plane to come to Pakistan in connection with return of Nawaz Sharif to home.

Former Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif will leave Dubai for Pakistan through special Dubai flight 4525.

The NOC has been issued to special plane. The plane will take off from Dubai airport at 10 a.m on October 21.

According to Islamabad airport flight schedule the plane will land on Islamabad airport at 12:00 hours.

The plane will leave Islamabad for Lahore at 2.30 p.m and will reach Lahore at 3.30 p.m

Policeman martyred in exchange of fire with drug dealer

PESHAWAR (APP): The police constable, who was injured by bullets during an exchange of fire with a narcotics dealer last night in Kohat, succumbed to his injuries in the hospital.

According to the details, a police party conducted a raid in the mountainous area of Chakerkot Bala last night to arrest a notorious drug dealer.

However, he opened fire, seriously injuring constable Kashif.



QUETTA: Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai inaugurating exhibition squash match by hitting shot

China cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy, anchor of regional peace: PM

URUMQI (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday met Ma Xingru, member of the Politburo of Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCPC) and Party Secretary of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and underscored Pakistan's commitment to friendship with China.

The Prime Minister emphasized that the relationship with China was the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and an anchor for regional peace and development. Recalling his meetings with Premier Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang in Beijing,

the Prime Minister appreciated the strong personal commitment of the Chinese leadership to further strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries.

Reiterating the importance of Xinjiang for Pakistan, Prime Minister Kakar underscored that the region held a specific significance due to its geographical, historical and cultural affinity with Pakistan.

He stressed the importance of deepening of linkages between Xinjiang and the neighbouring areas of Pakistan in diverse fields of cooperation, ranging from trade and investment to cultural and people-to-

people ties.

Thanking the Prime Minister for visiting Xinjiang, Party Secretary Ma Xingru stated that there was immense potential to deepen Pakistan-Xinjiang ties in multiple domains. He expressed Xinjiang's willingness to explore business and trade opportunities in Pakistan and to further facilitate commercial and people-to-people ties via Khunjerab-Sost border crossing.

The two sides agreed to work together to harness the full potential of cooperation between Xinjiang and the neighbouring areas of Pakistan.



URUMQI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets Mr. Abdureqip Tumulniyaz, Imam of Hangang Mosque and Dean of Xinjiang Islamic Institute.

PM offers Friday prayer at Urumqi's historic Grand Bazar Mosque

URUMQI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar offered Friday prayer at the historic Hang Yang Grand Bazar Mosque of Urumqi. The prime minister prayed for the progress and prosperity of the country as well as the Muslim Ummah. He specially prayed for the oppressed people of Gaza and for their deliverance from suffering. He was accompanied by his delegation members including Jilil Abbas Jilani, Sarfaraz Bugti and others.

Pakistan calls for addressing terrorism's root causes

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan told UN's Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) that efforts to counter the terrorist menace would remain futile if the root causes— injustice, oppression, occupation and suppression of the right to self-determination— remain unaddressed. "Denial of these fundamental human rights and state terrorism will only lead to violent narratives," Pakistani delegate Jawad Ajmal said during a debate on 'Countering terrorist narratives and preventing the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.'

Ajmal, a first secretary at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, said that in the digital revolution, terrorist groups are able to recruit, organize and incite terrorism by using the internet as a command-and-control centre with technical tools like cryptocurrencies to transfer funds, and the dark web as a medium for execution of terrorism globally.

In his regard, he called

for regulation of technology companies, social media platforms and internet providers that are primarily driven by commercial interests, to curb their misuse and prevent the proliferation of hate and xenophobia including Islamophobia leading to violence and hatred against peoples and nations.

Capacity building of state agencies was essential for countering cyber terrorism, as was a global plan of action to educate and caution the young and vulnerable about the dangers of radicalization and online recruitment, the Pakistani delegate said.

Ajmal also underscored the need for reform of the global counter-terrorism architecture to deal with threats, including state terrorism, right-wing, extremist and fascist movements, and to also counter-narratives that facilitate and promote stigmatization of Islam and Muslims.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf called on Palestinian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Ahmed Jawad Rabei.

PML-N Balochistan party leaders & workers depart for welcome of Nawaz Sharif in Lahore

Independent Report QUETTA: The provincial leaders and workers of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) belonging to Quetta and different other parts of the province left Quetta for Lahore on Friday.

While a large number of the PML-N leaders and workers proceeded for Lahore by a special train from Quetta Railway station, several others also left by road from Quetta and other parts of the province.

The PML-N Provincial President Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, Jamal Shah Kakar, Chaudhary Naem Karim and some

other provincial leaders had already left Quetta for Lahore to welcome the party central leader.

Prominent among those who left for Lahore on Friday were Naseem Rehman Khan and others.

A special train was also booked by the PML-N leadership to take the party workers to Lahore for the grand show arranged by the party command for welcome of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in Lahore.

The train consisting of seven bogies left the Quetta Railway station at 11:00 AM would reach Lahore today (Saturday) evening.