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Presence of virus in environmental samples in Pishin matter of concern:

Coverage of polio immunization campaigns gradually improved in Balochistan: Domki

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardaan Khan Domki has stated that the coverage of polio immunization campaign has improved gradually in the province.

In the August 2023's campaign, the polio teams were succeeded in administering anti polio vaccine to the children while the coverage of the campaign run in May this year remained 100 percent and so in the previous campaign launched in the Quetta block, noted with contentment by the caretaker Chief Minister while speaking on the occasion of start of the country wide polio immunization campaign under National Task Force for polio eradication in

Islamabad on Monday. The Chief Minister also pointed out that no case of polio has been reported in Balochistan since January 27, 2021.

The last case of polio had been reported from Kila Abdullah, he maintained. However, the polio virus has been detected in the environmental samples in Pishin district after 28 months, which is a matter of great concern for us.

Mr. Domki also said that the virus detected in the Pishin environmental belongs to Afghanistan.

On finding the virus, the special immunization campaign was launched on an emergent basis in Pishin from September 26.

However, steps are being taken for prevention of the virus and stopping its spread to other areas.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing a press Conference.

PM stresses provision of skills to manpower according to contemporary requirements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday stressed the need to work on a war footing for the provision of skills to the country's manpower according to contemporary requirements.

He said the professional education and vocational training programs should be prepared at par with the needs of the international market.

Chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet here, the prime minister said steps should be taken to increase employment opportunities of skilled people abroad.

On recommendation of federal ministry of education and professional training, the federal cabinet also approved the service level amended agreement between

National Vocational and Technical Training Commission and Saudi agency Takamol.

The prime minister directed that all existing centers of technical education and vocational training should be activated.

On the recommendation of the ministry of education and professional training, the Cabinet also approved the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Area Studies Center, University of Peshawar and Central Asia Research Center of Corvius University of Hungary.

The Cabinet also extended approval to the name of Summit Bank Limited as Bank Mukarramah Limited on the recommendation of the finance ministry.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan administering drop to a child to formally inaugurate anti polio campaign

Polio campaign starts in 34 districts of Balochistan

Foolproof security arrangements made for the campaign: CS

Independent Report

QUETTA: The country-wide anti-polio campaign started in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan province on Monday.

The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan formally inaugurated the immunization campaign by administering anti-polio drops to the children at the Chief Secretary's office.

Administration of the anti-polio vaccine to the children marked inauguration of the vital campaign against the crippling disease.

Also present on the occasion were Secretary

Health, Asfandyar Khan Kakar, Coordinator Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for Polio Eradication, Syed Zahid Shah, EPI's Dr. Aftab Kakar and other concerned high ups. Also attended the ceremony by the representatives of UNICEF and WHO.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary said that it has been targeted to vaccinate over 2.44 million children below five years of age during the seven-day campaign in the province.

He informed that around 11,000 teams have been taking part in the immunization campaign for

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ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

Interior minister says

Security personnel involved in smuggling to face court martial

Says apex committee meetings being held to tackle terrorism; "Not right" to say security forces not involved in smuggling; Caretaker govt taking special measures to curb terrorism, hoarding, smuggling

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti announced on Monday that any security personnel found engaged in cross-border smuggling will face court-martial proceedings. Bugti's statement follows a similar warning issued by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir, emphasizing that security officials involved in cross-border smuggling would be subject to court martial.

During a press conference in Islamabad, Bugti acknowledged the involvement of security forces in smuggling activities, stating, "If I say that security forces weren't involved [in

smuggling], it won't be right as the smuggled items are transported via trucks, not camels."

Bugti said that Gen Asim Munir had warned military personnel that involvement in illegal cross-border trade would not only result in court martial but also lead to imprisonment. He explained that the army had its accountability mechanism, which, while not publicly known, does exist.

APP adds: Caretaker Minister for Interior Sarfraz Bugti on Monday said that on the directions of caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Kakar, the Ministry of Interior took

special measures to curb terrorism, hoarding, smuggling, illegal money exchange and other illegal activities.

Addressing a press conference along with caretaker Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi, Sarfraz Bugti said that ten joint check posts consisted of Custom officials, Frontier Core and local Police were established in Baluchistan with special powers of customs clearance, however the number of check posts were not being increased from ten to fourteen.

He said similar fourteen joint check posts are being established in Punjab, ten in Sindh and seven in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to control illegal activities.

He said on the special reports from the intelligence agencies, an action is being taken against smugglers, hoarders including their facilitators' officials or civilians in all provinces.

The minister said that for stoppage for sugar smuggling, the FBR using latest technology, was tracking the transportation of sugar and in the first phase 54 sugar mills had been taken on board whereas the rest were being taken on the system.

National Counter Narcotics Center is being setup to control drugs smuggling. Continued on page 2

Interim Govt decides to evict 11 lacs foreigners residing illegally in Pakistan

In first phase, illegal residents, in second phase, those with Afghan citizenship and in third phase, those with proof of residence cards will be expelled

ISLAMABAD (APP):

The caretaker government has decided to evict 11 lacs foreigners living illegally in Pakistan because of their involvement in funding, facilitating terrorists and other illegal activities.

In the first phase, illegal residents, in the second phase, those with Afghan citizenship and in the third phase, those with proof of residence cards will be expelled.

"Illegally resident foreigners pose a serious threat to the security of Pakistan" said a source privy to the development and added that the plan for eviction of illegally residing Afghan citizens has also been approved as this lot is involved in funding, facilitating and smuggling terrorists whereas 7 lacs Afghans have not renewed their

proof of residence in Pakistan.

It has been informed that in the first phase, illegal residents will be deported along with those who do not renew their visas.

In the second phase, those with Afghan citizenship will be deported, in the third phase, those with proof of residence cards will be deported.

The Ministry of Interior has prepared a plan in consultation with the stakeholders and the Afghan government.

In the meantime, the ministry has also issued directives to the concerned to compile a record of Afghans living without permits and prepare a transportation plan to bring them to the Afghan border.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar enquiring about health of injured of Mastung bomb blast during his visit to CMH

No place for terrorists and their facilitators in Pakistan, reiterate Solangi, Bugti

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Monday that it was responsibility of the government to ensure peace in the country and assist the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in conducting free, transparent and impartial elections.

This, he said, during a meeting with Caretaker Minister for Interior Sarfraz Bugti who called on him here. On his arrival at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi welcomed Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti.

The two ministers discussed matters of mutual interest including law and order situation in the country.

In the meeting, both Murtaza Solangi and Sarfraz Bugti expressed their profound regret over the loss of precious lives in the recent bomb blasts in the country. Both the federal ministers reiterated that there was no place in Pakistan for terrorists and their facilitators.

In the meeting, the support of the caretaker government to the Election Commission regarding the elections was also discussed.

The ministers said that the caretaker government will provide all possible assistance to the ECP in fulfilling its constitutional responsibility of conducting general elections in the country.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses the PPP candidates who won the local elections of Sindh, during meeting held at Bilawal House in Karachi.

PPP 'only' political party that wants timely elections, says Bilawal

KARACHI (INP): Taking a dig at his allies in the erstwhile Pakistan Democratic Movement-led ruling coalition, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday claimed the PPP was the "only" political party in the country that wanted timely elections.

"PPP is the country's only party that wants elections to take place," he said in a press conference in Karachi, lamenting how "so-called" political leaders were coming up with excuses to delay polls.

"You must have seen that sometimes a so-called leader comes on screen and says: 'Delimitation has to happen and until then [elec-

tions can be delayed]'. Okay let's accept delimitation [needs to be done] but that process has been completed so now there should be no issue in giving the date [for polls]. 'If not delimitation, then sometimes someone begins talking about the weather that 'it is very cold in February and January so how will we contest elections,' while others talk about the law and order situation," Bilawal said. His statement appeared to be a criticism of JUI-F emir Maulana Fazlur Rehman's concerns over holding elections in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as they remain grip-ped by intense winter.

President condemns terrorist attack in Turkiye

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a Turkiye's government building in Ankara. The president expressed hope that Turkiye would overcome terrorism under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "I am sure that Turkiye would eliminate the threat of terrorism under the dynamic leadership of

President Erdogan," the president posted on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. One of the two terrorists blew himself up in front of the General Directorate of Security in Turkiye's capital Ankara on Sunday.

Lt Gen Munir Afsar appointed Nadra's chairman

By M. Ilyas

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet Monday approved the appointment of Lieutenant General Munir Afsar as the chairman of the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra).

The federal cabinet approved his appointment after it received a summary containing three names



from the Ministry of Interior, a statement from the Prime Minister's Office said.

"The selection committee had shortlisted three best candidates for the post. After a detailed discussion, the cabinet appointed Lieutenant General Munir Afsar to the post," the communique stated.

Later, a notification was also issued, which mentioned that his appointment would come into effect immediately.

The new chairman Lt Gen Mohammad Munir

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ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar addresses the launching ceremony of National Polio Eradication Campaign. Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardaan Khan Domki is also present

Jan Muhammad Achakzai says: Interim Govt. fully prepared to tackle any emergent situation

Independent Report

QUETTA: The interim provincial government is fully prepared and active to tackle any emergent situation in the province.

This was stated by the caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai in an official statement issued here on Monday.

Jan Achakzai referred to the forecast by seismic research institute of solar system geometry survey (SSGS) and remarked that the advance prediction of the earthquake couldn't be made.

However, the natural calamities are the reality.

Our emergency services including MERS, PDMA, Pak Army, Frontier Corps, Civil administration, Levies, police, Fire

Brigade and medical teams are fully prepared to cope with any emergent situation.

He said that the concerned institutions are keeping vigil on the situation round the clock.

He asked the citizens to remain calm and keep them abreast about the situation.

He also asked the people to follow the safety measures issued by the government in case of emergency.

Moreover, the Minister Information said that the project government is already taking action against the illegal constructions as violation of the building code and constitution of encroachments on nullahs and karezat pose serious threat in such a situation.



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai meeting with Caretaker Health Minister Dr. Ameer Muhammad Khan Jogezi

Welfare of State population, top agenda of incumbent regime: AJK PM

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the present government has no agenda other than the welfare of the people of the state.

While addressing the inauguration ceremony of Cardiac Hospital in the State metropolis on Monday, the PM said, "We will leave the government in case we fail to address the problems of the people of the state and restore their confidence". "People will lose their faith in the government if we fail in our efforts to strengthen the

system and maintain the writ of the state", the PM said.

Reiterating his commitment to abide by the oath, the PM said that he would quit if he lost an absolute majority in the assembly. Terming the welfare of the people as his government's sole agenda, he said that safeguarding the constitutional rights of the people of the state was the responsibility of the coalition government.

Vowing to defend the rights of the people, the PM said that he would continue to raise his voice for the legitimate rights of

his people at all available forums. He, however, maintained that there was a dire need to realize our duties and responsibilities towards the state. He said that ruling and opposition parties were like two wheels of a chariot, necessary to run democracy.

The PM said, "As long as I am in the government, I will do my best to strengthen the system". The AJK government, he said, would continue to lend its all-out political, moral and diplomatic support to Kashmiri brethren in their just struggle for the right to self-determination.

Nawaz Sharif books ticket for return to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Ticket has been booked for return of Nawaz Sharif from London to Pakistan.

Nawaz Sharif will land in Abu Dhabi international airport on October 21 from London.

Advance booking for Nawaz Sharif has been got made through private airlines flight 243. Booking has been made in business class of private airlines.

Nawaz Sharif will leave Abu Dhabi for Lahore on October 21.

Private airlines will land in Allama Iqbal international airport at 6.25 p.m.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar enquiring about health of injured of Mastung bomb blast during his visit to Civil Hospital

Sirbaz Khan becomes 1st Pakistani to ascend 13 peaks above 8,000 metres

Sirbaz Khan achieves feat after summiting 8,188 metres Cho Oyu peak in Tibet, China

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Sirbaz Khan on Monday ascended Cho Oyu peak in Tibet, China, the world's sixth highest peak, becoming the first Pakistani to climb 13 mountains above 8,000 metres (26,247 feet).

Khan and his teammate Naila Kiani climbed the 8,188 metres (26,863 feet) Cho Oyu peak in over 28 hours using a marathon alpine-style climb, and without supplementary oxygen, said Alpine Club of Pakistan, the country's official mountaineering organization, in a statement.

Kiani became the first Pakistani woman climber to summit 10 peaks above 8,000 metres, the statement added.

After his latest feat, Khan has only left Shishapangma mountain to accomplish his dream of becoming the first Pakistani to climb all 14 peaks above 8,000-metre in the world, Alpine Club Secretary General Karrar Haider told Anadolu.

Shishapangma is the 14th-highest mountain in the world, at 8,027 metres (26,335 feet) above sea level.

Economic Review: IMF team to visit Pakistan in October end week

ISLAMABAD (INP): An IMF mission will arrive in the last week of October for economic review of the standby arrangement agreement, it was learnt on Monday.

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Ministry of Energy, State Bank of Pakistan, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) and Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), have been instructed to prepare their implementation reports on the IMF conditions.

The IMF mission will hold talks on the review with the economic managers for over one week. The energy sector's circular debt, FBR revenue generation and market-based currency exchange rate will be key points of the economic review. The visiting IMF officials will also review external financing, circular debt management plan, and issuance of bonds. The team of global lender will review the adjustment and re-basing in the prices of electricity and gas as per the conditions of the standby agreement.

The Ministry of Finance has assured the IMF, a reduction of 180 bln rupees in circular debt of the power sector by June 2024.

The mission during its stay in Pakistan will also hold meetings with various political parties and discuss the next general elections in the country.

The talks for the second tranche of the IMF bailout will likely to be held in the last week of October, ARY News had reported recently.

FM to participate in Trans-Himalaya Forum in Tibet on Oct 4-5

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani is visiting China to participate in the 3rd Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation, being held in Nyingchi, Tibet Autonomous Region, on October 4-5.

The foreign minister is undertaking the visit at the special invitation of the Foreign Minister of China, Wang Yi, the Foreign Office said Monday. The Trans-Himalaya Forum was initiated in 2018 to deepen practical cooperation among regional countries on diverse subjects including geographical connectivity, environmental protection, ecological preser-

vation, and enhancing cultural linkages. The last in-person meeting of the Forum was held in 2019. The theme of this year's Forum is "Ecological Civilization and Environmental Protection."

The Foreign Office in a statement said during his stay in Tibet, FM Jilani will address the opening ceremony of the Trans-Himalaya Forum.

On the sidelines, the foreign minister will meet with several regional dignitaries including the Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, the Foreign Minister of China and the Interim Foreign Minister of Afghanistan.

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ISLAMABAD: Former Speaker Balochistan Assembly Jamal Shah Kakar called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Faizabad sit-in review petitions SC issues written order pertaining to hearing

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday issued a written order pertaining to the hearing of September 28, in Faizabad sit-in review petitions.

In a four-page order, the court said that the respondents had been given one more opportunity to present the facts of the matter.

The respondents could file the facts in written form, through affidavits, till October 27, it said.

It said that the Attorney General of Pakistan

had stated that the defence ministry didn't want to pursue the review petition.

The Intelligence Bureau (IB), Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) and Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) had also filed miscellaneous applications to withdraw the review petitions. It said that petitioner Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed had sought time to hire a new lawyer in his case.

The order further said that four questions had been raised during the last hearing in the case.

Polio campaign...

Continued from page 1

the foolproof security arrangements have been made.

He said that security is not only challenge for us in Balochistan, rather in the country.

However, we are providing security to the polio teams as per our capacity, he maintained.

He urged the parents and all other segments of the society to wholeheartedly contribute in the campaign and make it successful.

It may be mentioned here that Vitamin "A" drops are also being administered to the children in addition to the anti-polio vaccine.

Meanwhile, the polio immunization campaigns were also started in all other districts of the province where the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners formally inaugurated the campaign.

Security personnel...

Continued from page 1

said the minister adding that through this system, the information gathering would become faster and easier and drug peddlers could be arrested, besides preparation of the educational programme in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission to sensitize the students against the use of drugs.

The minister further said that Afghan Transit Trade would be monitored from Karachi Port to Afghanistan to control tax evasion, whereas Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) was requested to expedite the prosecution of pending cases of smuggling.

Smuggling of 10195 liter POL worth Rs. 126 million was stopped during different raids during the month of September whereas 43 metric ton narcotics was apprehended and 252 cases were registered and 246 accused were arrested, the minister told the gathering.

He said that during raids against illegal money exchange dealers, Rs. 658.470 million were recovered and 168 cases were registered.

He said all these efforts of the government are meant to stop illegal activities which are damaging the economy and the government is also providing a safe and business friendly environment for investors.

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Lost and Found

My original driving license in the name of Muhammad Nabeel Ejaz S/o Ejaz Mehmed CNIC No. 54400-7236130-3 has been lost somewhere in Civil Secretariat.

Finder may please contact 0304-8029428.

Maryam's flopped show exposed claims of Nawaz's popularity: Saif

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif has said that flopped show of Maryam Nawaz has exposed the forged claims of popularity of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif among the masses.

Commenting over the public gathering of Chief Organizer of PML-N, he said that Maryam Nawaz keeping in the view the results of last gathering would organize in narrow streets in future.

Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said that Nawaz Sharif who remained absconder was now returning back to make fake claims of revolution in Pakistan.

He said that the PML-N supremo changes his viewpoint every day to

come into power.

The PTI leader said that the PML-N was offering motorcycles to people for welcome of Nawaz Sharif which was a ploy.

While return to Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif needs to bring back the looted nation exchequer along with him, he suggested.

"Maryam's uncle wasted Rs10 billion for his cheap publicity. Prisoners of Lahore Jail will welcome Maryam's father and he will be garlanded with handcuffs instead of flower garlands."

Barrister Saif said that Nawaz Sharif should also confirm his return ticket because if PTI chief comes out of jail, the PML-N supremo will find it difficult to flee.



QUETTA: Civil Hospital Trauma Center Managing Director (MD), Dr. Azeemullah Babar addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

'Bring more people to welcome Nawaz Sharif and get Honda 125 bike'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is gearing up for the highly anticipated return of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on October 21, marking his comeback to Pakistan after a four-year absence.

In a bid to create an unforgettable welcome, a PML-N leader has announced a unique incentive - a brand new Honda 125 motorcycle - for individuals who bring more people to greet their supremo Nawaz Sharif.

A viral video circulating on social media captured the moment when a prominent PML-N party worker, whose identity remains undisclosed, made an exhilarating announcement during a public gathering.

Flanked by large images of Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz, the party worker declared, "This is a big announcement, I hope my team will win. You are all being told that whoever brings more people to welcome Nawaz Sharif on October 21 will get a Honda 125."

The promise of a Honda 125 motorcycle as a reward for mobilising the masses to welcome Nawaz Sharif has already sparked conversations across Pakistan.



Caretaker Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed meeting with Chairman State Committee of Urban Planning and Architecture, Azerbaijan Anwar Guliyev

David Miller can put the 'chokers' on top in World Cup

NEW DELHI (INP): Few would look at an innings of 82 not out off 45 balls and think it played second fiddle to another knock in a game, but when David Miller walked off unbeaten at the end of South Africa's 50 overs in Centurion earlier this month, all the applause was focused on Heinrich Klaassen's freakish 174 off 83 balls, which took his side to 416 against Australia.

Two days later, Miller scored another half-century, 63 off 65, as South Africa posted 315 and sealed the series 3-2. Once more, his innings was overshadowed - by Aiden Markram's 93 and Marco Jansen's all-round heroics.

As the most experienced player in South Africa's ODI World Cup squad, Miller really shouldn't be flying under the radar ahead of what will likely be his last tilt at the title. His ice-cool exterior on the field is in evidence during our interview earlier this year. Sitting in a deck chair by the pool of a luxury hotel, Miller looks relaxed, but when he starts talking about this current South Africa side, he leans forward, the excitement almost palpable in his voice.

What happens when the ODI World Cup meets a T20 mindset?

No, he doesn't mind if he isn't the centre of attention. "We've actually got a world-class top six," he

says. "Quinton de Kock has that power up top, Aiden Markram strikes easy boundaries, Rassie [van der Dussen] can literally destroy the opposition, Klaassen... we've got a lot of power-hitters in the top six. I'm sure the coach would be open to moving me up one or two games, seeing how a game goes, but for now, I think we've pretty much got our structure and it seems to be working."

We're talking at a time when Miller is in form, though, in fairness, that doesn't really narrow it down much. His impressive run has extended across formats and seasons for so long now it's less a purple patch than a sparkling late chapter in a career that feels like it has still got some ways to run. His vastly improved numbers in T20 cricket since 2021 have made him an even more coveted asset in the franchise league circuit, but his ODI rise in that time has bordered on the meteoric.

Since July 2019, the start of this World Cup cycle, he averages just under 61 with a strike rate of 114.15; in the nine years before that period, his average was around 39 and strike rate a fraction over a run a ball. Miller has batted at No. 5 or lower in every one of his post-World Cup innings and yet he has been scoring his runs faster than ever, and scoring more of them.

Lt Gen Munir Afsar appointed...

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Afsar Hilal Intiaz (Military) has vast experience in IT related technical development and management in Pakistan Army and United Nations Mission, according to his profile released to the media.

Lt Gen Muhammad Munir is an MPhil in Public Policy and National Security Management. He compiled a research paper on public policy response in the GIS department during the 2010 floods.

Lt Gen Munir Afsar did his MS in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing. He was also awarded the President's Award for his paper on rapid geospatial data generation through photometry.

MS in National Resource Strategy (C&IT Industry and Supply Chain Management) from NDU Washington DC where he was named a Distinguished Graduate.

He is currently a PhD candidate in Remote Sensing at NUST Islamabad. His research paper is related to detection of plant diseases through remote sensing and artificial intelligence.

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QUETTA: Former Speaker Balochistan Assembly Raheela Hameed Durrani meeting with Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai

AJK kicks off preparations to commemorate 18th Anniversary of 2005 deadly earthquake

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir kick off preparations to commemorate the 18th anniversary of October 8, 2005 earthquake pay tribute to the martyrs and other victims of history's most-worst deadly catastrophe in the region.

A grand ceremony will be hosted by the Kashmir Orphan Relief Trust (KORT) and Educational Complex at Akhterabad in Mirpur, dwelling hundreds of children who became orphans and shelterless in deadly earthquake of October 8, 2005 in AJK.

The ceremony will begin at 6:00 am on Sunday, 08 the mega KORT complex at Akhterabad, in outskirts of this lake city, said Ch. Akhter, the founder of the KORT, the largest shelter home in South Asia, housing over 400 of orphan and shelter less children - mostly those who were rendered homeless and orphan following the killer earthquake of October 2005 in Muzaffarabad and various adjoining parts of AJK and KPK.

Talking to APP here on Monday, Akhtar said that the grand ceremony to pay rich tributes to the victims of the history's worst catastrophe, will be attended among others by the dignitaries - besides social workers, volunteers and heads of various nation-building institutions will

attend to observe the anniversary with due respect and prayers for the victims of the devastating calamity.

This year Mirpur city of AJK will observe the anniversary when it met the same fate in form of Sept. 24, 2019 devastating earthquake of moderate magnitude measuring 5.8 at Richter scale that left at least 45 people dead and over 1000 injured besides huge damaging of the buildings across Mirpur city and adjoining areas of Jattalan leaving hundreds of thousands of the people shelter less badly affecting the daily life.

The anniversary will be observed as the national day of awareness about safety from the national disasters to mark the 17th anniversary the calamity as 'day of firmness and determination for reconstruction - in memory of earthquake martyrs' coupled with special prayers for the rest of the departed souls of the quake victims in eternal peace and to express complete solidarity and sympathies with the survivors of the history's most worst natural catastrophe.

The day will dawn with special prayers in the mosques at Fajr across AJK for the departed souls of the earthquake victims. It will be a gazetted holiday throughout AJK State.



QUETTA: Members of Balochistan Development Authority (BDA) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, in Quetta.

Solangi calls for open but civilised debate on problems being faced by Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday stressed the need for open but civilised debate and discussion over the problems being faced by the country.

Delivering his speech at the launching ceremony of renowned author Dr. Farooq Adil's book "Humne Jo Bhula Diya: Tareekh Ke Gumshuda Awraq", here he said that open but civilised discussion on national issues was prerequisite for finding a way to resolve problems being faced by the country. Such ceremonies, he opined, helped in resolving the country's problems, especially at a time when the country was going to elections soon.

He said that forums of

Pakistan Television and Radio Pakistan were available for open but civilised debate.

He said that the 437-page book by Dr Farooq Adil had highlighted various aspects of national history. Murtaza Solangi that it was responsibility of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to conduct elections and the caretaker federal government was duty-bound to assist the ECP in the process.

Talking to media after attending book launching ceremony of Dr Farooq Adil's book "Humne Jo Bhula Diya: Tareekh Ke Gumshuda Awraq", he said Maulana Fazlur Rahman was leader of a large political party.

He said that Maulana's statement about elections in winter must

have been seen by the ECP top hierarchy and they will respond to it.

To a question, he said that Nawaz Sharif's return had nothing to do with caretaker government.

Replying to a question about his recent visit to China, the minister said Pakistan enjoyed evergreen relations with Beijing and future of these ties was very bright.

Congratulating Dr. Farooq Adil, Murtaza Solangi said that the nations that did not learn from history suffered.

He said that responsible journalism was need of the hour and determination of responsible journalism was essential.

The country will have to go on the path of development, not destruction, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan in a meeting with Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami former member Saint Sirajul Haq along with a delegation.

Fuel price adjustment case: SC issues notice to all respondents including AG

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has adjourned the hearing till October 16 of petitions filed against declaring illegal the Fuel Price Adjustment in electricity bills.

The court has issued notice to all respondents including Attorney General of Pakistan (AG).

The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa remarked there is heap of cases in respect of price of electricity. We will decide on October 16 after hearing the arguments. Video link facility will not be provided. All the respondents should come to Islamabad and give arguments.

He gave these remarks while presiding over a 3-member bench of SC Monday.

The CJP rejected the request of Attorney General (AG) for giving him time.

The CJP directed him to make preparation for case and give arguments within half an hour.



ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in their work during the construction of Margala Town Underpass, as the construction work is resume, which was halted due to improvements in the design.

IESCO plans to start installing over 1.4m AMI meters from January 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has planned to start installing over 1.4 million Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters of all tariffs in Rawalpindi circle from January 2024.

Official sources told that the project would be completed within two years. Currently data back and operation centers were being set up at Gujjar Khan and IESCO Headquarters and G-10 respectively besides operational laboratory. They said that initially some 512 AMI non-billing meters were installed in March 2022 as a pilot project.

Switching over to AMI system will bring about a permanent elimination of power pilferage with a systematic control of transmission through round-the-clock monitoring of the electricity meters.

This new technology, being introduced, would help reduce power sector

losses, enhance quality of billing and recoveries, control power load-shedding and would also address the consumers' complaints of wrong or over-billing, they said.

The AMI system will end human interventions in meter reading, enhance customer support, better measurements, more accurate billing, a degree of control of consumption and help the persisting dilemma of power outage by enhancing ability of IESCO to reduce non-technical losses.

This system has already been installed at Multan and Lahore Electric Supply Companies (MEPCO and LESCO) but at a very limited scale adding that the project was launched at Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) with the financial assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

ADB had provided \$170 million for AMI project being carried out in the IESCO phase wise.

Life threat to Imran: Bushra Bibi moves IHC for security, protection

ISLAMABAD (Online): Bushra Bibi has resorted to Islamabad High Court (IHC) for security and protection of Imran Khan due to life threat facing chairman PTI in jail.

Bushra Bibi wife of chairman PTI has filed a petition in IHC through Latif Khosa advocate expressing the fear Imran Khan can be given poison to Imran Khan through meal.

The petitioner has taken plea chairman PTI was not allowed to eat home made meal. In the past this facility was given to prisoners. Provision of pure food to Imran Khan be ensured through responsible medical officer. Adulterated food can be harmful for the life of her husband.

Bushra Bibi has also said in the petition that her husband is not being provided such facilities as per jail manual for which he is entitled to. Implementation of the court order for providing facilities in jail be ensured.

IRSA releases 161,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 161,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 96,000 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1539.13 feet and was 141.13 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 49,100 cusecs and 85,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1224.85 feet, which was 174.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 10,300 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 90,600, 90,000, 94,100 and 47,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 16,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 8,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing the launch ceremony of the famous author Dr. Farooq Adil's book titled "We Forgot the History of Pakistan's Missing Papers" at AIU Auditorium.

PBM extends aid to over 11.62m needy individuals during current year: MD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Managing Director of Pakistan Baitul-Mal, Malik Amir Fida Paracha on Monday revealed that over the past year, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal assisted over 11.616574 million individuals in need, with more than 10 million finding shelter in homes, facilitated 68,272 educational scholarships and provided financial support to 250,000 individuals for medical treatment.

During an interview with "APP" he stated that Pakistan Baitul-Mal was offering both housing and education to orphans through Sweet Homes.

These Sweet Homes are located in various regions across the country, comprising 11 in Islamabad and Azad Kashmir Region, 9 in Lahore, 5 in Multan, 3 in Gilgit-Baltistan, 11 in Sindh, 8 in KPK, and four in Balochistan.

In these homes, he said orphaned and homeless children receive a range of complimentary services, including standard accommodation, meals, education, uniforms, books, medical care, skill development programs, laundry services, religious education, and counseling.

The sweet homes admitted orphaned children

between the ages of 4 and 6.

Presently, there are 6,000 orphans residing in Pakistan Sweet Homes.

According to the Managing Director of Baitul-Mal, as of September this year, 13,229,739 million individuals had received assistance from shelter homes, while 12,2039 million had been provided with two daily meals, and 99,647 had found shelter.

Among the beneficiaries of Shelter Homes, 4.525 million are from Islamabad, 2.3 million from Sindh, 614,000 from Balochistan, and 2.2 million from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Minister directs PEIRA to ensure 10% scholarships for yearly registration private schools

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhvi on Monday ordered PEIRA to make 10 percent need based scholarships mandatory for yearly registration of private schools.

The decision was made during a high-level meeting convened between the Minister for Federal

eral Minister's previous visit to PEIRA in August where he first raised this subject.

Dr. Sayeda Zia Batool apprised the minister that as per his direction of offering these scholarships was now a compulsory criterion for private schools in Islamabad seeking registration with PEIRA.

This stipulation is ex-



Education & Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhvi and the Chairperson of Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA) Dr. Sayeda Zia Batool.

The meeting focused on critical subject of need-based scholarships for deserving students and served as a continuation of the Fed-

erally indicated on the registration certificates issued to Private Educational Institutions by PEIRA.

This official observation from PEIRA, addressed to the administrators of private educational institutions, references relevant regulatory guidelines and obligations that these institutions must fulfill.

DC Islamabad directs crackdown against illegal petrol filling stations

ISLAMABAD (INP): Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon directed officers crackdown against illegal petrol filling stations and to ensure the quality and quantity of petrol sold at petrol pumps.

On the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioner Industrial Area Awaish Irshad Bhatti was also conducting inspections of petrol stations to check for the presence of duty and inspection of weights and measures as per the notified roster, ICT Spokesman said on Monday.

The petrol stations found to be violating the rules were being sealed, and strict action would be taken against illegal petrol filling stations.

The Deputy Commissioner has warned petrol pump owners and opera-

tors to ensure that they are selling pure and adulterated petrol in the correct quantity.

He has also appealed to the public to report any irregularities to the authorities.

The Deputy Commissioner's crackdown on petrol pumps was widely appreciated by the masses.

It will also help to curb the illegal petrol filling station business.

The DC's crackdown on petrol pumps was part of a larger campaign by the government to ensure the quality and quantity of goods and services sold to the public.

The government has also taken steps to crack down on adulterated food and beverages, and on businesses that were using false or misleading weights and measures.

Anti-Polio Campaign launched

ISLAMABAD (APP): The anti-polio campaign in here on Monday started with target of vaccinating all children under the age of five in the capital territory.

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, Additional Deputy Commissioner East Usman Ashraf visited the polio campaign teams in different areas of the city. He was accompanied by Assistant Commissioners under the supervision of Additional Deputy Commissioner East Usman Ashraf. The anti-polio campaign will continue for seven days to target to vaccinate all children under the age of five in federal capital. Additional Deputy Commissioner East Usman Ashraf urged parents to cooperate with polio teams to achieve the target.

Film hero Waheed remembered on birth anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Celebrated film hero and producer Waheed Murad was remembered on his birth anniversary on Monday. Born on October 2, 1938 in Sialkot, Waheed Murad went to Karachi to complete his studies.

He commenced his film career as a producer by joining the company established by his father, Nisar Murad. The first film produced by Waheed Murad was titled "Insaan Badalta Hai" in 1961. After that, he began acting and starred in "Aulaad" in 1962.

His first film as an actor proved to be a hit at the box office and he impressed many directors and producers with his style and dialogue delivery.

He then played the lead in "Heera Aur Pathar" for which he even received a Nigar Award.

Heera aur pathar was his first movie as a leading actor. He got the Nigar award in the best actor category for the same film. In 1966, he produced and acted in Armaan. The film broke all the box office records at that time and completed 75 weeks in theatres. The film were sung by Ahmed Rushdi. Murad received two Nigar awards for the categories best producer and best actor for the film.

Education minister reviews anti-drug campaign in schools

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhvi, and the Chairperson of the Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA), Dr. Sayeda Zia Batool on Monday discussed and reviewed the activities of the PEIRA-ANF Anti-Drug Awareness Campaign.

During a meeting held here, the minister was pleased to see effective implementation and expressed satisfaction with the current status of the campaign's activities.

This meeting was in continuation of the Minister's earlier visit to PEIRA in August, during which he advised the launch of this significant initiative due to his great concern over the issue. The collaboration between PEIRA and ANF represents a community-based approach to combat substance abuse, as envisioned by the Federal Minister, Madad Ali Sindhvi. The program employs a multi-faceted strategy that includes education, awareness, and intervention, thereby offering a comprehensive solution to the drug issues affecting youth in the Islamabad Capital Territory.

Following the directives from the Minister, PEIRA initiated the cam-

paigned on August 30, 2023, inaugurated by the Minister himself. The event was also participated by the DIG ANF Mr. Rommel Akram.

The campaign has adopted immediate and intensive preventative measures designed to have a broad impact across both urban and rural sectors of the Islamabad Capital Territory.

PEIRA conducted two major Awareness Seminars on August 30th and September 20th, engaging hundreds of youth from leading private schools.

Resource persons from the ANF led these seminars; the September 20th seminar was chaired by the Chairperson, PEIRA Dr. Sayeda Zia Batool and featured ANF Force Commander, Brig. (ret) Ammar Ali. ANF DIG Rommel Akram and ANF Director, Mian Zahid also joined the event. The campaign has received an overwhelming response from the community and employs a cluster-based approach for targeted interventions. Similarly, a vital component of this campaign is the Teacher Training Action Plan.

This plan is aimed at equipping educators with the skills and knowledge required to identify and tackle drug-related issues among students.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology Qible Ayaz called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Pakistan, Turkiye condemn terrorism, express solidarity

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan and Turkiye on Monday strongly condemned the reprehensible acts of terrorism taking place in their respective regions.

In a telephonic conversation, Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi and Head of Turkish Religious Affairs Dr. Ali Arbash said Pakistan and Turkiye, standing together against terrorism, vowed to combat those who target innocent civilians and attempt to undermine Muslim nations through their mutual cooperation.

They, in a joint statement, said Islam was a religion of peace and safety, and any individuals or groups that perpetrated violence against innocent humanity

were enemies of Islam. "Such individuals, organizations, or entities have no connection to Islam," they added.

Dr. Ali Arbash, expressed his heartfelt condemnation of the recent terrorist incidents in Mastung and Hangu. He also expressed gratitude on behalf of Turkiye's government and people for Pakistan's strong condemnation of terrorism.

Ashrafi emphasized the brotherly bond between Pakistan and Turkiye, stating that recent acts of terrorism in both countries were unacceptable to the entire Muslim world. He reassured that Pakistan's government and people stood shoulder to shoulder with their Turkish brethren.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah deposited a valuable gift (bronzes sculpture of falcon) in Toshakhana which was received by him during his recent visit to Qatar.

ANF crackdown against drug smuggling continues

ISLAMABAD (INP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) continues its operations against drug trafficking and recovers more than 139 kg of drugs in 7 operations different operations while arresting 8 accused.

According to the spokesperson of ANF on Tuesday, 45 kg 600 grams of hashish and 12 kg of opium were recovered from the vehicle near Motorway Toll Plaza Khanewal on.

Meanwhile a resident of Islamabad was smuggling drugs by hiding them in the trunk of a car but was apprehended by the ANF.

During operation at Allama Iqbal International Airport, 53 capsules filled with cocaine were recovered from the stomach of a passenger. The accused had reached Lahore from Mus-

cat via flight number PK-230.

The spokesperson further said that 4 suspects arrested in a joint operation with Pakistan Rangers Punjab in Kasur and 7 kg of heroin was recovered from their possession.

At Sialkot International Airport, 50 ice and 50 hashish filled capsules were recovered from the passenger's stomach. The accused was a resident of Pakpattan and leaving for Doha via flight number QR-631.

Meanwhile 9 kg hashish was recovered from a local resident near Ghazar Taos Bala Bazaar in a joint operation with FC Balochistan at Luck Pass Check Post. During the operation, 40 kg of ice was recovered from 5 parcels in the bus.



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

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Faizabad redux

The memory of the infamous Faizabad dharna of 2017 has returned to haunt Pakistan. When one looks back at the stand-off, which eventually saw the Tehreek-i-Labbaik catapulted into the political 'mainstream', there is little to feel but regret.

As the Supreme Court takes up review petitions against its 2019 verdict in the same case, the TLP is once again on the rampage, this time against minority communities.

Unfortunately, there has been, so far, no attempt by the state to clamp down on their disruptive activities — an approach in line with the security establishment's earlier inclination to allow a free hand to the group. Interestingly, those who had filed the review pleas against the 2019 Faizabad sit-in verdict now want them withdrawn.

They include the PTI, which participated in an extended smear campaign against the current chief justice following the judgement, but which now finds it more suitable for his verdict to be implemented without further qualification.

There are also some who do not want the matter to be revisited as this will invariably give rise to difficult questions about the present political context.

It may be recalled that the Supreme Court's Faizabad ruling had prompted a presidential reference against Justice Isa — a move that was widely seen as a 'punishment' for his attempt to hold the security forces to account.

The judgement was seen as a clarion call for unelected quarters to respect their oath, to stop interfering in the political domain, and to check religious extremists, instead of patronising them.

But none was ever prosecuted for engaging in unlawful political activity, and the TLP was allowed to flourish despite its virulent ideology, which recurrently caused immense embarrassment for the Pakistani authorities in later years.

The political instability seen lately and the repeated attacks on Pakistan's minority communities in recent weeks are just some of the symptoms of the state's failure to implement the Faizabad sit-in verdict.

After the Eid Milad-un-Nabi bombings this Friday, many observers have been wondering why Pakistan continues to be targeted by those seeking to shed innocent blood. It would appear that violent extremism continues to find easy outlets here because it ranks so low in our state's priorities.

Consider how the state responded to the Faizabad verdict. When the court excoriated the security agencies for failing to act firmly against those openly spreading hate and advocating extremism, the administration at the time, instead of ensuring that the miscreants were dealt with resolutely, attempted to neutralise the judge who had issued the ruling.

As long as terrorists know that our state will turn a blind eye to bigotry and hate, there is little hope for us to be rid of the malignancies that have become embedded in our sociopolitical fabric.



Maleeha Lodhi

The interim government seems to be getting itself mired in unnecessary political controversy at a time when it should be reassuring people of its commitment to holding free and fair elections.

Instead of creating a propitious environment for credible polls, which is their main task, gratuitous assertions by the caretaker prime minister and some of his cabinet members are clouding the atmosphere and raising questions about how inclusive the election will be.

In an interview with Associated Press, Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar declared that fair elections were possible even with the exclusion of PTI leader Imran Khan and his jailed party members. This provoked a sharp response

from PTI, which said elections minus Khan would be "unacceptable, unlawful and unconstitutional". Others also took exception to this remark.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan described Kakar's claim as "ill-judged and anti-democratic" as courts had not yet found Khan guilty in the legal cases against him. HRCP also said it was not for the prime minister or his government to decide unilaterally what constitutes a 'fair' election. Former prime minister and PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi also said it was not the interim PM's job to make such contentious statements.

An official 'clarification' claiming Kakar's comments had been "misunderstood" and "misreported" did little to quell the controversy. Nor did Kakar's subsequent explanations. His insistence on being non-partisan was a response to rising criticism, but it was too little, too late. In fact, his nonstop media interviews on political issues and daily sermons on 'requirements of the law' only compounded the matter.

Meanwhile, remarks by the interim interior min-

ister also drew a furious response, this time from leaders of Pakistan's other major party, PML-N. In an interview, Sarfraz Bugti said Mian Nawaz Sharif would be arrested when he arrived back home from abroad if he failed to get bail. PML-N leaders accused the minister of "exceeding his jurisdiction" and pointed out that it was neither his business nor his decision about where Sharif would go on arrival. Again, a 'clarification' by the minister that his government had no "political agenda" did little to calm ruffled feathers.

Earlier, PPP leader Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari decried the absence of a "level playing field" for the polls. Party representatives publicly assailed the inclusion in the interim cabinet of former bureaucrats closely aligned with PML-N in the past. They insisted that the interim government was acting as a vehicle for PML-N and also accused the Election Commission of Pakistan of bias.

If the principal role of a caretaker government is to oversee free and fair polls and act impartially, such criticism from political parties, who are major contend-

ers in the upcoming election, suggests it is already falling short on fulfilling its responsibilities as envisaged in the Constitution and Elections Act of 2017.

The gap between how a caretaker government is supposed to act and the conduct of the Kakar administration is evident from what is prescribed by Section 230 of the Elections Act, 2017. It obliges the interim government to be "impartial to every person and political party" and "restrict itself to activities that are of routine, non-controversial and urgent" nature.

Responsible for managing "day-to-day matters which are necessary to run the affairs of the Government", it is barred from taking "major policy decisions except on urgent matters". It cannot take decisions that pre-empt the scope and sphere of activities and powers of the next elected government.

It is also not authorised to make appointments or carry out large-scale shuffles of civil servants that can affect the working or policies of the future government. Over the years, the Supreme Court has upheld this prin-

ciple in rulings on petitions by government employees and others who challenged such transfers. The judgement in the Khwaja Asif case in 2013 is a case in point.

True, an effort was made by the previous parliament to grant more powers to the caretaker government. But because of strict protests from treasury and opposition benches, the Elections (Amendment) Act 2023, adopted last month, was substantially watered down.

It only allowed the caretaker administration to take policy decisions on existing multilateral and bilateral agreements and already initiated projects. This did not in any way affect what is set out in the 2017 Act or change the principal function of the caretaker government to assist the ECP in holding elections.

Seen against this backdrop, there seems little doubt the caretaker government, which has a limited mandate, is over-interpreting its role and acting as if it has been elected and is here to stay. Policy pronouncements on foreign affairs have been frequent, including on sensitive issues on

which it has no authority to make decisions.

Public claims have been made by ministers about taking decisions which go beyond what is permitted by the law. In fact, ministers seem to be vying for public attention either by making exaggerated claims or issuing disingenuous statements.

Instead of getting itself embroiled in one controversy after another, the interim government should be focusing on its primary role: creating the conditions for a free, fair and transparent poll. Ministers should steer clear of commenting on political issues, pontificating on foreign policy and desist from seeking pointless publicity all the time.

For its part, the ECP should overcome its reticence to announce an election date. Its announcement of lists of preliminary delimitation of constituencies is, however, a welcome step.

The sooner the country goes to the polls, the greater the chance for it to find a way out of the present political and economic morass and address the multiple crises roiling Pakistan. -- Courtesy Dawn

Education and other non-priorities



Dr Ayesha Razaque

Around the world, universities have multiple goals. Core among them remains teaching in degree programmes to pass on knowledge, make (mostly) young adults understand the world we inhabit, elevate them to become capable of reasoning, and become contributing members of society. They offer graduate programmes — MS, MA, PhD — to prepare students to conduct research and create new knowledge. While the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is a perfectly good reason for getting an education, universities do not exist in a vacuum or bubble. As such, another goal of universities is to make a positive impact on the immediate and wider communities they are a part of.

What about universities in Pakistan? What goals do or should they prioritize? How well are universities' operations aligned with those priorities? Over the last two decades, all incentives have been reoriented towards a single goal: raising the number of research papers with author affiliations from Pakistan, however frivolous they might be (save for a small fraction). Twenty years later, those research papers have just become an expensive flex and a way to decide who gets promoted and who does not. In terms of our universities' reputation as a place of quality scholarship, innovation in the economy, and wider society, the impact of university research is not discernable.

Some might point to the nascent local startup scene as evidence of research impact. For the most part, those startups are not the result of any great research that happened at universities but have been enabled by the easier availability of young university graduates in greater numbers than before. In other words, more than any research done in universities, it is boring old teaching — for which there are no de-

mands on quality, no repercussions for doing it badly, and no appreciation for doing it well — that has made an impact. Valid and world-class research continues to remain the forte of a select few places in a select few universities.

Our higher education sector is not the only one where the majority of students — undergraduates — suffer from mediocre to badly delivered teaching while the incentive structure in place puts all emphasis on research at the expense of the learning experience. Higher education in the US is in a similar bind. According to a US News report, in 2021-22, median tuition per annum at private universities stood at \$38,185 and for out-of-state/international students at public universities at \$22,698. If you choose a university with a good reputation, that same bill can easily cross the \$60,000 per annum mark. For context, according to the US Census Bureau, the national median household income in 2022 was \$74,580.

For such an exorbitant price tag, students are justified in expecting a great learning experience. Unfortunately, that is often not the

case, especially in the first two years. Teaching is often off-loaded onto adjunct faculty members who are hired on short-term contracts, paid by the hour, and do not spend more time on campus than they must because they have cobbled together three or four teaching assignments (often at different institutions) to make ends meet and are, therefore, not available to students. To make matters worse, tenure-track faculty members who have secured sufficient research grants have the option to 'buy out' their teaching time — pay the university to not teach and hire an adjunct professor in their stead, so they can dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to their research. When the research so produced is world-leading, this arrangement all makes sense from the universities' perspective. However, for undergraduates, who make up the majority of the student population, their tuition payments support this research ecosystem while they get the short end of the stick. A recent report by The Chronicle of Higher Education ('Americans value good teaching. Do Colleges? - The evidence doesn't look good', September 20, 2023)

suggests that the rising cost of higher education is compelling more incoming undergraduate students and their parents (who often foot the bill) to pay attention to the quality of teaching universities offer.

Universities in the UK take a very different approach to ensuring the quality of teaching they deliver. During their first few years of service, young faculty members are required to earn a Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE) — usually around 18 months in duration, costing around GBP 10,000 (often at the employer's expense) and rated equivalent to half an MEd degree. It provides formal training on education theory and practice in higher education.

Since universities lack the resources to raise salaries, some have decided to look the other way and let their faculty members moonlight by teaching at other institutions in the evening. The practice of hiring adjunct professors on the cheap as a means to save money has been a widespread practice for years: a PhD-qualified adjunct professor can be had to deliver a course for as little as Rs120,000 for a whole se-

mester (four to five months). If the university can get away with it, an MS/MA-qualified person can be hired full-time for Rs45,000-50,000 and loaded up to teach as much as the day allows.

Budget allocations are reflections of a government's actual priorities — everything else is lip service. When teaching — the core function of a university — has been relegated to the lowest rung, what hope can we hold out for the future? On the trajectory we are on, universities will go the way of schools: overworked and underpaid staff and able to attract only those who could not find work elsewhere, an occupation of last resort.

In conclusion, I want to leave readers with a challenge: How many countries do you know that went from developing to developed-country status without having good schools and universities? Exactly! If you are waiting for this country to make a serious, long-term commitment to sustainable change and development, look towards education, both schools and universities. Everything else is kabuki. -- Courtesy TheNews

Refugee question



Huma Yusuf

It has been a bad week for refugees. A debate is brewing on whether the UN's refugee convention is still fit for purpose. A recent Financial Times poll found that 56 per cent of Americans and 60pc of Britons say immigration is too high. Closer to home, our interim government authorised the deportation of undocumented Afghan refugees. Our policymakers should closely follow the evolving global rhetoric on refugees for it will inevitably affect Pakistan's global standing.

It is not surprising that refugees are back in the headlines. According to the UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, as of May this year, more than 110 million individuals were forcibly displaced due to conflict, persecution or human rights violations, of which more than 35m were categorised as refugees.

Pakistan is in a double bind. On the one hand, as the preferred destination for over 2m Afghan refugees, it faces international pressure to sign up to the UN refugee convention (Pakistan is not a signatory and thus does not have national legislation guiding refugee and asylum protocols or non-refoulement, which is why it can deport vulnerable Afghans without breaching local or international law). On the other, as a (growing) exporter of refugees, it will face mounting pressure to stem the tide as well as aggressive containment approaches. Our economic, security and foreign policies are not adequately equipped to manage the challenge.

The interim set-up has already faced criticism for its decision to deport undocumented Afghan refugees (Pakistan hosts 1.4m documented Afghan refugees; an equal number of undocumented Afghans are also believed to reside in the country). The refugees complain of harassment and police mishandling, claiming that Pakistani authorities have been slow to approve registrations and visa extension applications. The international community is raising its eyebrow at a country ready to send Afghans, including girls and women, back to a country where human rights violations are extreme.

Pakistan uses deportations as a way to demonstrate it is cracking down on cross-border militancy, while also hoping it serves as a pressure tactic to elicit more support from Kabul to limit this security threat. This is largely ineffective given that most Afghan refugees are legitimately fleeing hunger, conflict and women's rights violations. Pakistan should, instead, consider the benefits of welcoming Afghan refugees, as it has historically done. This would be humane and demonstrate that Pakistan does not condone the extremism and horrific misogyny of the Taliban. It would also position Pakistan well for future international negotiations in which it would want to advocate for Pakistani refugees in other countries to be treated humanely and in accordance with international laws.

As a first step, Pakistan should sign the UN refugee convention, but on the condition that its Western allies provide it with support to comply with non-refoulement requirements (the prohibition on states to return individuals to places where they would be at risk). Indeed, refugee management could become a core aspect of our foreign

policy.

Pakistan since 2021 has been resisting setting up a Resettlement Support Centre to enable the US to process resettlement applications of Afghan refugees and relocate them onwards to the US. It argues that an RSC would trigger a flood of Afghan refugees. The US, meanwhile, refuses to handle resettlement cases without an RSC. This is an area for productive engagement between Pakistan and the US: Islamabad can enable Washington to meet its commitments in the wake of its messy Afghanistan exit, while receiving support to manage the influx of refugees in exchange.

Turkey is currently the world's largest refugee-hosting country, and knowledge sharing of best practices for refugee/ asylum frameworks could be a key element of the growing partnership between the two states. Pakistan could also serve as a valuable interlocutor with allies such as China and the GCC to encourage them to take a greater share of the global refugee population in line with their economic status, an argument that can only be made from the moral high ground, but that would help sustain the relevance of Pakistan's voice globally, and help secure fair treatment for Pakistani refugees later.

The world is on a difficult trajectory and the number of refugees and asylum seekers will only soar. Our own worsening security and economic environment and sickening levels of religious intolerance mean that Pakistani refugees will be among that count. If we want to safeguard our compatriots, we must change our perspective on the refugee challenge. Let's not forget the age-old wisdom of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. -- Courtesy Dawn

Southern conundrum



Mohammad Ali Babakhel

The south of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has historically been a turbulent region. It has been a haven for freedom-loving anti-imperialists as well as those with an intense devotion to religion. It has seen long-drawn tribal feuds and major demographic transitions. All of these factors have kept the region alive in the news and in history books.

Of KP's total area of 101,741 square kilometres, south KP occupies 36,655 sq km, or 36 per cent. The region is administratively divided into three divisions and 12 districts (including the recently bifurcated South Waziristan). North Waziristan's border with Afghanistan stretches over 183km, and it neighbours the Afghan provinces of Khost, Paktia and Paktika, where militants are reportedly concentrated. South Waziristan's border with Afghanistan stretches over 107km and, further north, Kurram shares a 192km boundary with Afghanistan, adjoining North Waziristan, Khost, and Paktia.

After a spike in militancy and counterterrorism operations, certain parts of south KP experienced significant demographic changes. People from South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Kurram and Orakzai migrated to Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, and Kohat, respectively. D.I. Khan's population grew from 852,995 in the 1998 census to 1,625,088 persons in the 2017 census. Likewise, in 1998, Tank

counted 238,216 people, but rose to 390,626 in 2017. In 1998, Bannu had 675,667 people, which rose to 1,167,071 in 2017. Displacement and migration simultaneously de-tribalised the local culture while burdening the urban areas of Kohat, Bannu, and D.I. Khan.

Militancy in south KP is a consequence of historical, political and socio-economic factors. The region lacks linguistic or ethnic homogeneity. Its effective governance requires a thorough understanding of its history, diversity, and the nature of its tribal dynamics. The Wazir, Bhattani, Mehsud, Kundi, Bangash, Paracha, Afridi, Khattak, Banuchi, Marwat, Gandapur, Miankhel, Turi, Orakzai, and Banuri are its major tribes. Pashto, Seraiki, Hindko, Brahui, and Urdu are the spoken languages. The region also has substantial sectarian diversity, including a significant Shia presence in D.I. Khan, Kurram, Kohat, and Hangu.

South KP is home to conservative tribal communities that feel marginalised, and which shuttle between nationalism and religiosity. Poverty, unemployment and a lack of access to education and basic services have contributed to their sense of general hopelessness, leaving the poverty-stricken youth susceptible to radicalisation and militant recruitment. External actors have exploited the local population's feelings of marginalisation to their advantage.

Furthermore, poor infrastructure has hampered trade and economic development. A long spell of militancy and other factors have disrupted rail and air connectivity: the railway stations in Tank, Bannu, Hangu, Usterzai, and Thal stand abandoned, while the airports in Bannu, Parachinar, and D.I. Khan are no longer operational. Newly constructed roads in

the former tribal areas have, however, bridged some distances and improved governance, trade, and the mobility of security forces.

South KP gets very little time and space in Pakistani media. Keeping in view the communication barriers, radio broadcasts may prove an effective medium of communication in the region and may help counter prevailing extremist narratives. Radio Pakistan has a radio station in D.I. Khan, and FM radio stations are on air in Bannu, Hangu, Kohat, and North Waziristan. In the absence of effective communication, people rely on alternative media, external broadcasts, and social media content to get information, but these me-tooisms often carry provocative content that may be detrimental to Pak-istan's interests.

Bannu, D.I. Khan, Kohat and Kurram were notified districts during the British era, so all, except Kurram, have cantonments. These districts were established primarily on the basis of their strategic importance; the colonial rulers wanted to improve their control over the tribal areas and improve revenue collection. Because the remaining districts in south KP were established after independence, the infrastructure they inherited was weak, which impacted public service. The mere creation of any more districts will not serve the interests of the state or the public; therefore, infrastructural development, improved public service delivery, and revenue collection should be the key focus areas. The dividends from the 25th Amendment have come in the form of a growing realisation and acceptance of different institutional human rights. However, resources are limited and expectations high: how to deliver in this context remains the real challenge. -- Courtesy Dawn

Govt to eliminate street criminals, dacoits: Baqar

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar has said that the government is persistently fighting to curb street crime in Karachi and dacoits in the Riverine area and simultaneously working hard to bring in investment in the province by facilitating the investors.

He stated while addressing the participants of National Security & War Course-24, who called on him here at CM House.

Major Gen Amir Najam, the Chief Instructor, led the delegation. Provincial caretaker ministers, Brig (ret'd) Haris Nawaz, Mubin Jumani, Junaid Shah, Omar Soomro, Chairman P&D Shakeel Mangnejo, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, IG Police Riffat Mukhtar, provincial secretaries attended the program.

The meeting was briefed by Chairman P&D Shakeel Mangnejo, and IG Police Riffat Mukhtar on the development and crime situation respectively.

IG Police said that so far 63,527 street crime cases, including 20,830 mobile snatchings, and 36,369 two-wheeler thefts have been registered during Sept 2023.

To a question, the CM told the participants that police and Rangers have sped up targeted operations against street criminals and drug mafia, who were also involved in street crime.

The CM said that he has given a task to his police Rangers to eliminate street criminals through a crackdown.

"The police have also started developing data of the street criminals, and prosecution of the street crime has been

strengthened.

The IG Police said 221 cases of kidnapping for ransom have been registered this year compared to 81 in 2022. The Larkana Range has 128 cases while Sukkur Range has 46. At this, the CM said that a comprehensive operation against the dacoits was being planned in Sindh and in the Punjab simultaneously.

The CM said that the operation was being supported by the Pak Army/Rangers and drones most probably used to hit their hideout in the thick forest located in the center of the Riverbed.

The operation has been started against the dacoits but it will be intensified shortly.

He added that dacoits have started surrendering. Seven dacoits had surrendered last week.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali inaugurates project completed under Peshawar Uplift program at Jinnah Women College Peshawar.

Drive against adulteration in food, milk planned: Maani

PESHAWAR (APP): The Food Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has planned a comprehensive drive against adulteration in edible commodities, especially milk.

Zariful Maani, Secretary Food said that a comprehensive drive was planned utilizing geo-tagging to ensure the quality of milk and other food items.

After a series of consultative meetings involving stakeholders and officials, the Secretary of Food has issued directives to prioritize food, especially milk.

The Secretary, along with the Director General and all officers, will actively engage in the field to ensure transparent quality checks.

Altai Hussain, Director of Operations, along with mobile lab testing experts, provided a briefing to the Secretary

and conducted real-time tests on milk and water, covering fresh milk (chemical and composition checks) and processed milk (composition check), as well as water tests. An overall briefing on the mobile test laboratory was also conducted.

The Secretary of Food gave on-the-spot instructions to the mobile test laboratory, including displaying a standard chart showcasing the composition of milk, water, and other food items for public awareness, conducting daily visits to markets, and making efforts to halt adulteration while taking strict actions against violators.

The Secretary emphasized the importance of not discriminating and maintaining a polite and professional demeanour during field activities to avoid discouraging businesses.



HYDERABAD: Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) President, GM Jamali addresses during Health Insurance Card distribution ceremony held at Hyderabad press club.

Social media campaign against Governor KP baseless

PESHAWAR (APP): The personal assistant (PA) to the governor, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maaz Fida, said on Monday that the campaign of corruption made against the governor, Haji Ghulam Ali, and the mayor of Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali, on social media is unfounded. She added that the opponents, despite using all of their resources, would be unable to prove any evidence of corruption against either of the two individuals.

The Governor's PA responded to several allegations made on social media by stating that the Governor and Mayor of Peshawar had provided unparalleled services to their citizens and that any rumors spread on social media were completely untrue.

He asserted that the governor and the mayor of Peshawar deserved praise

for their devoted work and approachable demeanor. The opponents tried to discredit the mayor's and governor's positions, but they countered the misinformation with their steadfast report that numerous uplift projects, including the installation of street lights, the donation of sewing machines to needy women, the replacement of faulty electricity transformers, the encouragement of youth through cash prizes and sport equipment, and the promotion of sporting events, were ongoing in the province. The governor has committed to doing everything in his power to improve the province and its residents.

He said that both of them should be commended for spending the majority of their time addressing the concerns of the populace, the PA continued.

LHC orders police to produce Sheikh within a week

RAWALPINDI (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench has ordered police to present Sheikh Rashid within a week.

The petition against arrest of former interior minister Sheikh Rashid came up for hearing before single bench of LHC led by Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan here Monday.

RPO Rawalpindi Syed Khuram appeared in the court.

The court questioned from RPO Rawalpindi Sheikh Rashid and two other persons with him are where. Will you give it in writing to court or produce Sheikh Rashid.

On being inquired from court, the RPO sought 15 days time more from the court.

The court remarked 15 days are too much. This is not ordinary matter. Two days time will be too much.

Justice Sadaqat Ali remarked I give 7 days time due to request of Sardar Abdul Razzaq counsel for the petitioner. If Sheikh Rashid is not produced within a week, the court will order for registration of FIR.

The court adjourned the hearing of the case for one week.

CS pays surprise visit to Sialkot, reviews various projects

SIALKOT (APP): Chief Secretary (CS) Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman paid a surprise visit to Sialkot on Monday and reviewed the projects of Punjab Intermediate Cities Improvement Investment Program (PICIP), construction work of Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital, Allama Iqbal Library and Government Khawaja Safdar Girls High School under the Model Schools Project.

The Chief Secretary expressed dissatisfaction over the pace of work on the PICIP projects and said that he had come to inspect the project himself on complaints from the citizens of Sialkot.

He directed the Commissioner Gujranwala to conduct third party evaluation of all projects and ensure completion of uplift schemes as per the timeline. The chief secretary was briefed on the renovation of the hospital on the occasion of his visit to Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital. He said that the healthcare facilities should not be affected during this project.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman addressing 'Right to Information Day' function as a special guest at Governor House.

Naqvi launches special education drive, project of assistive devices distribution to special children

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi officially launched the special education admission campaign and initiated the distribution of assistive devices for special children at a local hotel. In his address, Chief Minister Naqvi expressed gratitude towards all those involved in serving special children, emphasizing that it is both a religious and worldly obligation to care for them. He pledged unwavering commitment to the Department of Special Education, assuring prompt approval of all special education projects.

expansion of special centers in areas like Johar Town, Chief Minister Naqvi reaffirmed that endeavors for special children will be undertaken as acts of duty and devotion. Reflecting on his visit to the Government Pilot School on Wahdat Road, he expressed personal dismay at the situation. The school, housing 1650 students, had only 60 appointed teachers, with 35 on Election Commission duty and the rest on leave. A mere 10 to 15 teachers were left to educate the vast student population, leading to a concerning decline in quality. Chief Minister

Naqvi asserted that the responsibility for rectifying these conditions lies with the administration, not the children.

He called attention to the collective responsibility of the education department, its secretary, and minister in ensuring quality education and improving school conditions. Notable figures like Akhtar Rasool, Qari Sadaqat Ali, General Ziauddin, General Bilal, and General Naveed Anjum had all attended the Pilot School on Wahdat Road, which, Chief Minister Naqvi lamented, had been grievously neglected.

KP Universities bars from granting new affiliation to new institutions, colleges

PESHAWAR (APP): The Higher Education Department (HED) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has barred the public sector universities of the province from granting fresh or new affiliation to any new institution, college or programme till finalization of fresh policy by Higher Education Commission (HEC).

According to a letter issued to the public sector universities, the HED explained that the main reason behind was violation of HEC policy for

affiliation by the universities and granting affiliation to colleges without having proper qualified teaching faculty, meeting necessary academic and physical requirements.

It said that some universities of KP were violating jurisdiction policy whereas some colleges were running BS programmes which were affiliated with such universities where the BS programme was not offered at the main campus.



MULTAN: Chief Justice Lahore High Court, Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti presides over the meeting of District Bars of Multan and Dera Ghazi Khan Divisions, held at District Court premises in Multan.

Minister directs authorities to speed up improving irrigation system

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Irrigation and Communications & Works, Engineer Ahmed Jan Khan has directed the concerned authorities to speed up their efforts to improve the irrigation system in the province.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting of senior officers of all wings of the Irrigation Department here on Monday. Similarly, they provided details regarding the progress of major irrigation projects across the province.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Irrigation Muhammad Tahir Orkzai and other senior officers of all attached entities and development projects.

The caretaker minister was briefed about the departmental services of the offices of Chief Engineer North, Chief Engineer South, Chief Engineer Newly Merged Districts and Director Small Dams.

The provincial minister said that the irrigation department has a key role in the development and stability of the province, therefore all the officials of the department should realize their duties and they should play an active role in the development of this province by using their technical skills.

In the meeting, the caretaker minister was informed about the ongoing major projects related to irrigation in the province, while he was briefed about the efforts of the department to protect the system of canals and other sources of irrigation and precautionary measures regarding flood protection.

Similarly, they provided details regarding the progress of major irrigation projects across the province.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister said that he would make every possible effort to further improve the irrigation system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



MUZAFFERABAD: Women from across the City holds protest against the unjust hike of electricity and inflation at Azadi Chowk to show their solidarity with arrested members of Awami Rabta Committee in the Capital of AJK.

Governor visits shrine of Hazrat Abu Ayub Ansari in Istanbul

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori visited the shrine of Hazrat Abu Ayub Ansari in Istanbul.

According to a Governor House communique here on Monday, on the occasion, the Sindh Governor prayed for Pakistan's security, stability, and economic growth.

Tessori said that it was his intention to visit the shrine in the blessed month of Rabi'ul Awwal.



Rescue 1122 handles 572 emergencies in Sep

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Rescue 1122 on Monday issued a monthly performance report, featuring a total of 572 emergencies tackled with response time ranging within seven minutes by the district's emergency service during the last month.

Sharing the report, the spokesman of the Rescue 1122 said, the service provided first medical aid to about 592 patients and subsequently shifted them to hospitals while tackling different emergencies in September under the leadership of District Emergency Officer Awais Babar. He said the rescue teams promptly tackled all those emergencies and the emergency response time was recorded at seven minutes.

DC oversees polio eradication campaign

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, Afzal Wazir on Monday supervised the polio eradication teams in various areas while convincing reluctant parents to administer polio drops to their children.

Under the supervision of the provincial government, a seven-day polio eradication campaign is underway in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner visited Nasser Bagh Road, Regi, Hayatabad, Peshatkharra and other areas to oversee the polio eradication campaign. After meeting with hesitant parents and persuading them.

Governor for access to RTI thru departmental websites

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has asked the Punjab government to speed up access to basic information under the right to information (RTI) law through websites of all provincial departments.

Addressing a ceremony in connection with the 'Right to Information Day' at the Governor's House here on Monday, he said it is a good omen that Pakistan is among the 125 countries in the world where RTI has been implemented as a law.

The event was organised by Punjab Information Commission in collaboration with the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), Chief Information Commissioner Mehboob Qadir Shah, senior judges, lawyers, vice chancellors and principals of various

colleges were present on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said the main purpose of this event is to highlight the importance of Right to Information in the development of the country, adding that in the countries where the RTI law is effectively implemented, level of corruption is low.

He said RTI has a key role in eradicating corruption in government institutions, making the work of public officials effective and in good governance, adding the RTI Act ensures transparency in the financial and administrative affairs of government institutions. The Governor Punjab further said that the Punjab Information Commission has shown remarkable performance during the last five years.



GILGIT: Minister Health and Law Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Sohail Abbas and others health officer's administering polio drops to child during the Polio Campaign.

7-day anti polio campaign starts in KP; 7.478mln children to be immunized

PESHAWAR (APP): The seven-day anti-polio campaign started across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday wherein as many as 7.478 million children under the age of five would be vaccinated against the crippling polio disease.

According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC), in the first phase of the polio campaign, all children under the age of five in Peshawar, Kohat, Mardan, Malakand and Hazara divisions would be given polio drops while in the second phase of the campaign, which would include from October 9 to 13, all children up to five years of age in Bannu and

DI Khan divisions would be vaccinated.

During this campaign, vitamin A would also be given to children to increase their immunity, said the EOC, adding that in the first phase of the campaign, in all the districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Mardan, Malakand and Hazara divisions, 6,362,895 children would be vaccinated against polio.

In the second phase of the campaign, 1,116,081 children would be given anti-polio drops in Bannu and DI Khan divisions. Similarly, all children up to the age of five living in all Afghan refugee camps in the province would also be immunized against polio.

National polio drive begins in Mirpur-AJK

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): A total of 73082 children under the age of 5 years would be administered in anti-polio drive and vitamin 'A' drops during the 5-day nationwide anti-polio campaign which commenced in Mirpur.

The district has been divided into six zones with the induction of one supervisor in each zone to implement the drive.

One Ward In charge will supervise the campaign in the determined area falling in each Union Council in the district, the District Health Officer Dr. Fida Hussain disclosed while talking to APP in his

office here on Monday unveiling the plan of the national drive against polio in the district to be continued till October 6 without any break.

Mirpur Deputy Commissioner Ch. Amjad Iqbal inaugurated the campaign hosted at the DHO office here and administered the polio vaccine besides the vitamin 'A' drops to children under 05 years of age. The DHO continued that Medical officers will supervise the campaign in all 28 Union Councils besides the Ward Incharges deputized to supervise the drive in 88 other union councils.



RAWALPINDI: A teacher examine the eye of pupils at school to prevent the spread of eye infection to other students and in City.

KU VC urges for separate university ranking system for Muslim world

KARACHI (APP): Vice Chancellor (VC) of the University of Karachi (KU) Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi urged that the Muslim world should come up with a mechanism according to which they could have their own university ranking system.

He was addressing the panel discussion of the ninth Science and Technology Exchange Program (STEP) under the themes of energy, environment, health, AI, and STI Ecosystem, in Isfahan, Iran, said a statement issued by a spokesperson of KU here on

Monday.

He said that a separate university ranking system should consider the ground realities of the Muslim countries.

He mentioned that the socio-economic conditions of the Muslim world cannot be improved without making heavy investments in education and research sectors.

He believed that we have to make education and research sectors one of the top priorities to compete with other parts of the world. More than 100 eminent scientists, technologists, innovators,

President directs National Savings to reimburse Rs 1.2m to woman fraud victim

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday directed the Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) to reimburse an amount of Rs 1.2 million with profit to a woman victim of fraud. The money was fraudulently withdrawn from the woman's account through the issuance of a fictitious cheque book and affixing her fake signatures on the withdrawal slip. President Alvi asked CDNS to refer the matter to FIA for proper investigation so that the

delinquent officials of CDNS involved in the scam may be brought to the book and punished. The president issued these directions while deciding on a representation filed by CDNS (the Agency) against the decision of the Wafaqi Mohtasib directing CDNS to refer the matter to FIA for thorough investigation. As per details, the complainant Abida Riffat had alleged that she was maintaining a Pensioners Benefit Account with CDNS in Rawalpindi. She

found out in 2021 that an amount of Rs 1.2 million had been fraudulently withdrawn from her account in 2019 through another cheque book which was never issued to her. She lodged a complaint with CDNS for investigation and recovery of her defrauded amount, but the matter was investigated in a superfluous manner and she was informed that she could not produce any evidence in support of her claim. Feeling aggrieved, she approached the Wafaqi

Mohtasib which asked CDNS to investigate the matter through FIA. CDNS then filed a representation with the President against the Mohtasib's decision. President Alvi in his decision observed that CDNS in its letter dated 28.12.2021 had admitted that Rs 1.2 million were withdrawn from her account through the fake transaction on 23.05.2019 by affixing a fake signature on the withdrawal slip. He noted that during an internal inquiry conducted by CDNS.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) led by Senior Director, Human & Social Development Sector Office, Ayako Inagaki, met with Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan at his office.



SIALKOT: Former President Lahore Bar Association Jameel Akhtar Baig Advocate Expert Economics addressing to a seminar on Tax System and Economic Challenges in Pakistan at SCCI organized by Government Graduate College of Commerce.

Revolutionize Agriculture Sector Unity Plantations, Green Corporate initiative join hands

Independent Report
KARACHI: Unity Plantations (Private) Limited [a wholly owned subsidiary of Sunridge Foods (Private) Limited, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of Unity Foods Limited, hereinafter collectively referred to as Unity Group] and Green Corporate Initiative (Private) Limited are proud to announce a groundbreaking Master Collaboration Agreement that is set to reshape Pakistan's agriculture and livestock sector, bolstering food security and promoting sustainable development. This strategic partnership is dedicated to addressing critical challenges within Pakistan's agricultural landscape, with a sharp focus on enhancing food security, reducing reliance on imports, elevating seed

productivity, preserving the nation's rich biodiversity by establishing a complete eco system and developing integrated supply chain within and outside Pakistan. Unity Group, will be leveraging modern technologies, international networks, technical prowess, its existing state of the art processing facilities, and substantial financial resources, for spearheading efforts to cultivate corporate farms and livestock. This ambitious endeavor will encompass a minimum of 75,000 acres of designated land, and utilization of the produce by establishing and further enhancing the operations of its processing facilities and related infrastructure to enrich the value of agricultural and livestock products.

Ifikhar Sheikh elected as new KCCI president

KARACHI (APP): The Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), in its 62nd Annual General Meeting on Monday elected Ifikhar Ahmed Sheikh as new President of the Chamber while Altaf Ghaffar and Tanveer Barry were elected as Senior Vice President and Vice President, respectively. Around 3000 voters cast their votes in the election in which electronic voting system was introduced and 88% voters cast their voter electronically, said a statement issued here by KCCI. Chairman Businessmen Group Zubair Motiwalla, Vice Chairman BMG Tahir Khaliq, Haroon Farooki, Anjum Nisar, Jawed Bilwani, General Secretary BMG AQ Khalil, retiring President Mohammed Tariq Yousuf, retiring SVP Touseef Ahmed, retiring VP Haris Agar, Managing Committee Members and former Presidents and a

large number of General Body Members were present at the AGM. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman BMG Zubair Motiwalla urged to exhibit absolute discipline which was the first step on the road to success. He said that Karachi Chamber has emerged as the leading and the strongest Chamber of Commerce of the country whose recommendations are taken seriously and given special attention at the federal and provincial levels. He appreciated efforts made by retiring office bearers and hoped that the newly elected body would also follow the footprints of outgoing office bearers to achieve new milestones and positive results in dealing with numerous issues being faced by the business community. Tahir Khaliq, Haroon Farooki, Anjum Nisar, Jawed Bilwani, AQ Khalil, and others felicitated newly elected office bearers.



QUETTA: A vendor demonstrates igniting of locally made heater. This newly launched heater is low in cost and could be used with the used oil.

Rupee gains 97 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Monday witnessed the 19th consecutive recovery session as it gained 97 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs286.76 against the previous day's closing of Rs287.73. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs283.7 and Rs286.5 respectively. The price of the Euro increased 46 paise to close at Rs302.90 against the last day's closing of Rs302.44, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen came down by 01 paise to close at Rs1.91, whereas a decrease of 36 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs349.50 as compared to the last closing of Rs349.86. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal declined by 26 paise each to close at Rs78.07 and Rs76.45 respectively.

FCCI becomes "First E-Chamber" of the country

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has attained a unique status of "First E-Chamber" of the country and it is a first baby step toward the complete transformation of FCCI into a dynamic and vibrant corporate entity, said Dr. Khuram Tariq President FCCI. Addressing the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on the completion of his first year, he said that FCCI was the only chamber which strictly followed the election schedule. He said that because of protracted political wrangling, it was cleared just 15 days ago that elections for the year 2023-24 would not be held and the current office bearers would continue for the next year also. Commenting about his performance.

CPI inflation recorded at 31.4% in September

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation increased to 31.4 percent during the month of September 2023 as compared to the same month of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Monday. The inflation had increased to 27.4 percent during last month (August) whereas it was recorded at 23.2 percent during September, 2022, according to the PBS data. On month-on-month basis, the inflation

increased to 2.0 percent in September 2023 as compared to an increase of 1.7 percent in the previous month and a decrease of 1.2 percent in September 2022. The urban CPI inflation increased to 29.7% on year-on-year (YoY) basis in September 2023 as compared to an increase of 25.0% in the previous month and 21.2% in September 2022. On month-on-month (MoM) basis, it increased to 1.7% in September 2023 as compared to an increase of 1.6% in the previous month

and a decrease of 2.1% in September 2022. On the other hand, the rural CPI increased to 33.9% on year-on-year basis in September 2023 as compared to an increase of 30.9% in the previous month and 26.1% in September 2022. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.5% in September 2023 as compared to an increase of 1.9% in the previous month and an increase of 0.2% in September 2022. The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) based inflation on YoY increased to 32.0%.



PESHAWAR: Workers busy in reprocessing the clothes for preparing quilts at their workplace.

Trade deficit narrows by 42% in 1st quarter

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trade deficit contracted by 42.25 per cent during the first quarter of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Monday. The Trade deficit from July-September (2023-24) was recorded at \$5.289 billion as against the deficit of \$9.159 billion in July-September (2022-23), showing negative growth of 42.25 per cent. During the period under review, the exports decreased by 3.78 per cent to \$6.899 billion compared to the exports of \$7.170 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data. On the other hand, the imports narrowed by

25.36 per cent and were recorded at \$12.188 billion compared to \$16.329 billion last year. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the exports from the country increased by 1.15 per cent in September compared to the exports of the same month of last year. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.465 billion as against the exports of \$2.437 billion in September 2022. On the other hand, the imports during September 2023 were recorded at \$3.954 billion compared to the imports of \$5.293 billion in September 2022, showing a decrease of 25.30 per cent, according to the data. On a month-on-month basis, the exports from the country increased by 4.18 per cent.

SECP publishes latest statistics of insurance industry

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has published the latest statistics, providing a comprehensive assessment of the insurance industry's financial performance. These much-needed statistics, offering insights into 2022 data, are critical for the diverse stakeholders to make informed decisions and enable analysis. This is also significant in the long run for establishing industry-wide standard performance norms and functioning as a tool for effective performance measurement. The report shows that the life insurance sector accounts for 68% of gross premiums written in the industry, while the non-life sector accounts for 32%. In 2022, the industry's total assets increased by 14.5%, reaching PKR 2,421 billion from PKR 2,114 billion. The gross premium increased by 28% from PKR 432 billion in 2021 to PKR 553 billion. Claims paid increased by 26%, with PKR 276 billion paid by life insurance companies and PKR 69 billion by non-life insurance companies, compared to PKR 218 billion in 2021.

ADB delegation appreciates Pak efforts for economic revival

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in a meeting with Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan on Monday appreciated Pakistan's efforts for the economic revival. The delegation comprised Sofia Shakil, Director, Central West & East Asia Team SG-HSG, Najbullag Habib, Senior Specialist, Central & East Asia, Ayesha De Lorenzo, Health Specialist, Central East & West Team, Omer Bin Zia, Senior Project Officer (Social Sector), Pakistan Resident Mission, Fayaz Ali Khan, Project Officer Education & Tahseen Sayed, Consultant ADB. Chief Foreign AID at Planning Commission, Zahoor Khan, Chief Sustainable Development Goals SDGs. Dr Jehanzeb highlighted various steps being taken by the interim government towards economic revival in the country. He also

appreciated the role of the ADB as one of the major development partners of Pakistan, stating that the ADB for its decades-long assistance, has been playing a vital role in the socio-economic uplift of Pakistan. The delegation led by the Senior Director of Human and Social Development Sector Office, Sectors Group (SG-HSD), Ayako Inagaki assured Pakistan of their continuous support in the future for Social Sector Development Programs which include Healthcare, Education and others, said a press release.

PSX marks WIW 2023 with gong ceremony

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) along with numerous other exchanges and organisations across the world marked World Investor Week (WIW) 2023 through a gong ceremony held at PSX. The World Federation of Exchanges (WFE), of which PSX is an Affiliate Exchange, spearheads the WIW, the WIW is being held from October 2- 8, 2023. PSX is holding this event and organising the WIW for the third consecutive year, said a press release issued here

Monday. Present at the gong ceremony were representatives from the SECP, leading academic institutions, professional bodies, and securities brokers, amongst others. The week-long activities in World Investor Week are planned to promote the importance of financial literacy and to raise awareness about investor education and protection. The objective is to encourage financial inclusion and foster learning opportunities for investors. The gong was struck by the Chief Guests.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor is arranging socks on his stall at Karachi Company area to attract customers in Federal Capital.

SCCI chief reaffirms commitment toward resolution of issues

PESHAWAR (APP): President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Fuad Ishaq reaffirmed his commitment toward resolution of business community issues. Formally taking charge of his office on Monday, Fuad Ishaq said selfless service to traders' community is his prime goal and mission. No stone will remain unturned to work for betterment and resolution of problems that were being faced by the business community, he vowed. Portraying a bleak picture of the state of the national economy, Fuad Ishaq said a war-battered economy can revive only by boosting economic and trade activities. He promised the SCCI will frame policies by establishing a close coordination with trade bodies and associations. The SCCI chief firmly showed his full commitment to resolve community issues by taking them up with relevant government authorities in an appropriate manner. Meanwhile electing Fuad Ishaq as president of

SCCI was widely hailed by the business community as a large number of business leaders thronged to the chamber house today and felicitated the newly elected president Fuad Ishaq after taking charge of office. The business community expressed full support and best wishes to Fuad Ishaq and hoped the newly elected president will serve the community in an efficient way. Fuad Ishaq said SCCI believes in selfless service to the traders, businessmen and industrialists. He added being the third prime chamber of the country, the forum has always played an important role in resolution of business community issues. I am fully aware about the problems that were being faced by the business community under the prevailing circumstances, Fuad Ishaq said. He continued to say that the door of the chamber will always remain open for the business community. Fuad Ishaq said a synergy between the business community.

CDNS attains Rs 400b targets in fresh bond

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has accomplished a target of Rs 400 billion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, from July 1 to 30th September. The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, the senior official of CDNS told APP here on Monday. He said this was Rs 200 billion additional annual target than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22.

"The CDNS has set a reviewed saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the current financial year (2021-22) which will promote savings culture in the country," he said. In view of the current market trend in the country, the ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture, he said He said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and new reforms and innovations were being introduced. "At this time Automated Teller Machine (ATM) has also been introduced in CDNS.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships namely, Mumbasa Express, MSC Shahar, Dignity and Doha carrying Containers, Palm oil and LNG, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal and Elengro Terminal respectively on Sunday. Meanwhile two more ships, Amali and Kana scheduled to load/offload Cement and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of the port on same day. A total of ten ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours.

Biden says there's 'not much time' to keep aid flowing to Ukraine and Congress must 'stop the games'

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden said that American aid to Ukraine will keep flowing for now as he sought to reassure allies of continued U.S. financial support for the war effort. But time is running out, the president said in a warning to Congress.

"We cannot under any circumstances allow America's support for Ukraine to be interrupted," Biden said in remarks from the Roosevelt Room after Congress averted a government shutdown by passing a short-term funding package late Saturday that dropped assistance for Ukraine in the battle against Russia.

"We have time, not much time, and there's an overwhelming sense of urgency," he said, noting that the funding bill lasts only until mid-November. Biden urged Congress to negotiate an aid package as soon as possible.

"The vast majority of both parties — Democrats and Republicans, Senate and House — support helping Ukraine and the brutal aggression that is being thrust upon them by Russia," Biden said. "Stop playing games, get this done."

But many lawmakers acknowledge that winning approval for Ukraine assistance in Congress is growing more difficult as the war grinds on. Republican resistance to the aid has been gaining momentum and the next steps are ahead, given the resistance from the hard-right flank.

While Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., has begun a process to potentially consider legislation providing additional Ukraine aid, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., faces a more difficult task in keeping the commitment he made over the objections of nearly half of his GOP majority. He told CBS' "Face on the Nation" that he supported "being able to make sure Ukraine has the weapons that they need," but that his priority was security at the U.S.-Mexico border.



Turkish Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar, right, and United Arab Emirates Energy Minister Suhail al-Mazrouei attend the ADIPEC, Oil and Energy exhibition and conference in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

COP28 president says oil companies support 2050 net-zero goal

Monitoring Desk
ABU DHABI: COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber said on Monday that more than 20 oil and gas companies were rallying around his calls to curb carbon emissions ahead of a United Nations summit on climate change in Dubai, who is also head of United Arab Emirates oil giant ADNOC, has this year urged the energy industry to join the fight against climate change. He was a controversial pick to lead COP28, which begins next month, because his country is an OPEC member and a major oil exporter.

"We need a system-wide holistic transformation of entire economies — economies that currently run on the equivalent of 250 million barrels of oil, gas, and coal every single day," Jaber said at an oil and gas conference in Abu Dhabi.

"For too long, this industry has been viewed as part of the problem, that it's not doing enough and in some cases even blocking progress. This is your opportunity to show the world that, in fact, you are central to the solution," he said, addressing major energy companies.

Jaber said that more than 20 oil and gas companies had positively answered calls to align around net zero by 2050, and to zero out methane emissions and eliminate routine flaring by 2030. He did not elaborate. The COP28 summit is scheduled to take place in Dubai between Nov. 30 and Dec. 12. Ahead of COP28, countries remain divided between those demanding a deal to phase out planet-warming fossil fuels, and nations that insist on preserving a role for coal, oil and natural gas.

The summit is seen as a crucial opportunity for governments to accelerate action to limit global warming with reports so far showing countries are off track to meet promises to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Mexico church collapse that killed 10 caught on camera

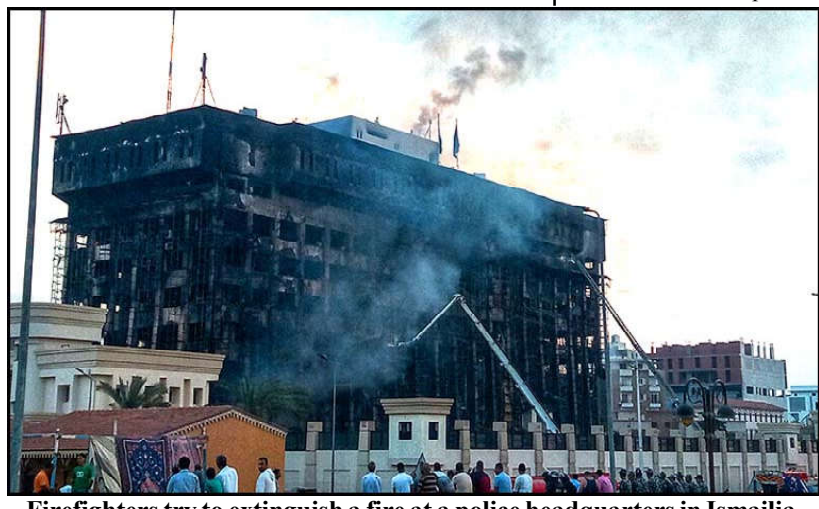
Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY: At least ten people, including three children, were killed and 60 more were hurt when a church's roof collapsed during a baptism on Sunday, authorities in north-eastern Mexico said. The disaster struck the coastal town of Ciudad Madero, in Tamaulipas state, with a Red Cross rescuer telling local media that 80 people had been in attendance at the Santa Cruz parish when the roof caved in.

"Unfortunately, ten people are confirmed dead. Of these, five are women, two men and three children," Americo Villarreal, governor of Tamaulipas, told reporters at the scene of the disaster. Rescue workers were attempting to recover the body of a woman from the rubble, but the death toll was not expected to rise as all of the missing had been accounted for, he added.

At least 60 people were treated for injuries, the governor said, with 23 still hospitalised. "Two have serious injuries, their lives are in danger," he said. Church officials said a baptism was being celebrated when the ceiling collapsed.

"We are experiencing a very difficult moment... the roof of a church has collapsed during the celebration of the Eucharist," the bishop of the local diocese Jose Armando Alvarez said in a video posted to social media. Earlier, ambulances, patrol cars and police and military personnel had rushed to the site, in addition to numerous people in search of family members who were in the church.

Local media showed footage of dozens of people trying to hold up part of the collapsed structure with poles while others made their way through the wreckage in search of survivors.



Firefighters try to extinguish a fire at a police headquarters in Ismailia.



French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Catherine Colonna and German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock speak to the media before EU-Ukraine foreign ministers meeting, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, Ukraine.

After Ankara bombing, Turkiye hits back in Iraq and at home

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkiye said it unleashed air strikes on militant targets in northern Iraq and detained suspects in Istanbul overnight, hours after Kurdish militants said they orchestrated the first bomb attack in the capital Ankara in years.

On Sunday morning, two attackers detonated a bomb near government buildings in Ankara, leaving them both dead and wounding two police officers. The outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group claimed responsibility.

The defence ministry said many militants were "neutralised", a term mostly used to mean killed, in air strikes that destroyed 20 targets — caves, shelters and depots used by the PKK in Iraq's Metina, Hakurk, Qandil and Gara regions.

Turkiye has stepped up military action against the PKK in northern Iraq over the last few years in operations it says are conducted under self-defence rights arising from Article 51 of the United Nations charter.

The PKK is designated a terrorist organisation by Turkiye, the United States and the European Union. It launched an insurgency in southeast Turkiye in 1984 and more than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

On Sunday, CCTV footage obtained by Reuters showed a vehicle pulling up outside the interior ministry's main gate in Ankara and one of its occupants quickly walking toward the building before being engulfed in an explosion.

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At least 38 injured in police station fire in Egypt's Ismailia

Monitoring Desk
ISMAILIA: A huge fire broke out at a police headquarters in the Egyptian city of Ismailia on Monday, injuring at least 38 people, according to local media.

No fatalities were immediately reported but the building is staffed by soldiers at all hours and hospitals were placed on alert.

Footage on local media showed smoke rising from the entirely blackened multi-storey building.

The cause of the blaze, which broke out at the headquarters of the Ismailia Security Directorate before dawn, is not yet known.

Of 26 wounded who were transferred to a local hospital, 24 had suffered from "asphyxiation" and two from burns, local media reported citing the health ministry.

Twelve more were treated at the scene.

The health ministry deployed 50 ambulances to the scene, which were joined by military emergency services including two planes, according to state media.

Deadly fires are a common hazard in Egypt, where fire codes are rarely enforced and emergency services are often slow to arrive.

Algeria says Niger accepts its mediation in resolving political crisis

Monitoring Desk
ALGIERS: Algeria has accepted Algeria's offer of mediation to help resolve its political crisis, Algerian state TV reported on Monday.

Algeria, which shares a border with Niger, has proposed an initiative involving a six-month transition period in Niger led by a civilian. Members of Niger's presidential guard seized power there in July and established a junta. Algeria received Niger's official notification of its acceptance of President Abdelmadjid Tebboune's mediation initiative, the foreign ministry said in a statement read out on state television.



Donald Tusk, the leader of Poland's largest opposition grouping Civic Coalition, and Rafal Trzaskowski, the mayor of Warsaw, walk in front of the national flag during the rally.

North Korea slams UN nuclear agency as US mouthpiece

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea on Monday denounced the U.N. atomic watchdog for joining a U.S.-led pressure campaign and "cooking up" a resolution over its nuclear programmes, calling the agency a "paid trumpeter" for Washington.

An unnamed spokesman of Pyongyang's Ministry of Nuclear Power Industry released a statement criticising a resolution adopted on Friday at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) general conference that calls for the North to curb its nuclear programmes.

The spokesman described the resolution as a "result of conspiracy" by the United States and its allies, saying North Korea's status as a nuclear weapons state has already become "irreversible."

"Such farce of the hostile forces is a revelation of their sinister intention to cover up their criminal acts of seriously threatening the international nuclear non-proliferation system and justify their hostile policy toward the DPRK," he said, according to state media KCNA.

Senegal intercepts boats carrying 262 migrants

Monitoring Desk
SAINT LOUIS: The Senegalese Navy said on Sunday it had stopped two more boats carrying 262 would-be migrants late the previous night, taking the total to five boats intercepted and over 600 people rescued by a navy patrol boat since Thursday. Those rescued included 26 women and 13 minors, the navy said in a post on social media platform X, sharing photos of dozens of people on a patrol boat and others seated in rows on a quay. The successive rescues come during the busy summer season.

Anti-govt rally draws '1 million' people in Poland

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Around a million people gathered on Sunday at a rally in Warsaw to protest against Poland's conservative government two weeks ahead of a key general election.

"We, here, are Poland," Tusk told the rally, "and we are here to win." "Poland deserves better. Poland deserves the best," he said, adding that "more than a million" people were taking part.

Participants from across Poland began gathering in Warsaw in the early hours to rally against the government, run by the nationalist Law and Justice party.

Tens of thousands demand climate action in Swiss capital

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: More than 60,000 protesters gathered in the Swiss capital Bern on Saturday demanding tougher policies to combat climate change, organisers said, less than a month ahead of a national election.

Such large protests are rare in Switzerland and show growing public frustration with the pace of policy-making to combat global warming despite ample evidence of its impact.

Switzerland's glaciers have shrunk by 10% in two years, while September was the hottest on record in a country warming at more than twice the global rate.

UAE holds major oil and gas conference just ahead of hosting UN climate talks in Dubai

Monitoring Desk
ABU DHABI: The Emirati president-designate of the upcoming United Nations COP28 climate talks urged oil and gas companies Monday to be "central to the solution" for climate change, a message delivered even as the industry boosts its production to enjoy rising global energy prices.

The appeal by Sultan al-Jaber highlights the gap between climate activists suspicious of his industry ties and his calls to drastically slash the world's emissions by nearly half in seven years to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) compared with pre-industrial times.

While addressing a major international concern, his remarks came at a marquee oil industry event highlighting the state oil company he oversees — feeding the concerns of those already critical of his appointment while also drawing applause from the same energy firms he wants to court at the upcoming COP28 talks starting in November. "That is our North Star. It is, in fact, our only destination," al-Jaber said. "It is simply acknowledging and respecting the science." However, he added: "We must do this while also ensuring human prosperity by meeting the energy needs of the planet's growing population."

Al-Jaber serves as the CEO of the state-run Abu Dhabi Oil Co., which has the capacity to pump 4 million barrels of crude oil a day and hopes to reach 5 million barrels a day.

Early voting begins in New Zealand's general election and in Australia for Indigenous 'Voice'

Monitoring Desk
WELLINGTON: Early voting began on Monday in New Zealand for the nation's Oct. 14 general election, with conservative contender Christopher Luxon casting his ballot.

Early voting also began in some parts of Australia in a referendum that would enshrine in Australia's constitution a mechanism for Indigenous people to advise Parliament on policies that affect their lives.

In New Zealand, the campaign of Prime Minister Chris Hipkins faced a setback on Sunday when he tested positive for COVID-19. He said he would isolate for five days or until he returned a negative test, but planned to continue with some engagements over Zoom.

Hipkins and his liberal Labour Party have been lagging behind the opposition National Party, led by Christopher Luxon, in opinion polls.

Luxon on Sunday released a 100-day action plan he said would deliver tax relief, rebuild the economy and restore law and order. "New Zealanders have waited six long years for a government that focuses on what matters to them, and gets things done," Luxon said.

In Australia, where voting is compulsory, some 98% of eligible Australians have signed up to vote in the referendum on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

Malaysians urged not to panic-buy local rice after import prices for the staple rise substantially

Monitoring Desk
KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's government on Monday reassured the country there is sufficient rice in the market and urged people not to hoard locally produced rice after recent panic-buying led to empty shelves in supermarkets and grocery stores nationwide.

Agriculture and Food Security Minister Mohamad Sabu said the government will increase distribution to rural areas to address a supply issue sparked by a hike in the price of imported rice. Malaysia and many countries are grappling with rising rice prices and low supplies after India's curb on rice sales cut global supplies by a fifth.

Mohamad said Malaysia's locally produced rice is capped at 2.60 ringgit (\$0.55) per kilogram (2.2 pounds), the cheapest in the region. So when sole importer Padiberas Nasional Berhad raised the price of imported white rice by 36% on Sept. 1, it prompted many Malaysians to switch from imported rice to cheaper local rice.

He said the higher price of imported rice cannot be helped after 19 countries, including India, restricted rice exports to cater for domestic needs. Malaysia imports about a third of its rice supply.

"Actually, we don't have a shortage of rice in the country. It's just that the price of imported rice has risen sharply. ... Many people have shifted to buying cheaper local rice," he said, adding that the government is taking steps to address this issue. "I want to remind the people again to keep calm and just buy what you need. Don't panic-buy."

Mohamad said the government will increase distribution of local rice to rural areas. He said the government will also subsidize the price of imported rice to two poorer states on Borneo island to ensure adequate supply.

From Tuesday, he said, authorities will step up surveillance of rice wholesalers and shops to ensure there is no hoarding of local rice.

He said samples will also be taken to ensure that sellers are not repackaging local rice as imported rice or mixing the grains for higher profits, warning that stern action will be taken against anyone found to be doing so.

Bangladesh dengue deaths top 1,000 in worst outbreak on record

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: More than 1,000 people in Bangladesh have died of dengue fever since the start of the year, official figures showed, in the country's worst recorded outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease.

Dengue is a disease endemic to tropical areas that causes high fevers, headaches, nausea, vomiting, muscle pain and, in the most serious cases, bleeding that can lead to death.

The World Health Organization has warned that dengue — and other diseases caused by mosquito-borne viruses such as chikungunya, yellow fever and Zika — are spreading faster and further due to climate change.

Figures from the country's Directorate General of Health Services published on Sunday night said 1,006 people had died, among more than 200,000 confirmed cases.

The agency's former director Be-Nazir Ahmed told AFP Monday that the number of deaths so far this year was higher than every previous year combined since 2000.

"It's a massive health event, both in Bangladesh and in the world," he added.

Among the dead are 112 children aged 15 and under, including infants, according to the official data.

This year's figures dwarf the previous highest total from 2022 when 281 deaths were recorded.

Scientists have attributed this year's outbreak to irregular rainfall and hotter temperatures during the annual monsoon season that have created ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes.

Bangladesh has recorded cases of dengue from the 1960s but documented its first outbreak of dengue haemorrhagic fever, a severe and sometimes fatal symptom of the disease, in 2000.

The virus that causes the disease is now endemic to Bangladesh, which has seen a trend of worsening outbreaks since the turn of the century.

PM urges every section of society to play role in complete eradication of polio

Launches anti-polio vaccine drive targeting 44 mln children

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday called upon every section of the society to play role in complete eradication of polio virus from the country. He said everyone would have to participate in this sacred task to ensure safe and healthy future of children of the country. Chairing a meeting of the National Task Force for eradication of polio here, the prime minister directed the concerned authorities to engage religious scholars, teachers, parents and all stakeholders to become part of the polio awareness campaign in the country. He also directed to ensure security of the polio workers during the anti-polio campaign. Expressing satisfaction over the significant drop of polio cases in the country, the prime minister vowed to continue ef-

orts till complete uprooting of this crippling disease from the country.

The nation would celebrate the day when every child of the country would be completely safe from this disease, the prime minister said adding that it was a fact that all the religious scholars, including Imam-e-Kaaba, had declared the polio vaccine absolutely safe and very necessary for the future of children without disabilities. PM Kakar expressing concern over reports of polio virus in the three districts of the country, directed to run a special anti-polio campaign in areas where the polio virus had been reported.

"We are grateful to the international partners for their active participation and key support in Pakistan's National Polio Program," he added. The meeting was informed that

compared to the 20 cases reported in the country in 2022, only two cases had been reported this year, which was mainly due to the continuation of anti-polio campaigns at the national level.

The prime minister appreciated the ministry of health, National Task Force, provincial governments and administration, and law enforcement agencies for their tireless efforts in eradicating polio virus from the country.

Meanwhile Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday launched the five-day anti-polio vaccination drive targeting around 44 million children across the country.

The prime minister initiated the campaign by administering anti-polio vaccine oral drops and vitamin A to children, here at the PM House.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar launched the National Polio Eradication Campaign by administering polio drops to child.

Chairman HEC assures to resolve issues of universities: Sustainable measures being taken to remove educational and social backwardness: Amjad Rasheed

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Finance, Amjad Rasheed has stated that sustainable measures are being taken to resolve the issues of masses and remove the educational and social backwardness from the province.

Surely the people of the province would benefit from the fruits of measures being taken on directives of the caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki. Amjad Rasheed mentioned that he had meeting with heads of all three institutions on directives of the Prime Minister.

This was shared by the Minister Finance while speaking to the Chairman

Higher Education Commission and other personalities during his visit to the federal capital on Monday.

Amjad Rasheed also visited the Neftech head office and Pakistan Baitul Maal and Executive Director and head of the Baitul Maal there.

Speaking to the head of Pakistan Baitul Maal, the caretaker Finance Minister urged him to expand the circle of social programme for the assistance of poor people living in the remote areas of the province.

He pointed out that the poor people are facing immense problems due to poverty in the remote areas of the province.

During meeting with the Executive Director of Neftech, the Minister

spoke about the establishment of technical institutions for the skilled youth in the province besides giving them access to the means of livelihood available abroad.

On this, the Neftech Director assured to expand the training programmes all the province.

While during the course of meeting with Chairman HEC, the matters about issues being faced by the universities were discussed. The release of grants for the universities was also discussed during the meeting.

The Chairman HEC assured that the progress would be ensured for resolving the financial and administrative matters of the public universities.

Aneeq Ahmed says: Solution to all contemporary issues lies in Seerat-un-Nabi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Monday said that the solution to all contemporary issues lies in the Seerat of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), should serve as a mirror for both individuals and nations.

Addressing as chief guest, he expressed his appreciation for the first-ever Seerat Conference organized within the Federal Tax Ombudsman Secretariat, emphasizing that Allah Almighty had exalted the mention of His beloved Prophet, which would endure until the Day of Judgment. He said, "The excellent moral values exemplified by the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) are the same values that guide us today." The minister said the re-

vered Prophet's exemplary ethics remained the standard for humanity. He said the Holy Quran, which is the first book on the Seerat of Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), should serve as a mirror for both individuals and nations.

He said the Holy Quran sternly warns those who did not implement its system on Allah Almighty's land. Federal Tax Ombudsman, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah organized the Seerat Conference themed 'Solving Contemporary Issues in the Light of the Prophet's Seerat' within his department.

The conference brought together tax officials and employees for a competition of Naats and speeches on the Seerat.

Governor stresses need to set up Artificial Intelligence laboratory in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has

technical institutions, besides other matters of mutual interest.

Speaking on the occa-



QUETTA: Senior Advisor for Overseas Pakistanis Federal Ombudsman ambassador retired Fouzia Nasreen visiting One Window Facilitation Desk at Quetta Airport

Caretaker Minister LG calls for ensuring provision of health facilities to masses

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Local Government, Sheikh Mehmoodul Hasan Mandokhail has stated that medical is a sacred profession and as such it should be ensured to provide necessary facilities to the masses.

He said that he would be approaching the concerned authorities on the issue of lack of medicines in the hospitals.

The caretaker Minister was speaking on occasion of his visit to the District Headquarter Hospital Zhob on Monday.

The Minister visited different sections of the hospital and inspected the services being provided to

the patients.

Also present on the occasion were the former Senator, Sheikh Saedul Hasan Mandokhail, District Health Officer, Dr. Muzaffar Shah, Medical Superintendent, Dr. Noorul Haq and other concerned.

Several patients on the occasion complained about the lack of medicines in the hospital.

Speaking on the occasion, caretaker Minister said that it is included in government's priorities to provide healthcare facilities to the masses.

For the purpose, huge funds are being spent to bring improvement in the healthcare facilities in the public sector hospitals, he added.

Chairman CII calls on PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology Qibla Ayaz called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here on Monday. During the meeting, Qibla Ayaz paid tribute to the prime minister on successfully representing Pakistan in the United National General Assembly (UNGA).

The chairman of the Council informed the prime minister about the current status of religious harmony in the country.

He also invited PM Kakar to attend the general meeting of the Council of Islamic Ideology.

The prime minister said the Islamic Ideology Council had been playing active role in maintaining law and order and religious harmony in the country.



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor for Irrigation Mir Danish Lango meeting with Provincial Sports Minister Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani

In all 4867 connections found involved in power pilferage, 158 arrested so far: QESCO

Independent Report

QUETTA: In all 4,867 electricity connections have so far been involved in the pilferage and some 158 arrested on the same charges as the extensive campaign is continued by the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) all over the province. This was informed by the spokesman of QESCO while sharing detail of the Company's crackdown against the power pilferers and defaulters.

According to QESCO spokesman, the crackdown is continued without any discrimination in all areas against those involved in

the power pilferage and defaulters. He said that 1255 applications have been submitted against the power pilferers in the province.

Out of them, 380 FIRs have been registered against the thieves while 158 arrested so far on the charges of pilfering. These FIRs have been registered i.e., 66 in Quetta, 89 in Loralai, 65 in Khuzdar, 93 in Sibi, 46 in Pishin and 21 in Makran.

Over Rs. 120 million have been charged fine to the power pilferers and over Rs. 88 million have been received from them.

Muhammad Ali, Zhang discuss mutual interest issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Power and Petroleum, Muhammad Ali has held a significant meeting with the Vice President of China National Petroleum Corporation, Mr. Zhang, during the sidelines of the Abu Dhabi International Progressive Energy Congress (ADIPEC). The discussions revolved around various issues of mutual interest between the two na-

tions, according to a news release received here on Monday. Both sides expressed their willingness to enhance future cooperation in the vital energy sector. ADIPEC, renowned as one of the world's largest energy events, is currently underway in Abu Dhabi, attracting participation from 2,200 companies and featuring 30 country pavilions that showcase cutting-edge energy strategies.

Customs seizes two tankers filled with Iranian diesel

GWADAR (INP): Pakistan Customs has foiled a bid to smuggle Iranian diesel, worth Rs40.4 million in Gwadar, Balochistan on Monday. Customs Intelligence during an action in Gwadar, seized two oil tankers filled with 80,000 Iranian diesel worth Rs40.4 million.

DG Customs Faiz Ahmed said the two tankers filled with Iranian diesel were being smuggled to parts of Balochistan when the action was taken.

Receipts of a private fuel station were also confiscated from the seized oil tankers, which proved 'fake' upon investigation,

he added. Earlier, Caretaker Prime Minister (PM) Anwaarul Haq Kakar directed the customs authorities and law enforcement agencies to strictly curb the smuggling of sugar, petroleum products, urea, agricultural products and other items.

The caretaker premier issued the directives while chairing a high-level meeting regarding smuggling control in border areas.

Caretaker Federal Minister for Trade Gohar Ejaz, Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Minister for Petroleum Muhammad Ali, Advisor to the PM Ahmed Cheema,

PTI urges CJP to ensure timely general elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Monday appealed Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa to step in and order that the general elections be held in the country within 90 days.

The declaration of the PTI core committee meeting stated that only 36 days have left for the caretaker government and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold general elections.

It further stated that holding the elections in 90 days is a mandatory and irrevocable order of the constitution and the state structure must maintain the sanctity of the constitution and implement its purpose.

The PTI core committee declaration also stated that the Supreme Court is responsible for maintaining the sanctity of the Constitution, adding that the Chief Justice of Pakistan should intervene in view of the sensitivity of the situation.

Cipher case: Court summons Imran, Qureshi on Oct 4

ISLAMABAD (Online): Special court set up under official secret act has summoned PTI chairman Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi on October 4 in cipher case.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain of special court has issued notice following the filing of challan in court.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain has remarked the statements of witnesses are enough for issuing the notice to accused persons. Chairman PTI Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi are imprisoned in Adiala jail.

Notice is issued to superintendent Adiala jail with reference to appearance of Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the court. Superintendent Adiala jail should present Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi in court on October 04.

Gilani blames PTI gov't poor policies of recent wave of terrorism

MULTAN (APP): Former Prime Minister, Senator Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, on Monday, blamed the poor policies of the former government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for the recent string of terrorism in the country. Gillani during his visit to a private university told reporters that level playing should be given to all political parties except those who were involved in the May 9 attacks. All political forces had agreed to frame a National Action Plan (NAP) when they were left with no option.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding Price Control Mechanism

People urged to verify their voter registration via SMS

ISLAMABAD (APP): Aspiring voters can confirm their registration status on the voter lists by sending their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) number to 8300 as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) allows eligible citizens to register, transfer, or correct their voting details until October 25th. According to an ECP official, after sending SMS to 8300, an automated response will be generated, furnishing information such as the name of the electoral area, block code, and serial number. Each registered voter has the option to verify their details by visiting the District Election Commissioner's office in their respective area, where the complete electoral roll is accessible.

The addresses and contact information for the DEC's offices across the

four provinces can be found on the Election Commission's website. He mentioned that voters have the option to download Form-21 (for voter registration or transfer), Form-22 (for raising objections or addressing omissions in voting), and Form-23 (for correcting personal details).

These forms can then be submitted to the appropriate offices of Form Registration Officers and Assistant Registration Officers. He mentioned that citizens can obtain information by dialing the ECP helpline at 051-8848888, where they will receive responses from a tele-computerized system. It is important to mention here that the ECP had removed restrictions on voter lists nationwide, enabling eligible individuals to register, transfer or update their voting information until October 25th.

Mustafa Khokhar indicates to announce new party this month

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former PPP leader and former senator Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar has given indication for announcing new political party in this month.

Talking to a private TV channel here he said this is a proposal that new party be announced after election. But to my view the announcement should be made before election. We will announce party in October.

He said whispers are in the air about the changes in Senate. He held these are whispers that change should come in Senate before return of Nawaz Sharif in Pakistan so that he remains satisfied. May be former finance minister Ishaq Dar is made chairman Senate. Terming the Nawaz Sharif return is under a deal 100 percent.



HUB: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries, Excise and Taxation Prince Ahmed Ali Ahmedzai issuing directives to MLIEDA during his visit to site of under construction road network project