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Pakistan takes up challenges confronting regional peace with Afghanistan

Foreign Minister Jilani meets Afghan FM Muttaqi in China; Reaffirms commitment to further strengthen bilateral ties; Not only Afghan refugees, action to be taken against all illegal immigrants: FO

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan and Afghan foreign ministers met in Tibet on Thursday amid tensions as the foreign office clarified that the crackdown against illegal immigrants was not against a particular nationality.

As tensions deepened between the two neighbours, Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani met his Afghan counterpart Amir Khan Muttaqi in China's Tibet Autonomous region. Both were there to attend an international conference.

A brief statement issued by the foreign office said the foreign minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthen bilateral

ties with Afghanistan. He underscored that challenges confronting regional peace and stability be addressed in collaborative spirit through collective strategies.

No further details were provided but sources said the issue of terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan was one of the main talking points. According to sources, Foreign Minister Jilani made it clear that Afghanistan will have to fulfil its commitment to deny terrorist groups including banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) a space to operate from the neighbouring country.

Sources said the Afghan

foreign minister reiterated his government's stance claiming that Kabul would not allow anyone to use its soil against any country including Pakistan.

Islamabad, however, is far from convinced with verbal assurances of the interim Afghan government. Relations between the two countries have been strained in recent weeks because of lack of decisive action by the Afghan Taliban government against the TTP.

APP adds: Pakistan on Thursday said its recent decision to deport illegal residents was not targeted

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Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani meets Afghan Acting FM Amir Khan Muttaqi in Tibet, China.

Immigrants expulsion state's decision to maintain security We will not succumb to any external pressure or influence: Jan Achakzai

Strongly condemns statement of Afghan Defence Minister Mullah Yaqoob; Caretaker Minister Information expects from Afghan Interim Government to refrain from interfering in our internal affairs and to focus on addressing challenges within their own borders

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has strongly condemned the statement made by the Defence Minister of the Afghan interim government, Mullah Yaqoob.

In a statement issued here on Thursday, Jan Achakzai said that "we disagree with the statement made by Mullah Yaqoob, the Defence Minister of the Afghan Interim Government."

The Minister Information said that "by seeking support from religious and political leaders in Pakistan, he (Mullah Yaqoob) has interfered in the domestic affairs of our Pakistan."

It is important to recognize that Pakistan holds

the sovereign right to expel any individuals, including those from Afghanistan, if deemed necessary.

Jan Achakzai also said that "we will not succumb to any external pressure or influence. In accordance with the directives of the Federal Government, the Government of Balochistan (GOB) will take necessary steps to repatriate Afghan refugees within the next 26 days."

"Our decision to expel these individuals is based on our national interests and the need to maintain stability within our borders. It is crucial to ensure the security and well-being of our own citizens. Therefore, we stand firm in our resolve to address this matter in a timely and efficient

manner."

The Minister also said "We understand the challenges faced by Afghan refugees, and we will work closely with the relevant authorities to facilitate their safe return to their home country. This process will be carried out in a humane and respectful manner, taking into consideration the rights and dignity of all individuals involved."

Furthermore, Mr. Achakzai added, it is essential for all nations to respect the sovereignty and autonomy of others. We expect the Afghan Interim Government to refrain from interfering in our internal affairs and to focus on addressing the challenges within their own borders."



QUETTA: Chief Executive Officer of WESS Pervez Iqbal meeting with Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai

Amid threats to Ahmad cricket stadium Pakistan urges India to provide security to team

ISLAMABAD (INP): Amid reports of terror threats to Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Pakistan has called upon India to provide security to the national team during the ICC World Cup 2023.

The statement came after Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch was asked to comment on visa delays for Pakistani fans and journalists and media reports regarding terror threats during a weekly press briefing in the federal capital on Thursday.

The Indian government hasn't granted visas to media persons even though they had applied for it much ahead of the mega

tournament.

"The host country should provide protection to our cricket team in the ICC World Cup 2023," she said, adding that it is the responsibility of the Indian government to create a favourable environment.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch stated that they are in touch with Indian authorities and hoped that the visas would be issued soon. "As the host, India should not hinder Pakistani fans from watching the World Cup," she said.

Meanwhile, the authorities are on high alert amid a terror threat pertaining to Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi stadium.

China invites PM Kakar to BRI ceremony

ISLAMABAD (INP): China has invited Pakistan Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar for participating in a Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) ceremony. The invitation was extended during a meeting between the foreign ministers of China and Pakistan which was held in Tibet on Thursday. The meeting between FM Jalil Abbas Jilani and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi focused a raft of issues including the ongoing Hamalya Region Conference being held in Tibet.

Jilani thanked Wang Yi for the warm welcome accorded to him in China.

Most wanted terrorist killed in Dera shootout

PESHAWAR (APP): Police in collaboration with law enforcing agencies (LEAs) on Thursday brought down a most wanted terrorist in a shootout in Dera Ismail Khan. According to the Central Police Office, the Al Barq Unit of police in collaboration with law enforcing agencies, shot dead a most wanted terrorist to the CTD in an intelligence-based operation.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing at the inaugural ceremony of National Emergencies operation Center established by NDMA.

Solangi says Pakistan intends to develop itself as progressive, democratic, peaceful nation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Thursday said that Pakistan intended to move forward by developing itself as a progressive and democratic nation that desired peace within its frontiers and across the world.

Speaking at an international conference "Navigating Peace & Security in the Region and Beyond: Pakistan's Role," organised at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), he said: "We want to be a nation that wants to look after its people and intends to focus on the welfare of its masses."

The minister said now the Pakistan government had a clear vision to focus on its people, and economic revival and it had recently taken several initiatives to bolster the economy and explore new prospects for

trade and investment.

He said the countries and political leadership did make mistakes in the past and Pakistan also had its share of mistakes and adding "but now we want to move on". The minister said it was in Pakistan's interest to avoid the ongoing confrontation between major world powers. He said that Pakistan had some lessons from its role with regard to the confrontation of major powers in the past.

Solangi said now Pakistan was desirous of establishing good relations with its neighbours including India and Afghanistan, and added Islamabad already enjoyed good relations with China and Iran.

He said that Pakistan also enjoyed very good relations with Middle East countries and now it was focusing to further improve economic and trade ties with the oil-rich states.

President, PM laud services of outgoing naval chief

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi paid a farewell call on President Dr Arif Alvi here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President House said.

The president lauded the services of the outgoing naval chief and his contribution to the country and the Pakistan Navy. He wished Admiral Niazi the best for his future.

Meanwhile outgoing Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi paid a farewell call on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here on Thursday, the PM Office said.

PM Kakar lauded the services of the outgoing naval chief for his leadership of the institution and playing a key role in making the country's defence impregnable.

PM Kakar seeks global cooperation in addressing adverse effects of climate change

Inaugurates Emergencies Operation Center for coordination on disaster management

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday inaugurated the newly established state-of-the-art

National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) to help in coordinated efforts to manage the natural disasters in the future.

Established at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Headquarters, the Center would also help in disaster risk reduction and mitigation of damages.

The prime minister lauded the establishment of NEOC and emphasized the importance of disaster resilient infrastructure and policy framework.

He said that despite being one of the least contributors of carbon emissions globally, Pakistan was one of the top countries affected by climate change.

"Climate change is a real challenge that will keep haunting our future generations unless we take such concrete steps," he reiterated.

The prime minister also praised the coordinated efforts of all state institutions during the devastating floods of 2022, especially NDMA.

"Nearly one third of the population of the country was affected by floods in 2022 and USD 30 billion

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ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi paid a farewell call on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Matter of people becoming missing brings bad name for country: IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) has remarked that matter of people becoming missing brings bad name for the country.

He further remarked the appeals are pending since five years. We feel ashamed of sitting this way.

He gave these remarks while presiding over two members bench of IHC during the hearing of case related to journalist Mudassar Naro and other missing persons Thursday.

Justice Miangul Aurangzeb remarked people go missing but state does nothing. The previous Prime Minister (PM) appeared and he too misled. When next PM comes he will have different priori-

ties. He remarked the matter of people going missing is matter of extraordinary nature. Missing persons cases are bringing black blot on the name of Pakistan. Court issues directives repeatedly but implementation is not being made.

He observed state is powerful but it says in missing persons case it can do nothing in this regard. People go missing here. Do you expect development of this country. No country will give you dollars if your citizens are not safe. The courts should not tolerate the process of making the citizens missing at any cost. Attorney general should meet PM and inform the court about progress in this matter.



Mr. Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting addressing on international conference titled "Navigating Peace & Security in the Region and Beyond: Pakistan's Role," in Islamabad.

Caretaker Minister Public Health Engineering announces: Mangi dam project to be completed by June 2024; 80 percent water needs of Quetta city to be met

Independent Report QUETTA: The Mangi dam project is due to be completed by June 2024. This project would meet almost 80 percent requirement of clean drink water supplying 8.1 million gallons of water on the daily basis.

This was announced by the caretaker Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering and Population Welfare, Sardar Ejaz Ahmed Khan Jaffar while speaking on occasion of the inspection of Mangi dam project on Thursday.

Also present on the occasion were Project Di-

rector of Mangi dam, Zarak Khan and other concerned high ups.

Speaking on the occasion, caretaker Minister said that Mangi dam is very important project. As the Quetta city has been facing water shortage issue, therefore, we are well aware about it, and in this regard, necessary steps would be taken to resolve it at every level.

The Minister on the occasion strictly directed the officers to mobilize all available resources for en-

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QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki attending a ceremony held in honour of participants of National Security & War Course

Chairman Sailani Trust calls on Kakar: Governor applauds role of welfare organizations for meeting basic needs of deserving people

Independent Report

leadership of Bashir Ahmed Farooqui, here on Thursday.

Also present on the occasion was prominent surgeon Dr. Sher Zaman Mandokhail.

Governor praised the payment of financial assistance to the martyrs and injured of Mastung carnage by the Sailani Trust.

He said that we have kept a special eye on everything from the day one and steps are being taken for more assistance of the heirs.

Moreover, the necessary medical treatment facilities are being provided to those injured in the carnage.

In the end, special prayer was offered for departed souls of the martyrs besides stability of the country.

The Governor was speaking to a delegation who called on him under



QUETTA: A delegation led by Sailani Trust Allama Bashir Ahmed Farooqui meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Quetta reports another Congo virus case

QUETTA (APP): A new case of Congo virus was reported in Quetta on Thursday, the hospital sources confirmed.

Fatimah Jinnah Chest Hospital Quetta officials told APP that 30-year-old Muhammad Ismail, a resident of Ghausabad, was brought to the hospital with symptoms of the Congo virus including bleeding and fever.

A blood sample, sent for report, was later diagnosed him Congo virus.

As many as 37 cases of Congo virus have been reported in Balochistan since January 2023 while 13 people have so far died of the deadly CCHF virus.

It is a matter of concern for the authorities concerned that recent year has seen an extraordinary surge in the cases of the Congo virus, with most of the people infected by the virus connected to the livestock business.

New Zealand hand England thumping defeat in World Cup opener

Independent Report
AHMEDABAD: New Zealand kicked off their World Cup 2023 campaign in a style, crushing England by nine wickets in opening match of the event at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, on Thursday.

Glorious hundreds from Devon Conway and Rachin Ravindra guided Black Caps to chase the target of 283 runs in just 36.2 overs. Conway lit up the world cup opener with lively hundred as he amassed unbeaten 152 while Ravindra also showed magic with bat by scoring 123 runs off 96 balls.

In what could be dubbed as one-sided show, English bowlers seemed helpless as they struggled to take wickets and restrict Kiwis from chasing the target.

Earlier, the Black Caps put England to bat first after winning the toss. Jos Buttler's side posted 282-9.

England opening pair attempted to take a strong start but their partnership was broken apart when Dawid Malan caught out for 14 off 24 balls. Opener Jonny Bairstow (33) tried to smash a drive on Santner's ball but caught by Mitchell in 13th over.

After average start, Joe Root put his team in command as he made 77 off 86 before being dismissed by Glenn Phillips. Harry Brook and Moeen Ali made 25 and 11, respectively.

Jos Buttler tried to regain the momentum built by Root but he was sent to pavilion for 43. After his dismissal, England were quick to lose wickets of their tail order as Sam Curran and Chris Woakes removed for 14 and 11, respectively. Adil Rashid made 15 runs and Mark Wood scored 12 runs as they managed to save the last wicket.

Henry took three wickets while Santer and

Phillips grabbed two scalps each.

The New Zealand team are without their key batsman Williamson who is recovering from injuries. He is expected to play the next match.

Meanwhile, Sachin Tendulkar, ambassador of the event, brought the scintillating trophy to the field and waved to his jubilant fans. The two teams also bowed their heads in deference to their national anthems.

Every four years, the cricket lovers enjoy the skills of their favourite players with their stylish knocks. The World Cup is a mega one-day international (ODI) cricket event.

As many as 10 teams - Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka - are going to battle to strengthen their reign in the cricket world.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki and Major General Aamir Najam exchanging shields during a ceremony held in honour of participants of National Security & War Course

Bugti instructs concerned officials to solve public problems immediately

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bold move to ensure public convenience and welfare, Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has instructed concerned officials to solve the problems of the people who come to the Home Ministry immediately.

He also warned that he will not tolerate any form of official culture or attitude that may hinder the process, he said in a tweet.

The home minister made these remarks during a meeting with the public at his office on Thursday. He listened to their problems and issued instructions to the concerned officials

on the spot. He assured the people that the staff of the Ministry of Interior is available at all times to solve their problems on priority.

The minister also emphasized the need to end the culture of bribery and nepotism. He said that there was no room in the Ministry of Interior for those who cause undue delay, bribery or abuse of power.

This commendable initiative by the minister is sure to bring a sigh of relief to the people of the country, who have long been plagued by bureaucratic delays and corruption.

PM Kakar seeks global cooperation...

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It can estimate vulnerable needs of the areas and determine the gap to be pre-coordinated support from global partner through all time ready holistic national outlook in the form of real time National Common Operating Picture.

Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, conducted the briefing session for the prime minister as well as ambassadors, UN organizations' country heads, lead global NGOs, academia lead institutional and experts who attended the event.

He presented key lessons from Pakistan's extensive exposures to disaster and national emergencies in the past and shared new vision of NDMA for proactive management of disasters through NEOC. The vision was principally approved by Prime Minister's Office and all national stakeholders of disasters response.

The ceremony was attended by national and international dignitaries who appreciated Pakistan government in establishing a high end outcome, fast-paced development of NEOC in record time and the swath of multilateral utility it promises of mutual growth and protection of strategic investments.

PM Kakar seeks global cooperation...
The prime minister said that the world needed to step forward and help developing countries like Pakistan to cope up with the adverse effects of climate change.

He also praised the role of NCOEC both in COVID-19 and 2022 floods.

In a briefing, Prime Minister Kakar was told that NEOC would serve as hub of all technological inputs related to climate change, disasters management and predictive modeling for national emergencies.

First of its kind in Pakistan and the region, this is Pakistan's indigenously conceptualized capability, which will evolve capacity to predict future disasters with credence and accuracy about likely locations, time of impact and damage intensity.

It would generate coordinated response, guiding lower tiers of provincial and district level disaster management authorities.

The need was felt for a platform which should perform the functions for developing a national collage of disasters monitoring, high end technology driven capability.



QUETTA: Members of Railway Workers Union Balochistan are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, held at Quetta press club.

PM, Baloch businessman discuss problems of trader community

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday held a meeting with businessman Hajj Nawab Damar who called on him here at the PM House.

The meeting focused on the problems faced by the trader community in Balochistan particularly Ziarat, Hamai, and Sanjawi, the PM Office said.

The prime minister also met tribal chief Sardar Farid Damar and social worker Lal Khan Kakar.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with the Pakistan Long Range Field Target Rifle Team who won the European Long Range Rifle Championship 2023 held in Britain at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Pakistan needs to capitalize on opportunities amid crisis due to evolving global order: Speakers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Speakers at a conference discussing peace and security on Thursday underscored that the country needed to capitalize on the opportunities amid crisis due to the evolving global order shifting from the West to the East.

The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), is hosting a two-day International Conference on "Navigating Peace & Security in the Region & Beyond: Pakistan's Role".

The two-day international conference brings together an amalgamation of academics and practitioners from around the world. The Conference stretches over two days and has six diverse working sessions focusing on Afghanistan, the Middle East, Pakistan-US bilateral

ties, counterterrorism, regional peace and security as well as non-traditional security challenges.

Ambassador Asif Durrani, Pakistan's Special Representative on Afghanistan was the Chief Guest at the occasion. Dr. Andrew Wilder, Vice President of Asia Centre, USIP, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI and Amina Khan also spoke in the inaugural session.

In her welcome remarks, Director CAMEA, Amina Khan stated that the contemporary global landscape is witnessing profound shifts, in which Pakistan finds itself at a critical juncture amidst this transformative milieu.

On a global scale, the pursuit of security, stability, and progress is beset by a myriad of challenges, including conflicts, warfare, economic uncertainties, natural calamities, climate change, poverty and over-

population.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic starkly exposed the shortcomings of a fragmented multilateral system in formulating coordinated responses to a crisis that continues to wreak havoc and inflict severe damage on the global economy.

Khan highlighted that the evolving global trends not only present challenges but offer a spectrum of opportunities, encompassing both economic and political dimensions, for Pakistan. The onus firmly rests upon the nation to assume leadership and proactively define its destiny within the multifaceted tapestry of these unfolding scenarios.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, while expressing his views, elucidated that the world is currently facing an unprecedented level of fragility, polarization and conflict risks. Various security

threats, including traditional and non-traditional, have increased global volatility and concerns about nuclear conflict are heightened, as symbolized by the "Doomsday Clock" being set at 90 seconds to midnight.

In addition, the world is currently marred by major challenges including major-power competition, ongoing wars, terrorism, the pandemic's effects, economic downturn, and climate change. The outcome of these transformations is uncertain, with ongoing debates about the decline of the West, globalization's fate, and the potential for a new Cold War. There is a shift in global power to the East, a growing desire for multipolarity, and a trend toward issue-based coalitions; while a semblance of stability and predictability are sought after by many nations. While shedding light on the regional challenges, Ambassador Mahmood fo-

cused on the geostrategic and economic transformation in South Asia and beyond. In the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, security threats persist, but a significant shift is observed in the Middle East. China-brokered reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia is having a regional impact. The Middle East is undergoing reforms, reshaping geopolitics and economics, driven by green initiatives, trade, investment, and connectivity.

In contrast, South Asia remains mired in history and the bitter past, unable to move towards reconciliation, peaceful resolution of disputes, regional cooperation and connectivity, as well as economic integration. In addition, the dangerous impulses of the "Hindutva" ideology are shaking the foundations internally in India and increasing the risks for peace and security in South Asia.

President lauds Pakistan Rifle Team on winning European Long Rang Rifle Championship 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Thursday congratulated the Pakistan Rifle Team on winning European Long Rang Rifle Championship 2023 held in the United Kingdom. Talking to a delegation of the team which called on him, the president lauded Lt. General Ahsan Gulrez and Col. Junaid Waqas on winning silver while Col. Junaid Ali on winning gold medal in the event.

He said the team of Pakistan Armed Forces had presented the excellent performance in international rifle shooting event. President Alvi said the Pakistani rifle team was worthy to be lauded for winning the championship. He stressed the need to promote and encourage different sports across the country. The president expressed success and good wishes for the Pakistani rifle team in the future.



ISLAMABAD: UNFPA representative in Pakistan called on Dr. Nadeem Jan, Caretaker Federal Health Minister.

Pakistan takes up challenges....

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at Afghan refugees but was against all foreigners without having valid visa documents.

Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch at a weekly press briefing said the national policy towards the Afghan refugees in the country "remained unchanged" and their safe repatriation was a separate issue.

The spokesperson said the ongoing operation was against the individuals who had either overstayed their visas or did not have the valid documents to stay.

Baloch clarified that the operation had nothing to do with the Afghan refugees that Pakistan had been hosting for several decades despite its economic constraints.

She confirmed that the bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan continued to take place, however, stressed that Pakistan would not accept the misuse of transit trade facilities.

Pakistan, she said, had been clearly articulating its concerns about the threats emanating from Afghanistan.

"We believe in diplomacy and will continue to engage with the Afghan authorities to ensure that the Afghan soil is not used to foment terrorism," she said.

She said that Pakistan was in contact with the Indian authorities and urged them to issue visas to Pakistani spectators and journalists who wished to see the International Cricket Council (ICC) World Cup in India.

She said that it was the responsibility of the host country to provide security and a conducive environ-

ment for the Pakistan cricket team and emphasized that sports should not be mixed with politics.

She said that the Pakistan team was visiting India not for a bilateral cricket series and thus had every right to participate in the international series.

To another question, the spokesperson said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had received the formal communication from the Election Commission to invite international observers for the upcoming general election. She said the process would be facilitated in accordance with the policy and past practice.

On Palestine, she said Pakistan's policy was clear that it supported a two-state solution on the basis of pre-1967 borders.

The spokesperson outlined the engagements of Foreign Minister Jilani Abbas Jilani, who is currently in China at the special invitation of Foreign Minister Wang Yi for participation in the Third Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation being held in Tibet Autonomous Region.

She said the FM in his keynote address delivered today at the opening ceremony of the forum underscored Pakistan's commitment to ecological balance and urged policy coordination and experience-sharing between countries in the region. She said FM Jilani and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Forum and emphasized the positive trajectory of bilateral ties, they discussed various aspects of the Pakistan-China friendship and exchanged views on regional and glo-

bal matters.

The two foreign ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and pledged to enhance high-level exchanges and strategic communication for continued cooperation, she said.

In Tibet, she said, FM Jilani met Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, Saibuyn Amarsaikha where the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to high-level exchanges, and enhance bilateral trade and investment.

Baloch said Pakistan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had concluded the negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the first such agreement concluded by the GCC with any country since 2009.

"We look forward to the early signing, ratification, and implementation of the Agreement which we believe will contribute to growth and mutual prosperity and mark a new chapter in economic relations between Pakistan and GCC," she said. In its capacity as the coordinator of the Geneva-based Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Group, she said, Pakistan co-organized with the OIC Observer Mission in Geneva an event titled "Mapping the efficacy of normative framework on religious discrimination, intolerance, and hatred".

The event aimed to raise awareness of the growing phenomenon of religious discrimination, intolerance, and hatred and the need for strengthening the normative framework for its redressal from a human rights perspective, she said.



QUETTA: A delegation led by former Speaker Balochistan Assembly Syed Matullah Agha meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

QESCO's Satellite town busy in operation against power thieves, bill defaulters

QUETTA (APP)- On the special instructions of Ministry of Energy (Power Division), operations are being carried out against power thieves in respective areas of Satellite town Quetta to recover arrears from the electricity thieves and defaulters of the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO).

The operation team was led by SDO, QESCO Satellite Amanullah Achakzai, Senior Line Superintendent Muhammad Rahim Bangulzai, Recovery Supervisors Malik Shaukat Ali Alizai, Haji Arshad Jadoon and Khurram Parvez.

The QESCO team disconnected several connec-

tion including commercial, domestic and illegal connection in conducting operation at various areas of Satellite town while some of consumers were fined in supervision of QESCO officials.

The officials said that with the cooperation of the administration and the police, the action against defaulters and power thieves was ongoing successful to ensure the payment of the dues of QESCO.

They also appealed those defaulter consumers to pay their dues, otherwise they would face legal action saying that electricity theft would not be tolerated under any circumstances.



QUETTA: Chairman Khidmat Khalq Foundation Niamatullah Zaheer handing over wheel chairs for disabled to Provincial Advisor for Irrigation Mir Danish Lango

Experts call for efforts from public, private sector for climate resilient healthcare system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Experts on Thursday call for concerted efforts from public and private sectors to develop resilience in the healthcare sector against climate change.

The seminar titled "Climate Change and Health System Resilience" was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), said a news release.

Deputy Executive Director SDPI, Dr Shafiq Munir, stressed the need for presenting bankable climate adaptation projects and secure climate finance through rigorous negotiations and workable targets.

He said that financing is central need to develop climate resilience in health

and other sectors which can be met through national and international financial institutions. However, the demand for financing must be complemented with substantial efforts in green-house gas emission reduction, he said.

He emphasized on including fossil fuel phase-out as an essential component in developing resilience of healthcare system considering the significant burden imposed due to fossil fuel pollution.

He highlighted that fossil fuel burning causes respiratory and cardiac diseases in adults, developmental challenges and mortality among young children.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on Breast Cancer Awareness with a delegation of Siemens Healthineers Pakistan, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President for collaborative efforts to raise awareness on breast cancer

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Thursday called for collaborative efforts by public and private sectors to create awareness about breast cancer, especially during October, besides providing support to those affected by the disease.

The president made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation from Siemens Healthineers in Pakistan. CEO of Siemens, Khuram Jameel, and the First Lady Begum Samina Alvi attended the meeting virtually.

The president said that media and other relevant stakeholders should join hands in the breast cancer awareness campaign and encourage women to engage in regular self-examinations and seek timely medical guidance for the early diagnosis of this life-threatening ailment.

During the meeting, President Alvi highlighted the potential of digital technologies in addressing healthcare challenges, particularly in enhancing awareness, improving healthcare accessibility, and

raising the quality of care while minimizing costs.

He underscored the importance of early screenings, self-examinations, and improved medical services.

Moreover, the president also underlined the pivotal role that private sector partners could play in raising awareness through media campaigns, standee displays in hospitals and public areas, distribution of pamphlets, and organizing educational workshops and seminars in women's educational institutions.

He also called for or-

ganizing breast cancer awareness events during October. President Alvi also commended the role of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and telecom companies, who had initiated a call-caution tone from 1st October on the advice of Presidency urging women to conduct self-examinations and seek medical advice if they noticed any unusual growth.

He said that spreading the message of self-examination for early breast cancer detection should not be regarded as taboo.

Dr. Saqib describes teachers as fountains of knowledge and wisdom

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib has described teachers as "Fountains of Knowledge and Wisdom" and emphasized the importance of paying homage to these noble individuals who dedicate their lives to nurture the future.

Addressing an event on World Teachers Day, organized in collaboration with UNESCO and Pakistan Institute of Education (PIE) at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), Dr. Amjad Saqib drew a parallel between the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the modern-day significance of teachers, underlining the timeless value attributed to those who impart knowl-

edge and moral values.

The Chairman of BISP and Akhuwat Foundation further illuminated the three interconnected elements of 'Society, Teacher, and Student'.

He asserted that without the respect and recognition of teachers, society can never achieve true success and progress.

Teachers, he stated, are the architects of a brighter future, molding students into responsible citizens and better human beings.

Addressing the students directly, Dr. Amjad Saqib drew a parallel between the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the modern-day significance of teachers, underlining the timeless value attributed to those who impart knowl-

edge and moral values.

The Chairman of BISP and Akhuwat Foundation further illuminated the three interconnected elements of 'Society, Teacher, and Student'.

love and respect towards educators.

Dr. Amjad Saqib proudly highlighted the role of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), which endeavors to uplift nearly one crore impoverished families throughout the country.

BISP extends its support to these families by providing stipends to their children, ensuring access to education and a brighter future, he added.

Vice Chancellor of AIU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood, earlier in his welcome address, emphasized the significance of this day in celebrating the profound impact of teachers on society.

Director-General of PIE, Dr. Muhammad Shahid Soroya shed light on the pivotal role of teachers as builders of society and acknowledged the immense contributions of Akhuwat and BISP in uplifting the underprivileged.

Tahir Ashrafi, George discuss Jaranwala incident

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi discussed the Jaranwala incident with Caretaker Minister for Human Rights Khalil George, the other day.

Ashrafi who is also the President of the International Interfaith Harmony Council condemned the gruesome incident in the strongest terms.

George said the government was committed to upholding and promoting the rights of all citizens in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

He appreciated the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar's immediate legal action against those involved in the Jaranwala incident. "We will not allow bigotry and lawlessness to ignite animosity among our communities," he added.

SC adjourns case against tax collection by Cantt Board

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Thursday adjourned the hearing till October 13, in a case against receiving of taxes by the Cantonment Board Karachi from restaurants, banks and poultry farms.

The court also served notice to the Attorney General of Pakistan for assistance in the case.

A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa heard the case regarding the matter.

During the course of proceedings, the chief justice remarked that federal or provincial governments could impose the taxes. He questioned that how cantonment board could impose tax on professionals.

The Additional Attorney General said that the local government was also an elected body and authorized to impose taxes. The chief justice asked that if the tax is imposed on lawyers, then whether it would be collected by local body. Justice Athar Minallah said that the objection was that the local government couldn't impose tax under Article 163 of the constitution.

The officers and personnel received specific directives to maintain vigilant scrutiny of suspicious individuals during their duties, including thorough checks and swift action against criminal elements.

Furthermore, the importance of maintaining a professional and courteous demeanor towards the public, in contrast to traditional approaches, was stressed.

SAPM inaugurates new OPF Boys College's campus

ISLAMABAD (Online): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik, emphasized the government's unwavering support during the inauguration ceremony of the new OPF Boys College campus here in the Federal Capital. The Special Assistant applauded the OPF for inaugurating the new campus, catering to the educational needs of the children of overseas Pakistanis, according to a press release.

He stressed the importance of nurturing the youth in a conducive environment with access to top-quality resources, making quality education for over-

Sanjrani extends heartfelt appreciation to teachers on World Teachers' Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): In connection with World Teachers' Day, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has released a poignant message expressing sincere gratitude to the dedicated educators across the nation. In his statement, the Chairman Senate commended the tireless efforts of teachers in shaping the future of Pakistan, said a news release issued here on Thursday.

He highlighted the invaluable contribution of educators, emphasizing their crucial role in building a knowledgeable and empowered society.

Sadiq Sanjrani further underscores the Senate's commitment to advancing education through the recently established Education Parliamentarians Caucus (EPC). This caucus aims to support and work towards an educated society in Pakistan, promoting education for all.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George held a meeting with Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Maulana Tahir Ashrafi.

Recovery of PTI leader Abbasi: IHC directs ministry to seek report from subordinate law enforcement agency

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed interior ministry to seek report from subordinate law enforcement agency on the petition in connection with recovery of Sadaqat Abbasi.

The petition seeking recovery of PTI leader Sadaqat Abbasi came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Chief Justice Amir Farooq here Thursday.

Junior lawyer to counsel Babar Awan appeared in the court.

State counsel Zohaib Gondal appeared in the

seas Pakistani children a paramount concern of the current administration.

Malik reaffirmed the government's top priority of extending comprehensive assistance to overseas Pakistanis, recognizing their pivotal role in bolstering the nation's economy. He underlined the government's keen interest in facilitating the integration of overseas Pakistanis into the national mainstream, citing the favorable environment for further initiatives. Earlier today, Malik formally inaugurated the new OPF Boys College junior campus located in the H-8 sector, expressing his admiration for the facility's management and infrastructure.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Information and Broadcasting Zahoor Ahmed presiding over Board of Directors meeting of Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) at APP Headquarters.

IHC issues important directive in 190mln pounds case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued important directive in 190 million pounds case.

The court directed director industries and labor department to decide on the application of registration within two weeks in case against delay in registration under new trust act in 190 million pounds case.

The case came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb Thursday.

IHC remarked the petition filed by petitioner in connection with registration be decided within two weeks.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb inquired from state counsel why are you worrying about doing what is your job. Tell us if you have not to do registration.

The court adjourned the hearing of the case for two weeks.

SC adjourns hearing in plea against Elahi's arrest

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Thursday adjourned hearing till indefinite time in a petition against the arrest of former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood heard the case.

During the course of proceeding, the court remarked that where had been written in the law that an accused shouldn't be arrested in any case.

A court in Islamabad had issued such order that the accused would be arrested with its approval, it noted and remarked whether the courts were giving license to be arrested for the accused for crimes.

Justice Tariq remarked that the judges had taken oath for the protection of law. He asked if the police first sought permission before the arrest of any accused.

Return of Afghan refugees: FIA immigration counters to be build in 5 major jails

ISLAMABAD (Online): It has been decided to build FIA immigration counters in 5 major jails across the country on the issue of return of Afghan nationals.

Foreigners without proof of residency will be sent to jail. Sources said that the immigration authorities will take steps to deport them from the jail. The relevant police and border area police will bring the illegal Afghans across the

border. All the arrested Afghans will be sent across the border under human rights laws, sources reported.

According to the sources, the police operations against illegal resident foreigners are going on in Islamabad. Another 1126 were detained, 503 people did not have any kind of documents. The Federal Police registered a case against 503 people under the Foreign Act.

Pak poised to embark on sustainable national development: PIDE VC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Dr. Nadeem ul Haque said here on Thursday that Pakistan, a nation steadfast in its commitment to overcoming economic and governance challenges, was poised to embark on a transformative journey towards sustainable national development.

Speaking at the third Think Tank Moot, hosted by PIDE, he said, recognizing the urgency of comprehensive reforms, Pakistan sought to revitalize its economic outlook, enhance its business environment and elevate its global trade standing.

Speaking on the occasion, Dean of PIDE, Dr. Shujaat Farooq said the moot fosters exchange of intellectual capital and actionable strategies, trans-

scending individual efforts to leave a profound impact on policymaking.

The discussions at the moot revolved around critical reform areas, with each think tank contributing insights and ideas enriched by innovative strategies and approaches. PIDE's researchers presented compelling briefings on "Catalyzing Inclusive Economic Growth via Structural Reforms" and "Optimizing Governance for Effective Policy Execution and Impact Evaluation." Participants underlined that having ideas in today's world means having access to funds, adding financial resources were vital for driving positive change and addressing societal issues. They were of the view, contrary to common belief, smuggling was not the root cause of economic challenges.



ISLAMABAD: Girls are taking interest in paintings during exhibition entitled "Bare Boned" at Satrang Art Gallery in Federal Capital.

NIH issues advisory on prevention of Conjunctivitis

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Institute of Health (NIH) on Thursday issued an advisory for the prevention and control of Conjunctivitis (Pink eye) to provide information for mitigating the risk factors associated with the transmission of the disease. According to NIH, viral Conjunctivitis cases surge has been witnessed in some parts of the country in past few weeks. As per the advisory, it is imperative to undertake immediate and long-term preventive measures, and to alert and sensitize the health professionals to be vigilant and timely detect and treat cases of viral Conjunctivitis and prevent its further transmission in the community.

The advisory said that viral conjunctivitis, also called "Pink Eye" is a highly contagious acute conjuncti-

val infection usually caused by an adenovirus with symptoms including irritation, photophobia, and watery discharge (pus or crusty eyes).

The advisory recommended the measures including all viral conjunctivitis patients are encouraged to be self-quarantined or isolated for the duration of symptoms, and seeking medical care immediately if symptoms get worsened.

As per directions of the doctors, patients should be isolated in the hospital or at residence and avoid contact with others.

All patients should cover eyes with goggles in order to reduce photophobia symptoms. These patients should cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue or the inner crook of the elbow in order to avoid contamination of hands.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Anjad Khan Niazi calls on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

PBM assists 11.6million, aids 250,000 in medical care in past year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Bait ul Mal (PBM) has provided assistance to more than 11.616574 million individuals in need and has allocated financial support for medical treatment to 250,000 individuals during last year, said an official. He informed APP that Individual Financial Assistance (IFA) serves as a means of support for the underprivileged, including widows, impoverished women, orphans, and individuals with disabilities. This assistance encompasses various areas such as general aid, education, medical treatment, and rehabilitation.

The financial assistance has been provided to 3,000 patients over the last three years.

PBM offers medical

treatment for significant illnesses and disabilities among financially disadvantaged patients. It also fosters economic empowerment through rehabilitation education and provides education stipends to deserving and talented students from low-income backgrounds enrolled in public educational and technical institutions.

He mentioned that in the fiscal year 2022-23, 8,390 individuals received medical assistance, 4,391 were granted educational scholarships, and 18,375 received educational stipends. PBM aids underprivileged students in government educational institutions but excludes those in private schools or with parents who are government servants.



ISLAMABAD: A group photo of teachers with Chief guest DG Federal Directorate of Education Amjad Ahmad Director Colleges Irfan Ullah Principal Prof Sabah faisal in a ceremony held at ICG F6/2 to mark world Teachers Day.

Dolphin squads directed for prompt response in emergency cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Dolphin squads of Islamabad police have been directed to ensure the safety of the city's residents and provide prompt assistance in times of emergency.

In adherence to the directives of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the SSP Safe City conducted a comprehensive briefing session for the officers and personnel of the Dolphin Squad (Emergency Response Unit), as reported by a public relations officer.

During the briefing, the SSP Safe City underscored the critical importance of swift responses to calls received via the Pucar-15 helpline, urging officers and

personnel to take appropriate actions based on the nature of each incident.

Stringent patrolling protocols were emphasized to ensure the safety of the city's residents and their property. Officials were instructed to interact courteously with citizens, providing prompt assistance in times of emergency.

The officers and personnel received specific directives to maintain vigilant scrutiny of suspicious individuals during their duties, including thorough checks and swift action against criminal elements.

Furthermore, the importance of maintaining a professional and courteous demeanor towards the public, in contrast to traditional approaches, was stressed.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Mrs. Rubina Khalid, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

CDA demolishes 7,867 illegal structures in markets, sidewalk tracks, green belts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Directorate of Enforcement, Capital Development Authority (CDA) has demolished over 7,867 illegal structures in the markets, roads, green belts, and sidewalk tracks in the federal capital in one and a half years. "During the operation, around 13,243 items of encroachers have also been confiscated, subsequently, these articles are auctioned. Besides, fines

worth Rs. 5.126 million has also been recovered from trespassers as a penalty," sources in the CDA told APP. They said, "The Directorate of Enforcement has launched as many as 1,423 anti-encroachment operations carried out across the board in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT)." The sources said, "The Directorate was vigorously undertaking anti-encroachment operations

on a regular basis throughout Islamabad in order to curb the illegal constructions in the ICT."

They said the continuous operations were being carried out on a day-to-day basis 24/7 for the retrieval of state land from land grabbers and encroachers.

The matter was being dealt with by the Directorate of Municipal Administration, working under the administrative control.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

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Targeting Afghans

The government has given all illegal immigrants in the country till the end of the month to return to their homelands or risk deportation.

This includes 1.73m Afghans, who, according to Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti, are undocumented. E-tazkiras — Afghan identity cards — will no longer be deemed valid after Oct 31, leaving only passports and visas as the acceptable form of identification.

Mr Bugti said it is to ensure the “welfare and security” of Pakistanis. While security is paramount, one cannot help but question the real motive behind these plans.

The interior minister pointedly said that of the 24 suicide attacks that took place in Pakistan since January, “14 bombings were carried out by Afghan nationals”. This was a troubling statement to have made on TV and nothing short of ethnic profiling.

Even more disturbing was his announcement of a web portal and a national helpline where anyone can report “illegal immigrants” in exchange for a reward.

These decisions — seemingly targeting the Afghans — in addition to others taken in recent weeks suggest there may be more to it than meets the eye.

It bears mentioning that September saw an alarming rise in the rounding up of Afghans in the backdrop of renewed tensions between Islamabad and Kabul, which followed a TTP attack in Chitral.

The Afghan embassy said more than 1,000 Afghans were detained in the past two weeks — half of them despite having a legal right to be in Pakistan.

Why was such treatment meted out to those who have sought refuge on our soil for four decades? And with what conscience, when we are so quick to urge the West not to close their doors on war-ravaged Syrians, Iranians, and the like? Was it to pressure the Taliban rulers in Kabul to ‘do more’ with the TTP?

While Pakistan cannot allow such a large number of undocumented foreigners and must enact measures to properly register them, the West, which packed its bags and left Afghanistan in the lurch, must also bear responsibility for the ongoing fallout.

It must provide Pakistan assistance in this endeavour, monetarily as well as in terms of technical expertise. It must also help those migrants who came here with the hope of moving to the US or other Western countries under refugee resettlement programmes.

The migrants allege delays in the processing of their resettlement applications, lack of help from UNHCR and trouble securing an extension of their Pakistani visas. The UNHCR has belatedly offered to help Pakistan manage and register people in need of international protection.

The Afghans cannot be wished away. They are a part of the region’s sociopolitical fabric, and a compassionate, sustainable solution must be sought for their plight. Abandoning them in haste will only sow seeds of future discord.

**Ali Tauqeer Sheikh**

The cost of climate change for Pakistan is very high. But the cost of inaction and growing procrastination is even higher. It is often made worse by the absence of coordination among and within federal ministries and between the latter and the provincial departments.

The absence of the provinces from strategic-level climate decision-making has further trapped the country in climate passivity. This cycle is vicious: the less we prepare our communities to brace for climate action, the more vulnerable our economy becomes. Some initial actions on the ground can help us build credibility, which is the weakest link in the chain.

The climate summit in the UAE next month will

unleash the revision process of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by all countries, including Pakistan. The revisions will be based on the global stocktake that will be presented at the summit.

This offers the present interim government an opportunity to initiate a national-level stocktake for a realistic assessment of where we stand in climate-proofing Pakistan’s development agenda. A national-level stocktake can be very timely and instructive. To begin with, Pakistan has still not adopted a national agenda for climate-proofing its development priorities that are duly debated and approved by parliament and its committees, or the cabinet and its specialised arms such as the National Economic Council and the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council. Likewise, there are still no guidelines, timelines, or budgetary allocations for climate-proofing public-sector investments. This inaction has locked the future of millions of people in maladaptation, vulnerability, exclusion, and marginalisation.

In many ways, the country is still struggling with the first generation of policy planning and strategy papers, without systematically assessing barriers to their implementation.

Pakistan’s first climate policy developed in 2012 had committed to a wish list of 735 actions, including 242 priority actions that were to be completed by 2015. The remaining short- and medium-term goals have mostly remained unattended, primarily because these were not ranked in priority, budgeted, or negotiated with the con-

cerned line departments. Ironically, the revised edition of the climate policy in 2021 presented, yet again, another laundry list, only a longer one.

Pakistan’s NDC submitted in 2016 to the UNFCCC (climate change) secretariat, instead of aligning with the climate policy, went on a different tangent. As if this wasn’t enough, a parallel structure was created by the Climate Change Act in 2017 to establish a climate change authority, a climate fund, and a (governing) council. It was expected they would replace the climate ministry. While the first two have still not been notified, the council last year held its first meeting. It appears that the tendency to strengthen the federal grip has persisted, despite the 18th Amendment. Provincial efforts to develop their respective climate policies were stunted, if not stifled.

The NDC revised in 2021 was also not fully aligned with national climate, water, agricultural and other sectoral national and provincial policies. Ironically, it fell short of building upon the findings of the Second National

Communication submitted in the same year to the UNFCCC on the country’s emissions levels.

The SNC showed that Pakistan has an alarming trend in greenhouse gas emissions, recording a 170 per cent increase from 1994 to 2018 and projected an unbelievable 230pc increase between 2018 and 2030. These estimates are based on fantastic projections of an economic growth rate of 7pc, a threshold never touched since the 1960s. The IMF is now estimating a growth rate of only 0.5pc for FY23. There is then a clear case for a downward reduction in the third national communication as well as the NDC.

Pakistan’s adaptation policies have not always recognised that the country’s emissions are mostly generated in agriculture, livestock, forestry and other land uses, totalling 223.45 MtCO₂e (metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent), compared to 218.94 MtCO₂e from energy industries, manufacturing, transportation, and other sources combined.

Reducing emissions from agriculture is hardly a central plank of Pakistan’s

NDC or the National Adaptation Plan, approved in July this year. The data presented in SNC provides Pakistan a foundation for a science-based policy. It should inform the national stocktake of NDC revisions, as well as the development of national and provincial action plans for NAP implementation.

The national stocktake will only pave the way for a serious discourse on Pakistan’s biggest development challenge. It can serve as a precursor for Pakistan’s intent to reform and act for climate resilience. The global landscape of international climate finance is overly complex and, mostly out of reach for developing countries. An earnest assessment on where we stand will help strengthen three domains: i) streamlining and reforming institutional make-up and competencies, ii) deepening understanding of how global climate finance has evolved and how it can be accessed, and iii) understanding how to de-risk climate finance investments to attract national and international capital. Above all, it will help enhance Pakistan’s credibility.

— Courtesy Dawn

Conspiracy theories, slogans, myths**Husain Haqqani**

Nations and communities need narratives, but they cannot progress with narratives alone. They also need practical ideas about education, healthcare, innovation, external relations, and economic growth. Unfortunately, for far too long, Pakistan’s politics has revolved around slogans, myths, and conspiracy theories. The media shows little interest in serious discourse about policy ideas. Most drawing room conversations are about who is in and who is out, who did what to whom, and various real or imaginary schemes to steal from the people or acquire power.

There is an old adage, “Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.” Applying it to Pakistan’s general media

discourse, one would be compelled to believe that much of it is conducted by average or small minds. The public has access to little that can be described as serious ideas. Few people question catchphrases that are repeated without examination or evidence.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a slogan as “a word or phrase that is easy to remember, used for example by a political party, or in advertising, to attract people’s attention or to suggest an idea.” But Pakistanis seem to embrace slogans without much thought and are swayed by them without asking simple, logical questions. For instance, what does it really mean when Pakistani leaders describe their country as ‘a citadel of Islam’ or promise to create ‘Madina ki Riyasat’? Islam has been the faith of billions in its more than 1400 year history. Did Islam not need or have a citadel until the creation of the state of Pakistan in 1947?

Similarly, do the hordes that are motivated to commit violence in the name of protecting the Prophet’s (pbuh) honour or Islam’s dignity ever think if their actions actually fulfil their stated objective? Are speeches about ‘dushman ko naist o nabood kar dein ge’ (we will reduce the enemy to rubble) ever considered in the light of reality? Sticking it to the Americans or Israelis or Indians gets applause at home, but does it even stir powerful governments or countries?

Why has there been no UN resolution on Kashmir since 1957 and, given that the UN’s membership has gone from 82 in 1957 to 193 since then, would a similar resolution pass today? Is ‘iron brother’ when applied to China anything more than verbiage, given that China (or any country for that matter) makes policies on the basis of its interests not on some verbal bond of brotherhood.

Empty slogans are often backed by myths, defined in the Dictionary as “a widely held but false belief or idea.” From stories denigrating those we dislike to ones that extol the virtues of those we admire, there are hundreds of myths under discussion in Pakistan at any given time. The advent of social media has increased the speed at which myths can spread and those who believe them

often cite their WhatsApp messages, Twitter/X, or Facebook as a reliable source of information.

A little research, which at least the media and national leaders should engage in, would show that some of the founding arguments of elaborate theories about Pakistan’s history, foreign relations, and economy are just plain fabrications. Research shows that Liaquat Ali Khan never got an invitation to the Soviet Union in 1949, let alone turned it down; there were no secret clauses in the 1966 Tashkent agreement or the 1972 Simla Accord; the Americans never promised to send their fleet to save erstwhile East Pakistan from becoming Bangladesh; no Pakistani leader sold out Kashmir, it just became internationally less contentious; and Gwadar was never going to be a bigger port than Dubai or HongKong.

While myths are just made up stories that make people feel better about their circumstances or explain away difficulties and setbacks, conspiracy theories are the staple of many narratives in Pakistan. In 1991, Washington Post reporter Steve Coll had writ-

ten from Islamabad about Pakistan’s ‘political culture of shadow games’. Almost twenty years later, in 2010, New York Times reporter Sabrina Tavernise observed that “Conspiracy is a national sport in Pakistan”. Sadly, another 13 years have passed, and little has changed.

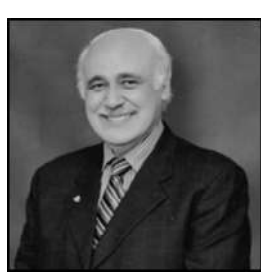
Conspiracy is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as “the belief that major historical and political events are brought about as the result of a conspiracy between interested parties or are manipulated by or on behalf of an unknown group of influential people”. Conspiracy theories are the dominant mode for explaining the country’s often sorry state of affairs.

Officially sanctioned deception, including projection of embellished Pakistani accomplishments and tailoring of history to conceal failings and failures, has altered the psyche of Pakistani citizens, making them see conspiracy in every corner. Conspiracy has bred an aversion to dispassionate examination of facts and precluded realism in policymaking. That, in turn, makes it difficult to reduce or manage the country’s myriad problems

with alternative prescriptions that might not conform to conspiracist assumptions.

Scholars who have studied the reasons for a society’s propensity to conspiracism point out that they are often rooted in a desire to explain away hardship. Experts also maintain that isolation and groupthink are important parts of convincing people that they are victims of a conspiracy.

Conspiracy theory promoters keep their supporters happy with nationalist rhetoric, while ignoring tough questions. We never hear a discussion about why the per hectare yield of Pakistan’s major crops is almost half of most other countries, why Pakistanis consume 34 per cent less calories on average than the rest of the world, or why the value of Pakistan’s cotton textiles exports is less than that of Bangladesh while Pakistan is the world’s fourth largest cotton producer and Bangladesh produces negligible amount of cotton. But addressing those hard questions, not sloganeering or conspiracism, is how Pakistan problems are likely to be solved. — Courtesy TheNews

Only time will tell**F.S. Aijazuddin**

In war, truth is the first casualty. In Third World countries, truth all too often is smothered at birth. Never more often than when general elections are due.

The midwife of our elections — the Election Commission of Pakistan — has informed us that our general elections will be delivered in the last week of January 2024. The exact date is a secret to which we voters are not yet privy.

Traditionally, our Election Commission has always been headed by judges. We have had 16 in succession since 1969. For the first time since then, however, the chief election commissioner in 2020 was handpicked from amongst the bureaucracy.

The present CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja joined the DMG/PAS in 1987. His last posting was as federal secretary/chairman, Pak-istan Railways, in 2018. After 14 unsu-ning months there, he was appointed CEC in January 2020 for a period of five years.

According to the ECP website, the only election he has ever conducted was in Azad Jammu & Kashmir, where in 2016 as chief secretary AJK “he ensured peaceful, free and fair elections”. (AJK has 2.7 million registered voters; Pakistan has 127m.)

The last ‘free and fair’ elections in Pakistan were conducted in 1970, under president Gen Yahya Khan. The CEC at the time was a Bengali, Mr Abdus Sattar. The political maelstrom that followed left Sattar

stranded in West Pakistan. Eventually, he returned to Bangladesh, where in time he became its seventh president.

Under our Constitution, the CEC enjoys the status of a judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. That did not prevent CEC Raja, however, from flouting the orders of his judicial brethren in the Supreme Court, when on March 22, 2023, he postponed the provincial elections. Some fear that, sometime before the last week of January 2024, the bureaucrat CEC will revert to the lessons he absorbed during his training. He will follow precedent — this time, his own.

The CEC’s tenure will end in January 2025. Like his predecessor CEC Abdus Sattar in 1970, he might have to manage the afterbirth of the elections, should there be a controversy over the results. The political parties — especially the PPP — are already in a state of apprehensive agitation about the unevenness of the playing field. It is not unlikely that the PPP leadership (father, aunt and son) may refuse to accept the results of the 2024 elections, just as Mr Bhutto did in 1970.

The PML-N — its former coalition partner and again its main opponent — has promised Oct 21 (the scheduled date of supreme Nawaz Sharif’s return to Pakistan) as the ‘Day of Deliverance’. Considering that the PML-N has been in power on three occasions in the past, it is approaching the next elections as Britain’s ruling Conservative party is before its own polls — as political ‘underdogs’. This disheartening admission was made by the chairman of the Conservative Party Greg Hands. He told delegates at the party conference a few days ago that (1) everyone praised Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, (2) no one trusted the Labour party, and (3) whenever Labour opposed in the country, it does the job badly.

It could have been a script tailored for the PML-N’s penchant for hero worship and its condescending dismissal of every opposition.

There are still four months to go before our elections. Although there is a quasi-em-bargo on news about the PML leader Imran Khan, the little news se-creted into the me-dia indicates that he has accepted the te--dium of incarceration, like some schoolboy after his first homesick day at boarding school.

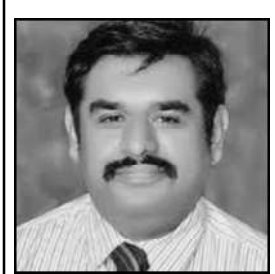
It has taken Imran Khan some time to adjust. He has, sooner than expected, that became apparent when he was informed that he was being transferred to the comparatively more congenial Adiala jail. He told his captors that he preferred to remain where he was.

The longer his imprisonment, the stronger his resolve. When he is released — as he shall, when the patience of his captors runs out — he might like to recall the words of an Olympian athlete Louis Zamperini: “All I did was pray to God, every day. In prison camp, the main prayer was, ‘Get me home alive, God, and I’ll seek you and serve you’. I came home, got wrapped up in the celebration, and forgot about the hundreds of promises I’d made to God.”

From his tenure as prime minister, Imran Khan learned the same lesson Winston Churchill had, after the unexpected surrender of Singapore in World War II. Churchill wrote of that debacle: “My advisers ought to have known and I ought to have been told, and I ought to have asked.”

Other leaders, if elected, should remember to remain “connected to the political class, the bureaucracy, the media, the wider public, and of course the establishment. To be isolated ... is to be doomed to impotence”. -

— Courtesy Dawn

Crop challenges**Khurram Zia Khan**

That Pakistan is a land of opportunities, is not mere rhetoric but a reality. Unfortunately, flawed planning, misplaced priorities, the weak writ of governments and thoughtless actions to attain short-term gains have pushed this country into a state of disarray.

Pakistan’s agricultural hands form nearly 42 per cent of its entire workforce and consume almost 90pc of water. This sector is a major support base for the textile industry, which forms the backbone of Pakistan’s exports. Maize, cotton, rice, sugarcane and wheat are our five major crops; these consume a major portion of land, labour and water in the agrarian sphere. But, despite this, their growth rate is negligible — just 1.1pc in the last two decades.

A low crop yield, non-availability of seeds, inadequate storage facilities, lack of infrastructure and the minimal to virtually nonexistent use of technology are key issues that plague the country’s farming belt. The regular and forceful impacts of the relatively new climate change phenomenon have also emerged as formidable challenges for this vital zone.

Furthermore, government intervention regarding some of the crops is also proving detrimental for agriculture. Wheat is a glaring example of the state’s intrusion as it is the only crop that the authorities purchase from farmers. The government did set a support price of

wheat to benefit the agriculturalists but, unfortunately, due to the powerful presence of middlemen, the real farmers remain deprived of the value they deserve. Hundreds of billions of rupees are borrowed by the government to obtain and store wheat, which is then sold to flour mills so that the poverty-stricken can get cheap flour. Additionally, the government subsidises flour further at the utility stores level. Therefore, such excessive intervention from the administration has led to a wheat yield that is stagnant at around three tonnes per hectare, which is a fraction of global quantities. On the other hand, the maize and rice produce are free of direct executive interference and these are turning out to be the jewels of Pakistan’s agriculture zone as their high growth rate surpasses that of the other crops.

A deep dive into the farming sector reveals that cultivators in most parts of the country use seeds of poor quality, which is regrettable as the result is a low yield and an inability to withstand harsh weather conditions. Moreover, growers have limited or no access to modern techniques. As for water, much of this precious commodity goes to waste in the absence of any serious effort to introduce solutions that will help reduce its consumption.

To turn around the fortunes of Pakistan’s agriculture sector, the corporate world must come forward to play an active part by investing in the acquisition of high-quality seeds and provide the needed finances and support to upgrade equipment and machinery. Corporate participation will also free this sector from feudal clutches, and close coor-

dination with the farmers will contribute significantly to an increase in the yield as well as ensure the well-being of those tilling the soil. Major organisations can also help restructure the sector and aid the government in generating revenue in the form of taxes. They will also create better storage facilities so that farmers can store the harvest as opposed to throwing it into the river when the desired prices are denied.

The involvement of corporates in dairy farming can serve as a benchmark — packaged milk companies working closely with dairy farmers collaborate with both large herd owners and those with two to three milk-producing dairy animals. Hence small herd owners can earn from the excess milk produced by their domestic animals, instead of it due to dispose of it due to the lack of storage. This sector also contributes to the national exchequer and is set to export dairy products.

The induction of corporates is one solution, but I am sure there are numerous others too. Globally, agricultural land is shrinking because of the rise in population and industrialisation. Many countries are now buying land in Africa and other places to cultivate crops for their people.

As the food crisis is expected to climb, Pakistan too has the potential to evolve into a leader in global food supplies by revamping its food production. The time is ripe for those at the helm of affairs to recognise the importance and benefits of making Pakistan a food-surplus country and lawmakers should strive on a war footing to achieve this goal. -- Courtesy Dawn

CM KP chairs Sehat Card Scheme meeting KP Govt, SLIP agree for regular monthly payments through installment

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government and State Life Insurance Pakistan here Thursday agreed that payment will be made to the latter on regular monthly installments for Sehat Card scheme.

This was decided during an important meeting regarding Sehat Card Scheme held here at Chief Minister's House with Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan in the chair.

Matters related to the implementation of reforms approved by the provincial cabinet to run the scheme on sustainable basis, and payment of outstanding partner i.e. State Life Insurance Company came under discussion. Advisor to the Chief Minister for Health Dr. Riaz Anwar,

Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Chief Executive Officer of the State Life Insurance Company and other concerned authorities attended the meeting. It was agreed in the meeting that in future, payment will be made to State Life Insurance Company on regular monthly installments. Relevant authorities of health department were directed to ensure implementation of newly approved reforms in the minimum possible time. Talking on the occasion, the caretaker Chief Minister said that his government was not only committed to run Sehat Card Scheme on sustainable basis but also taking concrete steps to this effect. He said that the provincial government was facing financial crunch due to non-payment of due

shares by the federal government on time, and that's why the provincial government was facing difficulties in paying the dues to State Life Insurance Company, and added that despite the financial crunch, it was the top most priority of the caretaker provincial government to continue the provision of free healthcare facilities under the Sehat Card Scheme. He maintained that all possible efforts were being made to make this scheme more pro-poor and sustainable adding that reforms have been introduced to this effect with the aim that maximum benefit of the schemes goes to the underprivileged ones. It was also agreed in the meeting that emergency operations would not be suspended under Sehat Card Scheme in any case.



HYDERABAD: Members of Teachers Organization are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, in connection of World Teachers Day, held at Hyderabad press club.

Minister stresses measures to reduce medical treatment cost

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir has stressed the need to lower the cost of medical treatment, especially medicines' prices, in the light of the country's current economic challenges.

Speaking at the Provincial Drugs Quality Control Board meeting on Thursday, he highlighted Pakistan's economic constraints and the need to control rising treatment costs.

Dr. Nasir called upon the government institutions, pharmaceutical companies, and stakeholders to collaborate on a comprehensive strategy to lower medicines' prices. He emphasized the importance of safeguarding Pakistan's prosperity and economic

growth by ensuring accessible healthcare for all. He urged medical-related businesses to prioritise public welfare over personal profits.

Highlighting the humanitarian aspect of medicines, Dr. Nasir said that quality medication was a fundamental right of people and encouraged the local pharmaceutical industry to produce internationally acclaimed medicines in Pakistan. He commended the role of the Provincial Quality Control Board in ensuring availability of quality medicines in Punjab and stressed the importance of fair hearing for all cases.

The meeting was attended by Special Secretary Health Muhammad Iqbal, Additional Secretary Drugs Dr. Qalandar Khan.



LAHORE: History Art and Crafting students in NCA Lahore is being watched by various colleges and art lovers.

PRCS organizes seminar to raise mines risk awareness in AJK

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Pakistan Red Crescent Society AJK chapter, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) successfully organized a seminar aimed at enhancing risk awareness and safer behaviors among journalists in Muzaffarabad. The event was held at Central Press Club here Thursday, with an enthusiastic turnout of local journalists, media professionals and representatives from various media outlets.

Secretary Pakistan Red Crescent Society Chapter Gulzar Fatima graced the event as chief guest. Besides, officials from Civil Defence department and other stakeholders also participated in the seminar. In today's rapidly evolving media landscape, journalists often find themselves working in high-risk environments,

covering events ranging from natural disasters to conflicts and emergencies. Recognizing the crucial role of journalists in disseminating timely and accurate information, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society took the initiative to provide them with essential knowledge and skills to ensure their safety while reporting from the field. The seminar included a comprehensive program featuring expert speakers, interactive workshops and practical demonstrations.

The participants were privileged to hear from distinguished speakers who shared their experiences and insights into risk management and safer reporting practices. The event also featured representatives from the local government and the Red Crescent, who reiterated their commitment to supporting the safety and well-being of journalists.

Islam is religion of peace: VC

SUKKUR (APP): Vice Chancellor (VC), Arore University Sukkur Engr. Zahid Hussain Khand has said Islam is a religion of peace and Allah dislikes Shirk and clashes which can be avoided by following the teachings of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).

Addressing a ceremony here Thursday, he said that we must form a society on the basis of justice, which must be irrespective of any kind of biases and differences. The VC said that the biggest problem of the world was to establish peace in the world and the problem could be solved by preaching the teachings of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).

Other speakers said that the life of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) was the best example for us and it was the responsibility of parents and teachers to transfer our love with Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) to the next generation.

They said that Islamic literature was being removed from curriculum books under a conspiracy and the West was making progress by following some of the principles of Islam adding that Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) was the blessing for the universe.

Senior faculty members and a large number of students were present on the occasion.

749,177 children administered polio drops in Sialkot

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner sialkot Captain (retd) Shah Mir Iqbal said on Thursday that during the first three days of national anti-polio campaign, 749,177 children were administered polio drops in the district.

Provision of vitamin-A to children aged 6 months to five years was also ensured, he said.

Chief Executive Officer Health Dr. Rehan gave the deputy commissioner briefing on the anti-polio campaign. The meeting was informed that during the campaign, which started on October 2, the target of giving 772,711 children up to five years age polio vaccine was set and so far 97 per cent of the target had been achieved. While vitamin-A drops were also being given to improve immunity in children.

The meeting was told that during the first visit of the anti-polio teams.



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister Education Madad Ali Sindh distributing Awards during the "Academia Choice Award 2023" organized by all Sindh private school & College Association.

Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy close historical & friendly ties: Baligh

Independent Report
LAHORE: Durmus Bastug, the newly appointed Turkish Consul General in Lahore, called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore. The Governor of Punjab expressed his best wishes for the Consul General. During the meeting, bolstering bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkiye and enhancing cooperation in the fields of education, trade, and tourism were discussed in detail.

Speaking on this occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Turkiye

is a brotherly country. Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy close historical and friendly ties. He said that there should be maximum exchange of educational and trade delegations between Turkiye and Pakistan.

The exchange of delegations at the public level will further promote bilateral relations in the field of trade and tourism, he added.

Governor Punjab said that a large number of Pakistanis go to Turkiye for the purpose of tourism, and a large number of Pakistani students are also studying in Turkish universities. He said that there are opportunities for

foreign direct investment in Pakistan for Turkish investors. Governor Punjab said that the government is grateful to Turkiye for helping the flood victims in Pakistan last year.

He said that the Pakistani government and people came forward to help the earthquake victims in Turkiye. He said that the state-of-the-art Rajab Tayyab Erdogan Hospital established in Muzaffargarh with the cooperation of Turkiye is providing quality health facilities to the people.

Governor Punjab underlined the need to further expand cooperation with Turkiye in the field of health.

Minister highlights significance of teachers in society

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Provincial Caretaker Minister for Primary, Secondary and Higher Education, Dr. Muhammad Qasim Jan has emphasized the significant role of teachers in society stating that their contribution in nation building cannot be undermined. He expressed these views as a special guest at an event commemorating International Teachers Day at Government Higher Secondary School No. 1 in Peshawar. The event featured speeches, national songs, and tributes by students to their teachers.

He expressed gratitude to teachers for their services and

highlighted their pivotal role in the country's development. He also urged students to honor and respect their teachers, recognize their role in nurturing society and shaping the future generation. The minister assured that economic challenges would be addressed and teachers' issues including their upgradation would be resolved soon. He encouraged teachers to focus their energies on providing quality education and assured them that the government is committed to addressing their concerns and providing them with necessary support.



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman addresses to media persons during press conference, at Idara-e-Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.

Minister stresses importance of regular check-ups for women

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Professor Dr. Javed Akram emphasized the importance of regular medical check-ups for women over the age of 40 to combat the rising rate of breast cancer in Pakistan.

At an awareness seminar, held at the University of Home Economics here on Thursday, Dr. Akram highlighted the global significance of World Breastfeeding Week and stressed the need to educate young girls about breast cancer prevention to ensure their long-term health. He revealed a concerning statistic, stating that 9 out of every 100 women in Pakistan are currently battling breast

cancer. The seminar, organized in reference to the World Breastfeeding Week, received commendation from Dr. Javed Akram, who acknowledged the university's efforts in raising awareness.

The seminar also saw the participation of key figures in healthcare and academia, including DG Health Services Dr. Ilyas Gondal, Vice Chancellor of the University of Home Economics Dr. Faleha Zahra Kazmi, and Registrar Shujaat Munif, along with numerous teachers and students. The event underscored the critical role of awareness and regular screenings in the fight against breast cancer in Pakistan.



LARKANA: Jeay Sindh Mahaz (JSM) Chairman, Riaz Chandio addresses to media persons during press conference, at Larkana press club

US Consul General calls on CM Naqvi

Independent Report
LAHORE: US Consul General Ms. Kristin K. Hawkins deputed in Lahore met with the Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi here on Thursday in which matters pertaining to mutual interests, promotion of bilateral relations and enhancing cooperation in various sectors were discussed.

The American Consul General lauded steps being taken by the Punjab government under the leadership of CM Mohsin Naqvi with regard to restoration and renovation of religious places especially of historical buildings. The American Consul General stated that the Punjab government is doing an appreciable work in order to safeguard and protect the religious and cultural heritage.

CM Mohsin Naqvi while talking with the American Consul General underscored that all citizens including the minorities enjoy equal rights in Pakistan according to the constitution. "We have chalked out a comprehensive plan for the restoration of religious and historical buildings." CM Mohsin Naqvi outlined that the Punjab government is vigorously pursuing its uniform agenda of progress by making the welfare and prosperity of the people as its focal point.

The American Consul General while talking to the CM underlined that 'we would further promote cooperation in various sectors with the Punjab government'.

Provincial Minister for Information and Culture Amir Mir, Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Deputy Commissioner Lahore and officials of American Consulate were also present on the occasion.



LAHORE: Durmus Bastug, newly appointed Turkish Consul General in Lahore called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

SHC seeks reply from govt Sale of sensitive data of Pakistanis on dark web case

KARACHI (Online): Sindh High Court (SHC) has sought reply from federal government till November 01 in the case of selling sensitive data of Pakistanis on dark web.

During the hearing of the case Deputy Attorney General (DAG) told the court notice was issued to provincial government instead of seeking reply from federal government.

We will reply if notice is issued to federal government.

The petitioner Tariq Masood advocate said all institutions have filed replies. Seeking reply from secretary IT and Telecommunication is must.

The court while seeking reply from federal government till November

01 ordered DAG to implement April 20, 2021 decision.

The court directed DAG he should give arguments on next hearing. Implement the court orders in the light of April, 20, 2021 decision. If court's orders are not implemented then secretary IT and telecommunication should appear in person.

The counsel for the petitioner said federal government is delaying legislation persistently. No national cyber policy has been formed so far. 4 major incidents related to cyber have occurred so far in Pakistan.

It is pertinent to mention court had ordered all respondents and IT Telecommunication on April 20, 2021 to file reply.

10 dead in Punjab road accidents

Independent Report
LAHORE: At least 10 people were killed and 1,202 others injured in 1,129 road traffic crashes in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 592 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 610 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The analysis showed that 567 drivers, 44 underage drivers, 165 pedestrians, and 480 passengers were among the

victims of road accidents. The statistics showed that 255 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 281 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 74 in Multan with 84 victims, and at third Faisalabad with 70 accidents and 77 victims.

According to the data, 978 motorbikes, 77 auto-rickshaws, 98 motorcars, 24 vans, 16 passenger buses, 13 trucks and 114 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road accidents.



PESHAWAR: Police display a huge quantity of smuggled liquor, recovered during an operation.

Forests jewel of earth: ACS South

MULTAN (APP): Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab, Saqib Zafar has said that the forests were the beauty of the universe and jewel of earth.

He expressed these views during a meeting with former Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Tank Mehmood Bettani who called on him here on Thursday.

Secretary Livestock Nasir Jamal Hotiana,

Secretary Services Amjad Shoaib Khan Tareen, Secretary Irrigation Abdul Khaliq Razaqi and others also took part in the campaign and planted saplings.

ACS South Punjab while addressing the ceremony said that Pakistan was facing adverse effects of climate change and that last year's flood due to heavy rains was also the result of climate change. He said the global temperature was increasing which poses serious threats to the whole world.

High-Level meeting strengthens economic ties between Pakistan, Kazakhstan

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a move towards enhancing economic cooperation and bilateral trade, Pakistan's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Dr. Gohar Ejaz, engaged in a Zoom meeting with the Minister of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Shakkaliyev Arman.

The virtual meeting served as a platform for both nations to explore opportunities for a mutually beneficial partnership and to foster greater economic collaboration, said a press release issued here.

Minister Shakkaliyev Arman began the discussions by highlighting the deep-rooted friendship and the untapped potential for trade between Kazakhstan and Pakistan.

He emphasized the need for expanding cooperation in various

sectors and increasing the trade volume between the two nations.

Minister Arman expressed particular interest in exploring trade opportunities in agricultural products and the potential for transit trade and logistics through the Pakistani ports of Gwadar and Karachi, facilitating access to South Asian markets.

Dr. Gohar Ejaz, Pakistan's Minister of Commerce and Industry, reciprocated the enthusiasm for closer economic ties, acknowledging Kazakhstan's remarkable progress as a regional player.

He lauded Kazakhstan's progress as its GDP has reached \$250 billion and international trade stands at \$150 billion.

Minister Ejaz stated,

"While Pakistan's international trade stands at \$100 billion, with a GDP of \$350 billion, our mutual trade with Kazakhstan stands at a mere \$100 million. Our vision is to increase exports by \$100 billion in five years, and we welcome Kazakhstan to be part of this journey."

Dr. Ejaz announced a target of \$1 billion in trade with Kazakhstan and highlighted Pakistan's capacity to bring substantial value to Kazakhstan through its huge market for energy, industry, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Minister Ejaz extended a warm invitation to Minister Shakkaliyev Arman and business delegates from Kazakhstan to visit Pakistan and explore investment opportunities.



ISLAMABAD: Country Head of World Bank Waleed called on Federal Minister for Privatisation Fawad Hasan Fawad.

Fawad expresses resolve to privatize loss-making entities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Privatization Fawad Hasan Fawad on Thursday expressed the firm resolve of the government to privatize major loss-making state-owned enterprises to avoid a substantial financial drain of national resources as well as enhancing their working efficiencies.

The minister held a meeting with the Country Head of the World Bank Najy Benhassine and discussed the caretaker government's strategic agenda for privatization, with specific attention to privatizing Pakistan

International Airlines (PIA) and optimizing the performance of Distribution Companies (DISCOs). This concerted effort aims to rectify substantial financial losses incurred by these entities and thereby alleviate the fiscal burden on the government, said a press release. The Minister said that the federal government including the Apex committee of SIFC, comprising civil bureaucracy, military leadership, and political stakeholders, have unanimously agreed to undertake the privatization of major loss-making State-

Owned Enterprises (SOEs) which are already on the privatization list.

He said that the PIA has emerged as the foremost priority for privatization due to its persistent and staggering financial losses, amounting to billions of rupees annually, adding that privatizing PIA is considered imperative to remove these losses and improve its operational efficiency.

Fawad Hasan Fawad explained the outlines of the PIA privatization plan, expressing the government's intention to engage the World Bank.

Chinese Envoy calls on Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong called on the Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, & Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar at Finance Division, today.

While felicitating Ambassador Jiang Zaidong on his appointment as Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Pakistan, the Minister appreciated the enduring, robust, and time tested friendly relations between the two countries. The Finance Minister expressed government's unwavering commitment to further strengthen these ties. She also expressed gratitude for China's invaluable support and assistance to Pakistan in various sectors. Outlining Government's resolve

towards economic reforms, Dr. Akhtar underlined the importance of these reforms in the revitalization of the national economy. The Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's determination to successfully completing the IMF Programme, demonstrating the government's commitment to sound economic governance. Ambassador Jiang Zaidong praised the efforts of the government towards the economic reforms and revival of the economy. The Chinese Ambassador assured continuation of the Chinese support to Pakistan. The meeting also reviewed and discussed the progress of projects under CPEC and highlighted its strategic significance in the context of regional.

LCCL, DHF ink MOU

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and Dilawar Hussain Foundation inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure diagnosis and access to affordable and high-quality medicines to diabetics in Pakistan.

The agreement, which aims to improve the lives of millions of people currently living with diabetes, was signed by LCCI President Kashif Anwar and Chairman Dilawar Hussain Foundation Hassan Zubair Sheikh in the presence of other dignitaries from both organizations.

Speaking on the occasion, President LCCI Kashif Anwar said the LCCI was committed to supporting the health and well-being of its members and their employees.

Dr. Umar saif efforts to boost IT exports to \$4 bln

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif expressed the hope that the decision to allow IT companies to retain 50 percent of their export proceeds in special foreign currency accounts will increase IT exports to \$4 billion.

This groundbreaking move fulfills a longstanding demand of the IT sector and underscores Dr. Saif's unwavering commitment to the industry's growth.

Previously, IT companies were permitted to retain only 35 percent of their export proceeds in foreign currency accounts, making this decision a pivotal step toward streamlining financial operations and bolstering the industry's potential.

The inclusion of "digitization and enhancement of forex retention for IT companies" on the agenda of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) meeting marked a significant milestone.

Following the directives of the SIFC, SBP is now set to revise foreign exchange regulations, permitting IT exporters and companies to retain 50 percent of their export proceeds in these specialized foreign currency accounts.

The Ministry of IT and Telecom played a central role in brokering successful negotiations between the IT sector and the State Bank, reinforcing the government's commitment to fostering a conducive environment for technological innovation.

Dr. Umar Saif's tireless advocacy for the IT industry bore fruit when he brought the sector's demands to the federal government's attention, resulting in its inclusion on the SIFC's agenda.

This proactive approach has led to a milestone decision that will not only enhance the IT industry's competitiveness but also provide companies the opportunity to transfer their accounts from abroad to Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: PTCL and Ufone 4G Group Chief Marketing Officer, Atif Raza presents a memento bat signed by Babar Azam, Pakistan Cricket Team captain Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO PTCL and Ufone 4G, during a TV commercial reveal event, held at Ufone Tower (PTCL Group Headquarters) in Islamabad

Diversifying economic activities stressed to protect Pak economy from global uncertainties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Meher Kashif Younis on Thursday said diversification of economic activities across various sectors including technology, renewable energy, agriculture, and manufacturing can shield Pakistan from the uncertainties of global markets.

Speaking at a seminar on "The importance of diversification in economic growth" held here under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, he said as Pakistan continues to navigate the complexities of the international economy, diversification can prove to be a pivotal strategy for sustainable growth and resilience, said a news release here.

He said in today's interconnected world, economies are increasingly interdependent. By investing in diverse sectors, we can mitigate

risks associated with economic downturns in specific industries.

He said more over, diversification fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. Encouraging a wide range of industries not only creates job opportunities but also nurtures a culture of creativity and adaptability.

Innovation is a driving force behind economic progress, and diverse industries provide a fertile ground for new ideas and inventions.

"We can build a robust and resilient economy that can withstand the challenges of the modern world while fostering sustainable development and prosperity for all citizens of Pakistan", he added.

Meher Kashif Younis said additionally, diversification enhances our global competitiveness as a varied economic base allows us to cater to a broader range of international markets.



ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E Mr. Jiang Zaidong, called on Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue & Economic Affairs at Finance Division.

ICCI and ICSTSI call for promoting ease of doing business to revive economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The business community on Thursday urged the government to focus on promoting ease of doing business in order to facilitate the growth of trade and business activities for reviving the economy of the country, which was passing through difficult times.

This demand was made during the visit of a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI), said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, President ICCI Ahsan Bakhtawari said that small businesses play an important role in promoting economic activities and urged the Capital Development Authority to address their key issues to facilitate them in business development.

He emphasized that the allot plots to Chambers of Small Traders and Small Industries so that these trade bodies can play a more effective role in promoting small businesses to improve exports, generate jobs and help revive the economy.

He said that due to the high transaction costs and tough collateral requirements, small businesses are facing great problems in getting loans from banks and urged the government to address this issue to increase their share in the total credit of the private sector.

It will enable businesses to play an enhanced role in the economic development of the country. He assured that ICCI would cooperate with ICSTSI in resolving the key issues of small traders and small industries to facilitate their better growth.

Rupee gains Rs 1.06 against US-Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Thursday witnessed the 22nd consecutive recovery session as it gained Rs1.06 against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 283.62 against the previous day's closing of Rs 284.68.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 281.25 and Rs 284 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 20 paise to close at Rs 298.13 against the last day's closing of Rs 298.33, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen went down by 01 paise to close at Rs1.90, whereas an increase of 19 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs344.16 as compared to the last closing of Rs343.97.

PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 372 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 372.55 points, a positive change of 0.79 per cent, closing at 47,452.38 points against 47,079.83 points the previous day.

A total of 462,865,965 shares valuing Rs. 8,998 billion were traded during the day as compared to 330,249,094 shares valuing Rs. 7,304 billion the previous day.

As many as 355 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 238 of them recorded gains and 91 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 26 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 190,161,011 shares at Rs.1.39 per share.



SIALKOT: Chief Executive Muhammad Zubair Motiwala and Secretary Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Dr Farid Iqbal Qureshi addressing to exporters at SCCI.

Rs.295.6m fine imposed on 2383 power pilferers

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) caught 2,383 pilferers during last 28 days and imposed a fine of over Rs 295.6 million in various areas of the company during an ongoing special anti-power theft drive. Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said on Thursday that over 6.527 million detection units were charged. A sum of over Rs 119 million was also recovered from defaulters. He said that 2,300 cases

were registered against accused in various police stations whereas police also arrested 1,838 pilferers so far.

He said that the teams detected electricity theft at 840 points in Faisalabad district and imposed a fine of Rs101.5 million on them under the head of 2,247 million detection units. In Jhang district, teams caught 225 electricity thieves and imposed a fine of Rs 35.7 million under 823,000 detection units.

TDAP Chief Executive visits SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Chief Executive Muhammad Zubair Motiwala

and Secretary TDAP Dr. Fareed Iqbal Qureshi, along with their team visited Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) for an engagement with the business community. Upon their arrival, they received a warm welcome from the SCCI Senior Vice President Wahub Jahangir and Vice President Amer Majeed Sheikh.

The meeting centered on addressing various industry-related concerns and TDAP (Trade Development Authority of Pakistan) assured their full commitment to promptly resolve these issues.

Addressing the business community, TDAP Chief Executive Muhammad Zubair Motiwala said that Sialkot was a place which had diversified and whatever you were doing was truly required for the country.

The TDAP Chief Executive said that FIFA World Cup Football was played with Sialkot made football while 'Your Karate' was one of the top most productions in the world.

Railways to solarize entire power its network in phases

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is all set to start switching its entire stations' power network including major railway stations, offices, workshops, and factories to solar systems in different phases which would help to save billions of rupees for the department.

"The step is expected to save Rs. 1.8 billion in the first phase to the department, later on, more stations, offices, and other facilities will be added in the subsequent phases,"

an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

Initially, in the first phase, he said that Pakistan Railways wanted to switch around 99 formations, including major railway stations, nine divisional headquarters, and other vital offices, to solar power.

He said Pakistan Railways is going to hire the services of the National Engineering Services Pakistan (NESPAC) to convert its network to a solar system.



QUETTA: Mechanics repairing faulted generators at Mission Road Quetta as per increased demand due to QESCO Operations.



QUETTA: Balochistan Mines Owners Association Quetta President, Mir Nusrat Hussain along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club.

Minister emphasises proper use of artificial intelligence in agriculture sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik on Thursday emphasized the proper use of artificial intelligence in the agriculture sector.

The HEC offered the Ministry to have joint projects with agriculture universities, research organizations, and SUPARCO for food security by utilizing artificial intelligence and supercomputers.

The Ministry of National Food Security & Research would hold a joint conference with the HEC agriculture universities to devise plans & strategies for utilizing these modern technologies in the agriculture sector.

country. He sought cooperation from the HEC to assist the Ministry in the use of artificial intelligence in the agriculture sector.

The Ministry to have joint projects with agriculture universities, research organizations, and SUPARCO for food security by utilizing artificial intelligence and supercomputers.

The Ministry of National Food Security & Research would hold a joint conference with the HEC agriculture universities to devise plans & strategies for utilizing these modern technologies in the agriculture sector.

Putin says West has lost touch with reality, Russia had to push back

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that the United States was seeking to impose its crumbling hegemony across the world and that the war in Ukraine showed how far the West had lost touch with reality. "We did not start the so-called war in Ukraine. On the contrary - we are trying to finish it," Putin told a meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club in the Black Sea resort of Sochi. The West had caused the war because the United States was a "hegemon" which considered itself the only arbiter of truth on the planet, said the Kremlin chief. Putin said the leaders of the West had lost "a sense of reality" because of what

he cast as Washington's "colonial thinking". He questioned what right the United States had to lecture any other country. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 unleashed a war that has devastated swathes of eastern and southern Ukraine, killed or injured hundreds of thousands of men and triggered the biggest rupture in Russia's ties with the West for six decades. The West casts the war as Moscow's biggest strategic blunder since the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Western leaders say they want to defeat Russia on the battlefields of Ukraine. A Ukrainian counteroffensive has so far failed to yield major territorial success. Putin, though, presents

the war as part of a much bigger struggle with the United States which the Kremlin elite says aims to cleave Russia apart, grab its vast natural resources and then turn to settling scores with China. The former spies who wield power in Moscow have repeatedly warned of the risk of a Russia-NATO conflict as the West's post-Cold War dominance wanes, Russia lays to rest the humiliations of the Soviet collapse, and China rises to superpower status. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 unleashed a war that has devastated swathes of eastern and southern Ukraine, killed or injured hundreds of thousands of men, and triggered the biggest rupture in Russia's ties with the West for six decades.



Indian army personnel conduct a search operation for the missing soldiers in north Sikkim.

At least 14 dead, 102 missing in India glacial lake burst

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian rescue teams searched on Thursday for 102 people missing after a devastating flash flood triggered by a high-altitude glacial lake burst killed at least 14, officials said. Violent flooding from glacier lakes dammed by loose rock has become more frequent as global temperatures rise and ice melts, with climate scientists warning it poses an increasing danger across the wider Himalayan mountain range. "The number of human lives lost is 14 so far, and the number of missing is 102," Prabhakar Rai, director of the Sikkim state disaster management authority, told AFP a day after a wall of water rushed down the mountainous valley in northeastern India. Authorities said roads had been "severely" damaged and 14 bridges had been washed away. Rescuers were battling to help those hit by the

flood, with communications cut across large areas, and 25 relief camps set up for those forced to flee their homes. "Floodwaters have caused havoc in four districts of the state, sweeping away people, roads, bridges," Himanshu Tiwari, an Indian Army spokesman, told AFP. Twenty-two soldiers are among the missing, the army said. One previously missing soldier was rescued. The army was working to reestablish telephone connections and provide "medical aid to tourists and locals stranded", it said in a statement. The water surge came after intense rainfall burst the high-altitude Lhonak Lake, which sits at the base of a glacier in peaks surrounding the world's third-highest mountain, Kangchenjunga. Himalayan glaciers are melting faster than ever due to climate change, exposing communities to unpredictable and costly disasters.

US warns of Chinese global disinformation campaign that could undermine peace and stability

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: For much of the world, China's Xinjiang region is notorious, a place where ethnic Uyghurs face forced labor and arbitrary detention. But a group of visiting foreign journalists was left with a decidedly different impression. On a tour in late September sponsored by Beijing, the 22 journalists from 17 countries visited bazaars and chatted with residents over dates and watermelon slices. They later told state media they were impressed with the bustling economy, described the region as "full of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity," and denounced what they said were lies by Western media. The trip is an example of what Washington sees as Beijing's growing ef-

orts to reshape the global narrative on China. It's spending billions of dollars annually to do so. In a first-of-its-kind report, the State Department last week laid out Beijing's tactics and techniques for molding public opinion, such as buying content, creating fake personas to spread its message and using repression to quash unfavorable accounts. The Global Engagement Center, a State Department agency that's tasked with combating foreign propaganda and disinformation and that released the 58-page report, warned that Beijing's information campaign could eventually sway how decisions are made around the world and undermine U.S. interests.

Senators say they hope to meet with Xi during China trip

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A bipartisan group of U.S. senators hope to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping during a trip to China this month, two of them told NBC News, as a whirl of diplomatic activity builds expectations for a meeting later this year between the leaders of the world's two largest economies. "I don't think that that's clear yet whether it will happen," Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, said of a potential meeting between the senators and Xi. "We want to meet with a number of the officials there as well as the American business community there as well, and we would like to meet with President Xi." Crapo and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., will lead the delegation, which also includes Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., Sen. Maggie Hassan, D-N.H., Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., and Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga. They will also visit U.S. allies South Korea and Japan during the 10-day trip.

Israeli, Palestinian women hold joint rally for peace

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Hundreds of Palestinian and Israeli women rallied in Jerusalem and the Dead Sea in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, calling for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "We want peace," chanted the demonstrators, many dressed in white and holding placards that read "Stop killing our children." "Our message is that we want our kids to be alive rather than dead," Huda Abu Arqoub, a Palestinian activist and director of the Alliance for Middle East Peace NGO, said as participants initially rallied in Jerusalem. "This is the first time that we have a real partnership between Israeli and Palestinian women on an equal level."



Demonstrators holding flags and signs protest outside India's consulate, a week after Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau raised the prospect of New Delhi's involvement in the murder of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.



House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH), a prime contender in the race to be the next Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, arrives for a meeting with the Texas Republican House delegation, at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, U.S.

Russia-Ukraine war: Moscow's missile strike kills at least 49 in Kupiansk grocery store, cafe

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukrainian officials said on Thursday that 49 people had died as a result of a Russian attack on a grocery store and cafe in Kharkiv's eastern region, where Moscow's forces have been pushing to recapture territory they lost last year to Ukrainian troops. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said the strike had slammed into the Kupiansk district of the war-battered region bordering Russia.

"The brutal Russian crime of hitting an ordinary grocery store with a rocket is a completely deliberate

Ukraine downs 24 drones launched by Russia - military

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's air defences downed 24 of 29 Russian drones launched in attacks on its territory overnight, the Ukrainian general staff said on Thursday. Ukraine's Air Force said the drones were destroyed over southern Odesa and Mykolaiv regions, as well as central Kirovohrad region.

Poland election turns Germany into punching bag, straining Western alliance

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Fighting to win an unprecedented third term in office, Poland's nationalist government has seized on a target close to home: Germany, its NATO ally and biggest trading partner. In a tight race ahead of Poland's Oct. 15 election, leaders of the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party have accused Germany of trying to dictate Polish government policy from Berlin on anything from migration to gas.

The feud has frayed Europe's broadly united front supporting Ukraine against Russia's invasion, shredding a plan for a joint Polish-German tank repair plant for Kyiv's benefit. The populist PiS leadership also says Germany is plotting to install the party's main electoral opponent, the liberal former prime minister Donald Tusk, back in power. PiS has tapped into a mistrust towards Germany that still runs high in part of the electorate, above all elderly conservatives who remember the devastation of World War Two. "Do you know where you can read the (opposition's campaign) programme?" In German newspapers," Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki told a campaign event.

Biden thanks Qatar's emir for prisoner swap deal

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: US President Joe Biden called Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to thank him for Doha's mediation that resulted in the release of a number of Americans from Iran, the Amiri Diwan and the White House said on Tuesday. Last month, with Doha's mediation, Iran freed five Americans as part of a prisoner swap for five Iranians held in the United States and the transfer of \$6 billion in Iranian funds, marking a rare deal between the long-time antagonists. Qatar, a wealthy Gulf Arab state with diplomatic ambitions, has pressed both Washington and Tehran to engage in more talks and reach "understandings."



Activists from various local and foreign NGOs gather around the Tolerance Monument in a park in Jerusalem.

Jill Biden urges women to get mammograms or other cancer exams during Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Jill Biden is urging women to consult their doctors about getting mammograms or other cancer screenings, saying in a new public service announcement for Breast Cancer Awareness Month that early detection saves lives. "October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and I'm asking you to put your health first," the first lady says in the 30-second spot recorded amid flower blooms in the White House Rose Garden. "Take a moment to talk to your doctor about

whether it's time for your mammogram or other cancer screenings," she says in the announcement airing this week on the Lifetime cable network. "There is no one-size-fits-all approach, but we know that early detection of cancer saves lives." Biden's ad is part of an annual breast cancer awareness campaign by Lifetime, according to the cable network. A separate public service announcement featuring similar messages from actor Keshia Knight Pulliam and TV correspondent Rachel Lindsay will also be broadcast by the network.

11-year-old shoots two teens in Florida after chips argument escalates

Monitoring Desk
FLORIDA: An 11-year-old boy opened fire on two 13-year-olds during a dispute that began over a bag of chips at a Pop Warner football practice in Apopka, Florida, according to local police reports. The altercation between the three boys took place at a recreation center on Monday evening. Witnesses said that after arguing about the chips, the older boys chased and attacked the 11-year-old.

Japan utility starts release of second batch of treated radioactive water

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Tokyo Electric Power Company (9501.T) (Tepco) started releasing on Thursday more treated radioactive water from Japan's wrecked Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, as part of a plan that has caused tension with neighbouring China. The discharge plan kicked off in August in a key step towards decommissioning the plant, which suffered melt-downs after being hit by a tsunami in 2011 in the world's worst such nuclear disaster since Chernobyl 25 years earlier.

The release that began on Thursday morning will run for about 17 days, as about 7,800 cubic metres (275,454 cubic feet) of the water is discharged into the Pacific Ocean, Tepco said in a statement. "We started the release of the treated water into the ocean," it added. Although nuclear authorities, including the United Nations watchdog, have said the plan will have a negligible impact on humans and the environment, it has still angered some neighbours, particularly China.

Italy impounds migrant charity ship after multiple rescues

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italian authorities have impounded a vessel operated by a Spanish charity, the group said on Saturday, after it carried out multiple rescues of migrants stranded in the Mediterranean. The Open Arms group said in a statement it had completed three rescues on Saturday picking up 176 people at sea, which included more than 90 unaccompanied minors. The boat docked on Wednesday in the central Italian port of Carrara to disembark the migrants. The vessel was placed under detention for 20 days after the authorities questioned the captain and the head of mission over what happened.

Biden to build new border wall touted by Trump, in policy reversal

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden's administration said on Thursday it will build additional sections of border wall to stave off record migrant crossings from Mexico, a policy reversal that embraces a signature measure of former President Donald Trump. Trump is the frontrunner for the Republican Party nomination to challenge Biden, a Democrat, in the 2024 presidential race. Trump made building border barriers a central tenet of his first campaign for president with the rally chant, "Build That Wall."

One of Biden's first actions after taking office in January 2021 was to issue a proclamation pledging "no more American taxpayer dollars be diverted to construct a border wall" as well as a review of all resources that had already been committed. Trump was quick to claim victory and demand an apology. "As I have stated often, over thousands of years, there are only two things that have consistently worked, wheels, and walls!" Trump wrote on social media. "Will Joe Biden apologize to me and America for taking so long to get moving..." In a notice published in the Federal Register on Thursday, Biden's Department of Homeland Security said it needed to waive a number of laws, regulations and other legal requirements "to ensure the expeditious construction of barriers and roads.

UN warns global economic growth on verge of stalling

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations has warned that the world economy is headed for a protracted slowdown without reform of the global financial architecture, better policies to combat inflation, inequality, sovereign debt and stronger market regulation. Economic growth is forecast to stall, slowing to 2.4 percent in 2023, from 3 percent in 2022, across most global regions with little prospect of a rebound in 2024, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said in a report released on Wednesday. The UN trade body, which is based in Geneva, said that the global economy is at "a critical

junction", with some economies thriving and expanding, while others falter and slow down. Rebecca Grynspan, UNCTAD Secretary-General, emphasised the need to avoid past policy errors. "We need a balanced policy mix of fiscal, monetary and supply-side measures to achieve financial sustainability, boost productive investment and create better jobs. Regulation needs to address the deepening asymmetries of the international trading and financial system," she said. According to the UNCTAD, the global economy's recovery from the pandemic is marked by significant divergence, prompting concerns about the right path forward in the absence of policy coordination.

India demands Canadian diplomats leave over killing row

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India confirmed on Thursday that it had demanded a further reduction in Canada's diplomatic presence, following reports that New Delhi had ordered dozens of foreign service officers repatriated in a dispute over the killing of a Sikh separatist. Relations between Delhi and Ottawa nosedived two weeks ago when Canada raised the possibility of Indian government involvement in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar near Vancouver in June. The fallout prompted tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions and a forceful denial from India, which said any suggestion it played a role in Nijjar's killing was "absurd".

India has already advised its nationals against travelling to parts of Canada and has temporarily stopped processing visa applications to Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has described the situation as "extremely difficult" and said on Tuesday that Ottawa was seeking to avoid escalating the situation. The affair has complicated US government overtures to India, which has seen both countries steadily upgrade their relations over recent years. Washington views New Delhi as a key ally in countering Chinese influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Both are members of the Quad strategic grouping alongside Japan and Australia.

World Bank-led study warns humans increasingly settling in high-risk flood zones

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Humans are increasingly settling in areas highly exposed to dangerous flooding, a study warned on Wednesday, with China helping drive the rise in risky urban expansion into exposed areas. The research, led by a World Bank economist, warns that settlement growth in flood zones has vastly outpaced growth in safe areas since 1985. "In a time when human settlements should be adapting to climate change, many countries are actually rapidly increasing their exposure to floods," author Jun Rentschler said. The study analysed 30 years of satellite imagery tracking the expansion of human settlement globally, along with flood maps. While past studies have tended to focus on a particular region or type of flooding, the new research looked worldwide at coastal, rainfall and river flooding risks. It found that by 2015, 20 percent of all settlement areas were in zones with

medium or higher flood risks, up from 17.9pc three decades earlier. The percentage rise might not seem substantial, but it represents an enormous area because of how quickly human settlement has expanded globally since 1985. About 76,400 square kilometres of human settlement — about 48 times the size of greater London — now faces flooding of more than half a metre, Rentschler said. "These expanding settlements in high-hazard areas lock in flood exposure, as well as future losses and the need for mounting flood-protection investments," the paper published in Nature warns. East Asia and the Pacific region are among the most exposed, driven particularly by urban expansion in China, as well as Vietnam and Bangladesh. "In Vietnam, where almost one-third of the coastline is now built up, the safest and most productive locations are increasingly occupied," the authors wrote.

Interim govt to resolve issues of teachers to continue academic process effectively: CM Domki

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the interim government is well aware of the issues of teachers, and as such the government would resolve them in order to continue the academic activities in an effective manner.

The Chief Minister stated so in a message issued on the eve of World Teachers Day observed on Thursday.

The Chief Minister said that we all know about the importance of education as it plays key role in development and prosperity of the nations and countries.

He said that the role

of teachers is also very critical in formation of educated society.

He said that his government is serious in resolving the issues being faced by the teachers.

In this regard, the condition of government educational institutions located in the remote areas of the province, he said.

The Chief Minister said that his government would provide the necessary resources for brining improvement in the education sector.

He said that the teachers play important role in development of the society. He urged them to fully concentrate on imparting quality education to the students.



QUETTA: Major General Aamir Najam presenting shield to Additional Chief Secretary Home Saleh Muhammad Nassar during ceremony held in honour of participants of National Security & War Course

Over Rs. 100m fine recovered from pilferers

15 more power pilferers arrested; 490 connections of defaulters cut as QESCO crackdown continues

Independent Report
QUETTA: At least 15 more persons accused of pilferage of electricity were arrested while 490 more connections were disconnected as the extensive crackdown is continued by the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) in Quetta and other parts of the province.

According to the spokesman of QESCO, the Company's crackdown is continued against the defaulters of electricity bills and arrears besides those involved in the pilferage of electricity in the province.

He informed that 15 power pilferers were arrested from Pishin, Chaman and Khanozai areas during the campaign the other day. In all 11 applications were

also registered in different police stations and levies thanas for taking legal action against them.

During the course, 17 transformers were also removed on the similar charges in different areas.

Moreover, connections of 490 defaulters were also disconnected all over the province, the spokesman maintained.

According to him, a total of 1293 applications have so far been registered against the power pilferers in all parts of the province and 380 FIRs have been registered against them. At the outset, 166 people have been arrested on the charges of pilferage of electricity in the province against whom legal action is continued.



TURBAT: Judge of Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Hashim Khan Kakar visiting Law Faculty at University of Turbat

Govt to file review petition against SC verdict on NAB amendments

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government on Thursday decided to file a review petition against the Supreme Court (SC) verdict in the NAB amendment case. The Supreme Court of Pakistan on September 15 struck down amendments made to National Accountability Bureau (NAB) laws as it announced its reserved verdict on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's plea. In a majority 2-1 verdict, the top court approved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan's petition challenging amendments made to the country's accountability laws during the tenure of the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led government.

Sources say that the review petition will be filed in the top court next week. The law ministry has also started preparing a draft of a review petition. The three-member bench, headed by then CJP Umar Ata Bandial, and comprising Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Ijazul Ahsan had reserved judgment on September 5.

Ex-CJP Bandial and Justice Ahsan declared Imran's plea to be maintainable while Justice Shah disagreed with the verdict. The top court also restored graft cases against public office holders that were closed down following the amendments to NAB laws.

Following the verdict, the references against some of the country's political bigwigs will once again land in the accountability courts.

These include the Toshakhana reference against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Supreme Muslim League-Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan Peoples Party Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari and former prime minister Yousuf Raza Gilani.

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WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan visits US Foreign Service Institute, interacts with designated US diplomats for Pakistan. Underscores the need for promoting diplomats' exchanges, fostering strong economic partnership.

Solangi, Turkish envoy agree to enhance cooperation in diverse fields

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Turkiye on Thursday agreed to promote bilateral cooperation in diverse fields including economy, trade, culture, tourism, media and people to people contacts.

This was decided in a meeting between Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi and Ambassador of Turkiye Mehmet Pacaci who called on the minister here.

Murtaza Solangi said that Pakistan highly valued its relations with the brotherly country Turkiye.

"Pakistan and Turkiye have always supported each other in difficult times," Murtaza Solangi added.

Strongly condemning the recent bomb blast in

Turkiye, the minister said Pakistan had faced the scourge of terrorism and Turkiye was also suffering from the same menace.

"We are a strong country and incidents of terrorism cannot weaken us as a nation," reiterated Murtaza Solangi.

In the meeting, the need to expand cooperation in the fields of media, drama and films was also emphasized.

"Film and drama can play a key role in improving the global image of any country," Murtaza Solangi said that Turkish plays were very popular in Pakistan.

Expressing the desire to co-produce movies with Turkiye, Murtaza Solangi said that Turkish filmmakers could benefit from tax

amnesty given the film industry in Pakistan.

"Northern parts of Pakistan are rich in natural beauty and Turkish filmmakers can utilize these beautiful tourist areas," Murtaza Solangi remarked.

Moreover, he said that cooperation between the two countries in the fields of media was the need of the hour. He suggested that Pakistan and Turkiye should promote their culture together and in this context, joint films can also be exhibited at Pakistan, China Center. Turkish ambassador said that Pakistan and Turkiye were cooperating in every sphere of life including media.

He said the Turkish government wanted to bring Turkish films to Pakistani cinemas.

WB director, minister discuss rehabilitation projects in flood-hit areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Bank (WB) Country Director for Pakistan Najy Benhassine Thursday called on Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed and discussed the progress and implementation of the rehabilitation and reconstruction projects in the flood-affected areas.

Secretary Awaiz Manzoor Sumra and senior officials of the Ministry also attended the meeting that reviewed the current status of the projects' implementation, a news release said.

The two sides discussed the WB-funded projects related to infrastructure development, energy, environment and other flood-affected rehabilitation.

Bhangar posted as SSP Special Branch

Independent Report
QUETTA: The PSP Officer of Grade-18, Muhammad Yousaf Bhangar, awaiting posting order, has been posted as the SSP operations Special Branch. This was announced in an official notification issued here on Thursday. According to the official statement, another officer Syed Abdul Saboor has been posted as the SSP MT, Balochistan.

ECP orders withdrawal of protocol facilities for Ex-Sindh cabinet members

ISLAMABAD (APP): The election commission of Pakistan (ECP) has directed the chief secretary and Inspector General of Police Sindh (IGP) to withdraw protocol facilities of former provincial cabinet members and others within the next three days. According to a notification, the ECP has instructed Sindh Chief Secretary Dr. Muhammad Fakhare Alam Irfan and IGP Riffat Mukhtar to promptly submit a compliance report upon the completion of the task.



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador, Mehmet Pacaci called on Murtaza Solangi Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting.

Ashrafi urges Afghan interim govt to address legitimate concerns for peaceful relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Thursday urged the Afghan interim government to prioritize addressing legitimate concerns raised by Pakistan instead of engaging in a blame game.

In a candid conversation with Arab and national media representatives, he underscored the importance of maintaining stability and peace in the region.

Ashrafi stated that Pakistan's intentions were clear: it had no desire for

instability or lawlessness in Afghanistan, and it expected the same commitment from its Afghan counterparts.

He emphasized the historic ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan, rooted in social, cultural, and religious bonds, making their peace and prosperity interdependent.

Regarding the repatriation of illegal Afghan immigrants from Pakistan, Ashrafi encouraged the Afghan government to engage in open dialogue with Pakistan rather than resorting to hostile rhetoric.



QUETTA: President All Pakistan Akhbar Farosh Federation Mir Ahmed presenting bouquet to Muhammad Noor Khetran after greets him on assuming charge of Director General Public Relations

Ratio of cancer increasing alarmingly: Seminars on breast cancer awareness to be held in universities & colleges

Independent Report
QUETTA: The seminars are scheduled to be held to create much needed awareness in all universities and colleges of the province.

These awareness seminars would be organized by the doctors and staff of CENAR.

This was announced by the Director CENAR, Dr. Khush Naseeb Ahmed, Dr. Meh Jabeen Marri, Dr.

Hameeda Naheed, Dr. Jamila Shuja and Dr. Shehla Iftikhar while speaking in a meeting on awareness about cancer here on Thursday.

They stressed the need to create awareness about the breast cancer as its ratio is increasing at an alarming level.

They noted with concern that thousands of women die of breast cancer every year in the country.

PTI announces public rally in Lahore on Oct 15

LAHORE (INP): As the nation gears up for the upcoming general elections, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Thursday requested permission from the district administration to hold a public gathering at Liberty Chowk in Lahore on October 15.

In a written application, the Central Punjab wing of the party approached the Lahore Deputy Commissioner to seek approval for the public gathering.

The objective of the gathering is to unveil the party's election strategy to the general public ahead of the general elections.

The PTI has also pledged to adhere to all legal requirements for hosting the rally.

Gwadar Port receives 34000 tons fertilizers for export

GWADAR (INP): As a fresh impetus to the Gwadar transshipment drive, Gwadar Port has received a mega vessel loaded with 34,000 tons of DAP fertilizers to be processed and discharged to Afghanistan as per the Pakistan-Afghanistan transit trade deal.

The Pacific Integrity, a vessel loaded with 34,000 tons of DAP fertilizers, arrived at Gwadar Port on the morning of October 3rd.

The fertilizer is imported by a joint venture of Agven Private Limited and KB Fertilizer, two private enterprises registered in the Gwadar Free Zone area.

An Agven official told Gwadar Pro that after offloading the fertilizers, the next step is to pack a huge quantity of fertilizer at a warehouse jointly sub-leased by both entities in the Gwadar Free Zone.

After the packing process is completed, all pack-

ets will be transported by trucks to Afghanistan, he added.

This is the second consignment delivered to Afghanistan in 2023. The last time during the current year, a private sector consignment of 20,000 tons of DAP fertilizer was sent from Gwadar Port to Afghanistan on May 31, 2023.

This batch of DAP fertilizer was imported from Australia. DAP is used in various industrial processes, such as metal finishing. It also improves crop yield besides the development and growth of flowering plants or leafy plants.

In 2022, Gwadar Port processed a private sector consignment of 8,000 tons of DAP fertilizers and transported it via road to Afghanistan. In 2021, a total of 500 tons of fertilizers were shipped out of the port's warehouse by a fleet of Pakistani trucks from Gwadar Port.



ISLAMABAD: Country Director World Bank, Njay Benhassine calls on Caretaker Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed to discuss the progress and implementation projects for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the flood effected areas.

Aneeq stresses eternal legacy of Holy Prophet, emphasizes learning, unity among Muslims

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Thursday the era of Prophethood had concluded, yet the everlasting legacy of the Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him persevered.

Addressing the third annual 'Seerat-un-Nabi Conference' organized under Auqaf Islamabad here at Faisal Mosque as special guest, he opined that a single life was not enough to gain a profound comprehension of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)'s exalted and virtuous character.

Minister Aneeq fur-

ther emphasized that the Holy Quran instructed us to follow the path shown by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) raising question whether we had learned from His life and incorporated it into our own lives.

He highlighted the success in following the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)'s teachings, stating, "True believers are those whose character and conduct reflect the qualities of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him)." He said, "If our way does not align with the noble path of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), it is a complete failure."

Speaking about the value of knowledge, Minister Aneeq said, "Knowledge is the essence of fear of God, and those with knowledge hold a profound reverence for Allah," adding that a true believer was one whose ethics and actions reminded others of Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him. He stressed that by learning from the character of the Prophet Peace Be Upon Him, we could improve our society.

"We aspire to enhance the beauty of this land and eliminate despair from Pakistan," he said, emphasizing unity among the Muslim community.

DC directs to timely completion of dev. projects in Duki

QUETTA (APP) Deputy Commissioner Duki Captain (Rtd) Fayyaz Ali on Thursday directed concerned officials to ensure using of standard quality material in all schemes development and timely completion of them.

He issued this direction while visiting the office of Xen Irrigation Department Duki.

During the visit, he was briefed about the ongoing development schemes.

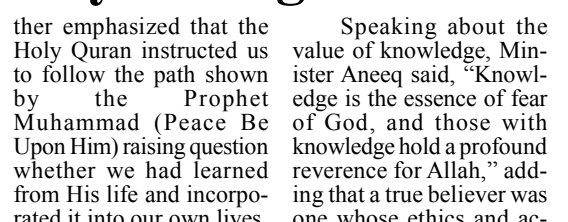
Later, he inspected the ongoing development schemes in Tehsil Thal Chhattali and Tehsil Loni, such as the construction of protective dams to prevent floods, rainwater harvesting scheme under the Urban and Rural Development Program and other development schemes.

He also issued instructions on the occasion, saying that standard quality material should be used in all the schemes and timely completion of the projects should be ensured.

SECP to host Intl Insure-Impact Conference

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) is set to host the International Insure-Impact Conference 2023 (IIC 2023), a two-day event in Karachi on December 13 and 14, 2023, with the theme "Journey to an Insured Pakistan".

Through the IIC 2023, the SECP aims to boost the insurance sector by promoting inclusivity, innovation, and resilience through discussions and presentations, highlighting key issues and potential prospects, said a press release issued here Thursday. The conference will focus on raising insurance product awareness, utilizing technology.



GWADAR: Chairman Gwadar Port Authority Pasand Khan Buledi, Director General DDA Mujeebur Rehman Qambrani and Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Aurangzeb Badini exchanging views on issues of Gwadar



Govt decided to register cases against those not returned 50 official vehicles

QUETTA (APP)- Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai said that the Balochistan Caretaker government has decided to register cases against those who have not returned 50 official vehicles of various institutions.

The government has decided that an FIR will be registered against those who do not return the official vehicles within a week, he said.

The Minister said that the drivers of the official vehicles would be arrested and after the case was registered, the FIR would be registered again for non-submission of the vehicles.

He further said that people in whose name government vehicles have been allotted would be brought under the law.

Step afoot to enhance quality of education in schools of Nasirabad: AC Ismail

QUETTA (APP) Assistant Commissioner (AC) Chithar Muhammad Ismail Mengal paid a surprise visit to Govt High School Goth Haji Imdad Hussain Khosa on the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad Batool Asdi.

He reviewed the teaching process in the school and checked the attendance of the students in different classes and also asked them various questions. Assistant Commissioner Chithar also checked the attendance of the teachers and expressed satisfaction with the performance of the school, saying that no matter how much work was done in education, there was always room for improvement.

He said that there was a need for more scope to enhance the quality of education in various schools of Naseerabad district.

"Therefore, the district administration is doing its best to take immediate steps to resolve the obstacles faced in the educational process across the district so that the children do not face any problems in getting education, he said.

He also heard the problems of the school and assured them of their solution.

Later, Assistant Commissioner Chithar Muhammad Ismail Mengal visited Mir Hassan Bazar. On this occasion, prices, quality and supply of various food items were reviewed. Meanwhile, cleanliness of shops and food items was also checked and the shopkeepers were strictly warned not to sell substandard.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Sports Nawabzada Jam Khan Raisani being briefed by Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Muhammad Ishaque Jamali, DG Sports Dara Baloch and security officials regarding security of semi final and final matches of CM Gold Cup Football Tournament