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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China on Friday expressed deep concern over the current escalation of tensions and violence between Palestine and Israel, and called for an immediate ceasefire.

In a joint statement issued at the conclusion of Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar's visit to China, both sides reiterated that the fundamental way out of the conflict lied in implementing the "two-state solution and establishing an independent State of Palestine."

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

The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to

the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and to jointly upholding the international system with the United Nations at its core, the international order underpinned by international law, and the basic norms governing international relations underpinned by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

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

Pakistan and China agreed to actively promote the implementation of the

Framework Agreement on Industrial Cooperation to support the industrialization, and encourage Chinese companies to set up manufacturing facilities in Pakistan.

The two sides reiterated that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was an open and inclusive platform for win-win cooperation.

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

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

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

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

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commander of the Sri Lankan Army Lieutenant General H L V M Liyanage called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir at the General Headquarters (GHQ) on Friday.

During the meeting, matters of professional interest, and ways for enhancing bilateral defence ties were discussed, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

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

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

The visiting dignitary will also witness the Passing Out Parade at the Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul on Saturday.



QUETTA: Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran briefed Provincial Secretary Information Imran Khan about departmental affairs

Government of Balochistan shows concern about long march of BNP

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

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

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

ince. The spokesman said that peaceful demonstrations are the basic right, but this should also be ensured that such activities may not put the safety and stability of the citizens in danger.

He also said that there is already ban on such activities in view of the security concerns.

He urged the BNP to postpone the long march.

He also reiterated the government's resolve to maintain safe and stable environment for all people of the province and assured that the government is determined to establish writ of the government and protect their interests.

4 terrorists killed, one held by security forces in Lakki Marwat operation

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

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

PM arrives in Islamabad after concluding his visit to China

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

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

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

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

Achakzai starts "Information Hour"

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai started "Information Hour" for presenting weekly performance of the federal and provincial governments.

According to the Minister Information, during this week general public is being given awareness to the masses about reduction in prices of petrol and petroleum products, provision of Scholarships and laptops to the students and jobs and livelihood to the unemployed people.

The Minister said that the provincial government is ever ready to give relief to the masses.

Tahir Asrafi appointed SAPM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Maulana Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi has been appointed as the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM).

He has been appointed as SAPM on Middle East and Inter-faith Harmony.

The notification of appointment of Maulana Tahir Ashrafi as SAPM has been issued. He has worked on this post in previous tenures.



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

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

Independent Report

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

The Chief Minister also distributed laptops among the position holders of Information Technology sector. Speaking on the occasion, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki said that hundreds of youngsters are getting opportunities of livelihood every year through training being imparted to them in different trades at Technical Training Center.

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

Mr. Domki on the occasion noted with contentment that 50 percent of the students have got livelihood after their graduation from the Training Center. He said that the role of TTC is very important with regard to provide jobs and livelihood to the students. Chief Minister on the occasion assured that all available resources would be mobilized to put the TTC on modern lines.

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

Pak relation with China are cornerstone of our foreign policy: PM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meeting with Party Secretary of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Central Member of Politburo of Communist Party of China and Party Secretary of Xinjiang Autonomous Region Mr. Ma Xingrui.

While emphasizing Pakistan's commitment to friendship with China, Prime Minister emphasized that relations with China are the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and the guarantor of regional peace and development.

While referring to his meetings with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang in Beijing, Prime Minister appreciated the strong personal commitment of the Chinese leadership to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.



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

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

Government determined to provide relief to general public, protect rights

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has welcomed the reduction in prices of different edibles following reduction in prices of the petrol and petroleum products in the province.

In an official statement issued here on Friday, Jan Achakzai claimed that the price of the live broiler (chicken) has been reduced to Rs. 360 per kilogram while the chicken meat's price has been reduced to Rs. 495 per kilogram from previous Rs. 530 PKG.

Similarly, the price of per dozen eggs has also come down to Rs. 290, he added.

Moreover, the price of different vegetables have

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

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

He said that the role of traders is important to control inflation. The Minister Information said that the interim government is determined to provide relief to the masses. He vowed that the rights of consumers would be protected anyway.

He said that those fleecing the people don't deserve any relaxation and as such stern action would be taken against them.

JCP approves nomination of Justice Irfan Saadat as SC judge

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Friday unanimously approved the nomination of Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, Acting Chief Justice of Sindh High Court, as a judge of the Supreme Court.

"A meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan ('Commission') was convened to consider the nomination of Justice Irfan Saadat Khan," a press release said.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa stated that Justice Irfan Saadat Khan met the stipulated requirement as he was knowledgeable, well-experienced and versatile, had an upright character, and was also the most senior Judge among the chief justices and judges of all the high courts. All the JPC members present in the meeting unanimously approved the nomination, which was also endorsed in writing by the Law Minister, who was abroad.



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

Federal govt forms committee on Balochistan education issues

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

Caretaker Finance Minister Amjad Rasheed, Regional Director Higher Education Commission Zahoo Bazai, VC, BUTEMS Khalid Hafeez, VC University of Loralai, Ehsanullah Kakar, VC, University of Mekran Malik Tareen, VC, Univer-

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

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



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

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

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

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

The minister said that

Pakistan highly valued its relations with Britain.

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

The project, he added will further improve the knowledge, capacity and skills of key government agencies and officials in identifying false and hateful narratives in the online space.

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



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

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

Independent Report

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

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

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

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

Addressing the rally, Chairman PkMAP said if

United Nations can't stop war in Gaza then there's no use of it.

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

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

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

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

They also urged the international community to intervene in the situation immediately to avoid further loss of precious lives.

Pak- Australia forge closer ties in labour mobility and cooperation Initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant step towards enhancing labour mobility between Pakistan and Australia, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik Friday held discussions with Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins.

The meeting was aimed at fostering cooperation and exploring new avenues to enhance labour mobility between the two countries, said a press release issued here.

The SAPM informed about the ample pool of skilled Pakistani professionals and workers ready to bolster the Australian labour market, highlighting the potential for addressing labour shortages through cooperation in various sectors. The central discussion revolved around the vital

need for secure labour mobility channels to reduce irregular migration from Pakistan to Australia.

Both the sides stressed the importance of providing safe avenues to job seekers abroad.

The SAPM asked for further information on in-demand trades, accreditation, and language proficiency requirements for Australian working and skilled visas, aiming to simplify the process for Pakistani job seekers in Australia.

Additionally, the discussion explored the possibility of setting up centers of excellence within the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sectors of both nations.

Malik stated that the centers would prepare Pakistani workers to meet Australian labour market standards.



ISLAMABAD: SAPM Jawad Sohrab Malik engages in productive discussions with Mr. Neil Hawkins, the Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan.

Rights activist urges parents to embrace awareness-parenting to prevent child violence

ISLAMABAD (APP): Child rights activist Bushra Iqbal on Friday called on parents to nurture their children well in order to prevent them from resorting to violence and secure a brighter future for them.

In an interview with PTV News, Iqbal highlighted the importance of quality time spent with children, both offline and online, in today's rapidly changing world.

She noted that children are facing a multitude of threats, and their emotional health is particularly vulnerable in the face of these challenges.

Iqbal expressed concern about the growing trend of children being neglected

in favour of screen time, stressing the importance of physical activity and social interaction for children's mental health.

The activist also advised parents to use online safety tools to restrict their children's access to inappropriate content.

She encouraged parents to keep their children busy with positive activities in order to prevent them from engaging in harmful behaviours.

Iqbal emphasized that parents play a pivotal role in their children's lives and that they are responsible for their children's physical, psychological, social, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional well-being.

Islamabad Capital Police hand over 40 stolen vehicles to their owners

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Capital Police Officer Operations Shaker Hussain Dawar conducted a press conference at Police Lines Headquarters on Anti Vehicle Lifting Unit crackdown against car lifters.



During the press conference, he highlighted the Islamabad Capital Police Anti Vehicle Lifting Unit (AVLU) crackdown against car lifters and thieves and added that AVLU team ensures the arrest of 125 accused of 24 different notorious gangs including 20 car receivers. Police teams also recovered 178 vehicles worth Rs 462.5 million from their possession.

CPO Operation said that, due to the effective measures taken by Islamabad Capital Police, the car theft activities in the federal capital have been reduced by 10% as compared to previous year. The strategic use of modern surveillance techniques and effective coordination played a pivotal role in tracking down the elusive perpetrators, he added.

117 Engineering students show compassion through blood donation

ISLAMABAD (APP): A total of 117 young engineering students of Friday generously donated blood to help Thalassemia-affected children, at a Grand Blood Donation Camp organized by Pakistan Sweet Home Blood Bank at Heavy Industries Taxila Education City (Hi-Tech University) Taxila.

Both faculty members and professors, along with students from diverse departments, including mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, civil engineering, biomedical engineering, and software engineering, actively participated in donating blood.

Zammurd Khan, the pattern in chief Pakistan Sweet Home, expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the future engineers and professors who contributed by donating blood.

Zammad Khan mentioned his immense happiness at witnessing the substantial participation of students from Pakistan's premier engineering university in the noble mission of saving the lives of those in need through blood donation.

Undoubtedly, these young people will later play crucial roles in advancing their nation and country during their practical lives.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan visited Regional blood Centre Chak Shahzad.

SAPM urge Muslim world to adopt a united stance on long-standing issues of Palestine, Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights Mushaah Hussain Mullick Friday demanded that the Israel and Indian governments should be held accountable for the war crimes and urged Islamic countries to take practical steps to adopt a united stance on the long-standing issues.

Talking to a Private news channel, she called for the international commu-

nity to act quickly and hold the Israeli occupation forces accountable for these heinous war crimes against the Palestinian people and for immediate intervention to stop the carnage to prevent humanitarian catastrophe, demanded.

"Muslim Ummah needs to stand united and convey a message to the world that no more Israeli terrorism against Palestinians would be tolerated," she added.

It is the need of the hour that the world leaves its double standards and raises a clear voice for the rights of oppressed Muslims anywhere in the world, SAPM said.

Mushaah Malik said that the ongoing violence in the region is deeply concerning and we believe that diplomacy is the best path to a solution, adding, that continuous Israeli airstrikes are causing immense suffering among women, chil-

dren, and the elderly.

Israelis are urging civilians to vacate their homes, and the Gaza territory is completely blockaded, lacking necessities like water, shelter, and food, she added. Both Kashmir and Palestine have shared the struggle for self-determination against the colonial occupation for the past 75 years as they both await the fulfilment of the UN resolutions, as of now, she mentioned.

ECP's service desks to remain open on holidays

ISLAMABAD (APP): Facilitation Desks and Representation Receiving Centers, established at the Election Commission Secretariat in Islamabad to facilitate public, will continue to operate during the public holiday on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

According to a statement by an ECP spokesperson on Friday, Representation Receiving Center has been established at the ECP Secretariat with the purpose of receiving objections related to constituency delimitation from concerned individuals.

These centers will remain in operation without any interruptions until the deadline for objection submissions on October 27, 2023.

Furthermore, individuals can obtain maps from the Election Commission, with payment required in accordance with legal regulations and these centers will be open during standard office hours.

Missing boy reunites with his family

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Police, Khanna Police Station team has reunited a missing boy with his parents on application from a citizen.

According to the spokesman of Islamabad Police, he said the Khanna Police Station team has received an application from a citizen in which he stated that his son namely Muhammad Asim had been missing and could not be traced despite the family's intense efforts. He said that upon receiving the application Khanna Police teams used technical and human resources and successfully traced the missing boy and reunited him safely with his family. The spokesman said the parents appreciated the police team's efforts and thanked the Islamabad Capital Police for immediate assistance.

Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the safety of lives and property of the citizens is our prime responsibility and no stone would be untuned to secure the federal capital.

Regularization of daily wages employees: IHC orders to publish results of successful candidates

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has ordered to publish result of successful candidates in the case pertaining to regularization of daily wages employees of federal government educational institutions.

On the other hand Additional Attorney General (AAG) has told the court on behalf of the government results of all successful candidates will be sent to them soon and notification will

also be issued.

The order was issued by justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani of IHC Friday.

It has been said in the order education ministry should release result of successful candidates on website. The court remarked the offer letters of successful candidates be also issued to them.

According to FPSC authorities results were sent to ministry of education on September 26.



FAISALABAD: Federal Secretary Ministry of Education & Professional Training Waseem Ajmal Chaudhary is distributing certificates among the students of National Textile University Faisalabad (NTUF) during scholarship distribution ceremony under National Endowment Scholarships for talent holders.

Significant reforms enhance civic facilities in traffic police division

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have initiated substantial reforms to improve the services offered to citizens at the Traffic Police Headquarters in Islamabad.

These reforms, undertaken on a broad scale during the current year, are geared towards enhancing the citizens' experience. Notable improvements include extending the working hours of the license branch from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., enabling the issuance of new driving licenses for citizens. Furthermore, the DDL Hall is now open on Saturdays to better serve the public.

In a significant stride towards inclusivity, a dedicated driving school and testing centre have

been established in Sector H-11, catering specifically to women. Additionally, the process of obtaining an online driving license has been streamlined for Pakistani expatriates.

The introduction of modern technology, in the form of Safe City Islamabad, has greatly improved traffic monitoring and enforcement of traffic laws, resulting in the issuance of e-challans for various violations. Instances of traffic law violations have led to the suspension of driver's licenses, underlining the rigorous enforcement of traffic regulations.

A total of 686 FIRs were registered due to unilateral road violations, with 1,423 driving licenses suspended for severe traffic law breaches.



ISLAMABAD: EDG/PIO Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan in a meeting with a delegation of All Pakistan Newspaper Employees Confederation at PID Headquarters.

Dr. Nadeem visits infectious diseases hospital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on Friday visited Infectious Diseases Hospital in Chak Shahzad.

The purpose of the visit was to take stock of the facilities and performance in the hospital. The Infectious Diseases Hospital consists of 250 beds.

Dr. Nadeem took notice and expressed concern over the hospital not being functional for last two years.

The minister formed a three-member committee to make the hospital fully operational, which would be headed by Dr. Muhammad Salman, Chief Executive Officer, National Institute of Health.

The committee will formulate an integrated strategy to make the hospital fully functional.

The minister directed the committee to submit its recommendations to him on urgent basis.

Later, Dr Nadeem Jan visited Regional Blood Centre. More than forty staff members were absent from the Regional Blood Centre.

He took notice and instructed to issue explanation letters to the staff absent from duty.

The minister questioned as to why such a big safe blood donation center was non-functional, adding strict action would be taken against the responsible.

The minister ordered an immediate investigation into the non-functionality of the Regional Blood Center.

The minister said, "We are ensuring merit and transparency in the health sector," adding salaries of Infectious Diseases Hospital and Regional Blood Centre staff should be paid without delay.

He said that implementation of the reform agenda was necessary for improvement in the health sector.

He directed to the officers to pay attention to their assigned duties, adding strict action would be taken for negligence in performance of duties.

The minister said efforts were being made to ensure the availability of the best medical facilities in the country.



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Canada, Ms. Leslie Scanlon calling on Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House.

We welcome Nawaz Sharif on his arrival in Pakistan, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and President of IPP Sardar Tanveer Ilyas said that we welcome Mian Nawaz Sharif on his arrival in Pakistan.

If there is an election then Nawaz Sharif should be given a chance. All people should have a chance in the election politically and democratically.

Nawaz Sharif has been the Prime Minister of the country three times and the Chief Minister of Punjab.

While talking to media, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas said that we strongly con-

demn the Israeli brutalities against Palestine. The United Nations is losing its grip on the issue of Palestine. The heart weeps tears of blood after seeing the Israeli oppression of the women and children of Palestine. The Palestinian state is a reality that is not being recognized.

He said that Israel cannot sustain its existence with this cruelty and brutality. A meeting of the Azad Kashmir Assembly should be called soon on the issue of Palestine. The Azad Kashmir Assembly has apparently been put out of existence by locking it.

Citizens cooperation essential to make country load shedding free: Secretary Langrial

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary for Power Division, Rashid Mahmood Langrial Friday

said that government was working on an action plan to improve the energy supply to make the country free of load shedding and ensure a reliable electricity supply.

The Secretary Power Division further mentioned that Mardan city had earned the status of a load-shedding-free city, adding, he praised the efforts of the police and PESCO officials in the campaign against electricity theft.

In an exclusive talk with PTV news channel, he hailed the citizen of Mardan city which was recently declared as a load shedding free city with the huge co-

operation of citizens, adding, the "Zero-Theft, Zero-Load-shedding" initiative in Mardan was a model for other cities and region which had showcased the positive impact of targeted measures to combat power theft and ensure a reliable electricity supply.

The Secretary Power Division further mentioned that Mardan city had earned the status of a load-shedding-free city, adding, he praised the efforts of the police and PESCO officials in the campaign against electricity theft.



ISLAMABAD: People are busy in Fishing at the bank of the Rawal Lake during pleasant weather in Federal Capital.

AIOU students urge VC to simplify online registration, enrollment procedure

ISLAMABAD (APP): The current students of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) have urged the Vice Chancellor Dr Nasir Mahmood to make the online registration and enrollment procedure of admissions in the new semester.

Talking to APP, the students also demanded to revive the manual procedure of admissions and registration as they were facing immense problems in enrollment and uploading assignments.

The students were of the view, that they could not register for next semes-

ter due to the absence of manual procedure, lengthy enrollment process and poor internet facilities particularly in far-flung areas of the country.

"They have to pay a handsome amount to the bookshops and photocopy shops for online registration and generating fee challan" they added.

Meanwhile, a student Amreen Shahid told APP that in an era of such inflation, they have to pay Rs 100-200 to the bookshops for uploading their assignments on the AAGHS LMS Portal of the university.

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CPEC's potential

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

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

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

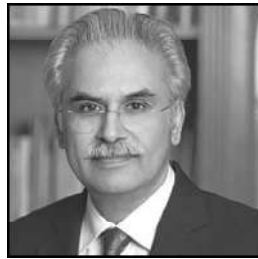
That is precisely why many maintain that Islamabad has failed to fully realise CPEC's promise, and missed a golden opportunity to fix its economy.

China's renewed push for BRI global cooperation at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held this week to mark the first decade of BRI's launch has afforded Pakistan yet another chance to expand bilateral economic ties with Beijing beyond debt-creating energy and transport schemes.

Thus, we may take heart from the multiple agreements reached between the two countries to expand CPEC's scope, and expand bilateral economic and investment cooperation to industry, mining, agriculture, livelihood projects, science and technology, education, etc. Simultaneously, Beijing has agreed to finance and upgrade the rail track from Peshawar to Karachi at the reduced cost of \$6.7bn and to invest \$1.5bn in the refinery business here.

These agreements were signed during interim Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar's Beijing visit to participate in the forum where he also met President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Qiang. In the past, bilateral cooperation in these important areas was set back by multiple factors: irresponsible statements by PTI ministers against CPEC investment, bureaucratic impediments, painfully slow progress on Special Economic Zones for creating industrial infrastructure to facilitate the relocation of Chinese industry, poor regulatory and policy regimes, the dollar liquidity crunch and the like. At the same time, the Covid pandemic, Beijing's tensions with the West, and its concerns over security for Chinese nationals working in Pakistan also slowed momentum on BRI and CPEC. That President Xi told the forum that China is moving from "sketching the outline" towards "filling in the details" shows that Beijing is reasserting its position as leader of "economic multilateralism and globalisation".

The question is: are we ready to seize this second chance to fully realise the potential of cooperation on CPEC to develop a green, open and inclusive economy?

**Zafar Mirza**

Last month, the World Bank and the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics convened a two-day national dialogue titled 'Reforms for a Brighter Future: Time to Decide — A Conversation on Pakistan's Development Priorities'.

It can be deciphered as: things are not right and reforms are badly needed; if appropriate reforms are undertaken now, they can lead to a better future, but if they are not implemented then the future is bleak; this should be decided now, before it is too late.

The World Bank's Matthew Verghis made a simple, though not simplistic, keynote address. The message in a nutshell is threefold: Pakistan's economic model is no more sustainable; still, economic and development progress

is possible — provided we make fundamental shifts in our economic and development policies.

Why is our economic model no more sustainable? Because it has resulted in a huge, ever-growing macro-economic imbalance. Simply put, our income is far less than our spending. To plug the deficit, we must regularly borrow loans. We are in a vicious cycle, where we borrow more to return earlier loans and their interest. Covid-19, the global slump, floods, political instability and rupee depreciation have also caused a deep dent in recent years, although our economic mismanagement goes far beyond these catastrophes.

The chronicity of this phenomenon has landed us in a situation where our debt and debt servicing have risen to 82.3 per cent of GDP in 2023. All this hits people very hard. High inflation and, once again, growing poverty are taking their toll.

Human development is sliding further. Our abysmal health and education indices are a stark testimony to an economic model which isn't working. Our infant mortality rate (over

60 per 1,000 live births) and stunting (40pc of children under five years) are the highest in South Asia and our literacy rate among adults (above 15 years) is the lowest in South Asia, even lower than that of sub-Saharan Africa.

So why is economic and development progress still possible? There are examples of countries that have managed such crises and bounced back. They fastened their belts, put their house in order and turned around their economies.

Indonesia, India and Vietnam emerged from their respective crises, introduced and sustained deep economic reforms and followed positive trajectories. Incremental economic growth rates have resulted in improvements in living standards, and human development indicators have improved.

In 1965, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea and Pakistan were very close to each other in terms of GDP per capita. Today, South Korea's per capita income is close to \$35,000, Indonesia's is more than \$14,000, Malaysia's is close to

\$14,000. China's is over \$11,000 while Pakistan's is only \$1,568.

Sri Lanka was also marred by misgovernance, economic mismanagement and political instability. Ultimately, it defaulted by announcing a debt repayment moratorium in April 2022, amidst unsustainable debt and critically low reserves. The images of people rioting inside the presidential residence are still fresh.

Sri Lanka had no option but to initiate wholesale economic and governance reforms. Early indications are promising. Inflation peaked to an unprecedented 69.8pc during the crisis last year, more than double that of Pakistan, but, today, it has come down to single digits. Indeed, it's too early to form an opinion about what trajectory Sri Lanka will take, but there is a great opportunity in the crisis if Sri Lanka does not waste it.

Every country has its own context and problems, but the fact remains that there are countries that have experienced economic crises but have successfully emerged from them by reshaping their eco-

omic and development policies. Our situation is dire but not an exception. We must develop the resolve to proactively address it rather than shutting our eyes and waiting for Allah before the worst hits us.

What fundamental shifts are required in our economic and development policies? While there is no single cookie-cutter solution, lessons from other countries are useful. The principles of good economic policies are well laid out. We need to, first and foremost, set our priorities right. Investing in people should be our first economic priority as this brings the highest rate of return.

Apart from being a moral argument, it is also good economics. Our youth bulge can be our greatest resource. Exploiting the globalised world and the huge elastic global demand for ideas, knowledge, technology, commodities, and human resource, we should reorganise internally to enhance our abysmally low exports. We need to address the structural drivers of fiscal deficits and must

expand our revenue base and improve our expenditure quality.

We need to enhance our savings and stop channelling private savings into financing unproductive government consumption. We need to improve our business environment to encourage investments and increase public capital investments rather than providing huge, poorly targeted subsidies. This is a broad but by no means exhaustive list.

Can our powerful stakeholders transcend their know-it-all approach and self-interest and reach out to each other to develop a national consensus on Pakistan's future?

Economic experts say that if Pakistan leverages its young population, natural resources, and location within a vibrant region, it can achieve growth rates of 7-8pc per annum, reaching middle-income status by 2047. "This may be Pakistan's moment in making policy shifts," said Najib Benhassine, World Bank head in Pakistan, while making the opening speech at the national dialogue. -- Courtesy Dawn

Waste not the crises**Are caretaker setups needed?****Hassan Hakeem**

As the 15th National Assembly completed its term, the transition to the caretaker government has been marred with political chaos, free-falling economic meltdown and growing security threats from within and outside.

One constant in the last 18 months has been growing distrust of the public in the political system. Political parties also share this distrust with continued allegations of electoral mismanagement, rigging and fraud against the predecessor government.

The PTI, even after forming the government in 2018, continued to raise issues of pre-poll manipulation and accusations of interference by various powerful elements. As we move into another election cycle, it is necessary to review past mistakes and allow for new

practices. It is equally important to understand the primary concern centered around the establishment of a "political interim" government, or is the emphasis on achieving a smooth transition of power without such an arrangement?

In examining Pakistan's democratic evolution, it becomes apparent that the institution of caretaker governments may not be the most effective means to ensure electoral integrity. Understandably, the caretaker government is mandated to oversee smooth transition of power through free, fair and peaceful conduct of elections while simultaneously maintaining governance. It also necessitates an equitable playing field where all political parties can compete freely, devoid of concerns about violence, rigging, targeting, or bias. However, reliance on caretaker governments to oversee the transition of power between elected administrations has its own set of challenges. It can potentially disrupt the continuity of governance and create an environment of uncertainty by self-extending its mandated tenure. Additionally, the appointment of caretaker governments could inadvertently

open avenues for political maneuvering and manipulation.

Considered the bloodiest elections in Pakistan's history, the 1970 general elections, and the subsequent reluctance to transfer power to the majority seats winner Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League. What followed had a lasting impact on the country. This also led to General Zia's 13th constitutional amendment that introduced the concept of caretaker governments. Ever since, caretaker governments have largely been accused of electoral misconduct in each transitional phase of Pakistan's political history.

In 1988, under the caretaker government led by the then president Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the first general elections were held after the end of General Zia's military rule. Extensive allegations of rigging and electoral irregularities were raised, particularly in Punjab and Sindh. The PPP accused the caretaker government of favouring the Islamic Jamhuri Ittehad (IJI) alliance, which was seen as an ally of the establishment. Several constituencies in Sindh and Punjab became key battlegrounds between

the PPP and its opponents.

The 1990 general elections held under the caretaker government of Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi witnessed widespread allegations of rigging. The PPP lost to the IJI amid accusations of support from the establishment under a hotly contested general election. The 1993 general elections witnessed another round of allegations of pre-poll manipulation, voter intimidation and electoral fraud; putting the caretaker government led by Moeen Qureshi in the center of a scandalous election that witnessed clashes between political activists. The PPP accused the caretaker government of favouring the IJI. Subsequently, the elections were nullified, and a new election was called. The caretaker government stayed for 132 days, well beyond its mandated duration.

The 2002 general elections were held under the administration of a caretaker government led by Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali; this was followed by the 1999 military coup. The caretaker government was unable to guarantee a level playing field with political victimization of the PML-N's top leadership, while Benazir

Bhutto was also in exile.

The 2008 general elections, after the end of General Musharraf's regime, were generally considered to be more transparent compared to previous elections, there were still allegations of irregularities in some constituencies. The 2013 general elections were held under a caretaker government led by Prime Minister Mir Hazar Khan Khoso. Around 148 terrorist attacks were reported across the country, making this another bloody election that targeted political parties (it claimed the lives of at least 117 people including candidates).

The onus of responsibility also lies on political parties and the Election Commission to uphold the principles of transparency, accountability, and fairness in the electoral process. To expect this puts the ECP and its powers to deliver with autonomy at the centerstage.

The recent action of the ECP regarding the politically affiliated caretaker cabinet of the KP government, and hearing of a petition seeking removal of 'biased' members of the federal cabinet are all steps in the right direction to ensure a fair electoral process. However, this

would require a lot more to be done.

The responsibility for response and action in the face of human rights disruption in pre-poll, poll and post-poll period lies with the ECP. Stricter and proactive administration of the voter registration process including the missing 10 million women voters (or more), ballot access and certification, election security and integrity, delimitation to ensure fair and equal representation, timely announcement of the elections results, but also ensuring compliance with law and order. While the nightmare of the 1970 elections and what followed cannot be relived, it is essential that all political parties agree to a system of fair and peaceful transfer of power.

If we were to eliminate the notion of a caretaker government for the smooth transition of political power between parliaments, it would also necessitate a consistent holding of local government elections without interruptions. Commitment to upholding transparency and credibility in the electoral process is fundamental to strengthening democracy in Pakistan. -- Courtesy TheNews

Reach the masses**Zubeida Mustafa**

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

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

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

There are a number of other similar groups working to educate people and create public awareness. Such bodies are rendering a useful service in a society where the free dissemination of information on sen-

sitive and controversial issues is not encouraged. Hence events such as the URC Forum will have to become a regular exercise that go beyond converting the already converted. The need is to be inclusive and widen the reach of their activities by going to the masses who are handicapped by illiteracy and poverty. People may be open to intelligent discourse but lack the resources to come to their hosts. Their interest in such matters is evident from their participation in Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, etc.

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

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

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

Not worth it?**Nazir A. Jogezi**

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

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

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

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

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

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

For instance, Balochistan's known natural gas reserves have been more or less exhausted. An erudite friend's response to the lack of access to gas in major parts of the prov-

ince was shocking: "What was the benefit of providing gas to Balochistan's scattered locations with fewer consumers?" In his province, a few districts with the same number of consumers as Balochistan's entire population were deemed to benefit more from the gas. Such a mindset showcases our inability to distinguish between fundamental rights and commercial parameters. States are not corporations. They are guardians of the rights of citizens.

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

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

Situation in Palestine is painful: Governor Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman on Friday attended a seminar on the role of different governments in national consolidation and foreign policy at Government Graduate APWA College for Women as Chief Guest.

Secretary Higher Education Sajid Zafar Dal, DPI Colleges Syed Ansar Azhar, Director Colleges Lahore Division Muhammad Zahid Mian and Principal APWA College Professor Dr. Naima Khurshid and education expert Muzamil Mahmood Butt and others were present in the

ceremony. Addressing the ceremony, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the situation in Palestine is painful. He said that bombs are being dropped on innocent children, women, and civilians in Palestine, adding he said that the weapons of the so-called developed countries of the world are being used.

He said that the sad thing is that the countries that advocate human rights are vetoing the ceasefire resolution.

He said whole humanity is like a body, if one part of the body suffers, the rest of the

human beings should also feel it. He said that our religion has ordered to take care of humans as well as animals, birds and the environment.

He said that eternal success lies in truth. He stressed that understanding other's viewpoints with tolerance is very important. He said that disinformation is spread on social media and people accept it without verifying. He added that it is forbidden in our religion to believe a rumour and spread it further.

Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman further said that education is very

important to take the country forward.

We increased the budget of higher education from 34 billion to 120 billion, which yielded positive results. Unfortunately, after 2018, the funding of higher education was reduced to 60 billion. He said that the distribution of laptops to students on merit made Pakistan join the e-lancing countries, software exports increased and Pakistani youth got global recognition in gaming apps. He said that youth is the future of the country, and investing in their education and character building is the best investment.



KARACHI: Ambassador of Japan Mitsuhiro along with the delegation of WADA calls on Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House.



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

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

Independent Report
LAHORE: Responding swiftly, 36 beds were promptly added within 48 hours on the ground floor of the Children's Hospital, effectively augmenting paediatric treatment capacity and efficiently managing the influx of patients.

Late at night, Chief Minister personally inspected the medical emergency section on the ground floor, the newly established baby ward on the first floor, and the emergency section still under construction.

In line with the Chief Minister's directives, the existing space within the medical emergency was optimised to accommodate the additional beds. Expressing his satisfaction at the immediate implementation of this initiative, CM Mohsin Naqvi announced plans to further increase the emergency bed capacity to 150. During his visit, the chief minister engaged with the children receiving treatment and sought feedback from their

mothers regarding the facilities provided. He also provided specific instructions to the hospital management and medical staff, emphasising the paramount importance of providing the best possible care for the children.

In the newly established baby ward, a concerned mother raised a grievance regarding a delayed MRI procedure by four days. Responding promptly, Mohsin Naqvi directed the Deputy Medical Superintendent (DMS) and attending doctor to expedite the MRI for the child. Expressing disappointment at the high patient-to-bed ratio and subpar sanitation in the new baby ward, he issued directives for better bed management and an immediate improvement in sanitation arrangements.

Inspecting the ongoing construction in the emergency section, CM Mohsin Naqvi urged for an acceleration of construction activities and emphasised the need to maintain a comprehensive record of AC units.

Amir Mir clarifies eviction policy targets no specific nationalities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Amir Mir refuted claims of targeted legal action against specific nationalities residing illegally in Punjab, emphasizing that the government's focus is on foreign elements contributing to terrorism in the country. He clarified that the recent measures do not exclusively target Afghans, but encompass all unlawfully present foreigners.

While acknowledging the involvement of Afghans in recent anti state activities, Minister Mir stressed that the said policy aims to deal with all foreign individuals residing illegally in Pakistan. Notably, the 1.4 million Afghan refugees, who have

received temporary authorization from NADRA, are not included in this initiative. These refugees, of which 1.64 million reside in Punjab, possess valid registration cards, affirming their legal status in Pakistan.

Addressing a press conference at the DGPR office, Minister Mir explained that the Punjab government's approach aligns with the federal government's efforts to repatriate unlawfully residing foreigners.

A deadline of October 31 has been set for individuals, including those with expired visas, to either furnish their documentation by November 1 or depart from Pakistan.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Pakistan Rah-e-Haq Party (PRHP) are holding protest rally against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Namak Mandi Chowk in Peshawar.

JI held rally to show solidarity with Palestinians

Independent Report
SUKKUR (APP): Jamaat-e-Islami Sukkur organized a solidarity rally after Juma prayer here on Friday, where local leaders showed their ardent solidarity for the oppressed Palestinians.

While addressing the rally, Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Sukkur, Hizibullah Jakhro condemned Israel for its actions in Palestine. He accused Israel of committing war crimes, including genocide, against the Palestinian people.

The event featured speeches by prominent figures who voiced their concerns about the ongoing situation in the region.

The speakers also expressed disappointment with the Muslim world's leadership, including the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which they claimed had failed to address the issue effectively. Prominent leaders and civil society attended the rally in large numbers to show their support for the Palestinian cause.

Journalists attend H.E.A.T training at SSU

Independent Report
KARACHI (APP): A one-day Hostile Environment Awareness Training (H.E.A.T) session and self-defence training program held at SSU headquarters wherein, 25 journalists attended the session.

The session aimed at apprising the journalists on how to protect themselves and the people around them and the measures to be adopted in case of any hostile situation if created by terrorists, said a news release on Friday.

During the training session, the journalists were given awareness to protect their lives and properties, develop confidence/capabilities and avoid risk in case of an emergency situation if arises during the attack by anti-social elements.

The guests were also informed about the self-defence techniques and use of different types of lethal and non-lethal weapons handling and behaviour in hostile environments.

Secretary Economic Affairs Division calls on CM KP

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan was called on by Federal Secretary for Economic Affairs Division Dr Kazim Niaz and a representative of the Asian Development Bank for Pakistan here on Friday.

Various matters related to foreign-funded projects being executed in the province especially in the Newly Merged Districts came under discussion.

Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and Additional Chief Secretary Imtiaz Hussain Shah were also present on the occasion.

It was agreed that special steps would be taken to accelerate the pace of work on the ongoing foreign-funded projects in the province to ensure their completion in the stipulated time frame.

It was decided that the caretaker Chief Minister will hold monthly progress review meetings in

order to speed up work on these projects. The Chief Secretary will make arrangements for the funding gap of these projects so that these projects are executed without any interruption.

Similarly, the Additional Chief Secretary was directed to take necessary steps to remove the bottlenecks hindering the smooth execution of the projects. However, issues that could not be resolved at the level of additional chief secretary, will be taken up at a higher level.

It was also agreed to identify new development projects to be executed under foreign funding in the newly merged tribal districts. The chief minister directed the authorities concerned to identify such development projects that could benefit the maximum population.

He termed the foreign-funded projects as of public importance and said that the benefits of these projects should reach the target population without any delay.

CM, Turkiye's consul general discuss investment opportunities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Dursum Bastug, the consul general of Turkiye, stationed in Lahore, held a meeting with Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at the Chief Minister's Office on Friday.

The discussions encompassed a range of topics, including mutual interests, intensifying cooperation across diverse sectors, and bolstering bilateral investments.

Mohsin Naqvi emphasised the deep-rooted bond of fraternity between the peoples of Pakistan and Turkiye, emphasising the critical need to further strengthen relations as per the Lahore and Istanbul Sister Cities Agreement. He expressed eagerness to elevate

engagements with Turkiye in various domains and assured Turkish investors of receiving full-fledged support for their ventures in Punjab.

CM Naqvi revealed plans for the construction of a diplomatic enclave on the CBD (central business district) land, where the Turkiye consulate will also be relocated. He graciously accepted the Consul General's invitation to partake in the centenary celebration of the Republic of Turkiye, CM extended an invitation to the Mayor of Istanbul and the Police Chief to visit Lahore.

Addressing the global challenge of terrorism, Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi emphasised the necessity for a unified plan of action.



KARACHI: Visitors takes interest at the stall in Health Asia Expo 2023 in Karachi.

After Mardan district, Peshawar to be made as load-shedding-free city

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided to make Peshawar, the provincial capital, as load-shedding free model city after making of Mardan district a load-shedding free model city. A plan has been drawn up to speed up the recovery of dues from defaulting electricity consumers and to stoppage the misuse of electricity in Peshawar city.

Necessary instructions have been issued to the district administration, police officials and PESCO operational teams across the province. It has also been decided to speed up the process of installing meters in the areas deprived of the facility of electricity meters and to increase the recovery targets from the defaulting

electricity consumers of all feeders.

In this regard, the fourth meeting of the Provincial Task Force for Energy was held under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary Finance & Tribal Affairs Mohammad Abid Majeed, Secretary Energy & Power Nisar Ahmed Khan, all Divisional Commissioners, Regional Police Officers, Chief Executive PESCO, Deputy Secretary Industry Maqbool Hussain were also attended the meeting. It was told in the meeting that in a short period of one and a half month, the provincial task force has so far recovered more than Rs. two and a half billion from the bill paying consumers, and more than Rs. 28 thousand illegal connections have been disconnected by imposing fines.

2371 illegal immigrants including 1700 Afghans have been deported so far: Haris Nawaz

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Caretaker Minister for Home and Prison Brigadier (Retd) Haris Nawaz has said that a total of 2371 illegal immigrants, including 1700 Afghans, have been deported so far.

While addressing a press conference along with Sindh Caretaker Minister for Law, Religious Affairs, and Human Rights, Omar Soomro, at Karachi Press Club (KPC), he said that the action of deporting illegal immigrants was

being taken indiscriminately. He clarified the perception that the action was not being taken only against illegal Afghani immigrants. It was being taken against all citizens of the world living illegally in the province.

Nawaz said that the crackdowns were being carried out across the country against illegal immigrants, and it was a unanimous policy, which the Sindh province was also adhering to.

He further said that due course was being followed in the deportation process. He said that 1218 cases of illegal immigrants were pending in jails in the province. The Home Minister said that illegal immigrants lived more in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa and Balochistan than in Sindh province.

The Home Minister linked the peace in the city to the deportation of illegal immigrants. He said that they were trying to make Karachi a crime-free city.

Railway employees stage protest, observe hunger strike

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

Salary should be issued from AGPR, railway employees demanded. Pension and other arrears should be paid immediately, railway employees demanded.

Minister orders crackdown on substandard beauty products in Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir has ordered a crackdown on those producing and trading substandard beauty products in the province.

He issued directives during a review meeting with district drug quality control boards' secretaries on Friday.

He ordered a crackdown on unauthorised individuals administering beauty injections, stressing the use of only Drug Regulatory Authority-approved injections for beauty and skincare. Dr. Jamal highlighted that only

qualified skin specialists and surgeons should administer these injections, and ordered strict action against unqualified individuals violating the rules.

Additionally, he addressed the issue of sub-standard beauty creams, which could pose serious health risks, including cancer. He said that stringent policies would be implemented to regulate non-standard cosmetics and beauty creams. Standard operating procedures for cosmetic cream preparation would be established, and licences would be issued to cosmetic cream manufacturers.



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

Gomal university to celebrate golden jubilee in 2024: VC

Independent Report
DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Vice-Chancellor of Gomal University Professor Dr. Shakibullah has said that elaborate arrangements are being made to celebrate the golden jubilee of the university in 2024.

In this regard a consultative meeting with Gomal University alumni forum Islamabad was held to discuss plans for the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the university. The meeting was attended by Gomal University Alumni Forum Convener Director Pharmacy Services Polyclinic Dr. Amina Khan, Senior Gomalian Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto University, Dr Syed Ghulam President Alumni Forum Farid Khan, Daily Jang Bureau Chief Rana Ghulam Qadir and Regional Incharge Press Information Department (PID) Dera Ismail Khan Muhammad Fazlur Rehman. On this occasion, the members of Gomal University Alumnae Forum Islamabad paid tribute to Vice Chancellor Gomal University Prof. Dr. Shakibullah for joining the first consultative meeting regarding the Golden Jubilee celebrations.

They said that the Golden Jubilee celebrations would be conducted in an effective manner.

132KV Grid Station formally energized to supply electricity to Hattar SEZ

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: A 132 KV Grid Station in Hattar Special Economic Zone was officially powered up on Friday to ensure a continuous electricity supply for the zone's industrial units and address the power-related concerns of investors.

The inauguration ceremony took place in the presence of Dr. Aamir Abdullah, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce, Technical Education and Newly Merged Districts Affairs, who served as the chief guest. The event was also

attended by Javed Iqbal Khattak, CEO of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC), along with board members and representatives of the Hattar Industrial Association.

During the inaugural ceremony, Minister Abdullah highlighted the grid station's significance in resolving electricity-related issues for industrial units and pledged the provincial government's commitment to address such problems for the benefit of the public and investors.

IPC playing effective role for national harmony: Masood

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The KP Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination Masood Ahmed has said that his department has developed ideal coordination with the federal and other provincial governments while due to close support from the federation and other units, long-standing problems being resolved apart from the economic problems of the province. Economic and security issues at national level have also been successfully progressed through this forum, he added.

He said this while expressing his views on the performance of the Inter-

provincial Coordination (IPC) department KP at the program 'Studio 92' of Pakhtunkhwa Radio Peshawar. Journalist Hasnain Malik hosted the program while Ghulam Hussain Ghazi, Station Director of Pakhtunkhwa Radio was also present on this occasion. Masood Ahmed said that the IPC department is actually working effectively for provincial harmony and national unity. This platform, he maintained, is actively promoting coordinated efforts to bring provinces closer together and create liaison among provinces for resource acquisition and proper utilization.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



KARACHI: A delegation of All Pakistan Oil Tankers and Goods Transporters Association calls on Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House.

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

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

Caretaker IT Minister Dr Umar Saif has special interest in promoting IT and Telecom sector in the country and recently approved infrastructure sharing framework and the proposed spectrum sharing mechanism are important milestones to reduce

operational cost of telecom operators, he expressed while talking to Head of Asia Telenor Group Borre Furberg.

The Secretary further said that the country had 190 million cellphones, 127 million mobile broadband subscribers and 130 million broadband users, reflecting its potential in the sector.

They also discussed issues relating to upcoming IMT Spectrum Auction and business and investment opportunities in Pakistan.

Mr. Petter- Borre Furberg, EVP and Head of Asia, Telenor Group said, "We are proud of the contributions Telenor has made since 2004, through our investments in Telenor Pakistan and Telenor Microfinance Bank, in bringing connectivity and digital financial services to millions of customers, enabling them to live productive digital lives. The business and investment environment in the telecom sector is challenging for some time and urgent policy reform.

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

PSX contuse with bullish trend, gains 366 more points

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

A total of 430,052,557 shares valuing Rs 14.611 billion were traded during the day as compared to 427,476,593 shares valuing Rs14.593 billion the previous day.

As many as 350 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 188 of them recorded gains and 145 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 17 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Pak Refinery with 42,467,382 shares at Rs 18.13 per share, K-Electric Ltd with 35,749,829 shares at Rs 3.26 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 31,023,989 shares at Rs 1.28 per share.

Pak Hotels XD witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 35.72 per share price, closing at Rs 512.25, whereas the runner-up was Murree Brewery XD with a Rs 18.67 rise in its per share price to Rs 267.66.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 190.00 per share closing at Rs 7,200.00, followed by Pak

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

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

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

PTA's significant achievements in this domain includes MoU with UNICEF, the allocation of an emergency short code (121) for reporting child abuse, and carrying out Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) survey by UNICEF

Global as part of the 'Disrupting Harm Programme'.

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

PTA has also collaborated with TikTok to promote online safety in 100 government schools through awareness videos, booklets, and tool kits.

Additionally, PTA's extensive awareness campaign involves curated videos, articles, public notices, SMSs, and community engagement involving Islamic scholars, cricketers, and the entertainment industry.

These efforts have earned PTA the LEAD Award and positioned Pakistan as a leader in safeguarding the digital future of its youth.

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

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

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

The event provided a platform for Pakistani businessmen to share their success stories and experiences of doing business with their Chinese counterparts.

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

Addressing on the occasion, Dr. Ijaz emphasized the historical ties between the two nations and highlighted the potential for further economic integration.

He stated that the gathering symbolizes the enduring friendship between China and Pakistan, and our commitment to building a stronger, more prosperous future together, adding, "We are ready to explore new horizons in our economic partnership."

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

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

Through this strategic alliance, Zong 4G's Enterprise Solutions will play a pivotal role in meeting the evolving communication needs of LCCI and its esteemed members, as it aims to foster collaboration and synergies between LCCI and its member companies,

Association Raja Tariq Mehmood, Vice Chairman (VC) Haji Faisal, Chairman Lahore Zone Sohail Shahzad, Chairman Faisalabad Zone Rana Aftab Jahangir and members of the SCCI were also present.

Packaging industry must be given industry status: APCCMA chairman

SIALKOT (APP): Chairman All Pakistan Corrugated Cartons Manufacturers Association (APCCMA) Zaki Ijaz Qureshi has said the packaging industry should be given the status of an industry. Online business and widespread popularity of e-commerce has increased the importance and value of the packaging sector, he said while addressing a ceremony at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Friday.

SCCI Vice President Amer Majeed Sheikh, Vice President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Adnan Khalid Butt, Senior Vice Chairman (SVC) Packaging

said a news release on Friday.

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

He stated, "Together, Zong 4G and the LCCI are dedicated to building synergies that would empower LCCI and its member companies with comprehensive digital communication solutions."

This collaboration promises to enhance diversity and bring cutting-edge technologies and advancements.

Turkiye's investors shows keen interest in investments in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci said on Friday that Turkish investors have shown keen interest in making substantial investments in Pakistan, especially in mining, equipment manufacturing, paper products, pharmaceutical sector and special economic zones.

Mr. Mehmet Pacaci, the Ambassador of Turkiye said this in a meeting with Tahir Javed, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister/Minister of State on investment at the Board of Investment (BOI), said a press release issued here.

During their talks, both parties emphasized

the deep religious, cultural, political, economic and social ties between Pakistan and Turkiye.

The meeting had fruitful discussions which highlighted the enduring and multifaceted relations that Pakistan and Turkiye have enjoyed for a long time. Ambassador Pacaci expressed Turkiye's keen interest in making substantial investments in Pakistan, particularly focusing on mining, appliance manufacturing, paper products, the pharmaceutical sector and the clusters of Special Economic Zones.

He emphasized the commitment of leading Turkish companies,

including Lemak, Dolcer, Turkish Contractors Association, Arcelik, Zorlo, Alberic, and Pak Yetiram, which have already invested in Pakistan.

The Ambassador reaffirmed Turkiye's readiness for joint ventures in various investment sectors, citing Pakistan's vast potential in these areas. Ambassador Pacaci highlighted the extensive research conducted on Pakistan's investment landscape and expressed Turkiye's readiness to invest significantly.

He also mentioned the 46 Turkish contracting companies keen on investing in Pakistan.

Gold rates up by Rs.2,200 to Rs.208,500 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.2,200 and was sold at Rs.208,500 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs.206,300 the previous day of trading.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.1,886 to Rs.178,755 from Rs.176,869 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.163,859 from Rs.162,130, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,550 and Rs.2,186.21 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$27 to \$1,999 from \$1,972, the Association reported.

Sino-Pak discusses economic cooperation through BRI

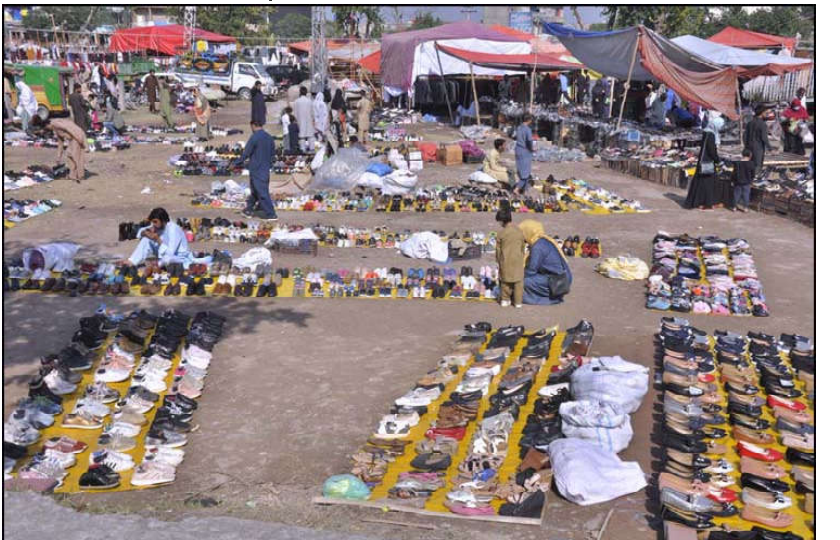
ISLAMABAD (APP): China and Pakistan have negotiated for the strengthening of bilateral cooperation and the pivotal role of China in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Pakistan's economic growth.

Federal Minister of Commerce, Industry and Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz held a meeting with Chinese EXIM Bank President Mr. Ren Shengjun, said a press release issued here on Friday.

Federal Minister of Commerce, Industry and Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz, was given a warm welcome in Shanghai by Mr. Ren Shengjun, the President of the EXIM Bank. President Mr. Ren Shengjun commenced the meeting by expressing his desire to see Pakistan

become China's hub for productivity and development, emphasizing that now is the opportune time to seize these prospects. He was encouraged by the progress of CPEC and recognized the positive impact of infrastructure developments on connectivity and Pakistan's foreign trade.

President Mr. Ren Shengjun disclosed that EXIM Bank had concluded its internal processes for debt restructuring, which would facilitate transactions in RMB and further enhance trade relations. He commended the establishment of the PCC as a promising mechanism for driving private investment and thanked Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz for his visit.



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

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, Maersk Jabal, Navios Constellation, XT Dolphin, Golden ID and Nord Adriatic carrying Containers, Palm oil, Chemicals and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile two more ships, Sea Power and Nakhil Siver with wheat and Palm oil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same day.

Ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, two ships, Xin An Ping and Sea Treasure left the port on Friday morning, while three more ships, Navios Constellation, MSC Jemima and Chem Harvestare expected to sail on same day afternoon.

New calling innovation center to propel 5G's unique calling feature

ISLAMABAD (APP): China Mobile and Huawei during the 11th China Mobile Global Partner Conference have announced to jointly establish a "New Calling" Innovation Center to propel 5G's unique calling feature.

New Calling Innovation Center to propel forward large-scale commercial use of New Calling, where calling will shift from voice to video and then to content, enabling China Mobile and Huawei to jointly build a solid New Calling ecosystem, said a news release issued here on Friday.

New Calling is an upgrade to traditional calling services and has been positioned as one of the strategic products by

China Mobile. China Mobile has taken the lead in defining the VoNR+ target network architecture and typical service flows and initiated multiple international and national standards projects.

Together with Huawei and other partners, China Mobile has developed innovative New Calling services, such as "fun" calling (video calls where users appear as avatars, for example), visualized voice calling, real-time translation, and speech-to-text conversion.

At present, China Mobile has beta-tested these services in multiple provinces in China and commenced the construction of a nationwide New Calling network.



FAISALABAD: Vendors are selling unstitched clothes at Weekly Friday Market in Rail Bazaar at City.

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

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping told Egypt's prime minister on Thursday that their countries should work together to bring "more stability" to the Middle East, as the Israeli aggression on Gaza casts a shadow over the region.

China has repeatedly backed a vague two-state proposal on the decades-long deadlock, but it has historically been sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

Xi met Egypt's Mostafa Madbouli in Beijing on Thursday, repeating China's support for a "two-state solution... to realise the peaceful coexistence of Palestine and Israel", according to multiple state media outlets.

"China is willing to enhance cooperation with Egypt... and inject more certainty and stability into the region and the world," Xi was reported as saying.

Beijing was also willing to work with Cairo to "jointly safeguard international fairness and justice as well as the common interests of developing countries", he said.

China "appreciates the important role played by Egypt in de-escalating the situation and supports Egypt's efforts to open humanitarian corridors", Xi

told Madbouli.

"It is crucial to prevent the stultification from expanding or even losing control and causing a serious humanitarian crisis," Xi said. "The top priority is to cease fire and stop war at an early date," he added.

And after the United States vetoed a UN Security Council resolution on Wednesday calling for a "humanitarian pause", Beijing reiterated those calls for a cessation of violence.

"China is deeply disappointed in the United States' obstruction of the Security Council's adoption of a draft resolution on the Palestinian issue."



Palestinians gather around residential buildings destroyed in Israeli strikes in Zahra City, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in southern Gaza City.

China and Russia find common cause in Israel-Hamas crisis

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: With anger building across the Middle East over Israel's strikes in Gaza, China and Russia are finding common cause with countries across the region in support of the Palestinians.

For Moscow and Beijing, Israel's bombardment of Gaza following the Hamas attacks that killed 1,400 Israelis presents an opportunity to burnish their credentials as the champions of the developing world, in contrast with the United States, which has put its support squarely behind ally Israel.

China has consistently called for restraint and a ceasefire but has also sharpened its criticism of Israel. "Israel's actions have gone beyond the scope of self-defense," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said this week, calling on it to stop its "collective punishment" of Gaza residents, Chinese state media reported.

Russia has expressed sympathy for the Palestinians while blaming the US. "I think that many people will agree with me that this is a vivid example of the failure of United States policy in the Middle East," Russian President Vladimir Putin said this week.

Both Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping have sought to deepen ties to the global south, seeing economic opportunities and possibly a way to counterbalance the diplomatic influence of the US and its allies.

That was on display this week as China hosted a summit for Xi's signature Belt and Road Initiative, which has lent hundreds of billions of dollars for infrastructure projects across the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Asia.

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

Monitoring Desk
OTTAWA: Canada on Friday said it was temporarily suspending in-person operations at consulates in several Indian cities and warned of visa processing delays amid a diplomatic dispute over the murder of a Sikh separatist leader in British Columbia.

The announcements affecting consulates in Bengaluru, Chandigarh, and Mumbai came hours after Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said Canada has withdrawn 41 diplomats from India. Separately, Indian government sources said New Delhi is not planning to impose any measures to curb imports or investments from Canada despite the dispute.

New Delhi last month asked Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited what he said was credible evidence of a potential link between Indian agents and the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.



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

Russian FM thanks North Korea for support over Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has met North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Russia's foreign ministry said on Thursday, as the two countries forge closer ties in the face of what they see as a hostile and aggressive US-led Western camp.

Russian state-run TASS news agency reported that Lavrov's meeting with Kim had lasted over an hour but the ministry did not provide further details.

Lavrov, who arrived in Pyongyang on Wednesday, earlier thanked North Korea for backing Russia's military actions in Ukraine and pledged Moscow's "complete support and solidarity" for Kim, Russia's foreign ministry said.

Lavrov's visit is seen as setting the stage for a visit by President Vladimir Putin, who has stepped up cooperation with politically isolated North Korea.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the North on Wednesday, Lavrov said Moscow strongly valued Pyongyang's "unwavering and principled support" for Russia in the Ukraine war, which it calls a "special military operation".

"Likewise the Russian Federation extends its complete support and solidarity with the aspirations of the DPRK," Lavrov said, according to the transcript of the speech released on his ministry's website. DPRK are the initials of the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

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

Monitoring Desk
RAMALLAH: The Israeli forces on Thursday extended atrocities to the occupied West Bank, killing 12 Palestinians and pounded a military base in Syria as calls for humanitarian aid swelled for the helpless people of Gaza Strip.

At least 78 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops or settlers in the West Bank since the Hamas raid on Oct 7, the Palestinian health ministry said, as the death toll in Gaza soared to 3,785.

The deaths occurred during an Israeli attack on Nur Shams refugee camp, the Palestinian Authority (PA) said.

The Wafa news agency reported that seven of the dead had been transported to hospital, while five others were in a mosque inside the camp.

The authority said it had been informed of "other martyrs who could not be transferred by ambulance to hospital".

In separate clashes earlier in the day, Israeli forces shot dead a 17-year-old in Dheisheh refugee camp, near Bethlehem, and a 32-year-old in Budrus, to the west of Ramallah.

Israel has occupied the West Bank since the 1967 war and its forces regularly carry out incursions into Palestinian towns and cities.

Scholz says that Germany needs to expand deportations of rejected asylum-seekers

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Chancellor Olaf Scholz says Germany needs to start deporting "on a large scale" migrants who don't have the right to stay in the country, adding to increasingly tough talk on migration since his coalition performed badly in two state elections earlier this month.

Scholz's comments in an interview with weekly Der Spiegel were published Friday, as a leading German opposition figure called for the center-left chancellor to dump his quarrelsome coalition partners and instead form a government with conservatives to deal with migration issues.

Scholz has signaled an increased desire to take personal charge of migration over the past two weeks, following a pair of regional elections in which voters punished his three-party coalition, which has squabbled publicly on a wide range of subjects. Mainstream conservatives won both votes and the far-right Alternative for Germany made significant gains.

Last week, Scholz announced legislation to ease deportations of unsuccessful asylum-seekers. He met with opposition leader Friedrich Merz and two leading state governors to discuss ways of tackling migration — a subject on which his opponents have assailed the government relentlessly.

On Monday, the government notified the European Commission of temporary border controls at the Polish, Czech and Swiss frontiers.

US official resigns over military aid to Israel

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Opposition to Israeli attacks in Gaza is growing in the United States where a State Department official has resigned over additional US military aid to Israel and a group of progressive lawmakers have introduced a "ceasefire now" resolution in Congress.

Also, the US media reported on Thursday that Capitol police have arrested hundreds of Jewish peace activists for holding anti-war protests inside the Capitol building.

On Wednesday evening, Josh Paul, who was director of congressional and public affairs at the department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, posted his resignation letter online in a rare act of public dissent against the Biden administration's pro-Israeli policies.

"Let me be clear: Hamas' attack on Israel was not just a monstrosity; it was a monstrosity of monstrosities," Paul wrote. "But I believe to the core of my soul that the response Israel is taking, and with it the American support both for that response, and for the status quo of the occupation, will only lead to more and deeper suffering for both the Israeli and the Palestinian people."

Japan's foreign minister to attend Cairo meet

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa said she would visit Egypt to attend an international conference on Saturday that will discuss ways of tackling humanitarian and safety issues stemming from the Israel-Hamas conflict.

"I plan to visit Egypt to take part in the Cairo Peace Summit, which will be hosted by the Egyptian government to discuss the situation surrounding Israel and Palestine," Kamikawa told a regular press conference on Friday.

"I intend to contribute to debate aimed at improving humanitarian conditions in Gaza."

Ukrainian parliament gives initial approval for 2024 budget increasing army funding

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's parliament gave initial approval on Thursday for the 2024 budget, which will increase funding for the army and national defence because of the war with Russia.

Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko said the government's priorities next year included accumulating funds for defence and security, and securing social payments for the population "to bring Ukraine's victory closer." The budget law, which was approved in its first reading, sets budget revenues at 1.7 trillion hryvnias (\$46.4 billion), and spending is targeted at 3.3 trillion hryvnias, lawmaker Yaroslav Zhelezniak said on the Telegram messaging app.

The budget deficit is expected to be about 1.6 trillion hryvnias, he said.

Officials have said that about half the state budget is planned to go to the defence sector next year. Marchenko told Reuters last week that donor "tiredness" was growing as the war with Russia dragged on but that he would continue working with international partners to raise the necessary funds to close the budget gap.

Ukraine has attracted nearly \$34 billion in Western financial aid so far this year after receiving \$31 billion in 2022.

Last year, the economy shrank by about one-third as millions of people fled the war, towns and cities were bombed, logistics routes and supply chains were disrupted, and the power sector and critical infrastructure were damaged by air strikes. But nearly 20 months after Russia's full-scale invasion, Kyiv says businesses in Ukraine have adapted to the new reality and is cautiously optimistic about the economic prospects for the rest of this year and 2024.

Gulf and Asian nations end summit with call for cease-fire

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Arab Gulf and southeast Asian nations are calling for a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war and the entry of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

The final statement of a summit hosted by Saudi Arabia on Friday also condemns "all attacks against civilians." The joint summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations brought together 16 member states. Saudi Arabia, which has launched a number of diplomatic initiatives across the Middle East over the past year, has called for a halt to the fighting. Before the outbreak of the war, the kingdom had been in talks with the United States on normalizing relations with Israel in exchange for a U.S. defense pact.



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

Canadian PM says India's actions making life hard for millions of people

Monitoring Desk
OTTAWA: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Friday the Indian government's crackdown on Canadian diplomats was making normal life difficult for millions of people in both countries.

Trudeau spoke a day after Canada said it had withdrawn 41 diplomats following an Indian threat to unilaterally revoke their status. New Delhi is angry that Trudeau last month suggested Indian agents might have been involved in the June murder of a Sikh separatist leader in Canada.

"The Indian government is making it unbelievably difficult for life as usual to continue for millions of people in India and in Canada. And they're doing it by contravening a very basic principle of diplomacy," Trudeau said.

"It's something that has me very concerned for the well-being and happiness of millions of Canadians who trace their origins to the Indian subcontinent."

Italy PM Meloni leaves partner after TV comments

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on Friday she had separated from her television journalist partner Andrea Giambro, who has drawn criticism in recent weeks for sexist comments.

Meloni told reporters last month she should not be judged over Giambro's remarks and in future would not answer questions about his behaviour.

Disinformation surge threatens to inflame passions

Monitoring Desk
AMSTERDAM: As the situation in Gaza worsens, regulators and analysts say a wave of online disinformation risks further inflaming passions in an electronic fog of war. An Israeli strike at a Gaza hospital that killed hundreds of Palestinians on Tuesday is the latest focus of the surge of activity as supporters of both sides bolster their own side's narrative and cast doubts on the other's. Reuters fact-checking unit has identified numerous cases of social media posts using fake images and information, and others in which confusion rather than deliberate disinformation appears to have heightened tensions.

An X account under the name Farida Khan claiming to be an Al Jazeera journalist in Gaza posted a message saying they had a video of a "Hamas missile landing in the hospital" in Tuesday's incident. Al Jazeera subsequently alerted social media users that the account had no ties to the news service. Al Jazeera said it does not employ a person with the name Farida Khan. The account was later removed. A video of Russian President Vladimir Putin speaking about Ukraine last year was shared this month with fabricated subtitles warning the US not to interfere in the conflict.

A 2015 video of the lynching of a 16-year-old girl in Guatemala has been misrepresented online as showing a young Israeli woman being burnt by a "Palestinian mob".

Israel recalls diplomats from Turkey

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Israel has recalled its diplomats from Turkey as a security precaution, in a source close to the dossier said, meanwhile US and advised citizens to leave Lebanon on Thursday.

"It's a temporary measure, which should be for the short term," said the source, who refused to be quoted by name. Israel's National Security Council late on Tuesday called on all Israelis in Turkey to leave "as soon as possible".

Meanwhile, the US and British embassies in Beirut advised citizens to leave Lebanon while flights "remain available". "We recommend that US citizens in Lebanon make appropriate arrangements to leave the country."

Egypt peace summit may struggle to foster unity on Gaza conflict

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Egypt holds a summit on the Gaza crisis on Saturday amid growing fears of a wider Middle East war but the absence of a top official from Israel's main ally the U.S. and some other leaders has dampened expectations for what it can achieve.

The hastily-convened Cairo Peace Summit as the conflict still rages will bring together several Arab and European heads of state and government, alongside foreign ministers.

They will meet as Israel reads a ground assault on Gaza following the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas that killed 1,400 people. More than 4,100 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's counteroffensive, amid a growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

There was no word as of 1300 GMT on who would represent the U.S., or whether major powers China and Russia would attend.

Egypt has said little about the aims of the gathering, beyond an Oct. 15 statement by the Egyptian presidency that the summit would cover recent developments involving the crisis in Gaza and the future of the Palestinian issue.

"There is no precise overview of the participants so far. Much is still in flux," said one European source.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will not attend, while there has been no official word on whether French President Emmanuel Macron will go.

Arab countries have voiced anger at Israel's unprecedented bombardment and siege of Gaza, home to 2.3 million people.

European countries have struggled to settle on a united approach to the crisis, beyond condemning Hamas's attack, after days of confusion and mixed messaging.

Egypt has been trying to channel humanitarian relief to Gaza through the Rafah crossing, the one access point not controlled by Israel, but aid has piled up on the Egyptian side.

Protesters in several countries demonstrate over Israeli airstrikes

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Thousands of people in Muslim countries and beyond held demonstrations Friday in solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, calling for an end to Israel's blockade and airstrikes in the wake of a brutal incursion into southern Israel by fighters from the Hamas militant group that rules Gaza.

Demonstrators gathered in Iraq at the country's border crossing with Jordan; in locations across Egypt; in Turkey's capital Ankara and its most populous city of Istanbul; and in Indonesia, Malaysia and South Korea.

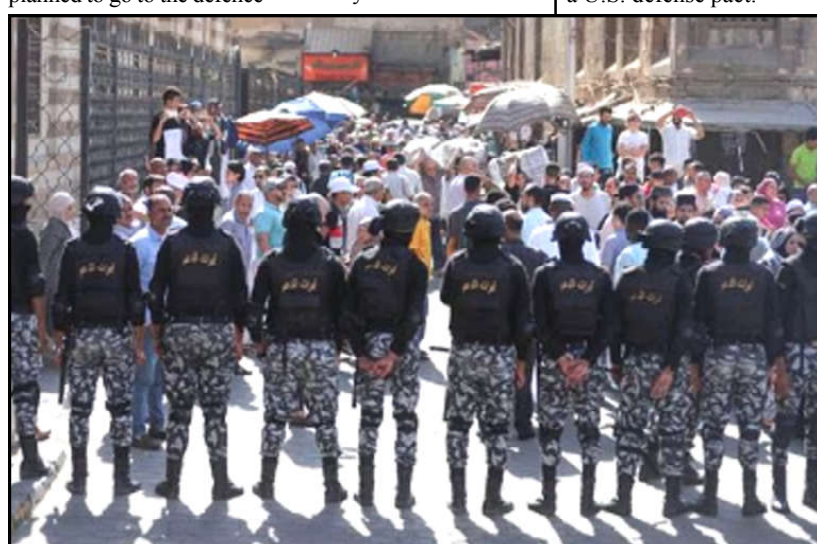
A Tuesday night explosion at a Gaza City hospital tending to wounded Palestinians and residents seeking shelter was a prominent theme in some of the demonstrations. The cause of the blast at al-Ahli Hospital has not been determined.

U.S. assessments said the explosion was not caused by an Israeli airstrike, as the Hamas-run Health Ministry in Gaza initially reported. Israel has presented video, audio and other evidence it says proves the blast was caused by a rocket misfired by Palestinian militants, who denied responsibility.

The AP has not independently verified any of the claims or evidence released by the parties.

The Israeli siege of the Palestinian territory and airstrikes on it were the focus earlier this week of demonstrations at Egyptian universities, inside a congressional office building in Washington, outside the Israeli Embassy in Bogota and near the U.S. Embassy in Beirut.

Nearly two weeks after the Hamas attack in Israel, such protests continued as Israel prepared for an expected ground invasion of Gaza. The Gaza Health Ministry has said more than 4,000 people have been killed and over 13,000 have been wounded in Gaza since the war began, most of them women, children and older adults. More than 1,000 people were believed buried under rubble, authorities said. More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed, mostly civilians slain during Hamas' deadly incursion. Roughly 200 others were abducted.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

people ties.

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

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



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

Pakistan stands with Palestinians as ever before: Raja Pervez

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that genocide, massacre and ethnic cleansing of Palestinian men, women, children and elderly in Gaza and adjoining areas is condemnable and reprehensible.

He also underscored that the barbaric and inhumane atrocities committed by Israel are in stark contradiction to settled international laws and tantamount to war crimes.

Further, he emphasized, "The world must not be a silent spectator in this darkest hour of human history. It must come forward immediately and play its due role not only in stopping the mayhem and barbarity of Zionist forces but in resolution of the Palestinian issue in accordance with the UN Security Council and OIC Resolutions."

He expressed these

views during his visit to the Embassy of Palestine in Islamabad on Friday.

During his meeting with the Palestinian Emissary to Pakistan Mr. Ahmed Jawad Rabei, the Speaker pledged unwavering support and reiterated Pakistani people, its Parliament and its government have always supported the Palestinian cause and each Pakistani would continue to support Palestine. He said that every Pakistani has the same sentiments for Palestinian people and is ready to sacrifice everything for the cause of Palestine.

While expressing his support to stand with people of Palestinians, he said that stopping aid to Gaza is a violation of basic human rights. The Speaker voiced his disapproval of the "double standards" exhibited by champions of Human Rights regarding Israeli aggression.

I have never stolen nor bowed down to anyone: Parvez Khattak

PESHAWAR (Online): President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians Parvez Khattak said that I have never stolen nor have I bowed down to anyone.

He said people have been fooled for 75 years. If the politicians were sincere, the country would not have been in this situation, they are bad for the country, they have destroyed the country.

Speaking at the PTIP Workers' Convention in

Peshawar, Parvez Khattak said that we ran a campaign in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to make life easier for the common man.

He said that PTI did not fulfill the promises made to the people. Those who had money from PTI came forward. Chairman PTIP said that we have gathered like-minded people in the province and have come out against the thieves, Bangladesh, Korea, Malaysia even Afghanistan, even better than us.



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

BFA fines 18 shops on substandard of items in Balochistan

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

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

Apart from this, action was taken against 4 spice shops, 2 hotels and 1 bakery for violation of hygiene rules in the Dera Murad Jamali area of Nasirabad district.

The spokesman said that action was taken against the spice shops for various reasons including inadequate cleaning arrangements, and keeping open spices outside the shops in dusty conditions.

in the baking premises, rusty machines and baking trays, improper arrangements for preventing insects and use of unhealthy colours in the preparation of sweets by a team of BFA in operation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jan Achakzai visits BA; meets Secretary

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai visited the Balochistan Assembly here on Friday.

During the visit, the Minister Information met the Secretary of Assembly, Tahir Shah Kakar.

Jan Achakzai visited different sections of the provincial assembly. On the occasion, there was also discussion on the open door programme of assembly.

Nawaz's return will create hope for improvements: Shah

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

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

A special train, which departed from Karachi to transport party workers to receive Nawaz Sharif, reached Hyderabad, where PML-N supporters accorded a warm welcome.

According to the party sources workers from Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Tharparkar, Mirpurkhas, Badin, Sajawal and other areas departed for Lahore by train and numerous women workers were also present at the occasion.



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

Solangi dispels notion of any delay in election

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

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

The minister was talking to private television channels in two separate

programmes on current affairs.

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

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

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

bound by the Constitution and law.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bharucha and other staff.

Mrs. Bharucha briefed the visiting Chief Minister about the overall working of SOS Children Village and the facilities available to the children staying in the village. The Chief Minister appreciated the SOS Children Village for the social services being performed for the orphaned children there. He said that the services being rendered by the institution are commendable. He also termed SOS Village as pride of the society and adding assured that every possible cooperation would be extended to the institution by the provincial government.

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

URUMQI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar offered Friday prayer at the historic Hang Yang Grand Bazar Mosque of Urumqi.

The prime minister prayed for the progress and prosperity of the country as well as the Muslim Ummah.

He specially prayed for the oppressed people of Gaza and for their deliverance from suffering.

He was accompanied by his delegation members including Jalil Abbas Jilani, Sarfaraz Bugti and others.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki in a group photo with children and staff of SOS Children Village

Poverty increases in Pakistan during the last financial year: report

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

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

The report stated that high inflation coupled with worsening wage and employment situation has severely affected purchasing power, due to which poverty is estimated to increase. Inflation rate is expected to be 26.5 percent during fiscal year 2024, which is

likely to be 17 percent in FY 2025 after a reduction.

The report noted that higher petroleum levies and energy tariff adjustments would maintain domestic energy price pressures, and increase social and economic insecurity.

Despite the signing of a \$3 billion short-term loan agreement with the IMF this year, foreign exchange reserves are expected to remain less than one month's worth of imports during the next fiscal year, necessitating continued controls on imports and Economic recovery will be difficult. Real gross national product (GDP) growth rate is expected to be 1.7 percent during fiscal year 2024.

Along with this, confidence may also weaken due to tight fiscal and monetary policy, inflation and uncertainty regarding upcoming elections. Poverty is expected to decrease to 37.2 percent during the fiscal year 2024 with a recovery in the growth rate, the report said.

NOC issued to special plane of Nawaz Sharif

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

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

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

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

The plane will leave Islamabad for Lahore at 2:30 p.m and will reach Lahore at 3:30 p.m

Policeman martyred in exchange of fire with drug dealer

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

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

However, he opened fire, seriously injuring Constable Kashif.

During the raid, the suspect opened fire on the police team, resulting in the tragic martyrdom of the policeman.

The police have initiated a large-scale operation in the area to apprehend the suspect.

President for enhanced collaboration of Pakistani varsities with Rhodes Trust

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

The president, in a meeting with a delegation of Rhodes Trust, headed by former Senate Chairman Waseem Sajjad and CEO of Rhodes Trust of UK, Elizabeth Kiss, also urged the Pakistani universities to strengthen their linkages with world-famous institutions, particularly the University of Oxford.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Pakistan calls for addressing terrorism's root causes

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

Ajmal, a first secretary at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, said that in the digital revolution, terrorist groups are able to recruit, organize and incite terrorism by using the internet as a command-and-control cen-

tre with technical tools like cryptocurrencies to transfer funds, and the dark web as a medium for execution of terrorism globally.

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

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

Cases of election in 90 days, trial of civilians in military court fixed for hearing in SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Most important cases of election in 90 days and trial of civilians in military courts have been fixed for hearing in Supreme Court (SC).

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa had told a day before during hearing of a case about fixation of these two important cases for hearing.

Election in 90 days case will be heard by a 3-member bench of SC presided over by CJP Qazi Faez Isa

on October 23.

SC Bar, PTI and others have filed petitions in election in 90 days case.

Under the directives of CJP Qazi Faez Isa the case of trial of civilians in military courts has also been fixed for hearing.

A five members larger bench of SC presided over by Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan will hear the case on October 23.

The court has issued notice to the respondents. The previous hearing of the case was held on August 3.



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

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

Independent Report

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

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

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

Khan Mandokhail, Jamal Shah Kakar, Chaudhary Naeem Karim and some other provincial leaders had already left Quetta for Lahore to welcome the party central leader.

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