

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

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Lauds role of armed forces in fighting terrorism COAS urges youth to stay aware regarding hostile propaganda against state institutions

Vows to ensure safety, security of every Pakistani at any cost

RAWALPINDI (APP): The participants of National Security Workshop-25 visited General Headquarters (GHQ) on Thursday.

The participants were briefed about regional and internal security dynamics and the national security environment, said an Inter Services Public Relations press release.

Later, the participants had an interactive session with General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff (COAS).

While addressing the participants, the COAS said, "Armed Forces of Pakistan and its security and intelligence setups have fought the menace of terrorism in an exemplary manner despite sustained and varied support of inimical forces. Success will be ours Insha Allah with the

continued support of the people of Pakistan."

The COAS emphasized that intelligentsia and civil society had greater responsibility to ensure that our people, especially youth stay aware and steadfast against hostile propaganda onslaught being launched through soft offensive against the state institutions of Pakistan.

The forum was also apprised about a host of measures being taken to curb activities of illegal spectrum, including smuggling, power theft, narcotics prevalence, border control measures, and repatriation of illegal foreigners from Pakistan.

On the subject of repatriation and deportation of illegal foreigners, the COAS said, "Safety and security of each Pakistani is of para-

mount importance which cannot be allowed to be compromised at any cost."

He also highlighted the economic positivity generated by multiple proactive steps, especially Special Facilitation Investment Council (SIFC).

"Pakistan Army is fully engaged in enabling national and provincial responses in different domains in step with other institutions of the state for the collective good of the people of Pakistan. We are a resilient nation that has endured the tests of time on its path to achieving peace and stability," the Army Chief added. National Security Workshop is an annual event at the National Defence University, participated by representatives from all segments of the society.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir interacting with participants of National Security Workshop-25 at General Headquarters (GHQ)

BRI to give huge leap to Pakistan's economy: PM

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar says Belt and Road Initiative, being a flagship component of the CPEC, will give the much-needed huge leap to the Pakistani economy.

In an interview with a Chinese media network, he said the CPEC is a win-win for both countries.

The Prime Minister said the project offers immense opportunities to Pakistan to develop our infrastructure and energy sector, our ports especially the Gwadar port which is being connected with the rest of the country.

He said we look forward to multiple north-south rail and road networks.

He said as we enter the

second phase of this project, the connectivity it offers has brought the Chinese and Pakistani societies more close than before. To a question about his visit to Urumqi, Anwar ul Haq Kakar said the area will be linked with Pakistan's northern region of Gilgit Baltistan through roads network thus reviving the old silk route.

He said Urumqi would be gateway for Pakistan with mainland China, and Pakistan anticipates a lot of trade and economic activity through this project. He said it will also usher in a new wave of tourism in the region as there are lot of historic and civilizational sites to be witnessed on the route.

Pakistan Navy is well prepared to meet any internal, external challenges: CNS

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, called on Minister for Defence, Lt Gen Anwar Ali Hyder (Retd) at Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi Thursday. Defence Minister felicitated the CNS on assuming the charge of the Chief of the Naval Staff.



During meeting professional matters of mutual interest and Pakistan Navy's role in regional maritime security in the Indian Ocean region came under discussion.

Defence Minister shared government's resolve to strengthen and enhance the capability of its Armed Forces, so as to affectively cope with the prevailing challenges and ensure fool proof defence of the national frontiers.

The Minister expressed that under the able Command of Admiral Naveed Ashraf, Pakistan Navy would emerge as a superior force to meet current and future challenge.

PTI leaders meet Maulana Fazl, discuss 'political situation'

PESHAWAR (NNI): A delegation of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, headed by Asad Qaiser, called on Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) President Maulana Fazlur Rehman and discussed the country's overall 'political situation'.

The delegation of PTI leaders - which included bigwigs Asad Qaiser, Ali Mohammad Khan, Junaid Akbar and Barrister Saif - condoled the Maulana Maulana Fazlur Rehman's mother-in-law.

During the meeting, sources said that PTI leaders also engaged in discussions about the political situation in the country with the JUI-F chief.

Sources further claimed

that the delegation also lauded the Maulana Fazl's 'reconciliation' narrative among political parties. He stressed the need for 'unity' among all stakeholders to pull the country out of crisis.

The JUI-F chief also stressed for 'politeness' in political differences among parties. Meanwhile, the politicians also discussed Maulana Fazlur Rehman's meeting with former federal minister Muhammad Ali Durrani, which occurred on October 23.

In a meeting that lasted for almost two hours in Islamabad, Maulana Fazl agreed to 'reconciliation' narrative, which Ali Durrani presented to major political parties.

ECP denies vote postponing possibility

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has emphatically denied any potential delay in the election, emphasizing that the Commission has already stated its position on this issue.

In a statement on Thursday, an ECP spokesman clarified that the impression of election postponement had been sparked by comments made by the President dur-

ing an interview on a private channel last Wednesday, which hinted at the possibility of delaying the election.

The spokesman stated that, as per the election action plan, all the necessary preparations by the Election Commission have been concluded, and the election schedule will be revealed after the constituencies are formally published. There is no uncertainty in this regard.

No compromise on deportation of illegal immigrants after deadline: warns Interior Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior, Sarfraz Bugti on Thursday gave an unwavering message that the government would not compromise on repatriation of illegal immigrants in Pakistan after the deadline ending on October 31st.

In a stern and resolute press conference, the interior minister said that according to the repatriation plan, all provincial governments, including the government in federal capital, Gilgit Baltistan and special areas, "Holding Centers" would be established to retain all illegal immigrants.

Females, children and senior citizens would be given special care in those holding centers and the government will ensure provision of food, security and medical care for all detained in those centers, said the minister.

He said that no one would be sent to jail but to their holding centers and

those who have no documents to stay would be deported from the centers to their respective countries after necessary documentation.

The minister said that the illegal immigrants would only be allowed to take Rs. 50,000 cash per family with them however if they wished to take more money to their country, they would have to use banking channel.

The government will

take strict action against local Pakistanis who will facilitate illegal foreigners in any shape, minister warned adding that this act would be a violation of law.

He said, NADRA is collecting data of those involved in theft by making fake ID cards and stern action would be taken against those officials. The government will also confiscate such properties purchased on fake ID cards, said the minister.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti addressing a Press Conference.

76 years of Illegal occupation: Kashmiris to observe Black Day today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmiris and their supporters the world over and on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) will observe October 27 (Friday) as black day - the day when Indian forces illegally landed in Srinagar in 1947, marking a chapter of occupation, subjugation and oppression for the innocent people.

Black Day is observed every year to protest against the Indian illegal occupation and remind the world community of its commitments regarding the implementation of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions that advocate Kashmiris' right to plebiscite.

Call for the observance of Black Day and shutdown has been given by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference.

UAE Air Force Commander calls on Air Chief Marshal

ISLAMABAD (Online): A high level delegation, led by Major General Staff Pilot Ibrahim Nasser Mohamed Al-Alawi, Commander of the Air Force & Air Defence of the United Arab Emirates, called on Air Chief Marshal Ziauddin Khan at Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters, Islamabad today.

The meeting covered a wide array of matters pertaining to geo-strategic environment, regional security and the aspect of exploring new avenues to enhance bilateral defence cooperation.

On his arrival at Air Headquarters, a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented guard of honour to Major General Staff Pilot Ibrahim Nasser Mohamed Al-Alawi. He was also introduced to the Principal Staff Officers of Pakistan Air Force.

Women being deprived of rights in unconstitutional way, says CJP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa on Thursday observed that the women were being deprived of their rights in an unconstitutional and un-Islamic manner.

The CJP was heading a three-member bench which heard the case pertaining to a land dispute.

The court ordered the Revenue Department of Dera Ghazi Khan to immediately hand over possession of her share of inherited land to woman Sara Akhtar after taking it from her maternal uncle Sardar Mansoor.

The court also directed the maternal uncle to pay all the expenditure his niece had incurred on litigation.

During the course of hearing, the CJP remarked that the court

was not giving special concession to women.

The petitioner's lawyer said that the woman had sold her land in 1989 to her maternal uncle Sardar Mansoor, and reclaimed its ownership after 20 years and denied her own signature on the sale deed.

Justice Athar Minallah observed that it was the responsibility of the buyer to prove the purchase of the land. Three courts had ruled against the petitioner, he noted.

Sara Akhtar's lawyer said that his client was a minor at the time of the alleged sale of the land. Sardar Mansoor is the former chairman of district council who had transferred the land to his young children, wife, mother-in-law and brother-in-law, he added.

IHC restores Nawaz's pleas in Avenfield, Al-Azizia cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday restored the appeals of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif against his conviction in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills and Avenfield property references.

A two-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the petitions of Nawaz Sharif for restoration his appeals. Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif appeared before the

bench along with his daughter Maryam Nawaz and legal team.

During the course of proceedings, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Prosecutor General adopted the stance that the petitioner had rendered himself at the mercy of the court after surrender.

The chief justice questioned from the NAB officials that whether the Bureau wanted to arrest the petitioner.

The prosecutor replied that they did not require the custody of former prime minister.



ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif arrives to appear before Islamabad High Court.

Solangi takes part in celebrations of Pak-S Korea diplomatic ties' 40th anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Thursday attended an event hosted by the Embassy of the Republic of Korea for commemorating the completion of the 40 years of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Pakistan.

A cake cutting ceremony was also held to mark the 40th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the two countries. The ceremony was attended by important per-

sonalities including Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori and foreign diplomats.

Solangi extended congratulations to the people of Pakistan and Korea on the completion of 40 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

"Pakistan values its relationship with the Republic of Korea," he remarked on the occasion.

The minister lauded the visionary and committed leadership of South Korea that had achieved remarkable progress in economic and industrial sectors.

Railways restore long-awaited Sibi-Harnai track for traffic

QUETTA (INP): The Sabi Harnai section of Pakistan Railways (PR) has been restored after almost 17 years.

Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, Chairman and Secretary of the Railway Department, announced the news on social media on Thursday. He said that the restoration of the railway section was a major achievement and would benefit the people of the region immensely. Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Balochistan John Achakzai also congratulated the people and authorities on the restoration of the Sabi Harnai rail service.

Pakistan calls for immediate cessation of bombing by Israel, ending siege of Gaza

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan has called for immediate cessation of bombing by Israel and ending siege of Gaza.

Pakistan stance on Palestine has never change. Pakistan wants unconditional ceasefire. Kashmir issue should be resolved as per UN resolutions. Pakistan has not supplied any arms to Ukraine, this was said by Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch in weekly press briefing here Thursday.

Pakistan has hoped that the upcoming special emergency session of the UN General Assembly will play its role in bringing about an urgent and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza and condemn the plans for ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people.

Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch regretted that despite rising death toll of Palestinians and flagrant violations of international humanitarian laws, the UN Security Council failed to even call for a ceasefire.

Bilwal urges int'l community to resolve Kashmir issue

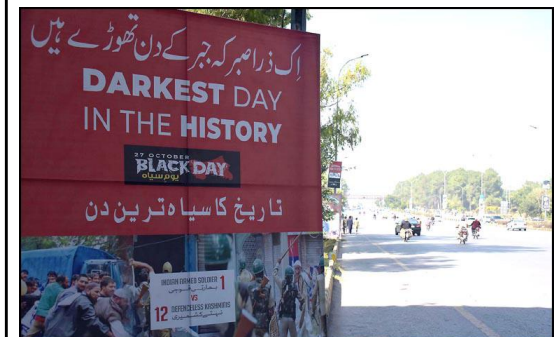
ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Thursday said that the issue of Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) was a matter of stability in the region as well as peace in the world urged the international community to realize its responsibility to resolve this South Asian conflict.

In his message on the occasion of the Kashmir Black Day, he said that the illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir by India, against the will of the people there, had completed 76 years today.

"During this long period, India has martyred thousands of Kashmiris and tortured millions to maintain its occupation, turning the paradise-like valley into the world's largest open prison," he added.

Bilawal Bhutto said that the struggle and sacrifices of Kashmiris reflected the unprecedented movement of a nation dedicated to the spirit of freedom.

He pointed out that freedom of Kashmir from illegal occupation of India was the mission of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, adding that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto continued struggle for the cause of Kashmir throughout her life, while Asif Ali Zardari had been raising the slogan of "Pakistan Khappe" as well as "Kashmir Khappe".



ISLAMABAD: A view of the banner at Faisal Avenue regarding the "Black Day of 27 October about the cruelty on oppressed Kashmiris of IOJK".

REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

DAYS REMAINING

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in f @GovtOfPakistan

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Deadline approaches

The deadline for 'illegal immigrants' to exit the country looms like the sword of Damocles.

Although Oct 31 is set as the last day for all undocumented foreigners to leave, it seems the government's energies are focused on expelling the Afghans, whom the interior minister claims number around 1.73m.

The deadline was set earlier this month, with less than a 30-day window provided to them to leave. In this time, thousands have been rounded up, a lot of them in arbitrary crackdowns.

While the 'welfare and security' of the country were declared paramount when the decision was announced, the state must not lose sight of the fact that so many of these people are not just immigrants, but refugees, who escaped unimaginable horrors to seek shelter in a country that they felt had welcomed them for decades.

Evicting them so abruptly and so heartlessly not only puts them at risk of returning to hostile conditions, it is tantamount to washing away all the generosity shown to them in years past.

It is no wonder an Afghan cricketer in a post-match presentation dedicated his Player of the Match award to "people who were sent from Pakistan to back home [sic]". His words are very telling, of how Pakistan's actions are being viewed globally, particularly by Afghans.

Instead of a broad-brush approach during crackdowns, there must be a system in place to separate wanted individuals from ordinary people. Afghans, especially those fleeing persecution, have repeatedly raised concerns about harassment by police and officials. They bemoan their limbo: they have neither been registered in Pakistan nor had their visas renewed.

This is not to say Pakistan alone is responsible for their welfare, or failing them on that count. They have not received much international attention either. It is only now that reports have surfaced that 3,000 of those who assisted coalition troops will be relocated to UK this week.

The West, quick to mount pressure on Pakistan to not turn away refugees, would do well to remember it has a moral responsibility towards these people who are reeling from the fallout of the 2021 troops withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Although Pakistan has long struggled with a growing refugee population, one is forced to question if mass deportation is the best way to overcome the challenge. There are more compassionate approaches. For starters, the deadline must be pushed ahead to allow Afghans enough time to leave with dignity. They are owed at least that kindness. Countries that promised relocation schemes must do their part and expedite the process. Most importantly, Pakistan must consider integrating refugees into our social and economic frameworks, giving them access to education and opportunities, and ensuring their rights are protected.

A Dark Day in Kashmiri History: October 27, 1947

By Abdullah Malik

In the annals of Kashmir's turbulent history, October 27, 1947, stands as a somber and fateful day. It marks the moment when India deployed its troops to seize control of Kashmir, sparking a chain of events with deep and enduring consequences.

This delves into the historical context, the ongoing struggle for freedom in Occupied Kashmir, the evolving landscape, and the intricate international dynamics that envelop this protracted conflict. The roots of the Kashmir conflict stretch back to the period leading up to India's independence in August 1947. During this pivotal time, the Maharaja of Kashmir entered into an agreement with the Government of Pakistan, pledging that the same arrangements existing under British rule would continue with Pakistan. Regrettably, these promises were broken, setting the stage for enduring disputes.

The pursuit of Kashmiri freedom has endured for over seven decades. Despite facing decades of Indian oppression, the resilient people of Kashmir have never relinquished their aspiration for self-determination. However, as time has passed, the situation has grown increasingly intricate.

The year 2019 marked a turning point when India unilaterally altered the constitutional status of the disputed region to fortify its illegal occupation of the valley. Following this move, India issued 5.41 lakh domicile certificates, primarily to Hindus, raising concerns about demographic shifts in the region. The human rights situation in Kashmir remains dire. The presence of 900,000 Indian soldiers in the region since 1991 has led to widespread violence and repression. Recent estimates reveal a stark reality: 96,000 Kashmiris have fallen victim to extrajudicial killings, 162,000 individuals have been unlawfully detained, over 25,000 have been wounded by pellet guns, and thousands of women have been widowed, leaving children orphaned.

Indian government's strategy includes stifling information and communication. Since 2017, major social media platforms have banned content related to the Kashmiri freedom movement. India is a global leader in internet shutdowns, leading to significant hardships for the local population. The Kashmir conflict often receives limited international attention due to several factors. Geopolitical tensions between major powers, especially the United States and China, play a pivotal role. The U.S. views India as a crucial ally in countering China's ascent, resulting in diplomatic and political support for India. In the complex landscape of international relations, interests often take precedence. The Western world regards India as both an economic market and a strategic partner in countering China's growing influence.

This selective approach shapes responses to issues involving India, even when they pertain to human rights. In conclusion, the quest for Kashmiri freedom is a protracted narrative marked by hardships, sacrifices, and unwavering resolve. While October 27, 1947, stands as a dark and enduring day in Kashmiri history, the hope for a brighter future endures. This hope is nurtured by the unyielding determination of the Kashmiri people in their ongoing struggle for self-determination and peace. As the world grapples with shifting power dynamics, the fate of Kashmir continues to hang in the balance, transcending borders and resonating with all who champion justice and human rights. The enduring struggle for Kashmiri freedom serves as a stark reminder of the enduring yearning for self-determination and justice in an ever-evolving global landscape.

Kashmir Black Day: The Ongoing Struggle for Peace and Justice

By M. Azlan Khan

On the 27th of October each year, Pakistan observes "Kashmir Black Day," to commemorate the day when India first illegally occupied the Kashmir, initiating the strife that has been hanging fire for more than seven decades. This annual observance serves as a poignant reminder of the protracted dispute over Kashmir, a region whose complex history has been marred by conflict and the suffering of its people, a region that has been at the heart of a decades-long dispute between India and Pakistan. Beyond the geopolitical complexities, at its core, the Kashmir issue is about the rights and aspirations of the people who have endured immense hardships for decades.

The Kashmir conflict started back in 1947 when the state of Jammu and Kashmir, led by Maharaj Hari Singh, was

unilaterally revoked Article 370 which gave Kashmir its special status. This curfew was implemented throughout the Indian-occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir with the intention of averting unrest, violence, and protests. The Kashmir issue has not only the potential to destabilize relations between Pakistan and India, but if it remains unresolved, this conflict threatens South-Asian regional peace in the long term, affecting the larger geopolitical landscape. It is a complicated issue that needs diplomatic attention and international cooperation. The world community has repeatedly urged Pakistan and India to reach a peaceful settlement via conversation and diplomacy. The United Nations, in particular, has approved resolutions calling for a plebiscite on Kashmir's

future status under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 47, adopted on April 21st 1948. This was the first of many similar resolutions which followed over the course of time. Pakistan has continuously backed the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination. Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar raised the issue on multiple occasions. In his address to the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Prime Minister Kakar reiterated Pakistan's unshakeable stance on Kashmir. He emphasized that India is entirely to be blamed for human rights violations in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. In this quest Pakistan is dynamically analyzing all possible channels which leads to the peaceful resolution of this conflict. Kashmir is more than

just a piece of territory; it is home to millions of people who have yearned for peace, security, and the ability to shape their own fate for decades. Their voices, often unheard are an important part of the Kashmir story. People have been forced to bear the consequences of decisions made by forces beyond their control. Kashmir Black Day is not just a symbolic observance; it is a cry for recognition and compassion. It serves to express solidarity with the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir, acknowledging their suffering and their aspirations. At its core, it is a call for justice, peace, and the right to self-determination, principles enshrined in several United Nations resolutions. In conclusion, a long-term solution to the Kashmir dispute is critical for the region's peace and stability. It is critical not just for the individu-

als directly affected, but also for the whole region and the worldwide community. Diplomacy, dialogue, and commitment must take precedence over conflict in order to chart a course ahead. The interests and ambitions of the Kashmiri people should be central to any resolution. Their voices must be heard, their rights must be upheld, and their safety must be guaranteed. The only way to achieve long-term peace is to pass a resolution that genuinely reflect their will. As the world watches, and the international community plays a vital role in fostering dialogue and understanding, the hope remains that a compassionate, equitable, and lasting resolution can be found, one that respects the rights and aspirations of the people who have endured so much in Kashmir.

Commerce News

Dr. Umar Saif says Govt. taking measures to facilitates IT industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for IT & Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif Thursday said that the government was taking various steps to provide all possible facilities to the Information Technology and Telecom industry.

"No doubt about the potential in Pakistan's IT sector, the industry is playing a significant role in the stability of the country's economy, the government is taking steps to provide all possible facilities to the IT industry," he said, while addressing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony for strategic partnership between HBL and Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA).

PTCL transforms its optical ultra long-haul network

ISLAMABAD: PTCL Group, a leading telecommunications service provider in Pakistan, has announced its collaboration with Nokia to transform its nationwide optical ultra-long-haul network to deliver an astounding 15 Terabits per second (15T) capacity.



Moreover, Group Chief Technology & Information Officer of PTCL & Ufone 4G Jafar Khalid and Senior Vice President of Network Infrastructure, Nokia MEA Roque Lozano jointly announced further strengthening of the two companies' long-term strategic collaboration at a grand handshake ceremony during GITEX Technology Week 2023 in Dubai. During previous years, PTCL Group had deployed Nokia's cutting-edge CD-F (Colorless, Directionless, Flex-grid) technology on its network to efficiently manage nationwide transport traffic, followed by successful demonstration of 1 Tera per lambda in its Metro network. With the emergence of more bandwidth-hungry applications in recent years, PTCL Group is now preparing to introduce Pakistan's first commercial deployment of 400G per lambda on its ultra-long-haul network.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatisation Fawad Hasan Fawad and Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali jointly chaired a meeting with representatives of IFC/World Bank regarding restructuring of DISCOs.

Beijing assists Pakistan in enhancing exports to China

BEIJING (APP): Minister last week, Beijing Review reported on Thursday.

The Minister of Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Pakistan's behalf with the Chinese Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao during his recent visit to China. Under the MoU, China will assist Pakistan in enhancing its exports to China.

The MoU will go a long way in increasing Pakistan's exports to China and will contribute to job creation, in addition to balancing bilateral trade, said the Commerce Minister who attended the Belt and Road Forum along with the Caretaker Prime

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Senate Committee directs MoI&P to present plans for future of PSM

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Industries and Production was convened at the Parliament House in Islamabad, with Senator Khalida Ateeb presiding as the Chair. The committee members expressed displeasure about the absence of the Minister for Industries and Production in the committee and urged the officials to ensure the minister's presence, as it would help clarify the way forward. During the session, the Senate Committee discussed the current status of the privatization of Pakistan Steel Mills.

Jawad Paul, Secretary of the Privatisation Division, briefed the committee members on the progress. He informed them that Pakistan Steel Mills was included in the Privatisation list on June 17, 2019. Initially, four Chinese companies expressed interest in the bidding process. However, due to the global decline in steel demand and adverse economic conditions, three of these companies withdrew their interest. Consequently, in a meeting held on October 6, 2023, the Privatisation Commission Board decided to halt the privatization process.



LAHORE: Ambassador of Poland in Pakistan Maciej Pisanski speaks during 7th Pak Water Energy Conference at Expo Center.

Kausar Abdullah vowed to utilize available resources for agric. sector development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for National Food Security and Research Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik on Thursday vowed to utilize all available means and resources to facilitate and expedite the investment projects for the benefit of the nation and its people. The minister held a meeting with key figures from the world of investment and technology, including the Chief Investment Officer of Tri-Ri Asset Management

(TRAM), Asad Ali and the Chief Executive Officer of Tingo Group, Dozy Mmoubou led by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Science and Technology Dr Najibullah, Chairman Pakistan Science Foundation Dr Shahid Mahmood Baig, said a press release. This gathering comes at a pivotal time, with Tri-Ri Asset Management committing a substantial \$100 million investment in the startup industry, while Tingo Group announced a \$10 million investment.

Rupee sheds 21 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Thursday witnessed a 21-paise depreciation against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs280.09 against the previous day's closing of Rs 279.88. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 280.25 and Rs 282.9 respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.04 to close at Rs 295.52.

Turkish furniture manufacturers delegation to visit Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq Thursday said a high level Turkish furniture manufacturers delegation would visit Pakistan to further explore the possibilities of collaboration for joint ventures and investment. Talking to a delegation of furniture manufacturers led by Araib Arain here, he said series of fruitful meetings with Turkish furniture manufacturers through zoom had been arranged to invite them to Pakistan. He said both the Turkish and Pakistani furniture industries were significant players in the global market. The chief executive said collaboration between the Turkish and Pakistani furniture industries could lead to exciting opportunities for the two countries.

Gold rates up by Rs.2,900 to Rs.211,350 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.2,900 and was sold at Rs.211,350 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs.208,450 the previous day of trading. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.2,486 to Rs.181,198 from Rs.178,712 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.166,098 from Rs.163,820, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

KP Cabinet authorizes Rs529.118b expenditure for next four months

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Finance, Ahmad Rasool Bangash here Thursday said that Rs529.118 billion expenditure has been authorized by the provincial cabinet with Chief Minister in a chair for the second four months i.e (1st November to 29th February 2024), showing 14pc increase as compared to Rs462.939 billion of the first four months (July to October 2023). Addressing a press conference here, the Minister said that the total expenditure authorized for eight months is Rs992.055 billion for the financial year 2023-24, showing 12pc increase as compared to Rs888 billion of the first eight months of the previous year's budget. He said Rs417.7 billion for the current and Rs112.118 billion for development expenditures of the second four months i.e November to February 2024 showed a 19pc increase as compared to the first four months i.e Rs350.041 billion current expenditure, was authorized. The total current expenditure authorized for eight months is Rs767.040 billion in the current fiscal as compared to Rs609.200 billion for the eight months of the last financial year. He said Rs366.298 billion current expenditure has been authorized for the second four months (Nov to Feb 2024) indicated 26pc increase compared to the first four months (July to October 2023) i.e Rs309.498 billion for settled areas.

Formation of new merged districts transformed status of tribal people: Dr. Aamir

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries, Technical Education and Merged Districts Affairs, Dr Aamir Abdullah has said that the status of tribal people has been changed from subjects to respectable citizens after merger of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He expressed these views in Pakhtunkhwa Radio's programme Pakhtunkhwa online here on Thursday. He said that "Now tribal people have become equal citizens and joined national mainstream of development". He maintained that provincial government is fully implementing the ten-year development action plan of merged districts. Dr. Amir Abdullah said that process of balanced development has been started in all 25 tehsils of the seven tribal districts. He said that new schools and hospitals are being built and security and administrative matters are being improved in merged districts. Answering to a question, the Minister urged the youth to be attracted towards modern technical education to develop the country and nation. He said that to large industrial sector, it has been decided to establish new industrial estates at the district level in which priority will be given to industries based on local raw materials.



SWAT: Regional Police Officer Malakand Muhammad Ali Khan presiding over a meeting with police officers of Malakand division.

PHA utilizing all available resources to uplift city parks

RAWALPINDI (APP): Director General (DG), Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi, Ahmad Hassan Ranjha here on Thursday said that the authority was utilizing all available resources to make the city clean and green and uplift the parks. Talking to APP he informed that the authorities concerned had been directed to complete ongoing renovation and beautification work of all the parks within the shortest possible time frame. The DG said that efforts were also being made to repair faulty lights, swings and walking tracks besides improving the security of the parks.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman cutting cake during a ceremony held in connection with 31st Republic Day of Kazakhstan.

CM inspects Ghora Chowk flyover project

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the Ghora Chowk Defence Morr flyover project early in the morning, accompanied by Information Minister Amir Mir and IG Police Dr Usman Anwar. During the inspection, the Chief Minister expressed his appreciation for the workers, shaking hands with those who had been laboring since dawn. He congratulated them and encouraged them to persist with diligence and enthusiasm. He inspected the ongoing tasks, focusing on the progress of the flyover pillars. He observed the finishing touches being applied. Expressing his satisfaction, the Chief Minister commented on the continuous efforts invested in the project, noting that work was consistently progressing from night until the early hours of the morning.

ANF seizes 46 kg drugs in six operations; arrests four accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover over 46 kg of drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 20.4 kg hashish and 3.6 kg opium were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Maweshi Mandi Rawalpindi. During the operation, an accused, a resident of Mardan, was arrested. In another operation at a courier office in Rawalpindi.

KP finalizes programme for repatriation of illegal foreign nationals

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has said that repatriation programme of foreign nationals illegally living in the province has been finalized. In a statement issued here on Thursday, the chief minister said that all illegal foreigners can go back to their homelands voluntarily till the 1st of next month; and the government will extend every possible support to them for this purpose. He said that so far, around 60,000 such foreign nationals have gone back to their homeland via Torkham boarder. Muhammad Azam Khan said that action against foreigners illegally living in the province would be initiated from 1st of November under which repatriation of such persons would be carried out from the designated points in the province. "concerned administration will arrange temporary points where food would be provided; and women, children and old people would be accorded special treatment as per the traditions of the land."

Govt employees stage protest against cut in salaries, pension

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa civil servants on Thursday staged a protest in front of Peshawar Press Club against pension reform and proposed cut in salaries. The protesters included employees of Education Department, Communication & Works Department (C&W) and the employees of various semi-government bodies.

Nation of Kazakhstan is a resilient and independent nation: Governor Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended the 31st Republic Day of Kazakhstan function as Chief Guest at Al Hamra Hall here today. Governor Punjab extended his heartfelt felicitations to the brotherly people of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the occasion of their Republic Day. Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the nation of Kazakhstan is a resilient and independent nation. He referred to last year and said that the two countries celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. He said that Kazakhstan's dynamic economic and regional power transformation is recognized throughout the region and beyond. He said that the people of the two countries share common historical, cultural and religious ties. He said that Kazakhstan is blessed with the largest oil reserves in the Central Asian region and can serve as an energy hub. "It is good to know that our bilateral relations are progressing at a positive pace," he said. In this context, the role of the Kazakh ambassador in Pakistan is commendable. He further said that due to the efforts of the Kazakh Ambassador to Pakistan, Pakistan and Kazakhstan are now operating direct flights through the operations of SCAT Airlines.



ABBOTTABAD: Members of Government Employees Coordination Council are holding protest demonstration against government policies, at Abbottabad press club.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's push for smoke-free Communities

PESHAWAR (APP): In an effort to combat the pervasive challenge of tobacco use, Blue Veins organized a two-day capacity-strengthening workshop for the members of the Provincial Alliance for Sustainable Tobacco Control. Provincial Alliance for Sustainable Tobacco Control is a robust combination of civil society organizations, NGOs, trade bodies, medical professionals, online social groups, and tobacco control advocates, established in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to lead proactive anti-tobacco measures and advocacy for sustainable tobacco control in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Focusing on strengthening the role of Alliance, according to Blue Veins the workshop served to equip the tobacco control advocates with essential skills.

International News

Putin warns Israel-Hamas conflict could spread beyond Middle East, condemns Gaza bombing

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin warned on Wednesday that Israel's conflict with Hamas could spread well beyond the Middle East and said it was wrong that innocent women, children and old people in Gaza were being punished for other people's crimes. Putin, who made the comments in a Kremlin meeting with Russian religious leaders of different faiths, said bloodshed in the region had to stop. He said he told other world leaders in phone calls that if it did not, there was a risk of a much wider conflagration. "Our task today, our main task, is to stop the bloodshed and violence," said Putin, according to a Kremlin transcript of the meeting. "Otherwise, further escalation of the crisis is fraught with grave and extremely dangerous and destructive consequences. And not only for the Middle East region. It could spill over far beyond the borders of the Middle East." In remarks that criticised the West, he said that certain unnamed forces were seeking to provoke further escalation and to draw as many other countries and peoples into the conflict as possible. The aim, he said, was to "launch a real wave of chaos and mutual hatred not only in the Middle East but also far beyond its borders. For this purpose, among other things, they are trying to play on the national and religious feelings of millions of people." Putin conveyed his condolences to the families of Israelis and citizens of other countries who were killed or wounded by Hamas in its bloody Oct. 7 attack. Moscow, he said, continued to advocate for a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli issue, something he said was the only way to reach a long-term settlement. He made it clear though that he thought Israel was wrong to keep bombing Gaza in retaliation for the slaughter and hostage-taking of Israeli citizens by Hamas. "It is also clear to us that innocent people should not be held responsible for crimes committed by others."



Slovakia's newly appointed Prime Minister Robert Fico attends the new cabinet's inauguration, at the Presidential Palace in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Turkish President slams EU on for failing to call cease-fire in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan slammed the European Union on Thursday for failing to call for a cease-fire in Gaza and accused the West of indifference toward the suffering of Muslims. "How many more children must die before the EU Commission calls for a cease-fire," he said in a televised speech. "How many more tons of bombs must fall on Gaza before the United Nations Security Council can take action?" Erdogan accused the West of failing to see the violence unfolding in Gaza "because the blood being shed is Muslim blood." In his speech, Erdogan also said Turkey has so far dispatched 10 plane loads to Egypt carrying humanitarian aid, including generators, destined for Gaza. Twenty five Turkish medical personnel have also left for Egypt, he said.

India 'exploring all legal options' after Qatari court sentences 8 Indians to death for spying

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: The Indian government on Thursday vowed to explore "all legal options" after a Qatari court handed death sentences to eight Indian employees of a Qatari company on spying charges. According to Indian media reports, the eight men are retired Indian naval officers who worked for the consulting company Al Dahra, advising the Qatari government on the acquisition of submarines. India's External Affairs Ministry said in a statement it was awaiting the detailed judgment in the case. "We are in touch with the family members and the legal team, and we are exploring all legal options," it said. "We attach high importance to this case and have been following it closely. We will continue to extend all consular and legal assistance. We will also take up the verdict with Qatari authorities."



Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki attends a meeting of the Security Council on the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas at U.N. headquarters in New York, U.S.

S.Korea, Japan, US condemn North Korea's supply of arms to Russia

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: South Korea, Japan and the United States strongly condemned the supply of arms and military equipment by North Korea to Russia and said they had confirmed "several" deliveries of such weapons, a joint statement issued on Thursday said. Russia and North Korea have denied the transfer of arms from the North for use in Russia's war against Ukraine amid reports that Washington and researchers said showed movement of vessels carrying containers likely with weapons between the two countries' ports. While it was not possible to confirm the contents of the shipments, reports said containers from the North were later seen delivered to a Russian munitions storage facility near the border with Ukraine. "The Republic of Korea, United States, and Japan strongly condemn the provision of military equipment and munitions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to the Russian Federation for use against the government and people of Ukraine," the statement said. The Democratic Republic of Korea is North Korea's official name. "Such weapons deliveries, several of which we now confirm have been completed, will significantly increase the human toll of Russia's war of aggression," the statement issued by the foreign ministers of the three countries said. North Korea is seeking military assistance from Russia to advance its own military capabilities in return for its arms support for Moscow, it said.

Qatar court hands down death penalty verdict for eight Indians

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: A Qatar court has announced the death penalty for eight Indians arrested in the country last year, the Indian government said on Thursday, adding it was "deeply shocked" by the verdict. New Delhi said in a statement that it attaches "high importance to this case" and will "take up the verdict with Qatari authorities." Local media has reported that the eight men, who worked with a private company in Qatar, were arrested for spying in August 2022, but Reuters could not independently confirm the charges. Neither the Indian government nor the Qatari authorities have made the charges against the men, who are all former Indian navy officials, public. A spokesperson for India's foreign ministry did not respond to a request seeking comment. Thursday's government statement said that it would "not be appropriate to make any further comments at this stage" due to the "confidential nature of the proceedings".

US police launch huge manhunt for shooter who killed at least 22

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A massive manhunt was under way on Thursday for a gunman who a local official said killed at least 22 people and wounded "many" more in mass shootings in the US state of Maine, the deadliest such incident this year. Police said Robert Card — seen in surveillance footage pointing a semi-automatic weapon with an extended clip as he walked into a bowling alley in the town of Lewiston — "should be considered armed and dangerous". Card is a certified firearms instructor and a member of the US Army Reserve, CNN reported, citing law enforcement sources. Lewiston city councillor Robert McCarthy told CNN that law enforcement had "confirmed 22 dead, many, many more injured", with local media reporting shootings had occurred at multiple locations. Swaths of Lewiston were locked down, with businesses urged to shutter and people ordered to shelter in place, as the scourge of horrifying gun violence once again ripped through an American community.



People arrive at a school in Khan Yunis that has been converted into a shelter for displaced families.

Moscow trains forces for 'massive' retaliatory N-strike

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia is training its forces for a "massive" nuclear strike in response to an "enemy nuclear strike", Moscow's defence minister Sergei Shoigu said on Wednesday as the country fired test ballistic missiles. According to the Russian press agency Interfax, Shoigu said they will also be practising "delivering a massive nuclear strike by strategic offensive forces in response to an enemy nuclear strike." President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday oversaw ballistic missile drills remotely, the Kremlin said, hours after Russia moved to revoke its ratification of a landmark nuclear test ban treaty. The drills came 20 months into Moscow's Ukraine offensive — which has raised some fears of nuclear war — and hours after Russia moved to revoke a key nuclear arms control treaty. "Under the leadership of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armed forces, Vladimir Putin, a training exercise was conducted with the forces and equipment of ground, sea, and air components of nuclear deterrent forces," the Kremlin said in a statement. "During the training, practical launches of ballistic and cruise missiles took place."

Israel attacks two Syrian cities, kills eight soldiers

Monitoring Desk
DAMASCUS: An Israeli attack on military positions in southwest Syria on Wednesday killed eight soldiers and wounded seven more, the Syrian state news agency (SANA) reported. Citing a military source, SANA said Israel's "aerial aggression" targeted a number of military positions near the southwestern city of Deraa. The strike also caused material damage, it reported. The attack took place at around 1:45am on Wednesday.

PM reaffirms Pak unwavering support to oppressed Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, reaffirming Pakistan's unwavering support to the oppressed Kashmiris, called for an immediate reversal of the Indian government's unilateral and illegal actions of 5th August 2019.

The prime minister, in his message in connection with the 'Kashmir Black Day' being observed on Friday, also stressed that the Indian government should stop its egregious human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), and implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

"Pakistan, as always, stands shoulder-to-shoulder with its Kashmiri brethren. It will continue to extend its full moral, diplomatic and political support to their just struggle for realization of their inalienable right to self-determination," he remarked.

"Today marks the 76th anniversary of India's occupation of the large parts of Jammu and Kash-

mir against the will of the Kashmiri people. On 27th October 1947, India landed its troops in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) for the first time. It continues to forcibly occupy this territory ever since."

He said in the last 76 years, India had tried different methods to perpetuate its illegal rule on Jammu and Kashmir. An intensified campaign to 'Indianize' Kashmir and transform Kashmiris into a disempowered community in their own land has been in full swing since August 5, 2019, he added.

"The Indian occupation forces have taken a number of steps to realize these nefarious designs, including gerrymandering of the electoral constituencies, addition of non-Kashmiris to voter rolls, issuance of domicile certificates to outsiders, and introduction of new laws on ownership of land and property." PM Kakar said the undemocratic and illegal measures were in direct contravention of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary for Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry release balloon during launching ceremony of Dyslexia Special Measures Act-2022 IMCG F-6/2.

Ahmad Irfan Aslam says Pakistan seeks int'l collaboration to combat water related issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Water Resources, Ahmad Irfan Aslam on Thursday said Pakistan was highly grateful to IAHR for extending its all-out support in various areas of national development, in particular the climate change and water sector.

During a meeting with the President of International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR), Philippe Goubesville, he said IAHR was playing an outstanding role in strengthening Pakistan's relation with the international community to mitigate flood's damage and climate related issues.

Ministry of Water Resources, Federal Joint Secretary, Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah and Chairman Federal Flood Commission, Ahmad Kamal were also present in

the meeting. The president of IAHR conveyed that the vision of his organization was to offer support to the national organizations in the field of climate change adaptation and mitigation, energy transition and carbon neutrality, water related disaster mitigation and digital transformation.

Indonesia, China, Spain, France, Chile, Brazil, and other countries were already on this platform, and this initiative would significantly contribute to support Pakistan's planning and strategies to combat water and climate related issues, he added.

Later on, the caretaker minister for water resources endorsed that irrigation departments from the provinces and Pakistan Meteorological Department would also be brought into the umbrella of IAHR for better understanding and joint collaboration.



ISLAMABAD: Members of Civil Society take part in a rally against Israeli airstrikes on Gaza, to show solidarity with the Palestinian people.

CDA, district administration continue operation against illegal Afghan refugees

ISLAMABAD (APP): In pursuance of the government's decision against the crackdown against the Afghan refugees living illegally in the federal capital, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the district administration bulldozed hundreds of illegally built homes of Afghans situated in several areas of the city.

According to an official of CDA, large contingents of Islamabad Police, Rangers and district administration looked after the operation against illegal Afghan refugees and heavy machinery was used

for the purpose. The officials said that they had issued a notice to the residents of the Afghan settlement soon after the notification issued by the government asking them to vacate their homes otherwise action would be taken against them.

In order to maintain peace in the federal capital, the operation would continue till the last eviction of the Afghan refugees as they were involved in criminal activities and had been occupying the places in the city for a long time.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing the 6th Senate Meeting of the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President asks medical universities to increase graduate numbers

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday asked the medical universities to increase graduate numbers to fulfill requirement of a large number of doctors and nurses in the country.

"To enhance accessibility to healthcare facilities for the general public, there is a need to increase the number of trained individuals in health sector," he said while presiding over 6th session of the Senate of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, Islamabad.

He also stressed for taking special measures to maintain the services of female doctors in the field of health adding that creating a friendly and harassment-free environment for women at their workplaces was very important.

The president also advised the universities to enhance their performance in research fields besides hiring the services of the experts to obtain research grants from abroad.

The session of the university's senate was attended by Senator Samina Mumtaz, Vice-Chancellor Professor Tanveer Khaliq of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University and other members of Senate.

During the session, a briefing was given on the university's performance and future development projects.

It was highlighted in the meeting that Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University had increased number of admissions in various fields, including nursing.

The briefing also highlighted that the university had trained 429 specialists in various fields within a short period.

The university has secured significant international research grants in various fields. It has also shown remarkable performance in medical research.

The meeting was informed that in future, the university planned to initiate new PhD programs and complete the construction of its first teaching block.

President Alvi appreciating the university's contributions to medical education and acknowledging its overall performance, drew attention towards the need for policies related to healthcare, emphasizing the importance of focus on

disease treatment and prevention.

He emphasized that early prevention and timely diagnosis could reduce the burden on the healthcare system.

The president said focusing on disease prevention could lead to improvement in the overall health situation of the country at a lower cost.

The meeting also discussed the successful completion of 10 years of the university's establishment and its services in the field of health.

The university's senate also granted approval for amendments in the service laws of the university's employees, which is a significant step.

The annual report of the university was also presented in the meeting.

PMA to protect medical practitioners' rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) Islamabad chapter on Thursday said that the association is committed to safeguarding the rights of medical practitioners.

President PMA Islamabad chapter Professor Dr. Akhtar Ali Bandisha said this while chairing the executive body meeting of PMA Islamabad.

General Secretary PMA Islamabad Dr. Mubashir Mushtaq Daba and other members of PMA also participated in the meeting.

It was decided that the PMA Islamabad chapter would raise voices for doctors for early address their outstanding issues by using all relevant forums. The participants of the meeting agreed that they would take all issues in an appropriate manner and in a democratic way.

The meeting asked the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) to take necessary steps for the betterment of physicians. The meeting decided to convey their worries to the Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA). It was also appealed to restore the health card scheme with further improvements.

Motorway Police holds road safety seminar to prevent accidents

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) will leave no stone unturned to prevent accidents, as evident from its recent road safety seminar in Chakri.

The event, which was held on the special instructions of DIG Motorway North Zone Muhammad Yusuf Malik, brought together owners, terminal authorities, drivers, the general public, Motorway Police officers and employees to discuss and raise awareness of traffic safety issues.

The seminar featured a multimedia presentation by Motorway Police officers on traffic rules, as well as a Q&A session in which participants tested their knowledge of the rules and won prizes for correct answers. Transporter officials also shared their views and insights on traffic safety.

Describing the 27th of October as the darkest day

Minister visits NAVTTC, reviews its ongoing projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Tourism, Wasi Shah here on Thursday visited the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) to review the ongoing project of the commission.

During the visit, Director General NAVTTC Dr. Khalid Mehmood briefed the minister about the Youth Skill Development Program (YSDP) and expressed their commitment to jointly working for the betterment of the organiza-

tion, said a news release. Wasi Shah was also briefed regarding the achievements of NAVTTC and its programmes to make the youth skilled employer.

The minister appreciated the efforts and programmes launched by the NAVTTC in empowering youth and make them able to compete in the world.

He committed in helping NAVTTC for media strategy to encourage youth to join skill development opportunities.



ISLAMABAD: Care-Taker Federal Minister for Railways Captain (Retired) Shahid Ashraf Tarar cut the cake along with Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin and others during an event on the eve of the Republic Day of the Kazakhstan at local hotel on 25 October in Federal Capital.

Kashmiri leaders call on world community to address IIOJK, Palestine issues for Global Peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): The top leadership of Kashmir has urged the international community to come forward and play a vital role in addressing the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and Palestine for the sake of durable global peace. During a news conference held on Thursday, the Kashmiri leadership pointed out that the Indian regime, led by the controversial figure Narendra Modi, was employing tactics similar to those used by Israel in the Kashmir valley to change the demographic composition from a Muslim majority to a minority in favor of the Hindu community.

Sheikh Mateen, the General Secretary of APHC-AJK, stated that the Modi government was blatantly violating numerous international human rights laws and regulations, as a substantial portion of the Kashmiri leadership was either detained in Indian jails or placed under house arrest.

Describing the 27th of October as the darkest day

in Kashmir's recent history, he emphasized that India's aggressive actions on this day in 1947 set the groundwork for the long-standing Kashmir conflict, which continues to threaten peace and stability in the South Asian region even after 76 years. He noted that this act of aggression not only hindered the smooth and complete implementation of the partition plan for the sub-continent but also plunged the entire region into a state of uncertainty, chaos, and instability. Mehmood Ahmed Saghar, the convener of the APHC-PAK chapter, lamented that the bloodshed initiated by India in occupied Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 still persists today, with the blood of innocent Kashmiris being shed on both sides of the ceasefire line. Referring to India's history of colonization in Kashmir, he pointed out that the settler colonialism policies of the Indian government, mirroring Israel's policies, have instilled fear among Kashmiris, leaving them increasingly unsafe and insecure.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Nasebullah Bazai, Chairman Senate Standing Committee On Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Proposed increase in gas tariff not to affect 57% consumers, help end circular debt: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali on Thursday said the proposed increase in gas tariff would not affect 57 percent of consumers across the country rather it would help control and end the ever-increasing circular debt of the petroleum sector.

"It will be a big achievement," the minister said in a media briefing on the gas prices' revision along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi.

The Energy Minister said the increase in gas prices had been approved by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and now would be presented before the federal cabinet for the final nod.

Out of around 10 million gas consumers, he said the commodity price for 5.7 million had not been increased. "After the proposed increase, there will be no surge in the circular debt of the energy sector, which currently stood at Rs2.1 trillion in the recent past."

The minister said the fixed rate (line rent) for the 5.7 million gas consumers had been increased from Rs10 to Rs400, adding the new tariff would marginally

affect the protected gas consumers.

He was of the view that most of the people living in rural areas had no access to gas and were using Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and wood as sources of fuel. "Approximately 30% of the country's population has access to gas facility while this commodity is not available for 70% of the population and they are using LPG and wood as fuel," he added.

Ali further explained that in terms of consumption, 57% of households primarily use 31% of the total gas and account for 11% of payments.

He said that the upper class, which constituted 3% of gas connections, used 17% of the gas, leading to a 39% billing rate. He said the gas rate had not been increased for "Tandoor" across the country to facilitate the masses.

The minister said gas prices for the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and commercial connections had also been increased. However, he said gas price for the fertilizer and power sectors had not been increased as the hike in the price for this sector directly affected the farmers of the country.



ISLAMABAD: Donald Blome, Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan called on Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Nadeem Jan.

Pakistan to boost cooperation in diverse areas in SCO region: Jilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support and commitment to fostering cooperation in critical and practical areas in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) region including enhancing connectivity and transport links, youth empowerment, investment in key sectors with high regional potential, such as agriculture, mining, minerals, energy, and information technology.

He said during Pakistan's Chair of Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Pakistan will also continue to strengthen co-

operation in the fields of education and poverty alleviation.

Addressing the meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in Bishkek, the foreign minister said as the succeeding Chair of the Council, Pakistan would continue to support the existing mechanisms and welcome new initiatives.

The council is the second-highest body within the SCO and focuses on issues related to economy, finance, trade and socio-economic collaboration.

Jilani said SCO was the key platform for taking the vision of Eurasian connectivity to the next level.



ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, SAPM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment along with APHC leaders speaks during a press conference at PID.

IPP gets 'Eagle' as electoral symbol

LAHORE (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) allotted 'Eagle' as the electoral symbol to the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), while announcing the October-23 reserved decision on an application of the party.

The IPP had requested the ECP to allot 'Eagle' as the election symbol to the party, and the Commission finally accepted the request on Thursday. Earlier, 'eagle' election symbol was held by the All Pakistan Muslim League (APML) of the late General (retired) Pervez Musharraf.

India hiding Israel-like war crimes in Kashmir through media gag: Mushaal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick said on Thursday that India was committing Israel-like war crimes in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) but it had imposed military siege of the region by blocking communication and imposed gag on the media.

Addressing a press conference along with senior All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders here, she said that horrible videos of Israeli bombing in Palestine were available on the social media, but India had hidden its war crimes in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir which could be termed world's largest prison.

"India has been using chemical weapons, lethal pellet guns in Kashmir and targeting hospitals and ambulances and medical staff", she added.

She said during Covid-19 pandemic, when the world's attention was diverted towards that crisis, India unleashed a fresh reign

of terror in IIOJK to crush Kashmiris' just freedom struggle.

Mushaal Mullick said that both Israel and India were committing genocide of Palestinians and Kashmiris with complete impunity.

She lamented the human rights champions in the world had done nothing practical to pressurise Israel and India to stop genocide of the hapless people of Palestine and Kashmir.

The special assistant to the PM said that the hapless Kashmiri nation was bravely facing the Indian atrocities for the past over seven decades.

She said that October 27, 1947 was the blackest day in the history of Kashmir as on this day India illegally occupied the state against the aspirations of the Kashmiri masses. She said that in the age of nuclear weapons and biological warfare a small war could result in disturbing world order. She opined that if the Kashmir dispute was not resolved as per aspirations of the Kashmiris, it could lead to a great catastrophe in the region.