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PM directs all stakeholders to pursue SIFC initiatives to reap dividends

Army Chief reiterates army's resolve to 'backstop' govt initiatives for economy's recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday directed all the stakeholders to vigorously pursue the Special Investment Facilitation Council's (SIFC) initiatives through a collaborative approach to reap the dividend in short to medium terms, besides initiating processes for long term endeavours in the larger national interest.

The prime minister said this while chairing the 7th meeting of the Apex Committee of SIFC that

was attended by the Chief of Army Staff, members of the federal cabinet, provincial chief ministers and high level government officials.

The meeting was held to review various initiatives being led through the SIFC forum, a PM Office press release said.

In the meeting, the ministries presented progress on projects identified in key sectors and gave plans to further improve the ecosystem for realizing the envisaged investments in a timely man-

ner.

The committee showed extreme satisfaction on overall progress under the umbrella of SIFC, appreciated the enhancing level of engagements with friendly countries, both public and private entities, and the outreach strategy to proactively engage investors' community, which was translating in enhanced traction and approvals at domestic and global stages.

It reviewed progress on various measures undertaken to improve invest-

ment climate and approved policy level interventions to further improve investors' confidence including repatriation of profits, strengthening domestic dispute resolution mechanism, infrastructural and human resource development, and speedy operationalization of EXIM Bank.

The committee also directed to make a comprehensive strategy to address oil and gas issues in a sustainable manner by invest-

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs the 7th meeting of Apex Committee of SIFC.



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif, Former Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, former finance minister Ishaq Dar, Chief Organizer PML-N Maryam Nawaz, during their visit to Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Bilawal vows to double wages, fight inflation, empower youth

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed determination to establish a government prioritizing youth empowerment, poverty alleviation, and inflation control, with plans to double wages over a five-year period.

While addressing a PPP workers' convention in Abbottabad on Thursday, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari thanked the party's supporters, particularly the women, and highlighted the deep-rooted relationship

between the PPP and the people spanning three generations. He also expressed gratitude for the warm welcome during his Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tour.

Bilawal acknowledged former President Zardari's accomplishments and the party's contributions, emphasizing the need to continue the mission of Quaid-e-Azam, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, and Shaheed Mohdarma Benazir Bhutto. He called for a collective effort in the upcoming elec-

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ABBOTTABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing to workers convention.

Intelligence reports

Terrorists are in contact with foreign nationals residing in Pakistan illegally: FO

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan has said that it has intelligence information that terrorists are in contact with foreign nationals residing in Pakistan illegally.

"International institutions of justice will have to be active on Israeli war crime. Israeli army is perpetrating atrocities against unarmed people of Palestine. Attacking hospitals is brazen violation of human

and war laws, this was said by Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch during her weekly briefing here Thursday.

We have asked Afghan interim government to take action against terrorists targets on the basis of intelligence reports, she added.

Talking on Kashmir

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Our struggle is for oppressed, down trodden and Pakhtun is one of them: Achakzai

Says solution of myriad Pakistan's problems lies to the principles of civilian supremacy



ISLAMABAD: The solution of Pakistan's myriad problems lies to the principles

of civilian supremacy and adhering to the constitution in letter and spirit by all the institutions and power cen-

ters of the state. On Thursday, Chairman of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party Mahmood Khan Achakzai said this while addressing several public meetings in the vicinities and later a huge public gathering in the city of Lorelai.

If the affairs of a village cannot be run effectively and harmoniously without adhering to certain

Three police constables kidnapped in Turbat

TURBAT (INP): Unidentified gunmen on Wednesday took three constables hostage who were deputed at a police check post in Turbat, Balochistan, officials said.

Constables Naem, Nadeem and Sameer were on duty at the Singani Sarmomin police check-point when armed men took them away at gunpoint. The attackers also snatched two sub-machine guns and magazines from the policemen, officials added.

Police and security personnel rushed to the site and launched a search operation. No arrest has so far been reported.

Meanwhile, a man was arrested for forcibly entering the Quetta cantonment area late on Wednesday evening, said the officials.

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Present conditions are self-inflicted wound, laments Nawaz Sharif

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan's currency, economic and the system has devastated, and prices increased by five-fold, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif said on Thursday.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's supreme leader was addressing officials of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) today.

"It is our responsibility and duty to emancipate the people from price hike and poverty," Nawaz Sharif, who returned from self-exile in London on October 21, addressing to businessmen said.

"People want education, health facilities and development," he said. "It is their right, and it is responsibility of the state to

provide these facilities," PML-N leader said.

Nawaz claimed that Pakistan became 24th largest global economy between 2013 to 2017. "We kept the US dollar static at Rs 104 rate for four years. The dollar would have dropped to Rs40 to 50 if our policies and development process were not interrupted," he claimed.

"Today we are desperate for one billion dollars, it is self-inflicted harm we committed to us," he said. "These miserable conditions are consequence of our own decisions," he lamented.

"The policy rate has soared to 22 percent, which was 6.25 during our ten

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SC rules May 9 riots took place due to non-implementation of Faizabad verdict

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court has observed that due to the non-implementation of its 2019 Faizabad sit-in judgment by successive governments, the nation suffered consequences in the shape of the May 9 events.

The observations came as a three-member bench — headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, and comprising Justice Aminuddin Khan and Justice Athar Minallah — issued a written verdict of the November 15 hearing of the Faizabad sit-in case.

Referring to the days-long sit-in staged by the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in 2017, the four-page order authored by CJP Isa noted that the February

2019 Faizabad judgment traced the history of orchestrated violent protests in Pakistan and sounded a warning for the future.

"However, the concerns expressed by us almost 5 years ago were disregarded by successive governments. Review petitions and applications were filed and these were not fixed for hearing, which hindered the Judgment's implementation," it added.

The verdict further noted that no responsibility was affixed, nor was anyone held accountable for the violence of the past.

"It is not surprising that violence continued to be perceived as a permissible means to attain one's goals. Victims of those

striving for an independent judiciary, an inclusive and tolerant Pakistan were disregarded without justice; the nation suffered the consequences, as evident from the recent events of 9 May 2023," the CJP said in the judgment.

The May 9 events referred to the violent protests that broke out almost across the country following the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in a corruption case from the premises of Islamabad High Court (IHC).

The violent protesters ransacked and attacked the defence and public installations in various parts of the

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Digital Payment Gateway discussed: Digitalisation important need of hour, Prince

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information Technology, Prince Ahmed Ali has stated that the digitalisation is an important need of the hour, and the government

wants to introduce automatic and effective system of E-payment to facilitate the masses.

The provincial Minister was presiding over the meeting about digital payment gateway here on Thursday.

There was also detailed discussion on the system of E-payment, departmental matters and related issues for facilitation of the

general public.

Those who were in the meeting were included Vice Chancellor Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIEMS), Dr Khalid Hafeez, Secretary IT, Ayaz Khan Mandokhail, DG IT, Irfan Baseer while the high ups of firm providing services for E-payment system and its implementation participated in the meeting through video link.

The meeting decided to make payment on the portal and security system more effective bringing about transparency in the mechanism of E-payment.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister Prince Ahmed Ali Baloch presides over the meeting regarding Balochistan Digital Payment gateway.

Border crossing made conditional with production of passport: Implementation on one document regime, passport on Intl. border with Afghanistan started: Jan

CT Minister Information says passport offices in Chaman and Killa Abdullah made fully functional; asserts everyone has to show passport for crossing border

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has stated that the Pakistan has successfully started implementation on the one document regime i.e., passport on international border with Afghanistan.

In an official statement issued here on Thursday, the Information Minister said that the passport offices established in Chaman and Killa Abdullah are fully functional. He mentioned that 1,000 passport tokens have been issued from the Passport office operational in Chaman with some 200 passports also issued from there.

Similarly, some 150 passports have been issued from the Passport office op-

erating in Killa Abdullah, he maintained.

He informed that those Afghan nationals present in Chaman holding Tazkara are being allowed to cross into Afghanistan for one time. However, those coming from Afghanistan to Pakistan via Chaman are being asked for

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Massive reduction in expenses as Pakistan unveils Hajj policy 2024

ISLAMABAD (Online): Hajj 2024 will be digitalized wherein Hajjis will get an internet-free mobile application, unlimited free call package introduced.

Religious Affairs minister Aneeq Ahmed on Thursday announced the 2024 Hajj policy.

Aneeq Ahmed said that Hajj 2024 will be digitalized wherein Hajjis will get an internet-free mobile application that could be

used without internet and through an arrangement unlimited free call package will be provided to Hajjis.

Pakistan to Saudi Arabia Hajj 2024 cost Aneeq Ahmed said that last year's Hajj cost Rs11075000 but this year's Hajj will cost 1075000.

Minister of Religious Affairs said that residences for pilgrims are found in

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4 terrorists killed, officer martyred in Peshawar IBO

RAWALPINDI (Online): Security Forces have conducted intelligence based operation on report of presence of terrorists in Budh Bir area of Peshawar.

4 terrorists were killed including most wanted terrorists as a result of effective operation of security forces. Officer was martyred during another operation in Kalachi area of Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan).

According to Pakistan Army Public Relations Department (ISPR), Security forces have effectively targeted the hideouts of terrorists and as a result of this 4 terrorists were killed.

Most wanted terrorist Commander Salman alias Ahmed, terrorist Imran alias Mohammad, terrorist Hazrat Umer alias Khalid including Commander Samiullah alias Shinay are included among killed terrorists. Terrorists who were involved in various terrorist activities including extortion and target killing in the area were highly wanted by LEAs.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Zahid Saleem meeting with Secretary Finance Babar Khan.



QUETTA: President Balochistan Labour Federation Khan Zaman meeting with Caretaker Provincial Minister for Information Jan Achakzai regarding problems of BDA employees.

Dr. Jogezei says: Health system to be strengthened with vertical programs in rural areas

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Health, Dr. Ameer Muhammad Khan Jogezei has emphasized that the health system would have to be strengthened with support of the vertical programmes in the rural areas.

He said that the people come to the government hospitals with the hope of better treatment facilities, and if they return back disappointed, then we have no right to remain in power.

It is our duty to come up to come up to the expectations of masses by improving the healthcare system in the province, maintained the Minister Health in an official statement issued here on Thursday.

Dr. Ameer Muhammad Jogezei said that the improvement is

being brought in the government hospitals utilizing the available resources in the right direction and as such all issues being faced would be resolved gradually.

He also said that it is our responsibility to provide healthcare facilities to everyone without any discrimination. He said that all employees including subordinate staff to the higher officers are public servants and negligence to duty is just intolerable. He said that while the government is determined to provide best healthcare facilities to the masses, no negligence is tolerable in this regard.

He also stressed that we have to ensure just use of the available resources so as to ensure provision of best medical treatment to the patients all over the province.

Dire situation in Palestine calls for urgent world action against Israel: Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and the Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Islamic Countries Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Thursday said the current situation in Palestine was the world's most pressing issue. Addressing a press conference, he emphasized that the Pakistani Government's stance was unequivocal - Palestinians must receive their rightful justice. He highlighted the dire conditions at the Al-Shifa Hospital with Israelis even not sparing newborn kids, and asserted that the conflict was not a religious war but a battle between the oppressors and the oppressed. The Government of Pakistan, Ashrafi said, was actively engaged, with the Army Chief pledging full support to the Palestinian ambassador. He mentioned that the United Nations had also called for an investigation into the crimes, while the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) demanded an immediate ceasefire, aid provision, a sovereign state, and an inquiry into Israeli actions. He noted that the OIC summit witnessed unanimous demands for the measures, marking a rare display of unity among Islamic nations as evident from the presence of leaders from Iran, and Turkey, along with Saudi Arabia. Addressing concerns about the OIC's effectiveness, he cited positive progress but stressed the need for more stringent measures against Israel. He acknowledged that some Islamic countries were maintaining relations with Israel, but noted a growing global shift away from supporting Israeli actions.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadqi Sanjrani and Senators in a group photo with the Women Football team of Alshams Women Football Club, Hunza at Parliament House, Islamabad.

Improved diplomacy seen as way out of Pakistan's daunting regional challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): The speakers at the second day of Margalla Dialogue on Thursday underscored pressing issues faced by the country in the region due to fluctuating ties with its neighboring countries and termed improved diplomacy as a way out to capitalize on the opportunities underlying within the crises. The annual 'Margalla Dialogue: Evolving World Environment: Chartering the Course for Our Future' organized by the country's premier think tank, Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), was addressed on its second day by policymakers, leading local and international personalities, as well as media professionals. The session titled "Mapping internal and regional threats," was moderated by Fahd Hussain, President PNN, and was participated by Ambassador Asif Ali Durrani, Pakistan's Special Representative on Afghanistan; Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi; former finance minister Miftah Ismail; Dr Daniel Markey, senior advisor USIP; and Lieutenant General @ Aamer Riaz, former DG Military Operations. Fahd flagged five propositions by saying: "We are in a bad place as concerned with the region; we know the challenges facing us; we know what needs to be done, but we are not doing it, and that we cannot sustain any longer if the present predicament continues. Ambassador Durrani talked eloquently about the region and the four neighbours Pakistan has and said that with India in the East, Pakistan historically has had tense relations owing to the dispute on Kashmir. He said that Afghanistan in the West has never seen peace except for the four decades of Zahir Shah. "With Iran, we have good relations and the common denominator is that Tehran has been under direct sanctions whereas Islamabad had faced indirect sanctions," Durrani observed. He said that China is the only hope line for Pakistan. He went on to elucidate that the occupation of Kashmir by India was not Pakistan's choice, and so was the case with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Revolution in 1979. He said that Afghanistan in the West has never seen peace except for the four decades of Zahir Shah. "With Iran, we have good

relations and the common denominator is that Tehran has been under direct sanctions whereas Islamabad had faced indirect sanctions," Durrani observed. He said that China is the only hope line for Pakistan. He went on to elucidate that the occupation of Kashmir by India was not Pakistan's choice, and so was the case with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Revolution in 1979. He said that Afghanistan in the West has never seen peace except for the four decades of Zahir Shah. "With Iran, we have good

Saudi Arabia beat Pakistan 4-0 in World Cup Qualifiers

Sports Desk AL-FATEH STADIUM: Saudi Arabia beat Pakistan 4-0 Thursday in the second round of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers at Al-Fateh Stadium in the Kingdom's Al-Ahsa. Pakistan started off well as they conceded only one goal in the first half. However, Saudi Arabia dominated the second half, netting three goals to secure a dominant win. Saleh Al-Shahri opened the scoring for Saudi Arabia with goals in the 6th and 48th minutes, followed by Abdul Rahman Ghareeb in the 91st minute and Abdullah Radif in the 96th minute. Saudi Arabia maintained significant possession throughout the game, taking advantage of the absence of Eash Suliman due to injury, which weakened Pakistan's defence. Suliman, the team's defender and captain, was sorely missed. Reflecting their respective FIFA rankings, Saudi Arabia at 57 and Pakistan at 193, the match unfolded as anticipated, with Saudi Arabia emerging victorious as expected. It must be noted this is the first time Pakistan will play in the second round of the Asian Qualifiers. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia last played against each other in 1978 in a game in the latter's backyard which the Shaheens lost 6-0. Jordan and Tajikistan are the other teams in Pakistan's group. These four teams will play against each other on a home and away basis and then the top two nations will progress to the third round, while the bottom two teams will move into the third round of the 2027 Asian Cup Qualifiers. Being a host country of the 2027 Asian Cup, Saudi Arabia have already qualified for the continent's major showpiece. Pakistan are now set to play against Tajikistan in Islamabad on November 21, while the remaining qualification matches will be played next year in March and June. The top two qualify for the third round of qualifiers, in which 18 teams are split between three groups.

KARACHI: Anti encroachment authorities demolishing illegal marriage halls constructed on residential land, during anti encroachment campaign under the supervision of local government departments located on Malir Saudabad area.

SC rules May 9..

Continued from page 1 The apex court said every decision of the Supreme Court is binding and must be implemented by all executive authorities as stipulated in Articles 189 and 190 of the Constitution. Implementation, however, the order said may be forestalled when review petitions and other applications are pending. Those who were in government when the 2019 judgment was given are no longer in government and the composition of the Election Commission has also changed. "Therefore, it would not be appropriate to hold the present incumbents responsible for the actions/inactions of their predecessors, particularly when they have demonstrated that they want to implement the decision of this Court." country, prompting the authorities to take stern action against the rioters. Consequently, dozens of PTI leaders either quit politics or parted ways with the incarcerated party chairman over the ransacking of military installations for what they believed triggered by the confrontational politics of Khan. The same judgment also mentioned that Attorney-General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan informed the top court that the federal government had constituted an inquiry commission under the Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry Act, 2017. It said the commission was given a two-month time to complete its investigation. "[...] we expect that it will do so within the allotted time."

Our struggle is for..

Continued from page 1 er state's organ and institution owes its existence and legitimacy to the constitution, then what is institution without constitution, he questioned. The answer is that every institution should work within its constitution. Democracy will deliver once it established its roots, unfortunately, for 75 years we are struggling to establish the democracy. I meet my father for the first time when he was 6 years old. Immediately after independence he was arrested. Until his death in 1973, when I calculate minutes and hours, he hardly been with us for two years, the rest he had been in prison. Ironically, we could not reach to the goal of genuine democracy. The result of this vicious cycle is instability and abysmal poverty. Ahkzakai warned the caretaker government that establishing a new federal ministry of minerals is synonymous to roll back the eighteenth constitutional amendment. Before that Ahkzakai addressed Hazara community in the city Imambarga. He stated that neither state nor any group or individual has the right discriminate on the basis of creed, sect or ethnicity. Our struggle is for the oppressed and down trodden and Pakhtun is one of them. commonly agreed upon charter or conventions, how one can even think to run a state successfully to realize the aspirations of its citizens, he asked. Mere holding elections and shepherding the turncoats in a certain direction is a futile exercise which neither brought stability nor prosperity in the past, how the results of such exercise can be different in the future, Achakzai questioned. In 1950s, only to deprive people from the basic right of self-rule through electing their representatives, the power to be devised the world notorious formula of parity to equalize minority with a majority, and after the dismemberment of the country they resort to political and election engineering, Achakzai bemoaned. The fate of this country and the plight of the people cannot be turned around until and unless giving the inviolable right of self-rule to the people by electing their representatives freely with the sole right to hold them accountable. Before expecting delivery and good governance, no power or institution should impinge upon or put hindrance on the power of elected representatives, institutions and government, Achakzai maintained. Ev-

DC's directed to ensure relief to masses in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Hyderabad, Syed Khalid Haider Shah directed the Deputy Commissioners to provide maximum relief to the people, particularly in the health and education sectors of their respective districts. Presiding over a meeting here at his office on Thursday, the Commissioner asked the DCs to ensure daily visits to health and education centres in person and point out the issues being faced by the people of their respective districts. The report regarding the non-availability of required facilities.

Australia edge South Africa to play India in World Cup final

KOLKATA: Australia sealed their place in Sunday's final of the 50-over World Cup against India following a nervy three-wicket victory against South Africa in the second semi-final on Thursday. Australia bowled out South Africa for a below-par 212 despite David Miller's defiant 101 but the chase was not as straightforward as Pat Cummins and his team would have liked. Travis Head (62) led Australia's rollicking start before a mid-innings wobble put the five-time champions in a spot of bother. South Africa did not let big partnerships bloom but Australia eventually reached the target with 16 balls to spare with Steve Smith (30) and Jos Inglis (28) providing useful cameo. Earlier, Temba Bavuma's decision to bat under an overcast sky backfired and South Africa slumped to 24-4 inside 12 overs before light rain held up play. Miller and Heinrich Klaasen (47) arrested the slide after play resumed with a 95-run partnership but Head's double strike put Australia back in charge.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi offering Dua after inaugurating Shahdra Flyover.

PM directs..

Continued from page 1 ing in relevant industries. The apex body reviewed and appreciated the progress on privatization of State-Owned-Enterprises and directed to keep the process at fast pace. The Chief of Army Staff reassured undaunted resolve of the Pakistan Army to backstop government initiatives in various domains for sustainable recovery of the economy.

Pakistan welcomes joint declaration of Joint Arab Islamic Extraordinary Summit

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has welcomed the joint declaration of the Joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary Summit held in Saudi Arabia that urged the UN Security Council to enforce UN resolutions against Israel; its demand for ceasing export of weapons to the occupying force; and its call for international Criminal Court's investigation into Israeli crimes. At her weekly media briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan condemns repeated Israeli attacks on the premises and personnel of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and other humanitarian agencies, including the Headquarters of Qatari Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza. She said we join the UN in paying homage to the workers of UNRWA and other humanitarian agencies who lost their lives in Gaza and appreciate their steadfast dedication to the people in need. The Spokesperson said Pakistan also con-



NASEERABAD: Members of Pakistan Mili Tehreek are holding protest rally against Traitor Adil Raja, at Dera Murad Jamali in Naseerabad.

Bilawal vows..

Continued from page 1 tions to implement the PPP's manifesto and ideology. Addressing pressing issues like inflation and unemployment, Bilawal advocated for a new mindset and leadership focused on serving the people rather than engaging in divisive politics. He underscored the PPP's commitment to empowering farmers, workers, and the common people, proposing initiatives like the 'Kissan Card' and 'Benazir Mazdoor Card.' He emphasized the PPP's historical role in combating poverty and called for a departure from past politics to pave the way for a prosperous, modern Pakistan. He urged political counterparts to trust the people and create a conducive political environment for the young generation. Bilawal insisted on the people's right to choose their representatives. He criticized the politics of the past and stressed the need for a new political system that serves the people. Bilawal announced the continuation of party conventions in Mardan, Peshawar, Naushera, Dir, and Chitral, expressing confidence in the PPP's victory and its role in forming the next government. In the face of challenges during past elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Bilawal asserted that the PPP would triumph this time. He urged political counterparts to trust the people and create a conducive political environment for the young generation.

Massive reduction..

Continued from page 1 good places in both Holy cities. The Hajj Secretary clarified that the cost of a sacrificial animal is not included in the original Hajj package. Moreover, if anyone wants to go for a short Hajj, then the pilgrim will have to pay Rs75,000 extra. Aneeq Ahmed told media person that the caretaker cabinet approved the groundbreaking Hajj policy yesterday, marking a paradigm shift in the pilgrimage experience. He said the forthcoming Hajj is set to surpass its predecessor, with a plan in place to accommodate the mammoth number of pilgrims. The first phase of the policy featured an 'affordable' package priced at 1075 thousand rupees. Aneeq Ahmed said discussions with airlines are ongoing to secure minimum airfare, with the savings earmarked for pilgrims' accounts. Digitizing the Hajj process To embrace digital ad-

Present..

Continued from page 1 ure," he said. "Who can do business at 22 percent rate," he questioned. "We have ourselves committed excesses with the Parliament and prime ministers," Nawaz Sharif said. "See, who was handed over the country. The rupee, economy and all systems suffered devastation". "Those who were paying Rs 1,000 monthly electricity bill, now paying 15,000 rupees," he said. "Prices of everything, have soared by five-fold," he added.

Terrorists..

Continued from page 1 issue she said India is engaged in occupying lands in Occupied Kashmir. India took into possession lands of protectors of human rights in Pulwama. Pakistan will continue its support to Kashmiris for resolution of Kashmir issue, she reiterated. Indian forces brutalities are continuing in illegally occupied Kashmir by India. Pakistan will set up contacts in all regions. FO spokesperson said in regard to OIC summit conference held on Israel-Palestine war that caretaker Prime Minister (PM) Anwar ul Haq Kakar attended the joint meeting of OIC and Arab League. He condemned ongoing Israeli aggression in Gaza and demanded for immediate ceasefire. She told media men that PM expressed solidarity with people of Palestine and urged for resolving Palestine problem according to UN resolutions. Pakistan welcomes joint communication of joint session of Arab League and OIC. We demand international community to take notice of Israeli attacks on hospitals in Gaza. International institutions of justice will have to become active on Israeli war crimes. The international community should hold Israel responsible for human rights violations.



QUETTA: Secretary Local Govt Noor Ahmed Pirkanj alongwith Administrator Quetta Jabbar Baloch visiting Circular Road Parking.

Implementation..

Continued from page 1 as it is the state's decision, the Minister Information insisted adding that implementation on the decision is being made in collaboration with all institutions of the provincial and federal governments. He said that the credit of decision on the one document regime goes to the Army Chief, Syed Asim Munir, caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar and Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki. The decision to this effect has been made despite the international pressure exerted on the country, he mentioned. He also went on to say that the government is ready to go to any extreme in the country's larger interest. Passports to cross the border. Similarly, those Pakistanis who want to come to Pakistan would be handed over to the FIA for legal action so that they may not cross the border illegally, he added. Jan Achakzai made it clear that no one can be allowed to violate the one document's passport policy for across the border movement. He said that Pakistan is not a banana state, and as such no Pakistani or Afghan national is exempted from the passport to cross the border. Everyone has to show the passport for movement at the international border

HIRING OF BUILDING FOR OFFICE AND ACCOMMODATION Office and accommodation is required in Zhob Town/City for Executive Engineer, Urban Planning & Development Department, Zhob Division interested vendors/owners may submit their proposals in following terms and conditions. The facility should have at least four to five rooms one hall along with kitchen. The facility should have car parking/ space for 5 to 6 vehicles. Must have public utilities. The building should be newly constructed or must be in good condition. The place should be near Zhob Bazar, Contact the office of the Executive Engineer, Urban Planning & Development Department, Zhob Division at Zhob. Contact #: 03138201082 Address: Office of the Executive Engineer, Urban Planning & Development Department, Zhob division at Zhob PRQ No.995/16-11-2023 Executive Engineer, Urban Planning & Development Department, Zhob division at Zhob www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gob dpr_gob @dpr_balochistan

QUETTA: Political and Tribal Leader, Mir Vais Khan Achakzai addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta Press Club. Image showing Mir Vais Khan Achakzai speaking at a press conference.

Edu Ministry partners with NEST, MCB to advance education in nursing

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has partnered with the National Endowment Scholarship for Talent (NEST), operating under the Education Ministry, Government of Pakistan, and MCB Islamic Bank, with the primary objective of advancing education in the field of nursing and contributing to poverty eradication through nesting education.

The bedrock of this collaboration is a Letter of Understanding signed yesterday by Secretary of the Federal Education Ministry, Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, and Muhammad Ibrahim, General Manager, MCB Islamic Bank.

Distinguished participants from the Ministry and NEST included

Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, CEO.

NEST/Federal Secretary Education; Syeda Hajra Suhail, GM-NEST; Hameed Khan Niazi, CFO NEST; Malik Mazhar Awan, AM P&C; Majeed Asif, AM V&D; Zahid Awan, AM Finance; Waleed Bin Mushtaq, Communication Officer; and other esteemed members. Representing MCB

Islamic Bank were Muhammad Ibrahim, General Manager; Malik Tahir, Regional Head; and Salahuddin, Area Manager.

MCB Islamic Bank commits to making annual charitable donations to NEST to support deserving nursing students throughout their degree programs. In return, NEST pledges complete transparency in the allocation

of funds, offering detailed insights into beneficiary selection and fund utilization.

This collaboration aspires to empower aspiring nursing professionals, fostering educational growth and socio-economic development across Pakistan. Both NEST and MCB Islamic Bank express their fervor for this noble cause and anticipate that this partnership will significantly contribute to the enhancement of education and the upliftment of deserving students pursuing nursing degrees in Pakistan.

This alliance marks a milestone in the joint efforts of NEST and MCB Islamic Bank to strengthen educational opportunities, exemplifying their commitment to the welfare and progress of the nation.



ISLAMABAD: Astronaut Ms. Namira Saleem called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

75 years of Pakistan-Belgium diplomatic ties encompass 'spirit of solidarity': FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan said on Thursday that the 75 years of its diplomatic relations with Belgium encompassed the spirit of solidarity and expressed commitment to work with it towards shaping a better world for future generations.

A statement by the Foreign Office said the upward trajectory of bilateral relations was deeply embedded in people-to-people linkages and frequent high-level contacts at the leadership level.

It mentioned that the institution of bilateral political consultation provided a strong foundation for a multifaceted dialogue that holds the potential to

deepen this longstanding bilateral relationship.

"The robust trade between the countries has witnessed continuous growth for mutual benefit," it said.

"The depth of bilateral relations encompasses the spirit of solidarity and support demonstrated during times of need, such as disaster management to mitigate natural calamities," the FO statement said.

The Joint Communique, issued on November 26, 1947, encapsulates the decision of the two governments to accept respective diplomatic missions "to strengthen the bonds of friendship and mutual interest".

Following the historic decision, the two countries opened diplomatic missions in 1948.

"It is a proud moment, as the goals outlined 75 years ago paved the way for a strong bond of friendship," the FO statement added.

"The relationship between Belgium and Pakistan is forward-looking, as both countries are committed to working together on multi-lateral forums to address common challenges, such as sustainable development and climate change, as well as fundamental values such as democracy and human rights, providing strength to these relations," it said.

Govt vows to resolve tourism related issues: Wasi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Tourism, Special Assistant to PM on Youth Affairs Wasi Shah Thursday said that the government was committed to resolve the issues of tourism sector through better cooperation and joint efforts.

He expressed these views while giving an interview to the famous media house Warner Brothers at World Travel Market London, said that all possible cooperation for the devel-

opment of tourism was foremost priority of the government besides taking practical steps to promote tourism, said a news release issued here.

He said that there were immense opportunities for tourism in Pakistan which needed to be exploited.

The government was not only welcoming the foreign tourists to the beautiful valleys but also providing protection to them, he added.

Qureshi decides to resort to SC for bail in Cipher case

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi has decided to resort to Supreme Court (SC) in connection with bail in cipher case.

Legal team under Hamid Khan advocate has prepared the petition. It has obtained copy of order. According to sources bail plea of Shah Mehmood Qureshi is likely to be filed in next 72 hours.

Legal team was waiting for attested photo copy of Islamabad High Court (IHC) decision which has been obtained. Now it is waiting for verified/attested copy of decision.

Bail plea will be filed in the SC as soon as this copy is received. Chairman PTI has already resorted to SC in connection with his bail.

1 killed, two injured after car runs over pedestrians

ISLAMABAD (APP): A car ramed into pedestrians in Mirpur Khas on Thursday, killing at least one person and injuring two others.

According to rescue sources, the accident took place on Khairu Road in the Mirpur Khas area, where a speeding car hit the pedestrians, as a result of which a young boy died on the spot and two people were injured, a private news channel reported.

Police and rescue teams reached the spot and shifted the body and injured to the hospital.

According to police, the car driver managed to escape from the scene after the accident.

Culture plays crucial role in promoting tolerance: Jamal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah on Thursday stressed that culture played a vital role in fostering tolerance within the society by influencing values, attitudes and behaviors.

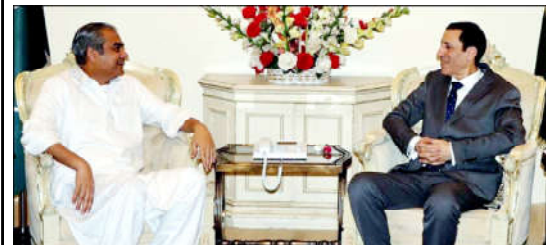
In a message on the occasion of International Day of Tolerance, the minister said that the purpose of celebrating this day was to highlight the importance of societal norms based on the principles of harmony, tolerance and brotherhood and we should also make a commitment to play our active role in this regard.

Jamal Shah highlighted various avenues through which culture promotes tolerance, such as government policies endorsing and safeguarding cultural diversity. He emphasized that fostering respect for individuals irrespective of their cultural background within cultural norms also played

a crucial role in building a tolerant society.

The minister emphasized that individuals' attitudes and behaviors, crucial for coexisting with people from diverse backgrounds were influenced by the socialization within their culture. Jamal Shah said that cultural institutions, community centers and grassroots organizations played a vital role in promoting tolerance by fostering connections and understanding among people from different backgrounds.

He said that all the segments of society should play their role in promoting tolerance in the country as well as in the world, adding that his Ministry was committed to promoting peace and harmony through art and culture. The International Day for Tolerance is celebrated each year on November 16 to promote respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of world's cultures.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (retd) Syed Arshad Hussain and Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi during a meeting.

VC AIOU shares vision, roadmap for next four years

ISLAMABAD (INP): Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, after assuming the charge of office, shared his vision and roadmap for the university's development over the next four years.

During a welcome reception given by the principal officers, he highlighted the need to revise the current curriculum and add new courses to meet the requirements of the modern job market.

He also emphasized the importance of establish-

ing new departments to cater to the student's evolving needs. Dr. Nasir added that we will work together to strengthen the university financially. He added that the former vice-chancellors rendered valuable services to bring AIOU to its present proud position and we will strive hard to improve them further.

The Vice-Chancellor said that increasing student facilities and enrollment, faculty development, promotion of research culture, and welfare of employees are priorities.

Search and combing operation conducted in against illegal foreigners

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) conducted a search and combing operation against illegal foreigners at Shams Colony police station jurisdiction, a public relations officer said.

According to police, search and combing operations are being conducted in different areas of the city to ensure the safety and security of the Islamabad

citizens. A search and combing operation was conducted in different areas of Shams Colony police stations jurisdiction by CTD, QRF and local police teams under the supervision of DSP CTD.

During the search and combing operation, 18 houses and 62 individuals were thoroughly checked while eight illegal foreigners were shifted to the police station for further verification purposes.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan Frederico Silva planting a plant sapling at Pakistan National Council of Arts during an event regarding the "Climate Change Challenges" in Federal Capital.

PTDC's remarkable achievements highlighted in promoting country's tourism

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) has made remarkable achievements in the tourism industry and its promotion by marketing country's natural landscape, history, culture and archeological sites being providing facilities to tourists.

Taking to APP, the PTDC official said that the corporation was working effectively according the vision to develop the tourism sector as a national priority in a sustainable and acceptable manner, taking full advantage of regional and international trends and developments.

He said the PTDC is projecting the country as a tourist friendly destination in bringing Pakistan amongst top five tourist

destinations of Asia and marketing of tourist places at home and abroad through tourism show and exhibitions to generate revenue. Tourism sector is contributing a lot to national exchequer as well, he added.

The official said that the tourism organization is to act as a catalyst in encouraging the private sector to play active role in tourism promotion and development. It was developing infrastructure and services within the country to facilitate the tourists.

He said it has already established Tourist Information Centers (TIC) at various airports to provide accurate information to foreign and local tourists.

He said that Minister of State for Tourism, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Wasi

Shah had unveiled that TIC would set up at Gawdar International Airport to facilitate the tourists about their destination.

He said that PTDC with collaboration of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has kicked off an effective cleanliness campaign at various parks of the federal capital to ensure neat and clean environment to attract large number of tourists in a healthy ambience.

Official said the campaign launched aimed at ensuring clean environment to urge the tourists to maintain cleanliness at tourist spots of the capital city as a number people from various parts of the country through to the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi for recreation and tourism purposes



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights, Khalil George, addressing seminar on "Universal Children's Day 2023" and "Child Rights of Invisible Children in Pakistan".

Minister emphasizes education for positive, soft image of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Human Rights Minister George Khalil Thursday highlighted the need to prioritize education for presenting a positive and a soft image of Pakistan and combating child violence on World Children's Day.

During a ceremony commemorating World Children's Day, the minister emphasized that the media can play a crucial role in putting an end to violence against children. The minister expressed that celebrating World Children's Day serves the purpose of advocating for children's

rights. "We are creating opportunities for children and young individuals to voice their concerns on matters important to them."

The Ministry of Human Rights established a commission for Child Rights, emphasizing that prioritizing children's welfare, along with the active participation of philanthropists, can contribute to building a better future for minorities and all. "If we genuinely care for children, we will advocate for their rights."

Additionally, the Minister also said the positive

portrayal of Pakistan through education, highlighting its strengths over negative aspects. The increasing threat of climate change, floods in Pakistan have grown more frequent, resulting in some communities facing an unending cycle of displacement and despair, he said.

Children are experiencing the impact of fatigue from disasters induced by climate change, taking a toll on their well-being. They not only feel exhausted but also harbor heightened anxiety about the potential threat of cascading events, he added.

Plaintiff seeks Nawaz's death sentence in Sara Inam case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The plaintiff's lawyer in the Sara Inam case has formally requested the District and Session Court of Islamabad to impose the death sentence on Sara Inam's husband, Shah Nawaz Ameer.

Judge Nasir Jawed Rana heard the Sara Inam murder case on Thursday, where the main accused, Shah Nawaz Ameer, was presented before the court.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf legal team member Sher Afzal Marwat and political leaders GulZareen Khan along with Malik and others are addressing a press conference at NPC.

4,278 people died in road accidents in four years in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ramshackle conditions of roads, lack of safety walls and frequent movement of Indian military convoys contribute to daily traffic accidents in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, which saw 4,278 deaths just from 2018 to 2022 despite double lockdown, because of Covid and military siege during the years of 2020 and 2021.

According to a recently released report by the IIOJK's Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), an alarming total of 4,278 lives were tragically lost due to road accidents from 2018 to 2022 in J&K.

The report reveals 984 lives were consumed by road accidents in 2018 while

the figure was 996 in 2019. In Covid-19 and military siege-hit years of 2020 and 2021, the numbers came down with 728 and 774 deaths respectively.

A significant portion of the road fatalities in J&K were attributed to accidents on national highways, particularly in hilly Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban areas of Jammu region. The treacherous road conditions between Jammu to Srinagar and Jammu to Doda-Kishtwar have led to numerous accidents.

According to Firdous Tak, a PDP leader from the region, overloading, no crash barriers, bad roads and inadequate buses remain four prime reasons for frequent road accidents in hilly Doda-Kishtwar.

Production order Imran: court issues notice

ISLAMABAD (Online): District and Sessions Court Islamabad while issuing notice in connection with reply to the petition filed by chairman PTI for issuance of his production order has adjourned the hearing of the case till December 9.

The case was heard by Judicial Magistrate Shahzad Gondal.

Naeem Haider Panjotha counsel for chairman PTI appeared in the court.

He took the plea we want to file petition in the court for issuance of production order in respect of PTI chairman

The court remarked you appeared in the court for the first time. Give the application. We see it.

Lawyer Naeem Haider Panjotha replied they will make excuse again that there are security concerns.

Exemption plea in respect of Asad Umar was presented in the court.

16 Basic Police ATS course ends

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 16 basic anti terrorist course (ATS) for personnel of Islamabad Capital Police concluded in police lines headquarters Islamabad.

The purpose of the course was to enhance the professional capabilities of the police officials. Police spokesperson said that numerous courses for police officers and officials including ATS, investigation and combat are being organized for police personnel.

A total of 23 women and 46 male police personnel were trained in the three months course in which the officials were trained about physical fitness, weapon handling, recovery of hostages, control of armed elements and maintaining law and order situations.



ISLAMABAD: Special Representative to the Prime Minister for Religious Harmony and Islamic Countries and Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addresses to media persons during press conference.

NCRC, IRC commemorate world Children's Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Universal Children's Day is an annual day of action for children, by children, marking the adoption of the convention on the rights of child. Children's rights are human rights. But in too many places today, children's rights are under threat.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC), in collaboration with National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), here on Thursday hosted a multi-stakeholder national consultation on how Climate Change is impacting children of Pakistan in commemoration of Universal Children's Day 2023, under the global theme of "For every child, Every Right".

Ayesha Raza Farooq, Chairperson NCRC in her opening remarks, noted

that the impact of climate change on children was a matter that demands our collective attention and today's consultation provided a platform for us to engage in a meaningful dialogue, share insights, and develop strategies that would resonate beyond this room. The Guest of Honor Khalil George, Caretaker Minister for Human Rights in his keynote speech, opined that Universal Children's Day holds particular significance for Pakistan as it provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress made in ensuring the rights and well-being of every child. Our commitment to the rights of unregistered children must go beyond rhetoric. It requires concrete actions, innovative policies, and collaborative efforts from all stakeholders involved, she expressed.



ISLAMABAD: Foreigners Women are taking interest in paintings during exhibition entitled "Sugar and Spice" at Pakistan National Council of Arts in Federal Capital.

Repeat telecast

Six years may have passed since the engineering experiments that spoiled the 2018 general election, but no lessons have been learned and little has changed. With another poll approaching, old turncoats are now being ushered to the ranks of a new 'chosen one'.

The opportunists, too, seem to have sensed the mood and will soon start rushing to pay obeisance to the PML-N's rising sun. With a new 'selected' being prepared to take Imran Khan's place, one cannot help but feel sorry for the PPP and the others who had cast their lot with the Pakistan Democratic Movement. After all, wasn't the entire raison d'être of the movement to prevent undemocratic forces from planting deeper roots in the political landscape?

Instead, the same forces seem to have ended up taking an even more central role in national-level decision-making. As for the PDM's component parties, they are now being co-opted into what looks like 'hybrid 2.0', or being turned against each other.

Considering how the 2018 election played out, it seems unlikely that 2024 will yield any different results. Whoever will take over will constantly be looking over their shoulder, wondering when the winds of favour will start blowing in a different direction.

Eventually, today's beneficiaries may realise that they were played; that a 'victory' that came from a tainted contest is never meant to endure. At some point, historians will ask: what was the point of removing one malformed government if it was only going to be replaced with a similar system of governance?

It will be a difficult question for political actors like the PML-N to contend with, who have played and lost this game too many times before and should have known better. Such arrangements only suit those who wish to rule without accountability; to whom politicians are a front, to be used and discarded at will.

Pakistan's democracy lies in tatters. Those who promised to be its saviours have dealt it a grievous blow. Is there hope for a better future? Once again, only principled politics can yield an answer.

Until legitimacy and power are derived from the vox populi, no civilian government can hope to deliver. At best, it can be a pliant tool in the hands of institutions whose ideas about good governance, foreign policy and economic management, etc, have repeatedly failed the test of time.

Politicians should, as one of them recently put it, rely on their own politics instead of looking to the country's security establishment to keep lending them a hand.

They should also learn to work with each other instead of turning politics into a zero-sum game. Lastly, they must yield to the people's will. Elections cannot be turned into a rubber stamp for backroom deals. All such efforts must be resisted.



Ali Tauqeer Sheikh

The federal government has rectified what successive governments in Pakistan had overlooked for many years: announcing a National Climate Finance Strategy to help mainstream climate change in national policymaking processes.

The NCFS has raised the bar of Pakistan's ambition and committed to reorient the portfolios of key national institutions for climate finance, enable innovative instruments, secure carbon credits and accreditation with global climate funds.

Building resilience to climate disasters for reducing economic costs for the economy is one of four objectives of the ongoing \$3 billion Stand-by Arrangement with the IMF. The NCFS is expected to create

some badly needed fiscal space while building resilience.

The World Bank and IMF had earlier indicated that development and climate financing may not flow to Pakistan in future unless national investments were aligned with Climate-Public Investment Management Assessment. The C-PIMA is derived from the IMF's time-tested PMIA used as a yardstick or conditionality for disbursements. This will hopefully help the government identify potential improvements in public investment institutions and processes to build a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy.

Pakistan has just committed to IMF that C-PIMA will be presented to the cabinet for approval and that Pakistan's future investments will be climate resilient. The process will begin with three key institutions: Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Public Sector Development Plans (PSDP), and Public Private Partnership Authority (3PA), all housed and managed by the Planning Commission. CPEC was not mentioned in the

blueprint.

The C-PIMA will be accomplished through a newly minted Sustainable Finance Bureau, again at the Planning Commission, to 'revolutionise' climate finance. It is expected that the SFB will reorient 20 per cent of the new PSDP schemes during FY 2023-24, amounting to Rs925bn.

These projects will qualify Pakistan, it is hoped, for concessional finances and help it meet targets set in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Both NAP and NDCs reflect Pakistan's sovereign commitments, as part of the Paris Agreement, submitted to the secretariat of the climate change convention.

The government plans to invest in resilience through 4RF (Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework that was developed after the 2022 floods), recently updated 4th NFPP (National Flood Protection Plan), and by developing sectoral priorities.

The blueprint of NCFS has not furnished details, but the sectoral pri-

orities will be derived from the National Climate Change Policy and NAP. These will presumably be developed by the sectoral ministries and departments.

In order to meet the IMF conditionalities, the policymakers have packaged many ongoing endeavours and cobbled them together to meet the IMF demands. If successful, it will reflect the 'whole-of-government' approach that is mentioned in several national and provincial policies but seldom translated into action. The progress on NCFS will be reviewed early next year under five heads already given in the C-PIMA: climate-smart planning, inter-ministerial coordination, appraisal and selection of projects, budgeting and portfolio management, and risk management.

While the government has announced its commitment, how will it create synergy to ensure its timebound implementation? The fiscal strategy has committed that all projects will have new templates for project feasibility notes, and technical feasibility studies across the planning documents to

completion certificates.

This will require the Planning Commission to revise PC-I to PC-V in order to ensure that public sector projects also map climate risks and respond to adaptation, mitigation, and their development co-benefits, and the finance ministry to adopt mechanisms to track all its climate-related expenditures. This necessitates brass-tracking on multiple fronts, particularly: i) getting SFB off the ground, ii) notifying templates for climate-smart PSDP projects, iii) initiating expenditure tracking and, finally, iv) putting in place an entire ecosystem that includes carbon trading policy, carbon inventory and its digitalisation, and the required monitoring and validation systems.

Meaningful progress on these will serve as precursors for the two urgent objectives of the NCFS: accessing concessional finances and leveraging private sector investments.

Pakistan's failure to access international climate finance at scale is often attributed to relatively limited technical capacity of the focal ministry. Instead

of understanding the deeper reasons, many ministries and provincial departments have begun to set up specialised units to lure climate finance rather than embedding resilience in their sectoral policies and projects. Since the second IMF review in 2024 will cover five interrelated domains (planning, coordination, projects, budgeting and portfolio management, and risk management), it is imperative that finance strategy implementation is synchronised by trespassing silos within which the ministries often operate. The NCFS is designed as an inter-ministerial and multisectoral document that would, out of necessity, require 'whole-of-government' approach, and that is not possible without exercising convening power. After all, climate finance is a function of climate governance and climate diplomacy at COP28. Both will need to work in tandem and to leverage one to maximise the other. This will require the NCFS to have its own dedicated secretariat to oversee its realisation rather than leaving it to chance. -- Courtesy Dawn

SIFC and Pakistan's future



Awais Anwer Khawaja

Pakistan's economy has witnessed several challenges in the past few years. The country was on the verge of default up until a few months back. Some quarters blame the PDM's coalition government for edging Pakistan to default. Others put the responsibility on the PTI government for renegeing from its commitment to the IMF.

Although the immediate threat of default has been averted, a lot is yet to be done. Political stability, in the interim setup, is better compared to the preceding governments. The role of the SIFC and the military leadership's active participation therein and its impact on the future of Pakistan require further analysis.

Economists Daron Acemoglu and James A Robinson in their book 'Why Nations Fail' cite the example of a few countries

where the respective economies prospered despite the absence of fully functional democratic institutions. The past and present political systems of China, South Korea — under the leadership of General Park Chung Hee — and Singapore — in Lee Kuan Yew's era — have witnessed economic advancement despite these countries not meeting the yardstick of Westminster's democracy.

Contrary to this, many nations under democratic rule do not meet modern economic standards. Pakistan ranks low in Ease of Doing Business. Political instability, red-tapism, unskilled labour, bureaucratic inertia, corruption, and unideal situation of enforcement of contractual rights and obligations are a few reasons for the country's low ranking.

With a high-powered executive body such as the SIFC in place, the foregoing challenges can be mitigated. Investors will not have to navigate through the cumbersome process for setting up the shop. The SIFC's committees have been carefully formed with the objective of the seamless implementation of goals.

Unfortunately, the 18th Amendment — enacted

in 2010 — has not delivered the desired results. With 60 per cent of tax receipts going to provinces, the federal government resorted to heavy borrowing to meet its budgetary targets. The SIFC aims to bolster FDI, which cannot be translated into reality without restoring the confidence of investors in the entity called Pakistan.

Stringent measures — for example, the crackdown against foreign currency hoarders, commodities hoarders, increase in tax receipts, crackdown against petroleum products' smuggling, crackdown against commodities' smuggling and the mass exodus of illegal migrants in the country — have reaped positive results. Investor confidence, after the formation of the SIFC, is reflected in the performance of the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

Agriculture is one of the top priorities of the SIFC. I had the opportunity to call upon the Uzbek ambassador to Pakistan, back in 2018, who confided that the per-hectare agricultural yield of Uzbekistan is twice as much as Pakistan. Modern agricultural practices are not followed here due to a host of reasons. Pakistan presently is better positioned for corporate farming compared to

agro-industry.

Apart from raw material suppliers, a huge employee base and product buyers, industries have to deal with a dozen different government agencies. However, a farmer primarily engages with the provincial revenue department alone.

With millions of acres of cultivable land in Pakistan, corporate farming will not only ensure food security in Pakistan but also export surplus produce to the GCC and other countries. India, the largest exporter of rice, imposed a moratorium on the export of non-basmati white rice in July, which spiralled the global prices of rice. Pakistan is poised to fully capitalize on the opportunity accentuated further by the fact that a good yield is expected this year. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has projected that Pakistan's rice exports will jump 40 per cent to 4.8 million tons in the current fiscal year, fetching an additional \$1.0 billion in exports. Pakistan is expected to have rice production of 9.0 million tons in FY2024, significantly higher than the output of 5.5 million last year due to devastating floods.

Pakistan's entry in new markets — Mexico and Rus-

sia — is also anticipated to have a positive impact on Pakistan's GDP this year. The agriculture sector is projected to play a significant role in achieving the target of 3.5 per cent in 2024. With the expansion of Pakistan's cultivable area (intensification) through corporate farming, an increase in oilseed production is foreseen which will have a positive impact in terms of foreign exchange savings.

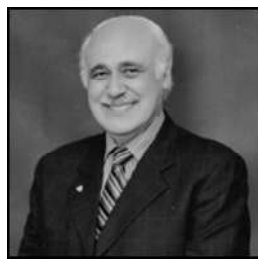
The IT sector is also one of the focal areas of the SIFC. The government's recent decision to allow IT companies to retain 50 per cent of their foreign exchange proceeds to service their subscription and other payment requirements is expected to have a positive impact on IT receipts. The government is also vying to ensure the availability of PayPal and Stripe payment gateways services in Pakistan.

The SIFC's role in curbing smuggling, foreign exchange hoarding and a host of other steps, in turn addressing the concerns of the FATF, has made the ecosystem of Pakistan conducive for PayPal and Stripe gateway services in the country. The availability of international payment gateways will give an immediate impetus to the

freelancing community, which consequently will scale up foreign remittances in the country.

The demand for lithium, against the backdrop of the popularity of EVs in the global market, has witnessed unprecedented growth in the past few years. The global lithium market is expected to grow from \$65.9 billion in 2021 to \$273.8 billion by 2030, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 19.3 per cent. Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan are known to have lithium deposits. The role of the military in the SIFC is a positive indication for foreign investors because the challenge of law and order can only be met by the Pakistan Army. Growth in Pakistan's GDP will create fiscal space for education, healthcare and spending in other social sectors, which will empower people with an informed decision-making process. The SIFC's active participation in economic decision-making followed by an effective implementation mechanism, with a sense of collective responsibility, will eventually strengthen the political and democratic institutions of Pakistan. -- Courtesy TheNews

Crimson chronicles



F.S. Aijazuddin

The dead die when ceremony replaces memory. Ask the souls of those millions who sacrificed their lives throughout the history of human conflict. They lie interred beneath the earth they fought over. They fertilise the flowers that are plucked into wreaths. They are beyond the sound of vainglorious trumpets. They lie deep, 'too deep for tears'.

There was a time when news of victories or defeats in battle took days, often weeks, if not months, to reach families at home. How long, one wonders, did it take for news of Alexander's victory over Porus near the Jhelum in 326 BCE to reach Greece and the anxious Macedonians? It took over a month in 1776, after the Declaration of Independence of July 4, for the British King George III to learn that he had lost his American colonies. News of Wellington's victory over Napoleon in 1815 reached London's Whitehall after three days. The telegraph and the radio, however, brought modern wars into real time.

In May 2011, news channels via satellite television allowed president Obama, secretary of state Hillary Clinton and their cast of hawks in Washington, D.C. to watch US Navy SEALs invade Pakistan, and then assassinate Osama bin Laden in distant Abbottabad.

Today, death strides with bloodied boots directly from the battlefield into our family lounges. It does not wait for a casus

belli. Retaliation now precedes the provocation.

There are many today who suspect that the attacks on America's homeland on 9/11 were pre-planned by forces within the US, with Saudi help. Out of the 19 Al Qaeda terrorists who hijacked four US commercial airliners on Sept 11, 2001, 15 were Saudi citizens.

No one has been allowed to plumb the alleged role of the then Saudi ambassador to the US Prince Bandar bin Sultan. (He served both masters in D.C. for 22 years.) It has been alleged he indirectly funded some of the hijackers. His name is believed to be included in the 28 sensitive pages redacted from the final version of the 9/11 Commission report. How did Saudi and UAE nationals with US pilots' licences agree to commit such a well-planned suicide? And who is looking after their families? (In India, Bimal Kaur — the widow of Mrs Indira Gandhi's assassin Beant Singh — was later elected to the Lok Sabha.)

Some ask how Hamas could have amassed unaided 5,000 rockets to launch its pre-emptive attack on Israel? Whoever planned that assault must have anticipated its devastating consequences. They could foresee that the resultant punishment would not only fit the crime but was intended to exceed it. And after the present apocalypse, what? Many years ago, the comedian Peter Sellers starred in a satirical film *The Mouse that Roared* (1959). In it, a fictional tiny European Duchy of Grand Fenwick "declares war on the United States, surrenders and takes advantage of American largesse towards its defeated enemies to rebuild the defeated nation's economy". If only Palestine had been another Grand Fenwick: its rehabilitation would have been assured. Instead, before the close of 2023, Palestine as

a state will have been obliterated. Its rubble will be pulverised to cement the foundation for a dollar-funded reconstruction, a phoenix rising out of the ashes of Palestine into a larger Israel. Ironically, Palestine's annihilation will be the final solution to the Palestinian problem. This would suit everyone: an ambitious Israel, its ever-loyal patron the US, a re-proving but impotent UN, and a quiescent Muslim ummah which has less the properties of a camel than of an ostrich with its head buried in the sand. Such a solution would suit everyone — except the innocent infants who fight for every breath, not for land. They are as-sured enough inches for a grave.

Will these atrocities pass into history unchronicled? In 1945, World War II had hardly ended when the Western media began a barrage of propaganda aimed at extolling its victories and denigrating its enemies. Quack off the mark were Lord Russell of Liverpool's charge-sheets of German and Japanese atrocities. The first — *The Scourge of the Swastika: A Short History of Nazi War Crimes* — appeared in 1954. (It avoided the word 'German'.) It was followed by *The Knights of Bushido: A Short History of Japanese War Crimes* (1958). No embarrassment there.

If there are any comparable volumes on the war crimes committed by the US and its allies since 1945, the White House library certainly does not have them. It would not have enough space.

A resident — president Ronald Reagan — once said: "There is no cause more important than affirming the transcendent right to life of all human beings, the right without which no other rights have any meaning." But then, Ronald Reagan began his Hollywood career as a comedian. -- Courtesy Dawn

Balochistan politics



Rafiullah Kakar

Balochistan has again captured the spotlight, courtesy of Nawaz Sharif's strategic foray into the province to court electables from BAP and other parties in a bid to solidify PML-N's position ahead of the polls. The influx of over two dozen electables into PML-N begs a critical evaluation of Islamabad's approach towards Balochistan. The national discourse has almost always attributed the plight of Balochistan to its own predatory and corrupt political elite, particularly the tribal sardars. While Balochistan's people generally agree with this assessment, they stress a crucial exception: these predatory elites owe their sustenance primarily to the patronage emanating from Islamabad.

The genesis of the predatory political behaviour of traditional elites in Balochistan can be traced to the tribal governance system of the British. Popularly known as the 'Sandeman system', the colonial frontier governance model corrupted tribal social structures and fortified the position of tribal sardars by extending to them patronage in exchange for performing specific administrative functions. Tribal sardars thus became integral to a two-way patron-client relationship, acting as both clients of the colonial state and patrons of their tribal subjects.

The postcolonial state perpetuated this policy of 'indirect rule' through the tribal sardars. Although the introduction of representative democracy opened avenues for

commoners to enter the political arena, the de facto power of the sardars endured, courtesy of the patronage received from Islamabad. The Islamabad-sardar alliance symbolises a marriage of convenience, with the state providing patronage in return for sardars' countering assertive Baloch nationalists and downplaying thorny issues straining Baloch-Islamabad ties.

Since Balochistan's establishment as a province in 1970, it has predominantly witnessed rule by Islamabad-backed tribal elites. In the period from 1970 to 2023, Balochistan experienced civilian rule for only 28 years, with countrywide parties governing for approximately 22 years (82 per cent), leaving ethno-regional parties with a mere six years (18pc). Countrywide parties like the PML-N, PPP, and PTI have remained primary conduits for the traditional sardars and newly emerging electables, generally hailing from the mercantile class. They have switched political allegiances frequently. Despite their penchant for political nomadism, these turncoats find ready acceptance in the very parties they had deserted previously.

In the current scenario, the influx of electables into the PML-N raises eyebrows about the party's strategy for the restive province. Given the proclivity, and proven track record, of these electables to change political loyalties opportunistically, the PML-N leadership should prioritise the medium- and long-term goal of cultivating a genuine support base among the masses. Of all the parties, the PML-N should know better that these electables are trustworthy neither in the short nor medium term.

It was only in 2018 that the PML-N chief minister in Balochistan, Nawab Sanullah Zehri,

was deserted by more than two-thirds of his own party members in support of a no-confidence motion filed by the opposition. Requiring a simple majority (33 votes) to continue as Leader of the House, the PML-N, with 21 members in the provincial assembly, should have comfortably thwarted the motion with the support of coalition partners whose combined strength was 25. However, it couldn't retain the loyalty of even nine out of 21 members and collapsed like a house of cards. Despite this experience, the PML-N leadership appears reluctant to learn from the past. The opportunistic and inconsistent behaviour of countrywide parties towards political turncoats renders them susceptible to ex-ternal manipulation when political fortunes reverse.

This policy of ruling the province through electables has hindered the organic growth of political parties and fostered the growth of non-partisan, predatory political behaviour in the province. Further, it has fostered and cemented patronage-based provision of public goods and services at the expense of systemic reforms and service delivery. Lastly, it has weakened the public accountability of elected representatives, who increasingly rely on state patronage rather than popular support to enhance their chances of re-election.

In conclusion, the embrace of proven turncoats carries damaging implications for both political culture and public service delivery. Moving forward, the countrywide parties and the ruling elite in Islamabad, at the minimum, must acknowledge their complicity in Balochistan's crisis of political leadership rather than shifting the blame onto the province's citizens. -- Courtesy Dawn

KP Governor announces establishment of KMU's campus in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali on Thursday has announced the establishment of a Khyber Medical University (KMU) campus in Dera Ismail Khan (D.I. Khan) during the 5th convocation of Gomal Medical College.

This decision was taken in view of the region's remote and backward status and the need to provide accessible medical facilities to the local population.

The governor has instructed the Vice

Chancellor of KMU and the Commissioner of D.I. Khan to resolve all issues related to the establishment of the campus within a month and to commence operations temporarily in a rented building.

The governor awarded degrees to 50 male and female students who completed their medical studies during the session 2009-13 and 2017-22 and presented gold medals/silver medals/bronze medals to 18 male and female students for their excellent performance.

During his address at the convocation, Governor

Ali appreciated the performance of Gomal Medical College and congratulated the successful students, parents, and faculty members.

He reaffirmed the commitment of the federal and provincial governments to addressing the challenges faced by educational institutions and providing the best possible medical facilities to the people.

He also assured the audience that efforts are underway to equip hospitals with the latest infrastructure and modern

technology.

Governor Ali urged the newly graduated doctors to treat patients with utmost respect and compassion.

He highlighted the provincial government's ongoing efforts to bring development to the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The governor commended the management and faculty members of Gomal Medical College for their dedication to improving academic standards and organizing curricular and extra-curricular activities.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Muhammad Balighur Rehman in a group photo with students of Government Boys High School and Government Girls High School established here at Governor House during free uniforms and school bags distribution ceremony.



DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali inaugurates Dental Block at Gomal Medical College DI Khan.

US Ambassador opens Punjab's first ARCC at Nishtar Hospital

MULTAN (APP): The first Anti-Rape Crisis Cell (ARCC) of Punjab, which has been set up for provision of medico legal aid to victims of sexual abuse including women and children, opened at Nishtar Hospital here on Thursday.

US Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Bloom, caretaker provincial Health Minister Dr Javid Akram, ACS South Punjab, Saqib Zafar and UN Women representative for Pakistan, Sharmila Rasool jointly opened the Cell.

It aims at getting the victims justice from the courts based on the evidence of the case.

Addressing the inaugurating ceremony, US Envoy, Donald Bloom said that the establishment of the Cell in Multan was an important step towards justice for sexually abused women and children. He emphasized the protection of the rights of victims in the fight against the violence and paid tribute to the Punjab government and UN Women for establishing the ARCC.

Mr Bloom said that sexual violence was not a local issue but a global problem that required collective efforts to prevent it adding that the international community was united to deal with it

and stands with the victims to get justice. He said that it was the responsibility of the entire society to provide support to any victims. He said that the ARCC would provide legal, medical and psychological support to the victims and it was the first cell in Punjab province and the second in Pakistan.

The Cell has been set up in Gynae Ward of Nishtar Hospital in collaboration with Punjab Health Department, UN Women and the American Government. The Cell is part of the US-supported protection programme and will be functional round the clock, he added.

Dr. Saqib stresses need of skill development for 8.3m children getting Wazaif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib Thursday emphasized equipping beneficiary children of BISP Taleemi Wazaif initiative to make them self-sufficient in the future.

Addressing a gathering of dedicated BISP staff at Jamia Masjid Qasim ul Aloom in Sargodha, Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib said that serving 9.3 million needy families is a noble cause and equivalent to worship, according to a news release.

Acknowledging the mission of BISP to alleviate poverty and empower

vulnerable populations, Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib commended the impact of BISP's efforts in education by providing educational scholarships under Benazir Taleemi Wazaif to 8.3 million children ensuring their regular attendance in schools.

He also stressed the need to provide technical skills education to the interested children from these needy families.

The chairman has called upon BISP manpower to work collectively and make BISP the best institution in the country.

Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib issued instructions to BISP.

Punjab Governor says: Seeking knowledge obligatory for every man, woman in our religion

LAHORE: The Punjab Governor, Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended a ceremony of free uniforms and school bags distribution among the students of Government Boys High School and Government Girls High School established here at Governor House as chief guest. Begum Governor, Ayesha Baligh, renowned industrialist, Chairman Rumi Foundation, Jalaluddin Rumi, Principal Boys High School, Principal Girls High School, Najam Rumi,

teachers and students were present. Addressing the ceremony, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rahman said that seeking knowledge is obligatory for every man and woman in our religion. He said that when the Holy Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the first word was Iqra (Read). Punjab Governor said that the process of learning should continue throughout life. He called upon the students to develop positive character traits in themselves. Addressing the

students, he said that parents hold the status of spiritual parents and they should respect them. Governor Punjab appreciated the announcement by Rumi Foundation to award merit scholarships to the top three boys and girls. Chairman Rumi Foundation, Jalaluddin Rumi said that the children are our future. He said that Rumi Foundation will bear the higher education expenses of the top three students. He said that Rumi Foundation will distribute uniforms.

KP declares 'Emergency' for repatriation of illegal foreigners

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department has declared 'Emergency' in district Khyber, Peshawar and Nowshera to expedite the operational activities in the transit and staging points for repatriation of the illegal foreigners.

A notification issued here authorized Director General (DG) of PDMA and Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of the three districts to mobilize all resources and engage necessary machinery and other equipment to establish and

operate these transit and staging points for repatriation of illegal foreigners.

It further said that the Finance department would release all the required funds for the purpose to PDMA for further release to the deputy commissioners for prudent and judicious expenditure.

It directed PDMA and DCs to properly maintain the inventory registers and accounts of all the expenditure, issuance of articles etc. as per formal government procedure for accountability.

Ulema conference held to engage scholars in making Bannu polio free

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government on Thursday arranged a one-day Ulema conference in Bannu district to engage religious scholars in the mission to make Bannu polio-free. The conference which was attended by distinguished scholars and key officials sought to harness the influential role of Ulema in eradicating polio through collaborative efforts.

Prominent figures including Caretaker Health Advisor Dr. Riaz Anwar, Secretary Health, Mahmood Aslam Wazir,

Commissioner Bannu Division, and Parvez Sabatkhel participated in the conference.

Scholars including Maulana Mufti Abdul Ghani, Maulana Naseem Ali Shah, and Maulana Qari Muhammad Roman actively contributed to discussions on eliminating the polio virus highlighting the role scholars of in making Bannu a polio-free area.

Caretaker Advisor Dr. Riaz Anwar shed light on the consequences of polio highlighting the permanent physical disability it inflicts upon children.

Dagha surrenders salary, allowances as Caretaker Minister

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Minister for Revenue, Industries and Commerce Muhammad Younus Dagha has surrendered his salary, allowances and TA/DA entitled as Caretaker Minister. In his letter addressed to Secretary Services, General Administration and Coordination Department, Younus Dagha stated that he had been notified as Caretaker Sindh Minister on August 19, 2023. The Minister stated that he was surrendering his monthly salary, allowance and TA/DA as admissible under rules and shall work for province of Sindh on honorary basis.

Counterfeit FIA officer held

PESHAWAR (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Anti-Corruption Circle Peshawar on Thursday arrested an impersonator posing as an officer of the agency and blackmailing the government officials and general public.

According to FIA spokesman, the accused Sajjad Hussain resident of district Haripur was caught red-handed from in front of the NAB KP building, while the FIA team comprising Sub-Inspectors Naheed Bilal and Muhammad Sohail and Constable Mushtaq recovered two mobile phones.

Chief Justice PHC stresses accountability and legal commitments

HARIPUR (APP): Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Muhammad Ibrahim Khan underscored the shared responsibilities of the bench and bar, highlighting the crucial role lawyers play in upholding justice. He expressed these views while addressing lawyers at the District Bar Haripur where he inaugurated the new building for lawyers' offices and the Bar Club here Thursday.

The CJ expressed the court's unwavering commitment to providing support to lawyers whenever judicial expertise is required, emphasizing the fundamental nature of legal practice in the profession.

Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan assured that the selection and appointment of judges

would adhere to principles of complete merit and transparency. Reflecting on his philanthropic endeavors during his tenure as Additional Session Judge and Session Judge in Haripur, he outlined the contributions such as establishing a Blood Donation Center in a hospital and providing X-ray machines.

He also mentioned his ongoing efforts to allocate a portion of his monthly salary for charitable activities, with a specific focus on promoting the Rule of Law and Service to Humanity.

Furthermore, Justice Ibrahim Khan stressed that accountability is not confined to the Chief Justice alone but extends to Deputy Commissioners and District Police Officers.



MULTAN: U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome and Caretaker Minister for Health Punjab, Prof. Javed Akram unveiling a plaque to inaugurate the Anti-Rape Crisis Cell at Nishtar Hospital.

Fact sheet on newer nicotine, tobacco products unveiled in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): Blue Veins, a non-profit organization dedicated to public health and social development, has unveiled a comprehensive policy brief and fact sheet addressing the growing concerns surrounding newer nicotine and tobacco products.

This initiative aims to equip policymakers with crucial insights into emerging trends, key challenges, and necessary policy actions for regulation.

The policy brief, compiled by Blue Veins, draws upon information from a multitude of reputable sources, including briefing papers,

research studies, fact sheets, and analytical reports from entities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), international health institutions, academic and educational studies, credible media outlets, and news sources.

The document serves as a valuable resource for policymakers seeking to make informed decisions regarding the regulation of newer nicotine products.

Qamar Naseem, Program Manager of Blue Veins, emphasized the importance of banning e-cigarettes in Pakistan, stating, "E-cigarettes pose a significant threat to public health, especially

Two killed in separate incidents at Swabi

SWABI (APP): Two persons were killed in separate incidents of violence in two different areas of the district here on Thursday.

According to police, a man identified as Muhammad Arif was killed in Dagai. Relatives have nominated Maqsood and Aftab in the first information report for the murder. The reason behind the killing was stated to be an old enmity. In another incident that occurred in the limits of Yar Hussain Police Station.

ANF recovers 207kg drugs in eight operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover 207 kg drugs and arrested nine accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday.

He informed that ANF was making all-out efforts against drug trafficking at national and international level.

In an operation, 122 grams ice drug concealed in a parcel of spoons booked for US was recovered at a Courier Office in

Rawalpindi. 216 grams heroin was recovered at Allama Iqbal International Airport from a parcel being sent to Kuwait.

200 grams weed was recovered at GPO Multan from a parcel sent from America.

100 ecstasy tablets were recovered from two accused going on a motorcycle in Bahria Town Rawalpindi.

On the pointation of the arrested accused, ANF raided on a flat in Sector E-11 and recovered over 3,100 ecstasy tablets.



SARGODHA: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib addressing a gathering of BISP staff at Jamia Masjid Qasim ul Aloom.

Government approves Telecom Infrastructure sharing framework

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government has approved the Telecom Infrastructure Sharing Framework (TISF) developed by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA).

The Framework was developed in consultation with the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) and the telecom industry, said a news release.

This Framework provides a regulatory mechanism for licensees to share their active as well as passive telecom infrastructure in a fair and competitive manner.

The approval of the Telecom Infrastructure Sharing Framework is a major step forward for the growth & sustainability of the telecom sector in Pakistan.

It is expected to lead to significant reductions in

the cost of deploying (CapEx) and operating (OpEx) telecom networks, which will ultimately benefit consumers in the form of lower prices and better as well enhanced services.

There was a great need for telecom infrastructure sharing in Pakistan due to increasing inflation, low Average Revenue Per User (ARPU), rising fuel prices, revenue challenges, massive CapEx demand for 4G & 5G expansion, connecting remote areas, and cost-effective capacity growth for nationwide coverage.

Telecom Infrastructure Sharing acts as a jump-start for new services with a larger coverage footprint and early Time to Market (TTM) of innovative products.

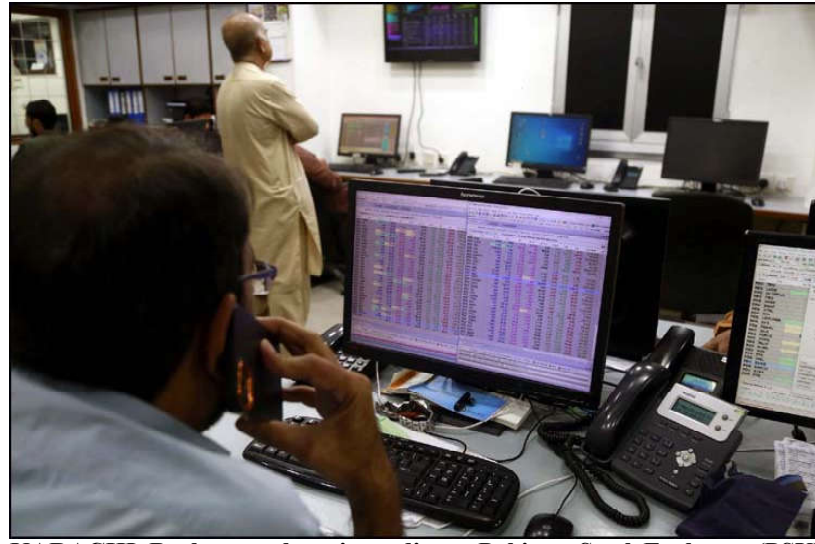
The Framework heightens competition

among operators to focus on service differentiation and enhancing customer experience since part of the underlying network is shared.

PTA appreciates MoITT for its support in the development and approval of the Telecom Infrastructure Sharing Framework.

The Authority is confident in the positive impact of the Framework on Pakistan's telecom sector and anticipates collaborative efforts to implement the framework, which aligns with the shared goal of advancing Pakistan as a leading digital economy.

The Framework is available on PTA's website: www.pta.gov.pk. Telecom infrastructure sharing refers to the sharing of telecom network components and associated non-electronic.



KARACHI: Brokers are busy in trading at Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) in Karachi. The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark index and rupee recorded gains on Thursday.

Govt needs to curb soaring energy rates, hike in gas price to lift inflation: Ali Sheikh

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Presidential candidate of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industries' (FPCCI) upcoming election for 2024 Muhammad Ali Sheikh has called for keeping check on soaring energy prices, as the recent hike in gas prices will lift the average Consumer Price Index further, hitting all sectors of the economy.

In a statement on Thursday, FPCCI's Presidential candidate said that the government had increased gas tariff with effect from this month 2023 just before the first IMF review under the \$3

billion short-term loan program. This is the second gas price increase in 10 months. The gas price hike is a condition attached to the loan program. It may pave the way for the release of second IMF tranche of \$700 million.

Calling to revert the decision, Muhammad Ali Sheikh said that may resort to price increase include fertiliser, cement and steel, which will make agricultural production and construction material more expensive. The inflation forecast was higher than the State Bank of Pakistan's projection of 20-22 percent. The central

bank governor has said that the expected gas price hike has been incorporated into the inflation forecast. The business leader said that feed and fuel stock prices are forecast to increase to Rs580 per million British thermal units (mmbtu) from the current price of Rs510, and to Rs1,580 per mmbtu from the current price of Rs1,500, respectively. Earlier, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) had notified revised gas prices in February 2023 for consumers of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL).

CDNS achieves Rs 515b targets in fresh bond

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 515 billion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, from July 1 to 15th November September.

The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, the senior official of CDNS told APP here on Thursday.

He said this was Rs 200 billion additional annual targets than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22.

"The CDNS has set a reviewed saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the current financial year (2021-22) which will promote savings culture in the country," he said.

In view of the current

market trend in the country, the ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture, he said.

He said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and new reforms and innovations were being introduced.

"At this time Automated Teller Machine (ATM) has also been introduced in CDNS which will provide enough facilities to the users," he added.

Replying to a question, he said the CDNS had collected an investment of Rs 16 billion in the month of July 2023-24, through Islamic investment bonds.

He added that the directorate has set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds.

VP FPCCI says: Tourism is hidden treasure of Pakistan, has potential to transform the economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mr. Amin Ullah Baig, Vice President of FPCCI and chairman Capital Office said that Gilgit-Baltistan has a great potential to generate 40,000 megawatts of hydropower. Apart from this, the province also has attractive business and investment opportunities in tourism, minerals, agriculture, and dry fruit

high-quality hotels, roads, and other infrastructures in the area can be developed on modern lines that will attract tourists from all over the world to the region.

Mr. Amin Ullah Baig expressed above while talking to the meeting of all chambers and associations of Gilgit-Baltistan. Group Leaders, Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Executive



Members of the Gilgit Chamber, Hunza Chamber, Ghizar Chamber, Skardu Chamber, Hunza Small Chamber & Gilgit Women Chamber & PGMA were present at the meeting. All Members of Chambers and Associations of Gilgit-Baltistan expressed their full confidence in President FPCCI Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Vice-President and Chairman Capital Office Aminullah Baig, and other team members they further expressed that the business.

The area is rich in natural resources, including forests, minerals, and water, which present opportunities for economic growth and development. Federal & GB Governments should consider providing more attractive incentives to investors, especially in the tourism sector, so that

HBL, BOC sign MoU to enhance regional trade

BEIJING (APP): Habib Bank Limited (HBL) and Bank of China (BOC) on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Strategic Cooperation to enhance regional trade, at the BOC headquarters in Beijing, China.

The signing of the strategic cooperation memorandum signifies HBL and BOC's commitment to driving economic empowerment and regional connectivity.

The cooperation between the two will facilitate seamless trade opportunities, benefiting businesses in South Asia, the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa.

Both organizations will also work to deepen strategic cooperation in the areas of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), technology and training.

The MoU would also aim to foster stronger ties between financial institutions in both the countries, improve trade infrastructure and ultimately will promote economic growth and development through increased regional trade opportunities.



LAHORE: General Secretary of Pakistan Kisan Rabta Committee Farooq Tariq addressing press conference along with others at press club in Provincial Capital.

PSX stays bullish, gains 716 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with a bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 716.96 points, a positive change of 1.26 percent, closing at 57,397.03 points against 56,680.07 points the previous trading day.

A total of 1,056,714,813 shares valuing Rs 28.861 billion were traded during the day as compared to 661,624,152 shares valuing Rs 24.353 billion the previous day.

As many as 374

companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 235 of them recorded gains and 118 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 21 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 386,369,558 shares at Rs.1.59 per share, Cnergycio Pk with 45,145,732 shares at Rs.4.70 per share and Pak Refinery with 39,582,534 shares at Rs.24.97 per share. Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.400.00 per share price.



HYDERABAD: Warm clothes are being selling at a roadside stall as the demand of warm clothes increased in city on the arrival of cold waves of winter season, at Bacha Khan Chowk in Hyderabad.

Govt failed to capitalize on IMF-SBA for Resumption of IFIs loans: Irfan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has welcomed the successful completion of first review of the staff-level agreement (SLA) with IMF pertaining to the current Standby Agreement (SBA). The business community has stood by the government to surpass its revenue generation target despite all odds – and, above all, unbearable cost of doing business in the wake of triple whammy of electricity, gas and petroleum prices, he added.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, nonetheless, reiterated FPCCI's stance that Pakistan must embark on a tangible, pragmatic and business-friendly plan to get rid of IMF – and, its unnecessary and ruthless conditionalities; which evaporates any possibility of business & economic growth.

We can generate more resources through boosting trade & industry than knocking at the doors of

IMF again in April 2024 after completion of the ongoing 9-month standby agreement in March 2024.

FPCCI Chief questioned that why economic team of the government has still not been able to secure other sources of cheaper external financing from multilateral sources and international financial institutions (IFIs) like World Bank, International Finance Corporation (IFC), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB). It is pertinent to note that IMF-SBA kicked off 5 months back in July 2023, he added.

Mr. Sheikh explained that due to the lack of institutional arrangements with IFIs, Pakistan will continue to rely on bilateral loans from friendly countries to complete the current IMF program – while, our preference should have been investment, trade and industrial collaboration with friendly countries.



LAHORE: A vendor preparing the different kind of decorative stuff use for marriage ceremonies at his workplace.

OGRA, PRL seal pivotal agreement under Brownfield Refinery Policy

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark development aligning with Pakistan's refining policy, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) and the Pakistan Refinery Limited (PRL) officially inked a pivotal upgrade agreement on Thursday.

The accord, which was signed following extensive deliberations, consultations, and a series of meetings with key stakeholders, marks a significant milestone for the energy sector.

"After a marathon of meetings, consultations, and deliberations with the stakeholders, the agreement was finalized, and by the grace of Almighty Allah, we

have signed the first one with PRL," said OGDCL Chairman Masroor Khan said. He said the Brownfield Refinery Policy, a critical component of the national strategic framework, necessitated such agreements to facilitate existing refineries in advancing their projects toward producing Euro-V-compliant fuels.

The implementation of the policy was poised to usher in positive transformations within the oil sector of Pakistan, he added. "We believe that the upgrade projects under the Brownfield Refinery Policy are of paramount national importance.

Rupee gains 77 paisa against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Thursday gained 77 paisa against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 287.37 against the previous day's closing at Rs 288.14.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 287.2 and Rs 290 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.55 to close at Rs 311.60 against the last day's closing of Rs 313.15, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen depreciated by 02 paisa to close at Rs 1.89; whereas a decrease of Rs 3.26 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 355.90 as compared to the last closing of Rs 359.16.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 21 and 20 paisa to close at Rs 78.24 and Rs 76.62 respectively.

Pakistan's total liquid foreign reserves reach at \$ 12.53 billion

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of the country on Thursday stood at US\$ 12,535.5 million while the central bank held the reserves of \$ 7,396.7 million.

The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here informed that SBP's reserves decreased by \$ 115 million to \$ 7,396.7 million due to debt repayments during the week ended on November 10, 2023. Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at \$ 5,138.8 million, it added. Total liquid foreign reserves held by the country, in the previous week ending on November 3, 2023, were US\$ 12,614.2 million. Among them, foreign reserves held by the central bank were \$ 7,511.5 million while net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were \$ 5,102.7 million.

Zong 4G celebrates UAE National Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the UAE's National Day approaches, Zong 4G's UAE Roaming Bundles, truly embody the spirit of celebration and unity.

These bundles not only provide seamless connectivity for travellers but also serve as a testament to Zong 4G's commitment to fostering connections during this special occasion.

In the spirit of celebration, Zong 4G has simplified the activation process for UAE Roaming Bundles. Users can easily subscribe to these bundles through the My Zong App (MZA) or by dialing *4225#, ensuring hassle-free connectivity.

Zong 4G remains committed to providing a seamless experience for users, allowing them to focus on the celebrations rather than the logistics of staying connected. The UAE Bundle gives users 2GB of data coupled with 120 minutes and SMS for just Rs 1999 + tax with a validity of 7 days.

The UAE Roaming Bundles empower users to connect with their families, friends, and colleagues.

By offering cost-effective international communication, Zong 4G ensures that users can share the joy of the occasion and celebrate the spirit of unity.

Gold rates dip by Rs500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.500 and was sold at Rs 214,300 on Thursday as compared to its sale at Rs 214,800 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 428 to Rs 183,728 from Rs 184,156 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs 168,417 from Rs 168,810, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver decreased by Rs30 to Rs.2,550 whereas that of ten gram silver declined by Rs25.72 to 2,186.21.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$2 to \$1986 from \$1,988.



PESHAWAR: Vendors are weighing corn cobs for bidding in the market at Lahori Gate.

SCCI calls for further cementing Pak-US bilateral trade, economic ties

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) president, Fuad Ishaq said discoveries made in oil, gas and other natural resources in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but a geological survey hasn't been conducted in the last two decades, therefore, urged the U.S to assist in conducting a geological survey in the province.

Emphasizing further cementing Pak-US bilateral trade and economic relations, the SCCI chief invited US companies and investors to make investments in a potential sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He made these remarks during a meeting with U.S. Consul General in Peshawar Mr. Shante

Moore, who visited the chamber house on Thursday, according to a press release issued here.

On the occasion, the SCCI senior vice president Sanaulah Khan, vice president Ijaz Khan Afridi, former presidents Haji Muhammad Afzal, Zahidullah Shinwari, Zulfikar Ali Khan, Faiz Muhammad Faizi, Sherbaz Bilour, executive members Hafaf Ali Khan, Monwar Khurshid, Kashif Amin, Qurtul Ain and Fahad Amin, Khalid Sultan Khawaja, Ashfaq Ahmad, Saleem Bokhari, Ihsanullah, Muhammad Akhtar, Sadder Gul, Fazle Wahid, Ishtiaq Ahmad, Women chamber Peshawar vice president Aneela Khalid, traders and industrialists were present.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, CSL Manhattan, Clemens Schulte and Mineral Olympia carrying Containers and Mogas, berthed at Container Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile two more ships, VTC Phoenix and Felicity to load Rice and Condensate also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same day.

A total of twelve ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, seven ships left the port on Thursday morning.

Cargo throughput of 125,367 tonnes, comprising 70,630 tonnes imports cargo and 54,737 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 3,239 Containers (1,430 TEUs Imports).



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Secretary Babar Khan inspecting the various sections during his visit to Directorate General Treasury and Accounts.

Biden, Xi restore military ties despite 'dictator' comment

Xi says China ready to be 'partner and friend' of US

Monitoring Desk
CALIFORNIA: US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed at their first summit in a year on Wednesday to restore military communications between the two countries, even as Biden went off script by saying he still considered Xi a "dictator".

The leaders shook hands and strolled around a garden at a historic California estate during four-hour talks aimed at preventing growing tensions between the world's largest economies from spiraling into conflict.

They also agreed that China would crack down on the production of ingredients for fentanyl, responsible for a deadly epidemic of opioid abuse in the United States, with Xi saying he "sympathises" with US victims of the deadly drug, which has ravaged communities across the country.

But Xi and Biden remained far apart on the wider flashpoint of Taiwan,

with the Chinese president telling his US counterpart to stop arming the island and that reunification was "unstoppable". Beijing claims sovereignty over the self-ruling democracy and has not ruled out seizing it by force. The two leaders had not met in person since they held talks in Bali in November 2022, and relations nosedived after the United States shot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon in February this year.

But Biden told a press conference at the Filoli estate that his talks with Xi, whom he has known since 2011, were "some of the most constructive and productive discussions we've had".

The United States would compete "vigorously" but "responsibly" with an increasingly assertive China "so it doesn't veer into conflict or accidental conflict," Biden said. "He and I agreed that each one of us could pick

up the phone, call directly and we'll be heard immediately."

The separate move to restore high-level US-China military-to-military communications, which China severed after then-US House speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan in 2022, was "critically important" to avoid possible conflicts, Biden added.

The two sides also agreed to hold talks on artificial intelligence and to deepen cooperation on climate change ahead of the COP28 conference in Dubai next month.

But a day of painstakingly choreographed diplomacy ended with a not-so-diplomatic remark as Biden walked offstage after his press conference.

When a reporter asked if he would still say Xi was a dictator as he had in June, a remark that prompted an angry response from Beijing at the time, Biden replied: "Well look, he is."



US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping walk together after a meeting during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' week in Woodside, California.

Turkish parliamentary committee delays decision on Sweden's NATO membership bid

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: The Turkish Parliament's foreign affairs committee on Thursday opened debate on Sweden's bid to join NATO, but adjourned the proceedings until a later date without reaching a decision.

It was not immediately known when the committee would resume its discussions on Sweden's accession protocol or when it would reach Parliament's general assembly for the last stage of the legislative process.

The meeting was adjourned after legislators from Erdogan's ruling party submitted a motion for a

postponement on grounds that negotiations with Sweden had not "matured" enough, Turkey's state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

Turkey has stalled ratifying Sweden's membership in NATO, accusing the country of being too lenient toward groups that Ankara regards as threats to its security, including Kurdish militants and members of a network that Ankara blames for a failed coup in 2016.

Turkey has also been angered by a series of demonstrations by supporters of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, in Sweden as well as Quran-

burning protests that roiled Muslim countries.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan lifted his objection to Sweden's bid during a NATO summit in July and sent the accession protocol to Parliament for ratification last month.

Turkey's reversal of its position came after Stockholm pledged deeper cooperation with Turkey on counterterrorism and to support Turkey's ambition to revive its EU membership bid. In addition, NATO agreed to establish a special coordinator for counterterrorism.

Iran's nuclear enrichment advances as it stonewalls UN, IAEA reports show

Monitoring Desk
VIENNA: Iran has enough uranium enriched to up to 60% purity, close to weapons-grade, for three atom bombs by the International Atomic Energy Agency's definition and is still stonewalling the agency on key issues, confidential IAEA reports showed on Wednesday.

Iran's steady progress in enriching to very high levels while failing to provide the International Atomic Energy Agency with the cooperation it demands on a growing list of issues presents a challenge to both the agency and Western powers that have repeatedly called on Iran to

reverse course.

Iran's stock of uranium enriched to up to 60% grew by 6.7 kg (14.8 pounds) to 128.3 kg (282.9 pounds) since the last report on Sept. 4, one of the two reports to member states seen by Reuters said. That is more than three times the roughly 42 kg (92.6 pounds) that by the IAEA's definition is theoretically enough, if enriched further, for a nuclear bomb. "That's quite an amount, especially if you don't use it for anything," a senior diplomat said, referring to the fact Iran is the only country to enrich to such a high level without producing nuclear weapons.

Voter support for Japan PM Kishida slides to record low

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Public support for Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government slid to a record low, a poll conducted by Jiji news agency showed on Thursday, as Kishida's tax cut plans to help cushion the blow of rising inflation left voters unimpressed.

In the research conducted from Nov. 10-13, 21.3% of those polled said they supported Kishida's government, down from 26.3% in October, with 51% of those surveyed saying they do not see his tax reduction steps positively.



Keir Starmer, leader of Britain's Labour Party, speaks during the Prime Minister's Questions, at the House of Commons in London, Britain.

Qatar seeks deal for prisoners' release, three-day truce

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: Qatari mediators were on Wednesday seeking to negotiate a deal between Hamas and Israel that includes the release of around 50 prisoners from Gaza in exchange for a three-day ceasefire, an official briefed on the negotiations said.

The deal, under discussion, which has been coordinated with the US, would also see Israel release some Palestinian women and children from Israeli jails and increase the amount of humanitarian aid allowed into Gaza, the official said.

Hamas has agreed to the general outlines of this deal, but Israel has not and it is still negotiating the details, the official said.

It is not known how many Palestinian women

and children Israel would release from its jails as part of the agreement under discussion.

The scope of the Qatari-led negotiations has changed significantly in recent weeks, but the fact that the talks are now focused on the release of 50 prisoners in exchange for a three-day truce and that Hamas has agreed to the outline of the deal have not been reported before.

The wealthy Gulf state of Qatar, which has ambitious foreign policy goals, has a direct line of communication with Hamas and Israel. It has previously helped mediate truces between the two. Such a deal would require Hamas handing over a complete list of remaining living prisoners held in Gaza.

Car crashes into barricade near Israel embassy in Tokyo, man detained

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: A car crashed into a barricade near the entrance of the Israeli embassy in Tokyo on Thursday and a man in his 50s was detained on the spot, local media reported.

One police officer was injured, Fuji TV said.

An official at the Israeli embassy said the matter was under police investigation and declined further comment.

A police spokesman said they were unable to comment at this moment.

Police officers blocked the area around where a black car with damage to its front headlights and panel appeared to have crashed, while the road was strewn with debris.

Cuba blames US sanctions for fomenting irregular migration amid exodus

Monitoring Desk
HAVANA: Cuban and US officials met in Havana to discuss migration, the second such meeting this year as both countries grapple with how best to slow the record-breaking flow of Cubans north to the United States.

The United States - the top destination for Cuban migrants - in 2022 renewed talks with Cuba and has since increased legal pathways to migration for Cubans, including visa access in Havana, family reunification and humanitarian parole programs aimed at stemming illegal migration.

But the problem won't go away, said Cuban vice foreign minister Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, until the United States eases sanctions on the island, which Cuba blames for devastating its already-ailing state-run economy.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, sits opposite Britain's Foreign Secretary David Cameron, during a meeting, in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Taiwan's opposition to unite on presidential ticket challenging frontrunner

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan's two main opposition parties, which have vowed to renew talks with China, agreed on Wednesday to make a decision on a joint presidential ticket for January's elections, as the front-running ruling party decried interference from Beijing.

The issue of China, which views Taiwan as its territory, looms over the Jan 13 parliamentary and presidential elections. China has stepped up military and political pressure

to press the island to accept its sovereignty claim, which Taiwan rejects, including high-profile war games.

Vice President Lai Ching-te, the ruling Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) presidential candidate, has almost consistently led opinion polls, leaving candidates of the main opposition Kuomintang (KMT), Hou Yu-ih, and the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), Ko Wen-je, to battle it out for second place.

Renewed drilling begins to rescue 40 men trapped in Indian tunnel for fifth day

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Rescue workers renewed efforts on Thursday to reach 40 men trapped inside a collapsed highway tunnel in India for the fifth day, making slow progress as they began drilling through rock and soil debris.

Authorities said they were confident an advanced drilling machine flown in from New Delhi will speed up the rescue at the site in the northern state of Uttarakhand.

Lebanese hospitals in danger of collapse

Monitoring Desk
MARJAYOUN: From his office overlooking the border with Israel, Dr Mounes Klakesh can hear the thump of artillery rounds and air strikes landing on nearby Lebanese towns. The increasing frequency of those strikes has the staff of his small hospital on edge.

"We've already had to treat 15 people wounded by explosions in the last month or so. Seventeen of those died, or arrived dead. More than that and we'd be overwhelmed," Klakesh said. Klakesh, director of the Marjayoun Hospital in southern Lebanon, said it serves nearly 300,000 people in the area. It has 14 emergency beds and struggles to operate because of a lack of staff and, crucially,

Labour rebellion as UK MPs vote on Gaza ceasefire

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: With a massive pro-Palestine demonstration taking place outside parliament, UK's House of Commons voted on Wednesday on a divisive amendment calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, with nearly 70 Labour MPs going against the party leadership.

However, both motions on Gaza were defeated, as majority MPs voted against them.

The Labour motion on Gaza called for a humanitarian pause whereas the Scottish National Party (SNP) motion sought release of Israeli prisoners, end of the Gaza siege and an immediate ceasefire.

During the debate,

the drama unfolded live as Labour MPs voting for the SNP's ceasefire motion simultaneously tweeted resignations from their frontbench posts. Labour MP and shadow minister for women and equities Yasmin Qureshi was the first to resign from her post as she supported a ceasefire vote. MP Afzal Khan from Manchester Gorton followed, resigning from his post as shadow minister for exports.

Tory MPs, however, reiterated their support for humanitarian pauses, and took exception to the term ceasefire. One MP said the word ceasefire implies "only one side, that is Israel, should stop violence, which is not the solution".

David Cameron visits Ukrainian port of Odesa in first overseas visit as top UK diplomat

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: David Cameron traveled Thursday to the Ukrainian port of Odesa in his first overseas trip as Britain's new foreign minister, and pledged that the U.K. would continue providing military support until Ukraine is victorious in its war with Russia.

Cameron, a former prime minister who returned to government in a surprise appointment Monday in a Cabinet shuffle, said he wanted to make Ukraine his first diplomatic destination, and met Wednesday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"I admire the strength and determination of the Ukrainian people," he told Zelenskyy in a video posted by the president.

Cameron said the U.K. would continue to provide moral, economic and diplomatic support "but above all, the military support of our people and critical infrastructure. I am grateful to the UK for its support!"

The two-day visit came as Ukraine faces several challenges on and off the battlefield.

Zelenskyy has struggled to capture the world's attention as focus has shifted to the Middle East and Israel's war against Hamas. Additional U.S. funding for Ukraine is jeopardized by political fights in Washington and the European Union says it can't provide all the munitions it promised. Meanwhile, Ukraine's counteroffensive has led to only incremental gains and the ground war appears bogged down in a stalemate as winter arrives.

Zelenskyy thanked Cameron for visiting and told him that the divided focus in the world does not help his cause.

"A good meeting," Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram on Thursday. "Weapons for the front, strengthening of air defense, protection of our people and critical infrastructure. I am grateful to the UK for its support!"

Rich countries may have met \$100 bln climate goal last year -OECD

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: Developed nations may have achieved their overdue promise of \$100 billion to help poorer countries cope with climate change in 2022, the OECD said on Thursday, an estimate that may muster some political goodwill on the eve of the COP28 climate summit.

In 2009, developed countries promised that from 2020 they would transfer \$100 billion a year to poorer nations hit by worsening climate change-fueled disasters. Rich countries had previously signalled the target would not be met until 2023.

The goal is politically symbolic and failure to meet it has stoked mistrust in past climate talks, hampering other deals to tackle climate change as poorer nations argue the world's economic powers are leaving them in the lurch.

The data come two weeks ahead of the United Nations' COP28 climate

summit, which starts in Dubai on Nov. 30.

Finance is a sore point in UN climate talks, as developing economies say they cannot adapt to extreme weather or invest in cleaner energy without more support from the rich nations whose historical fossil fuel burning caused climate change.

"Based on preliminary and as yet unverified data, the goal looks likely to have already been met as of 2022," said Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The \$100 billion is far below poor nations' actual climate investment needs, which by 2025 could total \$1 trillion per year, the OECD said.

"The delivery of the \$100 billion is vitally important," said Tina Stege, climate envoy for the Marshall Islands, a nation vulnerable to rising sea levels.

McDonald's UK boss says fast-food chain faces racism and bullying claims

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: McDonald's boss in Britain said Tuesday the US fast-food giant faces "one to two" sexual harassment allegations from workers every week, as he vowed to tackle the issue recently exposed by the BBC. Alistair Macrow, chief executive of McDonald's UK and Ireland, told a watchdog parliamentary committee that the chain's management also receives around five reports a week of bullying.

He said that his employees' accounts of alleged harassment and racism were "truly horrific and hard to listen to".

It follows the BBC reporting in July numerous allegations of sexual misconduct, racism and bullying by staff at McDonald's outlets in Britain.

Some 249 cases remain to be investigated, it has said. Law firm Leigh Day recently launched group legal action against McDonald's after the BBC aired the accusations, which included employees' claims they were "groped and harassed almost routinely". McDonald's UK opened a specialist unit to investigate the allegations, which stemmed from the accounts of around 100 staff, according to the British broadcaster.

Appearing before lawmakers in parliament, Macrow reiterated that he was "absolutely determined to root out any of these behaviours". He pledged to identify individuals who are responsible for them and "make sure they are eradicated from our business". But earlier in the hearing, union leaders claimed that, contrary to those assertions, the situation had not improved within McDonald's since it launched its internal probes.

Over 200,000 displaced by Myanmar fighting

Monitoring Desk
YANGON: More than 200,000 people have been displaced by fighting in Myanmar after an alliance of ethnic minority groups launched an offensive against the military last month, the United Nations said on Wednesday.

Fighting has raged since October 27 across northern Shan state near the Chinese border after the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Arakan Army (AA) launched attacks on the military. The alliance has blocked vital trade routes to China and seized a border hub in what analysts say is the biggest military challenge to the junta since it seized power in 2021.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) said that as of Wednesday, "more than

200,000 people" across Shan, Chin, Kayah and Mon states and Sagaing region have been "forcibly displaced due to the fighting".

At least 75 civilians including children have been killed and 94 people wounded in the fighting, UNOCHA said, citing initial reports from the field. Both sides have set up checkpoints on roads they control in Shan state and mobile communication remains patchy outside the main city of Lashio, hampering the delivery of aid, the UN said.

The junta has imposed martial law on several townships in the state, further hampering relief efforts, it added. The remoteness of the rugged, jungle-clad region — home to pipelines that supply oil and gas to China — and patchy communications make it difficult to verify casualty numbers.

The top UN court has ordered Syria to do all it can to prevent torture

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: The United Nations' top court on Thursday ordered the Syrian government to "take all measures within its powers" to prevent torture, in a case in which the Netherlands and Canada accuse Damascus of a years-long campaign of torturing its own citizens. The interim order is intended to protect potential victims while the case accusing Syria of breaching the torture convention proceeds through the International Court of Justice, a process likely to take years.

The court's President Joan E. Donoghue said the panel was ordering Dam-

ascus to "take all measures within its power to prevent acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

The court also called on Syria to "ensure that its officials, as well as any organizations or persons, may be subject to its control, direction or influence do not commit any acts of torture or other acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." The court further ordered Damascus to "take effective measures to prevent the destruction and ensure the preservation of any evidence related to the allegations of acts within the scope" of the convention.

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Protesters hold placards and flags during a rally in support of Palestinians, outside the Houses of Parliament in central London.

Solution to political instability lies in joint efforts by politicians, executive & establishment: Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday said Pakistan could overcome its challenges relating to political stability if its politicians, executive and the establishment make a joint commitment to address the issues.

He, in an interview with Voice of America (VOA), was responding to a question if the upcoming general polls would bring political stability in the country.

President Alvi expressed confidence that the result of the polls as an outcome of the public opinion would lead to an environment ensuring stability and prosperity of the country.

Dismissing doubts about delay of general election, he said the judiciary, executive and politicians held a unanimity on holding general elections on the announced date of February 8.

He maintained that the provision of level-playing field to all political parties was the mutual responsibility of the government and the Election Commission of Pakistan.

"The government has already given assurance about providing level-playing field to all parties," he said, adding that the nation had full trust in the

government's commitment in that regard.

The president said that through his letter, he invoked the government's attention towards the apprehensions of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI).

To a query, he said the Constitution did not allow the President to take a 'practical' action to ensure the transparency of an election.

"The President has no other way but to bring such issues to the notice of the government," he said.

He said though the office of the President did not have an administrative authority, however the points raised by it held a significant value. "There can be many expectations [from me to act in a particular way], but I will not take any unconstitutional step," he said. The president said he was not the spokesperson of any party, but of all Pakistanis, adding "However, I will continue to identify and point out whenever see any issue."

To a question, the president said he never showed negligence with respect to the date of general elections.

Alvi appreciated the Supreme Court of Pakistan on demonstrating unanimity over the election date.



KARACHI: Leaders and members of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, held at Moach Goth area in Karachi.



GENEVA: The Federal Secretary Health, Mr. Iftikhar Ali Shalwani represented the Government of Pakistan, during 50th board Meeting at Geneva Headquarter.

ADB receives \$8mln funds to meet sanitation challenge in Asia-Pacific

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund has received \$8 million replenishment from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, further scaling up the partnership between the two institutions to improve access to safe sanitation in Asia and the Pacific.

"As of 2022, the trust fund has leveraged over \$1.64 billion in ADB investments on citywide inclusive sanitation (CWIS) projects in ADB developing member countries (DMCs)," said ADB press statement received here Thursday.

"This replenishment brings the foundation's financial contribution to the trust fund to \$27 million

since 2013," it added.

"We highly appreciate the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's continued support to the Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund," said ADB Water and Urban Development Sector Officer Senior Director Norio Saito.

"This contribution will help ADB scale up and magnify the impact of our initiatives to improve access to safe sanitation in the region," Saito added.

This new funding will help advance ADB's focus on addressing climate resilience in sanitation infrastructure and services while helping make these services affordable, safe, inclusive, and effective.

The trust fund was established in 2013 to promote investments in fecal

sludge management, focusing on establishing markets, regulatory frameworks, and innovative business models that facilitate the delivery of non-piped sanitation and septage management services in DMCs.

The trust fund also aims to accelerate the adoption of the CWIS approach to promote adequate, equitable, and inclusive sanitation service solutions in the region.

Since its creation, the trust fund has helped improve sanitation of 13.93 million people in the region. Out of the \$1.64 billion leveraged investments in CWIS projects, around \$410 million were channeled towards non-sewered sanitation and fecal sludge management projects.

Dostain Jamaldini says: CMIT working to ensure quality of work in dev. projects

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Inspection Team (CMIT) is working together with the line departments to ensure quality of work in the development projects and complete projects in the stipulated time.

This was stated by Chairman CMIT, Mir Dostain Jamaldini while presiding over the meeting of different departments on Thursday.

The Members of CMIT Abdul Rauf Baloch and Qasim Mengal, Deputy Commissioner Kech, Hussain Jan Baloch besides officers of different departments of Kech.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman CMIT said that it is working in light of the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki so as to ensure transparency in the development projects of public interests.



QUETTA: Senior Politician, Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Raisani addresses during condolence reference in memory of Jahanzaib Awan organized by Tanzem-ul-Awan held at Quetta press club.

Speakers urge media action to promote menstrual hygiene management in Balochistan

Independent Report GWADAR: Highlighting issues pertaining to Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is an urgent need of the hour to ensure wellbeing of women and girls. The district government Gwadar would lend its all-out support to efforts that are aimed to raise awareness on MHM in society. Mr Tabish Baloch, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Gwadar said this while sharing his views with the participants of the groundbreaking media workshop, "Communicating Menstrual Hygiene Management," organized by The MHMWG Secretariat, Balochistan, in collaboration with the Education

Support Programme (ESP) funded by UNICEF Pakistan. Dr. Tahira Kamal, Chairperson of the Menstrual Hygiene Management Working Group (MHMWG) Balochistan underscored the strong correlation between promoting MHM and education, commending ESP for its noteworthy initiative to collaborate with MHMWG for media engagement on MHM. This collaboration aims to contribute to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 6.2 (Clean Water and Sanitation). The collaborative effort seeks to harness the power of local and national media to create a platform for constructive dialogue.

OIC calls Israeli aggression against Palestinians 'war crimes', asks world to step in

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Thursday said that the genocide perpetrated by the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip constituted a war crime under international humanitarian law and called for the immediate cessation of the aggression.

"The OIC renews its call on all international actors to assume their responsibility toward an immediate and complete halt to the Israeli aggression," a statement issued by the OIC headquarters in Jeddah said.

The statement urged the international community to ensure the opening of humanitarian corridors for the safe and sustainable delivery of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. The OIC strongly condemned the incursion into the Al-Shifa medical complex by the Israeli occupation forces and their continued siege of hospitals in Gaza City. The Israeli move, it said, resulted in cutting off electricity, fuel, and food supplies, besides targeting medical crew, displaced persons, and sick and injured people.

Sindh gov't moves SC against decision of stopping trial of civilians in military courts

ISLAMABAD (Online): Sindh government has filed appeal in Supreme Court (SC) against the decision of stopping trial of civilians in military courts.

Sindh government has requested the court to nullify decision of stopping the trial of civilians in military courts.

It has been said in appeal that Supreme Court (SC) decision be suspended till the decision of appeal.

It was further said in

the appeal those accused in attacking military installations should be tried in military courts. SC has not made correct review of law and facts. Sindh government has requested for restoration of nullified clauses of army act and official secret act. The accused persons themselves gave application that they should be tried in military courts.

The petition is likely to be fixed for hearing next week.



QUETTA: DG PDMA Jhanzaib Khan presides over the meeting regarding outbreak of Congo Virus.

Jan emphasizes on conveying philosophy of Allama Iqbal

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Thursday left Islamabad for Maldives to attend the oath-taking ceremony of Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu.

The swearing-in ceremony is scheduled to take place on November 17 in the Maldives.

According to a news statement, the caretaker information minister will represent Pakistan at the oath-taking ceremony of the President of Maldives in line with the directives of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

On the occasion, the minister will also hold meetings with different international leaders.

Present in the gathering were large number of writers and intellectuals besides the provincial ministers. Jan Achakzai and other speakers spoke at length about the philosophy and ideology of Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

The Minister Information said that we need to promote the thinking and philosophy of Allama Iqbal.

He stressed that the philosophy and thinking of Allama Iqbal should be spread to the youth through digital media.

SMEDA, Balochistan held training workshop at Gwadar University

QUETTA (APP): Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), Balochistan organized a one-day training workshop on "Entrepreneurship as a Viable Career Option" at Gwadar University (GU) in collaboration with the Department of Research and Commercialization, Gwadar University on Thursday.

Inaugurating the workshop, Gwadar University's Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Abdul Razzak Sabir said that Gwadar University has planned to expand its linkages with industries and companies in the public and private sectors through the Office of Research and Commercialization to promote the concept

of entrepreneurship among people. The training workshop aimed to enable students to become job providers rather than job seekers, he said. Prof. Dr. Sabir thanked the provincial head of SMEDA, Abdul Shakoor and his team for organizing such a training workshop in the university saying that such workshops should be organized every year so that the students could develop their skills. Addressing the workshop, Director of Officer Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) Muhammad Irshad Buledi said that such a workshop was beneficial to change the attitude of the participants and improve their business skills.



TURBAT: Chairman Chief Minister Inspection Team Mir Dostain Khan Jamaldini being briefed by head of various departments regarding ongoing development projects.

Israel bombs a masjid in Gaza, 50 worshipers martyred, many injured

GAZA (Online): At least 50 worshipers were martyred and dozens were injured when the Israeli Air Force bombed a mosque in Gaza.

Al-Shafa Hospital has been attacked again by the Zionist forces, which completely destroyed the southern and entrance ways of the hospital.

Saudi Arabia has strongly condemned the Israeli army for the attack on the hospital and the bombing in areas around the Jordan Field Hospital.

According to Arab media reports, Israeli planes destroyed a mosque

full of worshipers in Sabra, central Gaza. Dozens of worshipers were also injured by the Israeli bombardment. Many of the injured are in serious condition.

On the other hand, the Zionist army did not leave the field hospital in Jordan. 7 members of the field hospital were injured in the bombing.

40 days have passed since Israel's attacks on Gaza and so far 11,500 Palestinians have been martyred and more than 25,000 have been injured in these attacks.

According to Arab media reports, Israeli planes destroyed a mosque

dia reports, the Israeli army has re-operated in Gaza's largest al-Shafa Hospital, where more than 2,000 civilians are sheltering.

Report said, Major General Yaron Finkelman, the head of Israeli military operations in Gaza, said in a social media post that tonight we conducted a targeted operation at al-Shafa Hospital, we will continue to advance.

Gaza's health ministry said Israeli bulldozers destroyed parts of the hospital's southern entrance, detaining around 200 people at the Israeli military hospital.

Pak re-elected to UNESCO Executive Board

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Pakistan has been re-elected to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Executive Board for next four years.

In a press release on Thursday, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said the re-election of Pakistan is a testament to its longstanding support and constructive role at the United Nations.

After its re-election to the Executive Board, Pakistan will continue to work with Member States to strengthen UNESCO's mandate.

NDMA showcases pre-disaster preparedness plan, recommendations

QUETTA (APP): Syndicates at NDMA's Provincial Level Simulation Exercise (SimEx), here on Thursday showcased their pre-disaster preparedness plans, shared recommendations and coordination strategies with various government and humanitarian stakeholders.

The Multi Hazards SimEx, covers a range of topics to enhance the disaster management cycle including components of gender and child protection.

The purpose of conducting multi-hazards mock exercises was to enhance the preparedness and response capabilities of Balochistan's disaster management agencies to deal with emergency like situation.

As part of proactive approach, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has organized a three-day Simulation Exercises.

The syndicates also emphasized the need for effective coordination and cooperation among all

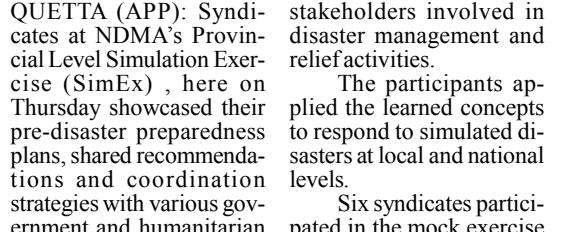
stakeholders involved in disaster management and relief activities.

The participants applied the learned concepts to respond to simulated disasters at local and national levels.

Six syndicates participated in the mock exercise including representatives from Provincial Disaster Management Authority Balochistan, District Disaster Management Authorities, Armed Forces and NGOs.

Mock drills on preparedness and response based on various scenarios such as cyclones, forest fires, floods and earthquakes were conducted in the exercise. NDMA conducted first SimEx at national level was held in March, 2023 in Islamabad.

To examine technical driven probabilistic recurrence of floods, forest fires, earthquake, coastal emergencies in Balochistan, the exercise would enable the provincial departments and local administrations for preparing plan at all tier.



QUETTA: Members of Pashtunkhwa Students Organization (PSO) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands.

25 closed schools made functional in Kohlu: DC

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Kohlu Naqibullah Kakar announced that 25 closed schools have been reopened in the district, including Kahan, Mawand, and other areas. This initiative aims to provide education to children at their doorsteps.

The Deputy Commissioner made these remarks during the monthly meeting of the District Education Group (DEG) on Thursday.

He emphasized the importance of making inactive schools in remote areas functional on an emergency basis to secure the future of children. He also warned of strict action against absent staff members.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the progress made in the past two months, with 25 schools that had been inactive for a long time being reactivated. This will enable children living in these areas to access education at their doorstep.

Final term exams of fall 2023 Semester to start on Dec 4

QUETTA (APP): University of Turbat's Controller of Examinations announced that final term examinations of the fall 2-23 semesters would be held from December 4, 2023.

According to an official press release, all the students and faculty members of the University of Turbat are hereby informed that the final term examinations of the fall 2023 Semester at the University of Turbat will start on December 4, 2023.

Muhammad Rashad, Director A&P, Khalid Khan, Deputy Director A&P and Jahangeer Ahmed, Assistant Director A&P represented NAB (B) therein.

The main objective of the meeting was to interact with SSGC representatives



QUETTA: Members of Pashtunkhwa Students Organization (PSO) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands.

NAB conducts anti corruption drive at SSGC

QUETTA (Online): Under the anti-corruption awareness and prevention campaign of NAB Balochistan, a Prevention Mode Meeting on "Study of Laws / Rules and Procedures of SSGC" was conducted at Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), Regional Office, Quetta on Thursday.

General Manager (SBU), Mohammad Anwar Baloch, General Manager (CRD), Latifullah, Regional Manager, Farooq Ahmed Khan and Billing Incharge, Imran Azam were present from SSGC.

Muhammad Rashad, Director A&P, Khalid Khan, Deputy Director A&P and Jahangeer Ahmed, Assistant Director A&P represented NAB (B) therein.

The main objective of the meeting was to interact with SSGC representatives

to have discussion on various aspects relating to SSGC in order to prevent the chances of corruption.

The Director NAB highlighted the awareness and prevention mandate of NAB u/s 33-C of NAO and the role of NAB in fight against the menace of corruption. Representatives of SSGC briefed about the Laws / Rules / Procedures regarding different functions of SSGC.

The issues/problems prevailing due to the deviation of practices from standard laws / procedures / instructions were discussed and highlighted in the meeting.

Further, the need for provision of maximum relief to general public and businesses by resolving their grievances was encouraged.