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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing a special session of the Apex Committee of SIFC held to foster strategic partnerships with friendly countries.

Bilawal leaves for Dubai

KARACHI (INP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari left for Dubai unexpectedly on Friday without bringing into notice of party leadership.

According to details, the PPP chairman has left for Dubai through a private airline flight.

It should be mentioned here that the development comes a day after former President Asif Ali Zardari said that his son and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari was "not fully trained" in politics and would "take time" getting up to speed.

SIFC reviews existing level of collaboration, approves initiatives to be broached with friendly countries

PM stresses realisation of SIFC's envisioned long-term economic dividends; COAS Munir reaffirms support to govt for durable economic recovery; Pakistan, Kuwait to ink seven MoUs for \$10b investment during PM's upcoming visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday, appreciating the efforts of relevant ministries for identifying prospective areas of collaboration under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), directed all stakeholders for efforts to realise the envisioned long-term economic dividends.

He was chairing a special session of the Apex Committee of SIFC held here to foster strategic partnerships with friendly countries.

The meeting was attended by Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, ministers and high-level government officials, a PM Office press release said.

The apex committee reviewed the existing level of collaboration and unanimously approved various initiatives to be broached

with friendly countries and directed to fast-track implementation of various projects conceived under these initiatives.

The Chief of Army Staff assured the unwavering resolve of the Pakistan Army to support economic initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Pakistan.

Meanwhile Pakistan and Kuwait will sign seven Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for investment worth \$10 billion in Pakistan through seven projects in multiple fields including environment, mining and food security.

In this regard, the federal cabinet, in its meeting held on Friday approved seven MoUs to be signed during the upcoming visit of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar to Kuwait.

Consequent to the efforts by the Special Invest-

ment Facilitation Council (SIFC), both countries would sign MoUs on multiple projects including the expansion of water reservoirs, mining facilities, conservation of mangrove forests in coastal areas, information technology and food security, a PM Office press release said.

Prime Minister Kakar and the cabinet members appreciated the efforts of the SIFC and the relevant ministries.

The prime minister, who chaired the meeting, instructed to ensure cooperation with the provinces for early and fair execution of the projects.

The body also endorsed the decisions of the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases it had taken in its meeting on November 14, as well as those of the Economic Coordination Committee meeting on November 15, 2023.

Pakistan actively engaged in ending Gaza crisis, resolution of Palestine issue: FM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani informed the Senate on Friday that Pakistan had actively engaged in ending the Gaza crisis and resolution of the Palestine issue.

Responding to a notice raised by Senator Mushtaq Ahmed the siege of land, sea, and air routes of Gaza by the Israeli occupying forces and the killing of innocent Palestinians by dropping phosphorus bombs on residential units, hospitals, schools, refugee camps, and mosques which is worst form of terrorism and violation of International Law and Human Rights, the minister said, "Pakistan has been actively involved in the resolution of Palestine issue for several years, particularly in the last month and a half."

Highlighting Pakistan's

contributions, he said, "Pakistan, along with Saudi Arabia, co-sponsored the OIC extraordinary session of foreign ministers held last month in Jeddah, and the extraordinary session of OIC was also held in Jeddah due to efforts of Pakistan".

He said Pakistan played a crucial role among the eight foreign ministers who collaborated on an unanimous document during the OIC summit.

The minister said, "Pakistan played a pivotal role in the passage of the resolution presented by Jordan at the United Nations, garnering support from numerous countries." I have received calls of appreciation from around 10 to 15 foreign ministers globally for our efforts in building consensus at the UN on the Jordan resolution in UN" he said. He said, "There

is no doubt that Israel has committed aggression against Palestinians. In fact, it amounts to genocide against the innocent people of Palestine. The situation in Gaza is dire, with a severe lack of water, health facilities, and food, leading to a major humanitarian crisis."

Condemning Israel for war crimes in Gaza, he urged, "Israel must be held responsible for these actions, and we call upon the international community to focus on the Palestine issue and play a decisive role in ending the crisis."

We express hope that the pressure exerted by OIC countries on Israel will yield positive outcomes."

The minister said that Qatar had played an OIC-mandated role on the issue of Palestine.

PM lauds Saudi Arabia for always standing with Pakistan in turbulent times

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday said Saudi Arabia always stood with Pakistan in difficult times and extended support to it in diverse fields. Talking to Imam-e-Kaaba Dr Sheikh Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid, the prime minister said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were tied in the strong historical relationship, based on commonalities of religion, values, and traditions.

PM Kakar expressed gratitude to Saudi Arabia for providing development assistance to Pakistan in the fields of education and health. He said that the Saudi government was extending exemplary support to the Pakistani manpower working in the Kingdom.

The prime minister highlighted that recently, the Custodian of the Two

Holy Mosques and the Crown Prince expressed unconditional support for the Palestinians by convening the emergency session of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

PM Kakar, during the meeting, strongly condemned the atrocities committed against Palestinians and the massacre of the children in Gaza.

He emphasized the opening of a corridor for uninterrupted supply of humanitarian assistance to the people in Gaza.

On Islamophobia, the prime minister stressed the need to educate the young generation through documentaries on Islamic teachings, history, and culture.

He said the translation of these documentaries into different languages and their broadcast across the world, could help project the true essence of Islam.

Imam-e-Kaaba's visit matter of honour for people of Pakistan: COAS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Imam-e-Kaaba Sheikh Saleh bin Abdullah bin Muhammad Humaid called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir here at the General Headquarters on Friday.

The Army Chief on the occasion said, "Visit of H. E. Imam-e-Kaaba to Pakistan is a matter of honour for the people of Pakistan."

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest were discussed, am Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The Army Chief welcomed the dignity and

highlighted that the Muslims from all across the world had boundless reverence for Harmin Shraifain and profound respect for their custodian.

Imam-e-Kaaba said, "Islam is a religion of peace & brotherhood and there is no space for misconstrued interpretations of Islam." The dignitaries condemned the ongoing atrocities in the Gaza conflict and the oppression of the Muslims in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK), and expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine and Kashmir.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interim Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Friday presided over the National Action Plan Coordination Committee meeting at NECTA headquarters in Islamabad to review the implementation of National Action Plan.

The meeting was attended by Home Secretary, National Coordinator NECTA, all IGs, Chief Secretaries and top officials of intelligence agencies.

Inspector General of Police of all provinces briefed the meeting on the implementation of the National Action Plan. Expressing satisfaction over the progress of implementation of the National Action Plan, the minister said that terrorists will be eliminated from the country at all costs.

He said lasting peace should be established in the country by the complete elimination of terrorists and effective action will be taken against terrorists and extremist parties.

ISLAMABAD (APP): His Excellency Sheikh Saleh bin Abdullah bin Muhammad Humaid, Imam-e-Kaaba called on General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at General Headquarters, in City.

ASAD QAISER SENT TO JAIL IN MAY 9 CASE

MARDAN (INP): A district and sessions court in Mardan on Friday sent the PTI leader to jail on a four-day judicial remand in a case pertaining to violent protests in the country on May 9.

The PTI leader was presented before a district and session court in Mardan.

During the hearing, Charsadda police submitted a request seeking Qaiser's five-day physical remand.

The court rejected the police's request for the physical remand of former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser and sent the PTI leader to jail.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti chairing National Action Plan Coordination Committee Meeting.

Bilawal dispels reports of Bilawal-Zardari rift Bilawal will be PPP's candidate for PM slot: Raja Pervaiz Ashraf

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said on Friday that former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari will be the party's candidate for the prime minister slot.

In an interview with a private TV channel, Ashraf said: "Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari is a mature leader. Asif Ali Zardari wants to see Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari as the country's premier." Speaking about the level playing field, Ashraf said: "If Bilawal feels there is no level playing field, then the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should do something." He said, "The talks about Nawaz Sharif being the favourite seem to be part of the electoral campaign." "The ideal party should have a combination of both youth and seasoned politicians," Ashraf said.

Meanwhile the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)

on Friday dispelled the speculations of discord within the party involving Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari following the former foreign minister's departure to Dubai.

Bilawal has been actively campaigning nationwide, positioning his party as the solution to Pakistan's challenges. He has targeted the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in his campaign and urged older politicians like Nawaz Sharif to step aside and allow the new generation to lead in the upcoming Feb 8 elections. But former president Asif Zardari in an interview on Thursday described Bilawal as "inexperienced" and "not fully seasoned" in politics. He noted that Bilawal's call to sideline "old politicians" echoed sentiments of many from the younger generation.

Bugti chairs NAP Coordination Committee meeting at NECTA Headquarters

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Muhammad Sami Saeed awarded certificates to the officers after completion of their 38th Mid Career Management Course.

Government offices in Federal Capital get free electricity worth Rs 10bn annually: Senator Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senator Mushtaq Ahmed on Friday has said that government offices and residences in Islamabad get free electricity worth Rs 10 billion annually. The Senate session started under the chairmanship of Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, in which later caretaker Finance Minister Shamsad Akhtar also arrived. During the question interval, Senator Mushtaq Ahmed said that government offices and residences in Islamabad are provided with free electricity worth 10 billion rupees annually, to which the Caretaker Finance Minister replied that we are sending letters to the secretaries of all ministries. That this expenditure should be controlled.

Senator Dinesh Kumar expressed his opinion and said that blind herds, turn around and give them to themselves. He said that the salary of each State Bank employee is 40 lakh rupees. Senator Patusha Khan said that what is such a job that he has a salary of 44 lakhs.

The Caretaker Finance Minister replied that the State Bank had given a policy that the salary would be increased in case of termination of pension. This policy was introduced when the State Bank's pension burden was increasing. The salary structure of central banks varies widely across the world.

Senator Raza Rabbani expressed his views and said that on the one hand, we hear that the rates of electricity and gas have been increased on the advice of the IMF, but on the other hand, the royal expenses of the government are not decreasing. Classes have now been created in Elite too. Elliott's salaries are being increased at an unaccountable rate. The salary of a common man in Pakistan is 32 thousand, in which it is difficult to make two daily bread. The elite class is not ready to pay 32 thousand per month even to the common laborer. The announcement was made but it is not being implemented.

During the session, caretaker Finance Minister Shamsad Akhtar, Chief Justice in the Senate. The Prime Minister has submitted a written response regarding the money collected under the Dam Fund and the details of its use, according to which 11 billion 46 crore 69 lakh 37 thousand 658 rupees have been received till 26 July 2023. According to the answer submitted by the caretaker finance minister, 6 billion 29 crore 59 lakh 38 thousand 962 rupees were received in the form of profit on government investment. From which the value of the funds of the fund has become 17 billion 86 crore 28 lakh 76 thousand 620 rupees. So far no funds have been withdrawn from the account opened in State Bank.

Dr Amir Bilal appointed as special assistant to prime minister

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar on Friday has appointed Dr Amir Bilal as his special assistant.

Dr Bilal has been appointed as Special Assistant to PM on Medical Education and Patient Care.

With the latest appointment, the number of ministers in the caretaker cabinet has risen to 27.

The interim cabinet includes 18 federal ministers, 3 advisers and 6 special assistants.

Polio campaign again deferred in Chaman due to security fears

CHAMAN (INP): The authorities in Balochistan's border city of Chaman have once again deferred the launch of polio campaign for law and order reasons, reported on Friday.

Chaman Deputy Commissioner Raja Athar Abbas informed that the polio campaign was postponed in the city for seven days due to security fears.

Three weeks ago, District Administration had decided to postpone seven-day special anti-polio campaign in Chaman district due to the sit-in on the Pak-Afghan border highway. The Chaman DC had then said that the decision was made due to the sit-in, law and order situation.

190 million pounds scam, Chairman PTI ordered to appear in court on Monday

ISLAMABAD (Online): Accountability Court has ordered Chairman PTI to appear in court in 190 million pounds scam on Monday.

Accountability Court has issued the written order to extend the physical remand of former Prime Minister (PM) and Chairman PTI in 190 million pound scam.

Judge Muhammad Bashir has issued written order comprises of 5-page.

According to order, Deputy Prosecutor General NAB Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi has applied for physical remand for another 10 days.

NAB told that Ali Zafar Advocate appeared in

NAB office on November 23 on request and provided the relevant record to NAB.

He has also provided the record of March 24, 2021 Agreement.

According to order of the Court, NAB authorities said that National Treasury has to conduct an investigation regarding the money transferred and further remand is required to complete the investigation and bring the case to final conclusion.

Lawyers opposed further remand and presented 2 letters. 1 letter dated November 6, 2019 is related to East Bank.

Lawyers said that Chairman PTI has no concern with transfer of money.

After cease-fire, find lasting solution to Palestinian issue: Pak urges Security Council

ISLAMABAD (INP): Spokesperson of Foreign Office Mumtaz Zahra Baloch reiterated Pakistan's demand for immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the main responsibility for this is on the Security Council.

"After the cease-fire, an international conference should be convened to find a lasting solution to the Palestinian issue," she added. "It is the duty of pro-

Israeli countries to put pressure on Israel for a cease-fire," Foreign Office spokesman said.

"According to international laws, it is the duty of the Security Council to establish a ceasefire in Gaza," Mumtaz Zahra Baloch added.

"A strong stand was taken in OIC and Arab League meetings for an immediate ceasefire," she said.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Final electoral rolls: significant step towards Feb 8 polls

With the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) concluded hearings on objections to the new delimitation of constituencies, the printing of final electoral rolls has begun. No doubt it is a significant step towards the February 8 general election.

During a meeting chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, it was announced that the final report on redrawn constituencies will be published on Nov 30, as planned. All told, the ECP received 1,403 representations challenging the delimitation of national and provincial assembly constituencies. An analysis by Pattan highlighted that challenges to the preliminary delimitation were filed from 124 of the country's 143 districts.

In Punjab, the battleground province in elections to grab political power, the preliminary delimitation was challenged from every district except for one. Some 80 per cent of the examined petitions claimed gerrymandering by the delimitation committees. Almost every petitioner alleged non-compliance with principles outlined in Section 20 of the Elections Act 2017.

In Thursday's meeting, the ECP stressed that it was ready to hold general elections on Feb 8 and directed the acquisition of army services to ensure voters' security. The Election Commission emphasised that if the police force was found insufficient, timely alternative arrangements should be ensured and the services of the Pakistan Army should also be availed to ensure a secure and peaceful voting process.

The meeting, which reviewed the overall election preparations, saw participation from four ECP members, its secretary, the provincial election commissioner of Punjab and other officers. The provincial election commissioners of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan joined the meeting via a video link. The participants were informed that the Election Commission had completed hearings on all objections to the initial delimitation. Consequently, the list of final constituencies will be published on Nov 30. Additionally, the printing and distribution of final electoral rolls are underway at Nadra and their timely delivery will be ensured.

The ECP has also finalized a code of conduct for the elections in consultation with political parties and it will be formally notified in the next few days. The commission was told that the training plan for district returning officers, returning officers, and polling staff was ready and that timely training of the related election officials would be ensured.

Similarly, necessary arrangements for printing ballot papers and purchasing election material have been completed, his clearly means that the Election Commission is ready to hold the elections in the country.

Collective crimes



By Nikhat Sattar

Two unrelated and very different events, one far away from us and the other in our own country KP, to be specific have given us cause to lament. Perhaps it is time to take notice.

Truth and justice tend to lose their meaning when fabulously rich countries and their extremely wealthy rulers are unwilling and unable to provide food, water and medicines to thousands of battered people, the majority of them children. As a genocide in real time is being carried out by a rogue state targeting a small strip of land that has been deprived of human living conditions for decades, and which is constantly bombarded with ammunition provided by the world's 'best democracies and custodians of human rights', nearly two billion Muslims remain voiceless.

There is no end in sight to the sufferings of the Palestinians, except painful death, or a crippled life. The world's leaders look on.

Of course, one can try and find some peace in the thought of the Day of Judgement, when all criminals will be brought before their victims and given just punishment. If one can do so, one might pray that those who remained silent or looked away when they could have done something would also be considered abettors and facilitators of these horrendous deeds.

As these words are being written, one is very conscious of the fact that the Palestinian cause is neither in favour of Muslims nor against Jews or Christians. It is a tragedy

wrought upon the people of a land through the connivance of the West and some Arab states. Their land was usurped and constantly encroached upon by Jews sent from Europe until they were restricted to a narrow strip and blocked from support from others. It just so happens that the majority of Palestinians are Muslims who have not merely been forsaken, but deliberately left to fend off Israeli settlers and the terrible Israeli military that has learnt much from their avowed enemy, Hitler.

The Muslim world, in general, is besotted with navel gazing and their rulers are busy amassing wealth and in displays of pomp. It is no wonder then, that of the 57 Muslim countries that have formed a toothless organisation, only one had the gumption to expel the Israeli ambassador in protest against the bestiality of the Israeli military. Bolivia, a non-Muslim country, has also cut ties, as has South Africa and a few others. As these words are written, Israel has bombarded heavily populated refugee camps while Palestinians are trying to find bodies in the rubble that Gaza has become. Thousands of Palestinians have lost their lives in this mass-scale slaughter while the wheels of the world continue to churn out the usual rhetoric. This holocaust is presided over by none other than the US.

The other event, which has caused much concern, is the coerced affidavit that was signed by a young teacher who had to swear that Darwin's theory of evolution, that he was teaching, was false and that he believed women are inferior to men. As he signed this ludicrous declaration (otherwise he would have had to suffer dire consequences along with his loved ones), he was flanked by many self-declared custodians of faith. They are merely another incarnation of the men who have over the centuries denied, denounced and hounded men of science and those who would have dared to attempt to question common beliefs.

This piece is not about whether or not Darwin's theory is against Islamic belief. Many renowned Islamic scholars have suggested that the theory does not deny in any way statements in the Quran that explain how the first human being came into existence. What is most reprehensible is that a religion that is critical of how the clergy in earlier faiths concentrated power in the hands of a few, has been misused to threaten and force a person to deny his opinions. The Islamic way of dealing with statements that some believe are religiously wrong would be to have calm, scholarly and compassionate discussions.

Let us keep Darwin's contentious theory aside. Which Quranic injunction did these 'men of religion' refer to when they had the young man vouch for male superiority? The one about having two male witnesses to a financial deal or the one to bring another woman to court in case the first one forgets? Both can be argued on the basis of the need of the time and the socioeconomic conditions in the seventh versus the 21st century. No wonder, then, that the Muslim world has been unable to produce women and men of knowledge, wisdom and understanding in significant numbers, who are able to express differences of opinions and beliefs without confronting hatred and bigotry.

The clerics in KP are a mere microcosm of the obscurantism that assails the Muslim world. It has become impotent and self-serving, and its rulers seek power, rather than justice and compassion.—Courtney Dawn

Public opinion

By Khalid Bhatti

As Israel's war against Gaza enters its second month, public opinion is gradually turning against the war, devastation and genocide of Palestinians. The solidarity movement with Palestine is growing by every passing day.

Public opinion is also turning against pro-Israel governments in the West. The pressure is mounting on the Biden Administration in the US and the UK government to withdraw their blanket support to Israeli war crimes in Gaza.

Millions of people have so far shown solidarity with Palestine. And millions have come out on the streets from London to Washington and from Jakarta to Mexico City; big demonstrations are taking place in American and European cities.

From Europe and the Middle East to Asia, football fans have shown solidarity with Palestinians during football matches. Jampacked stadiums across the world call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to war. These people have shown their anger against war, killings and destruction.

Three massive demonstrations have taken place in London so far with millions of people in attendance. Hundreds of thousands of protesters took to the streets of Washington a few weeks ago to oppose the pro-Israel policy of the Biden Administration. The UK and the US are the epicenters of these solidarity demonstrations.

Young people including sections of the middle class are participating in these demonstrations in big numbers. It is the first time that many young people have witnessed such horrific scenes coming out of Gaza.

For the first time, they are watching the destruction caused by the Israeli aggression. They are watching the bodies of children being slaughtered by Israel's airstrikes and the desperate parents running from pillar to post, carrying their injured children. Hospitals, schools, churches, mosques and homes are being destroyed in Gaza, and innocent people are being killed. The besieged civilian population is facing food shortages, and many people are starving.

The situation has radicalized sections of the youth and the working class. Many young people and workers are saying that they will not support the Democratic Party of US President Joe Biden in the next presidential elections in 2024; it is important to mention that young voters played a key role in the victory of President Biden in 2020. But now they are turning their backs on the Democrats.

The same political trend is also emerging among young people in Britain. The leadership of the Labour Party is blindly following the Tory government's policy on the Israel war on Gaza. Many young people have been disillusioned by the Labour Party leadership and might opt for the Green Party in the next elections.

The pro-Palestine protests around the world are the biggest anti-war demonstrations since the 2003 Iraq war. While millions are calling for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine, governments in the US, Britain and Germany are supporting Israel which continues to commit atrocities in Gaza and the West Bank. Western governments are still playing

the role of apologists for Israel.

However, there is no denying that the ruling class and governments are feeling the pressure. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was forced to sack Suella Braverman for making derogatory remarks against pro-Palestine protesters. The opposition to the position taken by US President Biden is also growing. Many officials of the Biden Administration have expressed their opposition to the blanket support provided to Israel. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has written a letter to the concerned officials of the State Department in an effort to pacify the growing opposition within the Biden Administration.

There is a reason for this anger and growing opposition. People around the world are watching on their TV screens or on their mobile phones through social media that Israel is committing war crimes. Israel has destroyed thousands of homes in Gaza and made 1.6 million people homeless. For more than a month, Israel has continued with its relentless bombardment. Its ground forces with tanks are also moving inside Gaza, leaving no space safe for people.

Israel's attacks have left not a single hospital fully operational. No medicines, electricity, fuel and other necessities of life are available in Gaza. First, Israel bombed hospitals and now ground troops are causing more destruction in these hospitals. It is surprising to see that while Israel is committing war crimes with impunity, the US, the UK and other Western countries are still supporting it in the name of 'the right to self-defence'.—Courtney The News

Commerce News

Business leaders call for Pak, Kazakhstan FTA to increase bilateral trade up to \$1b

ISLAMABAD (APP): The local business leaders and traders on Friday called for the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to take bilateral trade between Pakistan and Kazakhstan up to the level of \$1 billion.

After the FTA, there is huge potential to take bilateral trade to \$1 billion on both sides, in which the role of the business community is vital, President Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh told APP here.

He said that the joint trade potential of Pakistan and Kazakhstan was very important in regional trade as Kazakhstan was the largest economy in Central Asian Republics.

Irfan said that Pakistan and Kazakhstan were geographically significant in the region. Both countries want to work on regional economic integration using their geo-strategic position, he said.

He said that at the end of 2022, mutual trade between Pakistan and Kazakhstan was \$195 million, which was much less than its potential.

President FPCCI expressed the hope that the business communities of Pakistan and Kazakhstan will play a significant role in increasing bilateral trade in the near future.

He said that recently direct flights have been started between the two

major cities of Lahore and Almaty, which will benefit the business communities of both sides.

Meanwhile, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtavari said that Pakistan and Kazakhstan are major two countries in the region whose bilateral trade volume is much less than its potential.

He said that Central Asia is very important in the global trade and energy resources with which Pakistan has centuries-old trade relations.

Ahsan Bakhtavari said that the growth of trade between Pakistan and Kazakhstan depends on the businessmen of both countries, whose relations are very important.



PESHAWAR: A delegation of Kohat Chamber of Commerce and Industry meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

Drop in iron products prices welcomed

LAHORE (APP): The construction industry and traders on Friday expressed gratitude for the governments' measures for reducing prices of iron products. According to the details, prices of iron products in the markets of the city decreased by Rs5,000 to Rs10,00 per ton. Besides, branded rod, selling at Rs2,60,000 per ton, has decreased by Rs.10,000. The business community and consumers associated with the construction industry rejoiced at the cheaper price of iron. Pakistan Iron & Steel Merchants

Association sources told APP that the drop in iron prices is a great incentive for the construction sector, saying projects worth billions of rupees had started in the country, which would generate economic activities worth billions and create hundreds of thousands of new employment opportunities. Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar, rejoicing at the drop in iron prices, said that the construction industry in Pakistan covers a wide range of projects that presents numerous opportunities.

Nawaz to address SCCI today

LAHORE (APP): PML-N leader Mian Nawaz Sharif will visit Sialkot tomorrow for a one-day visit, party official sources told APP.

Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz have returned from Murree and reached Jati Umra here Friday. Nawaz Sharif will leave tomorrow for a one-day visit to Sialkot. The PML-N supreme will visit the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) tomorrow at 11 am and address the office bearers. He will also meet party leaders at Khawaja Asif's residence in the afternoon.



RIYADH: SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik signs Letter of Intent (LOI) with H.E. Ali Jabbar Almahan, CEO FNRCO Group.

Pak, Sweden hold bilateral political consultations on trade, investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Sweden held their 17th round of Bilateral Political Consultations in Stockholm on Friday and reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations, including political, economic, trade, investment and education.

Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Shaqat Ali Khan, led the Pakistan delegation, while the Sweden side was co-lead by Director General and Head of Global Department Dag Juhlin-Dannfelt and Acting Head of Department for

Asia and the Pacific Oscar Schlyte of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The two sides expressed confidence in the trajectory of bilateral cooperation noting that next year, Pakistan and Sweden would celebrate 75 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

They also agreed to promote bilateral dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation and engagement.

The Additional Foreign Secretary congratulated Sweden on

successfully completing the term of EU Presidency this year and expressed Pakistan's desire to further enhance cooperation in renewable energy, sustainable technologies, waste management, information communication technology, and rehabilitation and development.

He welcomed more Swedish companies to take advantage of the business-friendly environment in Pakistan, the Foreign Office said in a statement issued here.

Progress on jobs for Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (Online): More progress has been made on the issue of jobs for Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia and now the technical skills training and test will be held in Pakistan, and immediate visa will be given upon passing.

Saudi Arabia has agreed to set up a network of training centers in Pakistan for 23 professional skills, under which the number of advanced technical skill centers in Pakistan will be increased from 26 to 123.

New training centers will be opened in the small and big cities of the four provinces in collaboration with NEOTECH, by increasing the number of training centers, 6 lakh skilled workers will be able to complete training in their country every year.

The Saudi work visa will be subject to the training course and the test will be conditioned with the standard of Saudi testing company, "Takamol". "Takamol" team will also visit Pakistan in December.

Happy seeder machines help prevent smog

MULTAN (APP): The Punjab government was providing Happy Seeder Machines to farmers at subsidized prices that are helpful in preventing smog.

In a statement, the Agriculture spokesman said on Friday the Punjab government was enforcing a set of guidelines for the prevention of smog and happy seeder machines were one of them.

The machine not only mix paddy crop remains in the soil enriching its fertility but also completes sowing for the next crop. Thus, it saves farmers from the botheration of burning crop remains.

Mian Zahid says: Pak population growth higher than total population of many developed nations

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has said on Thursday that the number of children born in Pakistan per year was more than the total population of many developed countries.

Talking to businessmen on Friday, he said that the country's economy and resources cannot bear the burden of an increase in population of six million people per year.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the population growth rate in Pakistan was the highest in the world. In contrast, the growth rate was lower than that of African countries, which shows the deterioration of the situation.

He said that apart from Afghanistan, only Pakistan has the honor that polio disease has not been eradicated here. Much of the population lacks clean drinking water, jaundice and tuberculosis were common, and one in four adults has diabetes.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that nearly two and a half million children in Pakistan were deprived of schooling, and a few percent of those who have access to schools were forced to seek standard education.

Colonization of industrial estates top priority of govt: SM Tanveer

LAHORE (APP): Center of the PSIC house.

Caretaker Punjab Minister for Industries SM Tanveer said that colonization of industrial estates was the first and foremost priority of the government.

He said this while presiding over the meeting of Punjab Small Industries Corporation's Board here on Friday.

The board discussed PSIC Employees Welfare Scheme, medical policy, PSIC Hajj Policy and approved other administrative and financial matters. The board approved the sale of plots in Small Industrial Estates of Jhelum and Taxila, and the PSIC Voluntary Fund Rules 2023. The board also approved the revised PC-I and the renovation work of the Business Facilitation

In the meeting, it was also approved to increase the honorarium of the members of the PSIC Board from Rs 15000 to 25000. The board directed to send the committee to again review the PSIC Transport Policy.

Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce SM Tanveer while addressing the meeting directed that all the matters and affairs of PSIC should be conducted according to the rules, adding that the process of auction of plots in Jhelum and Taxila should be completed in a transparent manner.

Investors would be given all possible facilities to set up new factories in the industrial estates, he added. Secretary Industries

Governor awarded honorary degree of PhD to the Ambassador of UAE

Appreciates role of UAE Ambassador in strengthening the cultural and trade relations between two countries

LAHORE (Online): Governor Punjab/Chancellor Muhammad Balighur Rehman today awarded an honorary degree of PhD to the Ambassador of UAE, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Al Zaabi at the special convocation of the Institute of Art and Culture at Governor House Lahore today. The ambassador of UAE was awarded an honorary degree in recognition of his valuable services in the promotion of bilateral relations, especially in the field of trade between Pakistan and UAE. Governor Punjab congratulated the ambassador of UAE on receiving the honorary degree of Ph.D. Vice Chancellor Institute of Art and Culture, Faisal Janjua, Pro Vice Chancellor Ijaz A. Qureshi, Member Senate Institute of Art and Culture, Imran Masood, Pakistan's first woman astronaut Namira Saleem, a large number of teachers and students were present in the ceremony. The Punjab Governor, Muhammad Balighur Rehman while addressing the ceremony said that he felt honoured to award the honorary degree of doctorate to the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Al Zaabi. The Governor of Punjab appreciated the role of the UAE Ambassador in strengthening the cultural and trade relations between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates and people-to-people contacts between the two countries. He said that there should be exchange programmes involving degrees or short visits of students between educational institutions of Pakistan and UAE.



LAHORE: Namira Salim, First Pakistani Astronaut being presented a shield by the Institute of Art and Culture (IAC) in the presence of Mr. Baleegh ur Rahman Governor Punjab, H.E. Dr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al Zaabi, Ambassador of the UAE to Pakistan and Mr. Muhammad Faisal Janjua, Chancellor of IAC.

Naqvi for maintaining hope to ensure future generation's prosperity

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has expressed unwavering optimism about the future of Pakistan, dismissing pessimism and affirming the nation's upward trajectory. Addressing the participants of the Air War College Institute course at Al Hamra Hall here on Friday, he emphasized the importance of maintaining hope for the prosperity of future generations. He urged collective efforts, stating that if individuals foster hope, it would resonate positively with their children, shaping a brighter future for Pakistan. Reflecting on the past 10 months of the caretaker setup in Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi highlighted a resolute decision to tackle the circular debt of wheat, which had surpassed 600 billion rupees. The success, he emphasized, was a result of effective teamwork and passion, turning even challenging tasks into achievable goals. The CM reported substantial achievements in agriculture, including an increased area under cotton cultivation, resulting in saving three billion dollars in foreign exchange. Rice cultivation witnessed a remarkable 100 percent growth, contributing a total of 2 billion dollars. Commending prudent decisions, he announced significant savings in Safe City projects in Gujranwala, Faisalabad, and Rawalpindi. Despite an initial budget of 100 billion rupees, these projects are being executed at a cost of 12.5 billion rupees.

CM directs civic agencies to resolve jurisdiction issues, improve city's image

KARACHI (APP): The meeting was attended by Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, Secretary Finance Kazim Jatoi, Secretary Local Govt Manzoor Shaikh, Secretary Works Nawaz Sohoo, Commissioner Karachi Saleem Rajput, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, DGs of KDA, LDA, MDA, COO water board, deputy commissioners, representatives of cantonment boards, KE, MD solid waste management, cable operators, and others. The CM said that no civic agency was working in the interest of the city and its people and under the garb of jurisdiction they keep passing on the buck when asked about their performance. "The roads are dilapidated, walkways are under encroachment, water is theft, transport is not properly regulated, people have no water to drink. Karachi is one of the largest cities of the world, but our civic agencies have left no stone unturned to deface it," he said and added that the agencies responsible for providing civic services in the city keep fighting on the jurisdiction issue and the condition of the city keep deteriorating day by day which is intolerable," he said.

Minister stresses awareness about family planning in rural areas

LAHORE (6AM Report): Punjab Minister for Population Welfare Dr. Jamal Nasir emphasized the necessity of raising awareness about family planning among the rural population and ensuring easy access to necessary facilities. He addressed the closing session of the 24th annual conference organized by the Population Association of Pakistan as the chief guest on Friday. Dr. Nasir stressed the importance of gaining support from religious scholars to dispel misconceptions about population planning, highlighting a consensus among them regarding the need for appropriate intervals between children to enhance the health of both mother and child. Expressing concern about Pakistan's rapidly growing population, the minister cited the alarming implications on poverty, unemployment, and social issues resulting from the imbalance of population and resources. He pointed out the challenges posed by climate change and population growth, noting the adverse effects on agriculture, forests, biodiversity, and food cultivation in the country. Dr. Nasir warned that failure to control population growth would lead to severe impacts on food production, water scarcity, and overall environmental sustainability. Highlighting the need for collective efforts from all societal stakeholders, the minister emphasized the importance of implementing effective population management policies and programs.

Caretaker Minister calls on Imam-e-Kaaba, discuss matters of mutual interest

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce, Technical Education and Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Dr. Aamer Abdullah, called on Imam-e-Kaaba Sheikh Dr. Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid in Islamabad, who is on a four-day visit to Pakistan and discussed matters of mutual interest with him said a press release issued here on Friday. On this occasion, the Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, His Excellency, Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmed Al-Malkiy was also present. During the meeting, the caretaker minister welcomed Imam-e-Kaaba on his arrival to Pakistan on behalf of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially the tribal areas, and said that the people here have more respectful feelings for Imam Kaaba due to special association with Holy Harmain Shareefain. He termed Imam Kaaba's visit to Pakistan as a blessing and thanked him for his arrival and requested him to offer a special prayer for the unity of Muslim Ummah and the removal of divisions among them. On this occasion, Imam-e-Kaaba expressed that the main cause of problems and difficulties being faced by the Muslim Ummah.



LAHORE: Activists of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) are holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Lahore press club

Reign of smog: Lahore ranks first in air pollution again

LAHORE (APP): On Friday, Lahore once again has been ranked first in terms of air pollution in the world. The Meteorological Department sources told APP that an average Air Quality Index (AQI) on Friday was recorded at 356 in the provincial capital. DHA Phase-VIII was recorded at 457, Lahore American School 356, Cantt Polo Ground 488, Aitchison College 389, Quaid-e-Azam Highway 545, and Johar Town was reported at 308. The city is getting colder as the temperature drops due to dense smog. The Met office said that minimum temperature of 14 and maximum temperature of 26 degrees Celsius was recorded on Friday.

CTD apprehends suspect with weapons

MIRPURKHAH (APP): The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) Police apprehended a suspect with weapons in a proactive intelligence-based operation on Friday in Mirpurkhas district. According to a press release, the operation was conducted in response to threats from banned terrorist organizations indicating plans to target the police.

International News

Guns fall silent as cease-fire in Gaza comes into effect on Israel-Hamas war

GAZA STRIP, Palestinian Territories (AFP/APP): A four-day truce in the Israel-Hamas war took effect on Friday, with hostages set to be released in exchange for prisoners in the first major reprieve in seven weeks of war that have claimed thousands of lives. Starting from 7:00 am (0500 GMT), the pause was set to silence guns and stop bombings in a conflict that erupted after Hamas's murderous raids into Israel on October 7. Later on Friday, 13 hostages held in Gaza are expected to be freed, followed by an undefined number of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails, according to Qatari mediators. Over the four days, at least 50 hostages are expected to be released, leaving an estimated 190 in the hands of Palestinian militant groups. Meanwhile, 150 Palestinians prisoners are expected to be released. For Gaza's two million-plus residents, the deal spells a respite from weeks of sustained Israeli bombardment. The territory's Hamas government says the war has so far killed about 15,000 people and displaced countless more.

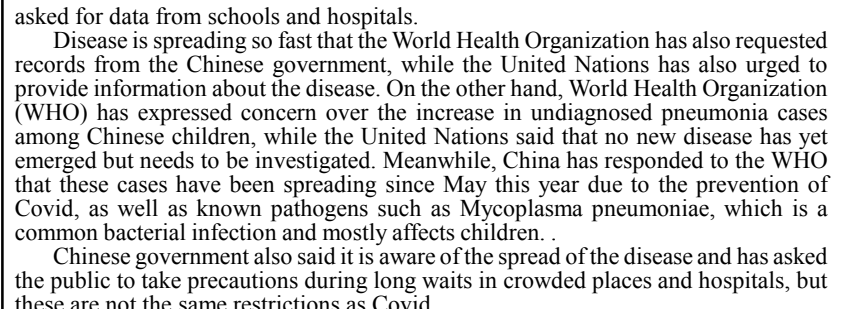
The exact number of casualties is impossible to independently confirm, but it is clear that for many Palestinian and Israeli families, the pause in violence has already come too late. The living here are the ones who are dead," Fida Zayed, a Gazan whose 20-year-old son Uday was killed in a recent air strike, told AFP. "The last thing he said to me was that he was waiting for the truce on Friday," she told AFP. "He asked me to prepare him a feast of rice and chicken." "I hope me and my children die here so we don't have to mourn each other." Qatari officials said the "first batch" of 13 hostages released would be women and children from the same families. Teams of Israeli trauma experts and medics await them—along with specially trained soldiers who, according to guidelines, will promise to keep them safe and will carry a child's favourite food item, be it pizza or chicken schnitzel. An Egyptian security source told AFP that Israeli security officials, International Red Cross-Red Crescent staff and an Egyptian team would deploy to Rafah, on the Egypt-Gaza border, to receive the hostages, who will then be flown to Israel.

Biden thanks Mexico for arrest of accused fentanyl trafficker

WASHINGTON (AFP/APP): President Joe Biden thanked Mexican authorities on Thursday for the arrest of an accused trafficker of weapons and fentanyl, the synthetic drug behind a wave of US deaths. Nestor Isidro Perez Salas, alias "El Nini," was captured Wednesday afternoon in Mexico's northwest Sinaloa state. His arrest came less than a week after Biden and Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador met in San Francisco and pledged to coordinate more closely on fighting drug trafficking, especially that of fentanyl.

After Corona, new epidemic hits China's many citizens, facing breathing difficulty

BEIJING (Online): In China, another deadly virus similar to Corona has caused a number of citizens to fall ill, suffering from breathing difficulties and symptoms similar to Corona. According to a foreign news agency, the disease with symptoms like corona and influenza is spreading rapidly in China, on which the government issued a red alert and asked for data from schools and hospitals. Disease is spreading so fast that the World Health Organization has also requested records from the Chinese government, while the United Nations has also urged to provide information about the disease. On the other hand, World Health Organization (WHO) has expressed concern over the increase in undiagnosed pneumonia cases among Chinese children, while the United Nations said that no new disease has yet emerged but needs to be investigated. Meanwhile, China has responded to the WHO that these cases have been spreading since May this year due to the prevention of Covid, as well as known pathogens such as Mycoplasma pneumoniae, which is a common bacterial infection and mostly affects children. Chinese government also said it is aware of the spread of the disease and has asked the public to take precautions during long waits in crowded places and hospitals, but these are not the same restrictions as Covid.

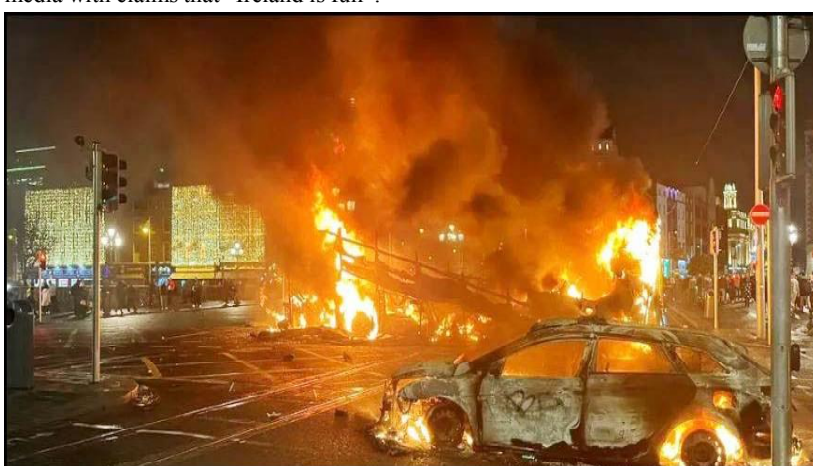


Tourism promotion campaign Visit Laos Year 2024 officially launched

VIENTIANE (Xinhua/APP): The Visit Laos Year 2024 tourism promotion campaign kicked off in Lao capital Vientiane on Thursday, expected to create a vibrant atmosphere for economic stimulation. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Lao Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone said the government views Visit Laos Year as a crucial and meaningful event, especially after the tourism industry was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's program takes the theme "A Paradise of Culture, Nature and History" with the mascot of an elephant holding a khaen, a Lao traditional musical instrument, as a symbol of good luck and prosperity. Sonexay urged concerted efforts nationwide "in hosting Visit Laos Year by assisting and providing services to visitors from around the world with warm smiles and open hearts." "This is an opportunity to showcase Laos' rich culture and traditions to the world, to create a memorable experience for visitors, and encourage them to revisit Laos in the future," he added. Also speaking at the ceremony, Lao Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism Suanesavanh Vignaket, who is also deputy head of the national committee responsible for Visit Laos Year 2024, said another goal of Visit Laos Year 2024 is to create a vibrant atmosphere for economic stimulation, both directly and indirectly, across all sectors. According to her, Visit Laos Year 2024 will feature 79 major events and activities, including 14 at the national level and 65 at the provincial level. "Visit Laos Year 2024 is one of the most important events in Laos. Apart from promoting tourism, it aims to conserve the country's arts, culture and traditions as well as inform visitors about Laos' long history and the sustainable use of its natural resources," Suanesavanh added.

Violence erupts in Dublin after school knife attack

DUBLIN (AFP/APP): Protesters on Thursday fought running battles with police, torched vehicles and looted shops in Dublin, after three young children were injured in a knife attack outside a school. Police in riot gear stood guard on the streets in the Irish capital as crowds taunted them with chants and set off fireworks. Near O'Connell Bridge, over the River Liffey, flames rose from a torched car and bus, while crowds broke into stores and looted goods on one of the city's main shopping streets. The unrest—the worst in Dublin in years—came after a five-year-old girl sustained serious injuries in a suspected stabbing in Parnell Square East, north central Dublin. Two other children and two adults—a woman and the suspected perpetrator of the attack—were taken to hospital after the incident shortly after 1:30 pm (1330 GMT). Police chief Drew Harris blamed the unrest on a "complete lunatic faction driven by far-right ideology", e warned against "misinformation" as rumours spread on social media about the suspected attacker's nationality. One protester told AFP that "Irish people are being attacked by these scum." Ireland has been facing a chronic housing crisis, with the government estimating that there is a deficit of hundreds of thousands of homes for the general population. But widespread dissatisfaction has fed into a backlash against asylum seekers and refugees, and far-right figures have promoted anti-immigration sentiment at rallies and on social media with claims that "Ireland is full".



Flames rise from the car and a bus, set alight at the junction of Bachelors Walk and the O'Connell Bridge, in Dublin

Afghanistan permanently shuts down its embassy in India

NEW DELHI (APP): The Afghan embassy has announced its permanent closure in Indian capital New Delhi and as of now there are no diplomats from the Afghan Republic in Delhi, reported Indian news agency ANI. Releasing an official statement on the closure of its diplomatic mission in New Delhi, the Afghan embassy said, "Effective from November 23, 2023, owing to persistent challenges from the Indian government. The decision follows the embassy's earlier cessation of operations on September 30, a move made in the hope that the Indian government stance will favourably change to let the mission operate normally." The embassy said it was "cognizant" that some may attempt to characterize this move as an internal conflict, allegedly involving diplomats who switched allegiance to the Taliban, adding "that this decision is a result of broader changes in policy and interests." "To the Afghan citizens in India, the embassy extends its sincere gratitude for their understanding and support throughout our mission's tenure," it added. Despite "limitations in resources and power", the Afghan embassy said it has worked "tirelessly for their betterment and in the absence of a legitimate government in Kabul". Over the past two years and three months, the Afghan community in India has witnessed a significant decline, with Afghan refugees, students, and traders leaving the country, the embassy noted in its statement, adding that the number has nearly halved since August 2021, with very limited new visas being issued during this period. "We assure the Afghan community that the mission operated with transparency, accountability, and a commitment to fair treatment based on the goodwill and interests of Afghanistan considering historic ties and bilateral relations with India," it added. "Unfortunately, efforts have been made to tarnish our image and hinder diplomatic efforts in order to justify the presence and work of Taliban-appointed and affiliated diplomats."

Imam-e-Kaaba urges Muslims to avoid declaring others infidels over petty differences

ISLAMABAD (INP): Imam-e-Kaaba Dr Saleh Bin Abdullah Bin Hameed Faisal delivered a Friday sermon at Islamabad's Faisal Mosque amid strict security arrangements, urged Muslims not to declare other Muslims infidels over petty differences.

He urged worshippers to strive for self-improvement for the betterment of the hereafter.

Imam-e-Kaaba emphasized importance of promoting love, brotherhood, and equality within the communities drawing on the metaphor of Muslims as a unified body.

Saudi ambassador to Pakistan was also among attendance as hundreds of

thousands of worshippers offer Friday prayer in capital.

Imam Kaaba's call to adhere strictly to the philosophy of piety resonated throughout the sermon, emphasizing the need for a steadfast commitment to spiritual principles.

Imam Kaaba Saleh bin Abdullah bin Hameed, standing on Pakistani soil, gave a strong message to Israel that international forces should protect the sanctity of human lives and stop crimes in Gaza.

"Muslims are being massacred in the name of human rights in Gaza. Massacre of innocent people in Gaza is the blackest visit in human history," he said.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti in a group photo with Imam Kaathib at Masjid Al-Haram and Advisor at Saudi Royal Courts of Saudi Arabia, Dr Saleh bin Abdullah Humaid.

Interior Minister welcomes Imam Kaaba at his residence

ISLAMABAD (APP): Imam Kaaba Dr Saleh bin Abdullah bin Hameed Friday visited Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on his special invitation at his residence.

Interior Minister organized breakfast in honour of Imam Kaaba.

Interior Minister warmly welcome to Imam Kaaba and said, "The Imam Kaaba's visit to his home is a blessing for him and his entire family."

He said, "The people of Pakistan love the land of Hijaz immensely and the servants have immense devotion to the Haram Sharif."

The minister said, "Pak-Saudi relations encompass shared faith, history and people-to-people ties and Pakistan highly values brotherly relations with Saudi Arabia."

CDA's design body approves various buildings plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) in its meeting has examined six commercial plots and approved the map of Plot No. 2 of the Blue Area (F-6/F-7) building plan and map of the Competition Commission of Pakistan building in Sector G-10/4.

The meeting of the Design Vetting Committee of the Capital Development Authority was held at CDA Headquarters in which officers of the planning wing of the authority and other relevant departments also participated and various plans of commercial buildings in Islamabad were presented for approval.

Moreover, the building plan and map of Sector B-17, Street No. 1, Plot No. 5 were approved in the Design Vetting Committee meeting.

Sami urges civil servants to adopt rapidly evolving global landscape

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed Friday emphasizing the importance of good governance urged the civil servants to quickly adopt the evolving landscape to address confronted challenges effectively.

Addressing the Certificate Award Ceremony of the 38th Mid-Career Management Course at the National Institute of Management (NIM) here, he shared his insights on governance and drew attention to the rapidly evolving global landscape.

He underscored the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, technological advancements, and the shifting para-

digms of economic integration, urging civil servants to adapt and excel in this dynamic environment.

In his thought-provoking address, the minister commended the institute for its dedication to enhancing the skills of civil servants.

He lauded NIM management for organizing a programme that bridged critical gaps in the training landscape, emphasizing its relevance in elevating participants from BPS 18 to 19 and highlighting the importance of refreshing knowledge and upgrading skills at the later stages of one's career.

Sami Saeed emphasized the invaluable opportunity for peer interaction, stressing the importance of networking, exchanging

ideas, and fostering friendships across diverse professional backgrounds.

He particularly appreciated the growing gender balance within civil services, acknowledging the positive shift towards increased female representation.

Referencing the visionary words of Pakistan's Founder Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Minister Saeed highlighted enduring principles of good governance articulated in speeches delivered in 1948, emphasizing the relevance of these principles even in contemporary times.

He underscored the importance of integrity, transparency, and commitment to the state as foundational values for civil servants.

Education Ministry to promote reading culture in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary for Federal Education and Professional Training Mr. Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry expected that the events would not only foster a reading culture and enhancing foundational literacy skills but also provide an opportunity to engage with renowned educationists in enlightening discussions.

Talking to APP, Mr Niazi stated that the Federal Ministry for Education and Professional Training (FE&PT) is all set to hold a three-day National Level Conference on reading and literacy, titled "Today's Readers, Tomorrow's Learners," along with Book and Foundational Learning Festival.

These events are set to take place in Islamabad on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of November.

Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Mr. Madad Ali Sindi has aimed that the three days events would be full of learning and knowledge for the books lovers.

Secretary for Federal Education and Professional Training Mr. Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry expected that the events would not only foster a reading culture and enhancing foundational literacy skills but also provide an opportunity to engage with renowned educationists in enlightening discussions.

Mr. Niazi who also lead Directorate General Basic Education Community Schools (BECS) termed the events a unique opportunity where renowned educationists will lead insightful discussions on key challenges and advancements in the field of literacy and foundational learning.

He further expressed that leading education professionals will deliver short 'Lightning Talks,' addressing innovative solutions to specific areas of foundational learning.



ISLAMABAD: Education Minister Madad Ali Sindi attended the celebration of UNESCO prize for Girls' and Women's Education 2023 received by Pakistan Alliance for girls education.

Prison reforms process continuing as per SC directions: Qureshi

Federal Ombudsman reviews progress on prison reforms in Sindh

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, on Friday said prison reforms process was continuing according to the directions of the Supreme Court (SC).

Under this program, 14 Prisons of the Sindh Province had been provided with biometric system, said a press release.

Appreciating the online meeting of jail inmates with their relatives, the ombudsman said the facility would enable the relatives to meet the prisoners when not in a position to travel at time, through computers and mobile phones at home.

He informed that up till now fifteen implementation reports on jail reforms had been submitted to the apex court and the 16th report would be presented soon.

The ombudsman also

directed IG Prison Sindh that work on providing biometric system in all prisons in Sindh and construction work on Thatta jail would be expedited.

Referring to the medical facilities for the prisoners, he asked the Jail and Health Authorities to ensure provision of doctors in all prisons.

He said keeping in view the recommendations of the Reforms Committee, steps should be taken to connect biometric system with Nadra Police, Prosecution and other relevant agencies.

The ombudsman chairing a high level meeting along with the Additional Chief Secretary Home during his visit to Karachi which was attended by I.G. Secretary Health, Senior officers of other relevant departments and Head of Wafaqi Mohtasib Regional Office Karachi.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkey Prof. Dr. Mehmet Pacaci, addressing during the Signing Ceremony of Agreement Cooperation Protocol between Yunus Emre Institute & Ghazali Education Foundation at AIOU.

UNIDO drives economic transformation in Sindh with 'PAIDAR Grant Fund'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) convened a pre-bid conference under the Poverty Alleviation and Inclusive Development Across Rural Sindh (PAIDAR) programme, which is funded by the European Union (EU) in a dedicated effort to combat poverty and advance inclusive development.

The event, held the other day, served as a pivotal platform, offering crucial insights and guidelines to potential applicants interested in the grant opportunities presented by the PAIDAR programme.

National Programme Coordinator for PAIDAR, Badar Ul Islam set the tone for the conference with a warm welcome,

underlining the collaborative effort needed for sustainable development. He shed light on the significance of the PAIDAR Grant Fund in supporting poverty eradication and communal infrastructure development.

Contracts Officer at UNIDO, Natalie Maabdi provided a comprehensive

walkthrough of the step-by-step process for submitting grant applications. A dynamic Q&A session followed, allowing participants to seek clarification and deepen their understanding. Executive Officer at PAIDAR, Nima Bahramalian shared valuable insights, setting the stage for the PAIDAR programme's commitment to sustainable poverty eradication and inclusive development. Director General for the Directorate of Urban Planning, Policy and Strategic Planning (URP&SP) and the Planning and Development Department at the Government of Sindh, Farooque Siddiqui also graced the conference with his presence.

Addressing the participants, he said, "The Sindh government is focused on tackling poverty as a top priority and the EU-funded PAIDAR programme implemented by UNIDO addresses a key gap in economic development through grants to empower MSMEs (especially targeting youth and women-led enterprises).



PESHAWAR: Brig. (Retd.) Muzaffar Ali Ranjha, Chairman, PMIC's is getting site visit briefing on PSDP project titled "Peshawar Northern Bypass" from the NHA officers and Contractor.

PMIC stresses completion of PIMS HVAC project by December 15

ISLAMABAD (APP): A team of the Prime Minister's Inspection Commission (PMIC) on Friday inspected the delayed project of installation of heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) plant at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and stressed for the completion of work by December 15, 2023.

The PMIC's visit took place in wake of the deep concerns expressed by the prime minister over the unwarranted delay in completion of the PSDP projects including "Replace and Upgradation of HVAC Plant Room Equipments and Allied Works at PIMS, Islamabad".

Following dissatisfaction on the reports from Ministry of Housing and Works and Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, the matter had been referred to the PMIC for effective supervision.

The inspection team that visited the project, comprised PMIC members Zahir Shah and Dr. Mumtaz

Ahmed Kamal, Co-opted Member Safdar Ali, Director Muhammad Saleh Narejo and Assistant Director Ahmed Waseem.

The team inspected the ongoing work of the HVAC regarding installation of the centrally air conditioning system in the whole buildings of the hospital.

Chairman PMIC Brigadier (Retired) Muzaffar Ali Ranjha had assigned the task to the inquiry team headed by Zahir Shah for vigorously persuading the project and ensure its completion at the earliest.

The PIMS administration, the officers of Public Works Department and contractors were present during the inspection.

The team observed the progress made by the contractors and PWD in the light of directions issued in the team's visit last week. Directions were given during the visit for speedy and effective completion of the project with deadlines which has been significantly delayed.



ISLAMABAD: DG FWO Maj-General Abdul Sami in a meeting with Chief minister GB Haji Gul Bar Khan provisional Minister Interior Shams Lone also present.

German embassy in Islamabad celebrates German Unity Day

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad joyously observed German Unity Day today in a garden reception. This auspicious occasion

community. Among the participants were representatives from German businesses, foundations, and organizations operating in Pakistan. Esteemed attendees included dignitaries and



high officials from diplomatic, military, political, economic, and humanitarian sectors, reflecting the strong ties between Germany and Pakistan.

The celebration showcased stalls from various German organizations, including economic development partners GIZ, KiW, BGR as well as academic exchange service DAAD, Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus, and political foundations. These stalls provided a glimpse into Germany's multifaceted engagement in Pakistan, illustrating the diverse contributions of German entities across various sectors.

high officials from diplomatic, military, political, economic, and humanitarian sectors, reflecting the strong ties between Germany and Pakistan.

Zong 4G ensures employee safety with fire safety awareness month

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, a leading telecommunication company, is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of its employees.

In observance of Fire Safety Awareness Month this November, Zong 4G, has taken proactive measures to equip its workforce with essential knowledge and skills to respond effectively in the event of a fire emergency said a news release.

As part of the Fire Safety Awareness Month activities, Zong 4G conducted a successful fire drill on the 24th of November.

The drill was meticulously planned to simulate real-life scenarios and evaluate the effectiveness of emergency response procedures. The objective was to improve response times and ensure that employees were well-prepared to handle any potential fire-related situations.

Zong 4G recognizes the importance of regular training and drills to reinforce safety protocols and foster a culture of preparedness among its employees.

First lady seeks support to raise awareness on breast cancer, mental health, rights of disabled persons

ISLAMABAD (APP): Begum Samina Alvi, wife of the president of Pakistan on Friday emphasized the need for collective efforts in raising awareness about breast cancer, mental health and well-being, as well as advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities to enable them becoming productive part of the society.

"These topics should be openly discussed throughout the year, whether it is breast cancer, rights of differently abled person or mental health," she said while speaking at an awareness seminar on

breast cancer organized by the Rotary Club here.

"In this regard, we will need the support of not only the government but also the society as a whole," she said adding that there was need to work for increasing the existing facilities in Pakistan.

The first lady said that a five-minute self-examination every month could help detect breast cancer at an early stage, thus saving thousands of the lives of women in the country.

She said that 44,000 deaths due to breast cancer

in Pakistan was an alarming situation that needed raising constant awareness about early diagnosis of the disease.

Samina Alvi mentioned that the world overall had a 98 percent recovery rate from breast cancer, however, pointed out that in Pakistan, insufficient mammographic facilities led to a high mortality rate due to the detection of malignancy at a late stage.

She said that women of all ages including teenage girls of 12-14 years were also being diagnosed with breast cancer.

Court issues written order regarding extension of PTI chairman's remand

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Accountability Court (AC) of Islamabad on Friday issued a written order regarding four days extension in the physical remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman in the Al-Qadir Trust case.

AC-1 Judge Muhammad Bashir, in the five-page order, said Deputy Prosecutor General NAB Sardar Muzafar Abbasi requested for further 10-day physical re-

mand of the accused. The National Accountability Bureau told the court that Ali Zafar had appeared before NAB on November 23, following the summons and shared the relevant record.

The judge further said that the prosecution had stated that it had to investigate regarding the shifting of amount to the national kitty and there was need of further custody of the accused to conclude the probe.

Faryal hails PPP leaders for successful 'Worker convention'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Central President of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Women's Wing Faryal Talpur hailed the party leadership and workers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter for conducting successful workers convention in the province. During the meeting with leadership of KP, she said that sentiments and enthusiasm of the masses for Bilawal Bhutto during his visit was remarkable.

Campaign for registration of house servants, tenants data in full swing

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: According to details, following the special orders of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police "Knock the Door" campaign for the registration of employees and tenants is in full swing, a public relations officer said.

He said that, during this campaign various teams of Islamabad Capital Police are



going to the streets and door-to-door to ensure the registration of tenants and domestic workers as well as to inquire about the problems faced by the citizens.

In this regard, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad has registered a data of 267 house servants and tenants of 580 houses from Bara Kahu Police Station jurisdiction.

The purpose of this campaign is to avoid any untoward incident by maintaining law and order in the federal capital adding that the registration of tenants and domestic workers could not only keep a close watch on miscreants but also prevent the elements involved in any kind of suspicious activity.