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President, PM applauds security forces for foiling attack

Security forces foil attack on Gwadar complex, kill 8 terrorists

Attackers killed while trying to gain entry into GPA complex, two soldiers embrace martyrdom

day repulsed an attack by militants on a complex outside the strategic port of Gwadar, killing all eight of them,

China has invested heavily in the mineral-rich southwestern province of Balochistan, including developing Gwadar, despite a decades-long separatist insurgency.

Armed with guns and bombs, the militants stormed the Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) complex just outside the port that houses offices of government departments, intelligence agencies and paramilitary forces, said Saeed Ahmed Umrani, a government commissioner.

The militants detonated a number of bombs before launching a shooting attack and trying to storm the com-

In a post on social media platform X, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said eight militants were "neutralised by security forces", adding: "The message is loud & clear. Whosoever chooses to use violence will see no mercy from the state.

The military said in a statement issued later in the solve," it added

GWADAR (Agencies): The security forces on Wednes- evening that a group of eight terrorists attempted to enter Port Authority Colony in Gwadar, which was successfully thwarted by the security forces personnel.

Own troops employed for security responded immediately and effectively engaged the terrorists, and in ensuing fire exchange, all eight terrorists were sent to hell," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR)

A large quantity of arms, ammunition and explosives was also recovered from the killed terrorists. "However, during the intense exchange of fire, two brave soldiers; Sepoy Bahar Khan (age: 35 years, resident of District DG Khan) and Sepoy Imran Ali (age: 28

years, resident of District Khairpur) having fought gallantly, sacrificed their lives and embraced Shahadat," said the military's media wing. "Security forces of Pakistan, in step with the na-

tion remain determined to thwart attempts of sabotaging peace and stability of Balochistan, and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our re-





ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meet-

President for expanding scope of Pak-Japan cooperation

Independent Report

Wednesday called for expanding the scope of bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Japan across a wide spectrum of areas, especially trade, investment, economy, culture and people-to-people con-

The president, talking to the Ambassador of Japan Mitsuhiro Wada, who called on him, said that Pakistan was a huge market and Japanese businesses should benefit from the economic opportunities by investing in diverse sec-

He said that both countries had been enjoying long-standing relations, which needed to be further cemented for the mutual benefit of the two sides.

He highlighted that Ja-ISLAMABAD: President
Asif Ali Zardari on
Wednesday called for an application of Pakistan that had been supporting Pakistan's socio-economic development in different sectors under the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

He further said that Pakistan had a huge population and could send the trained workforce and professionals to help Japan fulfill its requirement for

human resources The president said that Japanese automobile companies, based in Pakistan, should enhance production to export their products from Pakistan.

The Japanese banks should also be encouraged to restart their operations in Pakistan, he said and reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to overcome its current socioeconomic challenges.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, Mitsuhiro Wada calls on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

False narrative of Imran about Cipher distorted relations at int'l level: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ataullah Tarar has said today's hearing at the US Congress about the Cipher has again proved that Cipher conspiracy of PTI was a lie and complete false. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad tonight, he said the false narrative of Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf founding chairman about Cipher distorted our relations at the international

The Minister said today's hearing also proved fied lier, who mislead the entire nation and the youth by constantly speaking lies.

He said the false narrative of PTI founding chairman was also exposed in the Congress hearing, which was even arranged by the PTI after hiring lobbying firms in the United States.

Ataullah Tarar said PTI, under a well hatched conspiracy, put the interests of the state at the stake just to promote its political narrative and single person prioritized his personal interests over the state in-

ISI chief briefs **President on**

ers issues including internal security and situation at the

borders Complex

> **Independent Report** QUETTA: The Chief Min-

said that the brave jawans of security forces foiled the at-

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti said that the brave forces eliminated eight terrorists by immediate retaliation. The Chief Minister paid rich tributes to the security forces on successful action. He made pledge to wipe out terrorism from the

security situation ISLAMABAD (INP): Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) Director General Lt-General Nadeem Anjum on Wednesday visited the Presidency and briefed President Asif Ali Zardari on a string of issues, sources said. President Asif Zardari welcomed the ISI chief at the Aiwan-i-Sadr after which they held a detailed meeting. The meeting cov-

CM expresses satisfaction over foiling terrorists' attack at GPA

ster Balochistan, Mir

Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed satisfaction over foiling the terrorists' attack in Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) Complex in Gwadai and appreciated the security forces in this regard.
The Chief Minister

tack of terrorism in Gwadar

Quetta jolted by third earthquake in past 24 hours QUETTA (INP): Quetta and adjoining areas were jolted

by another earthquake in the wee hours of Wednesday, the third in the past 24 hours. The intensity of third earthquake was recorded 5.6 magnitude on the Rich-

ter scale in Quetta city and other areas of Balochistan province adjacent to Afghan border. As per the National Seismic Monitoring Centre (NSMC), the depth of the earthquake was 30 km and the epicenter of it was Shorawak area of Afghanistan's Kandahar province, adjacent to Nushki district of Balochistan that is 166 km southwest of Quetta

stronger manner through constitutional forums

Would not make compromise on rights in "closed rooms": CM vows to speak to

federation about rights in

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti welcomes former militant commander Sarfraz Bangulzai in national mainstream; emphasizes upon adopting course of sustainable development; says we have to increase our resources halting way of "commission" in projects

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that we would not be making any compromise on our rights in the "closed rooms" at all, rather would speak to the federation about the rights with federation in stronger manner through constitutional forums. He said that if we can't give jobs to our youth, nor clean the city, then it is our fault, not of any "Punjabi"

The Chief Minister was expressing views at the "Balochistan Youth state Harmony Summit" organized at

Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS) in collaboration with nongovernmental organization, Voice Of Balochistan here on Wednesday.

The Member of Pro-

vincial Assembly, Dr.

Rubaba Buledi, former Commander of banned outfit joining national Sarfraz mainstream. Bangulzai, Vice Chancellor of BUITEMS, Professor Dr. Khalid Hafeez and others. It may be mentioned here that Sarfraz Bangulzai participated in any public gathering after joining the national mainstream.



Hamna Malik presenting a shield to Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti after conclusion of Balochistan Youth Summit held at **BUITEMS**

Inquiry ordered into mine mishap:

12 coalmine labourers dead; 8 rescue alive in Harnai coalmine mishap entered the affected mine for

Independent Report QUETTA: As many as 12

coalmine labourers died while eight others were rescued after a coalmine caved in following the gas explosion in Harnai coalmine field on late Tuesday night.

The Chief Mines Inspector Balochistan, Abdul Ghani told that some 12 coal mine workers were trapped in a coalmine located in Zard Aalo area of Harnai after the blast occurred there.

After the mishap, eight other local coal mine workers entered the coal mine to rescue the trapped miners. However, they were also trapped after the mine caved

Later, the rescue teams reached the spot and started rescue operation.

including Provincial Disaster Management Authority and Mines department

During the course, eight

rescue, were rescued alive and shifted to the local health establishment.

However, 12 other mine workers could not survive and their bodies were taken out from the coal mine. The deceased workers

hailed from Pishin, Chaman. Harnai, Killa Saifullah and

The Chief Mines Inspector informed that the affected coal mine has been sealed after completion of the rescue operation. He said that an inquiry

has also been ordered to probe into the coal mine mishap. Meanwhile, bodies of deceased coal mine workers were sent to their native areas for burial. It may be mentioned here that Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti had directed the DG PDMA to dispatch rescue teams to the Harnai

Cross-border terrorism will no longer be acceptable: PM

Says Pakistan wants to live peacefully with neighbouring states; Invites countries to come and work together to end terrorism; Says Pakistan has to get rid of debts as they are harmful; PM, cabinet to forgo salaries and perks; calls for Charter of Unity.

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stated that Pakistan will not tolerate any more cross-border terror attacks on its soil

Chairing the federal cabinet meeting in Islamabad today, PM Shehbaz Sharif said security of the geographical frontiers of Pakistan is a redline.

have cordial relations with countries to promote trade was done previously. and economic relations. However, it is not acceptable that the land of the neighboring country is used for terrorism in Pakistan, he added.

President approves dismissal of Justice Mazahar Ali Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (INP): Dismissal of former Supreme Court judge Mazahar Ali Naqvi was approved by President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday.

The approval was given by the president after the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) found Justice Naqvi guilty of misconduct

After withdrawal of the previous notification by the Ministry of Law accepting Naqvi's resignation as a judge, a new noti-fication terminating his services was issued. The latest notification

cites Naqvi's judicial misconduct, as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council, as the reason for his dismissal.

Two terrorists killed as many injured in N Waziristan operation

RAWALPINDI (APP) Two terrorists were killed and as many injured by the security forces during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted on the night of March 19th and 20th in North Waziristan District. the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Wednesday.

During conduct of operation intense fire exchange took place between the Army troops and the terrorists.

Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area, the ISPR

Shehbaz Sharif pro- pelled to secure another

joint strategy with the sincerity of purpose to defeat the scourge of terrorism. He said collective efforts against terrorism will help establish peace in the region and address other issues

such as that of poverty. Highlighting the sacriin the war on terrorism, the Pakistan desires to premier reaffirmed the tors including agriculture,

> Sharif vows to revive Pakistan's economy

said the country is com- try

posed the formulation of a IMF package. He however affirmed the commitment to revive the economy and help it stand on its own feet. We have made a conscious decision to minimize borrowing and gradually rid the country of loans.

The premier said an enabling environment will fices rendered by Pakistan be created to attract investments across various seccommitment to wipe out industries, Information the neighboring fraternal the menace of terrorism as Technology and mines and minerals.

He said the Special In-Turning to the eco- Council is serving as a ronomic situation, Prime bust platform to facilitate Minister Shehbaz Sharif investment in the coun-



RIYADH: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir exchanging views with Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, The Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during meeting held in Riyadh.

COAS calls on Mohammad Bin Salman Saudi Crown Prince expresses desire to further strengthen

RAWALPINDI (Online): Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman has expressed desire to further strengthen bilateral relations with Pakistan He was talking to Chief of Army Staff General Gen-

bilateral ties with Pakistan

eral Asim Munir who called on him during his official visit to the Kingdom. Mohammad Bin Salman said the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will always standby with Pakistan in future as

He highlighted KSA and Pakistan have historic brotherly and strong relations and both countries have always stood up for each other

During the visit, the Army Chief also met with Saudi Defence Minister Prince Khalid Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chief of General Staff Saudi Armed Forces Gen-eral Fayyadh Bin Hamed Al Ruwaili , Saudi Assistant Minister of Defense Engineer Talal Abdullah Al Otaibi and other senior military leadership.

Donald Lu dismisses allegations of involvement in Imran Khan's removal

Monitoring Desk

WASHNINGTON: US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu has categorically denied allegations suggesting the United States played any role in the removal of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan from the position of Prime Min-

Lu's statement came during a hearing conducted by the US Congress Committee regarding the 2024 general elections in Pakistan, where he provided

testimony on the matter. Asserting respect for Pakistan's sovereignty, he emphasized that the allegations of US involvement in Imran Khan's removal were baseless

Addressing concerns surrounding the safety of an American citizen, the Assistant Secretary of State underscored the seriousness with which the United States approaches threats against its citizens. He clarified that any charges related to the cipher were unfounded and based on waiv-



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting of Zaireen Management Committee

Daily Aoice of Masse Independent

Austerity theatre

The government's recent unveiling of 'austerity' measures, ostensibly aimed at reducing expenses, appears to be more about show than actual sub-

While restricting cabinet members to three international trips per year and delineating travel class guidelines for various officials might seem like prudent steps, they barely scratch the surface of the belt-tightening needed to navigate Pakistan through its financial quagmire.

The decisions by the president and interior minister to forgo their salaries, though commendable on the surface, pale in comparison to the extravagance that continues to plague government spending. The gesture does little to address the underlying issues of fiscal irresponsibility that have led to our current economic predicament.

Allowing MNAs and senior bureaucrats the luxury of business class travel — which in practical terms for a return ticket to many European destinations means spending approximately a million rupees — is a slap in the face of the concept of fiscal restraint. The image of lawmakers and bureaucrats jetsetting on public coin sends a conflicting message to the populace they serve, especially when 40pc of the people fall below the poverty line.

The disparity in salary ratios between various employees in the UK and Pakistan serves as a shameful mirror for reflection. In the UK, the salary ratio between a janitor and the senior-most bureaucrat is 1:8, whereas in Pakistan, it is an astounding 1:80. The officials who think they are tightening their belts by not flying first class (the president and chief justice can, however) are sorely mistaken.

The austerity narrative pushed by the government — indeed like all other governments before it collapses under the weight of these contradictions. The privileging of a select few to cushy travel perks, while a significant chunk of the nation struggles to eat three square meals a day, is not austerity; it is austerity theatre.

The critique here is not merely about the scale of the measures but their sincerity. Real austerity involves hard choices and genuine sacrifice, not selective tokenism. The continued allowance of benefits and the half-measures proposed signal a troubling lack of commitment to governance and fiscal responsibility. If the government means business, lawmakers would do well to pass a resolution in parliament refusing such privileges until the economy stabilises. The PM, services chiefs, and at best, the foreign minister may utilise such travel perks but it is unreasonable to extend these to the rest of the government machinery

Symbolic gestures won't do anymore. There is a need for a fundamental reassessment of priorities and spending, with a laser focus on eliminating waste and directing resources towards sustainable economic recovery. Only then can the nation hope to emerge from its economic plight and embark on a future marked by stability and prosperity.

Russian roulette

Mahir Ali

A thumping majority for Vladimir Putin in his fifth bid for the Russian presidency was a foregone conclusion, even though its size surprised even seasoned analysts. It's a 10 per cent improvement on his 77.5pc score in 2018, and his initial candidacy in 2000 was rewarded with little more than 53pc of the popular

The electoral exercise that began last Friday and concluded on Sunday was not billed as a wartime affair, given that the aggression against Ukraine has officially been designated as a special military operation. But a war by any other name smells just as foul, and there is little evidence that most Russians buy the Kremlin's narrative that this sordid conflict bears any resem- Russia's recent history is blance to the 'great patri-otic war' of 1941-45, in which the Soviet Red Army ultimately routed

the Nazis. Russian accounts frequently neglect to mention that Josef Stalin panicked when Adolf Hitler betrayed the Nazi-Soviet pact, having ignored reports of an imminent German invasion from his spies. Or that Soviet military strategy went awry until Stalin left it to war, the domestic politics of paranoia resurfaced. In 1930s, Stalin had physically eliminated all conceivable rivals as well as numerous competent military leaders, which facilitated the initial Nazi cakewalk through vast

tracts of Soviet territory. Putin's Stalinesque paranoia has been evident since his earliest days at the helm. Many perceived opponents from recalcitrant oligarchs and disenchanted intelliists and politicians died in mysterious cir- renewal but replaced it Gaza? cumstances, as did politi- with predatory capitalism. Dawn

cal rival Alexei Navalny He also deployed the in a Siberian prison army against parliament, colony recently.

I find it hard to share Western and Russian liberals' enthusiasm for Navalny as an antidote to the poison Putin has injected into the lifeblood of Russia, notwithstanding his worthy anti-corruption crusade. But he certainly deserved the opportunity to face Putin on a level electoral playing field. He wouldn't have won, but the impression of an autocrat backed by more than

have been averted. Of course, an imprisoned Navalny would not have been permitted to contest, so his elimination can perhaps only be explained by visceral hatred, or as a means of limiting the challenge to any of Putin's successors.

The

irony

87pc of Russians might

that the federation's least undemocratic election occurred during the last months of the Soviet era, in March 1991. Boris Yeltsin won it with more than 58pc of the popular vote, despite the antipathy of the Gorbachev government. Yeltsin went on to play a key role in reversing the absurd Aucoup against Mikhail Gorbachev. Emboldened by Western backing, he went on disthe generals. After the mantle the USSR in collaboration with the elected leaders of Ukraine the first phase during the and Belarus, ignoring the non-Slav components of the union and superseding a new union treaty that Gorbachev was on

> the verge of finalising. We will never know how long a reformed Soviet Union, composed of sovereign states that fitonomy from Moscow that Vladimir Lenin had argued for 70 years earlier, might have lasted.

and incarcerated politicians included his vice president, Aleksandr Rutskoi (a former war prisoner in Pakistan during

the Afghan conflict). The 1996 election went to a second rou-nd, and Yeltsin beat the fairly dismal Com--munist Party can----didate, Gen-nady Zyu--ga-nov, with the aid of authorised foreign int--erference prim-arily from Am-e-rica.

The services of the newfangled intelli-g---ence agency, the FSB, may also have been invoked. Its first director was a former KGB agent and deputy mayor of St Petersburg, who was named prime minister in 1999. Shortly afterwards, Yeltsin quit, having been offered immunity from prosecution for corruption, and named Putin as acting president. The rest is recent history.

Stalinism could not even begin to be exorcised until the dictator's demise in March 1953 after 30 years in power, and it is widely assumed that Putin's exit from the Kremlin will also involve a coffin. That could be a long time coming, and it would be inhumane to prolong the Ukraine war indefinitely. In that context, Pope Francis' muchpilloried advice on pursuing peace makes far more sense than the gung-ho blather from Nato's Jens Stoltenberg or the EU's Ursula von der Leyen.

Besides, let's not forget that popular support for Putin is only reinforced by Western Russophobia that can-Chekhov and cels Tchaikovsky, and queries Russian cultural nally enjoyed the au- and sports figures about their views on the Ukraine war. What are the chances that Israeli or Jewish participants The Yeltsin regime de- in any event might be gence agents to journal-stroyed a moribund asked whether they economy desperate for support the genocide in

The Bhutto wound

Muhammad Ali Siddiqi

The Supreme Court's March 6 judgement gives valid legal reasons why the trial that led to the verdict ordering Z.A. Bhutto's execution in 1979 did not meet the requirements of the "fundamental right to a fair trial and due process

Decades earlier, Dorab Patel, one of Pakistan's most illustrious legal minds, called Bhutto's hanging "a judicial murder". However, for the people of Pakistan, especially those belonging to the generation that lived through the traumatic 1970s, Bhutto's murder was the aim of the general — and his flunkies — who seized power through a coup on a date that is part of our national memory: July 5, 1977.

Gen Ziaul Haq seized power in the wake of a countrywide movement launched by a nineparty alliance called the in Pakistan National Alliance against the alleged rigging of the general election — something de rigueur in Pakistan if you lose the polls.

Zia promised to the would "inshallah" hold elections within 90 days and went on to rule until his death 11 years later.

Initially he showed detention an equal number of leaders from both Bhutto's PPP and the that the PNA's nationwide agitation and its ability to bring the country to a halt had proved Bhutto had lost his popularity, and a fresh election would give the PNA

a sweeping victory.
After his release, Bhutto made a brilliant tactical move and decided to travel to Karachi by train. Huge crowds greeted him at railway his PNA supporters whose industrial empires

at Karachi's Cantonment Station to judge whether the reports about the former prime minister getting huge receptions were true. I perched myself on the steps of a railway bridge and waited, wondering if this was the right perch. And lo and behold, Bhutto's carriage stopped right in front of me. He was wearing a cream-coloured

shalwar kameez, and he

had a cold for there was

a handkerchief in his

hand. was the last time I was looking at him. The next day was perhaps the first of Ramazan, and just to prove that my feelings were wrong I went to his residence, 70 Clifton. There were security people outside, besides many VIPs who wanted to see him, but Bhutto was in conference with the top PPP leadership and no one was allowed

the crucial conference became known much later. Bhutto was clear in his mind and guessed how his enemies would react. He pleaded for an people of Pakistan he election boycott. The majority opposed him, saying the PNA would be delighted and would claim Bhutto was running away from elec-PPP would mean a sweeping PNA victory, once the military was

What happened at

When the clamour for election continued, Bhutto said one thing repeatedly in Urdu: "Elections hongay? Elections hongay? (Will elections be held? Will elections be held? Will elections be held? tions be held?)

He had read his opwanted his blood, be-

realise Bhutto still had he had nationalised had his charisma. I was there bankrolled the PNA movement.

Zia and his PNA allies were panicky and wanted the polls ditched. Much later, when Bhutto was dead and the PNA unity had broken up, the former allies went public with how PNA leaders kowtowed to Zia for calling off the elections — a drama Zia was enjoying, pretending to be indecisive about calling off the elections but keen to develop a consensus. Finally, he relented to the joy of his PNA allies, and Something told me it said he would call off the polls. One leader, according to a PNA veteran, prostrated himself, when the mi--litary dictator said he would oblige

> I was there at Karachi's Nishtar Park, where PPP leader Maulana Kausar Niazi made a brilliant speech full of humour and sarcasm. Then he confirmed what until then was a rumour. "This is the last public meeting and elections are going to be postponed." An ongoing election campaign was called off!

Bhutto was arrested, and Zia had the audacity to declare what has become a shibboleth repeated ad nauseam and as a holy grail -'pehlay ehtesab, phir intikhab' (accountability some sincerity, kept in tions. Bhutto argued that first, election later). an election without the Ehtesab is the criminal legacy Zia left for subsequent governments, PNA, and then released and he would tackle the military and civilian, to them. He had assumed civilian government brazenly persecute the opposition

Bhutto was buried without his family being shown his face the last time. On Aug 17, 1988, Zia's plane, C-130, Pak-One, crashed a few miles from the Bahawalpur airfield nose first in the mud close to the Sutlej river.

Bhutto's widow, ponents' minds cor- Begum Nusrat Bhutto, rectly, and knew they said in Urdu something that can be condensed stations, making Zia and cause the tycoons thus: "God, I have seen -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM for including global experts in economic reforms consultation

Sharif on Wednesday decided to include global experts and all stakeholders in the consultation process aimed at improving the economic government. health and financial

stability of the country. The prime minister implementation of the economic reforms.

The prime minister chaired a meeting on economic revival and

Minister Wing said in a press

During the meeting, the prime minister said that strengthening of top priority of his

The prime minister said that the government addition exports in the would provide all facilities would oversee the to the export industries and outreach of the country's

He further said that

taxes, besides supporting small, medium and large

industries in the country. He also asked for submission of reports over economy was among the economic reforms in different sectors in phases, besides directing to give vital significant to value country's export policy.

He vowed to bring increase global market country's exports into international value addition

The expertise of the they would increase the tax international experts with

ISLAMABAD (APP): reforms, PM Office Media net instead increasing regard to increasing of capability in export sector should be utilized, he

observed. The meeting was attended by federal ministers including Ahsan Muhammad Aurangzeb, Jam Kamal Khan, Ahad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, Dr Musadik Malik, Sardar Awais Khan Leghari, Governor State Bank of Pakistan Jameel Ahmed, Jehanzaib Khan, Chairman FBR Malil Amjad Zubair

Tiwana, Dr Ejaz Nabi.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on Economic Revival and



ISLAMABAD: EU Ambassador Riina Kionka calls on Pakistan's Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, and congratulates him for assuming the portfolio of Ministry of Commerce.

Chicken, eggs prices reach at Rs 420 per kg, Rs 280 per dozen

ISLAMABAD (APP): poultry items have The price of poultry increased by 20 percent in chicken reached Rs 420 per the twin cities during the kg and the price of poultry eggs reached Rs 280 per dozen in the open market in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

according to the survey conducted by APP here on Wednesday. The price of poultry chickens and eggs has been going above Rs 420 to 280 per kg and dozen for the past last months, which is getting

the twin cities during the last month after Ramazan began, which has created

huge volatility in the market. According to the market survey, during the The meat of the last two months in the twin poultry chicken has cities, a 24% increase was reached Rs 700 to 710 per witnessed in the price of kg in the open market, poultry chicken, while as same as 30 per cent increase in the price of poultry eggs in the same period. Meanwhile, talking to APP former Chairman of Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA), Dr Sajjad Arshad said that the increase in away from the purchasing the current prices of power of consumers day poultry was due to by day. The prices of demand and supply factor.

Rupee gains 23 paisa against dollar ISLAMABAD (APP):

Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday strengthened by 23 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.40 against the previous day's closing of Rs278.63.However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs278.7 and Rs281.45, respectively. The price of the Euro remained unchanged to close at Rs302.35, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen came down by 02 paisa and closed at Rs1.83, whereas an increase of 02 pasia was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound.

Funding Scheme for Engineering Startups' ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Engineering areas for this scheme, the Council (PEC) Innovation official of PEC said that the Council (PEC) Innovation and Entrepreneurship themes for the proposals

PEC announces 'Seed

Committee (ICE) has invited engineering startups to submission of business proposals under efficiency, its 'Seed Funding Scheme for Engineering Startups'. business

proposals addressing key challenges opportunities in the engineering sector with a focus on sustainable technology development in Agri-tech and Smart-tech are sought from the

are Agri-tech and Smart-Tech. Agri-tech is crucial to enhance productivity, sustainability in the sector of agriculture such as food security, environmental

sustainability, and increasing demand for agricultural products, integration of technology in agriculture continues to evolve, offering new opportunities for innovation and improvement in farming

Dr. Khalid Maqbool urges provinces to harmonize food business rules ISLAMABAD (APP): regulations

Federal Minister for enforcement mechanisms Science and Technology, among provinces and Dr. Khalid Maqbool federal agencies have Siddiqui has called upon the provincial governments to harmonize rules related to food businesses.

addressed to each chief ministers of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan, Dr. Siddiqui highlighted the need for uniformity to ensure food safety and quality nationwide.

existing disparities in standards to prevent authorities.

resulted in inconsistencies, inefficiencies and potential gaps in ensuring the safety and quality of food In separate letters products available to consumers nationwide and for import and export purposes. He emphasized the role of the Pakistan best practices", the letter Standards and Quality said. The minister noted that Control Authority (PSQCA) as the national standards body and

and duplication of efforts isms between PSQCA and provincial authorities.

He said PSOCA is the sole national standards body to establish standards for al food and non-food products, services and processes. "After the 18th amendment, provinces started establishing their own standards which are against the international manufacturers were suffering because of the duplication of these activities by PSQCA The minister said the advocated for streamlining and provincial food

Wilmar unit to make further investment in Pak-listed Unity Foods

Independent Report

KARACHI: Ŵilmar Pakistan Holdings Pte. Ltd. ("WPH", a wholly owned direct subsidiary of Wilmar International Limited), Unity Wilmar Agro (Private) Limited ("UWA", a 52% subsidiary of WPH) and certain shareholders of Unity Foods Limited ("UFL") have, through Arif Habib Limited (in its capacity as the manager to the public offer), made a public announcement to the Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited of their intention to acquire up to 277,070,908 shares of UFL in the public offer, at the price that

complies with the pricing

formula and other applicable esteemed Fortune 500 Pakistan laws and company, reaffirms its regulations including the commitment to Pakistan's Securities Act 2015 and economy through its Listed Companies (Substantial Acquisition of Voting Shares and Takeovers) Regulations

2017 ("PAI").

UFL, a public company listed on the Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited, is principally involved in the manufacturing and processing of edible oils, industrial fats, flour and various feed ingredients for Pakistan's poultry and

livestock sectors. Wilmar International

investment in Unity Foods Limited demonstrating confidence in the resilience and potential of Pakistan's economic public landscape. collaboration not only bilateral business ties but also underscores Unity Foods Limited's pivotal role in foreign fostering economic growth, and

strengthens attracting investment, facilitating development in Pakistan. Wilmar

Pakistan Holdings Pte. Ltd. WIL also ultimately controls Unity Wilmar Agro (Private) Limited ("UWA"), with an effective shareholding of 52% in UWA. WIL, founded in 1991 and headquartered in Singapore, is today Asia's leading agribusiness group. WIL is ranked amongst the largest listed companies by market capitalization on the Singapore Exchange. The business activities of WIL ("Wilmar Group") include oil palm cultivation, oilseed crushing, edible oils refining, International Limited is the flour and rice milling, sugar Limited ("WIL"), an ultimate acquirer or the milling and refining,

shareholder of Wilmar

controlling manufacturing of consumer products, ready-to-eat meals, central kitchen products, specialty fats, oleochemicals, biodiesel and fertilizers as well as food park operations. Wilmar Group has over 1,000 manufacturing plants and an extensive distribution network covering China, India, Indonesia and some 50 other countries and regions. Through scale, integration and the logistical advantages of its business and its group companies model, Wilmar Group can extract margins at every step of the value chain, thereby reaping operational synergies and cost efficiencies

Minister directs completion of centralized database software in 25 districts

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Excise, Mian Khaleeq-ur-Rehman has directed to complete centralized database software in 25

districts of the province. He was chairing a meeting of regarding Motor Vehicle Software Database and Software Up gradation here on Wednesday.

The minister said that transparent system of taxation was being introduced in the province

brought in excise an facilitation of people

He also directed steps

to resolve technical problems in Motor Vehicle Software Database and its implementation all over the province. He directed to complete database in 25 districts of the province and added that integrated system would soon be develop for online verification of property

and motorcar taxation. Excise minister said



GILGIT: Minister Agriculture Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Anwar speaks during the 3rd sitting of 18th Session of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly under the chair of Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Nazir Ahmad Advocate.

Ramazan Ration bags LHC rejects plea seeking immediate removal of Nawaz Sharif picture

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has rejected the plea immediate removal of Nawaz Sharif picture from Ramazan ration bags.

Justice Shahid Karim of LHC took up the petition for hearing Wednesday.

Counsel Salma Riaz gave arguments on behalf of the petitioner.

plea national exchequer cannot be used for personal publicity. This way the distribution of atta is against the dignity

prayed the court to order for stopping the printing of PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif picture on ration bag. Order be issued for not hurting the prestige of the citizens in connection

with distribution of atta. Punjab government be ordered to send the cash to the citizens at their homes through Benazir Income Support

The court rejected The counsel took the the plea for removing Nawaz Sharif picture from ration bags related to Ramazan package forthwith.

The court while issuing notice to Punjab petitioner government sought reply. | Return).



Industries Corporation.

KP gov't committed to underprivileged children's uplift: CM

Speaker inspect health

projects in Swabi

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur has said that the government is development committed to uplifting the lives of underprivileged

He expressed these the state children would institution- ZamungKor respons campus here.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief minister

of stray dog

policy

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief

Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin

Gandapur, taking notice of the inhumane killing of

stray dogs, has directed

concerned authorities to

review the current policy

Municipal and Livestock

Departments to develop an

from the Chief Minister's

Secretariat to the relevant

departments highlights the

ineffectiveness and cruelty

emphasizes the need for

collaboration among departments to devise and

implement a humane

alternative promptly. The

new policy will focus on

TNVR principles(Trap,

Neuter, Vaccinate, and

of the current approach.

He instructed the

A communication

directive

on their extermination.

alternative policy.

The

education, food and other Ministers, former NA **Chief Minister** orders revision

responsibility to ensure the well-being and children, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds.

As part of efforts, he iews during his visit to said that the government fulfill responsibilities providing the children of ZamungKor with the best

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: Health

Minister Syed Qasim Ali

Shah, Minister for

Irrigation Aaqibullah, and

former Speaker of the

National Assembly Asad

Qaiser on Wednesday

visited Swabi to inspect

Special Secretary Health

Habibullah, Chief Planning

Officer Qaiser Alam, DG

Health Dr. Shaukat Ali,

Director Public Health Dr.

Arshad Roghani, and other

officials, the ministers visited the under-

construction building of Women and Children

Director General Health

Services Dr. Shaukat Ali

During the briefing,

Hospital in Swabi.

Accompanied by

infrastructure projects.

ongoing

health

An Iftar Dinner was also arranged for children and staff of the campus where the chief minister interacted and distributed cash prizes among the

He also visited various sections of the ZamungKor and lauded staff's services and their profound commitment to ensuring a brighter future for the children of Khyber

billion rupees, with 236

million rupees allocated for

the current financial year.

The hospital, comprising

260 beds, is being

constructed on a 46 kanal

land allocated for it. 55%

of the construction work

has been completed and

with funds available, the

hospital is expected to be

fully operational by June

Additionally, Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali

Shah, Irrigation Minister

Aaqibullah, and former

Speaker of the National

Assembly also visited the

District Headquarters

by MS Noor Alam, who

briefed them about the

ongoing construction of

a new hospital building

They were welcomed

Hospital in Swabi.

He also assured his all support of his

government for fulfilling requirements and needs of the children. Assistant Director of

the campus, Rafiullah Khan expressed gratitude for the Chief Minister's visit and pledged to continue working closely with the government to meet the essential needs of

ANF recovers 30 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP) Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 30 kg drugs and arrested six accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday.

He informed that 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from a parcel booked for Lahore in TCS office Rawalpindi.1,943 intoxicated tablets were recovered from a parcel sent from Thailand at a courier office in Rawalpindi.85 Ice-filled capsules were recovered from a passenger going to Doha at Peshawar

13 kg heroin, 9 kg hashish, and 980 grams Ice were recovered from the possession of two accused | any cost. arrested from Makran Coastal Highway Hub.

Punjab Police sign MoU for higher technical education of children of martyrs, employees martyrs will be given

Independent Report

General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has taken another good measure for the higher technical education of children of martyrs and employees of Punjab Police. An MoU was signed

between the Punjab Police and a private college (Shamim Ramzan College of Health Sciences). Under which the children of police employees will get better opportunities for higher education. According to the details, IG Punjab and CEO College Shahid Rasool signed the MoU at the ceremony held at the Central Police Office here on Wednesday. Under the MOU, children of police

specialized degrees/courses in pharmacy technician, dispenser, medical lab technology, operation theater technology and radiology & imaging technology absolutely free, whereas children of in-service employees are given 50% discount in all course fees. Police employees will avail these educational scholarships in five colleges located in Vehari, Okara, Jhang, Arifwala and Shorkot. The IG Punjab thanked the

private college for its support in skills-based degree programs and courses. He said that with this initiative, the children of police employees will be able to get respectable employment by obtaining degrees.



MUZAFFARABAD: Women from far-flung rural areas queue up outside the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) office to receive money in the warm, sunny month of Ramadan, waiting for their turn.

Commissioner Mardan for ensuring safety to people lives, property

UN chief invokes film,

warns of nuclear disaster

Independent Report PESHAWĀR Commissioner Mardan Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai has directed concerned authorities to strengthen the security

arrangements at all levels in the context of the security current situation and to ensure the safety of people's and Gohar Ali, officers lives and property at of security agencies,

the

Intelligence Coordination meeting at his office. Additional Commissioner Naeem Akhtar, Regional Police Officer Najibur Rahman Bagwi, Commissioner Swabi Dr Tariqullah, Additional

Deputy Commissioner (General) Saeedullah Jan, ADĆs Shah Zaib and He was addressing concerned officials Divisional attended the meeting.

International News

informed that the project to replace would incur a cost of 3.8 dilapidated one.

Ukraine's survival in danger, warns Pentagon chief

Monitoring Desk RAMSTEIN BASE: US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on Tuesday warned that Ukraine's survival was in danger and sought to convince allies that the United States was committed to Kyiv, even as Washington has essentially run out of money to continue arming Ukrainian forces.

Republican House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson has so far refused to call a vote on a bill that would provide \$60 billion more for Ukraine and the White House has been scrambling to find ways to send assistance to Kyiv, which has been battling Russian forces for more

monthly meeting known as

the Ukraine defence contact group (UDCG), held at acutely aware of our funding situation and the Ukraine Ramstein Air Base in Germany, of about 50 allies that have been militarily supporting Ukraine.

'Ukraine's survival is in danger," Austin said in a press conference after the meeting. "Our allies and partners continue to step up, the United States must also," he added. Austin, who is travel-

year since prostate cancer treatment, did not say how Washington would support Ukraine without additional funding. Officials say the lack of funding available is the ground in Ukraine and Ukrainian forces are having Austin is leading the to manage scarce resources. "I think our allies are

already having an impact on but added that it was an ex-

nians more so than anyone because of the shortages that are resulting from us not being able to supply them," a senior US defence official said. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky appealed to Kyiv's allies on Tuesday to supply more air defences. saying Russia had launched 130 missiles, more than ing for the first time this 320 attack drones and almost 900 guided bombs in

> Last week the Biden administration said it would send \$300 million in military assistance to Ukraine, traordinary move after unexpected savings from military contracts the Pentagon had made.

attacks this month alone.

Moldovan president launches campaign to promote EU referendum

Monitoring Desk CHISINAU: President Maia Sandu launched a campaign to promote an upcoming referendum on Moldova's push to join the European Union on Monday, calling on civil leaders to rally support for the country's accession to the 27-member bloc.

Moldova, a former Soviet republic of 2.6 million led by a pro-European government, applied for EU membership in 2022 and received a draft framework for accession negotiations in March, along neighbouring Ukraine.

The country's relations with Russia have become strained since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022,

hold a referendum later this year on whether to join the EU.



meeting of the United Nations Security Council at U.N. headquarters on the maintenance of International Peace and Security Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in New York City, US.

Putin to visit China in May for talks with Xi

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: Russian President Vladimir Putin will travel to China in May for talks with Xi Jinping, in what could be the Kremlin chief's first overseas trip of his new presidential term, according to five sources familiar with the matter.

Western governments on Monday condemned Putin's re-election as unfair and undemocratic. But China, India and North Korea congratulated the veteran leader on extending his rule by a further six years, highlighting geopolitical fault lines that have widened since Russia's

"Putin will visit China," one of the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Reuters. The details were independently confirmed by four other sources, who also spoke on condition of anonymity. Another of the sources said Putin's trip to China would probably take place in the second half of May. Two of the sources said the Putin

visit would come before Xi's planned trip to Europe. The Kremlin, when asked about the Reuters report, said inwould be released closer to

Armenia's PM says he must return disputed areas to Azerbaijan or face war

Monitoring Desk TBILISI: Armenian Prime

Minister Nikol Pashinyan said that Armenia may face a war with Azerbaijan if it does not compromise with Baku on returning some strategic Azerbaijani territories that Armenia has controlled since the early 1990s. Pashinyan was speaking during a Monday meeting with residents of border areas in northern Armenia's Tavush region, close to a string of deserted Azerbaijani villages that

Yerevan has controlled since the opening phases of the countries' three decade-long conflict in the early 1990. TASS quoted Pashinyan as saying in a video of the meeting circulated by his government: "Now we can leave here, let's go and tell [Azerbaijan] that no, we are not going to do anything. This means that at the end of the week a war will begin." Pashinyan has repeatedly signalled in recent weeks that he is willing to return the villages to Azerbaijan.

Clans step in to protect Gaza aid **Monitoring Desk**

CAIRO: Armed and masked men from an array of clans and factions have started providing security to aid convoys in Gaza, Palestinian officials and sources in the Hamas group say. Video footage obtained by Reuters showed a convoy of trucks entering Gaza City with foreign aid overnight, watched by several men armed with AK-47 assault rifles and others wielding sticks.

With Israeli forces sworn to eliminating Hamas since its deadly Oct 7 raid

Israeli strikes target 'Hezbollah inside Syria'

Monitoring Desk launched missiles at several military targets outside the Syrian capital Damascus on Tuesday, Syria's defence ministry said, in what regional intelligence and Syrian sources said were stepped up strikes on fortifications of Hezbollah. Syrian air defences intercepted Israeli "missiles and shot down some of them", the ministry said in a statement, adding they caused only material damage.

that the world faced the highest risk of nuclear war At a Security Council session called by Japan,

Guterres said that the biopic about the morally conflicted father of the atomic bomb "brought the harsh reality of nuclear doomsday to vivid life for millions around the world."

Monitoring Desk Secretary General Antonio

Guterres invoked Oscarwinning film Oppenheimer

on Monday as he warned

"Humanity cannot survive a sequel to Oppenheimer," Guterres said. "We meet at a time when geopolitical tensions and mistrust have escalated the risk of nuclear warfare sia to resume negotiations, to its highest point in decades," he said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has made thinly veiled threats to use nuclear weapons as he early 2026.

warns the West against its support for Ukraine, which Moscow invaded more than two years ago. Without naming Putin, Guterres said, "Nuclear saber-rat-tling must stop." "Threats to use nuclear weapons in any capacity are unacceptable," he said. Elsewhere in the world, tensions surrounding nuclear-armed North Korea have continued to rise and Iran has been enriching uranium closer to the level needed if it decides to build an atom

Israel, the Middle East's only nuclear-armed power albeit an undeclared one, has been at war since Oct 7. Guterres called on the United States and Rusat a standstill since the Ukraine war, on a successor to the New START nuclear arms reduction

Blinken lauds 'extraordinary' expansion of defence ties with Philippines

Monitoring Desk MANILA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken hailed on Tuesday a recent "extraordinary", saying they would only grow fur-ther, though Washington's expanding alliances were

not aimed at China.Speaking during a visit to the Philippines, Blinken said China's actions in the South China Sea had triggered a wider international reaction, and the United States was engaged in intense diplomacy to reaffirm international law.

'We have a shared concern about (China's) actions that threaten our common vision for a free open Indo-Pacific, including in the South China Sea and in the Philippines exclusive economic zone (EEZ)," Blinken told a press conference alongside his Philippine counterpart.

Ties between the tion.

treaty which expires in

Philippines and China have soured amid repeated spats over disputed features in the Philippine's strengthening of defence ties with the Philippines as and Manila has accused China's coastguard of a policy of aggression.

Beijing, which claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea, has maintained Philippine vessels are intruding in its territory. China's foreign min-

istry spokesperson Lin Jian on Tuesday said the United States had no right to interfere in disputes between Manila and Beijing and China would take the necessary actions to defend its territory.

"Military coopera-tion between the United States and the Philippines should not harm China's sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea, let alone be used to prop up the Philippines' illegal posi-

'unlawful': UN mission **Monitoring Desk** GENEVA: A fact-finding mission mandated by the

Palestinians gather to receive free food, even as

Gaza residents face alarming levels of hunger dur-

Amini's death in custody

United Nations said on Monday the death of Mahsa Åmini in the custody of Iran's morality police was unlawful and caused by violence and that Iranian women still suffer systematic discrimi-

ing the month of Ramazan.

The death of 22year-old Amini, a Kurdish Iranian woman, in Septem-

ber 2022 while in custody

for allegedly flouting

Iran's Islamic dress code unleashed months of protests and the biggest challenge to the Islamic Republic's clerical leaders in decades.

established that her death was unlawful and caused by physical violence in the custody of state authorities," Sara Hossain, chairperson of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, told the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

"Our investigation

which Chisinau has staunchly condemned. Sandu announced plans in December to



QUETTA: Chairman OGRA Masroor Khan meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz

Pakistan needs 'Economic Long March' to achieve development, prosperity: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): cal party for making failed Export, Energy, Equity, E-Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has said that the country needed an 'Economic Long March' to move on a consistent path of development and pros-

Participating in a private television programme, he urged opposition parties to play a positive role in Parliament so that the country could move forward to achieve the goal of economic stability effectively. He criticized a politi-

attempts to dent the country's talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), terming it 'Economic Terrorism.

Ahsan Iqbal was of the view that the financial matters of the country could not be sustained on loans permanently and stressed the need to increase production capacity, suggesting imposing an export emergency in the country.

Last year, the Ministry of Planning set up a 5-Es framework consisting of the products.

Pakistan and Environment, under which a comprehensive plan had been prepared for the implementation of the framework and suggestions from all the ministries in this regard to be sought.

Replying to a question, the federal minister said all chambers of commerce would have to play their due role so that more efficiency could be achieved in agriculture, information technology and other sectors with value addition of

Citing the examples of developing countries like Korea and Japan, Ahsan Iqbal said these countries had progressed by increasing their production capacity. He vowed to lead the country towards development during the next five years under the dynamic leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). To another question, the minister said he could not even think of rolling back the 18th Constitutional Amendment due to the sensitivity of its nature.



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressing the desire to elevate the Pakistan-UK relationship to the next level, emphasized the importance of early conclusion of the Enhanced Strategic Partnership (ESP) agreement.

The prime minister, in a meeting with British High Commissioner Jane Marriott, who called on him, highlighted the government's priorities, in particular the importance of navigating through the economic challenges facing the country, a PM Office press

hance bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, climate, and people-topeople contacts as well as developing convergences on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

Shehbaz thanked British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Foreign Secretary Lord David Cameron for their messages of felicitation on his re-election and said that he looked forward to working closely with the UK leadership to further strengthen bilateral relations. He said Pakistan and the UK had longstanding, historic relations and shared

while cooperating closely over a wide range of areas. The prime minister

called for the early resumption of PIA flights between Pakistan and the UK to help strengthen linkages Minister between the two countries and assuage concerns of the 1.6 million strong Pakistani diaspora in the UK.

He requested the high commissioner to convey his best wishes to King Charles III and prayed for his early recovery to full health. The prime minister also expressed the hope that the King would visit Pakistan, as soon as his health permitted him to travel.

PM grieved

NACTA to be restructured on modern lines: Naqvi

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Nagvi here on Wednesday

visited National Counter

Terrorism Authority

(NACTA) headquarters. He presided over an important meeting where several major decisions were taken, out of which one was to restructure NACTA on modern lines as well as to place it on the

The meeting also decided to summon a meeting of the Coordination Committee of the National Action Plan in the next week which will be presided over mented.

front in war against terror-

by Interior Minister. The minister said that instead of taking action after every incident of terrorism, we must take early action to eliminate terrorists and their facilitators.

He called for a detailed report on the efficiency of all provincial Counter Ter-Departments (CTD).

He said that establishment of National CTD is the need of the hour for complete elimination of terrorism. Naqvi said a comprehensive strategy should be formulated against terrorism and extremism adding that the National Action Plan should be fully imple-

CM grieved over Harnai coalmine mishap; orders complete inquiry

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed grief and sorrow over the coalmine mishap occurred in coalmine field of Harnai. In an official statement issued here on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that he is grieved over loss of precious lives of the coal mine workers in Harnai coal mine mishap.

He said that we share the pain and grief with the performance of relief organizations including Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and others on saving the lives of coal mine workers trapped in the coal mine during the rescue operation.

He directed the concerned department to conduct thorough inquiry into the coal mine mishap and submit its report to the government. He asserted that no compromise would be made on protection of the coal mine workers and safe



prising Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan, Secretary assistance offered in the health sector. Finance, Babar Khan and provincial coordinator of BICHP, Sadiq Khan Kakar reviewed the measures

taken in health sector and

observed the existing health

Minister lauded

security forces

to foil terrorist

attack on GPA

ISLAMABAD (APP)

Minister for Interior Syed

Mohsin Naqvi lauded the

security forces for thwart-

ing the terrorist attack on the Guard Port Authority

In his message, the

complex on Wednesday.

minister said that the secu-

rity forces bravely foiled the

terrorist attack. He said that

the security forces personnel

who thwarted the nefarious

intentions of the terrorists

are the heroes of the nation.

SSP distributes

appreciation

certificates

among IOs

QUETTA (APP): Senior

Superintendent of Police

(SSP) Jaffarabad Ms.

Faryal Fareed distributed

certificates of appreciation

among investigating officers

and police personnel for

completing the cases against

accused involved crimes

activities. She said that the

Court had given sentences

to accused on the basis of

best investigation of police.

Mohammad Ali Chalgari

Sub-Inspector Ghulam

Hussain Babar Jamlai, As-

sistant Sub-Inspector

Abdul Sattar Bhat Head

Constable Abdul Jalil and

Constable Habib Rehman

were involved. She said that

the SHO and Investigating

officers should investigate

the cases diligently and use

their skills to complete

them on which they would

be fully encouraged

Sub-Inspector

level meeting, at NACTA Headquarters in Islamabad.

The Sindh Chief Minister welcomed the high ups came from Balochistan to

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi chairing a high

Syed Murad Ali Shah assures full assistance:

GoB delegation visits Karachi to bring

Balochistan. He particularly directed to Chief Secretary Sindh and his team to support the high ups of Balochistan to adopt and implement best health models in Balochistan.

It may be mentioned here that the delegation of Balochistan officers would present its recommendations to the Chief Minister Balochistan after reviewing different measures taken under public-private part-

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner H.E. Jane Marriott called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Shaza, PTA chairman discuss 5G spectrum auction

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja and Chairman of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Maj General ® Hafeez Ur Rehman on Wednesday discussed matters concerning the 5G spectrum auc-

Telecom Industry. The minister during a meeting said, that providing affordable and highquality telecom and internet services to the masses remains a top priority for the

tion, connectivity, and the

She reiterated the government's commitment to promoting digitization in the country and resolving related issues.

Shaza highlighted that the Ministry of Information Technology is steadfast in its determination to collaborate with the telecom

She assured that the government is dedicated to addressing the concerns of the telecom industry.

The minister said, We will empower the youth by integrating them into the digital ecosystem and offering dignified employment opportunities.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Major General (Retd) Hafeez ur Rehman called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

Nomination papers of Swati, Khurram, Murad for Senate election in KP rejected

PESHAWAR (Online): Nomination papers of Azam Swati, Murad Saeed and Khurram Zeeshan for Senate election have been rejected in KP.

The nomination papers of Faisal Javed, Noor ul Haq Qadri and Azhar Mashwani have been ac-

The Returning Officer (RO) issued list after scrutiny. The list was issued following the completion of scrutiny process for Senate polls on 7 general seats, 2 women and 2 technocrats As many as 25 candi-

dates had filed nomination papers against 7 general seats and papers were accepted in respect of 16 candidates. The papers of remaining 9 candidates were rejected.

The papers have been rejected in respect of the candidates including Murad Saeed, Khurram Zeeshan and former chief minister KP Mehmood Khan.

The nomination pa-pers of Faisal Javed, Mirza Afridi, Azhar Mashwani, Noor ul Haq Qadri, Dilawar Khan, Irfan Saleem and Fida Muhammad have been accepted on general seats. 10 candidates filed

nomination papers on seats of technocrats. The nomination papers of two candidates were rejected.

Those whose papers were rejected include Azam Swati and Hammad Mehmood Cheema.

The nomination papers in respect of candidates including Noor ul Haq Qadri, Irshad Hussain and Dilawar have been accepted.

For two women seats. candidates have filed nomination papers and nomination papers of Hamida Shah were rejected.

The nomination papers of Robina Khalid. Ayesha Bano, Robina Naz. Mehvish Ali, Begum Tahira and Shazia have been ac-

over deaths in Harnai coal mine blast SLAMABAD (APP):

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed grief over the loss of ves consequent to an explosion inside a coal mine in Harnai district of Balochistan. He prayed to Allah Almighty for peace for the departed souls and sympathised with the bereaved family members. PM instructed the authorities concerned to accelerate the rescue operation for the trapped miners and extend all possible medical treatment to those injured.



ISLAMABAD: The US Ambassador Donald Blome calls on Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan to discuss and explore avenues for enhancing bilateral trade and investment between the two countries.

Committee constituted to inquire about Harnai coal mine incident

Independent Report QUETTA: The committee has been constituted for inquiry of the coal mine mishap occurred in Harnai on

Wednesday According to an official notification issued here, the five-member inquiry committee has been formed by the Mines and Mineral Development, Government of Balochistan.

As per the notification, Additional Secretary Mines, Dr Attiq Shahwani would head the inquiry committee. The committee would

fix the responsibility besides investigating the incident, and would present its report within three days. It may be mentioned here that 12 coal mine work-

coal mine incident occurred on late Tuesday night. **SC** serves notice

ers had died in the Harnai

to Qasim Suri

ISLAMABAD (APP) The Supreme Court of Pa-kistan on Wednesday served notices to former deputy speaker of the National Assembly Qasim Suri after the registrar's office submitted its report regarding the delay in fixation of his appeal for hearing against the decision of re-election in his constitu-

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa heard the case

Crackdown continues against illegal medicines; two medical stores sealed in Quetta

Independent Report QUETTA: The crackdown is continued against the illegal medicines in the provincial metropolis.

According to the official handout, two medical stores selling illegal medicines Near Eastern bypass were sealed.

The senior Drug In- down

spector Sarwar Khan Kakar conducted raid on the two stores and recovered illegal and unregistered medicines

The services of FIA were also taken for knowing the real means of bringing illegal and unregistered medicines during the crack-

Sports competitions to start on March 23 in Balochistan: Shahwani

and Youth Affairs Department of Balochistan has released the schedule of sports competitions in connection of Pakistan Day to be held on March 23 across Balochistan including the provincial capital Quetta.

In this regard, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs of Balochistan, Dr. Javed Anwar Shahwani presided over a high-level

QUETTA (APP): Sports meeting in which important decisions were taken regarding the department's performance, problems and their solutions. The senior officials of the department participated in the meeting.

In the meeting, Secretary Sports said that the sports competitions would be started from March 23 to continue till March 29 in all districts including the



QUETTA: Members of Joint Action Committee University of Balochistan are holding protest demonstration against non-payment of their salaries, in Quetta.

He directed the connership. **General election 2024** PTI founder moves SC for

formation of JC to probe

into alleged rigging ISLAMABAD (Online): got defeated in any way in PTI founder Imran Khan has resorted to Supreme forms 45 and 47 are clear Court (SC) for investiga- on all of us. tions into alleged rigging in

general election 2024. The petition has been filed through Hamid Khan advocate. The petitioner has de-

manded through the petition that a Judicial Commission (JC) comprising neutral judges be constituted to probe into rigging. The allegations of alleged rigging and changing the result be investigated.

Federal and provincial governments and Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) have been made respondents in the petition.

taken plea in the petition that massive rigging has taken place in general election 2024. In several constituencies PTI candidates had won the election but they were got defeated in a way. Still efforts are under-

The petitioner has

It was further said in

the petition that PTI has irrefutable evidence wherefrom it becomes clear that candidates of other parties were got won the election in some constituencies through rigging.

The petitioner has requested SC to constitute such JC which investigates all the matters related to this election besides probing into the rigging matters. This commission should comprise impartial

It was further said in the petition that commission be constituted comprising SC serving unbiased and neutral judges.

The allegations of alleged rigging and changing the result be investigated.

It was further requested in the petition that federal and Punjab govern-



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb calls on by Dr. Mehmet Pacaci, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkiye.

Pakistan Army & other security forces vigilant day & night to protect homeland: Samina Zehri Independent Report tion and the entire nation

QUETTA: The entire nation is standing by the side of the army until the end of terrorism from the country and terrorists will never succeed in their evil inten-These views were ex-

pressed on Wednesday by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri in her statement condemning the ongoing incidents of terrorism in the She said that in the

terrorist attack in Mir Ali, North Waziristan, terrorist organizations originating in Afghanistan are involved, for which we strongly condemn, Pakistan's action in Afghanistan is justified.

She said that all the martyrs, including Lieutenant Colonel Syed Kashif Ali and Captain Ahmed Badr, are heroes of the naand their families are proud of the martyrs' eternal sacrifice for the country.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that those who sacrificed their lives for the protection of Pakistan have proved that the protection of Pakistan is in strong hands and no one can look at the enemy of Pakistan with a lecherous eye.

Samina Senator Mumtaz Zehri further said that the brave soldiers and officers of Pakistan Army sacrificed their lives for the survival of the country, for which the nation pays tribute to the martyrs.

She said that the courage, perseverance and patience of the families of the martyrs are a source of strength for the nation and the security forces.

She also said that the martyrs themselves got the status of martyrdom but they saved the lives of the people and brought the terrorists to hell. Soon these cowardly terrorists will be brought to their end.

She said that cowardly enemies cannot shake our firm resolve with such actions. Every drop of blood of martyrs will be counted. Senator Samina

Mumtaz Zehri said that the determination of the security forces and the nation will not decrease until the end of the last terrorist. She said that the entire nation is with its security forces until the elimination of terrorists from the country and will not hesitate to make any sacrifice for this