

Independent

dailyindish@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Gwadar

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 275, Ramzan 10, 1445 AH Thursday March 21, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15

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

GWADAR (Agencies): The security forces on Wednesday repulsed an attack by militants on a complex outside the strategic port of Gwadar, killing all eight of them, officials said.

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 complex, he said.

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 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) said.

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 nation remain determined to thwart attempts of sabotaging peace and stability of Balochistan, and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," it added.



GWADAR: View of site after unidentified gunmen opened fire at Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) Complex in Gwadar.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

President for expanding scope of Pak-Japan cooperation

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on 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 contacts.

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 sectors.

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 Japan had been a key development partner 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 socio-economic 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 Ataulah 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 (PTI) founding chairman about Cipher distorted our relations at the international level.

The Minister said today's hearing also proved the PTI chairman as a cer-

tified liar, who misled 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.

Ataulah 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 interests.

ISI chief briefs President on 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 covers issues including internal security and situation at the borders.

CM expresses satisfaction over foiling terrorists' attack at GPA Complex

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

The Chief Minister said that the brave jaws of security forces foiled the attack of terrorism in Gwadar.

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 province.

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 Richter 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.

Would not make compromise on rights in "closed rooms"

CM vows to speak to federation about rights in stronger manner through constitutional forums

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



QUETTA: Program Director Voice of Balochistan Hanna Malik presenting a shield to Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz 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

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 in.

Later, the rescue teams including Provincial Disaster Management Authority and Mines department reached the spot and started rescue operation.

During the course, eight coal mine workers, who had entered the affected mine for 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 Quetta.

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 coalmine area.

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.

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

Shehbaz Sharif proposed the formulation of a 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 sacrifices rendered by Pakistan in the war on terrorism, the premier reaffirmed the commitment to wipe out the menace of terrorism as was done previously.

Sharif vows to revive Pakistan's economy

Turning to the economic situation, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the country is com-

pelled to secure another 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 be created to attract investments across various sectors including agriculture, industries, Information Technology and mines and minerals.

He said the Special Investment Facilitation Council is serving as a robust platform to facilitate investment in the country.

President approves dismissal of Justice Mazhar Ali Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (INP): Dismissal of former Supreme Court judge Mazhar 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 notification 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 added.



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 bilateral ties with Pakistan

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 Asim Munir who called on him during his official visit to the Kingdom.

Mohammad Bin Salman said the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will always stand by with Pakistan in future as well.

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 General 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

WASHINGTON: 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 Minister.

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 ciphers were unfounded and based on waivers.



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

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 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 while digitization has been

brought in excise an taxation system for 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 developed for online verification of property and motorcar taxation. Excise minister said that citizen service.



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 seeking 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. The court rejected the plea for removing Nawaz Sharif picture from ration bags related to Ramazan package forthwith. The court while issuing notice to Punjab government sought reply.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Trade and Industry presiding over a meeting of Punjab Small Industries Corporation.

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

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur has said that the government is committed to uplifting the lives of underprivileged children. He expressed these views during his visit to the state children institution- ZamungKor campus here. Speaking on the occasion, the chief minister said it was the government's responsibility to ensure the well-being and development of children, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. As part of efforts, he said that the government would fulfill its responsibilities by providing the children of ZamungKor with the best education, food and other necessary facilities. An Ifar Dinner was also arranged for children and staff of the campus where the chief minister interacted and distributed cash prizes among the children. 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 Pakhtunkhwa. He also assured his all out 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 the children.

Chief Minister orders revision 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 on their extermination. He instructed the Municipal and Livestock Departments to develop an alternative policy. A communication from the Chief Minister's Secretariat to the relevant departments highlights the ineffectiveness and cruelty of the current approach. The directive emphasizes the need for collaboration among departments to devise and implement a humane alternative promptly. The new policy will focus on TNR principles (Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, and Return).

Ministers, former NA Speaker inspect health projects in Swabi

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 ongoing health infrastructure projects. Accompanied by 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 Hospital in Swabi. During the briefing, Director General Health Services Dr. Shaukat Ali informed that the project would incur a cost of 3.8 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 2025. Additionally, Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah, Irrigation Minister Aaqibullah, and former Speaker of the National Assembly also visited the District Headquarters Hospital in Swabi. They were welcomed by MS Noor Alam, who briefed them about the ongoing construction of a new hospital building to replace the dilapidated one.

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

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

Independent Report
LAHORE: Inspector General 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 martyrs will be given 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

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Intelligence Coordination meeting at his office. Additional Commissioner Naem Akhtar, Regional Police Officer Najibur Rahman Bagwi, Deputy Commissioner Swabi Dr. Tariqullah, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Saeedullah Jan, ADCs Shah Zaib and Gohar Ali, officers of security agencies, ANF and other concerned officials attended the meeting. He was addressing the Divisional

International News

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 than two years. Austin is leading the monthly meeting known as

the Ukraine defence contact group (UDCG), held at 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 traveling for the first time this year since prostate cancer treatment, did not say how Washington would support Ukraine without additional funding. Officials say the lack of funding available is already having an impact on the ground in Ukraine and Ukrainian forces are having to manage scarce resources. "I think our allies are



Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres looks on during a 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.

UN chief invokes film, warns of nuclear disaster

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres invoked Oscar-winning film Oppenheimer on Monday as he warned that the world faced the highest risk of nuclear war in decades. 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." "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 to its highest point in decades," he said. Russian President Vladimir Putin has made thinly veiled threats to use nuclear weapons as he



Palestinians gather to receive free food, even as Gaza residents face alarming levels of hunger during the month of Ramazan.

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 with neighbouring Ukraine. The country's relations with Russia have become strained since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which Chisinau has staunchly condemned. Sandu announced plans in December to hold a referendum later this year on whether to join the EU.

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 2022 invasion of Ukraine. "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 information on Putin's visits would be released closer to the date.

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 on Israel.

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 1990s. 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.

Israeli strikes target 'Hezbollah' inside Syria

Monitoring Desk
AMMAN: Israel 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.

Blinken lauds 'extraordinary' expansion of defence ties with Philippines

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken hailed on Tuesday a recent strengthening of defence ties with the Philippines as "extraordinary", saying they would only grow further, 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 Philippines and China have soured amid repeated spats over disputed features in the Philippine's exclusive economic zone, 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 ministry 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 cooperation 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 position."



QUETTA: Chairman OGRA Masroor Khan meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): 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 prosperity.

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 political party for making failed 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

Export, Energy, Equity, E-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 the products.

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.

PM for early conclusion of Pak-UK Enhanced Strategic Partnership agreement

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed the desire to elevate the Pakistan-UK relationship to the next level, emphasizing 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 release said.

In this regard, he un-

derscored the need to enhance bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, climate, and people-to-people contacts as well as developing convergences on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

Prime Minister 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

immense political goodwill 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 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.

NACTA to be restructured on modern lines: Naqvi

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi 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 front in war against terrorism.

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 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 Terrorism 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 implemented.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi chairing a high level meeting, at NACTA Headquarters in Islamabad.

Syed Murad Ali Shah assures full assistance: GoB delegation visits Karachi to bring Sindh model of health in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: A delegation of Government of Balochistan visited Karachi to review healthcare facilities in Sindh and establish the standard healthcare institutions in Balochistan on pattern of Sindh.

The delegation comprising Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan and provincial coordinator of BICHP, Sadiq Khan Kakar reviewed the measures taken in health sector and observed the existing health

models there.

During the visit, they also met the Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah and conveyed best wishes of Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti to him.

They also thanked the Sindh Government on the assistance offered in the health sector.

The Sindh Chief Minister welcomed the high ups came from Balochistan to Sindh for observing the healthcare facilities.

He directed the concerned authorities of Sindh to extend full assistance to 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 partnership.

got defeated in any way in by polls. The matters of forms 45 and 47 are clear on all of us.

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 judges.

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 governments be suspended.



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 auction, connectivity, and the Telecom Industry.

The minister during a meeting said, that providing affordable and high-quality telecom and internet services to the masses remains a top priority for the government.

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 sector.

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."

PM grieved over deaths in Harnai coal mine blast

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed grief over the loss of lives 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 sympathized 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.

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 bereaved families in the time of grief.

The Chief Minister, however, appreciated 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 mining in the province.



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 workers had died in the Harnai coal mine incident occurred on late Tuesday night.

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 Inspector Sarwar Khan Kakar conducted raid on the two stores and recovered illegal and unregistered medicines from there.

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

SC serves notice to Qasim Suri

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan 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 constituency.

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

Sports competitions to start on March 23 in Balochistan: Shahwani

Independent Report
QUETTA (APP): Sports 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 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 provincial capital.



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

Minister lauded security forces to foil terrorist attack on GPA

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Naqvi lauded the security forces for thwarting the terrorist attack on the Guard Port Authority complex on Wednesday.

In his message, the minister said that the security 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

Independent Report
QUETTA (APP): Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Jaffarabad Ms. Faryal Faraed 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.

S u b - I n s p e c t o r Mohammad Ali Chalgari, Sub-Inspector Ghulam Hussain Babar Jamli, Assistant 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.

General election 2024 PTI founder moves SC for formation of JC to probe into alleged rigging

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan has resorted to Supreme Court (SC) for investigations into alleged rigging in general election 2024.

The petition has been filed through Hamid Khan advocate.

The petitioner has demanded 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.

The petitioner has 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 underway that PTI candidates be

got defeated in any way in by polls. The matters of forms 45 and 47 are clear on all of us.

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 judges.

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 governments be suspended.



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

Pakistan Army & other security forces vigilant day & night to protect homeland: Samina Zehri

Independent Report
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 intentions.

These views were expressed on Wednesday by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri in her statement condemning the ongoing incidents of terrorism in the country.

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 nation and the entire nation and 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.

Senator Samina 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 purpose.