

Independent

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Extends congratulations to Shahbaz Sharif

US to stand with Pakistan in tackling global, regional challenges, Biden tells PM

Says US will continue to forge a strong partnership between both nations

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of the United States Joe Biden, in his first communication with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif after assumption of his office, conveyed his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the newly elected government of Pakistan.

In his letter to the prime minister, President Biden reiterated the US' unwavering commitment to standing alongside Pakistan in confronting the most pressing challenges facing the world and the region.

He also emphasized the shared vision of prioritizing public health protection, economic development, and education, affirming the commitment to advancing these goals in tandem, a press release of Prime Minister Office said on Friday.

Highlighting the significance of the enduring partnership between the peoples of the United States and Pakistan, President Biden said the partnership was critical to ensuring the security of the world and the people.

Moreover, President Biden emphasized the continued collaboration between the two nations under the US-Pakistan Green Alliance Framework, aiming to bolster environmental improvements and sustainable development initiatives.

He also assured to continue support for Pakistan's endeavors in sustainable agriculture, water management, and recovery efforts following the devastating 2022 floods.

President Biden reaffirmed the joint commitment to upholding human rights and promoting inclusive development, signaling a strengthened partnership between the United States and Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti addressing a press conference along with leaders of allied political parties



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on measures against the spectrum of illegal activities.

We are well aware of hardships being faced by people due to poverty & inflation: Governor

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that we are well aware of the certain hardships being faced by the people in province due to poverty and inflation.

However, the miseries of people subside after hearing their sorrow and grief.

This was stated by the Governor Balochistan in a statement issued here on Friday.

The Governor said that the human society is name of mutual partnership of the human being.

He said that support and help of the poor and underprivileged segments of the society is a real quality of good human being.

The Governor also said that becoming voice of the voiceless and shelterless people in life is an appreciable and likable social practice.

He said that what mental satisfaction is found by extending help to the otherwise deprived and destitute people of the society can't be expressed mere in words. The Governor said that service of the ailing humanity is real pride of the humanity.

Pakistan expresses dismay over absence of Indian diplomats from Iftar dinner

ISLAMABAD (INP): - Pakistan expressed dismay over the absence of Indian diplomats from the Iftar dinner held for ambassadors at the Foreign Office (FO).

According to sources, despite the new government's desire for positive relations with India, the Indian High Commission displayed conduct contrary to diplomatic norms. An invitation to PM Shehbaz along with ambassadors from other countries was given. Foreign minister Ishaq Dar hosted the dinner on March 27.

The Indian diplomats did not even respond to the Iftar dinner invitation.

It is worth noting that former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had hosted an iftar dinner in 2022, where Indian diplomats were also in attendance.

Finance minister out as Council of Common Interests reconstituted

ISLAMABAD (INP): On the advice of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, President Asif Ali Zardari has reconstituted the Council of Common Interests (CCI) including Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and excluding Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb.

According to the notification released on Friday, the Chairman of the eight-member CCI will be Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while the chief ministers of all four provinces will be its members.

For the first time, the position of minister of foreign affairs was included in the Council instead of the minister of finance. Although the federal minister of finance traditionally serves as a permanent member of the CCI, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has included Ishaq Dar in the Council.

PM directs for vigorously pursuing initiatives against spectrum of illegal activities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday chaired a meeting on measures against spectrum of Illegal activities here.

Members of the Federal Cabinet, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Provincial Chief Ministers and high-level government officials were present in the meeting. The agenda of the meeting was "Measures against Spectrum of Illegal activities & Criminal Mafias". The participants were briefed in detail on steps taken against the criminal mafias, smuggling, hoarding, money laundering, power theft and repatriation of illegal foreigners etc.

The participants acknowledged the importance of such actions and their positive impact on the economy and well being of the people of Pakistan.

The meeting showed firm resolve to take action against smugglers, hoarders and market manipulators, who have impacted the economic trajectory and to provide immediate relief to common citizens.

The meeting gave approval of agreements among Federal and Provincial governments on Anti-Power Theft policy, restructuring of Power Distribution Companies on modern lines, installation of Smart meters for full eradication of Power Theft and ordered strict action against the corrupt officers.

Chief of the Army Staff assured unwavering resolve of Pakistan Army to support government's initiatives aimed at economic recovery of the country.

China joins probe into deadly suicide attack Culprits of Shangla attack will be brought to justice: Mohsin Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (Online): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has said that the real culprits of Shangla attack will be brought to justice.

He gave the assurance to the special investigation team that came from China during a meeting at the Chinese embassy in Islamabad.

Meanwhile China's inter-departmental working group has carried out comprehensive emergency response work with the investigation into the incident.

The Interior Minister briefed the Chinese investigation team about the progress made so far in the investigation into the incident.

Measures pertaining to the protection of Chinese nationals and overall security were also discussed on the occasion. The Interior Minister also met with the Chinese Ambassador and updated him on the probe into Shangla incident.

Meanwhile China's inter-departmental working group has carried out comprehensive emergency response work with the investigation into the incident.

Continued on page 2

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi meeting with Chinese officials at Chinese Embassy.

Federal, provincial govts on same page to address Balochistan issues: Bugti

Balochistan government making efforts to promote the good governance as the beneficiary of such governance was common people of the province, who is main victim of bad governance

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Friday said that both the federal and Balochistan provincial governments are on the same page to address issues of the province.

Addressing a press conference along with leaders of allied political parties in Islamabad, he said that the state is using the relevant tools to prevent threats and causes of insurgency in Balochistan.

He said that the leadership of Balochistan was united for resolving the issues of province. He said the Balochistan govern-

ment was making efforts to promote the good governance as the beneficiary of such governance was common people of the province, who is main victim of bad governance.

He mentioned that all parties were actively involved in providing relief to the common men of the province. He said that for the first time in history, Senators have been elected from the province unopposed.

In response to a question, he stated that violence cannot guarantee the provision of rights to Balochistan as all the rights granted to Balochistan to

date have been conferred by the country's parliament.

He expressed gratitude to the Pakistan People's Party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Awami National Party, and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz for giving him the opportunity to serve the people of Balochistan as Chief Minister.

Paying tribute to the security forces for foiling terrorist attacks in Gwadar and Turbat, the Chief Minister said the vigilant jawans thwarted the terrorist attack in Gwadar by killing the suicide bombers within a period of only twenty minutes.

Ban imposed on use of red carpets in govt functions as per PM directives

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif while taking stern notice of use of red carpets during the visits of federal ministers and senior authorities and government functions has expressed annoyance over it.

According to cabinet division PM has ordered to impose ban on use of red carpet besides declaring it non disagreeable act.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad Rabei, calls on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President urges int'l community to ensure protection of Palestinian civilians in Gaza Strip

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has urged the international community to make efforts for free flow of humanitarian assistance to Gaza and ensure protection of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip.

He was talking to Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan Ahmed Jawad Rabei who called on him in Islamabad on Friday.

The President said Pakistan has historic ties with Palestine, and would continue to stand by its Palestinian brothers and raise its voice at all fora.

He lauded the bravery and resilience of the Palestinian people for their long struggle against Israeli occupation.

Cabinet okays 3-year term for Lt Gen Munir Afsar as Nadra Chairman

Caretaker govt in 2023 initially appointed Afsar as NADRA Chairman until further orders

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Cabinet on Friday gave the green light to the appointment of Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar as Chairman of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) for a three-year term.

On October 2, the Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar-led caretaker government initially appointed Lt. Gen. Muhammad Munir Afsar as NADRA Chairman until further orders.

Following deliberations and considerations, sources within the government have revealed that the federal government has now officially endorsed his appointment for a tenure of three years.



ISLAMABAD: Senior journalist Shahid Rind appointed as spokesman to Government of Balochistan on Friday.

Senior journalist Shahid Rind appointed as spokesman to GoB

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department on Friday.

The S&GAD has also issued notification of appointment of Shahid Rind as GoB spokesman after approval of the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti.

Shahid Rind is ranked among credible media persons and analysts of the country. He has served as Bureau Chief of a private TV channel (ARY News Network) for long time.

Heavy rains kill 5 in Dukki

DUKKI (INP): Heavy rains in different areas of Balochistan including metropolis Quetta continued on the second day wherein five laborers died when the roof of a house collapsed in Dukki. The local people removed the dead bodies and shifted them to the nearby government hospital.

Thunderstorms also occurred in Loralai, Barkhan, Musa Khel, Shirani and Zhob

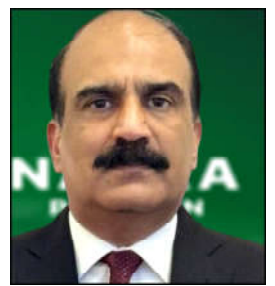
The roads in provincial capital Quetta inundated with rainwater.

CLOUDS also rained in Qila Abdullah, Mastung, Hamai, Sabi, Jhal Magsi

According to the Meteorological Department, Quetta, Loralai, Barkhan, Musa Khel, Shirani, Zhob, Qila Saifullah, Pashin, Qila Abdullah, Mastung, Hamai, Sibi and Jhal Magsi received heavy rain with strong winds and thunder.



QUETTA: Security personal stand alert during Good Friday service at Bethel Memorial Methodist Church.



Portrait of Lt Gen Munir Afsar, Chairman of NADRA.

PM Shehbaz vows zero tolerance against smuggling, corruption

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said the government will not allow any political or bureaucratic interference in its move to curb smuggling, corruption, power theft and tax evasion in the country.

"No political and bureaucratic influence will be allowed to interfere in this major surgery which we have to undertake collectively for the good of Pakistan and its 250 million people," the prime minister said while chairing a meeting on anti-smuggling.

He said it was very important to understand the real challenges of the country and then immediately fix them to revive and stabilize the economy.

For this, he said all stakeholders including the provinces, institutions, and armed forces will have to collaborate with the federal government to tackle one of the most important challenge of revival of economy.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said illegal trade and smuggling were the biggest challenges that had badly dented the country's economy.

He recalled that in 2022, the coalition government allowed export of 250,000 tons of sugar, but it had to withdraw its decision "because we were told that the surplus target was not up to that level". However, he said the same amount of sugar was later exported to Afghanistan.

Similarly, the prime minister pointed out that the

country had to face loss of around Rs 400 to 500 billion annually in term of power theft, whereas leakages, transmission losses and line losses of electricity were other than that. As regards tax revenues, he said the government's target this year was Rs 9 trillion. But it has the potential of collecting Rs 4 trillion extra revenues by streamlining the tax system and by curbing corruption and tax evasion.

He said a tax amount of Rs 2.7 trillion was still under litigation either in tribunals or in appellate courts. The government, he said would try its best to recover this amount.

Appreciating the efforts of Chief of Army Staff in curbing smuggling and power theft, the prime minister said during the nine months of interim government, an amount of Rs 58 billion was saved in power sector.

Similarly, a significant improvement was witnessed in smuggling in the country due to the commitment, will to do, and cooperation of all provinces, and the personal commitment and interest of the Chief of Army Staff, the prime minister added.

Besides initiating reforms in certain sectors, he said the government was also committed to promote industry and agriculture sector in the country.

He informed that the government had chalked out a plan to fully digitize the system of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to boost the tax revenues in the country.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb talking to media during his visit to Utility Stores Corporation to oversee the implementation of the enhanced Ramadan Relief Package.

Shehzada Farhat says Concrete measures at public, private sector levels required to be taken to promote archery

QUETTA: Concrete measures at public and private sector levels are required to be taken so as to promote archery, an archaic and traditional game of Balochistan province.

These views were expressed by erstwhile Director General, Public Rela-

He said that Balochistan Archery Association under the dynamic leadership of Muhammad Amin Badini, President, Balochistan Archery Association was earnestly striving to promote both modern and traditional games of archery, adding that archery

Six archery academies took part in the event. Balochistan Archery Academy clinched first position while Moulana Niaz Muhammad Durrani Archery Academy Quetta secured second position. Chief Guest Shehzada Farhat distributed prizes



tions, Balochistan, former PRO to Inspector General of Police, Balochistan, EXPRO to Chief Secretary Balochistan and scion of distinguished Khan of Kalat family, Shehzada Farhat on Friday while addressing the closing ceremony of "Archery Championship, 2024", held in the football ground of Ayub Stadium Quetta in connection with "23 March Sports Festival, 2024".

game was played in the province for centuries, hence, to provide opportunities to the players of archery to demonstrate their talent at national and international level, it was inevitable to arrange events of archery frequently.

He said that inclusion of archery event in 23rd March, 2024 sports festival would prove to be beneficial for promotion of archery game in Balochistan.

and shields amongst the players. On the occasion, Muhammad Amin Badini, President, Balochistan Archery Association, Chief Officer, Local Government, Arbab Mati-ur-Rehman Kasi, General Secretary, Balochistan Archery Association, Faizullah Kakar, President, Balochistan Mix Martial Arts Association, Rehmatullah Khan Nurzai and others were also present.

Army, Wapda, Navy win opening matches of All Pakistan Ramadan Cup Basketball Tournament

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Army, Lycans A, Wapda and Navy registered big wins on the first day pool round matches in the Women's and Departmental categories of All Pakistan 3x3 Ramadan Cup Basketball Tournament here at outdoor basketball courts of Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad organized by Federal Basketball Association (FBBA).

According to organizing secretary of the tournament Ouj E Zahoor, large numbers of basketball teams are participating in the four-day event played

under floodlights with the support of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB).

In Women's category Pakistan Army with a brilliant game defeated AK White by 16-3 points. Army's Aamina Mohsin scored 6 and Aiman Riaz scored four points. In the second match, Lycans A won by 11-2 points against Lycans Juniors with the help of Farha Naz's five points and Fariha Mushtaq's three points, while in the third match, Lycans B defeated AK Purple by 6-2 points.

In the departmental category Wapda (A) beat Army (C) team by 19-16 points with the help of Zain ul Hassan who scored 15 points for the winning side. In second match Navy Beat Police (B) by 18-2 points in one sided match Navy's Zia ul Rehman scored 8 and Usman Khalid scored 6 points in the match while Wapda (C) won against Police by 21-13 points, thanks to Aaliyah and Sajid Ali who scored 10, 10 points in the match. Wapda (A) thrashed Army (B) by 21-11 and Wapda (C) beat Police (A) by 21-13 points respectively.

TENDER NOTICE

The FOOD DIRECTORATE invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items: TSE-232403387211 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. Tender Fee Not required

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Material Handling and Conditioning and Storage Machinery and their Accessories and Supplies	2%

(Total Item(s) Count: 1)

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 2 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 30,000,000 PKR in Previous 3 Years. Turn over of at least 6,000,000 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List, Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. JV is permissible. Submission of the required Bid Security. In case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as ineligible and non-responsive. Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms & conditions specified in the bidding documents & contract agreement. (SIX (6) Samples of "A" CLASS EMPTY GUNNY BAGS are required printed with the words "FOOD DEPARTMENT BALOCHISTAN 2024". Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 16 April, 2024 till 11:00 AM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 12:00 PM on EPPS System Address: Balochistan Food Directorate Mir Jaffar Khan Jamali Road Near Chaman Phatak Quetta Phone no: 0819201993 Fax no: 0819202475 Email: dgfoodbalochistan@gmail.com

DIRECTOR GENERAL
FOOD BALOCHISTAN

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LOST & FOUND

My original CNIC bearing No. 54400-9166799-5 in name of Mir Salah Khan Baloch S/o Javed Iqbal Baloch has been lost somewhere in Quetta. Founder may please contact 0344-1877796



QUETTA: Vendor sells watermelons to earn his livelihood for support his family as demand of watermelons increased in city during the Holy Month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, at Samungli road in Quetta.

Finance Minister: Pakistan to seek extended IMF program by June

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that Pakistan will likely sign a staff-level agreement (SLA) for an extended IMF program by the end of this fiscal year, namely, before the end of June 2024. He said talks would begin in mid-April.

"We are hopeful that by the time we wrap up this fiscal year i.e. end June to early July, we reach at least a staff-level agreement with the IMF," Aurangzeb said while talking to reporters at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) where a gong ceremony was held to welcome the finance minister on Friday.

However, he did not disclose the size of the upcoming program but said Pakistan needed an extended facility spanning over at least three years.

Aurangzeb said all of the conditions set by the IMF favoured Pakistan's economic recovery.

The minister said privatisation of power distribution companies or disco was next on the card after selling off the PIA.

Pakistan to continue political, diplomatic support to Kashmiris: FO

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan will continue to extend its moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiri people for the just and peaceful settlement of longstanding Kashmir dispute in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

According to Kashmir Media Service, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, the Foreign Office spokesperson revealed that the Indian occupation authorities are reportedly set to auction some blocks of Lithium reserves, discovered in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

There are concerns that corporations from outside

the occupied region would be awarded the contracts to exploit this valuable resource that belongs to the Kashmiri people, the FO spokesperson said, adding that these measures by the occupation authorities to deprive Kashmiris of their right to natural resources are illegal and exploitative.

IIOJK must not be deprived of its natural resources. The people of Kashmir have the foremost right over the wealth of their homeland, including precious metals like Lithium, she maintained and added, "We call on India to abandon such exploitative plans and respect the right of Kashmiris to their own land and natural resources."

courts judgments with reference to jail rules. In the decisions of Indian courts political talk in the jail was being allowed.

Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq Khan took up the petitions for hearing Friday.

Amicus curiae Zainab Janjua appeared in the court.

Sher Afzal Marwat did not appear in the court and his junior advocate appeared.

Superintendent Adiala Jail Asad Warraich filed the report regarding meeting with Imran Khan in jail.

AG told the court that "we have worked out SOPs with mutual consultation. You should appreciate our response."

Justice Sardar Ijaz remarked you could do this job earlier.

AG told the court they had finalized SOPs within two days.

With reference to rules, the definition of clause 265 is different in Punjab government.

the head of the working group, Director Bai Tian of the Department of Foreign Security Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who arrived in Pakistan on March 28, met with Pakistan's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of the Interior and other officials, Lin Jian said during his regular briefing held here at the International Press Center (IPC).

Director Bai Tian asked Pakistan to thoroughly investigate the incident as soon as possible, properly handle the aftermath, effectively strengthen security measures, completely eliminate security risks, and make every effort to ensure the absolute safety of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects in Pakistan, he added.

Pakistan said that it has fully carried out investigation and follow-up work on the incident, and taken all measures to further strengthen the security protection of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions, he added.

The spokesperson said that the working group will also carry out related work during its stay in Pakistan.

Ghulam Jan Naseer leads ICT revolution with vision for e-Governance

In the heart of Balochistan's bustling administrative machinery, Ghulam Jan Naseer stands as a beacon of innovation and technological advancement. As the MIS/ICT Director for the Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority under the Finance Government of Balochistan, Naseer is the architect behind the transformative Electronic Procurement System (EPPS), a project that promises to revolutionize public procurement in the region.

Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program, was not just an academic endeavor. He actively contributed to the community through volunteer work at the Food Bank of CNY, the West Side Learning Center, and a local church in Syracuse. Furthermore, his participation in the City Open Data Challenge, sponsored by the City of Syracuse Office of Analytics, Performance & Innovation, underscores his commitment to practical and impactful technology solutions.



Reflecting on his experience, Naseer stated, "The Humphrey fellowship has not only equipped me with the necessary tools but also instilled a sense of responsibility to make a positive impact on the community and beyond." He is determined to leverage his enhanced skills in leadership management, data-driven decision making, and public technology management to foster prosperity and effect socio-economic transformation in Pakistan.

As Naseer prepares to apply his global insights and innovative strategies to his role as Director of IT, Balochistan stands on the cusp of a technological renaissance. With his vision and leadership, the province is poised to embrace a future where e-Governance is not just a concept but a reality that drives efficiency, transparency, and inclusive growth for all its citizens.

With an impressive educational background that includes a M.S. in Computer Science and a master's degree in Economics from the University of Balochistan, along with certifications in Project Management, Procurement, and Oracle Database Administration, Naseer brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to his role. His responsibilities span managing ICT services, staffing, and public procurement services, as well as overseeing the implementation of technology services across the province.

Beyond his administrative duties, Naseer's ambition stretches to the broader goal of enabling and optimizing e-Governance services within Balochistan and across Pakistan. His participation as a Humphrey Fellow, focusing on ICT policy management, artificial intelligence, data protection, data-driven



ABBOTTABAD: Security officials are standing high alert to avoid untoward incident as security has been high alert in city during the Holy Month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, in Abbottabad.

Culprits of Shangla ...

Continued from page 1

nese Embassy in Pakistan and the relevant enterprises in the wake of the Dasu terrorist attack, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Friday.

The head of the working group, Director Bai Tian of the Department of Foreign Security Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who arrived in Pakistan on March 28, met with Pakistan's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of the Interior and other officials, Lin Jian said during his regular briefing held here at the International Press Center (IPC).

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-232403387013 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The DEPUTY CONSERVATOR OF FOREST QUETTA CITY QUETTA invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates Tender Fee Rs.1000/- and bid Security 2%

S.No	Name of Works	E/Cost
1	CONSTRUCTION OF ROOMS	4,952,646

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 3,466,852 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years, showing financial capacity of the firm. PEC Registration C-6 or above and Specialized Code is CE10(i), CE10(ii) EE11, and CE11 Income Tax Registration certificate is required. 03 successfully similar work completion certificate each of estimated cost or above, for the last 03 year. The bidding Firm must submit Company's latest Bank Account Statement or Bank Credit Line Certificate. The bidder should have fully operational office/branch in Balochistan. The firm must be provided from last 3 year audit report duly issued by the registered with ICAAP. The bidder must submit the Income Tax Return of the last (3) three year. The Bidders must comply with all prevailing all Govt taxes as notified by FBR from time to time. The firm must be attached tender fee challan in original. Submission of the required Bid Security in original with technical bid Undertaking on legal valid and attested stamp paper that the firm is not involved in litigation with any of Provincial or Federal Government Department, Agency, Organization or autonomous body anywhere in Pakistan. In case involved in any litigation process, proof of dispute resolution is required. Affidavit on judicial stamp paper. Affidavit on stamp paper of Rs. 100/- duly notarized to the effect that iii. Bidder has submitted the correct and complete information along with the bid/offer. If any document / information is found forged / engineered / fake / bogus at any stage, the bidder may be declared as Blacklisted in accordance with law and the performance guarantee and payment, if any may be forfeited. Signature & company/firm seal on every page of the bidding document. Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 1,000 PKR. Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 16 April, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The tenders must be submitted latest by 16 April, 2024 till 10:30 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 11:30 AM Address: Quetta Phone no: 0819204754 Email: fawadfd@gmail.com

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Finance minister calls for fiscal discipline by reducing operational expenditure

KARACHI (APP): Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Friday, called for maintaining fiscal discipline through reduced operational expenditures and also advocated for a public-private partnership model to foster national development. He expressed the views in a significant meeting held here at the State Bank of Pakistan to deliberate on pivotal economic strategies and reforms. Governor SBP Jameel Ahmed, Chairman Pakistan Banks' Association Zafar Masud, and high-ranking officials from various Pakistani banks attended the meeting. The meeting was a

profound step towards aligning financial institutions with Pakistan's broader economic goals, underlining the need for strategic collaboration and robust implementation of reform initiatives, said a statement received here. The minister opened the discussion highlighting the robust start to the year, with a notable 5% growth in agriculture, spearheaded by a bumper rice crop. Aurangzeb acknowledged the visible signs of macro-economic stability depicted by a narrowing current account deficit and exchange rate stability. Underscoring the objectives of sustaining the stability and its transition

into a permanent state, the finance minister emphasized the synergy between the industrial sector and energy resources, alongside ongoing dialogues with the Ministry of Energy. He lauded the caretaker government for maintaining fiscal discipline and re-framed the "IMF program as Pakistan program" aimed at reinforcing Pakistan's economic foundation. He also called for proactive implementation and ownership of the reform agenda. The Minister stressed the importance of broadening the tax net to include under-taxed and untaxed sectors, particularly service providers, and addressed



ISLAMABAD: A view of massive traffic on Expressway in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Bishop of Fatima Church addresses on Good Friday Day.

KPC, Unilever collaborate for capacity building on climate journalism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Discussions centered on the need to differentiate between climate change and its impacts, as well as environmental degradation. The Karachi Press Club (KPC) and Unilever Pakistan joined hands in an interactive session aimed at delving into the intricacies of climate change reporting and its crucial role in shaping public awareness and policy discussions. The session commenced with an overview of Unilever's sustainability initiatives, which not only seek to transform the livelihoods of those associated with the organization but also aspire to create a broader societal impact, according to a news release. Afia Salam, Media Development Specialist, and Climate Change expert emphasized the significance of bridging the private and public sectors to find mutually beneficial solutions. She said, "Bringing together the private and public sectors is essential to provide reporters and journalists with access to accurate and authentic field information and resources, crucial for effective climate

change journalism." Shoaib Ahmed, Secretary of the Karachi Press Club, underlined the strategic necessity of facilitating such conversations and bringing them to the forefront for actionable solutions. He said, "It is imperative to facilitate these conversations and highlight them for impactful and actionable solutions," offering the Karachi Press Club's platform for organizing future events of this nature. Fatima Arshad, Head of Sustainability at Unilever Pakistan, emphasized the ongoing nature of climate change.

'Kashmiris' freedom movement will run out of steam if their identity is lost'

ISLAMABAD (APP): After 5th August 2019, the Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian government is working on a vicious plan to deprive the unique identity and culture of the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir and impose its Hinduva agenda on them. A report released by Kashmir Media Service today said India wants to snatch Kashmiris' identity to harm their struggle for right to self-determination. It said that Hinduva

leaders were openly announcing to efface Kashmir's unique identity and revive pre-Islamic Hindu civilization in the territory in line with the goal of BJP and RSS. The report said that India was systematically paving the way for settler colonialism in IIOJK. For this purpose, the report added, non-local Hindus were being brought from mainland India and settled in IIOJK to convert the territory's Muslim majority into a minority.

Female judicial officers' strength reaches to 18% of total: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): A report of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan has said that currently there are 3142 judges and judicial officers working across of the country including 2570 males and 572 female.

Thus the number of female working judges has reached to 18% of the total working Judges. The commission has recently released a report that summarizes the statistics of females working in the justice sector of Pakistan.

The report further reveals that there are currently 126 judges working at the upper tier of the judiciary, which includes the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the Federal Shariat Court, and the Five High Courts. Out of these 126 judges, 119 are male judges, while only 7 are female judges. Therefore, female judges make up only 5.5% of the total working strength of judges at the upper tier.

The report states that there are a total of 3016 Judicial Officers working in the District Judiciary level. Out of these officers, 2451 are male and 565 are female. This means that 19% of the total Judicial Officers are female. The report also provides district-wise details of the positions held by female judicial officers, highlighting their significant role in the administration of justice. Additionally, the report includes a province-wise list of Ex-Cadre positions held by female judicial officers.

Furthermore, the report reveals that there are 230,879 lawyers enrolled in different Provincial Bars in the Country. Out of these, 198,100 lawyers are male, while around 40,000 lawyers are female. This means that female lawyers make up about 17% of the total number of lawyers enrolled. According to the report, data collected from the Prosecution Departments reveals that there are currently 2210 Prosecution officers working in the country. Out of these, 1869 officers are male and 341 officers are female, indicating that women make up only 15% of the total network strength of Prosecution officers.

The report highlights the significant contributions of women in the justice sector of the country but also points out that their representation is not proportional to their share of the overall population. Therefore, it is recommended that the government and other relevant stakeholders take steps to encourage the inclusion of more females in the justice sector.

Rain-windstorm, thunderstorm at various parts of country: PMD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast intermittent rain-windstorm/thunderstorm with snowfall over mountains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir, central/upper Punjab, Islamabad and north Balochistan during the next 24 hours. Hailstorm is also likely during the forecast period. Heavy falls are expected at isolated places in upper Khyber

IRSA Advisory body to meet on April 2

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Advisory Committee of the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) will meet here on April 2 to finalize water share of the provinces for the upcoming Kharif season scheduled to commence from next month. The meeting will be presided over by Chairman IRSA Abdul Hameed Mengal. The meeting will attend member Federal Asad Imdiaz Ali, member Punjab Amjad Saeed, member Sindh Muhammad Ehsanul Haq Leghari, member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Zahid Abbas.

Further, the report reveals that there are 230,879 lawyers enrolled in

different Provincial Bars in the Country. Out of these, 198,100 lawyers are male, while around 40,000 lawyers are female. This means that female lawyers make up about 17% of the total number of lawyers enrolled.

ICCI, CDA sign MoU for upgrading, maintaining public washrooms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the Capital Development Authority (CDA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Friday for the upgrade and maintenance of public washrooms located in various markets across the capital city. The agreement was signed by President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and Masghooq Ali Shah, Director of Sanitation CDA, said a press release issued here.

Under the agreement, ICCI will be responsible for overseeing the newly constructed washrooms in various markets throughout the capital city. Their duties will include ensuring the operational functionality, management, maintenance, and upkeep of hygienic standards to facilitate visitors to these markets. Speaking on the occasion, the President of ICCI stated that a nominal fee would be charged for the use of these facilities, and the revenue generated would be allocated towards the upgrading and maintenance of the washrooms. Additionally, ICCI will ensure the deployment of janitorial staff, attired in appropriate uniforms, at each facility. The agreement was signed by President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and Masghooq Ali Shah, Director of Sanitation CDA, said a press release issued here.

ICCI's commitment to facilitating Islamabad's evolution into a model city and pledged to utilize all resources towards achieving this goal. Additionally, he unveiled plans to install water filtration plants at multiple locations to guarantee access to clean and potable water.

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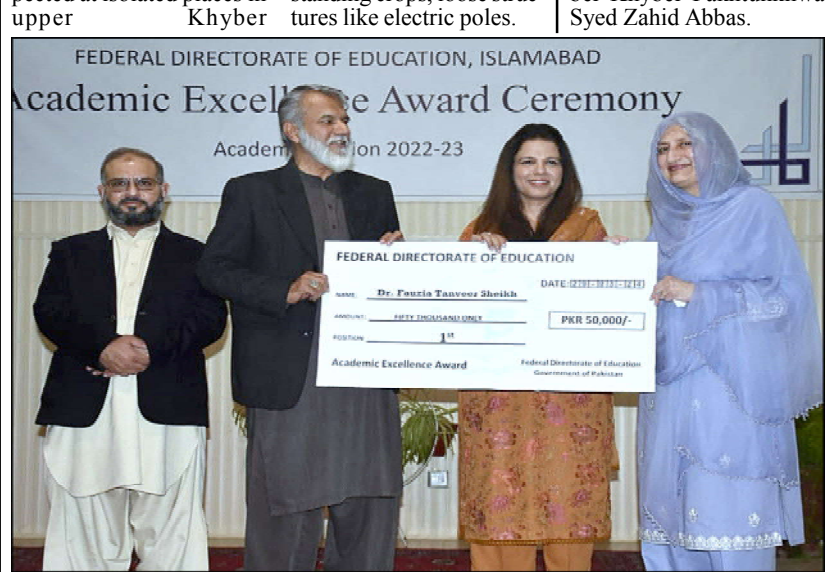
NAHE announces results of pre-assessment test

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), under the auspices of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), has announced the results of the pre-assessment test conducted for the Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Batch-V here on Friday. The test, held on February 25, 2024, marked a significant milestone in the selection process for aspiring scholars, said a press release issued here. In response to the HEC announcement of the test, 518 applications were received. Following initial scrutiny, 473 applicants appeared for the test. The applicants were provided with approved contents, weightage, and a model paper well in advance, ensuring clarity and guidance throughout the preparation process. The test, conducted at five designated centres across the country - Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, and Quetta - encompassed both objective and subjective components. According to the combined results of the IPFP pre-assessment test, 249 candidates remained successful, while 225 others were unsuccessful. The candidates can access the ETC portal, <https://etc.hec.gov.pk/#/login> to view their results. The minimum benchmark for successful applicants was to secure at least 50 percent marks in the test. These results highlight the dedication and academic prowess of the applicants, reflecting their commitment to advancing scholarly pursuits.

Qawwali evening featuring Ustad Shahid Virsa held at Lok Virsa

ISLAMABAD (APP): Qawwal Ustad Shahid Ali Khan entertained the audience with a devotional Qawwali performance here at Lok Virsa - National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage. He performed at "Mah-e-Isar O Aman - a cultural extravaganza featuring Naat and Tilawat competition, a captivating calligraphy exhibition, and tantalizing cultural foods organized by Lok Virsa.

The funeral prayers of the deceased would be held after prayers at 5 pm, H-11 Graveyard. Professor Zahid Baig Mirza, affectionately known as Prof. Z. B. Mirza, made significant contributions to the fields of ornithology, conservation, and biodiversity in Pakistan, earning both national and international recognition. Throughout his career, Prof. Mirza authored over 60 research publications and penned 27 books, including the acclaimed "Field Guide to Birds of Pakistan."



ISLAMABAD: DG FDE, Tanveer Ahmed awarding prize to Prof Fauzia Sheikh, Principal F7/2 in BS program category in Academic Excellence Award Ceremony.

High Commission of Malaysia denotes essential educational materials to I'abad Model College

ISLAMABAD (APP): The High Commission of Malaysia in Pakistan under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), donated essential educational materials to Islamabad Model College for Girls, located in Quaid-e-Azam University Colony, Islamabad. The donation included 60 chairs and 10 tables for preschool children, 30 stationery-filled goodie bags, and a fresh coat of paint for the classrooms, aims to enhance the learning environment for the students and support the institution's educational goals, said a news release. Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, the High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, has handed over the donated items at the school premises. The event witnessed the presence of former participants of Pakistan's MTCP program alongside dedicated staff members of the High Commission.

Addressing the event, Ambassador Azhar Mazlan underscored Malaysia's steadfast commitment to fostering educational advancement in Pakistan. He expressed his delight in supporting education and empowering young minds through this donation.

Speaking on the occasion, the President of ICCI stated that a nominal fee would be charged for the use of these facilities, and the revenue generated would be allocated towards the upgrading and maintenance of the washrooms. Additionally, ICCI will ensure the deployment of janitorial staff, attired in appropriate uniforms, at each facility. The agreement was signed by President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and Masghooq Ali Shah, Director of Sanitation CDA, said a press release issued here.

ICCI's commitment to facilitating Islamabad's evolution into a model city and pledged to utilize all resources towards achieving this goal. Additionally, he unveiled plans to install water filtration plants at multiple locations to guarantee access to clean and potable water.



ISLAMABAD: Labourers working on Chak Shahzad Road expansion in the Federal Capital.

DC reviews meeting, takes action against token tax violations, traffic rules

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday reviewed the meeting and directed the concerned to take action against token tax violations, fancy number plates and tinted glass vehicles. According to ICT spokesman, Dr Abdullah Tabassum, Directors of Excise and Taxation Department, Additional Deputy Commissioner General, Assistant Commissioners, Magistrates and other stakeholders attended the meeting. During the meeting, the DC directed the magistrates and Excise & Taxation officers to launch a crackdown against tinted glasses and fancy number plates. He urged the citizens of the federal capital to remove tinted glasses and fancy number plates from their vehicles and use only approved number plates issued by the Excise and Taxation Department to avoid any action. It is pertinent to mention here that the joint operation of the Excise and Taxation Department.



ISLAMABAD: Voters cast their vote during the APP Employees Union Election-2024 at APP Headquarters.

Islamabad needs urban climate resilient infrastructure to sustain livable status: Experts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The experts at a seminar on Friday underlined that amid growing population and climate-induced disaster risks it has become imperative for the federal capital to maintain a climate resilient infrastructure to sustain as a livable metropolis. The seminar titled, "Building Urban Climate Resilience in Islamabad," was jointly organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSAs) here. CANSAs representatives participated in the seminar online. Stressing the need to establish some model municipalities having climate resilient infrastructure, SDPI Deputy Executive Director, Dr Shaqfat Munir said that Pakistan needs to have a strong local govern-

ment system to develop climate smart urban centers whereas devolution at the small-scale needs to be achieved as every disaster hits local tier or bottom level of states, such as cities or municipalities. Referring to the SDPI Report on the same title, he said: "In Nepal, a mayor from a small municipality has developed climate smart infrastructure in his municipality, but in Pakistan, financial constraints for local level authorities are the main impediments to achieve the goal of urban resilience." He, however, pointed out that there a lack of strong local government system in the country, which needs to be made stronger, and democratic with maximum powers rest with the elected local lead-

ership. He informed that the SDPI is also engaging with provincial governments to convince them to invest in peri-urban areas and local governments for the sake of climate resilience. Aleena Kareem said transparency in public projects, better reporting and impact evaluation mechanisms and public-private partnerships could support urban resilience initiatives. She suggested the authorities concerned to come up with net zero targets for Islamabad to contain its carbon emissions to avoid climate disasters. Nakul from CANSAs said Pakistan has highest population growth and urbanization rates needs a proper mechanism and effort in this regard. Since the cities in South Asia are at

the receiving end due to the economic nature of development, robust efforts are required other than COP forums to meet its urban resilience goals, Nakul added. "Annual mean temperature per decade increased by 0.32° Celsius in Pakistan with a significant increasing trend of annual mean temperature between 1961-2022 following rapid population increase due to rural-to-urban migration," she noted. The Report suggests some action points leading to institutional building, coordination and governance, policy interventions, planning frameworks like green procurement, supply chains, pollution laws and liabilities on polluters and financing to create sustainable revenue streams for green and resilient urbanization.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the meeting to review law and order situation at Home Ministry

Maryam Nawaz approves Nawaz Sharif Kisan card

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Friday gave approval to the 'Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Kisan Card Project' aimed at uplifting the agriculture sector and socio-economic condition of farmers in the province.

The CM presided over the meeting related to agricultural reforms here. She said that under the Kisan card 500,000 small farmers would be given loans on easy terms. This loan will be worth Rs 150 billion and given in one year. Farmers would also be given loans of Rs 30,000 for per acre land for purchase of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.

Under the Nawaz Sharif Kisan Card different types of subsidy would also be provided to farmers, she added. The meet-

ing decided that model agriculture centres would be established with the cooperation of the private sector. Modern agricultural machinery, training, pesticides and seeds would be provided at these model agriculture centres.

The CM gave approval to set up a modern agriculture center in each district in the first phase.

Maryam Nawaz directed the agriculture department to formulate data related to production and demand of every crop. For research and development of wheat, rice, cotton, the meeting also gave approval for setting up a state-of-the-art centre of excellence.

The meeting decided that a board would control administrative affairs of the centre of excellence and research centre would be linked with regional univer-

sities while Research and Development Centre would be set up in Agriculture University Faisalabad with the cooperation of China at a cost of Rs 2 billion.

To stop the sale of fake fertilizers and pesticides, an amendment would be made to the Agriculture Pesticide Act and Fertilizer Control Act. The meeting reviewed reorganisation of Punjab Seed Corporation and Punjab Agricultural Research Board. It decided to equip Agriculture Extension Wing with modern technology and to induct 500 agricultural graduates.

The meeting was told that farmers would be given 24800 modern equipment in two years which would cost Rs 7 billion. Punjab Agriculture Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, Punjab Senior Minister Marriyam Aurangzeb.

Sub-cabinet committee reviews law, order in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): On the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the second meeting of the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Law and Order was held in the Home Department under the chairmanship of Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique.

Provincial Minister for Industry Shafay Hussain, Provincial Minister for Transport Bilal Akbar Khan, Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja ul Rehman and Provincial Minister for Agriculture Syed Muhammad Ashiq Hussain Shah participated as committee members. In the meeting, Home Secretary Noor Ul Amin Mengal,

Special Secretary Fazal ur Rehman, Additional Secretary Internal Security, Additional IG CTD Wassem Ahmed Khan, DG PP&PS Muhammad Shahid Iqbal and other officers attended. In the meeting, Home Secretary Nurul Amin Mengal also gave a briefing on law and order.

Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique said that security has been beefed up throughout the province after the brutal attack on Chinese nationals in Bisham. In the meeting, cases of 53 prisoners were taken into consideration. Since June 20, 2022, 39 prisoners have been released on parole.

Provincial Cabinet approves 1.15 billion Eid package for martyrs and poor families

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet constituted a committee to look into the grievances of the officers of the attached departments and the directives of the Peshawar High Court concerning reducing disparities in the salaries of the officers of attached departments and other cadres. The cabinet committee comprised of Advisor to Chief Ministers on Finance, Minister/Secretaries P&D, Establishment, and Population Welfare. The High Court had on a writ petition filed by over 973 officers of different attached departments directed the government to redress the grievances of the petitioners concerning granting them allowances allowed to officers of other cadres @ 1.5 of the basic pay in light of article 38(e) of the Constitution and the Principle of parity/discrimination among the civil servants.

The Finance Department has opposed the demand on the grounds of resource crunch and financial crises of the province. Its financial implications have

been estimated to be over Rs.971/- million per year.

The Provincial cabinet which met Wednesday evening under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Mr. Ali Amin Khan Gandapur was actively participated by Chief Secretary, Ministers, advisers and administrative secretaries. It took several decisions about the affairs of the province.

The cabinet approved the release of Rs.1.15 billion funds as Eid Package for distribution among the 115000 poor individuals of the province at the rate of Rs.10,000/- per head/family. The package will also include the families of police martyrs to whom the Police Department, already having their details, will directly disburse these amounts. The cabinet approved the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right of Digital Way Policy providing a frame work to facilitate the deployment of fiber connectivity through prompt resolution of public and private right-of-way issues commonly faced by telecom operators thereby leading to an increase in fiber connectivity. With this, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa becomes the

first province to have a Right of Digital Way policy as aligned with the Federal Public and Private Right of (digital) Way Policy Directive 2021. A Committee comprising Ministers/Secretaries C&W, Irrigation and Local Government Departments was also constituted to adopt this policy in a unified manner throughout the province.

Another Committee was constituted to categorize within 15 days the posts recruitment to which should be done through ETEA or the technical Departments/organizations themselves. The cabinet also directed that all Provincial departments/organizations must get NOC from ETEA before conducting screening tests for recruitment through private organizations (other than ETEA). The Provincial cabinet approved Zone Development Agreement for the Pakistan Digital City Haripur project. The Pakistan digital City Haripur is the first purpose-built Special Technology Zones (STZ) in Pakistan being developed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board under the administration.



LAHORE: Secretary Establishment Inamullah Khan Dharijo and Director General Farhan Ali Khawaja distribute shield and certificates in the ceremony of 51 common passing out ceremony in Civil Services Academy at Walton Road.

Final recommendations of consortia established in seven important themes sent to CM

Independent Report
LAHORE: On the special instructions of Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman, the final recommendations of consortia established in seven important themes in the universities of Punjab have been sent to Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif in the form of a report. The Punjab Governor has urged upon the Punjab Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz Sharif to issue instructions to the administrative departments of the varties for immediate implementation of the recommendations of the consortia. Earlier, Governor Punjab identified seven key themes in the three-day conference of Vice-Chancellors held in Murree in September 2022 and directed the Chairperson Punjab Higher Education Commis-

sion to set up consortia comprising Vice-Chancellors and faculty members. The major themes on which the consortia were established are as follows: Governance and Finance, Climate Change, Entrepreneurship, Character Building, Drugs and Narcotics Control, Women Empowerment, Promotion of Technology. It should be noted that the Governor of Punjab took a keen interest in the consortiums and chaired several meetings at the Governor's House. Several meetings of consortia were also held within the universities. Thus, as a result of these efforts spanning several months, the final recommendations were formulated. The aim of forming these consortia was that academia should come up with solutions for the challenges faced by the society.

Punjab police accelerate crackdown on drug peddlers

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has said that according to the vision and direction of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the mission of a drug-free Punjab is progressing rapidly. In a statement, he said intelligence-based operations are ongoing across the province under the supervision of RPOs, CPOs and DPOs to save the young generation from drug addiction. The IG said that during the last 24 hours, 486 raids were conducted on the hideouts of drug dealers across the province including Lahore. Over 217 cases were registered against the accused involved in the drug supply chain.

Women empowerment nucleus of US Mission efforts: Kristin Hawkins

LAHORE (APP): US Consul General to Lahore Kristin Hawkins has said that women empowerment has been the nucleus of their efforts at the Consulate and women participation is encouraged through exchange programs, educational scholarships and internship programs.

In an interview with APP in connection with Women's History Month here on Thursday, she said the U.S. Mission shares the belief that gender equity is essential to economic growth and development, democracy, and political stability in all societies.

About the Women's History Month, Kristin Hawkins said the month of March, besides observing International Women's Day

on March 8, was commemorated throughout the United States and other countries to celebrate the strengths, resilience and accomplishments of women across all sectors ranging from business, academia, sports and others.

To a question, she said her efforts towards empowerment of women were not limited to Women's History Month only as women-centered initiatives occupy the whole calendar, adding that it is not only about celebrating women but making them independent, vocal, self-sufficient and leader. Charismatic Kristin Hawkins, passionate about women empowerment and cultural preservation in Punjab, said "during the past 20 years.



PESHAWAR: Former Presidents Haripur Chamber Safdar Zaman Shah, Haji Manzoor, Malik Muhammad Nazeer and others meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor House.

HCCI delegation calls on KP Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of Haripur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI) led by Safdar Zaman Shah called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here on Friday.

The delegation informed the Governor about the problems and issues faced by the business community of Haripur.

The delegation also urged the Governor to play role for facilitating businessmen and resolve their problems.

Speaking on the occasion, Haji Ghulam Ali highlighted the significance of businessmen and traders for strengthening the country's economy and assured cooperation with them.

He said that federal authorities have been informed about the concerns of the business community regarding prices of electricity and gas. He said that the government desires to solve the issues of businessmen and to facilitate them.

Minister pledges completion of PMDFC schemes by 2025

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government and Community Development (LG&CD) department Zeeshan Rafique has pledged that all ongoing World Bank-funded schemes under Punjab Municipal Development Fund Company (PMDFC) will be completed by March 2025. PMDFC is working on municipal services projects in 16 cities including Daska, Hafizabad, Jhelum, Kantonke, Muridke, Wazirabad, Gojra, Jaranwala, Jhang, Kamalia, Okara, Bahawalpur, Borewala, Khanewal, Kot Addu and Wahari in a transparent manner, which will significantly improve the quality of life there.

He was speaking in a briefing by Managing Director Syed Zahid Aziz during a visit to the PMDFC office, here on Friday.

He expressed his happiness that PMDFC was the oldest company of the Punjab government which had been playing an important role in providing municipal services in different areas for last twenty five years. He said that it was gratifying that as a pilot project, re-tilational ponds in the selected villages were being cleaned using modern techniques. "Phase-wise cleaning of the polluted ponds is not only promoting aquatic life but also providing water for local agricultural purposes", he said. The minister emphasized measures to increase capacity building of municipal committees because the lack of efficiency of some municipal committees was hindering the timely completion of development schemes. He said that the problem of sewage needed more attention than solid waste management.



HYDERABAD: A large number of people offering Namaz-e-Jumma at Jamia Masjid city during Holy Fasting Month of Ramadan ul Mubarak

Minister holds meeting with ACASUS to discuss collaboration in KP

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Under the leadership of Health Minister Qasim Ali Shah, a meeting was convened titled "Reaching the Unreached" under the auspices of the EPI (Expanded Program on Immunization) and PEI (Polio Eradication Initiative). The briefing, organised by ACASUS, focused on collaboration efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Attending the meeting were Special Secretary Health for Polio Eradication Abdul Basit, Director General Health Services Dr. Shaukat Ali, Deputy Director Provincial Emergency Operations Center Zeeshan, along with personnel from all district Emergency Operation Centres participat-

ing online.

Minister Qasim Shah highlighted the significant responsibility that falls on parents of unvaccinated children, a consequence of insufficient awareness, which poses a risk to the entire nation. It is imperative to avoid international sanctions due to such negligence. The Federal Government will be engaged in discussions regarding these issues, he observed.

Qasim Shah added that access to remote areas in southern districts is crucial, necessitating the resolution of every possible challenge. Minister Shah emphasized that this is the third phase involving a special campaign for unvaccinated children, ensuring their vaccination.

Policeman gunned down in Tank

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): A policeman was shot dead by unknown miscreants here on Wana road in the limits of Shaheed Mureed Akbar police station on Friday morning.

According to police spokesman, a police head constable-Akbar Ali was going to his duty at Chowki Latif situated near Garah Baloch when unknown miscreants sprayed him with bullets near Sheikh Market. Latif was deputed at the chowki as Incharge.

A heavy police contingent reached the site and cordoned off the area. A search operation has been launched in the area to track down the suspects.

The funeral of the martyred policeman would be offered at District Police Office at 11:30 a.m. today.

DG Rangers chairs security meeting to assess law and order situation

KARACHI (APP): A high level security meeting was convened at the Headquarters Pakistan Rangers Sindh under the chairmanship of Director General (DG) Rangers Sindh Major General Azhar Waqas to assess the overall law and order situation in the city.

According to Rangers spokesman on Friday, high-ranking officials from various departments including Commissioner Karachi, Additional IGP - Karachi, Special Branch, DIGP - CTD, Joint DG Intelligence Bureau, DIGPs of Special Branch, East, South, West, CIA, Traffic, Rangers, and sensitive institutions participated in the conference.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on the special security measures for the martyrdom day of Hazrat

Ali (A.S), Easter, Ramzan's last ten days, and Eid-ul-Fitr, with confirmation of actions to be taken in this regard.

The conference emphasized on intensified patrols to curb street crime, increased snap-checking, and formation of a joint action plan utilizing modern technology for the apprehension of criminals.

It was stressed in the meeting that in light of the directives issued, utmost efforts will be made to ensure full compliance with existing laws and codes of conduct.

Law enforcement agencies, on the occasion, reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the security situation, with a stern focus on curbing any form of religious intolerance, forced conversions, extortion, and extremism.

6 dead, 1225 injured in 1106 road accidents in Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: At least six persons were killed and 1225 injured in 1106 road crashes in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 550 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 675 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals.



LAHORE: Members of Awami Rickshaw Union are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking, in Lahore.

CM takes notice of rape of mentally ill girl

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif took notice of the alleged rape of a 9-year-old mentally-challenged girl in DHQ Hospital Layyah.

She directed authorities concerned to identify the accused after a thorough investigation into the incident, and sought a report in this regard from IG Police.

Madam Chief Minister said, "All those involved in the heinous crime should be punished severely."



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique inspecting the revamping project at Punjab Institute of Cardiology.

NAB Lahore DG vows justice, compensation for victims

LAHORE (APP): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore held its monthly open court session here on Friday, addressing grievances of victims defrauded in the housing sector and investment schemes. The Director-General of NAB Lahore, Amjad Majeed Aulakh, personally listened to all complainants and issued on the spot directives.

The victims from various housing societies, including Pak Arab Housing Society, Palm Vista Housing, Al-Rehman Garden, Al-Haram Garden, Khayabane-Amin Housing, Al-Jalil Garden, Formanites Housing Society, and Govt Cooperative Housing Society, Lasani Chicks, Double Shah and others participated in the session.

The DG reported that 2,300 victims of the Pak Arab Housing Society have already been distributed Rs

1.67 billion, with an additional recovery of Rs 540 million completed. Despite a hopeful outlook for significant recoveries in the case, progress has been hindered by a court stay order obtained by the main accused. An official inquiry has been initiated for 218 claimants against the administration of Palm Vista Housing, where victims were defrauded through membership forms. NAB Lahore has also requested special leniency in NAB rules against the administration of Al-Haram Garden, which, upon approval, will enable disciplinary action.

NAB Lahore is eager to take priority actions against the Al-Haram Garden administration to promptly redress the victims' losses. Complaints against the administration of Khayabane-Amin indicate that despite payments made years ago for plots,

Finance Minister says: Economy commences on better note in 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday said that with significant improvements in key economic indicators the economy in year 2024 commenced on a better note.

Addressing the business community at Gong Ceremony at Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Karachi, the minister said that the Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with the Ministry of Law and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), was working to eliminate leakages in tax revenue and bring more people into the tax net.

The minister also highlighted the completion of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) review and the potential for future relations with the fund, said a statement issued here.

He mentioned that

government was working to bring reforms in State-owned enterprise (SOEs), privatization and energy sectors besides improving tax system. He, however highlighted the role of the private sector in economic development.

The Finance Minister acknowledged the importance of the capital market in advancing economic growth adding that the government would work with Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) to create a conducive regulatory environment for economic growth in the capital market.

He said the government would focus more on improving the efficiency, transparency, and protection of investors in the capital market to enhance its performance.

He said the finance ministry would collaborate with the capital market to

facilitate access to capital for small and medium-sized businesses.

Aurangzeb expressed gratitude for Chinese participation and investment in Pakistan's capital market and stock holdings.

He emphasized that the growing cooperation between PSX and Chinese exchanges was vital for the economic development of Pakistan and mutual benefits for both countries.

Meanwhile, during his visit to Karachi, the federal minister also visited Utility Stores Corporation (USC) to review the coverage and benefits of the Ramadan Relief Package. The purpose of the visit was to ensure implementation of the package.

It is pertinent to mention, the allocated amount for the Ramadan Relief Package has been increased from Rs. 7.5 billion to Rs. 12 billion.



GILGIT: Chairman Committee on Telecommunication Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Amjad Hussain Advocate chairs a meeting regarding the telecommunication and internet issue in GB.

Zong 4G contributes to Digital Transformation in Pakistan through OEMs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading telecommunication provider, has made significant contributions to the digital transformation in the country through its partnership with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

With the exhilarating introduction of OEM partnerships especially for its esteemed corporate clientele, Zong 4G unleashes a wave of innovation aimed at enhancing revenue streams and elevating the customer journey, said a news release.

In today's dynamic digital landscape, Information and Communication Technology stands as the cornerstone for every cor-

poration, shaping communication channels and revolutionizing business operations.

Recognizing its pivotal role, Zong 4G has taken a bold step forward, offering cutting-edge digital platforms and services tailored for corporate clients.

This initiative not only enhances Zong's DICT portfolio but also injects it with a thrilling blend of cost efficiency and diverse solutions, propelling businesses into an electrifying era of innovation and connectivity.

In order to create ease for its corporate users, Zong 4G is offering the following services: Network and Cyber Security.

Govt, lender banks end PIA's commercial debt negotiations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The commercial debt negotiations of Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Limited (PIACL) have been successfully concluded among the government, domestic lender banks and Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) as part of the entity's restructuring for privatization.

A statement issued by the PIACL on Friday said the step paved the way for filing of the Scheme of Arrangement (SOA) for legal segregation of PIACL with Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan on Thursday. The federal cabinet had approved the legal segregation plan of PIACL on February 6, 2024.

PIACL's privatization has been a priority agenda for the federal government, and above developments represent

one of the most complex restructuring exercise undertaken to prepare PIACL for privatization. This arrangement will help make a viable business case for private sector investment in the national carrier.

The domestic banks and financial institutions demonstrated firm commitment to the government's privatization initiative and extended their full co-operation in finalising the arrangement for PIACL's commercial domestic debt. Under the arrangement, PIACL's Commercial domestic debt will be moved to PIA Holding Company Ltd., established by the federal government as part of PIACL's legal restructuring. The term sheet covering mutually agreed commercial aspects of loan transfer was signed yesterday between PIACL, PIA Holding Company and lender banks.



LAHORE: Women busy in shopping ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr in the Ichhra Shopping Center of the Provincial Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with Governor SBP and CEOs of all leading Banks, at SBP headquarters, during his visit.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan to enhance cooperation in IT and Telecom sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima, and Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov, held discussions on Friday regarding IT and telecommunication sector.

The Ambassador of Azerbaijan congratulated Minister of State for IT, Shaza Fatima, for assuming her office, said a news release. Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in the IT and telecommunication sector.

Shaza Fatima high-

lighted the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan, emphasizing Pakistan's high regard for its ties with Azerbaijan.

She expressed Pakistan's desire to establish substantial relations between the two countries in the field of IT and Telecom.

Minister of State for IT, Shaza Fatima, articulated Pakistan's aspiration to initiate a youth exchange program with Azerbaijan.

She emphasized that the exchange of start-ups between the two countries would enhance relations.

PSX loses 137 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Friday, losing 137.02 points, a negative change of 0.20 percent, closing at 67,005.11 points against 67,142.12 points the previous trading day.

A total of 313,035,305 shares valuing Rs 9,899 billion were traded during the day as compared to 421,118,268 shares valuing Rs. 16,159 billion the last day. Some 343 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 136 of them recorded gains and 188 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 19 remained unchanged.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, X-Press Mekong, Taxidiara, Kerala, Sky Runner and Al-Bidda and scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, Furnace oil, Palm oil and LNG berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Elogy Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on report period.

A total of eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Chemroad Rose and Belforest left the Port on today morning while three more ships, Sky Runner.

Minister Shafay attends solar product launch

Independent Report
 LAHORE: Provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain visited Raya Golf and Country Club Defence on Friday and attended the launching ceremony of a new solar product by the Chinese company Huawei as a special guest.

Alongside officials from the Chinese company, the provincial minister jointly launched the new solar product. The minister highlighted that Pakistan faces the challenge of environmental pollution and emphasized the strong

friendly and economic relations between Pakistan and China, suggesting that both countries can progress together in green energy initiatives.

Chaudhry Shafay Hussain emphasized that the future of Pakistan is intertwined with the promotion of solar technology. He mentioned ongoing discussions with foreign companies regarding solar panel production in Punjab and negotiations with the federal government to reduce import duties on solar panel motors.

Furthermore, he out



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries Chaudhary Shafay Hussain addressing the inaugural session of new solar products of Chinese Company.

Neelum Jhelum achieves max capacity of 969 MW after TRT inspection

ISLAMABAD (APP): Neelum Jhelum Hydroelectric Project has achieved its maximum generation capacity of 969 MW yesterday.

Following resumption of its operation earlier this month after inspection of the tail race tunnel (TRT), the project is continuously in operation as per the availability of water and contributing electricity to the National Grid, especially during the month of Ramadan, said a press release issued on Friday.

Taking advantage of the low-flow season, operation of Neelum Jhelum Hydroelectric Project was stopped on January 10 for inspection of the rehabilitated tail race tunnel. Subsequently, the detailed inspection was successfully carried out prior to resumption of generation from the project earlier this

month. Most importantly, International Panel of Experts also inspected the tail race tunnel.

Neelum Jhelum is a unique hydropower project with 90% being underground under high mountains overburden. The project, completed in 2018 on River Neelum in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, comprises of a Dam at Nauseri, an underground waterway system consisting of 52-Km long tunnels and an underground powerhouse at Chattar Kalas with four power generating units of 242.25 MW each. With average annual energy generation of 4.6 billion units, Neelum Jhelum Hydroelectric Project has so far been generated 19,562 billion units of green and clean electricity, thus, significantly contributing to meet electricity requirements of the country.

Weekly inflation falls slightly

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed a decrease of 0.09 per cent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on March 28, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 323.20 points as compared to 323.50 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 29.41 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16=100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs. 17,732, decreased by 0.27 per cent and went down to 313.35 points from last week's 314.20 points.

Uzbekistan's Envoy, Minister forge path for enhanced economic ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Aybek Arif Usmanov and Pakistan's Commerce minister Jam Kamal Khan on Friday forged path for enhanced economic and trade relations.

Uzbekistan's Ambassador, Aybek Arif Usmanov, met with Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, aiming to elevate economic relations between the two nations, said a press release issued here.

Usmanov praised Minister Jam's experience in politics and expressed confidence in his ability to enhance bilateral trade.

Stressing the longstanding friendly ties between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, Usmanov em-

phasized the necessity of bolstering economic cooperation across various sectors through Business to Business and Government to Government agreements.

Uzbekistan's foreign minister and deputy trade secretary have planned to visit Pakistan soon for B2B and G2G discussions aimed at boosting trade, he added.

Highlighting the potential in sectors like agriculture, pharmaceuticals, building materials, textiles, and leather, Usmanov underscored the importance of tapping into these opportunities. Minister Khan echoed the sentiment, acknowledging the untapped potential between the two countries and emphasizing the need for improved connectivity and new trade routes to enhance trade volume.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov calls on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

KP revenue minister chairs meeting on land records computerization

Independent Report
 ABBOTTABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Revenue and Estate, Nazir Ahmad Abbasi chaired a meeting on Friday to discuss the computerization of land records.

During the session, Minister Abbasi issued directives for the establishment of a dedicated counter at Abbottabad's Service Delivery Center (SDC), covering Lora, Bakot, and Boni patwar circles. The initiative, aimed at issuing computerized deeds to curb corruption was highlighted during the meeting.

Project Director Khalid Zaman provided an extensive overview of the

project to the attendees. Nazir Abbasi also directed the implementation of similar initiatives in other service delivery centers province-wide.

He also addressed the staff shortage issue in Service Delivery Centers.

The minister ordered the immediate reassignment of computer operators currently stationed in Deputy Commissioner Offices back to the Service Delivery Centers. Additionally, comprehensive plans were instructed to be formulated for the appointment of new computer operators as per the requirement in all Service Delivery Centers across the province.

SBP extends facility of importing cash US\$ till June 30

KARACHI (APP): State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), on Friday, extended the facility for exchange companies to import cash US Dollars till June 30, 2024, to ensure an adequate supply of cash USD in the open market.

SBP's Exchange Policy Department, in a circular letter issued here, informed that Exchange Companies were allowed by the department on July 25, 2023, to import through Cargo or Security Companies cash US Dollars up to 50% of the value of their export consignments till December 31, 2023.

To ensure an adequate supply of cash USD in the open market, the validity of the above instructions is hereby extended till June 30, 2024, the circular letter read, adding that all other terms and conditions of above mentioned circular letter shall remain unchanged. As per the circular letter issued in July 2023, Exchange Companies had to include such arrangement in their deal with the overseas entity while the system-generated deal ticket should also include particulars of the amount to be imported as cash US Dollars.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb kicks starts business activity at the Pakistan Stock Exchange Gong Ceremony in Karachi as the Chief Guest, ringing the bell to symbolize the commencement of trading.

PTC rebuts misleading tax loss figures, seeks fair market competition

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tobacco Company (PTC) on Friday expressed concern about the recent misinformation spread across the media regarding loss to the national exchequer due to non-payment of taxes by legitimate tobacco companies.

PTC officials have expressed their concerns about the figures presented by an Islamabad-based think tank, showcasing a substantial revenue loss inflicted upon the national exchequer by legitimate tobacco companies around Rs 567 billion, said a news release.

It is important to note that this figure is incorrect, misleading and detached from ground realities. The only loss incurred to the

Government of Pakistan by a narrative that seems to align with the interests of certain entities advocating for the illicit tobacco sector.

Representatives from PTC questioned the legitimacy of such a report, which downplayed the impact of the illicit tobacco trade in the country.

They shared that the introduction of a 3-tier system in 2017 was the need of the hour for the government due to the fall in revenue collection, and this regime not only allowed revenues to increase and illicit market share to decrease but also paved the way for a level playing field and sustainability for the industry.

However, the illicit tobacco sector operates outside the stringent regu-

latory framework and yet, paradoxically, seems to evade the scrutiny and regulatory actions that are promptly applied to their legitimate law-abiding counterparts.

There is a growing concern within the relevant segment that this portrayal and the ensuing public narrative might be steering the government towards policy decisions that inadvertently favour these non-compliant entities.

The report also cited the Senate Special Committee on the causes of the decline in Tax Collection of the Tobacco Sector, to highlight the issue of lower tax collection. Ironically, in the same minutes, the FBR claimed the illicit market share to be more than 36

per cent, which caused tax revenues to fall.

The representatives urged the law enforcement agencies to initiate a nationwide crackdown against illicit cigarette trade, causing the Government of Pakistan losses of Rs 300 billion annually rather than what the impact the report has claimed spread out over a decade and raised questions regarding the intentions behind publishing such a report.

Contrary to the report's impression and subsequent coverage, the legitimate tobacco industry has significantly contributed to the national exchequer, with substantial payments in the fiscal year, Rs 148 billion in 2021-22 and Rs 173 billion in 2022-23.

President for promoting barter trade, economic ties with Iran

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday underlined the need for promoting barter trade and economic relations with Iran for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries.

The president, talking to Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Reza Amiri Moghadam, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, said that both countries had great scope for expanding bilateral economic cooperation in diverse fields.

Talking to the ambassador, the president expressed his commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries.

He called for working together to overcome the common challenges faced by both sides.

The Iranian ambassador congratulated the president on assuming the office.

He said that both Iran and Pakistan enjoyed historical, religious and cultural ties, which were becoming stronger with time.

He emphasised the need for increasing the bilateral trade volume, bank-

ing cooperation, and air and business linkages between the two countries.

The ambassador said that Pakistan could benefit from the Chahbahar-Zahedan railroad for trade with Central Asia, Europe and Türkiye.

He expressed the hope that Pak-Iran relations would receive fresh impetus under the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari.

He also conveyed warm regards from the Iranian President Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, for the President Zardari.

Later, Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad Rabei, also called on President Asif Ali Zardari and congratulated him on assuming the office.

The ambassador highlighted the atrocities and the reign of terror unleashed by the Israeli forces against innocent Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Talking to the Palestinian ambassador, the President said that it was very painful to see the tragic sufferings of Palestinians at the hands of Israeli forces.

He stated that Paki-

stan had historic ties with Palestine, and would continue to stand by its Palestinian brothers and raise its voice at all fora.

He lauded the bravery and resilience of the Palestinian people, who had been waging a long struggle against Israeli occupation.

President Zardari urged the international community to make efforts for the free flow of humanitarian assistance to Gaza by lifting all the barriers and ensuring the protection of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip.

He said that Pakistan would send additional relief goods, including food and medicine, to the Palestinian people. The ambassador appreciated Pakistan's support in the field of education as over 50,000 Palestinians had graduated in various disciplines from educational institutions in Pakistan.

He also conveyed the warm regards of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and thanked the government and the people of Pakistan for their consistent support and solidarity with the Palestinian people.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam calls on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

BCS officers assure wholehearted cooperation to CM for establishing good governance in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Civil Service (BCS) Officers have assured their wholehearted cooperation to Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti for establishing good governance in the province.

They were speaking on occasion of the Ifar dinner hosted by the Balochistan Civil Services Officers in honour of the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, members of the provincial assembly and personalities belonging to different walks of life here the other day.

The officers of Civil Services including Commissioner Sibi Division, Bashir Ahmed Bangulzai, Commissioner Rakhshan, Shah Irfan Gharsheen, Adminis-

trative Secretaries Fateh Bhangar, Javed Anwar Shahwani, Director General Social Welfare, Tariq Mengal, Deputy Secretary Ayesha Zehri and other officers appreciated the initiatives taken by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti for good governance in the province.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the full support shown by the officers of Balochistan Civil Services to the government and said that establishment of good governance is necessary for resolving the public issues and making government departments effective. For the purpose, the present provincial government has started reforms process in

the province, he added.

He said that development and prosperity of the province and establishment of peace is topmost priority.

The officers of Balochistan Civil Services thanked the Chief Minister, Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ghazala Gola, members of the provincial assembly Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani, Ali Madad Jatak, Mir Zahoor Buledi, Rehmat Baloch, Asghar Rind, Khair Jan Baloch, Malik Naeem Baza, Mina Majeed Baloch, Dr. Rubaba Buledi, Agha Shakeel Durrani and newly elected Senator Jan Muhammad Buledi on participating in the Ifar dinner.

Aurangzeb says: Ramadan Package enhanced from 7.5bln to Rs. 12.5 billion

KARACHI (APP): Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had enhanced Ramadan Package amount from Rs. 7.5 billion to 12.5 billion rupees so that people belonging to vulnerable segment of the society could be provided essential items on subsidized rates as compared to the open market.

He said this, while talking to media persons during his visit to a Utility Store here in the Defence area.

Finance Minister said under the Ramadan package, apart from Utility stores, 1200 mobile points were also set up to provide essential items to the

people at their respective areas. He said there will be no compromise on the quality of the food items being sold through the Utility Stores. Responding to a suggestion regarding donations from philanthropists to Utility Stores Corporation, the Minister termed it a good proposal and said as philanthropists of this city always generously helped the poor people and they must donate money to Utility Stores for the purpose.

Aurangzeb said there was a wrong impression that IMF was against the subsidies but the fact is that International Monetary Fund is against un-targeted subsidies while it wants the targeted subsidies be enhanced.



QUETTA: Members of Christian community engaging in services of Good Friday, at a Church.

Ghazala hails unopposed election of Senators as important milestone

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola has hailed the unopposed election of Senators from Balochistan and termed it an important milestone in history of the province.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the Deputy Speaker said that credit of the unopposed election of Senators from the province goes to the central leadership of Pakistan Peoples Party.

She particularly ap-

preciated President Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Ms. Faryal Talpur and provincial leadership especially Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti on the initiative in this regard.

Ms. Ghazala Gola said that PPP has always in the forefront in uniting all the political parties in history of the province.

She said that the positive role played by PPP in recent elections is being appreciated not only at the provincial but also at the country's level.

NHA restores road link between KP, Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highway Authority on Friday successfully restored the vital road link between the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

The relentless efforts of NHA General Manager, Agha Inayat, Deputy Director Agha Baseer, and their team were instrumental in achieving this feat through sheer hard work and commitment.

It is worth noting that the National Highway Authority has successfully restored traffic flow between KP and Balochistan via the N-50 route in the shortest possible time frame, ensuring vital connectivity for the benefit of all commuters and general public.

Following persistent and dedicated efforts by NHA's skilled construction experts, the road connection on the Dhanasar-Zhob section of N-50 has been fully restored, said a press release issued here.

Severe weather conditions, including heavy rains and subsequent landslides, had previously led to the suspension of traffic on this crucial route, necessitating diversions to alternate roads.

Under the guidance of Chairman NHA Arshad Majeed Mohmand, the

NHA staff deployed in the region worked tirelessly, around the clock, utilizing heavy machinery to effectively reopen the damaged road segments.



QUETTA: Commuters are facing difficulties in transportation due to stagnant rainwater caused by poor sewerage system, showing negligence of concerned authorities, in Quetta.

Sarbuland greets senators elected unopposed

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Balochistan Information Secretary Sardar Sarbuland Jozzezi congratulated the senators who were elected uncontested in general, technocrat and women's seats from Balochistan.

He hoped that the newly elected senators would play their role in solving the problems of Balochistan by highlighting them in the upper house in an effective manner.

In a statement issued here on Friday, he said that the political parties present in the Balochistan Assembly have united and made all the senators successful in general, technocrat and women's seats for and appreciated the role all political parties in this regard.

He said that in the past, questions have been raised regarding the election of the Senate in Balochistan but this time, due to the efforts of Chief Minister Balochistan and other political leaders, Senate candidates were elected unopposed on 7 general seats, 2 technocrat seats and 2 women seats from Balochistan.

He said that it has happened for the first time in the history of Balochistan that all the candidates have been elected unopposed on the 11 seats of the Senate from Balochistan after consultation with all the political parties.

He said that all the political parties will continue to play their role in solving the problems of Balochistan by uniting like this.



PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi offering Dua at Martyrs Monument during his visit to Frontier Constabulary Headquarters.

Pakistan's India diplomat Disputes resolution, enhanced understanding vital for regional peace, stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's charge d'affaires in India said that the goal of regional peace and stability could be achieved by enhancing mutual understanding, addressing shared concerns and resolving longstanding disputes including Jammu and Kashmir. "A cycle of perpetual conflict and tensions, is not our ordained destiny. We can emerge from the shadow of the past and script a future of hope for our two peoples based on peaceful coexistence, sovereign equality and mutual respect", Saad Ahmad Warrach said addressing the Pakistan Day reception held at the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, said a press release received on Friday.

He said that the founding fathers of Paki-

stan and India had envisioned amicable relations between the two countries. Unfortunately, the history of their bilateral relationship remained challenged for the most part, he added.

The grand reception was attended by a large number of guests including political figures, members from the diplomatic corps, businessmen, representatives of media and civil society, and prominent Muslims personalities including the custodians of different shrines in India.

The charge d'affaires, who earlier received the guests at the chancery lawns, highlighted the significance of the Pakistan Day saying that the historic resolution adopted by the All India Muslim League at its annual session in Lahore.



QUETTA: MPA Mir Rehmat Saleh Baloch distributing prizes among players during concluding ceremony of Youm-e-Pakistan Sports Festival.

Huge quantity of counterfeit medicines recovered in crackdown

QUETTA (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in Balochistan has intensified its efforts to combat the sale of counterfeit medicines during the ongoing lockdown in the province.

A spokesperson for the FIA revealed a series of successful raids conducted across various regions. These operations resulted in the seizure of a signifi-

cant amount of counterfeit drugs and the registration of four inquiries against individuals involved in the illegal activity.

A collaborative effort between the FIA's Anti-Corruption Circle Quetta and the district administration led to a significant raid on a store in Hazar Ganji. The operation yielded over 100 types of unregistered and counterfeit medicines.

BFA signs MoU with ICCBS-Karachi University

KARACHI (APP): The Balochistan Food Authority (BFA), Government of Balochistan has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Industrial Analytical Center (IAC), International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi. The purpose of this MoU is to create a long-term framework of collaboration, cooperation, and development of a strong linkage between BFA and IAC-ICCBS, for testing of food products, which

is in the interest of both institutions. The BFA Director Technical Dr. Noor Hassan and Prof. Dr. Farzana Shaheen, the Director of the ICCBS, University of Karachi, signed the MoU in an online meeting held at the HEJ, Research Institute of Chemistry, University of Karachi on Friday. Among other officials from ICCBS, including Prof. Dr. Shabana Simjee, Prof. Dr. Syed Ghulam Musharraf, and Dr. Shakil Ahmed, and officials from BFA.

LHC seeks report on threats to life of PTI founder

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) while calling arguments on next hearing on maintainability of the petition against non-provision of complete security to PTI founder in jail has remarked PTI founder has earlier been attacked too and we cannot afford any further big incident.

The petition came up for hearing before Chief Justice (CJ) Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan of LHC for hearing on Friday.

Advocate General (AG) Punjab Khalid Ishaq while raising the objection over maintainability of the petition said he will summon report on security concerns of PTI founder despite having objection on petition.

Courts summons Pervaiz others for indictment on April 4

LAHORE (Online): Anti-Corruption Court (ACT) has summoned former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and other accused on April 4 for indictment in illegal appointments case.

Judge Arshid Hussain Bhutta of ACT issued written order of the hearing.

The court summoned Pervaiz Elahi and other accused on April 4 for indictment. The court said in its decision central jail Rawalpindi filed medical reports of Pervaiz Elahi.

CM issues orders for treatment of Ustad Noorul on government expenses

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has issued orders for medical treatment of the prominent Baloch singer, Ustad Noor Muhammad Nooral on the government expenses.

According to an official handout issued here on late Thursday night, the Chief Minister directed the Secretary Health Abdullah Khan to contact the family of Ustad Noor Muhammad Nooral.

As per the handout, the treatment of Baloch singer would be done from private hospital of Karachi as proposed by his family.

The Chief Minister expressed best wishes for early recovery of the Baloch singer, Ustad Nooral.

Meanwhile, the Provincial Health Department contacted the private hospital of Karachi for treatment of the singer on directives of Chief Minister.

He was also shifted to Karachi for treatment.



QUETTA: PPP MPA's Haji Ali Madad Jattak and Bakht Muhammad Kakar meeting with Vice Chancellor BUITEMS Prof. Dr. Khalid Hafeez.

Punishing Nawaz Sharif on Iqama in Panama case was a mistake: Aleema Khan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry should now back these IHC judges," she added.

Aleema Khan also said that the judge had made a mistake in the Panama case, the case in which Nawaz Sharif had been awarded jail sentence on the basis of an Iqama. "Nawaz Sharif was not punished in the original case; otherwise they would not have been roaming free like today," she added. Aleema Khan said "If you listen to the case, there will be no doubt from the statement of Asad Majeed and the 10-year sentence.

Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry should now back these IHC judges," she added.

UNGA's revitalization key to promoting world peace, security: Pak

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Emphasizing UN General Assembly's status as the only forum with universal representation, Pakistan Thursday said that its revitalization was vital to promoting world peace and security, especially its authority for peace enforcement when the Security Council fails to act in a crisis.

"This authority is significant in the context of the developments in Gaza," Naeem Sabir Khan, a counsellor at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, said during a thematic debate on the "Role and Authority of the General Assembly," at the UN Headquarters in New York.

While terming the revitalization of the 193-member Assembly a political rather than a procedural matter, the Pakistani representative called for boosting its role in the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Sports Dept trying to keep youth away from social evils by games activities: MPAs

QUETTA (APP): Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) and Secretary

stan Day 23 March Sports Festival at Ayub Stadium. Additional Secretary

nities were provided to the youth of the province, they could make Pakistan fa-



QUETTA: MPA Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi addressing concluding ceremony of Youm-e-Pakistan Sports Festival.

Haji Ijaz Ali, Deputy Secretary Home Jahanzeb Sheikh, Assistant Director Activities Muhammad Asif Longo, Ayesha Zehri and other players and officials were also present on this occasion. They said that there was no shortage of talent in the players of Balochistan, it was necessary to provide suitable opportunities to the players.

The speakers said that if proper sports opportu-

nous not only in the country but also abroad. They said that on the occasion of March 23, sports competitions were organized across Balochistan in which more than 15 thousand athletes and officials participated. 44 local, national and international indoor and outdoor sports were included in the sports festival at Ayub Sports Complex on the occasion of Pakistan Day (March 23) which continued for 6 days.