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Two terrorists killed in suicide attack on foreign nationals vehicle in Karachi

President, PM condemn Karachi suicide attack; laud timely police response

KARACHI (Online): Two terrorists were killed and 3 persons including 2 security guards were injured in suicide attack on foreign nationals vehicle in Mansehra colony in the area of Landhi Karachi.

According to police two persons who were killed in suicide attack and firing were attackers. Police and Rescue teams reached the scene and started rescue operation. The injured were shifted to hospital.

Those who were injured in explosion include Noor Muhammad, Langar Khan and Suleman Rafiq. 2 injured are stated to be in precarious condition. No foreigner included in injured persons. Foreign citizens were there in the vehicle who remained secure.

According to Malir Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Tariq Elahi, all foreign nationals have been transported to safe and secure location. Elahi confirmed that the explosion was a suicide attack, with the crime scene revealing the presence of grenades in a bag left behind by the attackers.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) East, Ghulam Azfar Mahesar, disclosed that one terrorist detonated himself in the suicide attack, while another was neutralised by police. One terrorist fled.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir exchanging views with Major General (Engineer) Talal Bin Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Assistant Minister of Defence Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) during meeting held at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia vow to solidify efforts in defence collaboration

RAWALPINDI (Online): The Saudi Assistant Defence Minister also participated in the 5th Meeting of Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Defence Collaboration at GHQ, which he co-chaired by Chief of General Staff of Pakistan Army.

The forum discussed challenges to global and regional security and their implications on Defence Forces.

It noted that rapid advancements in modern technologies necessitated defence industrial cooperation in critical capabilities between the two brotherly countries.

Both sides reiterated their resolve to solidify the efforts in defence collaboration with focused approach to target specific capabilities in land, air and sea domains.

In this context, concrete proposals were deliberated by the forum to meet tangible objectives within specific timelines.



QUETTA: New appointed provincial minister Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran and Mir Asim Kurd Gailo meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Interior ministry decides to launch joint operation in Kacha area of Sindh

ISLAMABAD (APP): DG FIA, Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

IGs and provincial secretaries Interior besides National Coordinator NACTA, all teams of National Action Plan and Intelligence agencies and Chief Commissioners also attended the meeting.

The top brass after detailed brainstorming, decided to conduct a joint operation in the Kacha area with full force and close coordination between the provinces and all stakeholders to clear the area from dacoits.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Abdul Wali Kakar administering oath to 14-members Provincial Cabinet.

Maiden meeting of Balochistan cabinet held: Reforms being brought in different departments of Balochistan; transparency to be ensured: CM

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presents agenda of good governance & development of province in first meeting of provincial cabinet

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QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that reforms are being brought in different departments of the province. He said that it is our priority to bring reforms so as to ensure good governance in the departments and public affairs.

The Chief Minister said that we are also aiming to end corruption in the province. He said that wholehearted steps would

be taken to end corruption in the province and transparency would be ensured in all sectors.

Similarly, steps are also being taken to improve law and order situation in the province.

He asserted that the provincial government has to lead for maintaining law and order in the province.

He stressed that we have to move ahead in the manner that the province may progress and things are improved.

Balochistan cabinet slams Noshki terrorism incident

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QUETTA: The Balochistan cabinet strongly condemned the incident of terrorism in Noshki.

The cabinet met with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti in the chair here on Friday.

In its maiden meeting, the cabinet members observed that all those assassinated the innocent people in Noshki were terrorists while those who were martyred were Pakistanis. The cabinet members also offered fatiha for the departed souls of those martyred in different incidents of terrorism and lawlessness in the province. The members of cabinet also offered fatiha for the departed souls of those died in floods and other natural disasters in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding country wide Anti-smuggling drive.

15 died, 10 injured in torrential rainfall in Balochistan

QUETTA (INP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Balochistan revealed on Friday that 15 people died while 10 were during the recent torrential rains in the province.

In a report, the PDMA said that the casualties were reported since April 12 as the heavy rainfall also damaged the infrastructure. It added that the rain wreaked havoc in 11 districts of the province.

The PDMA maintained that 12 roads and two bridges have been damaged in different districts. The report read that 220 houses were damaged, out of which 60 were completely destroyed and 160 partially affected.

Three shot dead in Qilla Abdullah

QUETTA (APP): Three persons were shot dead and one injured in a firing incident in Qilla Abdullah on Friday.

According to the private news channel, the incident took place in the jungle Piralizai when unknown shooters opened fire on a car resulting in three dead on the spot whereas one was injured.

According to the Levies official, the teams reached the spot immediately after the incident was reported and shifted the dead bodies and injured to the nearby hospital.

The first information report (FIR) was lodged and further investigation started.

PM directs to accelerate countrywide anti-smuggling drive, reiterates zero leniency

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, while reiterating the resolve to purge the country of smuggling, on Friday directed the authorities concerned to accelerate the countrywide drive against the menace.

The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting to curb smuggling, paid tribute to Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir for his full cooperation with the government in its endeavor against smuggling.

A report of the investigation committee headed by AD Khawaja was also presented in the meeting.

The prime minister lauded the committee for identifying the elements involved in misuse of Afghan Transit Trade for smuggling and the officers facilitating them.

The prime minister was told that a list of smugglers, hoarders, and their facilitating officers have been forwarded to the law enforcement agencies and provincial governments.

The prime minister directed for removing the identified officers from their respective posts and initiate disciplinary proceedings against them.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also asked the law enforcing agencies (LEAs) and intelligence agencies to cooperate with each other to curb the smuggling.

Calling for punishing the smugglers and drug dealers, the prime minister asked the Law Ministry to carry out immediate necessary legislation for the purpose.

Affirming no leniency for looters of public money and their facilitators, Prime Minister Shehbaz directed for the measures to provide alternative earning opportunities and conducive atmosphere to the youths living in the frontier regions.

Ayaz suspends membership of MNAs for creating ruckus

ISLAMABAD (Online): Speaker National Assembly (NA) Ayaz Sadiq has suspended membership of MNA Jamshed Dastii and MNA Muhammad Iqbal Khan for creating ruckus and playing baja in the house.

During the address of president Asif Ali Zardari in joint session of parliament on Thursday, Jamshed Dastii MNA played baja and created ruckus.

As soon as president Asif Ali Zardari started his address, opposition members started chanting slogans and creating ruckus.

The opposition members started raising slogans Go Zardari Go. PTI members started chanting slogans prime minister Imran Khan.

ANF establishes rehabilitation center in Quetta for treatment of drug addicts

RAWALPINDI (APP): A rehabilitation center has been established at Baleli Road, Quetta for the treatment of drug addicts under the management of Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF).

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, A 45-bed rehabilitation center for the treatment of drug addicts has been made operational.

The rehabilitation center would provide quality treatment facilities for drug addicts.

The newly established center is equipped with modern facilities.

Four Advisors to Chief Minister also appointed: 14-member Balochistan cabinet sworn in; Governor Kakar administers oath

Independent Report

QUETTA: The 14-member cabinet of Balochistan took oath here at the Governor's House on Friday noon.

The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar administered oath to the members of cabinet at the simple but impressive ceremony.

Those who took as provincial ministers included: Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani, Ali Madad Jatak, Mir Zahoor Buledi, Noor Muhammad Dumar, Sardar Faisal Khan Jamali, Mir Sarfraz Domki, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa, Mir Asim Kurd, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Nawabzada Tariq Magsi, Mir Shoaib Noshervani,

Mir Ziaullah Langove and Ms Rahila Hameed Khan Durran.

Those who attended the oath taking ceremony were included Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, members of the provincial assembly, political leaders of the coalition parties, tribal elders, elites besides senior high ups.

Meanwhile, four advisors have been appointed by the Chief Minister the same day.

The advisors to Chief Minister appointed are included Ali Hasan Zehri and Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani of Pakistan Peoples Party, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi and Naseemur Rehman of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz.

President confers NI (M) award on Chief of Turkish General Staff



ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday conferred the Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) award on Chief of Turkish General Staff, General Metin Gurak in recognition of his illustrious services and contribution to strengthening Pakistan-Turkiye defence relations.

The award was conferred at a special investiture ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr and attended by services chiefs and parliamentarians.

PM calls UAE President to admire his leadership role during rains

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday held a telephonic conversation with President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The prime minister's call was centered on his admiration for the strong resolve and impeccable efficiency with which the UAE leadership had confronted the challenges that had emerged from the recent rains in the country, a PM Office news release said.

He lauded the UAE President, who had once again demonstrated his outstanding leadership qualities and proven his strong com-



KHUZDAR: President Balochistan National Party Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal holding protest sit-in in front of DC office

'No criticism on Pakistan allowed in Parliament', says Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar on Friday lambasted the Opposition benches for hurling criticism against the state and warned that no criticism against the country would be allowed.

Speaking on Point of Order at the National Assembly, the Minister said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had damaged the country's interests through its concocted narrative of foreign conspiracy that allegedly resulted in the regime change and put a dent to the foreign policy of the country.

He said the PTI's founder had been jeopardizing the foreign interests of the country and he compromised the confidentiality of the entire diplomatic communication. The PTI leadership had been accusing foreign countries for interference in the country which was retracted by the spokesperson of the PTI through its official social media handles, he added.

The Minister underscored that the country's economy was stabilizing which was discussed globally by prestigious institutions like Bloomberg, UNDP, Asian Development Bank that claimed that investment was coming to Pakistan and it was leading to its economic revival and would help in ending inflation.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

X post facto

As has become its modus operandi, the state is using smoke and mirrors to try to justify its decision to ban X, formerly Twitter. After weeks of denial and plain misrepresentation, including in statements made to the courts, the government recently owned up to blocking the popular social media platform for Pakistani users "in the interest of upholding national security, maintaining public order, and preserving the integrity of our nation".

From representations made on behalf of the interior ministry before the Islamabad High Court, it appears that the 'threat' to Pakistan's national security from X was flagged by intelligence agencies in a 'confidential' report.

The interior ministry thereafter cut off Pakistan's access to X, seemingly without even bothering to fulfil all procedural requirements. One of the 'justifications' now being given by the government for this 'punitive action' is that X refuses to localise its operations here and "does not obey Pakistani laws".

While the state is otherwise entitled and, indeed, expected to take any measures necessary to protect the country's interests, it cannot do so without providing lawful justifications. In the current political climate, where there is widespread public dissatisfaction with the state's policies, it is also rather difficult to take any claim regarding some unspecified 'threat' from social media at face value.

If there really was some clear and present danger to the country from the Pakistani people's ability to access and post on X, which necessitated an immediate ban, this ought to have been spelt out for both the courts and the general public when the X ban was first challenged in the courts. Instead, as one recalls, the government's representatives kept denying that a ban was even in place. When questioned, some of the caretaker ministers had smugly shrugged it off, telling those people who were affected to 'live with it' or use a VPN service.

It may be recalled that the X ban came in the midst of a raging controversy over the widespread manipulation of election results, right after a senior bureaucrat had issued a damning public 'confession' of his own complicity in the same. The correlation of these events, when seen in the broader context of the ongoing campaign to keep mass media in line and 'under control', would give anyone ample cause to doubt the government's rather convenient 'national interest' justification.

As far as the government's complaint regarding X's refusal to open a local office is concerned, it should realise that global tech companies are very wary of markets where regulations are opaque and subject to official whims. No company will want to move to a country where the state can quietly shut down a major global service without justification or due process. Our decision-makers should realise the harm they are causing.

Lethal streets

Dr Noman Ahmed

Karachi has been in the throes of brutal street crime including robberies, muggings and killings for several months. The recent killing of Syed Turab Hussain Zaidi for resisting robbery is a case in point. The situation has deteriorated to a point where even places of worship are not safe — recently, three worshippers at a mosque in Karimabad were stripped of their cash and valuables by a mugger.

While opposition leaders criticise the performance of the PPP government, officials are quick to lay the blame on multiple stakeholders, including the previous caretaker set-up, leading to the public's loss of trust in the police and administration. According to a report in this paper, between 2022 and 2024, more than 250 people were killed and over 1,000 injured in street crime. Meanwhile, muggings are indiscriminate. From call-centre and night shift workers, students, and domestic help to clerics, shopkeepers and vendors, the menace has spared few. The alarming rise in violence is deeply worrying and the provincial government must address it as a top priority.

However, provincial administrators are still hopeful that certain interventions, including the swift implementation of the much-trumpeted Karachi Safe City Project, will make a difference. The multibillion-rupee venture aims to make city roads and streets safer with CCTV cameras and other monitoring apparatus. While these are a step in the right direction, the real concern is not about viewing a crime but responding to it with speed and competence on the part of law enforcers. Instead of relying on a failed scheme, the au-

thorities must focus on enhancing the training and fitness of cops, set higher standards for recruitment, and jettison political 'recommendations' to appease constituents.

It must also be kept in mind that Karachi comprises over 10,000 kilometres of roads and streets, along with other public spaces that require a vigilant eye — bus terminals, parks, playgrounds, pedestrian bridges, parking lots, open markets, etc. This figure does not include lanes and cul-de-sacs in the city's dense urban neighbourhoods.

Monitoring these vast spaces requires innovative strategies, which must begin with reviewing and modernising the current approach of the law enforcers. The traffic police, for instance, seldom apprehend swanky vehicles that flout the law, but pounce on smaller vehicles to add to their traffic challan list. Moreover, cars with tinted glass and large jeeps featuring gun-toting private guards break traffic signals and the law with impunity.

People are, therefore, forced to take their own measures. Many neighbourhoods have installed metallic barriers with private guards to close off streets. While the law does not permit restricting access to public spaces, resident groups see it as their sole option. Needless to say, this was the norm a decade ago when the city was gripped by political bloodshed; while the Karachi operation of 2014 did bring some relief, the situation worsened soon after.

Once again, gated communities and streets have returned to the city landscape as many believe that reduced access can staunch the onslaught of fierce violations. But sadly, these

measures have only had a marginal impact as people cannot be confined in fortified precincts; they have to leave for work, or do chores, or get out of their homes for several other things. In so doing, the fragile law-and-order situation haunts them.

Besides, one of the fallouts of curtailing access to neighbourhoods is its effect on the urban poor. A research conducted by this writer some years ago revealed that the installation of barriers and other physical obstructions prevented mobile street vendors, greengrocers and pushcart operators from earning a livelihood from households in gated communities.

However, there are certain effective practices that residents can consider adopting. The Citizens Police Liaison Committee should take the lead and undertake neighbourhood surveillance with a local watch-and-ward system that is supported and assisted by residents.

In the past, this particular crime-control measure proved effective in many neighbourhoods. Several peri-urban settlements, such as Orangi Town, maintained a street chowkidari system to keep an eye on visitors, passers-by and vehicles, so that suspicious movement and individuals could be apprehended. The arrangement should be modernised and bolstered with surveillance devices. Furthermore, alarms and tracking tools fitted in cars and bikes, and advanced geo-fencing mechanisms can rein in street criminals. But Karachi demands more than neighbourhood management. A multipronged policy that entails police reforms, addresses socioeconomic deprivation and convinces the public to trust the law enforcers could prove an effective solution. — Courtesy Dawn

Zubeida Mustafa

In his memoirs, Foundations and Form, Mukhtar Husain writes about his first school experience: "In 1955, I started attending Mrs Corks' Private School which was run by a British lady, Mrs Corks. The Corkses lived in a stone house with terracotta roof tiles, located in its own enclave within our Colony and surrounded by a low wall. I was just five years old and hated going to school every morning. I would cry all the way and would go on crying in school as well. At times, I was so difficult that I was sent home during the mid-morning break. Shaukat Aziz [later on, the prime minister of Pakistan], who was perhaps a year older, was often asked to walk me home. But I settled down and soon I was doing well..."

I was curious to find out what upset Mukhtar at school. He told me that he had no idea. But I suspect it was the 'strangeness' of the language used at school which did not allow him to express himself fully. Being an intelligent child, he must have been frustrated. He was accustomed to speaking Urdu at home and the school was all English. A child cries when he feels insecure. Being away from the comfort zone of his home that has his mother's reassuring presence can be quite distressing for a young child. Add to that the barrier of language that prevents the child from communicating with others, and the situation becomes quite distressing.

In any case, Mukhtar was fortunate to have an understanding teacher who sent him home when she felt that Mukhtar was inconsolable. He later adjusted, and to his credit

Why insecure?

learnt English, which is evident from the impeccable language of his memoirs.

Nearly 70 years on, education in Pakistan is in the doldrums. A major factor responsible for the mess is the bizarre and hybrid pedagogy that is employed in the low-fee private- and public-sector schools, with the exception of Sindh (however, there is little by way of education there). The language used by the teachers is commonly spoken by the population of the area where the school is located. The textbooks are in Urdu or English, which the students are expected to read, and then write their answers to the questions accordingly.

As a result, there is a lot of rote learning going on and hardly any original writing and critical thinking is taking place in our classrooms. We still have to decide which language is to be the medium of instruction and what is to be the role of the mother tongue in the education system.

Our educationists do not even know how a child learns a language and how it should be used in school to maximise the benefits of education. In a nutshell, the child learns a language the natural way, ie, by listening to it. This process begins soon after birth. Children pick up the language of their community by listening to their family members, and later on, in the marketplace playground, so to speak. They do not have to be taught grammar or syntax; these come naturally to them by listening to others. That is why everyone (if not handicapped) speaks a language even if he has not attended school. Literacy is another ball game and has to be

taught in an organised setting.

By trying to introduce in our education system another language that is not familiar to the child, and through teachers who lack competency in the other language themselves, we confuse the language acquisition process.

The worst impact is on the child's ability to read and her interest in books. Researchers say that the more children read, the more they know. This, in turn, enhances their cognitive development. It is also said that if reading is made an unpleasant and laborious exercise from the start a child would just not enjoy reading books. The fact is that a person who is an avid reader also enjoys it.

Our education system is destroying our children by thrusting on them a language unfamiliar to them. This is done prematurely, without paving the ground for it. It is done in most cases by teachers who are not proficient in the language themselves. The method is also wrong. Instead of focusing on the vocabulary and starting with the spoken language, we want to teach them literacy skills that can be tedious. It is no wonder then that our children shun books. They grow up to be book-hating adults. Children are thus denied the experience of self-discovery that comes from reading books. This is a tremendous loss; the self-directed learning instinct is never kindled in them. Critical thinking that is innate to human beings is destroyed. That would explain why the book industry in Pakistan is not doing well at all. When children have not been exposed to books in the language they can understand and enjoy, they grow up with no interest in them. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Minister advocates for IT sector growth with public-private coop.

LAHORE (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Communications Shaza Fatima Khawaja has reiterated the government's dedication to enhancing the IT industry by endorsing and aiding the private sector.

Addressing the participants at the Global Digital Summit during the 24th ICTN Asia Conference at the Expo Centre here on Friday, she lauded the collective zeal for technology and its role in transforming economies and societies. She underscored the value of such summits in fostering collaboration and exchanging knowledge among stakeholders from both public and private sectors.

She emphasised the government's efforts, under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision, to review policies and legislation to

better support the private sector's growth and innovation. The minister stressed creation of a conducive environment in Pakistan for the private sector, focusing on business culture, technology, and the ecosystem. The minister pointed out cybersecurity and the skills gap as major challenges, but also as opportunities, especially in leveraging Pakistan's young population for national development. She highlighted the need to modernise education systems to address immediate lack of skilled labour and employable graduates.

She referenced the industry-academia bridge programme that facilitates on-job training for university students, ensuring their employability upon graduation. She also called for a quicker adaptation of university curricula to keep up with the fast-

paced industry changes. The minister outlined the complexities the universities face with industry advancements and the importance of international exposure for Pakistan.

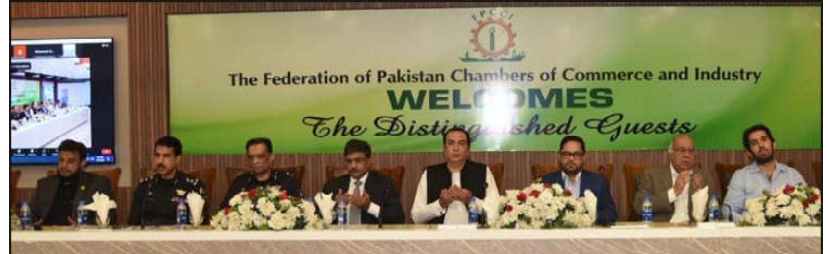
She announced plans for a National Digitization Plan, focusing on governance, economy, and society, which will incorporate modern concepts like the Pakistan stack to streamline services for individuals.

Shaza Khawaja emphasised the government's commitment to engaging with citizens and inviting collaboration for the success of digitization initiative. She discussed the importance of public-private partnerships, ongoing policy developments in data protection and cybersecurity, and the need for an environment conducive to international business.

Atif Ikram Sheikh says: FPCCI supports innovation Pak customs implements live system to control mis-invoicing

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KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that Pakistan Customs held a high-profile and interactive orientation session on "Implementation of Linking International Value (LIVE) System under Innovation Framework to Control Mis-invoicing" on Friday. The session was hosted by FPCCI at its head office at the



Federation House and was attended by prominent trade and industry personalities, he added.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh appreciated the efforts of customs; and, especially Directorate of Valuation, Karachi for creating a conducive environment for trade and industry under the leadership of Member Customs Operations, Dr. Fareed Iqbal Qureshi.

Member Customs Operations addressed the audience over zoom in detail regarding the main features and benefits of the LIVE System.



WASHINGTON: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb met with Citibank officials.

Railways unveils new fuel management system

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways has unveiled a state-of-the-art fuel management system, designed to tackle the current challenges.

As per the announcement made on Friday, Railways Chief Executive Officer Amir Ali Baloch has confirmed a new partnership with Pakistan State Oil (PSO), which will now be responsible for ensuring a consistent fuel supply within the

railway's oil supply facilities. The collaboration with PSO brings the introduction of the latest fuel management technology, promising substantial benefits for the railway's operations. In line with the standards set by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), the railway's fuel supply centres are set to undergo comprehensive upgrades to meet international benchmarks.

ICCI President rendered unprecedented services for business community: Rajput

ISLAMABAD (INP): Group leader Blue Area, Yousuf Rajput recounting the achievements of President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for welfare of the business community has pledged his and his colleagues unwavering support to the ICCI President. He along with other business leaders was addressing an impressive ceremony held here at Chamber House in honour of the office bearers of different Traders Welfare Associations who have recently proceeded back after performing Umra.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Founder Group, ICCI Khalid Iqbal Malik said that the business community of Capital was indebted to ICCI President for his unprecedented support for the flourishing of its businesses. He said that Zafar Bakhtawari has been spending millions of rupees from his personal account not only on the welfare of traders and civil society but for the promotion of education in the shape of Water filtration plants and computers. Secretary General United Business Group and former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari said that the sitting ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari.

IFAD Country Director reviews rural economic project

PESHAWAR (APP): The Country Director of International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha on Friday held a meeting with Syed Intiaz Hussain Shah, the Additional Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, to conduct a comprehensive review of the Rural Economic Transformation Project (RETP). The Chief Economist Arifullah Awan and Chief IDS, Sarah Rehman were also present in the meeting.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships namely, Wan Hai, Express Athens, Al-Mothanna, Pelagic Tarpon, Ullswater and Milaha Qatar scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Mogas, LPG and LNG, berthed at Container Terminal, Grain Terminal, Oil Terminal, Engro Terminal and Gasport Terminal respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile two more ships, Project-A and HansaOsla carrying Sugar and Gasoline also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

PM calls for further strengthening economic, trade ties with Turkiye

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday reiterated the government's resolve to further strengthen economic relations and trade partnership with Turkiye.

He was talking to a delegation of the Turkish investors which called him here at the Prime Minister Office.

The Turkish investors, expressing confidence in the leadership of the prime minister, took keen interest in investing in Pakistan's diverse areas.

The prime minister said the people of Pakistan and Turkiye had a long-standing brotherly relationship spanning

centuries. He said reforms had been made in the system to take full advantage of the potential of foreign investment in Pakistan.

Ambassador of Turkiye to Pakistan Mehmet Pacaci, CEO Terminal YAPI Cenk Coskun and other Turkish and Pakistani officials participated in the meeting.

Federal ministers Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Ahmad Khan Cheema, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ehsan Afzal and relevant senior officials also attended the meeting.

The delegation thanked the prime minister for the warm welcome.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE Hamad Obaid AlZaabi called on Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik.

Food exports grew by 48.17% in 09 months, reached \$5.651 bln

ISLAMABAD (APP): Food group exports from the country during the first nine months of the current financial year (2023-24) increased by 48.17 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year.

During the period from July-March, 2023-24, food commodities valued at \$5.651 billion were exported as against the exports of \$3.814 billion in the same period of the last year, according to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

During the period under review, rice exports increased by 83.37 per cent and over 4.550 million tons of rice worth \$2.930 billion were exported as compared to the exports of 2.939 million tons valued at \$1.598 billion in the same period of last year, it added.

Meanwhile, the exports of fruits grew by 17.34 per cent and vegetables by 42.79 per cent as 782,155 metric tons of fruits and 906,836 metric tons of vegetables valued at \$265.655 million.

CM KP directs to have special focus on addressing the issues of Polio refusal cases

PESHAWAR (APP): An important meeting of the Provincial Task Force (PTF) for Polio Eradication Initiative was held here at Chief Minister's House here on Friday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur in the chair. The authorities concerned briefed the chief minister about the various aspects of Polio Eradication Initiative with special focus on challenges faced in this regard, future course of action and other important matters. Important decisions were also made on the occasion to achieve the cent percent goals of polio eradication drives by improving the existing strategy and making this

whole effort more effective and result-oriented. Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur, Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Abid Majeed, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Amjad Ali Khan, administrative secretaries of concerned departments, representatives of partner organizations and other relevant officials attended the meeting. Divisional and deputy commissioners also attended the meeting via video link. The chief minister on this occasion, directed the relevant quarters to further improve the coordination

mechanism amongst all the stakeholders in order to achieve the desired targets of polio eradication campaigns, and said that we can make these efforts successful only through an effective and better team work. He further directed them to have special focus on addressing the issues of refusal cases in addition to making operational affairs of polio eradication campaigns better. "We need to have targeted approach in order to convince the parents who are reluctant to administer anti polio drops to their children", he remarked and directed that Ulema-e-Kiram, Social mobilizers and elected public representatives be involved for this purpose.



FAISALABAD: Provincial Minister of Punjab for Food Bilal Yasin inspection for bread (Roti) at a Tandoor during visit and checking rate list and Roti weight, in the city.

817 held for selling roti at higher rate in 5 days, meeting told

LAHORE (APP): A meeting, chaired by Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman at Civil Secretariat, was informed here on Friday that implementation of reduced price of roti was being ensured across Punjab on the orders of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. The meeting was told that 817 people had been arrested over violation of the orders, 347 cases registered and Rs. 11.7

million fine imposed collectively during the last five days. A report regarding the actions was presented during the meeting. The administrative secretaries of industries and food departments, Chairman PITB and officers concerned attended the meeting, while all divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners participated through video-link.

Tribal Clash claimed one more precious life of minor boy

Independent Report SHIKARPUR: The dirty game of Bloodshed under the umbrella of Tribal Clash could not be discouraged which resulted one more minor boy lost his life over Tribal Clash on Friday. According to initial reports reached here that one minor boy identified as Meer Hassan of 8 son of Ali Hassan Brohi was gunned down by their enemy groups men at village Sanaullah Brohi in the jurisdiction of Sultankot police station on Friday. The assailants managed good their escape after firing upon their rival enemy groups men. The dead body of deceased minor boy Meer Hassan was shifted to RHC Sultankot for Medico Legal formalities and later handed over to his heirs after conducting postmortem examination from there. The cause behind the incident was said to be an ongoing old Tribal dispute between Kakepotta and Brohi communities of the area, area police disclosed.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali witnessing the funeral prayer of the customs officers who were martyred in D.I Khan attack, at custom House.

Administrative machinery actively checking price, weight of roti/naan: Bilal

FAISALABAD (APP): Punjab Food Minister Bilal Yasin has said administrative machinery is active for checking price and weight of roti and naan across the province on special instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. He was presiding over a meeting at the commissioner's office here on Friday. Commissioner Silwat Saeed, Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Nayar Sheikh and other officers were present. The minister said that measures were being taken on a daily basis to monitor the new rates of roti and naan, which had been fixed after consultation with relevant stakeholders including Anjuman-e-Tajran, Tandoor Hotels Associations and flour mills, etc. The government is not in favour of enforcing its decisions on any section forcefully, he said.

Governor attends funeral prayers of custom officials

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Haji Ghulam Ali, attended the funeral prayers of two officials of customs intelligence who were killed in D.I. Khan. The funeral prayers of two customs officials, Shehab Ali and Iftikhar Alam, were also attended by Inspector General Police Akhtar Hayat Gandapur, Inspector General Frontier Constabulary Major General Noor Wali, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary, and other senior customs officials.

Prisoner commits suicide in Timergara Jail

PESHAWAR: A prisoner of Timergara Jail in Dir Lower on Friday ended his life by jumping into a drum filled with water in the jail's bathroom. Superintendent Jail said the prisoner named Shafiqullah was the resident of Maidan in Dir Lower. He said the prisoner was jailed for killing his wife last month. He said the prisoner killed himself by jumping into a water-filled drum inside the bathroom of the barrack.

Market-based subjects being introduced in educational institutions: Minister

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi has said that subjects that are compatible to need of modern era have been introduced in educational institutions. He was chairing a meeting that was convened to discuss problems being faced by girls' degree colleges. The meeting was also attended by Secretary Higher Education, Arshad Khan and principles of Bacha Khan Girls Degree College, City Girls Degree College, Hayatabad College and Frontier College for Women. On the occasion, the minister was briefed about problems of girls' colleges and shortage of staff in these institutions. Chairing the meeting, provincial minister said that necessary steps have been taken for promotion of girl education that is among top priorities of government.

Dr. Rauf Iftikhar's services for the ailing humanity are commendable: Baligh

Independent Report LAHORE: Kidney Transplant Surgeon, Dr. Brigadier (Rtd) Rauf Iftikhar Ahmed called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore. Director Vigilance Punjab Human Organ Transplantation Authority, Adnan Ahmed Bhatti was also present in the meeting. During the meeting, measures to improve the kidney transplant sector was discussed. Talking on this occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Dr. Brigadier (ret'd) Rauf Iftikhar Ahmed's services for the ailing humanity are commendable. He said that he will also draw the attention of concerned authorities to give civil award to Dr. Brigadier (Rtd) Rauf Iftikhar Ahmed in recognition of his services. Kidney Transplant Surgeon Dr. Brigadier (Rtd) Rauf Iftikhar Ahmed informed the Governor Punjab about the performance in the field of Kidney Transplant. He said that he has done more than two and a half thousand successful kidney transplants in CMH Rawalpindi and other hospitals.



LAHORE: Kidney Transplant Surgeon Brigadier (ret'd) Rauf Iftikhar Ahmed meeting with Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman.

Advisor asks tourists to avoid visiting Kaghan during current rains

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Zahid Chanzeb, Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism, Culture and Archeology, has expressed sorrow and concern over the damages caused by heavy rains in the province. He has advised the local administration and police to play an active role in helping out and guiding the travelers in the tourist areas and hill stations and urged the tourists to take full care of the SOPs. Zahid Chanzeb went on to the severely affected Kaghan Valley and Mansehra district to personally assess the situation caused by the prolong rains, where he along with the relevant authorities of local administration, Kaghan Development Authority and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism Authority reviewed situation at highways and hotels at various places. He also assessed the arrangements for the tourists there. He issued an advisory for the tourists to refrain from visiting the Kaghan Valley and traveling along highways in the mountainous areas in general in view of the dangerous situation caused by the rains.

International News

Bombs rain on Rafah as US tries to 'prevent' all-out offensive

Monitoring Desk RAFAH: Birds sang and planes rumbled overhead as Abdeljabbar al-Arja dug the remains of his dead neighbours from the rubble in Gaza. An overnight Israeli strike hit the home where a displaced Palestinian family was sheltering in the southern city Rafah, relatives and neighbours told AFP as they scraped at the soil with their hands. "We retrieved the remains of children and women, finding arms and feet. They were all torn to pieces. This is horrifying, it's not normal," Al-Arja said, adding that at least 10 people were killed in the blast. Soon after the war began on October 7, Israel told Palestinians living in the north of Gaza to move to "safe zones" in the territory's south like Rafah. But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has since vowed to invade the city, where around 1.5 million people live in shelters, more than half the territory's population. "How is Rafah a safe place?" said Zeyad Ayyad, a relative of the victims. In a separate strike on a house in Rafah's Al-Salam neighbourhood overnight on Tuesday, rescue crews recovered the corpses of eight family members including five children and two women, Gaza's civil defence service said. Meanwhile, senior US and Israeli officials held a virtual meeting on Thursday expected to include a discussion of both Israel's plans for the southern Gaza city of Rafah and its consideration of a retaliatory strike against Iran. President Joe Biden has urged Israel not to conduct a large-scale offensive in Rafah to avoid more Palestinian civilian casualties in Gaza, where Palestinian health authorities say more than 33,000 people have been killed in Israel's assault. At the United Nations, Secretary General Antonio Guterres painted a dark picture of the situation in the Middle East, warning that spiraling tensions over the war in Gaza and Iran's attack on Israel could devolve into a "full-scale regional conflict." Guterres also said Israel's military offensive in the Gaza Strip had created a "humanitarian hellscap" for civilians trapped in the besieged territory.



Palestinians attempt to salvage their belongings from the rubble of a damaged building in the city of Nuseirat, in central Gaza Strip.

Kenya mourns defence chief killed in helicopter crash

Monitoring Desk NAIROBI: Kenya began three days of mourning on Friday after its defence chief and nine other senior officers were killed in a helicopter crash, the latest military accident involving a high-profile figure. General Francis Omondi Ogolla, the Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces (CDF), was killed when his helicopter went down shortly after takeoff in a remote forested area of northwestern Kenya on Thursday. "A distinguished four-star general has fallen in the course of duty and service of the country," President William Ruto said as he announced the deaths that evening. He said the nation would observe three days of mourning from Friday, with the national flag flying at half-mast across the country and at Kenyan missions abroad. Ogolla's family announced that a funeral would be held on Sunday at his home in Siaya County in the west of the country, followed by a memorial service in a Nairobi suburb on April 26.

US envoy to UN visits Nagasaki A-bomb museum, pays tribute to victims

Monitoring Desk TOKYO: The American envoy to the United Nations called Friday for countries armed with atomic weapons to pursue nuclear disarmament as she visited the atomic bomb museum in Nagasaki, Japan. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who became the first U.S. cabinet member to visit Nagasaki, stressed the importance of dialogue and diplomacy amid a growing nuclear threat in the region. "We must continue to work together to create an environment for nuclear disarmament."

Tehran signals no retaliation against Israel after drones attack Iran

Monitoring Desk TEHRAN: Explosions echoed the Iranian city of Isfahan on Friday in what sources described as an Israeli attack, but Tehran played down the incident and indicated it had no plans for retaliation — a response that appeared gauged towards averting region-wide war. Israel had previously warned it would hit back after Iran fired hundreds of missiles and drones at Israel almost a week ago, in retaliation for a deadly strike — which Tehran blamed on its foe — that levelled Iran's consular annex at its embassy in Syria. While most of the Iranian strikes were intercepted, fears of a major regional spillover from Israel's Gaza offensive have since soared. The limited scale of the attack and Iran's muted response both appeared to signal a successful effort by worldwide diplomats who have been working round the clock to avert all-out war since the Iranian move last weekend. Iranian media and officials described a small number of explosions, which they said resulted from Israel's air defences hitting three drones over the city of Isfahan. Notably, they referred to the incident as an attack by "infiltrators", rather than by Israel, obviating the need for retaliation. A senior Iranian official told Reuters there were no plans to respond against Israel for the incident. "The foreign source of the incident has not been confirmed. We have not received any external attack, and the discussion leans more towards infiltration than attack," the official said.

Pentagon chief Austin discusses Iran, Gaza aid with Israel's Gallant

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Thursday spoke with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant to discuss Iran's actions in the Middle East, other regional threats and aid into Gaza, the Pentagon said in a statement. Austin discussed "the importance of increasing and sustaining" the flow of humanitarian aid to civilians in Gaza, including via a new route from Ashdod Port in Israel, the Pentagon said. Israel recently reopened the Erez crossing into northern Gaza and allowed the temporary use of Ashdod port in southern Israel after US President Joe Biden threatened to impose conditions on support for Israel unless it took steps to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Israel has faced growing international calls to do more to help civilians in Gaza, where nearly all of the 2.3 million population is displaced and enclave also suffers widespread hunger. The Israeli military said on Wednesday food trucks entered the blockaded Gaza Strip from Ashdod Port for the first time since the government approved the opening of the port to aid shipments. The Pentagon said Austin and Gallant discussed what it called "destabilizing actions" from Iran in the Middle East. Over the weekend, Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles in a retaliatory strike against a suspected Israeli strike on its embassy compound in Syria. Most of the drones and missiles were downed before reaching Israeli territory.



Iranians attend an anti-Israel rally in Tehran, Iran.

US slaps sanctions on entities that raised funds for West Bank settlers

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: The United States on Friday imposed sanctions on two entities that it said helped raise tens of thousands of dollars for two violent extremists in the West Bank already targeted with US sanctions, the Treasury Department announced in a statement. Washington had previously sanctioned five settlers and two unauthorized outposts in the West Bank in two rounds of sanctions aimed at punishing ill-behaved Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank, where Palestinians envisage a future state. One entity, Mount Hebron Fund, launched an online fundraising campaign that raised \$140,000 for settler Yonon Levi, Treasury said, after he was sanctioned on Feb 1 for leading a group of settlers that assaulted Palestinian and Bedouin civilians.

European Union official von der Leyen visits the Finland-Russia border to assess security situation

Monitoring Desk COPENHAGEN: The head of the European Union's executive branch said Friday that Finland's decision to close its border crossings with Russia over a surge in migrants is a security matter for the whole 27-member bloc to consider. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen made the remarks during a trip to the frontier, visiting a part of the border located in south-eastern Finland. "We all know how (Russian President Vladimir) Putin and his allies instrumentalize migrants to test our defenses and to try to destabilize us," von der Leyen told officials. "Now Putin is focusing on Finland, and this is no doubt in response to your firm support of Ukraine and your accession to NATO."

India begins voting in gigantic election as Modi seeks historic third term

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: India began voting on Friday in the world's largest election as Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeks a historic third term in office on the back of growth, welfare, his personal popularity and Hindu nationalism. The vote pits Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) against an alliance of two dozen opposition parties which is challenging him with promises of increased affirmative action, more handouts and what they say is the need to save democratic institutions from Modi's dictatorial rule. The gigantic exercise involving almost one billion voters will be spread over seven phases across the world's most populous country at the peak of summer. It ends on June 1 and votes will be counted on June 4. On Friday, in the largest of the seven phases, 166 million voters in 102 constituencies across 21 states and territories will vote, including in Tamil Nadu in the south, Arunachal Pradesh on the Himalayan frontier with China

Directs to expedite relief activities PM grieved over loss of lives, property due to rains in KP, Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed deep grief and sorrow over loss of previous lives and property due to heavy rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces.

He in a message, prayed for the elevation of ranks of the departed souls in paradise and offered condolences to the bereaved families.

The prime minister also prayed for early recovery of the injured as a result of various incidents occurred due to torrential rains.

He directed the Na-

tional Disaster Management Authority and other concerned departments to speed up the relief activities in the affected areas.

The federal government stood with the provincial governments of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and would provide all possible assistance in relief operations, the prime minister said.

He directed not to spare any effort in providing relief to the victims.

Besides he also asked to expedite the work for opening roads that had been closed due to rains and landsliding.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Establishment of good governance in Balochistan is top priority, says CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister, Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that establishment of good governance in the province is top priority of his government.

The Chief Minister was speaking after the oath taking of provincial cabinet to the media persons here on Friday.

Referring the delay in formation of the cabinet, the Chief Minister said that the formation of cabinet was made with consultation of all ally parties, and that's the reason behind it's delay.

He said that these are the issues faced in the coalition government.

The Chief Minister

said that portfolios would be allocated to the newly inducted provincial ministers.

He said that security of the province is the biggest challenge of the province.

He stressed that effective measures have to be taken for eliminating terrorism from the province.

The Chief Minister said that different areas of the province are affected due to rains and flash floods.

However, the teams of provincial disaster management authority and local administration are effectively working to tackle the situation of rains and flood in the province, Chief Minister maintained.

SC dismisses bail plea of an accused allegedly involved in espionage against country

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has dismissed the bail plea of one Muhammad Din, allegedly involved in espionage against the country.

The court dismissed the petition as withdrawn. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar remarked it is charged money has come into the account of accused from other country.

Case under espionage charges was registered against the accused last year in CTD police station.

The case related to bail of the accused Muhammad Din, arrested under charges of espionage

came up for hearing before 3-member bench of court presided over by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar Friday. Justice Ayesha Malik raised the question about Afghan nationality of the accused. The counsel said the matter that he is Afghan national is not proved. I am Pakistani and I have attached my passport and Identity card. Justice Ayesha Malik remarked the national identity card of the accused has been blocked. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar remarked the allegation has been leveled against the accused by his relative.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Turkish General Staff, General Metin Gürak called on Minister for Defence & Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

British Army Chief affirms Pakistan's significance

LONDON (Online): Several decorated British military officers paid glowing tributes to the allure of Pakistan while referring to the hospitality of Pakistanis as being unparalleled. They appreciated the professionalism and versatility of the Pakistan Army, calling it one of the best and most disciplined military organisations in the world.

Around 50 senior British military men of the Quetta Association who studied and served in Pakistan Army's elite Command and Staff College in the last 50 years shared their views after attending a luncheon in their honour hosted at the Army and Navy Club in London. UK Army Chief General Patrick Sanders was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The event was organised to cherish the indelible imprints of the British officer's stay at Quetta. Veteran British officers paid rich tributes, unbounded homage and reverence to the

great institution at Quetta. Notable British military officers who attended the event included Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin (1980 graduate), Lieutenant General Anthony Palmer (1981 graduate), Brigadier Nick Thompson (1971 graduate), Brigadier Tony Berry (1970 graduate) and Major General Seumas Kerr (1985 graduate).

They were accompanied by their wives who were equally delighted in reminiscing the good old memories of the past.

The event was conducted by Colonel Taimur Rahat, Army and Air Adviser at Pakistan High Commission London. He spoke on the achievements of the Staff College and informed the audience of the value that Staff College beholds for the training and grooming of officers from 1905 onwards. Col Taimur gave various examples of how command and staff echelons in all major battles fought by the British Army from 1900s.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over introductory meeting of Provincial Cabinet.

Law minister calls on Opposition in NA to uphold principles of parliamentary decorum, etiquette

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Friday emphasized the importance of upholding parliamentary rules and traditions, urging the opposition within the National Assembly to ensure the smooth conduct of House proceedings.

Addressing concerns raised by Opposition Leader Omar Ayub regarding the absence of a motion of thanks on the presidential address in the agenda, Minister Tarar reiterated the clarity provided by the Rules of the Procedures and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly 2007.

Citing Rule 60, which outlines the discussion of the President's address, Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar highlighted the procedure stating, "At the first sitting of the Assembly held after the President's Ad-

dress, a Minister shall lay a copy of the Address on the Table." He further emphasized the necessity of a motion of thanks as stipulated in Sub-Rule 2 of Rule 60 which states that the President's Address may be discussed by means of a motion of thanks moved by Minister for [Parliamentary Affairs] and seconded by any Minister or a member.

Additionally, Rule 61 was referenced, which pertains to the appointment of days for discussion, and Rule 62, specifying the scope of discussion, emphasizing the importance of adhering to these rules for productive parliamentary discourse. Expressing dismay over the opposition's behavior during the address of the Constitutional head of the country (President) in the joint session of Parliament, Minister Tarar highlighted the need for de-

corum and respect for such occasions.

Speaking on a point of order, Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPP) lawmaker Abdul Qadir Patel emphasized the importance of orderly conduct, ensuring that each member is given a fair opportunity to speak without disruption or disregard for parliamentary decorum by the opposition.

Meanwhile, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) legislator Noor Alam Khan protested the oath-taking of female lawmaker Sadaf Ehsan, citing party disassociation. The Speaker clarified that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had issued a notification following which the oath was being taken. Subsequently, Noor Alam Khan raised a quorum issue, which was found complete upon counting.

Chief of Naval Staff calls on President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf Friday called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr and congratulated him on assuming the office of the President. The Naval Chief briefed the president about the operational readiness of the Pakistan Navy in safeguarding the maritime interests of the country.

He highlighted that the Pakistan Navy had the capability to defend the national sea frontiers.

The president commended the professionalism of the Pakistan Navy in protecting the maritime interests of the country.

Five persons including three women & two kids dead in recent rains at Chaman

Independent Report
QUETTA: Five persons including three women and two children were killed while 16 others injured in different mishaps occurred during recent rains in Chaman.

According to the reports, the recent rains affected several houses besides paralysing the routine life in the border district.

During the rains, communication system and power supply also remained suspended in border town.

The road network was also badly affected

suspending the connection of Chaman with other areas including Killa Abdullah.

In the meantime, local administration and PDMA remained busy in the relief activities in Chaman and other adjacent areas.

The heavy machinery was also engaged in the rescue and relief activities.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Chaman exhorted the doctors and other medical staff of all hospitals and BHUs of Chaman to remain alert and present at their respective places of duty.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chairing the meeting of National Action Plan Coordination Committee at NACTA Headquarters.

Faiz Hameed asked me to resign during Faizabad dharna: Zahid

ISLAMABAD (Online): Statement of former law minister Zahid Hamid has come to open with reference to Faizabad Dharna.

Former law minister said former DG ISI Faiz Hameed and two officers met him during Faizabad Dharna and asked him to resign. Junior officers of ISI came to my home on November 26, 2017 to obtain my resignation.

Faiz Hameed thought if I proceed on leave for some time then TLP will be satisfied.

Pak Embassy Tokyo condemns terror attack on Japanese nationals in Karachi

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Embassy of Pakistan Tokyo in a statement issued said the mission is deeply concerned about the reported targeting of Japanese nationals in Karachi by terrorists.

Pakistan and Japan have a common commitment to rid the world of the menace of terrorism and violent extremism and such actions will not dent our resolve, the embassy said in a press release posted on X, formerly Twitter, and on Facebook.

Emaan Pakistan Eid-Mela inaugurated

QUETTA (APP): Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) Farah Azeem Shah on Friday inaugurated Emaan Pakistan Eid-Mela at Liaqat Park saying that Balochistan Government was taking measures to provide opportunities to women of the province.

Talking to media, she said that our children and women always complained about not organizing events, therefore the provincial government organised the event.

She said that natural disasters kept occurring, but the provincial government took steps to address issues of women and children victims of these incidents saying that they would not be left alone in this difficult time.

She said that we were trying to highlight real image of Balochistan including its valuable traditions

by conducting such events saying that people of Balochistan were patriotic an peace loving.

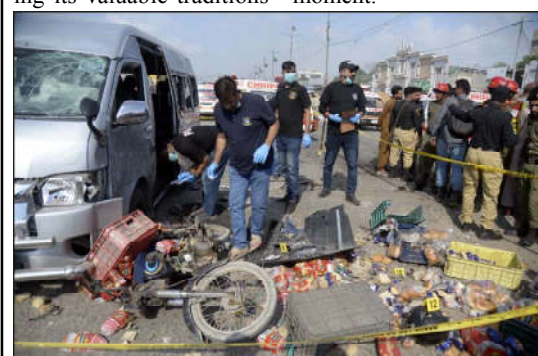
MPA Alia Nawaz appreciated the efforts of Farah Azeem Shah and her team for organizing Emaan Pakistan Eid-Mela for women of the province and added that more measures would be taken them.

The Emaan Pakistan Eid Mela will continue till April 21.

On the occasion, Provincial Minister Raheela Hameed Durrani, MPA Alia Nawaz and a large number of women and children participated in the Eid-Mela.

Earlier, Provincial Minister Raheela Durrani along Farah Azeem Shah and MPA Alia Nawaz cut cake at the program.

MPA Farah Azeem along with MPA Alia Nawaz inspected established different stalls at the moment.



KARACHI: View of site while security officials are cordon off the site for inspection and rescue operation after a suicide blast at Landhi area in Karachi.

FM Aurangzeb says Pak wants larger, extended loan programme with IMF

FM commends WB's blueprint to propel Pakistan to High Middle-Income status

WASHINGTON (INP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that Pakistan wants to enter into a larger and extended loan programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Attending the Roundtable conference with Investors in Washington, the finance minister highlighted Pakistan's stable macroeconomic indicators including declining inflation, stable currency, strong growth of agriculture sector, strong remittances, rising forex reserves and buoyant stock market.

He also discussed the priorities of the Government around taxation, energy sector reforms and privatization programme.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb also met with Citibank officials in Washington DC and briefed them on the positive economic indicators including rising stock market, renewed interest of foreign buyers and institu-

tional flows on the back of Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) signed with IMF.

The Finance Minister said Pakistan has successfully repaid Eurobond on time. He said the government has initiated discussion with IMF on a larger and extended programme.

He also highlighted priority areas of taxation, energy sector overhaul and reforms in state owned enterprises.

Meanwhile, the Finance Minister also held a meeting with Moody's Investor Service on the sidelines of IMF and World Bank Spring meetings in Washington.

During the meeting, the finance minister briefed them about key economic indicators and how macroeconomic stabilization has been achieved after entering into Stand-by Arrangement with the IMF.

Aurangzeb highlighted key priorities of the government around tax reforms, energy sector reforms and privatization agenda.

He said the government wanted to tap international capital markets with a focus on Middle East and China.

He also addressed key questions related to inflation, level of foreign exchange reserves, debt repayments, external account vulnerability and domestic liquidity.

APP adds: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue on Friday appreciated the World Bank's Thought Leadership and its insightful report titled "From Swimming in the Sand to High and Sustainable Growth," giving a clear roadmap for propelling Pakistan to a High Middle-Income country.

He expressed these views while attending the "Roundtable on Implementing for Faster Results and Greater Impact," organized by the financial institution on the sidelines of the World Bank Group-IMF Spring Meetings in Washington D.C.



WASHINGTON: Finance Minister, Muhammad Aurangzeb attending the "Roundtable on Implementing for Faster Results and Greater Impact" organized by the World Bank.

Chief of the Turkish General Staff calls on defence minister

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief of the Turkish General Staff, General Metin Gürak called on Minister for Defence & Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif in Islamabad. Defense Minister extended warm welcome to the esteemed Turkish defence delegation.

He described the bilateral defence relations between Pakistan and Türkiye as robust. Defence Minister acknowledged the active role being played by Türkiye for controlling the situation and suffering in Gaza. The visiting dignitary commended Pakistan's efforts in fostering regional peace and stability.

Smuggled items worth Rs10 b seized in Mastung

MUSTANG (INP): The Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan (North) in collaboration with other agencies carried out a significant operation in Mastung district of Balochistan and seized a smuggled items worth Rs10 billion, reported on Friday.

According to the details, the FC Balochistan (North) handed over the seized items to the customs authorities through 46 trucks and 3 big containers.

The confiscated goods included cigarettes, betel nuts, cloth, solar panels, tyres, urea fertilizer, and electronic items.

This seizure, valued at nearly 10 billion rupees, marks the largest confiscation in the crackdown against smuggling activities especially in border areas of the country.

Previously, goods worth approximately three billion rupees had been seized in an anti-smuggling operation conducted by law enforcement agencies.

The channel said that the operation was conducted based on confidential information at a clandestine warehouse in Mastung district where illegal contraband was stored.

Raisani optimistic about Bugti cabinet's delivery for Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leader of the Pakistan People's Party in Balochistan, Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani Friday voiced optimism about the 14-member cabinet headed by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, while also expressing confidence in its ability to provide relief to the people and utilize re-

source effectively. In a statement, he was confident that the cabinet would provide the basic rights and facilities to the people of Balochistan and would utilize all its capabilities and resources effectively. The PPP leader stated that the youth of Balochistan eagerly awaited access to fundamental rights such as quality education, training, clean drinking water, equal job opportunities, as well as well-maintained roads and streets. He emphasized that addressing law and order remains a significant challenge, urging the ruling coa-

lition to align their actions in Balochistan with the prevailing realities.

Raisani stressed the importance of initiatives that encourage youth involvement in provincial and national development, steering them away from resorting to violence and instead fostering progress.

He highlighted the significant potential within the youth of Balochistan, underscoring the opportunity to elevate not just the province but also the nation as a whole through its development. He praised chief minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti for consistently advocating for the rights of Balochistan's common and marginalized citizens, emerging as a staunch representative for the province on various platforms.

Raisani urged the Balochistan Chief Minister to give clear instructions to his new cabinet to keep its doors open for the people for providing relief to them.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House.

PN rescue, relief operation continue in rain hit Gwadar, Ormara areas

Independent Report

QUETTA: Pakistan Navy conducted Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) operations in rain affected areas of Gwadar and Ormara, said a handout issued on Friday.

In the recent heavy rain spell, Pakistan Navy had provided its full support to Civil Administration of Gwadar and Ormara utilising all available resources to mitigate the sufferings of rain hit people.

Pakistan Navy troops reached the rain stricken people with heavy machinery to assist local population in order to drain out rain water from their homes and localities.

Relief operation in Gwadar and Ormara showed strong commitment of Pak Navy to extend all support to the masses in the hour of need.

Member CMIT visits different parts of Quetta to review post-rain situation

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Member, Chief Minister Inspection Team (CMIT) Manzoor Hussain visited different parts of Quetta to review the situation emerged due to rains for fact finding.

The officers of different departments were also accompanied by the CMIT.

He visited the areas including Sariab road, Gahi Khan, Lehri chowk, phodgali chowk, Gwalmandi chowk, Nawankilli, Zarghoon road and Satellite Town.

Speaking on the occasion, Member CMIT said that our committee is investigating the reasons behind

urban flooding in Quetta city. The committee would pinpoint the flaws that caused urban flooding in the city.

The committee would also inspect the development schemes of roads and sewerage during last three years.