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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President H.E. Dr. Seyyed

Ebrahim Raisi in a delegation level talks between Iran and Pakistan.

Continued on page 2

powered delegation, said that the flade volume between the two brotherly countries was not below the existing potential and they wanted to increase the volume to US

Joint presser

Pak, Iran for promoting bilateral trade ties, business activities at border areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Iran on Monday \$10 billion annually. agreed to enhance bilateral trade ties and promote business activities at the border areas to ensure development and prosperity of the people of two coun-

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in a press talk along with President of Iran Dr Ebrahim Raisi after witnessing the signing of bilateral agreements and MoUs at the PM House, said under the leadership of the Iranian President, the two countries could bring development and prosperity in their respective sides by turning their borders into hub of business activities.

He said during their meeting, the two sides held detailed discussions on various fields of mutual interests including economy, trade, investment, diplomacy, security and culture.

The Iranian President, who arrived here on Monday on three-day official visit to Pakistan along with a highpowered delegation, said that the trade volume between

Pakistan, Iran

agree to ban

terrorist

organizations

their respective countries.

The two sides agreed on a joint plan of action to deal with the menace of ter-

rorism being a common problem, with further im-

proving mutual support

and exchange of intelligence

information. It was decided

to sign a security agreement

grims on the occasion of

terior Minister extended an

invitation to his Pakistani

counterpart to visit Iran in

that regard where the Iraqi

counterpart would also be

It was also decided to

Rahimi

He stressed that steps were needed to enhance border markets to give spur to the business and trade activities at the border areas, besides enhancing security.

He said that the two countries shared common affinities and no one could separate them, adding the two sides in their meetings, decided to further promote the bilateral ties between the two countries in trade and economic

President Dr Raisi said that there were a number of common issues including fight against terrorism, efforts to curb organized crimes and smuggling, in which the two sides could enhance their cooperation.

The president stressed that it was significant to further broaden the bilateral ties for the benefits of the two countries, besides continuity of cooperation at the highest

He said that the historic and durable ties between Iran and Pakistan provided them opportunity to fully utilize them for the welfare and prosperity of the two

Dissatisfied with law & order situation despite huge spending: Zia urges masses to back institutions for restoration of peace in Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Hime, Mir Ziaullah Langove has urged the masses to back their institutions for restoration of

peace in the province. The Minister said that he can't see the people being killed anymore, therefore, we have to strengthen

the institutions now.
Mir Ziaullah Langove was chairing the meeting held to review the security measures here on Mon-

day.
The Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem briefed the meeting about security measures.

The meeting focused on how to tackle the security issues besides improving security in the province. ies forces to maintain peace. The meeting also re-

on the security forces.

Besides, the strategy of zero tolerance against terrorism, law and order situation and anti-smuggling activities were also reviewed.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Home said that no negligence would be tolerated in the mandate given by the masses.

He said that there are clear directives of the Chief Minister that no negligence would be tolerated in maintaining law and order.

He said that law and order is priority of the government.

He stressed the need to maintain better coordination between police and lev-He also stressed to

viewed the targeted attacks strengthen local intelligence network for information

> He asserted that the action would be taken against the concerned high ps of area where incidents of terrorism would occur.

He directed to take legal action against the disay of arms in Quetta. He said that terrorism would be uprooted from the

He also stressed that it necessary to eliminate corruption from the secu-

rity forces He said that action would be taken against any personal involved in cor-

The Minister also directed to ensure enforcement of biometric system in all the institutions

Reiterate call for immediate ceasefire PM, President Raisi condemn Israel's indiscriminate use of force in Gaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi on Monday expressed strong and unequivocal condemnation of the indiscriminate use of force by Israeli occupation authorities in Gaza for over seven months.

They reiterated the call for international efforts to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, lifting the siege and provision of humanitarian relief to the people of

The two leaders, in a meeting, discussed the entire range of bilateral relations and exchanged views on important regional and global developments, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Underscoring the rich history of relations between

Pakistan and Iran, they also reaffirmed commitment to expand wide-ranging bilateral cooperation, particularly in the areas of trade, energy, connectivity, culture and people-to-people contacts.

Ministers and senior officials from both sides were present in the meeting. Both sides agreed to increase the volume of bilateral

trade to US \$10 billions in the next five years.

in that regard at the earli-They also agreed to cooperate in developing joint approaches to confront common challenges including the threat of terrorism. provide all possible facilities to the Pakistani pil-



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and the Iranian President, Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, held

ther broaden mutually beneficial cooperation in various areas of common inter-

the need operationalizing bilateral trade mechanisms to boost Arba'een. The Iranian Inthe volume of trade up to \$10 billion, and also urged the need to work together to overcome the challenges being faced by the region.

ticularly the situation in

President Zardari ex-

pressed deep concern over

the worsening humanitar-

ian situation in Gaza and

the Middle East.

This was discussed beinvited. tween President Asif Ali The two sides ob-Zardari and visiting Iranian served that joint initiatives President Dr Seyyed would help ensure the pro-Ebrahim Raisi during a vision of best facilities to meeting held at the Aiwanthe pilgrims

Interior Minister Naqvi thanked his counterpart for the invitation to visit Iran

PM welcomes Iranian President in Persian language

ISLAMABAD (APP): Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday welcomed Iranian President Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi in

tional resources are rethe Persian language. quired for launching the air During their joint press ambulance in the province stakeout, the prime minisrather the available reter recited Allama Taqi sources are being utilized for Bahar's Persian verses about Pakistan, in which the The Chief Minister poet had invoked divine said that service delivery is blessings for the country, being improved in all secthe PM Office Media Wing tors including health ser-

said in a press release. The prime minister, or He said that the desired the occasion, read out a Per results can be achieved by sian couplet for the visiting changing the priorities of President which warmly decision making in the provwelcomed his arrival in Pa-He said that reforms are

The prime minister's eloquence in the Persian language brought smiles on the faces of the Iranian President and other participants who were pleased to hear such remarks.

They also applauded the prime minister's ges

BA session postponed Independent Report

QUETTA: The session of Balochistan's provincial assembly scheduled to be held today (Tuesday) has been postponed.

According to the official notification issued here on Monday, the new date of assembly session would be announced later.

a meeting, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Zardari, Raisi pledge to strengthen bilateral ties ISLAMABAD (APP): Pa- Israel's military aggression against its people of Gaza kistan and Iran on Monday reiterated the resolve to furthat had resulted in the killing of thousands of inno-

that Pakistan would consistently and unequivo-Both sides underscored cally support the Palestinian cause Both the presidents reiterated the need for enhanced internationa endeavours to bring an end to the Israeli suppression of the Gaza people, and

ian relief and assistance. President Zardari said that Pakistan and Iran enjoyed close fraternal ties based on shared religion, culture, and history, which needed to be further The two leaders also strengthened for the mudiscussed key regional and tual benefit of the two global developments, parbrotherly countries.

for enhanced humanitar-

cent Palestinians. He said

He thanked Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi for being the first Head of State to visit Pakistan after the general elections, which reflected his deep personal commitment to Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Dr. Ahmad Vahidi and Iran's Justice Minister Amin Hosein Rahimi.

CJP gives indication to change the period of filing appeal in SC KARACHI (Online): Chief review it afresh

Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has given indication to change the period of filing appeal in Supreme Court (SC).
The CJP remarked

don't make fun of the court. The application for adjournment is given repeat-

During the hearing of 15 years old case the CJP got annoyed.

The CJP sought opinion from senior lawyers in the matter of change of period in the case of ownership of plot against the citi-

zen in SC Karachi registry. The CJP inquired during hearing of plot dispute case what should be time limit for appeals against the

decisions of high courts. The lawyers replied decision of five members bench of SC is there regardng period of appeal.

Farogh Nasim said decision of 5-member bench is limited. You will have to not run it.

During the hearing of the case barrister Salah ud Din Farogh Nasim, Khalid Javed and others said to review the matter administra-

The CJP remarked ok we see this matter. This will be solved administratively or on judicial side.

Earlier the CJP expressed annoyance over seeking time by counsel for city government during the hearing of case in Karachi

SC has summoned mayor Karachi Murtaza /ahab immediately.

Secretary local government has also been directed to appear forthwith. The CJP remarked dur-

ing the hearing of the case that you people have made fun of the court. Run the case if you file it..

The CJP remarked the case has been filed since the last 15 years. Why do you

Eleven terrorists killed in two separate operations in KP

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Waziristan district, the security forces have killed some eleven terrorists in two separate operations conducted on April 21-22

in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release issued on Monday, an intelligencebased operation was launched in Dera Ismail Khan (D.I.Khan), district on reported presence of ter-

During the operation, and after an intense fire exchange, ten terrorists were

In another encounter that held in North

Army troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location as a result of which one more terrorist was sent to

The terrorists were found involved in numerous criminal activities in the area against security forces as well as the innocent civilians. Arms and ammunition were also recovered after the operation.

'Locals of the area appreciated the operations conducted by the Security Forces, who are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from this coun-



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mohammad Ishaq Dar called on President of Iran H.E. Dr. Syed Ebrahim Raisi.

PML-N clinches landslide victory in by-election

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: The ruling PML-N on Monday emerged victorious in byelections held on 21 national and provincial seats, according to provisional results released by the Election Commission of Paki-

stan (ECP). On Sunday, by-polls were held across the country amid allegations of "record rigging", temporary suspension of cellular services in specific districts of Punjab and Balochistan and multiple incidents of violence, leading to the death of a PML-N supporter in a clash outside a Narowal polling station.

By-elections were held on five NA seats, including two from Punjab, two from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one from Sindh. Further, 12 provincial seats were also up for grabs in Punjab as well as two each in KP and Balochistan Separately, re-polling in

all constituencies of Balochistan's PB-50 (Qila Abdullah) was also held. According to the pro-

visional results (Forms-47) issued by the ECP, out of the five NA seats, the PML-N won two from Punjab while the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) and an independent candidate won one each from KP. Meanwhile, the PPP clinched the NA-196 seat from Sindh. In Punjab, the PML-N grabbed 10 provincial seats while the PPP and the Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) won one each. In KP, one provincial seat each went to the SIC and an independent candidate.

In Balochistan, the and Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) won one provincial seat each. Separately, the Awami National Party (ANP) also won a provincial seat from PB-50, where re-polling

QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Ali Madam Jattak and Advisor Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Safaraz Bugti Rahila Durrani calls on acting Speaker BA

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Education, Ms Rahila Hameed Khan

Durrani called on the Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms Ghazala Gola at her chamber here on Monday During the course of neeting, different matters about the functioning of Assembly and others of

mutual interests were dis-They also discussed the matters about women empowerment in the prov-

Three killed, one injured as train hits motorcycle

ussed

in Naseerabad QUETTA (APP): At least three people, including a girl, were killed when a train hit a motorcycle near Naseerabad in Balochistan

on Monday. The accident occurred when the Quetta-bound Bolan Mail train hit a motorcycle, resulting in the death of three people and leaving one woman injured. private news channels reported.

Upon receiving the information, police and rescue teams rushed to the accident site and launched a rescue operation.

ation in the province

Government announces to launch air ambulance service in Balochistan two planes would be con-**Independent Report** verted into air Ambulance.

the purpose

vices in the province.

being brought in the health

sector to bring improve-

ment in the service deliv-

He said that no addi-

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has announced to launch air ambulance in the province.

According to the official handout issued here on Monday, the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti said that the provincial government has decided to initiate the air ambulance for the first time in history

of the province. The Chief Minister said that the Peoples air ambulance would be available for shifting of the patients

on an emergency basis. He said that the provin-

cial government decided to use the airplane for public instead of selling it. He said that one of the ery.

Independent Report QUETTA: The Member of

effect and until further or-This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Provincial Assembly's secretariat on

According to the notification, the acting Speaker of Provincial Assembly, Ms Ghazala Gola declared Mir Younas Aziz Zehri as Leader of Opposition in pursuance of Rule 19-C of the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Busi-

Younas Zehri declared as **Leader of Opposition in BA**

Provincial Assembly, Mir Younas Aziz Zehri has been declared as Leader of Opposition in Balochistan Assembly with immediate

It may be mentioned here that Mir Younas Aziz Zehri belongs to Jamiat

QUETTA: Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango presiding over a meeting regarding law and order situ

Daily Aoice of Masse, Independent

Not without reform

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb says that the economy has the potential to grow 10 times its size to \$3tr for Pakistan to become a high-middle-income country by 2047. That kind of growth or economic transformation is difficult to achieve but not impossible.

India accomplished this feat to become the world's fifth-largest economy by increasing its GDP size from less than \$275bn to over \$3.7tr in 30 years after it began to implement reforms in earnest to overcome a severe crisis resulting from external debt. Ever since then, it has not returned to the IMF for help and is now well on its way to becoming the world's third-largest economy after the US and China. The latter country has grown at a very high annual rate of 10pc for decades to transform itself into the world's second-largest economy and rescue millions of its citizens from poverty.

There are also examples of countries from Southeast Asia, which were poorer and less developed than us a few decades ago but have surged far ahead now. Even if these economies have not fully overcome poverty or become highmiddle-income nations, their examples show us the road to better days. But, living on borrowed money as we are, the periodic articulation of a desire to grow rich will not help.

If Pakistan is desirous of becoming a middleincome economy and halting the perennial cyclical crisis that has led Mr Aurangzeb to Washington to seek the country's 24th bailout from the IMF, it must follow the path others have successfully taken. It has to honestly and diligently implement reforms to limit the role of government in the economy, encourage the private sector to lead growth, and integrate the economy with the region and global economy by break ing down barriers to trade and investment.

These reforms, however, will have to be based on enduring fiscal stabilisation policies. A similar message was conveyed by IMF's Middle East and Central Asia director Jihad Azour the other day when he emphasised that giving precedence to reforms to revive the Pakistani economy was more important than the loan amount being negotiated. "What is important at this stage is to accelerate the reforms, double down on the structure of reforms in order to provide Pakistan with its full potential of growth,'

The problem with us is that our ruling elite is still trying to find a way around the tough reforms that will hit their privileges. The creation of SIFC as an island of facilitation for certain foreign or local investors is one example of this attitude. But it will be difficult to carry on like this. With geopolitical rent becoming more and more difficult to draw, a debt-ridden country cannot daydream its way into becoming a middle-income economy.

Tax with AI

Anwar Kashif Mumtaz

Tuesday April 24, 2024

December 2023, Pakistan's tax revenue further exacerbate the reached \$17.079 billion, problem, raising conmarking a significant infigure of \$7.622bn reported in September 2023. Tax revenue data for Pakistan is updated on a quarterly basis, with an average of \$10.565bn recorded from September 2000 to December 2023, spanning 94 observa-

What is even more significant is that only 2.74 million individuals in Pakistan file personal income tax, representing merely 4.1 per cent of the pertinent to mention that 35pc of these individual filers are exempt from paying income tax as their income falls below the taxable threshold, resulting in year. Between 2008 and tween 36pc to 39pc of its taxes, while the rest came from indirect taxes.

net, equitable tax, restruc- which is currently turing the tax brackets, etc, have been part of conversations, but that is where to 100pc and then to use actions stopped. We are still chaling out to the banked lenged by the small com- and unbanked, documunity of taxpayers, overburdened salaried class and large fields of agriculture and real estate being exempted. We tors, AI operates without have the super-impres- bias or influence. It admies that have risen on the basis of solid mon- considerations. By leveretary policies, with far

ewer resources. stan have long been as- efficie-ntly analyse vast sociated with compro- amounts of financial mise, connivance, and data, identifying patterns rampant corruption. This and anomalies indicative pervasive culture not of potential tax evasion. only undermines the in- This analytical prowess evasion, depriving the but also serves as a tesy Dawn

government of much- powerful discretionary powers cerns about their potencrease from the previous tial for abuse. The comhampers the effective enforcement of tax regu-

> holes to be exploited. Pakistan's population number goes in its favour. Imagine crowdfunding by 240m people. Imagine 50pc of the

lations, allowing for loop-

population paying taxes Pakistan becomes the golden goose. This argument compels us to look for the quickest, and most effective transforlabour force and 1.3pc of mative solution that can the total population. It is restore faith in the tax system and ensure compliance with the law – artificial intelligence (AI), a game changer in the realm of tax audits.

AI is not a mechanizero tax liability for the cal way replacing human error, but a made-to-or-2021, Pakistan's federal der algorithm that can government collected be- cater to and adapt to all local frameworks with tax revenue from direct optimisation of service, transparency, and above accessibility. Expanding the tax Smartphone penetration

around 31pc needs to be supported to take it up have that platform for reachmented and undocumented, in order to bring them on board.

Unlike human audisive examples of Malay- heres strictly to the prosia, Singapore, and visions of the tax code, South Korea — econo- without succumbing to external pressures or aging advanced algoand rithms data

deterrent needed revenue. The against non-compliance. AI-driven audits wielded by tax officers prioritise transparency

and accountability. Every decision made by the Al system is based on objective criteria, devoid plexity of tax laws often of any subjective judgement or favouritism. This not only minimises the risk of corruption but also ensures fair and equitable treatment for all

Moreover, AI facili-

tates the simplification of tax laws by streamlining complex regulations into easily understandable guidelines. This not only reduces ambiguity but also emp-owers taxpayto fulfil their obligat-ions with confidence and clarity. Criti-cal--ly, AI-driven audits shift the focus from mere revenue generation to long-term deterrence of tax evasion. By identifying irregularities and enforcing compliance, AI helps create a culture of accountability and integrity within the tax system.

Additionally, AI improves data management by automating data ingestion, extraction, and organisation, facilitating a 'no-touch tax return concept, and enhancing audit processes.

This is the only route for us towards equitability of taxation in Pakistan. With the right mechanics, we can investigate the integration of Al into tax audits for the much-needed paradigm shift. By eliminating the spectre of compromise and connivance, tax revenue can be enhanced in selected fields. AI can expand the tax net, instil trust and confidence in the tax system and fos-Tax audits in Paki- analytics, AI can ter a conducive environment for economic growth and development. As we embrace the transformative potential of AI, we pave the way for a fairer, more efficient. tegrity of the tax system not only enhances the and more equitable tax but also perpetuates tax effectiveness of audits regime for all. -- Cour-

The aging empire

Zarrar Khuhro

It's doublespeak that would have George Orwell slit his wrists with a sharpened quill: right after casting a veto against a draft resolution that recommended granting the state of Palestine full membership in the UN, the US ambassador said: "This vote does not reflect opposition to Palestinian statehood." If we are to actually believe the words coming out of the envoy's mouth it would mean that America just voted 'no' on something it claims to

strongly support.
The US vetoes anything that goes against Israeli interests, interests which it values more than its diplomatic standing, global stability, or even the welfare of its own citizens. Since 1945, it has used its veto to block 34 draft resolutions to protect Israel, with most of them calling for Israel to respect international laws or condemning it for displacing Palestinians and building settlements in occupied territories.

The US also used its veto to block 46 resolutions on Israel. The first instance was in 1972 when it vetoed a resolution regarding Israeli air raids in Syria and Lebanon. Interestingly, this was the second-ever use of the veto by the US with the first being in 1970 to protect Britain from condemnation for not using force to overthrow the white supremacist regime of Rhodesia. Funny how history always comes more or less full circle.

Meanwhile, the US House Represen-ta-tives voted in a resolution condemning the chant 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free', as antisemitic and presumably a call for genocide, all the while funding and supporting an actual genocide in Gaza.

antisemitism, the US

of Columbia University have become hotbeds of hatred. Congressmen on the measures taken on campus. Representative Rick Allen, in a fascinating display of the also been punctured. brain rot that Christian from Genesis 12:3, "If you bless Israel, I will bless you. If you curse Israel, I will curse you",

It was a bit much given that Columbia has gone out of its way to support Zionist stuclamping down on pro-Palestinian voices. In a move that, had it taken place in any other country would have invited immediate condemnation from the US, Columing students en masse and had them arrested pended students inafter Omar had questioned the Columbia administration about its treatment of pro-Palestinian voices. With every such action, the number of Americans

'be cursed by God"

Disquiet is increasthe myth of Israeli invincibility was shattered first by Hamas and now by Iran. After Oct 7, the assurance that Israelis felt about being secure and separate from the Palestinians, caged as were behind heavily guarded walls, by a highly armed mili-

opposed to Israel only

ducted a hearing about aided by the most cuthow the hallowed halls ting-edge technology available, all vanished like mist in the breeze.

With Iran's retaliaand women lined up to tion, the confidence Isprove their allegiance to raelis had in the imper-Israel by grilling the uni- meability of their air deversity administration fences which, in their imagination, allowed to tackle antisemitism them to strike outwards with impunity and with no fear of payback, has

Israel claims to Zionism can cause, have intercepted the quoted Bible verses majority of the drones and missiles fired from Iran, but the fact is that most of these were intercepted by the US, before asking the Co-lumbia president if she Israel also points to the wanted her university to relatively little damage caused by the strikes as evidence of failure, but the very fact that the Nevatim airbase, from which the US-supplied dents and staff, while F-35 jets operate, was hit several times should come as a shock to the Zionist regime, given that this is, without doubt, the most highly defended military base in all of Israel. Not only bia suspended protest- is the best of Israel's air defence deployed here, the base is also home to by the NYPD. The sus- an US-supplied radar system as the TPY 2 Xcluded the daughter of band radar system, US Congresswoman which is arguably the Ilhan Omar, just a day most advanced radar system the US has in its arsenal

Less publicised were the drone attacks Hezbollah carried out on Israel during this time, penetrating deep into northern Israel and wounding dozens of Israeli soldiers, thus deliving in Israel itself since ering the message that in any serious confrontation, it would rain down fire on large parts of Israel. Perhaps this is why the Israeli riposte to Iran has so far been unimpressive, but no one should bet on Israel to show any restraint given the psychotic nature of its ruling brutalised as they were class, military and public, and given that a decatary, surveilled as they dent and decrepit empire were by an infallible in- will support them to the bit-Congress also con-telligence apparatus ter end. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

NPO, APO collaborate to

enhance Paki gemstone Industry

through international standards

ISLAMABAD (APP): Monday.
National Productivity The said workshop is
Organization (NPO), attended by 18 overseas

April 2024 here on speakers from Thailand.

MoU inked to provide skill

based training to BISP

participants

Cambodia, Indonesia,

Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and

Vietnam from APO

member countries, 11 local

participants and sessions

will be delivered by the

international resource

Pak backs UN's FAO in forming a facility to ensure food security

(APP): Pakistan has told the just-concluded UN Economic and Social (ECOSOC) Youth Forum that it supports the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in creating a facility with broader and people-centric criteria to further strengthen it's efforts to defeat hunger, improve nutrition and food security in the developing countries. "We have considerable potential in the agriculture sector and could play an important role in building the global food supply chains," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent

around the world.

extended Pakistan's increasing vulnerability of safeguarding support to the UN global food systems to a systems for Secretary-General's call for urgent reform of the global financial system, notably how to approach debt billions of distressed hunger.

Ambassador Jadoon representative of Pakistan.

NATIONS said at the forum attended efforts to establish resilient country in the world stan has told by over 1,000 youth and sustainable food with a significant actuded UN leaders and activists from systems that can youthful population, At the same time, he disruptions in light of the critical importance of

> multitude of challenges. and from supply chain was critical for the significant threats to the Pakistan's implementation of the ability of existing food devastating affordable diets for all.

> > The

that the catastrophe led to

withstand shocks and Pakistan recognized the future titude of challenges.
He warned that the he said, was the backbone world was facing a of the country's economy, convergence of crises, from contributing substantially relief on behalf of the conflicts to climate change, to its GDP and employing a significant portion of its citizens living in the disruptions to economic developing world, saying it contractions, which posed Usman Jadoon referred to devastating floods, which Sustainable Development systems to provide destroyed 4.4 million acres Goal (SDG 2) to end world nutritious, safe, and of standing crops, and said Pakistani a stark realization of the also underscored the need envoy said that as the extreme vulnerability of for concerted international fifth most populous food systems.



DUBAI: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb in a Meeting with Senior Officials of Mashreq Bank and First Abu Dhabi Bank.



MoU signing ceremony between BISP and NAVTTC to extend access to technical and vocational education to members of BISP beneficiary families at BISP HQs on 22nd April 2024. Ms. Saira Atta, Director General (CI) from BISP and Mr. Shafiq Khokhar, Director General (P&D) from NAVTTC formally signed the agreement.

Chairman NTC seeks budget proposals from KCCI

man National Tariff Commission (NTC) Naeem Anwar, Monday, advised Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) to submit budget proposals along with details of all issues in writing at the ear-

The chairman NTC, while speaking at a meeting during his visit to KCCI, said that budget proposals submitted by the stakeholders were forwarded to NTC for review by the Commission's technical team which carefully analyzes, assesses repercussions and if found favorable faced by the business com- trade practices in imports.

the proposals to the government for inclusion in the budget, said a statement is-Chairman Special Commiteral Budget 2024-25. tee for Budget Proposals Muhammad Ibrahim Kasumbi, Former Presi-

the meeting. Naeem Anwar listened try, support manufacturing to the grievances being sector and obstruct unfair

trade bodies also attended

KARACHI (APP): Chair- for the economy, forward munity and assured that issues highlighted by Karachi Chamber will be reviewed by the NTC team and recsued here. President KCCI ommendations will be given Iftikhar Ahmed Sheikh, Vice to the government for rec-President Tanveer Barry, tifying the same in the Fed-

He stated that NTC which operates under NTC Act 2015, was duty-bound dents Majyd Aziz and Junaid Esmail Makda, KCCI Managing Commit-which include anti-dumping subsidies representatives of various countervailing law and safeguard measures to ensure

growth for domestic indus-

Understanding (MoU) was signed between Benazir Support Income Programme (BISP) and the

Organization (NPO), Pakistan in collaboration

with Asian Productivity

Organization (APO),

Japan is organizing an

International Workshop on

value addition of gemstone

products for compliance

standards from 22^{nd} to 25^{th}

international

National Vocational and Training Technical Commission (NAVTTC) here on Monday to provide high quality technical and vocational education to the BISP beneficiaries' families members.

The primary objective of the MoU was to establish a robust framework for cooperation between NAVTTC and

beneficiaries' family members ISLAMABAD (APP): A BISP in executing the Skills
Memorandum of Training Vouchers Programme.

This initiative was specifically designed to extend access to highquality technical and vocational education to members of BISP beneficiary families.

The signing ceremony was graced by the presence of d is t i n g u i s h e d personalities, including Chairperson BISP, Dr Muhammad Amjad Saqib, who witnessed the historic moment.

IFL scheme continues to serve underprivileged class

(PPAF) is contributing immensely to financially empowering impoverished families across the country by providing loans for small businesses, making them self-reliant.

The Interest Free Loan Programme is a flagship initiative of the government designed and implemented by the PPAF

to Qatar

Employment Corporation

(OĒC) an attached

department of the Ministry

of Overseas Pakistanis and

Development would send

nurses to a Qatri medical

firm during the current

fiscal year. According to

the advertisement of OEC,

Tabeeb Care Medical

Services required nursing

staff in the field of Pediatric

and Geriatric from

loans to impoverished households in more than 100 districts across Pakistan. These loans serve to empower poor

enterprises, thereby fostering economic self-IFL beneficiary, father to rest", she said.

ISLAMABAD (APP): and is strategically aimed The Interest-Free Loan (IFL) scheme being executed by the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund Poverty Alleviation Fund (IRAE) is contributing to the power of the providing interest-free power of the providing and providing and power of the providing and grandfather used to make and now I make pottery at my home however we didn't have enough finances to sustain this business" "My husband is suffering households to initiate from serious health issues income-generating and my son helps his father arrange pottery in the shop fostering economic self-sufficiency and improving take care of the business their overall quality of life. after school, allowing his

OEC to export **PSX collaborates with** medical experts **London Stock Exchange** ISLAMABAD (APP): The Overseas **Group on ESG**

Pakistan Stock Exchange statement received here. (PSX) has signed a collaborative understanding with LSEG (London Stock its well-trained workforce of Pediatric and Geriatric Exchange Group) on Environment, Social and Governance (ESG).

Under this mutual PSX listed companies for in the future

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a their ESG data reporting, landmark development, according PSX press This understanding

benefits PSX and listed companies in that the platform would not only provide ESG scoring but also enhance the visibility of Pakistani companies on the understanding, both international ESG radars, it companies will work to said adding the arrangement develop a suite of would also help lay down standardized ESG data the groundwork for an ESG tools that can be used by Index planned by the PSX



Khawaja Salman Rafique addressing the participants of 6th VCs, Principals

CM emphasizes completion of tourism-related projects, activities on emergency basis

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism Culture, and Archeology, Zahid Chanzeb has stressed on the urgent completion of tourism activities and projects to achieve 100 percent set goals for the development of tourism.

He indicated that the government would evaluate the performance of the departments based on the achievement of the targets and would release funds as per the performance,

Punjab govt

working to

improve people's

quality of

life: Minister

urban and rural areas.

adding that the institutions and Advisor to the Chief with perform would be washrooms and drinking strongly encouraged and views while presiding over a meeting of Kaghan Development Authority (KDA) at Pakhtunkhwa, said a press release issued here Monday. The Tourism Adviser issued clear instructions to the KDA to take concrete steps to develop tourism in the area and provide more facilities and

water to tourists at the funded. He expressed these spots as well as on the sides of the highways at a suitable distance.

He said that the owners of the local hotels and restaurants should be asked to manage the facilities on road side.

He said the provincial government and the Department of Tourism Culture were to tourists. He said that the committed to promoting development strategy tourism on a solid basis should include provision of throughout the province quality services in hotels and working on a five-year

Punjab Governor says: PAS has important role in running the country's admin affairs, development

SIALKOT **Independent Report** Provincial Minister for LAHORE: A delegation Government comprising participants of Zeeshan Rafique has said that the provincial cabinet Program and the first under the leadership of Specialized Training Punjab Chief Minister Course called on Governor Maryam Nawaz Sharif is Punjab Muhammad working day and night to improve the quality of life of the people of the province and fruitful results have started Mahmood Chauhan. The delegation was led by while performing their province and fruitful Mahmood Chauhan. Should strive for the Academy Dr. Sajid Mahmood Chauhan. Mahmood results have started Governor Punjab welcomed appearing in the form of the delegation to Governor reduction in the prices of House Lahore and informed flour and bread (roti) and them about the history of the provision of best municipal services in

Governor House. Speaking on this effectively these resources occasion, Governor Punjab are used.

Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Pakistan Administrative Service has 47th Specialized Training an important role in running the country's administrative affairs and development. He said that civil servants should serve Balighur Rehman. The the people. He said that welfare and betterment of general public. He said that success depends not only on individual abilities and resources, but also on how

Minister reviews projects of Food Safety and Halal **Food Authority**

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Food, Zahir Shah Toru on Monday presided over a comprehensive review meeting regarding the performance and ongoing projects of Food Safety and Halal Food Authority.

The minister emphasized ensuring the supply of quality and adulteration-free food products to citizens in the markets and directed the relevant officials to take necessary steps in this regard. Zahir Shah highlighted that the provincial government was taking priority actions to enhance the capacity of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety

and Halal Food Authority. The minister extended that seven mobile food testing laboratories were working in the fields and soon five more mobile food labs along with a state-of-the-art lab soon would be inaugurated.

Chaos party coming to an end: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari said on Monday that yesterday in by-polls the people of Punjab had once again rejected the agenda of

Talking to media here, she said, "It is a wrong impression governments win byelections and the fact is that people only vote to those parties which deliver."

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was habitual of making hue and cry whether they win or not, she said and added that chaos party was coming to an end.

She said that soon Punjab CM would give a comprehensive plan for

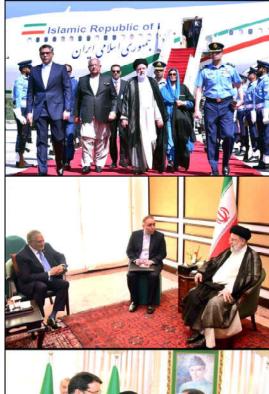
Azma said how unfortunate it was that Moonis Elahi could see rigging while sitting in Spain but could not see misery of his father.

Glimpses of Iranian President H.E. Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Pakistan













50 more bodies found

at hospital in Gaza's

Khan Younis

International News

Greek and Turkish delegations meet in Athens as part of efforts to improve often strained ties

Monitoring Desk ATHENS: Delegations from Greece and Turkey were meeting in Athens on Monday as part of longstanding efforts to improve often tense relations between the two neighbors, days after Turkey voiced objections over Greece's plans to create marine nature reserves in the Ionian

and Aegean seas. The two regional rivals are NATO allies but have been at odds for decades over a series of issues, including territorial claims in the Aegean and drilling rights in the Mediterranean, and have come to the brink of war three times in the last 50 years. A dispute over energy exploration rights in 2020 led to the two countries' warships facing off in the Mediterranean.

the Defense Ministry in Athens was to discuss confidence-building measures, following a similar meeting in Ankara last November. The two countries have engaged in the confidence-building process on and off for years, trying to seek common ground on a series of lower-key issues as a means of improving ties. The meeting comes ahead of planned talks in Ankara on May 13 between Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Greek Prime Minister

Kyriakos Mitsotakis. Tense ties have improved significantly over the past year, with Erdogan visiting Athens in December and signing a raft of trade, energy and education deals.

But Mitsotakis' announcement last week that

Monday's meeting in Greece will create two marine parks for the protection of sea mammals and birds — one in the Ionian Sea in western Greece and one in the central Aegean has angered Turkey.

Omer Celik, spokesman for Erdogan's ruling party, said last week that Ankara considers the creation of the marine parks "a step that sabotages the normalization process" in relations, and said Turkey would 'in no way allow actions toward the declaration of ma-

rine parks in the Aegean Sea.' Mitsotakis, speaking last week after a meeting of European leaders in Brussels, expressed surprise at what he described as "Turkey's totally unjustified reaction to an initiative which at the end of the day is of an environmental nature.



A grieving woman is consoled by a man after the body of her relative was discovered, buried by Israeli forces in a mass grave in the Nasser hospital compound in Khan Younis. West Bank

Iran says nuclear weapons have no place in its nuclear doctrine

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Nuclear weapons have no place in Iran's

nuclear doctrine, the country's foreign ministry said on Monday, days after a Revolutionary Guards commander warned that Tehran might change its nuclear policy if pressured by Israeli threats.

Iran has repeatedly said its nuclear programme only serves peaceful purposes. Nuclear weapons have no place in our nuclear doctrine," ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani said

during a press conference in

Following a spike in tensions with Israel, the Guards commander in charge of nuclear security Ahmad Haghtalab said last week that Israeli threats could push Tehran to "review its nuclear doctrine and deviate from its previous consider-

Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the last say on Tehran's nuclear programme

the occupied West Bank. Ukraine says it damaged Russian rescue ship in Crimea **Monitoring Desk**

Monitoring Desk

sian rescue vessel in Sevastopol, the headquarters reasons for satisfaction."
"Law and Justice has simply disappeared in many places," Tusk added at a news conference, referring to the main opposition party. The results put Civic Coalition in a favorable position as the country looks next to elections to the European Parliament on June 9

buried by Israeli forces at a hospital, in the southern city of Khan Younis.

camp mourns

Palestinians

killed in

Israeli raid

Monitoring Desk

TULKAREM: Families

kissed the faces of the dead

and neighbours cried in the

streets after one of the worst

Israeli raids anyone in the

Nur Shams refugee camp

can remember. On Sunday a

funeral procession for 13

Palestinians killed in the

army's West Bank opera-

tion passed through roads

piled with rubble from Israeli

bulldozers and rocket fire. Is-

raeli forces carry out regular

raids on towns and cities in

KYIV: Ukraine's military said

on Sunday it had struck and

damaged a long-serving Rus-

But while Israeli military said it was checking reports about the recovery of 50 bodies, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared far from being willing to respect the United Nations resolution calling for a ceasefire, saying he would fight against sanctions being imposed on any Israeli army units.

Monitoring Desk

GAZA: Health workers

have uncovered at least 50

bodies of people killed and

Israel's invasion has so far killed 34,097 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to the health ministry.

Separately, the Palesti-nian Red Crescent said on Saturday that at least 14 people were killed (the victims) faced torture and abuse," Mr Bassal said.

during an Israeli raid on a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank

The Israeli army said it killed 10 people during the operation at Nur Shams camp. "Inside the Nasser Medical Complex there are mass graves dug by the Israeli occupation ... we were shocked by the presence of bodies of 50 martyrs in one of the pits yesterday," said Mahmud Bassal, spokesman for the Gaza civil de-

fence agency.
"We are continuing the search operation today and are waiting for all graves to be exhumed in order to give a final number of martyrs." He said some of those killed had been tortured. "There were no clothes on some bodies, which certainly indicates

Philippines, US troops begin annual combat drills

Monitoring Desk MANILA: Nearly 17,000 Filipino and American troops will begin a threeweek joint combat training exercise in the Philippines on Monday involving maritime drills in the South China Sea where Manila and Beijing have sparred over maritime borders.France and Australia, which have ramped up defence ties with Manila in the face of China's aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea, will join the maritime exercises first time outside Philip-

pine territorial waters. The annual Balikatan "shoulder-to-shoulder" drills, which will run from April 22 to May 10, come amid an escalating diplomatic row and maritime encounters between the Philippines and China including the use of water cannon and heated verbal exchanges.

Beijing's increasing

pressure in the South China Sea has alarmed Manila, rival claimants to disputed martime territory, and other states operating there, including the United States which has reaffirmed its commitment to defend the Philippines against armed aggression in the South China Sea.

China claims most of the South China Sea, which is a conduit for more than \$3 trillion of annual ship-borne commerce. Beijing has to be conducted for the criticised the joint drills, saying they aggravate tensions and undermine

regional stability.

The Permanent
Court of Arbitration in the Hague ruled in 2016 that Beijing's expansive claims to the sea had no basis under international law China rejects the ruling and has built military facilities on disputed atolls to back up its claims.

Officials count votes during the parliamentary elec-

tions, at a polling station in Maldives's capital Male.

Landslide win for pro-China leader's party in Maldives vote

Monitoring Desk MALE: The party of Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu won control of parliament in a Sunday election landslide, results showed, with voters backing his tilt towards China and away from regional powerhouse and traditional benefactor India.

Muizzu's People's National Congress (PNC) won 66 of the first 86 seats declared, according to the Elections Comm-ission of Maldives results, already more than enough for a super-majority in the 93-

member majlis, or parliament. The vote was seen as a crucial test for Muizzu's plan to press ahead with closer economic coopera-

tion with China.
The PNC and its allies had only eight seats in the outgoing parliament, with the lack of a majority stymieing Muizzu after his presidential election victory in September.

The main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) — which had previously had a supermajority of its own.

First Iran group in nine years heads to Saudi Arabia for Umrah pilgrimage

Monitoring Desk

OUBAI: The first group of Iranian pilgrims in nine years made its way to Saudi Arabia on Monday for the Umrah, or minor pilgrimage, Iran's official news agency reported, as a result of improving ties between the two Middle Eastern

Iranian media had said in December that Saudi Arabia had lifted restrictions on Iranians wanting to perform Umrah but flights were delayed until now due to what Tehran called "technical problems' In March 2023, China

mediated an agreement under which Iran and Saudi Arabia restored full diplomatic relations that were cut since 2016 over Rivadh's execution of a Shi'ite Muslim cleric and the subsequent storming of the Saudi embassy in

Poland's prime minister celebrates after his party wins a string of cities in mayoral votes

WARSAW: Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk expressed satisfaction on Monday after a series of candidates supported by his party won weekend races for mayor. Candidates from his pro-European Union centrist Civic Coalition, or running with the party's backing, won in a series of cities in the second round of local elections held on Sunday, among them Krakow, Poznan, Wroclaw and Rzeszow.

"It is very difficult to clearly say who won and who lost," Tusk said Monday. "But if we compare these results, especially in the most attractive places, on these attractive battlefields ... then I actually have

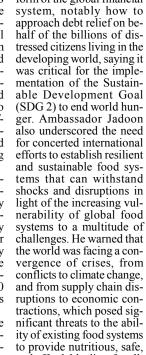
in occupied Crimea of Moscow's Black Sea Fleet. Navy spokesperson Dmytro Pletenchuk said the vessel, the Kommuna, had been hit in Sevastopol Bay on Sunday morning and it was "clear that the ship is no longer in a state to carry out assignments." A post on the Ukrainian Armed Forces Telegram channel said the ship was one of the oldest operated by the Russian navy.

Pakistan says it backs UN agency in ensuring food security

NATIONS form of the global financial just-concluded UN Economic and Social (ECOSOC) Youth Forum that it supports the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in creating a facility with broader and people-centric criteria to further strengthen it's efforts to defeat hunger, improve nutrition and food security in the developing

"We have considerable potential in the agriculture sector and could play an important role in building the global food supply Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan, said at the forum attended by over 1,000 youth leaders and activists from around the world.

At the same time, he extended Pakistan's support to the UN Secretary-





QUETTA: Provincial Advisor Mir Ali Hassan Zehri and MPA Mir Samad Khan Gorgage meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti. **Closing ceremony of Eiman Mela held:**

CM's vision is to provide healthy activities to women & youth: Farah

Independent Report QUETTA: The Member Provincial Assembly, Ms. Farah Azeem Shah has stated that it is vision of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti to provide healthy activities to the women and youth which increase their capabilities.

She was addressing the closing ceremony of Eiman Pakistan Mela arranged at the Liaquat Park on Sunday night.

Ms. Fatah Azeem Shah said that the objective behind holding the Eiman Pakistan Mela is to portray the positive image of Balochistan on one hand and provide opportunities to women to introduce their skills on the other hand, she

The lady MPA from Balochistan Awami Parry said that such melas also provide opportunity to the children to witness the dresses and other traditional items at the stalls set up in such festivals but they also benefit from their experiences and skills.

The members of provincial assembly, political personalities and other high ups participated in the ceremony. The women and children coming from different areas expressed their deep interest in the stalls of cultural dresses, handicrafts and different food items.

The singers presented national and traditional songs in the closing ceremony of Eiman Pakistan

women participated in the ceremony wearing tradi tional cultural dresses and

It may be mentioned here that Ms Farah Azeem Shah was the main organizer



QUEETA: Provincial advisor environment Naseem Ur Rehman addressing a press conference.

Bushra Bibi shifting to Adiala jail case: We don't want more delay: IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while seeking written arguments from the lawyers of Bushra Bibi wife of PTI founder on her petition in connection with her shifting from Bani Gala to Adiala jail has remarked we don't want more delay in

week. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked how chief commissioner can declare him provincial government. You have kept her in solitary confinement. This is in a way a torture.

The petition filed by Bushra Bibi requesting court for shifting her from Bani Gala to Adiala jail came up for hearing before Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb Monday.

Usman Riaz Gul and Khalid Yousuf Chaudhry appeared as counsels for Bushra Bibi.

State counsel said we on our own are seeing about case was adjourned till next establishment of sub jail.

We are seeing if any thing is not illegal.

Justice Miangul Hassan remarked how can chief commissioner declare himself provincial government. You have kept him in solitary confinement. This is in a way a torture,

The court remarked one writ and 6 miscella-The hearing of the case was adjourned till next in this case.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb while moving to state counsel said you have no grounds.

The court inquired

from the counsel do you too want to get shift Bushra Bibi from Bani Gala to Adiala iail.

The counsel Usman Riaz Gul said yes, we want to get transfer Bushra Bibi from Bani Gala to Adiala jail. The court while sum-

moning written arguments from lawvers of Bushra Bibi on next hearing remarked we want more delay is not made in this case. The hearing of the



in different fields between Iran and Pakistan.

NA reaffirms Pakistan's relationship with Iran

SLAMABAD (APP) The National Assembly on Monday emphasized the importance of Pakistan's relationship with its brotherly Islamic country Iran, highlighting the unity of the entire parliament and its members in nurturing these

While presiding over the sitting, the Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq stated, "We consider Iran as our

He highlighted his meeting with President of Iran, Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, where he was accompanied by a delegation comprising representatives from each political party from the lower house.

This gesture aimed to convey the message of the parliament's unity in strengthening relations with Iran, he added

Pakistan on track to secure new loan from IMF: FM

With macroeconomic factors shifting in Pakistan's favour, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that Islamabad is on track to secure a new loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the Washington-based lender. In an interview with

The National, the finance czar said: "The fund has been very receptive in terms of agreeing to consider a larger, longer programme." Pakistan has made a formal request to the IMF for another bailout package in the range of \$6 to \$8 billion under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the possibility of augmentation through climate financing. However, the exact size and time-frame will

only be determined after

major contours of the next programme in May 2024. Aurangzeb told the Abu Dhabi-based publica-

tion that the macroeco-

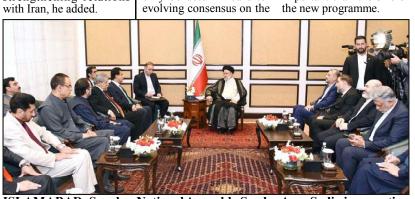
nomic factors are shifting in its favour as it works to boost its lagging economy.

The rupee has finally stabilised, he said, adding that the inflation is on track to drop to single-digit lev-

els by the end of next year. He further said that the cash-strapped nation would need at least three years of support to carry out a reform agenda across several sectors including

taxation and energy.

Last week, the global lender's Middle East and Central Asia director said the IMF was ready to sup-port Pakistan and the package of reforms is now more important than the size of the new programme.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in a meeting with President of Iran Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi.

Acting **Speaker** Most of the men and visits different sections of BA Secretariat

Independent Report QUETTA: The acting Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms Ghazala Gola visited different sections of the Assembly on Monday.

She was briefed about the Secretary Provincial Assembly and other senior officials about the overall functions and operations of

The acting Speaker went round of different sections of assembly and oversaw their functions.

It may be mentioned here that Deputy Speaker Ms Ghazala Gola has been serving as acting Speaker of the provincial assembly these days.

CDC of RMC calls emergency meeting on 25th April

Independent Report NOKUNDI: The Community Development Committee (CDC) of the Rekodiq Mining Company has called an emergency meeting on April 25 at the residence of its General Secretary, Haji Arz Mohammad Barech, to address the concerns and anxieties of the youth and the public regarding the irregularities in the employment process of the Rekodiq Project, the company'

policies, and other issues. The CDC members have stated that they will take a strong stance on prioritizing the social interests of the area and giving preference to local youth in the project. They said that if they cannot serve the public through the CDC, they will consider dissolving the committee. They also stated that this time, there will be a straightforward conversation with the responsible persons Rekodiq.

Asif Zardari seeks presidential immunity from court in NAB case

ISLAMABAD (Online): he does not appear then his The court has given indication to issue arrest warrants of president Asif Ali Zardari in NAB case while counsel for Asif Ali Zardari has sought presidential immunity from court.

According to media reports, Thatta water supply reference against Asif Ali Zardari and others came up for hearing in Accountability Court Islamabad Monday.

Judge Nasir Javed Rana of AC heard the case. Judge remarked during hearing of the case one ac-

cused has not signed roll. if

arrest warrants will be is-The counsel for presi-

dent Asif Ali Zardari sought presidential immunity saying petition has been filed on behalf of Asif Ali Zardari for presidential immunity.

The report regarding NAB presidential immunity was presented in the According to NAB re-

port under article 248 of the constitution president enjoys presidential immunity. The court adjourned the hearing of the case till



presenting a shield to newly appointed Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani.

Harnai-Sibi railway section restored for traffic after nine days

HARNAI (INP): Pakistan Railways has restored the Harnai-Sibi railway section for train service after nine days on Monday. The railway track was

damaged during recent flash floods generated by unprecedented rainfall in Balochistan.

The railways restored the track with repair after the train service suspended for nine days.

It is to be mentioned here that the Harnai-Sibi section of Pakistan Railways was restored last year in October for train service after closure of railway traffic for 18 years. The railway track was closed in February 2006. The railway's track

was made dysfunctional after a series of bomb blasts, which damaged 22 steel bridges in the highly rugged and inaccessible

In March 2016, a contract for rehabilitation and restoration of the Sibi-Harnai railway track along with the upgradation of railway stations was awarded to the

Pakistan, Iran sign eight accords to strengthen bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Iran on Monday signed a total of eight accords on varying subjects to enhance cooperation in the different fields included and Iran and Pakistan, was signed by Minister of Science and Technology Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Irania Minister of Science and Irania Minister of Sci to enhance cooperation in the different fields including trade, science technology, agriculture, health, culture, and judicial matters.

The documents were signed between the two countries on the occasion of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's three-day official visit to Pakistan. Prime Minister

Shehbaz Muhammad Sharif and President Raisi witnessed the ceremony as the representatives from both sides, signed the documents. The two countries signed an MoU on the Establishment of the Rimdan-Gabd Joint Free/Special Zone. The memorandum was inked by Secretary Board of Investment Ambreen Iftikhar and Iranian Advisor to President and Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Trade Industrial and Special Economic Zones Hojjatollah Abdolmaleki.

and Iranian Minister of Road and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash. An MoU on Coopera-

tion between the Ministry of Cooperative Labour and Social Welfare of Iran and the Ministry of Overseas Pakistani and Human Resources Development of Pakistan was also signed by Minister of Overseas Pakistani Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Iranian Min-

Bazrpash.
Minister of Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar and Iranian Minister of Justice Amin Hossein Rahimi inked an agreement on Judicial Assistance in Civil Matters between Iran and Pakistan Pakistan and Iran also

ister of Road and Urban

Development Mehrdad

signed an Agreement of Cooperation on Animal Hygiene and Health. The document was signed by Minister of National Food

nian Minister of Agriculture Jihad Mohammad Ali

Nikhakht. Similarly, the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in the Field of Ouarantine Phytosanitary was also inked by Minister of National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer

Hussain and Iran's Minis-

ter of Agriculture Jihad

Mohammad Ali Nikbakht. The two sides also signed an MoU for Legal Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice of Iran and the Ministry of Law and Justice of Pakistan. Minister of Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar and his Iranian counterpart Amin Hossein Rahimi signed the memorandum

An MoU between the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan and Organization of Cinema and Audiovisual Affairs of Iran was inked to promote film exchange and cinema cooperation between



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani in a meeting with

Gillani calls for enhancing parliamentary engagements between Pakistan and Iran

past visits to Iran, where

he emphasized the im-

relations between the

Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gillani on Monday extended a warm welcome to the Iranian President Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation, and called for enhancing parliamentary engagements, fostering regional cooperation, and further improving bilateral relations between Pakistan strong ties between the two

During the meeting, the chairman emphasized the deep historical ties between his family and Iran, tracing back to his ancestor, Hazrat Ghaus-ul-Azam, said a news release issued by the Senate Secre-

He reiterated the per-

He recalled that Iran was the first country to rec-

Reaffirming the endurserve as the bedrock of for-

sonal significance of his regional stability and pros-

portance of bilateral dia- ment to enhancing parlialogue in strengthening mentary cooperation, the chairman underscored the need for greater inter-parliamentary engagements and ognize Pakistan in 1947, exchange programs further solidifying the aimed at bolstering the capacity and expertise of parliamentary staff.

He also shared coning cordial relations be- cerns over recent developtween Pakistan and Iran, the ments in Indian Illegally chairman celebrated the Occupied Jammu and Kashstrong bilateral ties mir, highlighting the volagrounded in shared values tile situation and expressed and cultural heritage. He gratitude for Iran's continemphasized that these ties ued support towards the just cause of the Kashmiri eign policy, contributing to people.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding utilization of colleges for certification course in 2nd time from national level Universities.

Govt renames Islamabad's new highway as Iran Avenue

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has decided to name a new highway in Islamabad after the brotherly neighbouring country, Íran.

Islamabad's Eleventh Avenue has been named Iran Avenue as per the federal government's decision. The decision has been accorded by the federal cabinet on the CDA summary through circulation. It may be noted that the CDA has started the construction of Eleventh Avenue. Iranian Presi-dent Ebrahim Raisi today arrived in Pakistan for a three-day official visit.

The Iranian president reached the federal capital with his spouse, a high-level delegation of cabinet members and senior officials. The Foreign Office

(FO) said Raisi arrived at the Islamabad airport and was received by Housing Minister Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada and Pakistan's Ambassador to Iran Mudassir Tipu.

WB initiates Integrated Flood Resilience & **Adaptation Project costing** Rs. 8.8 bn in Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: The World Bank has started the Integrated Flood Resilience and Adaptation Project costing Rs. 8.8 billion for construction and repair of different infrastructure affected during floods in the Balochistan province.

In addition to this, the World Bank is also going to start another project of 100 million US dollars namely Balochistan Water Security Productivity Improvement Project. This project would help meet the water shortage in Quetta city besides improving the Kachhi plane flood management.

This was informed by the delegation of World Bank who called on the Provincial Minister for Irrigation, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani here on Mon-

World Bank, Yoro Sidibe best quality of work on the

Also present on the occasion were Secretary Irrigation, Hafiz Abdul Majid, Project Director of Balochistan Integrated Water Resource Management and Development Project, Barkatullah Kakar and other concerned high ups.

The members of delegation briefed the ongoing and new projects of the World Bank It was informed that the Balochistan Integrated

Water Resource Management and Development Project would complete in beginning of year 2025. This project is being

executed at cost of Rs. 14.747 billion. The Provincial Minis-

ter on the occasion appreciated World Bank's initiatives in water sector in the province

He directed to the con-The team leader of cerned authorities to ensure projects with transparency.

NA unanimously passes resolution to address plastic pollution

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly on Monday unanimously passed a resolution, calling for coordinated efforts among citizens, organizations, and government entities to tackle the global challenge of plastic pollu-

The resolution, presented by Federal Minister

Azam Nazir Tarar on World Earth Day, said that the the Ministry of Climate Government of Pakistan acknowledged the critical importance of safeguarding the planet, its environment, and ecosys-

It highlights the detrimental impact of plastic pollution on Pakistan's en-

The resolution said Change recognised the paramount importance of preserving the environment and ecosystems.

It emphasized the urgent need to combat plastic pollution, as highlighted by the theme "Planet versus Plastic," and safeguard the



QUETTA: A delegation led by team lead of World Bank Yoro Sidibe meeting with Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Sadiq

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