

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Hub

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 61, Ramzan 23, 1445 AH Wednesday April 03, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif casting his vote at the Senate elections at Parliament House.

PM terms promotion of foreign direct investment as top priority

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday highlighted that promoting foreign direct investment (FDI) in the country to transform challenges into opportunities was top priority of the government.

He was chairing a high level meeting to review progress on foreign investment. The meeting reviewed in detail the progress on the memorandum of understandings (MoUs) and agreements with the Gulf countries under Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

Talking to participants of the meeting, the prime minister said all possible facilities will be given to the investors adding that special cells in the federal ministries will be established to promote innovation and research in the investment sector.

The prime minister said the establishment of SIFC had helped restoring confidence of the investors. He directed that a feasibility study should be conducted for such projects which had the potential to attract investors and the services of internationally recognized experts should be obtained in this regard.

He emphasized that there should be no compromise on the quality of the projects presented for investment. The prime minister also directed all the ministries to further improve their relations with the Gulf countries regarding the progress on their respective MoUs.

He said all the necessary requirements should be fulfilled with respect to the foreign investment in the solar energy projects in Muzaffar Garh, Layyah

Role of political cadre important in becoming voice of voiceless, says Governor Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that the role of political cadres is very important in creating collective sense among masses, establishing balance between rights and duties besides becoming the voice of voiceless people.

The Governor was speaking to the president of National Party and former Chief Minister, Dr Abdul Malik Baloch who called on him here at the Governor House on Tuesday.

The Governor said that new courses have been determined for the young lot because of the modern science and technology.

Therefore, it is necessary for the new generation to benefit from the modern researches and creations.

He said that there is always mutual coordination between the rights and duties and human being gets ready to perform their duties after getting their rights.

The Governor said that political organization and politics of public is the conscious partnership in which the human being sets collective point of view through discipline.

The Governor also said that there is an important role of dutifulness and sense of responsibility in all sections of life.

He said that the sense of responsibility can prove to be helpful in achieving the destination.



QUETTA: Former Chief Minister Balochistan, MPA Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

IGP chairs crucial meeting on performance of Quetta Safe City Project

Independent Report

QUETTA: A high level meeting was held to review the performance and utilization of Quetta Safe City Project here on Tuesday.

The Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh presided over the meeting.

While the Deputy Inspector Generals of police, AIGP Quetta ITCP, AIGP Operations, SSP Traffic, Project Director Safe City Project, Deputy Director ITCPO were present in the meeting, the Commandant PTC Quetta participated in the meeting through video link.

The meeting reviewed the performance of Quetta

Umar Ayub appointed as opposition leader in NA

ISLAMABAD (Online): Speaker National Assembly (NA) has appointed Umar Ayyub Khan as opposition leader Speaker Ayyaz Sadiq has issued notification of appointment of Umar Ayub Khan.

Umar Ayub Khan will assume charge of his office after issuance of notification.

The process of scrutiny in respect of opposition leader was completed in speaker office.

The speaker declared Umar AYub opposition leader after his satisfaction.

Imran Khan tells court 'Bushra Bibi poisoned in Bani Gala sub-jail'

RAWALPINDI (Agencies): Incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan Tuesday apprised the court that his wife and ex-first lady Bushra Bibi was poisoned at the Bani Gala sub-jail.

The PTI founder made the claim during a hearing of the £190 million settlement case in Rawalpindi's Adiala jail. Khan informed the accountability court judge that the former first lady had marks on her skin and tongue after "being poisoned". He sought the court's order for an inquiry into the incident and a complete medical checkup of Bushra Bibi. Khan said: "I know who is behind it."

He insisted that the medical examination of the former first lady should be done by Dr. Asim Yunus, a doctor at Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre.



MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmiris protesting against Indian brutalities and demanding UN to take notice on completion of 1700 days of Indian military siege on occupied Kashmir in the city.

PM felicitates newly elected senators Ruling alliance sweeps Senate polls with PPP grabbing 11, PML-N six seats

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb win from Islamabad and Punjab, respectively; polls postponed in KP amid oath-taking dispute

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Tuesday took the lead in the Senate polls with 11 seats, while Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) clinched six seats.

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) and an independent candidate Faisal Vawda secured one seat each.

The polling for the 19 vacant seats was held in the National, Punjab, and Sindh assemblies while elections on 11 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's seats were postponed by the Election Commission over the "denial" of oath-taking to the lawmakers elected on reserved seats.

Overall 356 lawmakers cast their votes in the upper house of parliament's elections, whereas, votes of seven NA lawmakers were rejected.

ISLAMABAD

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar won on a technocrat seat from Islamabad, garnering 222 votes with Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) Raja Ansar Mehmood coming in second with 81.

Meanwhile, PPP's Rana Mehmoodul Hassan secured 224 votes to win the general seat in Islamabad while PTI's Farzand Hussain Shah garnered 79 votes.

In Punjab, all seven candidates vying for the general seats in Punjab were elected unopposed at the end of March. Today, polls were held on two women and technocrats seats each and one minority seat.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and Petroleum Minister Musadique Malik were successful on the two technocrat seats, garnering 128 and 121 votes, respectively.

In Punjab, PML-N's Anusha Rehman and Bushra Anjum were successful on two seats reserved for women, garnering 125 and 123 votes, respectively. PML-N's Khalil Tahir Sindhu was successful on a minority seat.

Sindh In Sindh, the ruling PPP secured 10 of the 12 seats up for grabs. The remaining two were won by the MQM-P and an independent candidate.

On general seats, PPP's Ashraf Ali Jatoti (22 votes), Dost Ali Jessar (21 votes), Kazim Ali Shah (21 votes), Masroor Ahsan (21 votes), Nadeem Bhutto (21 votes) were successful.

MQM-P's Amir Chishti (21 votes) and independent Faisal Vawda (21 votes) also won from a general seat. A day earlier, the PPP had decided to withdraw one of its candidates to support Vawda.

On the technocrat seats, PPP's Zamir Ghumro (58 votes) and Sarmad Ali (57 votes) were successful. PPP's Rubina Saadat Qaimkhani (57 votes) and Quratulain Marri (58 votes) won on two seats reserved for women.

PPP's Poonjo Bheel (117 votes) was also successful on a minority seat.

Prior to the polls, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah had expressed the hope for all PPP candidates to be elected to the Senate. Speaking to the media outside the Sindh Assembly, he said that Sarfaraz Rajar withdrew his nomination papers on the party's directives as the party was Vawda.

In an indirect reference to the PTI, CM Shah said that those who made tall claims about giving surprises in the Senate election finally retreated from the arena and boycotted the election from Sindh.

In its notification, the ECP stated that polls for the Senate seats of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will not be held until the administration of oath to the elected members against the reserved seats.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif felicitated the newly elected senators on their success and expressed good wishes.

In his congratulatory message, the prime minister said the Senate elections were the continuation of democratic process.

He hoped that senators will play their role for the uplift of the constitution and the development of the country.

Newly elected senators should participate in effective legislation for public welfare and national development and prosperity, he said.

Pak, Kazakhstan express keen interest to deepen collaboration on regional, int'l issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Kazakhstan have underscored the shared commitment to strengthen bilateral ties and deepen collaboration on regional and international issues of mutual interest.

The commitment was made during a meeting between Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin and Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif in Islamabad



on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Ambassador shed light on Kazakhstan's chairmanship in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the forthcoming events scheduled to take place in Kazakhstan.

In response, Khawaja Asif emphasized the significant potential for further enhancing cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan across various sectors, including military, military-technical, and other strategic domains.

Our's responsibility to restore trust of masses on State & it's system, says Chief Minister

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has urged all the members of provincial assembly from treasury benches to give patient hearing to the general public issues.

In a statement issued here on the matter of heated conversation between a government member of assembly and a professor of Balochistan university on occasion of the protest outside provincial assembly the other day, the Chief Minister said we are elected representatives of the public and as such it is our responsibility to hear the public problems and resolve them.

He said that we have got the mandate of resolving the issues of masses and it's our responsibility to restore public confidence on the state and it's system.

The Chief Minister said that where government would commit a mistake it would tender apology.

He said that public service is our motto, we can make mistake but don't do dishonesty. He said that there's a great respect of women in the politics of Pakistan and especially for the Peoples' Party, he added. He recalled that two women Mohtarma Nusrat Bhutto and Bibi Benazir Bhutto Shaheed led the party.

He said that whether there are issues of the universities of the province or the issues of governance, we need public support to resolve the same. The Chief Minister vowed to resolve the financial crisis of the public sector universities, and adding he stressed that the reasons behind the same would also be ascertained.

Speaker NA calls on President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

During the meeting, the speaker congratulated the president on assuming his office, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Matters related to parliamentary affairs and legislation were also discussed during the meeting.

EC suspends notification of success of speaker BA in PB-51

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has suspended the notification of success in respect of speaker Balochistan Assembly (BA) speaker BA Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

The petitions filed by candidates Abaseen Achakzai and Asghar Achakzai against result of PB-51 Chamman came up for hearing before Election Commission.

The election commission while accepting the plea suspended the notification of success of speaker Balochistan Assembly besides ordering re-polling in 12 polling stations of PB-51 Chamman.

PTI attempts to politicize matter of judges' letter: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarrar Tuesday said that statements of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI), and its founder were an attempt to politicize the suo-motu action of Supreme Court in matter of IHC judges' letter.

Giving reaction on a statement of PTI leader Barrister Gohar, the minister said that only the Constitution would be followed in this country, adding that what the PTI founder said was not a law.

He said that those who had been making references against judges in their regime shouldn't give advice to the government.

The law minister said that Barrister Gohar who himself was a lawyer should know that the bench has been formed under Article 184(3) of the Constitution.

Azam Nazeer Tarrar said that a full court of SC has issued a declaration for interrogation of the judges' letter. He said that it was the discretion of the Chief Justice of Pakistan and a committee of senior judges to form the bench on any matter.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Wang Wenbin says China firmly supports Pak counterterrorism efforts

Will provide necessary assistance in the investigation of Dasu terrorist attack

BEIJING (APP): China firmly supports Pakistan's counterterrorism measures and will provide necessary assistance in the investigation of Dasu terrorist attack, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday.

China firmly supports Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts, Wang Wenbin said during his regular briefing in response to a question asked by APP about Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's assurance of foolproof security measures for the Chinese national working on Dasu Hydropower Project as well as across the country and exemplary punishment for the perpetrators of March 26 attack.

The spokesperson said, since the attack, China has been in close communication with Pakistan and added, we hope that Pakistan will get to bottom of what happened with utmost resolve and efforts, bring the perpetrators and whoever behind the attack to justice and do everything possible to protect the safety and security of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in the country.

Wang Wenbin remarked that China firmly safeguards the safety and security of Chinese nationals, projects and institutions overseas.

"China will provide necessary assistance to Pakistan in the investigation of the case," he said.



President Balochistan National Party Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal enquiring about health of Central President Awami National Party Asfandyar Wali Khan

Islamabad court acquits Imran in vandalism case

ISLAMABAD (INP): In yet another relief for the former prime minister and ex-PTI chairman Imran Khan, a court in Islamabad on Tuesday acquitted him, ex-PTI leader Asad Umar and other suspects, including PML-N MNA Raja Khurram Nawaz, in the case of vandalism registered against them at Margallah police station.

Judicial Magistrate Mureed Abbas pronounced the decision.

Advocate Sardar Masroof Khan and Amina Ali appeared in the court on behalf of the suspects.

The decision came only a day after the

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Letter inquiry

There has been a twist in the tale. After the Supreme Court last week deferred to the federal cabinet, asking it to deal with a disturbing letter six Islamabad High Court justices had addressed to the chief justice, observers had worried that a government-sponsored inquiry into intelligence operatives' alleged interference in judicial affairs would prove to be a non-starter.

Even as voices from within the legal community were still criticising the Supreme Court for neglecting its responsibility and ceding full control over the inquiry to the government, a respected former judge, retired chief justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, was duly appointed to head the inquiry commission tasked with looking into the judges' letter.

By Monday, however — following an open statement from more than 300 lawyers, amidst whispers that the six IHC justices may be considering directly petitioning the Supreme Court, and a polite 'no, thank you' from Mr Jilani — the scheme seemed to have fallen apart.

Accepting demands that the letter be taken up by the Supreme Court under its jurisdiction defined in Article 184(3), Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa announced on Monday that his court had taken suo motu notice of the matter. A seven-member bench will take the case up for hearing tomorrow. Although some concerns regarding the size and composition of the bench have been raised by certain quarters, the development is a breakthrough for the legal community and is being seen as a positive step.

It is hoped that the court will now arrange for the proceedings to be broadcast live, as in past important cases. The issues raised by the six justices of the Islamabad High Court have caused quite a sensation, and it would, therefore, be in the public interest if they are also addressed transparently.

The legal community deserves much credit for refusing to accept a compromise in the form of an inquiry commission and pushing for the letter to be taken up by the Supreme Court.

Mr Jilani's well-reasoned refusal to sit in inquiry over six serving justices also deserves commendation. The former chief justice of Pakistan, while thanking the government for its consideration, courteously pointed out that since the letter had been addressed to the Supreme Judicial Council and its chairman, it would be improper of him to interfere in an institutional matter. He also objected to the inquiry's terms of reference, as set by the government, noting that they did not seem relevant to the issue raised in the judges' letter, namely, a consultation on what judges must do when they are placed under duress. In doing so, Mr Jilani greatly strengthened the argument that others had been making: the judiciary must address this issue internally. One now hopes it will do so enthusiastically.

"Should Dr. Arif Alvi Fill the Leadership Vacuum in PTI?"

By Qamar Bashir

Press Secretary to the President(Rtd); Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC



Dr. Arif Alvi, the former President, possesses a wealth of attributes that make him a distinguished figure in the political arena. In essence, Dr. Alvi embodies the qualities of an astute politician with a positive, creative, and non-violent approach to governance. Dr. Arif Alvi's political journey began in 1979 with Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), where he opposed martial law under General Zia-ul-Haq. He later became a founding member of PTI in 1996, serving as its Sindh president. Despite navigating through General Pervez Musharraf's martial law, he secured a National Assembly seat from Karachi in 2013 and won against MQM-P heavyweight Dr. Farooq Sattar in 2018. Known for his loyalty to Imran Khan, Alvi assumed the presidency in 2018, navigating Pakistan's volatile political landscape effectively with a few hiccups here and there.

derscores the urgency for Alvi to step up, especially as other key leaders of PTI find themselves either in jail or in hiding due to alleged state oppression. As PTI grapples with these unprecedented challenges, Alvi's leadership and guidance could prove instrumental in navigating the party through turbulent times and charting a course towards stability and resilience.

PTI's leadership is currently dominated by lawyers, often labeled as "paratroopers" by analysts. These individuals lack a political background and grassroots support, making them ill-equipped to handle the intricacies of political maneuvering effectively. Their tendency to resort to legal battles instead of leveraging popular support has been detrimental to the party's interests. This lack of political acumen has significantly undermined PTI's standing and effectiveness, leading to its near-complete disarray.

Their failures have been glaring: firstly, their inability to defend their own chairman entangled in numerous frivolous cases and subsequent incarceration. Secondly, their failure to secure the release of key political figures and thousands of workers unjustly imprisoned. Thirdly, the loss of the party's election symbol resulted in a significant blow to PTI's electoral prospects and brand value. Fourthly, their actions inadvertently led to the absorption of newly elected members into a sectarian political party, further tarnishing PTI's identity. Lastly, they were unable to defend the allocation of reserve seats for women and minorities, strengthening rival parties at PTI's expense. These

missteps have not only weakened PTI but have also alienated certain segments of its support base.

Their professional mindset predisposes them to view fellow lawyers as adversaries, contributing to a lack of unity within PTI. This absence of cohesion, a hallmark of effective political parties, has left PTI fractured. Divergent opinions among self-assumed leaders mirror the courtroom dynamics of lawyers competing for favorable outcomes, resulting in internal discord and confusion. As a consequence, PTI finds itself in a state of disarray, unable to present a unified front or pursue a cohesive agenda.

During the PTI government, I had the privilege of serving as Director General to two PTI ministers, Fawad Hussain and Shibli Faraz, and developed a close relationship with Mr. Shah Mehmood Qureshi. From my experiences accompanying Mr. Qureshi on official and unofficial engagements as Press Attache in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and later in Geneva, Switzerland, I observed their exceptional abilities. In my opinion, their presence at the forefront of PTI leadership, the lawyers and Mr. Raof Hassan had a marginal role in PTI decision making. But in the absence of the political leadership, despite their sincere intentions, these lawyers-turned-PTI leaders have inadvertently damaged the party's standing and undermined the political capital built by PTI's founder, Mr. Imran Khan.

While PTI owes gratitude to lawyers and Mr. Raof Hassan, who is renowned for his exceptional writing and keen political insight, it is undeniable

that they cannot match the experience and expertise of genuine politicians due to many pressing reasons.

Genuine politicians bring years of political activism, governance, and public service to their roles, allowing them to navigate complex challenges with finesse. Their understanding of political dynamics, constituency needs, and policymaking processes equips them to handle intricate political maneuvering, coalition-building, and effective constituency engagement. In contrast, lawyers-turned-politicians may initially lack direct political experience, presenting challenges in grasping the nuances of political dynamics and effectively engaging with constituents.

Secondly, genuine politicians often have strong roots in their constituencies and a profound connection with the concerns and aspirations of the people they represent. Their longstanding presence and engagement within communities allow them to establish meaningful connections with constituents and address their needs effectively. Conversely, lawyers-turned-politicians may encounter difficulties in building such connections, especially if they lack prior experience in community engagement or grassroots organizing.

Thirdly, genuine politicians typically demonstrate strong leadership qualities, including the ability to make tough decisions, build consensus, and inspire confidence among party members and supporters. Their leadership is characterized by a keen understanding of political dynamics and a commitment to advancing the interests of their constituents. While lawyers-turned-politicians may bring ana-

lytical skills and legal expertise to the table, they may face challenges in adapting their approach to the broader demands of political leadership, including building alliances and navigating internal party dynamics.

Given the context outlined above, it becomes apparent why it is crucial for former President Alvi, a close associate of Imran Khan and someone with deep ties to PTI, to step forward and provide political leadership to the party.

As a genuine politician with years of experience in governance and public service, Alvi possesses the necessary acumen to navigate the complex challenges faced by PTI. His understanding of constituency needs and ability to establish meaningful connections with constituents can help reinvigorate the party's grassroots support.

Moreover, Alvi's demonstrated leadership qualities, including his track record of making tough decisions and building consensus, make him well-suited to unite the party and provide a clear direction amidst internal turmoil. His commitment to advancing the interests of PTI supporters and addressing their concerns underscores the importance of his leadership at this critical juncture.

By stepping forward, Alvi can work towards reclaiming PTI's iconic symbol and disassociating it from sectarian affiliations, thereby restoring the party's brand value and integrity. Additionally, his efforts to secure the release of Imran Khan and other imprisoned party members would signal a commitment to upholding democratic principles and ensuring justice for all PTI members.

With over ten months of experience working closely with Dr. Arif Alvi as his press secretary and media advisor, I can attest to his wisdom, articulate nature, and exceptional team-building skills. As a statesman, Dr. Alvi envisions a vibrant, forward-looking, modern, and prosperous Pakistan. During his over five-year tenure, he persistently masterminded Pakistan-specific COVID-19 protocols, saving many lives and positioning the country favorably compared to others worldwide. Dr. Alvi emphasized the importance of fast-tracked education and skill development through smart and effective short-duration courses to uplift illiterate and unskilled segments, transforming them into wealth-generating assets. He advocated for leveraging the latest technological advancements such as quantum computing, internet of things, big data management, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. Additionally, he highlighted the significance of research and development as essential for achieving fast-track progress and development. On the social front, Dr. Alvi's advocacy for early detection of breast cancer, addressing mental health issues, and promoting inclusivity for differently-abled individuals underscores his commitment to social causes.

Overall, Alvi's leadership is essential in reasserting PTI's position as a formidable political force, reuniting the party under a unified vision, and overcoming the challenges that lie ahead. His experience, integrity, and dedication to serving the people make him a fitting candidate to lead PTI effectively and take the country towards a brighter future.

Commerce News

Pakistan implementing an economic reform plan critical for a robust recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP): The World Bank on Tuesday said that Pakistan was implementing an ambitious, credible and clearly communicated economic reform plan critical for robust recovery and poverty reduction.

Pakistan's economy is expected to grow by only 1.8 percent in the current fiscal year ending June 2024. According to the

World Bank's latest Pakistan Development Update titled Fiscal Impact of Federal State-Owned Enterprises, this subdued recovery reflects tight monetary and fiscal policy, continued import management measures aimed at preserving scarce foreign reserves, and muted economic activity amid weak confidence.

The Update also

highlights the high fiscal costs of federal state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and the critical reforms needed to improve their performance, efficiency and governance through privatization. After a contraction in FY23, the economic activity has strengthened over the first half of FY24 on the back of strong agricultural output, the report said.

According to the report, together with improved confidence, also supported some recovery in other sectors. But growth remains insufficient to reduce poverty, with 40 percent of Pakistanis now living below the poverty line. Macroeconomic risks remain very high amid a large debt burden and limited foreign exchange reserves.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding export sector.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Mr Jam Kamal Khan, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Delegation of All-Pakistan Car Dealers Association calls on Excise Minister KP

Independent Report PESHAWAR: A delegation, led by Ghulam Bilal Javed, Chairman of All Pakistan Car Dealers Association, and President of Peshawar Traders Chamber, met with the Provincial Minister for Excise, Taxation and Narcotics, Khaleeq Ur Rehman here on Tuesday.

The focus of the discussion was on a critical issue affecting the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A few months ago, the association successfully advocated for the approval of an Islamabad Excise facilitation desk to assist Peshawar residents with

the verification of Islamabad registered vehicles.

However, the KP caretaker government abruptly halted this process. In response, the delegation, under Ghulam Bilal Javed's leadership, urged the Provincial Minister to reinstate the desk.

Ghulam Bilal Javed highlighted the significant inconvenience and financial burden faced by Peshawar residents in traveling to Islamabad for vehicle verification, costing them approximately twenty-five thousand rupees and consuming their entire day.

UAE envoy calls on Commerce Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador to Pakistan, Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi, on Tuesday engaged in a fruitful discussion with Pakistan's Federal Minister for Commerce.

The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest and strategies to enhance bilateral trade.

During the meeting, Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal, emphasized the strong brotherhood relations between the two nations, which have continued to strengthen over time, said a press release issued here.

He emphasized the need to further bolster these ties on the commercial front.

Industry needs competitive energy rates to play role in national development: PBF

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Tuesday said that attempts to stem the growth of the energy circular debt through tariff increases was not a sustainable way.

Chairman PBF Punjab Muhammad Naseer Malik said fifty six percent of direct taxes are paid by industry, which is more than twice its share in the GDP. Denying industry competitive energy tariffs undermines its positive contribution to the economy. "Tariff increases may provide short-term

relief to the fiscal deficit but undermine the health of the economy," he added.

Muhammad Naseer Malik further stated that since 2013, we have been adding capacity by persuading companies that they will get payments against capacity addition regardless of whether the electricity is sold or not. This condition may have been the ground reality of that time when the country needed more capacity and this was the only way of gaining investors' confidence but now the policy should be revisited.

JazzCash launches Islamic savings with highest daily halal profits

ISLAMABAD (APP): JazzCash, Pakistan's largest fintech organisation, has launched its Islamic savings product with the highest daily halal profit rates.

The product offers customers free accidental insurance upon subscribing to the service, giving them an added layer of protection from life's uncertainties said a news release. Murtaza Ali, Head of JazzCash, said, "JazzCash's philosophy

has been to build products that suit our people's needs. With Shariah-compliant Savings, we are bridging a crucial gap that, in the past, has prevented people from adopting fintech solutions."

He further added, "We are grateful to Salaam Takaful for enabling us to offer free accidental insurance to customers subscribing to Islamic Savings, paving the way for a secure future for the communities we serve."

PM for mechanism to double country's exports in five years

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed for formulation of a strategy aimed at two-fold increase in the country's exports within next five years. He also asked the Ministry of Trade for compiling of such a strategy in consultation with the successful entrepreneurs and stakeholders.

The prime minister chaired a high level meeting on the export sector.

The meeting was attended by ministers including Jam Kamal, Rana

Tanveer Hussain, prominent e-Commerce entrepreneurs like CEO Utopia Jabran Niaz, Zeeshan Shah, Salman Ahmed and other relevant authorities, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the prime minister directed for extending facilitation to exporters in the e-Commerce sector who had been exporting country's product to the world, besides resolution of the issues of "Made in Pakistan" brand exporters.

He said that they were taking steps for maximum

utilization of the export sector, adding for the promotion of IT, domestic use item, textile and other exceptional sectors, the relevant stakeholders should be taken on board.

The meeting was apprised of proposals and recommendations for the development of export sector and the strategy in this regard.

The prime minister underlined for submission of recommendations over promotion of such industries that were exporting such items which had been part of the global value chains.

Gold rates dip by Rs.500 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed a decrease of Rs500 and was sold at Rs237,100 on Tuesday as compared to its last day rate at Rs237,600. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs429 and was sold at Rs203,275 against the sale price of Rs203,704 and 10 gram 22 karat gold also decreased to Rs186,335 as from Rs186,728, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver also witnessed no change and was traded at Rs.2,600 and Rs.2,211.93 respectively.

IT exports increases by 31.79% in February 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's ICT services export remittances saw a remarkable surge to US\$ 257 million in February 2024, marking an impressive increase of 31.79 percent compared to \$195 million in February 2023.

According to the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication, ICT export remittances

witnessed a substantial rise by \$ 257 million (14.94%) to reach \$ 1.977 billion during July 2023 to February 2024 of FY2023-

24, compared to \$ 1.70 billion reported for the same period last year.

This surge can be attributed to the concerted efforts of the Ministry of IT & Telecommunication and the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) in collaboration with the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to enhance the ease of doing business environment.

Their initiatives have bolstered confidence within the IT industry, resulting in an uptick in IT & ITeS export remittance receipts.

Momination papers of Murad, Swati others PHC dismisses petitions against acceptance for senate election

PESHAWAR (Online): Peshawar High Court (PHC) while upholding appellate tribunal decision has dismissed the petitions against approval of nomination papers of PTI leaders Murad Saeed, Azam Swati and others for Senate election.

They are candidates for Senate election.

The petition against acceptance of nomination papers of Murad Saeed for Senate election came up for hearing before Justice Arshid Ali and Justice Waqar Ahmad of PHC Tuesday.

The counsel for

Murad Saeed told the court Taj Muhammad Afridi has withdrawn his nomination papers and he is no more candidate for Senate election. He cannot raise objection now being not candidate for Senate election. Amir Javed advocate took the plea in the court Taj Muhammad Afridi is complainant from the very beginning. He was candidate at the time of filing papers. Murad Saeed has not provided details of the cases. Murad Saeed has not shown his assets. Murad Saeed has not deposited amount of fine imposed on him for

violating code of conduct. Amir Javed advocate told the court the nomination papers of Murad Saeed for the election of National assembly were rejected for not depositing fine. Appeal has to be filed by oneself but Murad Saeed is absconding.

Justice Arshid Ali remarked Supreme Court has made clear regarding abscondment.

Petition has been filed in PHC in connection with details of cases while assets have been shown. FBR documents are attached therein.



LAHORE: Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly, Malik Muhammad Ahmad Bachar is talking to the media with other MPs, on the occasion of the senate election.

Minister for regularization of tourism activities to increase revenue, service delivery

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Tourism, Zahid Chanzab has stressed to regulate tourism activities of development authorities in upper areas and said that it would help enhance service delivery system and increasing revenue generation.

He was talking to Director General (DG) Kaghan Development Authority (KDA), Muhammad Shabbir here on Tuesday. The minister highlighted the need of legislation to regulate tourism activities of

developmental authorities and said that it would positively impact service delivery and increasing revenue generation.

He said that proper regulation would also help discovering new avenues of tourism and attract visitors to KP. He also directed foolproof security measures for tourists in Eid season and expressed hope that the authority would provide all the needed facilities to visitors.

The minister also directed to expedite pace of developmental work on Kaghan Valley Township Scheme.

Court decision allowing Pervaiz to contest election challenged

LAHORE (Online): The single bench decision on allowing former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Pervaiz Elahi to contest by election has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC).

One chaudhry Muhammad Arshid has filed petition in LHC against allowing Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi from contesting by polls in PP-32. The petitioner has made Pervaiz Elahi, Election Commission and others respondent.

Minister Health approves promotion of 305 nurses

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Minister Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah on Tuesday approved promotion and placement of 305 nursing staff promoted through departmental promotion committee in the Health Department.

Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah stated that The Director General of Health Services will issue announcements regarding the placement of these nurses in various hospitals of the province. Following the approval of the Minister of Health, the services of these nurses will be assigned to different hospitals across the province. Out of these nurses, 156 have been promoted based on education, and 136 on seniority. The Minister of

Health emphasized that promotion in service is a fundamental right of employees, and placements will address the shortage of nurses in various hospitals of the province.

On the other hand, Minister of Health, Syed Qasim Ali Shah, chaired a meeting with a delegation representing Young Doctors Association, Provincial Doctors Association, and other forums led by Doctor Nabi Jan Afridi focal person to health minister for health community.

During the meeting, discussions were held regarding the installation of prepaid electric meters at Lady Reading Hospital doctor's hostel and officers of medical concerns regarding this matter.



LAHORE: Students watching the calligraphy exhibition at Alhamra Art Council.

Committee formed to ensure child birth registration

LAHORE (APP): A meeting on Tuesday decided to form a committee to prepare recommendations to ensure the registration of children at the time of birth. The committee will comprise the secretary of Local Government Department, special secretary of Health Department, chairman of Punjab Information Technology Board, director-general of National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), and the Punjab member of National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC).

Chief Secretary Punjab

Zahid Akhtar Zaman and Chairperson of the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC) Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq attended the meeting held at the Civil Secretariat. The meeting also decided to depute the Secretary of Implementation and Coordination as the focal person for enhancing coordination with the NCRC. Speaking on the occasion, the chief secretary said that birth registration was very important for the protection of children's rights and provision of better health and education.

CM Punjab takes action on Bahawalnagar student rape

BAHAWALNAGAR (APP): Following the disturbing incident of a student's kidnapping and rape at Islamia University's Bahawalnagar Campus, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz has swiftly intervened on Tuesday.

Expressing grave concern, CM Maryam Nawaz has ordered the immediate arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators.

Sub inspector suspended for getting bribe

ATTOCK (APP): The District Police Officer Attock on Tuesday suspended a Sub Inspector and charge sheet was issued to station house officer.

Police sources said that District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan immediately suspended Sub-Inspector Aizaz Ali posted at Jand police station for keeping a poor person including a loader rickshaw in the police station.

1186 FIRs registered against electricity theft in Rwp Division

RAWALPINDI (APP): 1186 FIRs had been registered against electricity theft in Rawalpindi division, said Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Engineer Aamir Khattak here on Tuesday.

Chairing a meeting held here at Commissioner's Office Rawalpindi to prevent electricity theft, the commissioner informed that 1186 cases had been registered in Rawalpindi

Division since 7 September 2023, while 994 accused were arrested and over Rs 88 million were recovered. He directed the authorities to ensure 100 percent electricity theft recoveries in all districts of the division.

He ordered to complete all the arrangements for power supply especially in Murree during Eid days.

Two brothers shot dead in Bahawalnagar

BAHAWALNAGAR (INP): Unidentified armed men gunned down two real brothers in Kora Khoh area of Bahawalnagar on Tuesday.

According to details, two brothers riding a motorcycle on their way to appear in court in a case were ambushed by unknown gunmen.

Both brothers identified as Sabir and Naha Khan were killed in the firing and attackers fled the scene of crime.

Rs 30.5b distributed among 2.9m families under BISP so far: DG Punjab

MULTAN (APP): Director General, Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Punjab Nadeem Alam Butt said on Tuesday that disbursement of quarterly grants, recently enhanced by the government to Rs 10,500 per registered family, was in progress and so far a sum of Rs 30.5 billion has been distributed among over 2.9 million families under strict monitoring by BISP

field teams across the province.

BISP was country's biggest social protection program and disbursement of Feb-Mar, third quarter of the ongoing fiscal year, was in progress to cover over 4.394 million registered families living below the poverty line. DG BISP Punjab told mediapersons, according to a release issued by BISP spokesman.

International News

Biden and Xi discuss Taiwan, AI and fentanyl in a push to return to regular leader talks

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping discussed Taiwan, artificial intelligence and security issues Tuesday in a call meant to demonstrate a return to regular leader-to-leader dialogue between the two powers.

The call, described by the White House as "candid and constructive," was the leaders' first conversation since their November summit in California produced renewed ties between the two nations' militaries and a promise of enhanced cooperation on stemming the flow of deadly fentanyl and its precursors from China.

Xi told Biden that the two countries should adhere to the bottom line of "no clash, no confrontation" as one of the principles for this year.

"We should prioritize

stability, not provoke troubles, not cross lines but maintain the overall stability of China-U.S. relations," Xi said, according to China Central Television, the state broadcaster.

The call kicks off several weeks of high-level engagements between the two countries, with Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen set to travel to China on Thursday and Secretary of State Antony Blinken to follow in the weeks ahead.

Biden has pressed for sustained interactions at all levels of government, believing it is key to keeping competition between the two massive economies and nuclear-armed powers from escalating to direct conflict.

While in-person summits take place perhaps once a year, officials said, both Washington and Beijing recognize the value of more frequent engage-

ments between the leaders.

Taiwan remains the "first red line not to be crossed," Xi told Biden, and emphasized that Beijing will not tolerate separatist activities by Taiwan's independence forces as well as "exterior indulgence and support," which alluded to Washington's support for the island.

Biden also raised concerns about China's operations in the South China Sea, including efforts last month to impede the Philippines, which the U.S. is treaty-obligated to defend, from resupplying its forces on the disputed Second Thomas Shoal.

Next week, Biden will host Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the White House for a joint summit where China's influence in the region was set to be top of the agenda.



A vehicle damaged in an Israeli airstrike in Deir Al-Balah, Gaza.

Daytime fire kills 29 people at Istanbul nightclub

Monitoring Desk ISTANBUL: A fire killed at least 29 people in a 16-storey residential building in Istanbul on Tuesday, the governor of Turkey's economic capital said, updating an earlier toll of 15 dead and eight hurt.

"The number of people who lost their lives in the fire [...] in Gayrettepe of Besiktas district has increased to 29," Governor Davut Gul's office said in a statement, referring to the Istanbul neighbourhood.

"One person hurt in

the fire was still being treated in hospital," it added. The fire began at 0947 GMT, the office said and was only brought under control by firefighters hours later.

Television images showed flames and a column of thick smoke rushing from upper-storey windows.

The number of people reported killed and hurt rose throughout the afternoon in a string of statements from the governor's office, as more victims succumbed to their injuries.

Russia appoints Admiral Moiseev as chief of the navy

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: Russia has appointed Admiral Alexander Moiseev as head of the navy, the defence ministry said on Tuesday.

During a conference call with the senior staff of the Russian Armed Forces, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu also said that Vice Admiral Konstantin Kabantsov was appointed as commander of the Northern Fleet, and Vice Admiral Sergei Pinchuk was named as commander of the Black Sea fleet.

Iran president says Israel's Syria attack 'will not go unanswered'

Monitoring Desk TEHRAN: Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi on Tuesday condemned a deadly air strike blamed on Israel against his country's consular annex in Damascus, saying the "cowardly crime will not go unanswered".

"After repeated defeats and failures against the faith and will of the Resistance Front fighters, the Zionist regime has put blind assassinations on its agenda in the struggle to save itself," Raisi said on his office's website.

"Day by day, we have witnessed the strengthening of the Resistance Front and the disgust and hatred of free nations towards the illegitimate nature of (Israel). This cowardly crime will not go unanswered."

The air strike on the Iranian embassy's five-storey annex killed seven

members of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, which runs Iran's overseas military operations.

Among the dead, were Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Zahedi and Mohammad Hadi Haji Rahimi, both senior commanders in the Quds Force, Guards' foreign operations arm. Zahedi, 63, had held a succession of commands in the force in a Guards career spanning more than four decades. Israel declined to comment on the strike. The UN Security Council was to discuss the deadly strike later on Tuesday at a meeting requested by Syrian ally Russia. "Iran reserves its legitimate and inherent right under international law and the United Nations Charter to take a decisive response to such reprehensible acts," Iran's mission to the world body said.



Taiwan's former president Ma Ying-jeou speaks to journalists ahead of his visit to China at the Taoyuan International Airport in Taoyuan.

12-year-old opens fire in Finnish school, injuring three: police

Monitoring Desk VANTAA: A 12-year-old opened fire on Tuesday at a school outside the Finnish capital Helsinki injuring three other children, police said, adding that the attacker was in custody.

The school in Vantaa has around 800 pupils and 90 staff. Children in grades one to

nine, or aged seven to 15, attend the school.

"There are people injured in the shooting incident", police said shortly after 10am (7am GMT).

Police were alerted to the scene at 9:08am and later specified that the suspect and the injured were all 12 years old.

NATO at 75 is stronger – but also under threat

Monitoring Desk BRUSSELS: The NATO military alliance marks its 75th anniversary on Thursday, reinvigorated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine – but menaced by the growing threat from Moscow and the spectre of Donald Trump.

In 1949, French President Emmanuel Macron slammed the US-led alliance – set up after World War II to face off against the Soviet Union – as suffering from a "brain death".

Now, four-and-a-half years later, the alliance has grown to 32 members with the addition of Sweden and Finland after what Macron described as the "electroshock" of Russia's all-out assault in 2022. In response, NATO has ramped up troop numbers on its eastern flank and put in place new plans to deal with any Russian attack. "NATO has been re-energised after the invasion of Ukraine."

Blinken says US urged Israel to investigate airstrike that killed NGO workers

Monitoring Desk PARIS: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday said Washington has urged Israel to carry out a swift, thorough and impartial investigation into an Israeli airstrike that killed seven people working for the World Central Kitchen charity in Gaza.

Blinken arrived in Paris for talks with senior officials including President Emmanuel Macron just hours after the Washington-based NGO was struck by

an Israeli airstrike in central Gaza, adding pressure on Washington to toughen its stance in the war between Israel and Hamas.

"We've spoken directly to the Israeli government about this particular incident. We've urged a swift, thorough and impartial investigation," Blinken told reporters at a press conference in Paris, adding that humanitarian workers have to be protected. "These people are heroes, they run into the fire."

Taiwan leader embarks on 'peace journey' to China

Monitoring Desk TAIPEI: Taiwan's former president Ma Ying-jeou headed to China on Monday for what he called a "journey of peace" aimed at cooling cross-strait tensions. Speaking to reporters at the airport before his departure, Ma described his trip to China as "a journey of peace and a journey of friendship". China claims democratic Taiwan as part of its territory and has never renounced the use of force to bring the self-ruled island under its control.

Russia needs new approach to migration after concert attack, Putin says

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday called for a new approach to migration after Tajiks living in Russia were detained for a deadly attack on a concert hall outside Moscow that killed at least 144 people and wounded 551 more.

Islamic State, the militant group that once sought control over swathes of Iraq and Syria, claimed responsibility for the mass shooting. Russia has said it suspects Ukraine was linked to the attack, a claim denied by Kyiv and dismissed by Washington. At least 12 people - including four accused gunmen - have been detained in Russia in connection with the attack. Most are Tajiks who had lived and worked in Russia. Putin told police chiefs that the attack was aimed at sowing discord, xenophobia and

Islamophobia inside Russia. But he said that migration systems needed improvement, as it was clear that work permits were sometimes being issued to people with serious criminal records.

"We need to deeply and radically update our approaches to migration policy," Putin said, adding that some people with almost no knowledge of Russian or Russian culture were being allowed to work without proper checks.

"The decisive principle should be that only those who respect our traditions, language, culture, and history can come to live and work in Russia." Russia's room for manoeuvre on migration, though, is limited. Millions of people from former Soviet republics in Central Asia have flocked to Russia's biggest cities over the past few decades, supporting a blossoming 24-hour consumer society by working as taxi drivers.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Reza Amiri Moghadam calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Protest rally in Muzaffarabad against unrelenting Indian repression in IIOJK

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): A protest rally was organized in Muzaffarabad, the capital city of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, today, against ongoing Indian repression in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The rally held under the aegis of Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, an organization of post-1989 migrants from IIOJK, started at Central Press Club and culminated at Gharipan Chowk in the capital city. Pasban-e-Hurriyat chairman Uzair Ahmad Ghazali, District president Jamaat-e-Islami Raja Mohammad Aftab Khan, central leader of PPP Shaukat Javed Mir, large number of post-1989 refugees and citizens of Muzaffarabad took part in the rally. The protesters carrying black flags raised

high-pitched slogans against Indian illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir and in favour of freedom of the territory from Indian bondage. Banners denouncing India's August 5, 2019 illegal actions were also displayed by the protesters. Addressing the rally, the speakers said that the Modi-led Indian government's illegal action of scrapping the IIOJK's special status on August 5, 2019 was in brazen violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, adding that New Delhi had no right to resort to any political and legal changes in the internationally recognized disputed territory. They pointed out that India was an occupier, usurper and aggressor country in Kashmir and its unilateral and illegal actions

could not change the territory's disputed status. They maintained that despite all the coercive measures taken from August 5, 2019 till date, the BJP-led Indian government had completely failed to break the morale and freedom spirit of the Kashmiri people. They said that India was acting as a cruel and imperialist power which was plotting to snatch Kashmir's identity, culture and homeland through its military might and colonial policies. They added that the Modi regime has snatched the political, civil, social and religious rights of the Kashmiri people. They lamented that the so-called world's largest democracy had put severe restrictions on freedom of expression in Kashmir and that religious parties

India's massive arms acquisitions, hostile military policies threaten regional security: Pakistan

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has told the UN Disarmament Commission that India's large-scale arms acquisitions plus its set of aggressive military policies has turned the security environment in South Asia "volatile and explosive", and urged the world community to address this situation.

"Needless to say, these developments impinge on Pakistan's security," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, said at the Commission, a subsidiary of the UN General Assembly, began its three-week session on Monday that is scheduled to deliberate on disarmament issues.

At the outset, he congratulated Ambassador Usman Jadoon, his deputy,

on his election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission's 2024 session. "Pakistan is honoured and proud at your election as Chair of this important Commission."

"The security environment in South Asia has deteriorated sharply in recent years, as the region's largest State has embarked on a programme of massive armament," the Pakistani envoy said, without naming India.

"It (India) is now the world's largest arms importer, and is being supplied by its 'strategic partners' with nuclear, missiles, conventional and other destabilizing weapons," he said, noting it has adopted war-fighting doctrines—such as 'Cold Start', envisaging a surprise attack on Pakistan, and a 'limited war

under the nuclear overhang."

"With a long-standing dispute—where the right of the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir are being brutally suppressed; with two major armies deployed in close proximity; with the induction of major destabilizing weapons and war fighting doctrines; with the sponsorship of terrorism against Pakistan; and with the absence of dialogue or international action—the security environment in South Asia is volatile and explosive," Ambassador Akram said.

"Unless determined steps are taken by the international community to address this situation, it could emerge as the proximate cause of a regional and global catastrophe," he added.



QUETTA: Chief Executive Officer BRSP Tahir Rasheed meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

PM Shahbaz says Pak, Iran should work to enhance trade, energy, road & rail connectivity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday and discussed matters of mutual concern.

The prime minister thanked the President of Iran, Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, for his congratulatory message and telephone call to him following his re-election.

He underscored that Pakistan attached great importance to Iran and the two countries enjoyed historic and brotherly relations.

The prime minister fondly recalled his meeting with the Iranian President when they jointly inaugurated a border market and

an electricity transmission line in May 2023. The two leaders had also met on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Samarkand in 2022.

He stressed the need for both sides to work together to enhance trade, energy cooperation, road and rail connectivity, cultural exchanges, counter terrorism efforts and security cooperation.

The prime minister appreciated Iran's support on the issue of Jammu & Kashmir. The situation in Palestine was also discussed in the meeting.

The Iranian Ambassador thanked the prime minister for receiving him and shared an overview of the current state of bilateral relations.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq met with Leaders of Opposition Parties in National Assembly at Parliament House.

Secretary emphasizes to make data system of child care, nutrition targets effective

QUETTA (APP): Secretary Health Balochistan Abdullah Khan emphasized that to make the data system of monitoring of maternal and child care, nutrition targets and health facilities effective in the districts of the province.

DG Health Dr. Farooq Hot, Additional Secretary Health Arif Achakzai, Director Public Health Dr. Fahem Khan and other officials participated in the meeting held on the other day. The meeting presided over by secretary health department discussed district-wise classification of health facilities related to maternal and newborn child and other health indicators.

Secretary Health

Balochistan Abdullah Khan while talking to the participants of the meeting said that according to data, these districts will be evaluated on the basis of desk monitoring to assess the number of health facilities, human resources, physical resources and quality of service delivery in the districts.

In the meeting, it was decided that to devise a comprehensive strategy for availability of health care services at the Tehsil level due to the scattered population and remote areas of the province.

"Tehsil level" data collection mechanism for evaluation/monitoring of PHC facilities will be devised."

MQM-P threatens to quit federal govt over rise in street crimes

HYDERABAD (INP): Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Senator Faisal Subzwari Tuesday said his party will quit the federal government if the people of the port city continue to be killed amid the rise in street crimes across Karachi.

Lamenting the 15-year-long rule of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in the province, the MQM-P senator said the demands for an operation would have come forward if such killings were happening elsewhere.

"If our people continue to be killed, we will leave the government," he said, speaking with journalists.

Karachi has been gripped by street crimes claiming the lives of dozens of citizens who have fallen victim at the hands of criminals for the past few weeks.

Waseem Ahmed, Syed Haroon appointed Chairmen APNS Balochistan, KP Committees Provincial Committee

KARACHI (PR): The President, Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani and the Secretary General, Sarmad Ali of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society have appointed Syed Haroon Shah to be Chairman of the Khyber Pakhtoon-Khwa (KP) Provincial Committee for the year 2024-25 and Mr. Waseem Ahmed, Chairman Balochistan Provincial Committee of the APNS for the year 2024-25. The members of the committees are here-under:

Balochistan Provincial Committee: Mr. Waseem Ahmed, Chairman Daily Awam Quetta, Arif Baloch, Vice Chairman Daily Balochistan Express, Javid Ahmed, Member Daily Atamad, Anwar Sajidi, Member Daily Intekhab, Riya-ul-Hassan Qazi, Member Daily Jang, M. Anwar Nasir, Member Daily Balochistan News,

Muhammad Haider Amin, Member Daily Balochistan Times, Naqem Sadiq, Member Daily Shaal, Syed Mumtaz Ahmad Shah, Member Daily Mashriq, Quetta

Khyber Pakhtoon-Khwa (KP) Provincial Committee: ?Syed Haroon Shah, ?Chairman Daily Wahdat, Syed Ayaz Badshah, Vice Chairman Daily Mashriq, Pesh, Saba Yousufi, ?Member Daily Aaj, Pesh, Bari Malik, Member Daily Watan, Imran Haider, Member D/ Frontier Times, Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed Mufti, Member Daily Ilaah, Syed Qaiser Rizvi, ?Member Daily Jiddat, Liaquat Ali Yousafzai, ?Member Daily Surkhah, Zahid Hafeez, ?Member Daily Sarhad, Tahir Farooq, Member Daily Jihad, Mahmood Ullah Afridi, Member Daily Frontier Post.



QUETTA: CEO Children Hospital Dr. Habibullah Babar, CEO Fatima Jinnah Hospital Dr. Shireen and CEO BINUQ Dr. Syed Liaquat Agha meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Balochistan Imran Zarkoon

ECP unveils by-polls schedule for national, provincial assemblies

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday announced schedule for by-polls on six National Assembly and 17 provincial assembly seats which would be held on April 21.

The top electoral body issued a notification regarding the election programme for vacant NA and PA seats where re-election will be organised next week.

According to the notification, the by-polls will be held on six NA, 12 Punjab Assembly, 2 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly, 2 Balochistan Assembly, and one Sindh Assembly seats.

A total of 239 candidates were going to participate in the forthcoming by-elections, including 50 contenders for NA seats, of which Pakistan Peoples Party leader Aseefa Bhutto-

Zardari was elected unopposed in NA-207 constituency.

Another PPP leader Zubair Ahmed Junejo was also elected without facing any contest on PS-80 Dadu seat.

Subsequently, 23 candidates were contesting by-polls for KP Assembly seats, 154 candidates for Punjab Assembly seats, and 12 candidates for Balochistan Assembly seats.

The ECP spokesman said polling material has been provided to the provincial election commissioner, whereas, all district returning officers (DROs) and returning officers (ROs) were fulfilling their duties in accordance with the by-polls' schedule.

Additionally, the printing of ballot papers was continued since March 30, he added.

Freight train derailed near Chagai district

ISLAMABAD (APP): A freight train heading from Quetta to Zahedan has derailed in Chagai district on Tuesday.

Around 11 bogies from the freight car have veered off the tracks, prompting swift action from railway officials, private news channel reported.

The derailment resulted in the suspension of train services between Iran and Pakistan, affecting both incoming and outgoing routes.

Railway authorities have confirmed that trains traveling to and from Zahedan have been stopped until further notice, as a result of the incident.

Meanwhile, the rescue teams from the railways have been dispatched to the scene to assess the situation and initiate necessary measures.

PC invites global investors for PIA Privatization bids

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), the esteemed national flag carrier, is set to undergo privatization as the Privatization Commission of Pakistan initiates the process by inviting expressions of interest from global firms to acquire a significant 51% shares in the airline. In order to offload PIA's 51 percent shares, the Privatization Commission has invited bids from interested parties till May 3.

The deadline for the submission of applications has been fixed for May 3, 2024. The successful bidder will not only secure a major shareholding but also gain complete management control over PIA. Established in 1955, PIA holds a prestigious legacy within Pakistani aviation. Its remarkable journey includes transporting over 20 million passengers by the year 2023. Presently, PIA operates a robust network of 260 weekly flights, spanning 97 international routes.



QUETTA: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Provincial President, Dawood Shah along with others addresses to media persons during press conference.

Vaccination stalls set up for polio eradication in shopping centers of Quetta, Pishin

Independent Report QUETTA: The stalls have been established for vaccination of children below five years of ages against polio disease in different shopping centers of Quetta city. According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for polio eradication, the vaccination stalls have been established at seven shopping centers located in different parts of the metropolis on eve of Eid shopping.

The EOC high ups informed that 14 teams have

been deputed for immunization of children against polio virus at these shopping centers.

In addition to Quetta, vaccination stalls have also been set up at five places in Pishin with 14 teams deployed for vaccination of the children there.

It may be mentioned here that the extra arrangements are being made to ensure eradication of polio virus in the province in backdrop of two cases reported in Balochistan recently.

All parents urged to ensure birth registration of their children

Independent Report QUETTA: The government of Balochistan has urged all parents to ensure registration of birth of their children soon after birth.

In an official handout issued here on Tuesday, the children are blessing of Allah Almighty and their birth registration is our responsibility.

The registration of birth makes it possible to have access not only to education, health facilities, inheritance and legal identity for the children, rather it also protects their rights.

In addition to this, the birth registration also provides safe and positive beginning along with mending their future.

Therefore, all parents

should ensure registration of birth soon after birth of their children.

The parents may contact the office of birth registration in their respective local Union Councils for the registration. They may also follow the directives as mentioned on the website of NADRA in this regard, it was stated.

It may be remembered that fee of getting birth certificate within 60 days of birth has been fixed as Rs. 100. It was stressed not to forget importance of birth registration of the children on the moment of pleasure.

Therefore, parents should complete registration of birth of their all children fulfilling their responsibility.

Political parties unanimously flay terrorists attack on Chinese nationals: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, on Tuesday, unequivocally denounced the terrorist attack on Chinese nationals and said that all political parties have united in their condemnation of this despicable act.

During a meeting with the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong, at the Chinese embassy, he conveyed profound sorrow and grief over the loss of innocent Chinese lives in the heinous terrorist attack in Shangla Besham.

He said that every Pakistani shares in the grief and sadness caused by this tragic incident. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that terrorists will never succeed in their nefarious designs to create a rift between the two nations.

PTI seeks permission for rally at Liaquat Bagh

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday wrote an application to the deputy commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi in which it sought his permission for the party's public gathering at Liaquat Bagh on April 19. In her application, PTI Northern Punjab President Seemabia Tahir Satti said that she was an honourable citizen of Pakistan.



QUETTA: People are busy in Eid shopping ahead of Eid-ul-Fitar during the Holy Month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, at Liaquat Bazar in Quetta.

Senator Qadir for taking steps to improve country's economy

QUETTA (APP): Chairman Standing Committee for Petroleum and Resources Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir on Tuesday said that all possible measures would be taken to improve the country's economy.

In a statement issued here, he said that all barriers to business would be removed for the promotion of trade with our neighbors, saying that all countries around the world were focusing on increasing trade with their neighbors.

Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir said that poor state's economy has become a big problem for us.

He said that Pakistan was serious about increasing the volume of trade with Afghanistan, Iran, China and India. India is a huge market for us, he said Pakistan's export volume with India alone could be higher than the current level. Pakistan exported goods in the current financial year while exports from Pakistan to India remained negligible, he noted.

NHMP, Pakistan Customs sign MoU to increase cooperation in prevention of smuggling

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) and Pakistan Customs on Tuesday jointly signed a memorandum of understanding to develop procedures for prevention of smuggling on national highways and motorways on modern lines and to increase cooperation in other areas.

Deputy Inspector General Police (Operations) Saad Akhtar Bharwana and Chief (Facilitation and Coordination) Pakistan Customs Ayesha Bashir were present at the signing ceremony. The MoU was signed at Central Police Office Islamabad, said a press release.



QUETTA: President of Quetta Bar Association, Qari Rehmat Advocate along with others addresses to media persons during press conference.

CM realized argument of MPA with UoB female teacher was mistake, says GoB spokesman

Independent Report QUETTA: The spokesman to Government of Balochistan, Shahid Rind has stated that no conscientious person would term the incident of argument between a government member of provincial assembly and female Professor of University of Balochistan as right.

While speaking in a PTV Programme "Current Affairs Time", the GoB spokesman said that the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti had personally contacted the lady lecturer participating in the protest of Joint Action Committee of UoB and apologized to her soon after the video of the incident went viral on social media.

The female teacher not only accepted the apology of Chief Minister but she also tweeted in Balochi and Brahvi languages addressing the Chief Minister that he (CM) is just like her elder brother.

He said that in his opinion where there would be mistake, the Government of Balochistan would not be ashamed seeking

apology.

It is also not wrong to seek apology on any highhandedness, Shahid Rind maintained.

The spokesman said that it is the elected government and it has to deliver. He said that the agenda of many people is just to make political point scoring. He said that the argument of MPA with the female teacher was a wrong act and after this, the Chief Minister's making apology on it speaks clearly that he realizes that it was a mistake.



A MoU is being signed between Motorway Police and Pakistan Customs.