

Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 74 Ramazan 28, 1445 AH Monday April 08, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

Islamabad starts work to complete 80-km section of Pak-Iran gas pipeline

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi expected to visit Pakistan on Apr 22; Islamabad faces penalty of \$18bn for failure to complete project; 80-km section to be completed in 24 months at cost of Rs44bn.

ISLAMABAD (INP): With Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's expected visit to Pakistan on April 22, authorities have commenced the work to begin the construction of the 80-kilometre section of the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline from Gwadar to a point where it can be connected with the Iranian section of the project, reported an English daily on Sunday.

As per the publication, citing a senior official of the Energy Ministry, the Inter-State Gas Company (ISGS) has already issued tenders seeking the much-delayed re-validation of survey and

Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) by consultants. The development comes amid the United States' explicit opposition to the bilateral project, coupled with warnings of potential sanctions, which has faced a nearly decade-long delay as it was set to be completed in December 2014 followed by its operationalisation in January 2015.

Over the years, Pakistan maintained that it could not materialise the project in its territory because of the US sanctions imposed on Iran, a view which authorities in Tehran

have never subscribed, saying the US sanctions are not justified. However, in January, Tehran issued the last notice to Islamabad seeking the completion of its side of the pipeline by February-March 2024 or face a \$18 billion penalty under the penalty clause of the Gas Sales Purchase Agreement (GSPA) of the 781-kilometre project.

According to the official, the laying down of the 80-km section of the pipeline is essential to avoid arbitration in France which may lead to the imposition of the aforesaid penalty on Pakistan.



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hosts an Iftar at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah for PM Shehbaz Sharif.

Saudi Crown Prince MBS hosts Iftar for PM Shehbaz in Makkah

Monitoring Desk MAKKAH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is on three-day visit to Saudi Arabia, on Sunday attended Iftar hosted by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah.

"Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hosts an Iftar at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah, attended by the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Crown Prince of Bahrain, where they all broke their fast together," reported Saudi Gazette.

A statement issued by

the PM Office said that the crown prince had extended special invitation to PM Shehbaz-led delegation for an Iftar.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and members of the federal cabinet were also invited to the Iftar, as per the statement.

PM Shehbaz landed in Saudi Arabia on Saturday on a three-day visit from April 6 to 8.

He is accompanied by federal ministers including Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Abdul Aleem Khan, Attaulah Tarar, and Ahad Khan Cheema.

Earlier Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has arrived in Makkah Mukarama from Madina to perform Umrah. The members of federal cabinet including Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Asif, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Abdul Aleem Khan, Attaulah Tarar and Ahad Khan Cheema are accompanying the Prime Minister.

Earlier, the Prime Minister offered Isha prayers and nawafil at Masjid-e-Nabvi and paid respects at Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH).

PM constitutes body to review climate change governance, funds

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Prime Minister has constituted a high-level committee to review Climate Change Governance and Mechanisms to access Climate Funds and nominated Climate Change Minister, Romina Khurshed Alam and Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Dr Abid Suleri as its members along with other senior members.

The Minister of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination has issued a detailed notification explaining the context, mandate, terms of reference (TORs) and list of the members of the Committee. The committee will be chaired by the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission that comprised of government officials, parliamentarians, representatives from civil society and environment NGOs, private sector, research institutes, and expert/advisors with knowledge on specific topics.

President Zardari calls for strengthening bilateral ties with Türkiye

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and President of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday called for further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries in various fields.



The two leaders spoke over the phone and discussed matters of mutual interest, a post on President of Pakistan X account said.

President Zardari felicitated the Turkish President on the forthcoming Eid-ul-Fitr and invited him to visit Pakistan, besides expressing his best wishes for him and the people of Türkiye, another related X post said.

Norway Removes Pakistan from its National Threat Assessment List

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant development, Norway has taken the decision to remove Pakistan from its National Threat Assessment List, a private news channel reported on Sunday.

This decision follows effective diplomatic efforts by Pakistan, which successfully persuaded Norwegian authorities to exclude Pakistan's name from their list of nations of security concern.

The announcement came through the latest report issued by Norway's Police Security Service, which holds responsibility for intelligence and security matters within the country.

For years, Pakistan, among other nations, had been listed in Norway's National Threat Assessment, posing challenges for Pakistani students and researchers who encountered obstacles due to their country's inclusion on the list.

Pakistan's diplomatic initiatives bore fruit, leading to its removal from the list. This decision is anticipated to bolster Pakistan's positive image on the global platform and create new educational opportunities for its students and researchers.

This decision follows effective diplomatic efforts by Pakistan, which successfully persuaded Norwegian authorities to exclude Pakistan's name from their list of nations of security concern.

The announcement came through the latest report issued by Norway's Police Security Service, which holds responsibility for intelligence and security matters within the country.

For years, Pakistan, among other nations, had been listed in Norway's National Threat Assessment, posing challenges for Pakistani students and researchers who encountered obstacles due to their country's inclusion on the list.

Pakistan's diplomatic initiatives bore fruit, leading to its removal from the list. This decision is anticipated to bolster Pakistan's positive image on the global platform and create new educational opportunities for its students and researchers.

The announcement came through the latest report issued by Norway's Police Security Service, which holds responsibility for intelligence and security matters within the country.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori talking with media men on eve of participating in 27th Sehri organized by JDC.

Restoration of law, order top priority of Sindh govt: Nasir Shah

KARACHI (INP): The Pakistan People's Party Leader and Sindh Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah on Sunday said that the top priority of the Sindh government was to restore law and order situation at any cost in the province.

and directed them to restore law and order situation. Nasir Shah said that the Police and Rangers were not only carrying out targeted operations in Karachi but also cracking down on street crimes. I do not understand, why Khawaja Ishaq was feeling bad on the appointment of an IGP of good reputation, he asked.

Police to get rid of bandits from katcha area soon, says IG Sindh

KANDHKOT (INP): Sindh Police has determined to get rid of bandits from katcha area with full support from government, IG Sindh Gulam Nabi Memon said on Sunday.

Talking to media in Kandhkot, he said the conditions seemed to be improving in katcha area including in Kashmore. "Hopefully we will get rid of bandits soon."

He said police and rangers have been active in katcha area to maintain law and order.

Pointing out tactics of bandit gangs, IG Police said that, earlier they were kidnapping people, now they

Police report reveals arsenic presence on threatening letters received by judges

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The Islamabad Police have forwarded the investigation report concerning the threatening letters received by judges of the Islamabad High Court to the Ministry of Interior.

The report reveals that the letters were tainted with arsenic powder, although the amount was not lethal.

Marwat dismisses reports of differences within PTI

ISLAMABAD (INP) - PTI leader Sher Afzal Marwat has refuted reports of differences within the party.

In a statement on Sunday, Marwat stated that all PTI leaders were standing by the party founder's cause, emphasising that this solidarity was imperative at this juncture.

The PTI leader also asserted that he would not respond to any questions about the party in a manner that could sow seeds of discord within its ranks. Marwat announced that PTI leaders, workers and supporters would take to the streets on Feb 8 to reclaim what he believes is the rightful mandate of the PTI.

Police report reveals arsenic presence on threatening letters received by judges

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The Islamabad Police have forwarded the investigation report concerning the threatening letters received by judges of the Islamabad High Court to the Ministry of Interior.

The report reveals that the letters were tainted with arsenic powder, although the amount was not lethal.

Khawaja Asif says: Pakistan stands firm to defend its sovereignty

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Saturday asserted that Pakistan was fully prepared to provide a comprehensive response if India takes any aggressive action.

Talking to a private news channel, he emphasized Pakistan's readiness to defend itself against any potential threat, stating, "If India takes any action, it will receive a full reply."

"We are prepared, and if anything occurs, we will not hold back", he said.

The minister highlighted Pakistan's unwavering

commitment to safeguarding its sovereignty against any form of aggression. He pointed to Pakistan's decisive response to India's reckless incursion in February 2019 as evidence of its resolve.

Pakistan has consistent history of exposing India's hollow claims of military superiority, he added.

Khawaja Asif said, "We've consistently responded to India swiftly, and history is bound to repeat itself."



MADINA MUNAWWARAH: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif paying respect at Roza-e-Rasool (SAWW).

MQM-P blasts Sindh govt over alarming rise in Karachi street crimes

KARACHI (INP): The rising crimes in Karachi are not possible without police acting as accomplices, said MQM-P leader Faisal Subzwari who also asked why the federal government wasn't taking notice of the alarming situation.

Regretting the fact that nothing is being done check the increase in street in crimes in the port city, he said most of the criminals at the end had always been found to be from the police, as he blasted the PPP government over the killing of dozens of people by criminals during robberies.

Subzwari censured the Sindh home minister over his comments in which he had blamed media for disproportional coverage of crimes in Karachi. He must speak

only after thinking properly, otherwise, remaining silent was the best option, he remarked.

The MQM-P leader said how it was possible that the police didn't receive a share from the criminals snatching mobile phones from citizens when they had been getting money from those involved

Two terrorist killed in North Waziristan, ISPR

RAWALPINDI (Online): A fire exchange took place between the security forces and terrorists in connection with the Toshiakhana case, saying they were "false, fabricated and baseless".

The former premier had alleged that the senior military leadership "implicated" him and his wife

Former CS Punjab Javed Mehmood passes away

LAHORE (APP): Javed Mehmood, former chief secretary (CS) Punjab, passed away on Sunday.

He had been fighting cancer and receiving treatment in Jinnah Hospital in Lahore, according to the family sources.



KARACHI: A large number of people getting board on Eid Special Train at Cantt Railway Station, departing to their home towns to celebrate Eidul Fitr, festive with their loved ones.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

9th May's sorry saga: Is reconciliation on the table?

While 9th May, 2023's sorry saga would always remain in the mind of each and every patriotic Pakistani as the "black day" and flash when spate of attacks on military installations, memorials, and sanctuaries of martyrs were witnessed in different parts of the country with no exception to the Rawalpindi and Lahore, it is obvious that the State of Pakistan remains resolute in its stance against engaging in any form of negotiation with individuals or groups who have become instruments of external forces to sow discord within the nation.

The whole nation still remembers the gory incidents rather riots in the country by the violent leaders, workers and supporters of a particular political party with its total backing and instigation what was also called as "9/11 type" attacks on the country's national interests. As sorry affairs of the 9 May were just mind boggling and shocking, an impression seems to be created among different circles including social media ones that whether reconciliation is on the table? How can just forget when the violent people had broken the fighter jets of 1965 war, what means they had attacked the pride of Pakistan Air Force attained by defeating the enemy in the air war. Similarly, the model of Chagai Mountain, which reminded the nation of nuclear tests carried out by its scientists that made the country's defence invulnerable, was also set on fire. Then there seemed to be a scheme/method behind that madness on 9th May last year as all such symbols were targeted selectively which had a link either with national heritage or were the pride of the Armed Forces. In this backdrop and that in light of the tragic events of 9 May, one thing must be crystal clear that no dialogue shall be entertained with perpetrators, facilitators or sympathizers associated with the planning and execution of such acts.

Obviously, unless those responsible openly condemn the heinous attack and publicly accept responsibility for their actions without expectation of any absolution from the state, there is no option of conciliation. They must issue a public apology and commit to abstain from any involvement in similar incidents in the future, what has not been witnessed yet, another sorry state and condemnable. What's most important is that unless those accountable openly denounce the heinous attack and publicly accept responsibility for their actions without anticipating absolution from the state, reconciliation is off the table. And of course, they also must issue a public apology and pledge to refrain from any future involvement in similar incidents. It appears to be the policy of state that those individuals who contributed to internal polarization at the behest of external inimical powers, fostering division and promoting hatred to the extent of negating each other's existence, will not be engaged in dialogue. Similarly, individuals who, for vested interests, inflicted economic or political damage while marring the international image of the country will not find any avenue for negotiation or reconciliation with the government. Those who, driven by personal interests, orchestrated economic or political harm against the nation on the international stage, will also not be afforded the opportunity for negotiation or reconciliation at all.

"Extrajudicial Killing: Responding to India's Actions"

By Qamar Bashir

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



In January 2024, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary made a significant revelation, alleging that India had orchestrated at least 12 extrajudicial killings in Pakistan linked to the Kashmir cause and the Khalistan movement. This disclosure marked the third high-profile accusation against India following similar allegations involving Canada and the United States. By engaging in these unlawful acts, India has aligned itself with countries like the USA, Russia, and Israel, known for eliminating adversaries both domestically and internationally with impunity.

The statement made by Pakistan's Foreign Secretary in January this year did not gain significant traction and was dismissed within and outside the country as routine accusations exchanged between the two countries for political point-scoring, lacking substantial evidence. The Foreign Secretary's statement was vindicated when similar allegations were corroborated by an investigative report by "The Guardian," on April 4, 2024 disclosing that nearly 20 killings in Pakistan since

2020 were attributed to India. The Guardian report was authenticated when in a revealing interview with CNN, Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh admitted to carrying out extrajudicial killings and warned of similar actions in Pakistan if terrorists sought refuge there after committing acts of terrorism. While aimed at Pakistan, this admission hinted at India's readiness to extend such operations across international borders, including in the territories of influential nations like the USA and Canada.

The narrative of the Indian espionage agency was compelling. This is how the narrative unfolds. India has successfully managed the rebellion and insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir and has, for the most part, tightened its grip over Sikh separatists inside the nation. However, neutralizing their handlers—who were mostly based in Pakistan, the US, and Canada—was a more pressing issue. To resolve the issue, the Indian government authorized RAW to conduct covert operations to kill firebrand Sikh and Kashmiri leaders and handlers, in the US, Canada, and Pakistan motivated by the KGB, Mossad, and CIA, which are notorious for eliminating its enemies abroad.

The Raw launched strikes in three distinct nations as part of Compliance. It eliminated Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a well-known Sikh activist who was shot and killed in Vancouver, Canada, in September of 2023. On 30 Nov, 2023, RAW enlisted the help of a hitman in New York to murder Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, another Sikh activist, but before the killer had accomplished the task, the US security forces frustrated the attack.

The Raw was particularly careful while targeting Pakistan. It First created sleeper cells in the UAE, later established a system to finance the killing spree through Dubai, Nepal, and Mauritius. Later, it cultivated local criminals, Afghan illegal aliens, and Jihadis to carry out the assassinations of individuals primarily connected to Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, allegedly linked with masterminding high profile terrorist attacks inside India.

The narrative, while seemingly logical and compelling, ultimately failed to achieve its objectives in any of the three cases. Canada and the United States reacted assertively, issuing stern warnings to India and demanding accountability for the masterminds, financiers, and RAW operatives involved in the killings. Canada went a step further by expelling the Indian Ambassador and downgrading diplomatic and economic ties. This action could potentially jeopardize Canadian Investment of \$3,754.05 Mn and

Bilateral trade of \$9.9 Bn in 2022 with India. Similarly, strained relations with the United States will impact Indian exports of \$118.8 billion and US investments totaling \$63.03 billion. The Guardian report garnered significant attention in Pakistani media, becoming the main topic of prime-time talk shows, however, the Pakistani government did not provide its official response until the next day, when the Foreign Office spokesperson issued a detailed press release beginning with customary rhetoric, but later offered specific details about two assassinations: that of Shahid Latif and Mohammad Rizaz.

In both cases, a RAW agent stationed abroad recruited a professional killer in Pakistan, who then assembled a team of target killers responsible for targeted assassination. In both the cases, assassins were apprehended, leading to the disclosure of the entire plan to Pakistani authorities.

The Press Release primarily drafted for consumption of the media ended with a safe, calibrated and measured customary response, where it condemned India, charged it for breaking the United Nation Charter, violating the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan and international diplomatic norms, and calling on the international community for collective action to hold India ac-

countable. However, it fell short of outlining Pakistan's concrete counteractions.

While behind closed doors, the government must be thinking of adopting a firm and strategic approach, drawing inspiration from the responses of Canada and the United States to similar incidents and giving a befitting response to India.

Though the diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan have already been downgraded, however, similar to Canada's expulsion of the Indian Ambassador and reduction of diplomatic ties, Pakistan may be considering diplomatic measures to register its protest.

Pakistan-India economic ties have already been downgraded, and this development has impeded any possible efforts through formal or informal channels to reconnect any meaningful trade, investment and business ties.

Pakistan must be actively engaging with the international community, particularly through the United Nations and other multilateral forums, to raise awareness and seek support for holding India accountable for its actions. This could involve filing formal complaints or seeking resolutions condemning India's violation of Pakistan's sovereignty.

The Pakistani ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) on its part

must be conducting thorough investigations to uncover any other instances of foreign interference or covert operations on Pakistani soil. This could involve strengthening counterintelligence measures and monitoring suspicious activities more closely and developing appropriate, proportional and effective countermeasures as deterrent to any such attack in future.

While maintaining restraint and prioritizing de-escalation, the Pakistani armed forces must have already increased vigilance and readiness to defend the country's sovereignty against potential threats or provocations. This may have included enhancing border security, and maintaining preparedness to respond effectively to any hostile actions, similar to the responses against past airspace violations by India, Iran, and Afghanistan.

Pakistan's response should be calculated, strategic, and focused on exposing India's misconduct on the international stage while ensuring the protection of Pakistan's national interests and security besides increasing collaboration with allied nations and multiplying diplomatic efforts aimed at garnering support and achieving accountability for India's extrajudicial actions.

Commerce News

CM KP for modern farming technology in agriculture

PESHAWAR (Online): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur chaired an important meeting of Agriculture Department, in which important policy decisions were taken to develop the agriculture sector on modern lines. The Chief Minister has directed the relevant authorities to take innovative measures in order to have maximum production with minimum cost, adding that modern farming technology should be introduced and the field of research in agriculture be aligned with contemporary requirements for this purpose.

He further directed them to collect detailed data of agricultural lands across the province and to take

necessary steps for the cultivation of saffron in suitable lands by upcoming season, adding that saffron crops being grown in neighboring countries should also be evaluated in order to have better production.

He urged upon authorities to ensure useful utilization of available agriculture land in the province so as to make it an effective source of income for the provincial government. He directed that agriculture department should cultivate itself instead of giving these agricultural lands on contracts. However, he said that farmers should also be encouraged to cultivate saffron in the land suitable for this purpose.

The Chief Minister

further directed them to initiate wild olive grafting program in the merged districts. He underlined the need for the construction of small artificial dams to cultivate vegetables in the districts where there is shortage of water, adding that drip irrigation system can also be introduced in such areas; agricultural activities should be carried out keeping in view the specific climatic conditions and other related aspects of different regions of the province.

Self-sufficiency in agricultural production is much needed to control prevailing inflation, he said and added that his government will extend its all-out support to agriculture department for the purpose.

Wheat procurement drive to commence from April 22: DC

FAISALABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Abdullah Nayyar Sheikh said on Sunday that wheat procurement drive in Faisalabad would start from April 22, 2024.

Chairing a meeting, he directed the Food Department to complete necessary arrangements for issuance of 'Bardana' (bags) to farmers so that wheat procurement could be started on time. He said that distribution of 'Bardana' would start from April 19 and for the purpose, wheat growers should apply through 'Bardana App' from April 13, 2024.

He said that 11 procurement centres would be made functional where farmers could sell their wheat produce at government-fixed rate.

He directed the assistant commissioners and food controllers to finalise their arrangements at tehsil level so that the wheat procurement drive could be launched in a fair and transparent manner.



ISLAMABAD: President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and president IBECHS Tariq Mehmood discussing matters of bilateral interest during a meeting.

Kyrgyz businessmen want to collaborate with Pakistani counterparts, says Meher

LAHORE (APP): Honorary Consul of Kyrgyzstan, Meher Kashif Younis said on Sunday that tremendous positive response from Kyrgyzstan entrepreneurs to Pakistani counterpart underscores the potential for deeper economic ties between the two countries.

Sharing the outcome of his recent two-week long visit to Kyrgyzstan with a delegation of exporters and importers led by Chaudhry Faran Shahid

Arain here, he said the Pakistani trade delegation under his leadership remained engaged in a series of fruitful and result-oriented meetings with representatives from both the private and public sectors.

The primary focus was on exploring avenues for cooperation in key sectors, notably pharmaceuticals, textiles and education etc. He said the response from Kyrgyz counterparts was

overwhelmingly positive, reflecting a shared enthusiasm for collaboration.

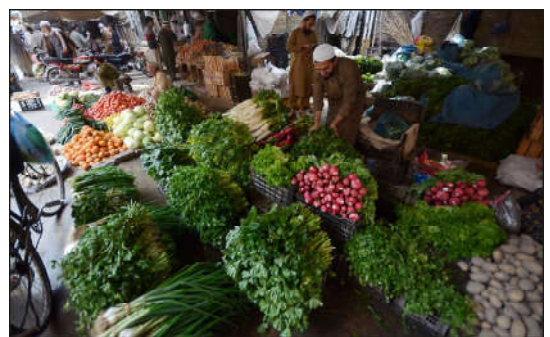
Meher said that beyond these specific sectors, the delegation also emphasized the importance of strengthening overall bilateral trade cooperation between the two countries. By building upon existing economic ties and exploring new avenues for collaboration, they aimed to enhance mutual prosperity and contribute

Beggars flock to Lahore's markets, malls ahead of Eid

LAHORE (APP): As Eid-ul-Fitr approaches, professional beggars have flocked to markets, main roads, Ramadan bazaars, traffic signals and shopping malls to seek fortunes. The beggars of all age groups can be seen seeking alms outside mosques after prayers and at shopping centres, markets, as scores of people head to markets for Eid shopping in the evening. Also they ensure their presence at traffic signals and other major roads and use different ways to seek alms from commuters.

But the story goes beyond further as several

begging rackets become active as Eid draws nearer. These begging rackets divide their respective areas while special persons are deployed to monitor their activities and "earnings" on special occasions like Eid, said an elderly man Mushtaq Ali Likewise, Bushra, an 16-year-old girl, who seeks alms on Ferozepur Road, told APP that no one from her family was educated and this was the best way to earn a living. Bushra said that she come here daily from Sundar Adda along with her mother, 9-year-old brother and a younger sister to seek alms as this is the best way to earn a square meal, she told APP.



PESHAWAR: The shopkeeper is selling vegetables on city Sabzi mandi.

NEPRA disposed of 17,545 consumers' complaints

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Consumer Affairs Department of National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) disposed of, 17,545 complaints of electricity consumers against various power distribution companies (DISCOs) during the last fiscal year 2022-23 while 1,294 were still under process.

According to official data, the authority received a total of 18,839 complaints from the electricity consumers against various DISCOs during the fiscal year 2022-23.

As per breakup, out of total, the head office

received 2,209 consumers' complaints against various DISCOs while the regional offices received 16,630 complaints during the last fiscal year.

Similarly, the head office disposed off a total of 1,946 complaint while the regional offices disposed off 15,599 complaints of consumers during the said period.

The head office received a total of 313 complaints against Islamabad Electric Supply Company, 268 Peshawar Electric Supply Company, 223 Hyderabad Electric Supply Company, 419 K-Electric, 133 Sukkur Electric Supply Company.



RAWALPINDI: A worker hanging vermicelli for dry at his workplace as demand increased for upcoming Eidul Fitr Festival.

Int'l Conference on Food: Over 27% world population face food shortage

MULTAN (APP): Chairman Department of Human Nutrition Dr Tauseef Sultan has said that about 27 percent of world population was faced with issue of food insecurity. However, Half of Pakistan's populace is undergoing malnutrition.

He said this while addressing International Conference at the department. The world conference was attended by scholars like Dr Esatanelly (Nigeria), Dr

Traner (Indonesia), Ahmed ul Aareb (Saudi Arabia), Dr Amjid (Turkiye), Dr Ansar (Australia), Mazhar Iqbal (Doaba Foundation), Pervaiz Iqbal Ansari (Farmers Development Organization), Dean Department of Food Science and Nutrition Dr Saed Akhtar and many others attended the conference. According to World Hunger Index 2021-22, nine countries were suffered badly in terms of food insecurity.

Govt decides to complete ongoing tourism, culture projects on priority: Advisor

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism, Culture and Archeology Zahid Chanzab on Sunday said that the provincial government has issued clear directives for early completion of all ongoing projects on priority basis under the Tourism, Culture and Archeology department.

He said that it is also decided to transform the archaeological sites, ruins, museums and religious places in the province as per the requirements of the modern era, initiate its digital marketing, provide more facilities to the visitors and prepare documentaries in the languages and cultures of

the respective countries.

It has also been decided to launch an all-out campaign to spread such documentaries among the people there through diplomatic means.

This was revealed by Zahid Chanzab, the Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism, Culture and Archeology, during his visit to the Provincial Tourism and Culture Secretariat in Peshawar and the briefing held there on. During the visit, he held introductory meeting with the tourism officers and learned about the various sections of the department.

Addressing the meeting that was held at the committee room of the department, he urged the

officers to work with a renewed spirit of national reconstruction in view of the various challenges being faced by the province and focus on achieving the goals.

He said that tourism and culture officers have to leave their offices and work side by side with the field staff for obtaining better results so that they could be aware of the ground realities of their respective fields.

Likewise, he said development schemes should not be delayed in any way, while in case of unavoidable situations, financial or administrative difficulties should be directly brought to his notice so as to ensure its timely resolution at the highest level.



LAHORE: People boarding on train at Railway Station to leave for their hometowns to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr with their loved ones.

Commissioner visits bus terminals, reviews facilities

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Divisional Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa Sunday visited bus terminals to ensure that no passengers, going to their hometown to celebrate Eid, was overcharged by the bus services.

In a surprise visit to the Badami Bagh Lorry Adda, he checked tickets and expressed his displeasure upon finding men present in the women's passenger hall. He ordered for deployment of a guard outside the women's hall and warned

Campaign against drugs continues in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): On special direction of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the campaign against users and sellers of drugs has been intensified.

In the last 17 days, more than 10,000 raids were conducted across Punjab, in which 4713 accused were arrested and 4941 FIRs were registered. Over 3,398 kg hashish and 20 kg opium were recovered, besides the recovery of 17.5 kg of the most dangerous drug, ice.

Minister uncovers huge corruption in illegal mining, sand/stone supply chain

LAHORE (APP): In a significant crackdown on illegal mining activities, a major operation, led by Provincial Minister for Mines & Minerals, Sardar Sher Ali Gorchani, uncovered rampant corruption and illicit practices in the sand and stone supply chain, amounting to millions of rupees in losses to the national exchequer.

The operation, conducted in the mountainous region of Sakhi Sarwar, DG Khan, revealed widespread irregularities in the supply



SKARDU: A participant reciting Holy Quran during the Husn-e-Qiraat and Hafiz Quran competition at Jamia Masjid Skardu-Baltistan in the Holy Month of Ramadan.

Over 70,000 Pakistani children born with heart defects each year

KARACHI (INP): A staggering number of Pakistani children, exceeding 70,000 annually, are born with congenital heart disease (CHD), according to healthcare professionals. This alarming statistic highlights a critical public health concern in the country.

Professor Dr. Sohail Khan Bangash, head of the pediatric surgery unit at the National Institute of Cardiology (NICVD), Karachi, sheds light on the breakdown of these cases. He reveals that roughly 80% of these children have holes in their hearts, while the remaining 20% suffer from various other heart ailments. Ages of affected children range from newborns to 14 years old. The lack of readily available specialized care is another pressing issue. Dr. Bangash emphasizes the scarcity of pediatric heart specialists in Pakistan, with only 100 pediatric heart surgeons nationwide. Karachi itself houses just 7 surgeons, with 4 stationed at the NICVD, and one each at Aga Khan Hospital, Liaquat National Hospital, and SIUT.

This shortage significantly impacts access to treatment. Dr. Hameedullah Malik, a pediatric physician, underscores the importance of early detection.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Peshawar Zubair Ali addresses to media persons during ceremony of the Journalists Ramadan Sports Gala, held at Peshawar press club.

21 dead, 1587 injured in 1430 RTCs in Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: At least 21 persons were killed and 1587 injured in 1430 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 725 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 862 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 855 drivers, 62 underage drivers, 174 pedestrians, and 579 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 301 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 321 persons placing the Provincial Capital at top of the list followed by Faisalabad 101 in with 119 victims and at third Gujranwala with 83 RTCs and 78 victims.

Relatives of Umair hold protest rally

By Aijaz Mughal
UMERKOT: The family of the young man who has been missing for several days from police custody is in shock. Rally and protest in front of the Press Club on behalf of the heirs, on the request of the father, Sessions Judge Umerkot summoned the police. Demand of the victim's family to take notice from the Supreme Court and the higher authorities.

According to the details, 20-year-old Umair Ahmed Mughal, a resident of Mohalla Bhitai Colony, has been mysteriously missing for the past several days. On behalf of his relatives and citizens under the leadership of his troubled son Muhammad Asif Mughal A rally was taken out from Allahwala Chowk and a strong protest was held in front of Press Club Kunri.

The protesters were holding pictures of the missing youth in their hands, on which were written slogans for the recovery of the youth.

Irregularities in purchase of health equipment surfaced in IKDP: Audit Report

PESHAWAR (APP): Complaints of widespread irregularities in procurement of equipment and construction contracts at the Institute of Kidney Diseases Peshawar surfaced in an audit report released here Sunday.

According to an audit report, by buying various equipment for the kidney center at expensive prices from the market rate and giving the construction contract to the company after approval, the exchequer

has caused a loss of millions of rupees.

In the audit report of the Institute of Kidney Disease Peshawar, objections were raised on medical devices and other items.

Medical equipment and other items were purchased at prices higher than the market rate and by purchasing medical equipment at higher prices, the exchequer suffered a loss of Rs 9.7 million, according to the audit report.

Four daily wages sanitary workers seriously unconscious

Independent Report
SHIKARPUR: The Four Daily Wages sanitary workers went unconscious and sent to Shikarpur District Headquarter Hospital for medical treatment where unavailability of health facilities, were referred to Sukkur hospital on Sunday.

According to reports, one Daily Wage Sanitary worker Qavi Kumar was on its Municipal Committee duty entered in the main hole for sanitary work and suddenly went out of sense due to heavy gutter gas inside, later three other sanitary workers.

International News

Yellen, Premier Li express hope for US-China cooperation

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: United States Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Chinese Premier Li Qiang sounded a hopeful tone on US-China cooperation on Sunday, though the American policymaker noted both sides cannot shy away from tough conversations.

The US-China relationship can only move forward with direct and open communication, Yellen told Li, after arriving in the Chinese capital from the southern city of Guangzhou.

"China sincerely hopes that the two countries will be partners, not adversaries," Li said in welcoming remarks to Yellen. He added that Chinese internet users have closely followed the details of her trip since her appearance in Guangzhou, showing "expectation and hope for the China-US relationship to continue to improve."

Yellen held a series of meetings in the southern port

city, including hours of discussions with her counterpart, Vice Premier He Lifeng. Both countries have since agreed to hold talks on balanced growth under an existing working group, allowing officials to discuss the key US concern of overcapacity.

This refers to a situation where Chinese government support to industries fuels production capacity, but risks a surge of exports at depressed prices to the global market, undercutting international competitors. Washington is especially concerned about this phenomenon in new industries such as electric vehicles and solar energy. Yellen's trip marks her second visit to China in less than a year.

"While we have more to do, I believe that, over the past year, we have put our bilateral relationship on more stable footing," she said in opening remarks to Premier Li as she began two days of high-level talks in Beijing.

Rather than avoiding hard conversations, this has meant "understanding that we can only make progress if we directly and openly communicate with one another", the Treasury chief said. Yellen also stressed, ahead of talks with Beijing mayor Yin Yong, the need to engage with local officials to understand China's "economic future."

"Local governments play a critical role, from boosting consumption to addressing overinvestment and Beijing of course has particular importance," she said. A senior treasury official told reporters on Saturday that Washington believes household spending needs to be a bigger part of China's economy. Speaking to professors from the Peking University National School of Development, Yellen said she was keen to hear their perspectives on "the potential long-term impacts of today's policy decisions."



US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen meets with Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

25 civilians killed in militia attack in eastern Congo

Monitoring Desk
BUNIA, Democratic Republic of Congo (Reuters) - The death toll from an attack in a village in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri province rose to 25 on Sunday, a local chief and civil society leader said, after a government spokesman and a U.N. document confirmed the attack on Saturday.

The Cooperative for the Development of the Congo (CODECO) group, one of many militias operating in the conflict-ridden east, carried out the killings in the village of Galayi, 70 km (45 miles) northwest of the city of Bunia, they said.

Fifteen bodies were discovered on Sunday, in addition to 10 bodies recovered on Saturday, Banzala Danny, a local chief, and Vital Tungulo, a civil society leader, told Reuters.

An internal U.N. document seen by Reuters, and Jules Ngongo, spokesman for the governor of Ituri province, both confirmed the attack and the initial death toll of 10 civilians.

"We assure that all the killers will be punished by justice," Ngongo said. The human rights situation in Ituri has deteriorated since the beginning of the year as CODECO carries out more attacks, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) said in a report published in March. CODECO and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), another militia group, are responsible for most civilian killings in eastern DRC, according to a report by the U.N. peacekeeping mission released in March.

etly leader, told Reuters.

An internal U.N. document seen by Reuters, and Jules Ngongo, spokesman for the governor of Ituri province, both confirmed the attack and the initial death toll of 10 civilians.

"We assure that all the killers will be punished by justice," Ngongo said. The human rights situation in Ituri has deteriorated since the beginning of the year as CODECO carries out more attacks, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) said in a report published in March. CODECO and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), another militia group, are responsible for most civilian killings in eastern DRC, according to a report by the U.N. peacekeeping mission released in March.

Gaza's largest hospital an 'empty shell' with human graves: WHO

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The World Health Organisation said on Saturday that Gaza's largest hospital had been reduced to ashes by Israel's latest siege, leaving an "empty shell" with many bodies. Israeli forces pulled out of Al Shifa hospital in Gaza City on Monday after a two-week military operation, during which it said it had battled Palestinian militants inside what was once the Palestinian territory's most important medical complex. A WHO-led mission finally accessed the hospital on Friday, after multiple failed attempts since March 25, the UN health agency said, describing the massive destruction.

"WHO and partners managed to reach Al Shifa — once the backbone of the health system in Gaza, which is now an empty

shell with human graves after the latest siege," agency chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

He said the team had seen "at least five dead bodies during the mission". They had also found that "most of the buildings in the hospital complex are extensively destroyed and the majority of assets damaged or reduced to ashes", the WHO chief said. "Even restoring minimal functionality in the short term seems implausible," he said, adding that "an in-depth assessment by a team of engineers is needed to determine if the remaining buildings are safe for future use".

Tedros lamented that efforts by WHO and other aid groups to revive basic services at Al Shifa after Israel's first devastating raid on the hospital last year "are now lost."

US, Russian, Belarus ISS colleagues return to Earth

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: A Nasa astronaut, a Russian cosmonaut and Belarus's first ever space traveller on Saturday returned to Earth safely after a fortnight aboard the International Space Station, Russia's Roscosmos agency reported.

"Today, at 10:17am Moscow time (0717 GMT), the descent vehicle of Sozuz MS-24 manned spacecraft landed near the Kazakh city of Zhezkazgan," Roscosmos reported. "The (vessel's) deorbit and its descent to Earth went off normally," the agency added.

Russian cosmonaut Oleg Novitsky and the first ever Belarusian cosmonaut, Marina Vassilevskaya, "spent 14 days in orbit", while American astronaut Loral O'Hara completed a 204-day mission.

Israeli embassies 'no longer safe' after Syria strike: Iran

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: An adviser to Iran's supreme leader warned on Sunday that Israeli embassies are "no longer safe" after a strike in Syria which Tehran blamed on Israel killed seven Revolutionary Guards members.

"The embassies of the Zionist regime are no longer safe," Yahya Rahim Safavi, senior adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was quoted as saying by the ISNA news agency.

Tehran has vowed to avenge Monday's air strike on Damascus that levelled the Iranian embassy's consular annex, killing seven Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) members including two generals.

"The resistance front is ready; how it (the response) will be, we have to wait," Safavi said, noting that "confronting this brutal regime is a legal and legitimate right".

He also noted that multiple Israeli embassies around the region "have been shuttered".

There was no immediate comment from Israel.

Blast kills seven children in Syria

Monitoring Desk
DAMASCUS: Seven children were killed in southern Syria's Daraa province on Saturday when an "explosive device" detonated, state media reported.

"Seven children" were killed "and two other people were injured, one of them a woman, when an explosive device planted by terrorists" went off in the city of Sanamayn, state news agency SANA reported, quoting a police source. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor gave a different toll, saying that "eight children of different ages were killed and another was wounded" in the blast.

Mexico says diplomatic staff leave Ecuador after embassy raid

Monitoring Desk
QUITO: Mexico's diplomatic personnel were leaving Ecuador on Sunday, its foreign minister said, as the two countries severed ties after Quito's security forces stormed the Mexican embassy in a raid that prompted searing international rebukes.

"Our diplomatic staff are leaving everything in Ecuador and returning home with their heads held high [...] after the assault on our embassy," said Foreign Minister Alicia Barcena on social network X, formerly Twitter. She spoke after Spain and the European Union joined the United Nations chief and Latin American countries in condemning Quito for the raid — which it carried out in a bid to arrest former Ecuadorian vice president Jorge Glas, who was sheltering at the embassy.

Glas sought refuge there last December after an arrest warrant was issued against him for alleged corruption.

Israeli military reduces troops in southern Gaza, spokesperson says

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: The Israeli military has withdrawn all ground troops from the southern Gaza Strip except for one brigade, a military spokesperson said on Sunday.

The military did not immediately provide further details. It was unclear whether the withdrawal would delay a long-threatened incursion into the southern Gaza city of Rafah, which Israeli leaders have said is needed to eliminate Hamas.

US, Britain, Australia weigh expanding AUKUS security pact to deter China, FT says

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The US, Britain and Australia are set to begin talks on bringing new members into their AUKUS security pact as Washington pushes for Japan to be involved as a deterrent against China, the Financial Times reported.

The countries' defence ministers will announce discussions on Monday on "Pillar Two" of the pact, which commits the members to jointly developing quantum computing, undersea, hypersonic, artificial intelligence and cyber technology, the newspaper reported on Saturday, citing people familiar with the situation.

They are not considering expanding the first pillar, which is designed to deliver nuclear-powered attack submarines to Australia, the FT said.

AUKUS, formed by the three countries in

2021, is part of their efforts to push back against China's growing power in the Indo-Pacific region. China has called the AUKUS pact dangerous and warned it could spur a regional arms race.

Rahm Emanuel, the US ambassador in Tokyo, wrote in an opinion piece, opens new tab in the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday that Japan was "about to become the first additional Pillar II partner".

A senior U.S. administration official told Reuters on Wednesday that some sort of announcement could be expected in the coming week about Japan's involvement but gave no details. Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will likely discuss expanding AUKUS to include Japan when the president hosts the prime minister in Washington on Wednesday, a source with knowledge of the talks said.

