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Pakistan, KSA call for immediate ceasefire in Gaza, regret int'l community's failure

Islamabad, Riyadh to work together for economic prosperity, regional security: There are various avenues to increase investment in Pakistan; Saudi FM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on Tuesday, while regretting the failure of the international community to ensure ceasefire in Gaza, demanded its immediate enforcement, opening of a humanitarian corridor and averting of famine that was leading to a catastrophe.

Addressing a joint presser along with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said that Pakistan was deeply concerned over the



Both the brotherly countries shared the same feelings on Gaza, he said, stressing upon the international community to help end the genocide. More than 33,000 Palestinians had been killed.

the world conscience must wake up and enforce an immediate and unconditional ceasefire to ensure unimpeded humanitarian aid, he added.

More Palestinians should not be killed due to starvation, he said, demanding for a global probe into the crimes committed against humanity in Gaza.

Foreign Minister Dar said that different investigations had been carried out across the world over the war crimes against humanity so why it could not take

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif hosted a banquet in honour of Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H. H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud and the accompanying Saudi delegation



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir presiding over the 26th Corps Commanders Conference at General Headquarters

Secretary Welfare Fund and IG Motorways call on CM separately:

CM calls for promoting skill-based education in different sectors along with traditional degree programme in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has underlined the need to promote skill-based education in different sectors in addition to the traditional degree programme in educational institutions.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the Secretary Welfare Fund, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, Zulfiqar Khan, who called on him in Islamabad on Tuesday.

The Secretary Welfare Fund informed about the ongoing social security programme continued in the province.

He told that there are 19,000 workers are registered in the social security

programme in which 90 percent are labourers working in the mines.

He said that the children of workers are being provided educational support under the Government of Pakistan Workers Welfare Fund.

The Chief Minister appreciated the workers Fund under the social security programme.

He said that every individual can't be given jobs in government sectors remaining in the available resources of the province.

He said that there is demand of the technical persons in different sectors all over the world.

Therefore, it is necessary to provide respectable livelihood by making the

youth skilled, adding he stressed.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General Motorway Police, Salman Chaudhary also called on the Chief Minister in Islamabad the same day.

During the course of meeting, they discussed about the international certification of heavy driving learning skills for youth.

The Inspector General of Motorway Police informed that comprehensive programme is being chalked out for issuance of the C category Driving licenses to the youth of Balochistan.

The Chief Minister appreciated the heavy driving learning skills programme under the Motorway Police.

FM Aurangzeb says Pakistan wants to get a new EEF package from IMF

ISLAMABAD (Online): Finance Minister (FM) Muhammad Aurangzeb has said Pakistan has completed IMF program successfully and there is plan for talks with IMF on Extended Fund Facility (EFF) Program. He held positive talks have taken place with IMF. We want to get the EFF (Extended Fund Facility) (EFF) from IMF as quickly as possible," Aurangzeb said.

Muhammad Aurangzeb is there in Washington DC US to participate in IMF and World Bank meetings.

Addressing his first Atlantic Council think tank FM demanded of World Bank (WB) and IMF to help countries like Pakistan to control climate change effects and promote financial participation.

He remarked Pakistan is in pursuit of large and long program with IMF because we need two to three years for structural reforms.

He underlined that at present, Pakistan does not need a lot of new policies and it needs only to implement these policies.

Rain-wind, thunderstorm forecast in various areas of Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Regional Meteorological Centre Balochistan has advised the relevant authorities to remain vigilant during upcoming spell of heavy rains starting from Wednesday in different parts of the province.

The met office on Tuesday has forecast Rain-wind/Thunderstorm in Gwadar, Kech, Awaran, Chagi, Panjgur, Kharan, Washuk and Noshki during the next 36 to 48 hours. Met office has also advised relevant departments to stay alert and promptly ensure precautionary measures to avoid any loss of life or property during the said period.

Consumers to get Rs 4.12 per unit reduction in electricity bills for May

ISLAMABAD (APP): The consumers will get Rs 4.12 per unit reduction in their electricity bills for the month of May as compared to March. A petition has been submitted to National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) for slashing fuel cost adjustment from Rs 4.92 per unit to Rs 2.94 per unit for May as compared to April, said a statement issued by Ministry of Power Division here Tuesday. The power tariff for April was also reduced from Rs 7.6 per unit to Rs 4.92 per unit as compared to March, the statement further said. Owing to the efforts of the government, the request for reduction in electricity bills has been submitted to NEPRA for the third consecutive month, it added.

Meanwhile, Minister for Power Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari said that benefits of reduction in fuel price would be provided to the masses.

CCC resolves to launch stern legal action against baseless propaganda about security forces

Baseless allegations on law enforcers part of larger design to drive wedge between people, security forces; Army vows providing support to govt for sustainable socioeconomic growth; Gen Munir directs commanders to pro-actively deny any space to terrorists; Top army forum condemns war crimes, genocide being perpetrated in Gaza.

RAWALPINDI (APP): The 26th Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) presided over by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir at the General Headquarters on Tuesday took serious notice of the baseless propaganda against the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and the security forces, and resolved to launch strict legal action against the perpetrators.

"The forum noted with concern the malicious propaganda campaign meant to demoralise the armed forces and underscored that unfounded and baseless allegations on law enforcement agencies and security forces have become a fashion and are part of the larger design to drive a wedge between the people and the Armed Forces of Pakistan. We will not allow such efforts to

succeed and as per the law and Constitution, stern action will be ensured," an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The forum paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of Shuhada (martyrs) including officers and men of the armed forces, law enforcement agencies and the citizens who have laid their lives for peace and sta-

bility in the country.

The COAS appreciated the untiring efforts of Pakistan Army and LEAs in successfully thwarting several terrorist attacks and neutralising key terrorist commanders during the ongoing counterterrorism operations.

He directed the commanders to pro-actively deny any space to the terrorists.

The Army Chief said, "The Armed Forces and LEAs of Pakistan, fully backed by the resilient nation, remain determined to permanently eliminate this menace from Pakistan, INSHA'ALLAH".

The forum condemned the heinous terrorist attack against Chinese nationals in Besham as well as the kill

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ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti meeting with Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani. Former Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar is also present

CM Balochistan meets Chairman Senate; extends greetings; discusses issues

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti called on the newly elected Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani in Islamabad on Tuesday.

During the course of meeting, the Chief Minister extended greetings to Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on assuming the coveted office of Chairman Senate.

He also discussed different matters besides discussing the issues being faced by the province.

Also present in the meeting were included former caretaker Prime Minister, Anwarul Haq Kakar, President of Balochistan Awami Party and Member National Assembly, Nawabzada Khalid Magsi, Member National Assembly, Syed Abdul Qadir Gilani and parliamentary leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Punjab, Syed Ali Haider Gilani.

All dams of Quetta intact; no threat to their structure

Independent Report
QUETTA: All dams located in and around Quetta are totally safe and as such there's no threat to their structures following the spell of heavy rains hit the city couple of days before.

According to the sources Irrigation Department, around 10,000 acre feet water has been stored in all dams located around the Quetta city and adjoining areas.

The sources of Irrigation Department, there is a capacity of storing 55 acres feet water in Karkhasa dam located near western bypass area.

At present, 20 feet acres water is stored in Karkhasa dam, the sources of Irrigation Department informed.

Similarly, there is capacity of storing 380 acre feet water in Wali Tangi dam, which has been filled.

Besides, Spin Karez dam has the capacity of storing 2500 acre feet water. However, 1200 acre feet water has been stored in the Spin Karez dam.

Faizabad commission gives clean chit to Faiz Hameed, agencies

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: The inquiry commission probing the November 2017 Faizabad sit-in absolves former director-general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), retired Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, of the charges.

The three-member commission, set up on the orders of the Supreme Court, has issued its 149-page report.

According to sources, the commission cited various loopholes in the han

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Eight people died, eight others injured in recent rain-related mishaps in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: In all eight people lost their lives while eight others got injured in different mishaps during recent rains in different districts of Balochistan province.

According to the report of losses released by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Tuesday, the deaths have been reported from five districts during April 12-14.

As per the PDMA's report, deaths and injuries to the people are reported from Pishin, Kech, Chaman, Sorab, Loralai and Dera Bugti.

The report suggested that nine houses were completely damaged while 33 were partially damaged.

One dam and two roads were also affected due to the heavy rains in different parts of the province.

Saudi FM's visit to Pakistan will usher in new era of friendship: PM

Pakistan desires to enhance bilateral cooperation with Saudi Arabia

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says discussions with the Saudi delegation will usher in a new era of close cooperation, and in coming weeks and months we will be able to sign agreements worth billions of dollars.

Speaking at the dinner hosted in the honor of visiting Saudi delegation in Islamabad tonight, he expressed satisfaction over the progress on areas of interests from both sides.

The Prime Minister also expressed hope that the Saudi Crown Prince will visit Pakistan on the occasion of signing agreements between the two brotherly

countries. He thanked the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia for sending a high level delegation led by Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud to fast-track the Saudi investment in Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud thanked Pakistani side for warm reception and hospitality.

He also thanked for the cooperation that would initiate a new phase of partnership and brotherhood through tangible economic cooperation that can deliver for both the countries.

Online adds: Prime Minister Muhammad

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NOSHKI: Inspector General of Police Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh being briefed by DIG Rakhshan Range Wazir Khan Nasar about Noshki incident during his visit to spot of assassination of nine labourers

Visits spot of murder of labourers in Noshki: No negligence to be tolerated in security of all routes in Balochistan: IGP

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh has stated that foolproof security of all routes in the province is included in top priority and as such no negligence and irresponsibility would be tolerated in this regard.

The Inspector General of police was speaking during the visit of spot of assassination of nine labourers in Noshki on Tuesday.

On the occasion, Deputy Inspector General Rakhshan Range, Wazir Khan Nasar, DIG CTD,

Aitezaz Ahmed Goraya, AIG Operations, Muhammad Baloch, DPO Noshki, Allah Bakhsh and other high ups were also present.

The DIG Wazir Khan Nasar briefed the IGP about the incident of killing of labourers in Noshki.

He informed that the police is investigating the incident from different aspects.

He also asserted that protection of the masses is also our priority. He directed the police personnel to remain high alert on entry and exit routes and ensure checking there.



QUETTA: Spokesman Government of Balochistan Shahid Rind inspecting media monitoring room during his visit to Directorate of Public Relations Balochistan. Provincial Secretary Information Imran Khan and DGPR Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran are also present

Why EC is increasing suspicions about election: CJ IHC asks

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) has asked Election Commission (EC) as to why it is increasing suspicions about election forcibly.

The CJ IHC gave these remarks during the hearing of contempt of court plea filed by Shoaib Shaheen against EC on non provision of certified copies of election documents including form 45 in NA-47 Islamabad and non compliance of court's orders.

The petitioner and candidate from NA 47 Shoaib Shaheen and counsel for EC appeared in the court.

Shoaib Shaheen told the court's orders were not complied in regard to provision of certified copies. The court had ordered to provide certified copies of relevant documents which have not been provided so far.

The counsel for EC Zaigham Anees said the case has been discussed with provincial EC Punjab and the copies will be provided soon to them. One week time be given for providing certified copies.

The CJ remarked don't say this. What is relevance of Islamabad with Punjab. Certified copies are their basic and legal right. Why

they are not providing. As to why they are increasing the suspicions of the people about election forcibly. if EC has not to provide copies then should I order today. If a senior lawyer and former president Bar has to make such hectic struggle then what about the common man. It will take how much more time. One year, two years, three years or five years is period.

The counsel for EC Zaigham Anees assured the court to provide the certified copies before next hearing. The court adjourned hearing of the case till April 24.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H.E. Prince Faisal bin Farhan al-Saud leading a high level delegation called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

Amb. Munir Akram discusses 'important matters' with UN peacekeeping chief

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Munir Akram, met with the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Jean-Pierre Lacroix, and discussed a range of peacekeeping matters. A press release of the Pakistan Mission said that they discussed "important matters related to Pakistan's current & future peacekeeping endeavours. USG Lacroix lauded Pakistan's role as a leading troop-contributing country to UN peacekeeping, a world body's flagship activity.

Since the 1960s, Pakistan has contributed over 200,000 troops to 43 missions UN peacekeeping missions around the world. In its service to the cause of peace, Pakistan lost 171 of its bravest who made the ultimate sacrifice.



QUETTA: A delegation of Al-Khidmat Foundation Quetta led by its President Abdul Majeed Sarbazi meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Pakistan, KSA call for immediate...

place in Gaza!
He reiterated that Pakistan believed that the perpetual solution to the issue was in the establishment of an independent state of Palestine with its pre-1967 borders and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

He shared views of the Saudi Foreign Minister that the world woke up after the killing of six aid workers from the West but not on the deaths of thousands of Palestinians.

The foreign minister said that the world must act fast and quick.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud said that in Gaza, so far more than 33,000 people had been killed.

"They are now facing a famine like situation and starving to death as the international humanitarian aid is not getting in. It is a complete failure of the international community," he added.

Terminating the situation unacceptable, he said there was no justification to it.

In reality, he said, the two United Nations resolutions regarding immediate ceasefire in Gaza had not seen implementation.

Efforts were seen after six Western aid workers were killed but not when 33,000 Palestinians died which showed the double standards, he regretted.

Prince Faisal called for an immediate end to the kill-

ings and sufferings of the people of Gaza.

He said that they were already living in an unstable region leading to a catastrophe in Gaza and 'there is no need for further confrontation', adding that 'de-escalation should be everybody's priority'.

Replying to various queries, both sides reiterated to further build up and convert the strong partnership into a strategic partnership and further promote economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries.

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar expressed his pleasure on the arrival of the high-powered delegation from the KSA, terming it an 'impressive group of dignitaries visiting Pakistan for the first time during his long political career'.

About their deliberations, he said that they had discussed ways and means to transform the cordial cooperation between the two brotherly nations into a strategic partnership and enhancement of investment in Pakistan.

He explained that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was functioning like one window for fast tracking foreign investment, adding that Pakistan was committed to strengthening of its investment environment.

He expressed the hope

that Pakistan would soon become a hub for investment and innovations.

He further expressed the optimism that their detailed briefings had highlighted the extensive opportunities for the Saudi investors in energy, agriculture, minerals and IT sectors.

Foreign Minister Dar said that they would ensure full support to the Saudi investment and provide a conducive environment under the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal expressed his profound appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to him and his delegation.

He termed his meetings with the Pakistani leadership very productive.

The Saudi FM stressed upon the importance of strategic partnership between the two countries and expressed commitment for strengthening of investment. He said that the delegation was impressed with the proactive and business focused approach of the Pakistani side.

The minister said that there were significant investment opportunities in Pakistan, and termed their visit 'very positive on their perspective', which would lay the groundwork for future ventures.

The untapped potential in Pakistan needed to be tapped, he emphasised.

Prince Faisal bin Farhan further reaffirmed to continue working closely for the economic progress and regional security with historic bilateral cooperation.

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, to another query, said that the SIFC and launch of Sovereign Wealth Fund were established through the acts of parliament.

The Fund had a worth of 9 million dollars now as against its initial launch at \$2.3million. Moreover, the country had 10 trillion dollars worth mineral assets, he added.

NA-130: Nawaz Sharif's victory challenged in election tribunal

LAHORE (INP): The victory of PML-N supremo and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif from NA-130 has been challenged in the election tribunal of Lahore High Court (LHC). The election result of NA-130 was challenged by PTI-backed Dr Yasmin Rashid.

It has been pleaded by the petitioner that the election commission issued the notification of Sharif's victory contrary to the law. The election tribunal consisting of Justice Sultan Tanvir Ahmad will hear the petition.

It merits mention here that the victory of former prime minister from NA-130 was challenged in LHC

PML-N prefers dialogue over chaos: Asif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Tuesday said that Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) has believes in resolving issues through dialogue and not chaos or sit-ins.

Speaking to a private news channel, he reiterated the unity within the party under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif. He expressed confidence that, with Nawaz Sharif's guidance, the party will effectively tackle the nation's economic difficulties. To address economic challenges, he said that PML-N aims to strengthen the exchequer through foreign investment, particularly in the government's petroleum and mining sectors.

Pak-Saudi FMs discuss potential for enhancing trade, investment coop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar and his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on Tuesday discussed potential for extensive commercial, trade, and investment cooperation in multiple domains for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Ishaq Dar, who received Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recalled the important understandings reached at the leadership level during the

Hashmi confers Hilal-e-Quaid-i-Azam upon Chairman, CIDCA

BEIJING (APP): On behalf of the President of Pakistan, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi conferred the civil award "Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam" on Ambassador Luo Zhaohui, Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), at an elegant investiture ceremony held at the Embassy of Pakistan today.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi felicitated Ambassador Luo on receiving the prestigious award that marked a recognition of his outstanding contribution to China-Pakistan friendship. Paying rich tribute to Ambassador Luo for his meritorious services, the Ambassador called him a 'great friend of Pakistan' who had always been at the forefront in supporting the people and government of Pakistan.

Ambassador Luo Zhaohui, in his remarks, expressed profound gratitude to the President of Pakistan for conferring on him "Hilal-e-Quaid-i-Azam".

He referred to Pakistan as his 'second home', recalling especially the extraordinary support extended to him by the Pakistan leadership during his tenure as Ambassador of China to Pakistan.

The ceremony was attended by dignitaries, high-level officials and media persons of China and Pakistan.

CCC resolves to launch stern legal...

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ing of innocent civilians in Balochistan.

It was briefed on how terrorist groups operating from Afghanistan pose a threat to regional and global security, besides acting as proxies against Pakistan and its economic interests, especially the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

The forum expressed serious concern over the ongoing Indian aggression in the Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK), and reaffirmed that Pakistan would continue to provide political, diplomatic and moral support to the Kashmiri brothers and sisters.

It expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine and condemned serious human rights violations, war crimes and genocide being perpetrated in Gaza.

The forum also expressed concern over the escalating tensions in the Middle East and noted that a wider regional conflict could ensue if both sides did not de-escalate immediately.

The forum resolved to provide full support to the government towards achieving sustainable socio-economic growth in the country, including wholehearted assistance in countering the illegal spectrum, particularly smuggling, hoarding, electricity theft and safe repatriation of all illegal foreigners.

The COAS directed the field commanders to ensure the highest standards of operational preparedness and motivation within their outfits and to pursue professional excellence through objective training.

PTI founder condemns Bahawalnagar incident

RAWALPINDI (INP): Former prime minister and founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has denounced the recent incident in Bahawalnagar, emphasizing the need for equal application of the law across the country.

In a media briefing at Adiala Jail, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan and party leaders, including Sher Afzal Marwat, voiced their concerns after meeting with the PTI founder. They highlighted that a scheduled meeting was disrupted by unidentified individuals placing glasses in the room, condemning the interference.

Saudi FM's visit to Pakistan...

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Shehbaz Sharif has expressed Pakistan's desire to further enhance bilateral cooperation with Saudi Arabia in the fields of trade and investment.

He was talking to a high-level Saudi delegation led by Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud in Islamabad Tuesday.

The Prime Minister said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia should work closely to expedite the first phase of Saudi investments in Pakistan.

He said the visit of Saudi delegation marks beginning of a new era of strategic and commercial partnership between the two countries.

The Prime Minister said the visit of Saudi delegation immediately after his visit to Saudi Arabia is a manifestation of strong commitment of both countries to strengthen bilateral relations.

Shehbaz Sharif highlighted the steps being taken by the government to promote foreign investment and achieve mutually beneficial partnerships with brotherly countries.

The Prime Minister informed the delegation about the Special Investment Facilitation Council and key role of Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and the cooperation of all



BEIJING: On behalf of the President of Pakistan, Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Khalil Hashmi conferred the civil award "Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam" on Ambassador Luo Zhaohui, Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), at an elegant investiture ceremony held at Pakistan Embassy in Beijing

Faizabad commission...

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ding of the issue and drafted recommendations after evaluating the circumstances related to the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan's sit-in at Faizabad.

The report highlights the role of the Islamabad Police, the Ministry of Interior, the Punjab government, the ISI and the IB, and contains details of matters related to former law minister Zahid Hamid.

The report stated that Faiz Hameed as Maj Gen DG © ISI was authorised by the then army chief and the ISI director general to sign the agreement with protesters. Moreover, then prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and then interior minister Ahsan Iqbal also agreed on retired Gen Faiz Hameed's role as a mediator. The commission stressed on ensuring implementation of all the points of the National Action Plan and recommended that weaknesses in the command and control system of the police should be addressed.

The inquiry commission pointed out that Faizabad-like incidents occurred because of flaws in the government policy. It stressed on "policymakers" to learn lessons from the Faizabad incident. The report held the Punjab government responsible for "allowing the TLP to proceed to Islamabad instead of halting it in Lahore."

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Senior Assistant Director Local Govt & Rural Dev Dept District Quetta invites sealed percentage based bids as per the rates by CSR-2018 (amended up-to-date) from interested bidding firms having valid registration with PEC, FBR (NTN/GST) and BRA for the following scheme of PSPD 2023-2024. Bid security in the form of Deposit at Call is 02% estimated cost as per bidding documents for undermentioned schemes.

S.#	NAME OF SCHEMES	E/COST
1	Estab. of Christian Study Center and Master Johnson Ashraf Memorial Digital Library at Quetta. (PSPD No. 5325/22021.3112) (TSE-232404390563)	35.00 M

METHOD OF PROCUREMENT: The procurement/open competitive bidding shall be carried out in accordance with Baluchistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (BPPRA) rules-2014 (amended up-to-date) under Single Stage - Two envelope procedure. The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of undersigned on submission of tender fee of Rs.2000/= (Non-refundable), deposited via Green challan in A/C C-03870 in the favor of undersigned. The same bidding documents can also be downloaded from B-PPPRA website. The name of firm(s) and address must be clearly mentioned on the green challan along with written application on letter head of the firm(s). Bid Validity period is 90 days. **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA OF BIDDER:** Bidding firms must have valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in category C-5 or above along with specialized codes as per bidding documents. The Bidding firms must be registered in FBR and BRA and their names must be in Active Tax Payer Lists (ATL). Firm(s) must provide fresh No blacklisting and No litigation declaration/certificates on 100/- pkr attested affidavit. Representative(s) of bidding firm(s) must submit fresh Power of Attorney on 100/- pkr attested affidavit. For further details, kindly see the bidding documents. **BID(S) SUBMISSION & DEADLINE:** The Technical and Financial proposal(s) by bidding firm(s) must be delivered to the address mentioned below before or on 30th April - 2024 till 11:00 Am. The document(s) received after the due date and time will not be accepted. **BID(S) OPENING:** The envelope(s) containing "Technical Bid(s)" will only be opened on the same day i.e. 30th April - 2024 at 12:00 pm. Whereas, Financial bids of technically qualified bidder(s) will be open afterwards. **TERMS & CONDITIONS:** (1) Bid(s) not accompanied along with call deposit will be rejected. (2) Erroneous bids or bids having overwriting or disfigured entries will be rejected. (3) Bidding document(s) received after specified date and time will be rejected. (4) Unsigned or partially signed bidding documents by the bidder will be rejected (5) The conditional and telegraphic bid(s) will not be accepted. (6) Bidding document(s) from Blacklisted firm(s) will also be rejected. **ADDRESS:** Office of the Senior Assistant Director LGRD Quetta Satellite Town Block-4, Kalat Road Quetta. Tel: 081-920209.

(SENIOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR) LOCAL GOVT & RURAL DEV DEPT QUETTA
PRQ No.1868/16-04-2024
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TENDER NOTICE

The DIRECTOR GENERAL FARMS & FEED RESOURCES QUETTA invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. TSE-232404395391 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.

Tender Fee Not required

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Medical Equipment and Accessories	2%
(Total Item(s) Count: 1)		

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 1 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 15,000,000 in Previous 3 Years. Turn over of at least 10,000,000 PKR in 1 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. JV is not permissible. Submission of the required Bid Security in case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as in-eligible and non-responsive. 01 successfully completed similar assignments in public Sector (Govt Sector) in last Three years. The Bidder must have completed same nature of work to the tune of Rs. 15 Million in one assignments in last Three financial years. **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 06 May, 2024 till 02:00 PM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 03:00 PM on EPPS System Address: Brewery Road Near CAS/VAB quetta Phone no: 0819213147 Fax no: 0819213147 Email: dgffidda@gmail.com

DIRECTOR GENERAL FARMS & FEED RESOURCES QUETTA
PRQ No.1872/16-04-2024
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QUETTA: Senior Politician, Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Raisani addressing the condolence seminar organized on the occasion of the first death anniversary of the Tribal Political and Social Leader Mir Manzoor Hussain Longo, at Quetta press club



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Pakistani and Saudi delegation with Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud on the occasion of Saudi Arabia - Pakistan Investment Conference.

Saudi investment in Pakistan to strengthen partnership, promote regional stability: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday said that the Saudi investment in Pakistan, would not only strengthen the deeply valued partnership but also make a sterling contribution to regional peace and stability.

The foreign minister, addressing the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) Forum held here and attended by the visiting high-powered Saudi delegation, led by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, said that the incumbent government's goal was to transform Pakistan into a hub for economic activity and innovation, creating an attractive environment for

global investors, particularly those from Saudi Arabia.

The visiting delegation consists of Saudi Minister of Water and Agriculture, Eng. Abdulrahman Abdulmohsen AlFadley; Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources, Bandar Ibrahim Alkhorayef; Assistant Minister of Investment, Ibrahim bin Yousef Al-Mubarak; Head of Saudi Special Committee, Mohammed Maziad Al-Tuwajiri; and senior officials from Ministry of Energy and Saudi Public Investment Fund.

The foreign minister assured the delegation that the Saudi investment in Pakistan was not just the placement of capital, rather

it would prove to be instrumental for mutual progress and prosperity.

The foreign minister reaffirmed that the Saudi investment in Pakistan would be handled with the utmost respect and through institutionalized mechanisms.

He told the gathering that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia shared deep-rooted ties, anchored in rich Islamic heritage and mutual strategic interests and the Saudi delegation's visit underscored a deep and abiding connection between the two countries.

He said a longstanding and time-tested friendship with Saudi Arabia was a significant element of Pakistan's foreign policy

with an aim to transform the traditionally fraternal ties into a strategic economic partnership.

He informed the delegation that the SIFC platform intended to streamline processes and ensure rapid decision-making and efficient handling of investments. The Council has a central role in augmenting infrastructure, streamlining regulatory framework and ensuring the swift processes to attract foreign direct investment to Pakistan.

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Pakistan was endowed with fertile agricultural land, a dynamic population, mineral wealth, a vibrant IT sector and abundant prospects for renewable energy like solar,

hydro and wind.

He said Pakistan's fertile land presented numerous opportunities in agriculture technology and food processing. A vast network of water resources did create the prospects for Pakistan to become the region's food basket, he added.

Furthermore, he said the country's mining sector was marked by untapped potential, especially in the Tethyan Belt known for copper, gold and valuable minerals.

He said through collaborative efforts, the bond between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was set to strengthen and emphasised that both sides should seize the abundant opportunity ahead.

NDMA, IRC sign LoU for cooperation on disaster resilience, preparedness

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) on Tuesday signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) to foster disaster resilience in Pakistan.

NDMA Chairman Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik witnessed the signing of LoU. Shabnam Baloch, Country Director of IRC-Pakistan and Raza Iqbal signed the LoU on behalf of their respective organisations.

"This initiative marks a significant collaboration between the NDMA, Pakistan's leading disaster management authority and IRC - a global humanitarian organization," as NDMA news release said.

The NDMA chairman, in his remarks, said that the Authority's National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) had provided a comprehensive outlook on potential hazards and emergencies expected in next six months.

"This crucial information serves as a foundation for the country's disaster management organizations to strategize and outline

their response plans effectively, ensuring readiness and swift action in the face of adversity," he added.

He called for incorporation of anticipatory actions for resilient interventions in humanitarian organisations' annual plans.

Ms Shabnam Baloch of the IRC-Pakistan on the occasion expressed her organization's commitment to the newly formed partnership, stressing the critical significance of collaborative initiatives, tackling the multifaceted challenges presented by climate change and natural disasters specifically in the context of Pakistan.

Both the NDMA chairman and the IRC Pakistan Country Director expressed their resolve to advancing the resilience agenda through tri-party partnerships involving relevant state institutions, civil society, and community voices into decision-making processes.

The scope of the IRC-NDMA collaboration encompasses joint efforts in strengthening community-based disaster risk management/reduction models, creating toolkit of best prac-

tices and the outlook for anticipatory actions. This includes consultations on innovative programmes and stakeholder engagement for strengthening resilience in communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and other local institutions.

According to the LoU, the partnership involves extending technical assistance for the development of a multi-sectoral resilience building initiatives, through capacity-building sessions for stakeholders and technical support for the robust functioning of National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC).

In the realm of policy advocacy, NDMA and IRC will collaborate on providing technical support to academic working groups focusing on disaster management, preparedness, and resilience building upon evidence-based research analyzing existing policy frameworks and alignment with ongoing multi-sectoral climate adaptive efforts.

Both entities will also jointly host engagements for dissemination of findings and learning with relevant stakeholders nationally and provincially.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

Azerbaijani ambassador calls on Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Tuesday.

Welcoming the ambassador, the minister said Pakistan viewed Azerbaijan as an important country due to its strategic location, immense resources, progressive outlook and fast growing economy.

The minister highlighted the importance of bilateral brotherly relations

between two countries which were based on historical, cultural and religious commonalities, a Defence Ministry news release said.

Khawaja Asif expressed the desire to enhance defence relations, which had immense potential to grow to the benefit of both countries. He stressed the need for continued interaction between higher military and defence level leadership of the two countries.

Kundi urges opposition alliance to prioritize dialogue over reservations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday urged the opposition alliance to go for dialogue for addressing their reservations.

"The PTI government currently holds power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; thus, their initial step should be to establish a judicial commission within the province," he asserted while talking to a private news channel.

Kundi emphasized

that they (PTI) should demonstrate some courage and consider relinquishing the seats secured by Fazal ur Rehman's JUI candidates at the province. In response to a question, the PPP leader said central executive committee (CEC) of the party was responsible for determining whether to participate in the federal government. Kundi stated that the Pakistan Peoples Party keen to provide the PML-N with a fair opportunity of governance.



ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at Faisal Avenue during sunny weather after two days of rain spell in the city.

UNESCO has announced MAB Young Scientists Awards 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): UNESCO has announced MAB Young Scientists Awards 2024 for the young researchers carrying out interdisciplinary research in line with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

The researchers (under the age of 35) either pursuing research in UNESCO Biosphere Reserves or potential sites or their work contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals may apply for the awards.

According to the ECOSF Pakistan, the deadline for submission of applications for the MAB Young Scientists Awards is May 15 while the priority

will be given to projects carried out in biosphere reserves. Created in 1989, the grant sheds light on interdisciplinary research in line with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme carried out by young scientists.

Since 2022, with the generous support from the Principality of Monaco, five additional annual fellowships are granted specifically to studies on marine, island and coastal issues in biosphere reserves, totalling a number of 11 awards.

Through the MAB Young Scientists Awards, the MAB programme is investing in a new generation of scientists worldwide as well-trained and committed

Ministry launches 2nd phase of Hajj training nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on Tuesday initiated the second phase of Hajj training across the nation, to educate intending pilgrims about religious rites, administrative matters, and host country regulations.

The ministry, in collaboration with 40 resource persons, religious scholars, and leaders, has organized training sessions at 122 locations across the country, spanning district levels.

These sessions would equip pilgrims with the necessary knowledge and understanding required for their journey to perform the sacred rituals of Hajj. At the

Haji Camp Islamabad, Director Hajj Information Technology, Hakeem Khan Khattak, said this move was intended to ensure a smooth operation of the sacred obligation.

He emphasized the importance of utilizing smart-phones during the Hajj season and provided mandatory training on using Nusk and other communication applications, facilitating pilgrims in performing their rituals hassle-free and addressing their grievances promptly.

Meanwhile, Spokesperson Muhammad Umar Butt informed that taking smart-phone was mandatory for all intending pil-

grims as the Saudi government had digitalised the Hajj operation as per its Vision 2030. He urged intending pilgrims to adhere strictly to the Hajj protocols outlined by the religious affairs ministry and Saudi government. "Compliance with these standard operating procedures is crucial for the safety and well-being of all pilgrims," he maintained.

The second phase of Hajj training will continue from April 15 to 30, 2024, he said adding that during this period, participants would receive comprehensive guidance on various aspects of the pilgrimage, ensuring that they are well-prepared for their journey.



ISLAMABAD: Women traffic wardens giving Chalan ticket to motorist driving checking people drives without wearing safety belt, at 9th Avenue in the Federal Capital.

River Kabul runs in high flood: FFC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) on Tuesday said that River Kabul was flowing in very high flood at Nowshera with water discharge of 212,000 cusecs.

According to FFC report, River Swat was also flowing in medium flood at Munda Headworks with decreasing trend.

Rivers Kabul, Swat and their respective tributaries have been experiencing flash flooding due to torrential rains in the catchment areas, it further said.

Tandoors/Nan-bais defy govt's Roti, Naan price reduction in ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to this initiative of the Punjab government, the federal capital has also reduced the prices of bread and naan by fixing their prices at Rs 16 and Rs 20 respectively, however, Tandoor and Nanbai kept their prices while refusing to obey the government order. The district administration issued a notification fixing the prices of Roti and Naan at Rs 16 and Rs 20 for a standard serving size of 120 grams.

Assistant Commissioners and Price Control

Magistrates have been tasked with ensuring the enforcement of these new prices across Islamabad.

In line with Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon's instructions, Assistant Commissioner Secretariat Abdullah Khan convened a meeting with the Nanbai Association to discuss the implementation of the revised prices.

Despite these efforts, Tandoors/Nan-bais in the twin cities are standing firm on their prices, declining to reduce them as per the government's rates.

Prioritizing political dialogue essential for national interest

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister of Commerce and Industries Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan, said on Tuesday that instead of creating political and economic instability through sit-ins and long marches, the opposition honor the offer of charter of reconciliation from the Prime Minister in order to resolve problems through mutual consultation and dialogue.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the PTI should approach the tribunals to resolve concerns over the election results rather than jamming the country and putting the economy at risk.

FDE announces results of class 5 & 8 centralized exams 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) on Tuesday announced the results of 5th and 8th centralized examinations for the year 2023-24.

This year, a total of 25,101 male and female students appeared in the Class-V examination.

According to the details of announced results, in the 5th class, the number of successful male students was 9599, while the number of female students was 11,598. The pass percentage remained 84.5 percent.

Similarly, a total of 19,693 male and female students appeared in the annual centralized examinations of Class VIII, in which the pass percentage

was 87.25 percent.

The number of successful male students of eighth class was 15,934 while female students were 21,473.

Haiqa Karim of Islam Model School G-8/2 stood first with 587 marks in the Centralized Examination of Class 5.

Second position in fifth class was secured by Mashal Fatima, Aina Munahal and Ayesha Iman with 586 marks.

Zainab of G-10/2 Model College bagged the third position in fifth class with 585 marks.

Maryam Shafi of CDA Model School bagged the first position with 679 marks in the 8th class centralized examination.

IRSA releases 188,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 188,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 301,200 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tabela Dam was 1423.30 feet and was 25.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 66,900 cusecs and 6,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1113.50 feet, which was 63.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 78,700 cusecs and 27,000 cusecs respectively.

PMYP, SBP deliberate on expanding youth loan scheme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Prime Minister Youth Program (PMYP) and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) deliberated on expanding the loan scheme for youth businesses here on Tuesday.

According to a statement issued by Prime Minister Youth Program, during a meeting between the Chairman of Prime Minister Youth Program Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan and Micro Financing Institute, discussions were held on strengthening the framework of Tier 1 of the Prime Minister Youth Business Loan Scheme.

The meeting aimed to expand its scope and implement structural adjustments to serve the youth of Paki-

stan better. The Prime Minister Youth Business Loan Scheme, a flagship initiative, offers loans up to 0.5 million in its Tier 1 and Rs 1.5 mln to Rs 7.5 mln in Tier 2 and Tier 3 programmes respectively to empower the youth by providing loans for their business objectives through collaborative efforts and empowering them economically. During the meeting, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan expressed firm commitment of the government to provide easy access to loans for the youth. He emphasized the government's vision to nurture success stories, envisioning every Pakistani youth as a beacon of prosperity and innovation.



ISLAMABAD: People purchasing stationary and school bags for their children as new session starts in schools at H-9 Weekly Bazaar in Federal Capital.

Daily Voice of Masses
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Tough talks

No matter how painful, a larger, medium-term IMF bailout, with complementary financial support from 'friendly' countries, is imperative for Pakistan to address its balance-of-payments troubles.

However, the key to unlocking fresh IMF funds lies in convincing the lender that Pakistan is now ready to undertake real reforms. Seeking a bailout of \$6bn-\$8bn before the current fiscal year ends, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is set to hold discussions with the Fund for new lending on the margins of the IMF and World Bank spring meetings in Washington, as well as muster the support of 'friendly' nations for its request.

Negotiations for the new loan will not be easy even though the Fund is, according to the minister, "very receptive" to Pakistan's request for a new programme. Indeed, it has expressed its willingness to help Islamabad navigate through its crisis ever since Pakistani authorities broached the subject of a follow-up programme with its mission last month during the final review of the just-concluded \$3bn Stand-by Arrangement. Yet it has made it clear that the new bailout hinges on Pakistan's readiness to implement tough, unpopular reforms the country had earlier circumvented. More recently, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said that Pakistan was in discussions with the Fund for a follow-up programme to the previous SBA, but added that "important issues" needed to be solved, including "the tax base, how the richer part of society contributes to the economy, the way public spending is being directed and ... creating ... a more transparent environment".

Mr Aurangzeb is discussing a new programme at a time when global creditors like the Asian Development Bank are repeatedly warning that Pakistan will continue to face challenges from substantial new external financing requirements and the rollover of old debt, exacerbated by difficult global financial conditions. Pakistan's desperation to close a new deal with the IMF is reflective of the perilous state of its economy. In its April 2024 Asian Development Outlook report, the ADB describes Pakistan's economic prospects as uncertain, with high risks on account of the impact of political uncertainty on the sustainability of stabilisation and reform efforts. Noting that potential supply chain disruptions from the escalation of the Middle East war would weigh on the economy, it says: "With Pakistan's large external financing requirements and weak external buffers, disbursement from multilateral and bilateral partners remains crucial." It points out that the IMF support for the reform agenda would improve market sentiment and catalyse affordable external financing from other sources, but warns that "these inflows could be hampered by lapses in policy implementation". If anything, the report suggests that Pakistan has no time to waste and no room to avoid the long-delayed reforms without causing irreparable harm to its people and economy.

Pakistan eyes clean energy with electrocatalytic water splitting

By Dr. M. Sagir
Pakistan struggles with frequent power outages and load shedding due to insufficient generation capacity, transmission losses, and distribution inefficiencies. The country heavily depends on imported fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, for power generation, which exposes it to price volatility and geopolitical tensions. The production and distribution of energy in Pakistan are costly, leading to affordability issues for consumers and hindering industrial competitiveness. Many rural and remote areas lack access to reliable electricity, hampering socio-economic development and quality of life.

These challenges could be addressed by integrating new sources of energy into Pakistan's energy mix. Pakistan has significant untapped renewable energy potential, particularly in solar, wind, and hydroelectric power. Investing in these clean energy sources can diversify the energy mix, reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels, and mitigate the impact of energy shortages. Enhancing transmission and distribution infrastructure can help minimize energy losses and improve the reliability and efficiency of energy supply.

This includes modernizing grid systems and investing in smart grid technologies to optimize energy distribution. Implementing energy efficiency measures in industries, buildings, and transportation can help reduce energy demand and lower overall energy costs. This includes adopting energy-efficient appliances, improving building insulation, and promoting public transportation and fuel-efficient vehicles. Building local capacity in renewable energy technologies through training programs and knowledge sharing can help accelerate the adoption of new energy sources. Additionally, fostering technology transfer and collaboration with international partners can facilitate the deployment of renewable energy solutions in Pakistan. No doubt, the correlation between energy supply and economic growth is undeniable; hence, addressing this issue is paramount for Pakistan's development trajectory.

To meet the projected growth targets, Pakistan aimed to significantly upscale its power production from 14,000 MW to 50,000 MW between 2009 and 2022. However, the heavy

reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation, estimated to cost \$12 billion USD in 2007-08 and projected to soar to \$41 billion USD by 2022, poses multifaceted challenges. Beyond economic strain, the unchecked utilization of fossil fuels exacerbates global environmental crises, including greenhouse gas emissions, climate change, and environmental degradation, impacting Pakistan's vulnerable ecosystems and contributing to economic losses due to natural disasters.

In response to these challenges, the scientific community has rallied around the quest for sustainable and renewable energy solutions. One such breakthrough avenue is electrocatalytic water splitting, a cutting-edge process poised to revolutionize renewable energy technologies. By leveraging catalysts composed of transition metals, metal oxides, or carbon-based compounds, electrocatalytic water splitting accelerates reaction kinetics, facilitating water electrolysis with enhanced efficiency and reduced energy thresholds. The allure of electrocatalytic water splitting lies not only in its capacity to generate hydrogen

as a clean and sustainable energy source but also in its versatility across various sectors. Hydrogen, often hailed as the "fuel of the future," offers a clean combustion alternative to fossil fuels, emitting only water as a byproduct. Despite its potential, the economic production of hydrogen remains a formidable challenge. Electrolysis of water emerges as a viable solution, offering efficient and environmentally benign hydrogen generation. Moreover, electrocatalytic water splitting holds promise for grid stability and energy storage integration with renewable sources like wind and solar power. By converting excess electricity during periods of low demand into hydrogen via water electrolysis, surplus energy can be stored and deployed during peak demand, bolstering grid resilience and reliability.

Beyond energy production, electrocatalytic water splitting presents opportunities for resource conservation and environmental remediation. By harnessing renewable energy to drive water electrolysis, this technique diminishes reliance on finite fossil fuel reserves and fosters the synthesis of hydrogen from abundant wa-

ter sources. Additionally, the oxygen byproduct finds applications in wastewater treatment, industrial processes, and medical treatments, contributing to cleaner air and water.

To unlock clean energy from electrocatalytic water splitting, Pakistan needs a multi-pronged approach. Researchers must develop efficient and affordable electrocatalysts, likely from abundant materials, while engineers design scalable and durable electrolyzers. Pairing these advancements with renewable energy sources like solar or wind is crucial. Additionally, integrating hydrogen production into the power grid and bringing down overall costs through strategic policies and economic incentives are essential. Collaboration between researchers, industry, and policymakers, along with public education on the benefits of clean hydrogen, can propel Pakistan towards a commercially viable electrocatalytic water splitting future.

However, hurdles remain on the path to widespread adoption of electrocatalytic water splitting, including the development of cost-effective catalysts, integration with re-

newable energy mechanisms, and scaling production to meet industrial demands. Collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders is imperative to surmount these challenges and propel this transformative technology towards commercial viability. The pursuit of innovative solutions, such as electrocatalytic water splitting, holds promise for revolutionizing renewable energy technologies. This cutting-edge process not only offers clean hydrogen generation but also presents opportunities for grid stability, energy storage, resource conservation, and environmental remediation. However, overcoming challenges related to cost, scalability, and integration requires concerted efforts from the scientific community, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. By embracing such advancements and fostering collaboration, Pakistan can chart a sustainable and resilient path towards energy security and economic prosperity.

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Change his name if BJP wins

wading into major headwinds.

On the other hand, the survey finds Mr Modi ahead of the main opposition Congress and its INDIA alliance partners. It offers no assurance that the adverse equation for the opposition may change during the long hard tussle ahead. Also, there's no discernible hint about a likely voter response to the possibility of a last-minute divisive strike that the Modi campaign is well known for. Mr Modi won the 2014 elections riding communal polarisation triggered by his party's anti-Muslim campaign in Muzaffarnagar in voter-rich Uttar Pradesh. He won in 2019 by staging a military stand-off with Pakistan.

The grand Ram temple in Ayodhya, as one has said earlier, had failed to become a national issue, be it for the Hindu electorate or any other. In a way, this represents a damning miscalculation for the Modi campaign given that the prime minister invested his prestige

in the saturated TV coverage of the event beamed to cities and villages. Images of the prime minister in the role of a Hindu high priest failing to strike a chord in these elections is just one more worry for the ruling party.

The pre-poll survey shows little to nothing that favours the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) even as it still sees that he remains ahead of rivals albeit subject to 'ifs' and 'buts'.

Unemployment and price rise are the key concerns of nearly half the electorate, the Lokniti-CSDS survey shows. Nearly two-thirds of those surveyed (62 per cent), with the highest among cities (65pc), said getting jobs had become more difficult. A significant section, 55pc — way higher than the 40pc of those surveyed in 2019 — said corruption had increased, with only 19pc saying that it had decreased (a fall from 37pc who felt so in 2019).

Ram temple and religious issues figure way down in single digits in the order of importance to the

voters. Two responses are evident to the state of play, one coming from Mr Modi, the other captured by the opposition's Kanhaiya Kumar, a Congress candidate in Delhi supported by the capital's ruling Aam Aadmi Party. Mr Modi has kept the divisive option warm. Not ready to respond to the questions on jobs and corruption, he has found references with communal slant more appealing. It seems that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi rustled up a mutiny with Bihar's opposition legend Lalu Yadav a few weeks ago. More recently, Lalu's son and former Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav posted a video of himself feasting fish in a helicopter. Mr Modi has signalled these events as taunting his Hindutva supporters and as appeasement of Muslims. However, the claim seems to have drawn a yawn, even outright scorn as seen from a section of train commuters interviewed by NewsLaundry portal.

That the relatively tepid communal comment may be testing the waters for a more vitriolic polarisation is not lost on Mamata Banerjee. The combative woman chief minister of West Bengal has cautioned her cadre to not fall into the BJP's trap by responding to communal needling with violence. West Bengal sends 42 MPs of whom the BJP took 18 last time, four less than 22 won by Ms Banerjee. She says she expects to win "twice the number of seats of the BJP" this time, which means a substantially reduced number for her main rival in West Bengal. If a communal assault does come as its likely target would be West Bengal or Assam.

While Mr Modi has preferred to skirt the issues of unemployment and corruption, Kanhaiya Kumar, the former communist student leader from JNU, has kept his focus on jobs and electoral bonds, and on India's troubled secular spine. In a way, it's a summation of the opposition's stance. Kumar is one of three candidates the Congress is fielding in Delhi, the other four going to the Aam

Aadmi Party in a robust alliance that has worried the BJP. It's partly to breach this Congress-AAP alliance that the Modi government is accused of using its agencies to jail Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his senior colleagues. But that may have boosted the alliance, which will find an even greater echo in Punjab, Goa and, importantly, also in the prime minister's home state of Gujarat.

Kanhaiya is a candidate from north Delhi, which witnessed large-scale anti-Muslim violence in 2020 evidently orchestrated to disrupt a nationwide campaign against controversial citizenship laws. Abutting Uttar Pradesh, Kanhaiya hopes to heal the constituency's experience that saw support against Muslims from various caste groups in the neighbourhood. Nine seats going to polls in the first phase come from western Uttar Pradesh, a heartland of Jat farmers, Rajput powerbrokers and a clutch of other influential castes that are said to have replaced their blanket support to Modi with a grudging one.

Early exits

Dr Niaz Murtaza

As the fractious new government fails to get a grip on matters, many already see its early demise, just a month after it was imposed via allegedly rigged polls. Early ends for civilian regimes and long innings for non-civilian ones is our norm, more so for rigged regimes/assemblies.

Four out of five largely legitimate Houses (1946, 1970, 1988, 2008 and 2013) completed their term though none of their seven prime ministers did so. But six out of eight rigged parliamentary-era assemblies and the nine prime ministers from them fell early and so did the four prime ministers from the two Houses completing their term (2002 and 2018). The reasons for early removals (except in 1977 when Bhutto called early polls and in 2012 when chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry axed Yousuf Raza Gilani) were fallouts with the establishment. If the current dispensation falls early, it would not be unusual.

Past early exits varied much in their exact form (removal of just the prime minister, the ruling party or the Assembly itself) and modalities (martial law, no-trust vote, presidential dismissals or resignation under duress). So did the reasons for the fallout, ranging from minor policy or personality clashes to attempts by civilian prime ministers to clip the establishment's wings. Those axed on policy clashes often returned quickly, for example, the PPP and PML-N in the 1990s. Those daring to dream about clipping halloved wings had very ugly fallouts and were banished for long. Bhutto was hanged

and his daughter came to power only briefly after more than a decade. Nawaz Sharif in 1999 was banished for several years. The MQM's Altaf Hussain, though not a national leader, had an ugly fallout in 2016. Imran Khan's fallout was perhaps the ugliest. Thus, a deeper analysis is needed to analyse the likely longevity of this wobbly, sorry-looking current set-up and the likely shape of an early end. We may even see a break from the past where both the prime minister and Assembly complete term or fall without an establishment hand in their collapse.

One unlikely way to this last option could be if election tribunals magically resolve the Form 45 saga in the PTI's favour. But the PML-N coalition's ranks have been contrived to reach a two-thirds majority and the number of election petitions filed by the PTI may be insufficient to reduce it to a minority. Street agitation may be a second way, especially if legal options to keep Imran Khan in jail run out, given the weak verdicts against him, and if a new judicial independence streak emerges in wake of the letter by six Islamabad High Court judges. This would put us in uncharted territory where a party having experienced an ugly fallout returns to power quickly against the establishment's wishes. Finally, the PPP and PTI may attempt to strike an alliance. But neither may want to be the junior partner. The PTI may not even want the PPP as junior partner and the PPP may not risk doing so without the approval of non-political elements.

Would this make an establishment-led early

removal of the government the likeliest scenario? Given the PML-N's earlier fallouts, it cannot be ruled out. The potential for policy clashes is vast even with a pliant Shehbaz Sharif as prime minister. He has few powers as persons widely perceived to be pro-establishment are running key ministries and Nawaz Sharif's loyalists like Ishaq Dar run other important areas and his daughter runs Punjab. Thus, policy clashes between Nawaz Sharif and those seen as establishment protégés are the biggest Achilles heel of this regime.

The establishment had policy clashes with the PTI, but still waited over three years before allowing an in-house change. Earlier, prime ministers and even assemblies were removed even before two years. Easy ways to implement the removal and put in place an acceptable alternative set-up were present.

While easy options to replace the prime minister from within the PML-N may not be possible, non-political circles may look to other options.

The binding constraint would be finding an alternative set-up which is more pliant and competent. The PTI would be neither and PPP not the latter. This may force the establishment to tag along with the PML-N despite policy clashes. The PML-N's hands are tied too given its contrived win.

Thus, the fear of Imran Khan's return may force some give and take. Also, the PML-N is too weak to try to clip halloved wings. Perhaps an uneasy cohabitation may persist for at least two to three years until one side is strong enough to jettison the other.

Finnish recipe

Mohammad Ali Babakhel

Finland has been ranked as the world's happiest country for the seventh straight year. It is also the 13th safest in the world. In the Global Terrorism Index, it is ranked 89th, placing it at the bottom of the list. Yet, even though it is one of the safest countries, preventing violent extremism (VE) is one of Finland's top priorities.

Finland's first National Action Plan (NAP) to prevent VE was drafted in 2012, the second version in 2016. Its implementation was assessed by an external reviewer, and the assessment report published in 2019. The objectives of the plan were to reduce extremist violence and its threat, promote the implementation of equality, freedom of speech, and other constitutional rights, and detect and investigate hate crimes.

The Finnish interior ministry now coordinates the prevention of VE and leads the National Cooperation Network, while the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service works with the police and international partners to combat terrorism. The Finnish plan also recognises the power of politicians in determining a direction for society and in defining values that influence public opinion and attitudes about VE.

Considering the productive role religious communities can play in the prevention of VE, the plan gave them immense importance. It aimed to strengthen the knowledge of imams and community leaders so that they could support their communities with the correct information. Militant groups attempt to use local incidents to support their ideology and spread their

own interpretations of religion through social media. Finnish authorities realised that religious leaders can prove effective in countering militant ideology if they can strengthen the immunity of their communities against messages that encourage violence.

The plan also recognised that families are in the strongest position to prevent radicalisation. Strong emotional ties within families can play an important role in preventing a person from joining militants. Likewise, the Finnish saw that their municipalities can also play an effective role. In multi-professional "anchor work", the police, social workers, psychiatric nurses, and education officers were asked to work with young people. "Anchor work" also acted as a contact point for anyone if they had concerns about radicalised individuals.

The plan also recognised that young people can help prevent VE and build peace. They can support other young people and apply their experiences and expertise to preventive work. During the last few years, the focus in Finland has been on improving the media literacy of young people, while less attention has been paid to that of adults. Increasing knowledge and the ability to identify the concepts used by extremists is essential, so training materials are being prepared for the public.

Hate speech is linked to violent extremism, as it divides people into "us" and "them" — friends and enemies — thus strengthening the possibility of confrontation. The Finnish plan aimed to increase the understanding of its public and professionals about communications related to hate speech and strengthen the ability of people working with young citizens to talk

about propaganda and hate speech, as well as support the victims of hate speech.

The gender perspective in the prevention of VE is often overlooked. Militant groups have both male and female members. Mothers play a more important role in raising children and are faced with the difficult task of protecting children in conflict areas from the influence of violent groups. Women, as mothers, can play an important role in saving children from being recruited by militants. The plan focused on increasing knowledge and awareness of the ways in which VE affects women in Finland and what can be done to support them.

Combating violent radicalisation in prisons was a key objective of the Finnish plan, as many of the individuals who had committed terrorist attacks in Europe became radicalised during imprisonment.

Before release from prison, the release plan now covers housing, education, job opportunities, and family situations. Information about released prisoners is exchanged with the intelligence service, police department, social services, and municipality so that the released persons may be assessed and monitored.

Since the education sector plays an important role in supporting the well-being, development, and learning of children, enhancing teachers' knowledge of extremist ideologies was part of the prevention measures identified.

From Finland's experience, militancy-infested societies can learn that the kinetic option can kill terrorists, but extremism may still multiply. It is, therefore, not enough to simply counter terrorism; we must work actively to prevent it.

CM directs Irrigation, Agri depts to introduce low delta high yield crops

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah expressing concern over the impact of climate change on water scarcity said that this could be addressed by introducing a new cropping pattern that includes low delta crops aimed at reducing water consumption and increasing efficiency in agriculture.

He said that climate change impact was emerging in the shape of water scarcity. "In order to tackle water scarcity his government is planning a new cropping pattern that includes low delta, high-yield crops to reduce water intake and upturn agricultural efficiency."

This he said while presiding over a joint meeting of Irrigation and Agriculture departments here at the CM House. The

meeting was attended by Minister Irrigation Jam Khan Shoro, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Secretary Irrigation Zareef Khoro and officers of the agriculture department.

The CM said that during the Kharif season-2024 water shortage was expected to 30 per cent but it could be more acute, therefore our agriculture sector would suffer. "I want the Irrigation and Agriculture depts to sit together and chalk out a plan for changing the cropping patterns," he said and added that the list of the proposed/recommended crops may be submitted to him for further discussion and approval. The CM Murad Shah directed Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah

to chair joint meetings of the irrigation and agriculture departments and work plans for changing the cropping pattern so that the low-delta high-yield crops could be introduced. Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah said that he would activate the agriculture department's Research wing for necessary research so that that could be disseminated to the farmers and growers. The CM directed Minister Irrigation Jam Khan Shoro to ensure the efficient use of water by the growers. "This becomes a joint responsibility of the Irrigation and Agriculture depts to educate the farmer for efficient and effective use of water," he said and added this was the reason his government has given priority to the lining of water courses.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting of the Irrigation and Agriculture Departments at CM House.

CM for improved hospital management system of THQ Murree

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited Murree's Tehsil Headquarters Hospital here on Tuesday and examined various departments of the hospital.

The chief minister expressed anger on seeing the long cues of patients in the OPD. She reprimanded the hospital medical superintendent and directed for an improved OPD system to avoid long waiting for the visiting patients. Fix the hospital system, patients are dying, she warned.

CM visited various departments and patients'

wards of the hospital. While interacting with the women waiting in the queue, she inquired about any problems they were facing and assured them for early resolution of the issues.

The chief minister inspected the medical facilities and interacted with under treatment patients in OPD. She also consoled the sick mother and daughter, expressed her compassion to the little child and directed the doctor for the best treatment of them. The Chief Minister visited the patients in the emergency ward and prayed for their early recovery. She

directed for better care of patients in the emergency department.

The chief minister also interacted with patients' attendants and inquired about the provision of free medicines to the patients and medical tests facilities by the hospital. During the visit Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif also inspected the PCU center, reviewed the facilities in the medical ward, gynecology wards and children's nursery.

The patients of the hospital expressed their joy during CM's visit and her conversation with them.

Minister says: Govt to introduce e-transfer policy in higher education

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi has said that the government was pondering over proposals to introduce e-transfer policy that would be implemented with due deliberation.

In a statement issued here, he said that teachers of colleges would be transferred under the policy that would be implemented with consent and deliberations besides

keeping in view the shortage of teachers in far-flung areas.

Keeping in view the domiciles, he said that teachers working in big cities would be transferred to their native areas.

The minister said that their transfer to native areas would reduce the financial burden on the exchequer, increase the confidence of people in public sector educational institutions, and promote transparency in the transfer process.

KP Govt withdraws protocol officers of former CM's

PESHAWAR (APP): As per the decision of the provincial cabinet, the establish department on Tuesday notified withdrawal of protocol officers of former Chief Ministers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A notification issued here said that the services of Khadim Hussain, the private secretary of ex-CM Amir Haider Khan Hoti has been withdrawn and he was asked to report to Establishment Department.

Situation in Kachcha area in Sindh is better than before: Sharjeel

Independent Report

KARACHI: Senior Minister of Sindh and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Mass Transit, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, has stated that the situation that arose during the caretaker government is being improved. The situation in the Kachcha area in Sindh is better than before. The Home Minister and IG Sindh are present in the Kacha area.

Thirteen hostages have been rescued in the last fortnight, two hostages in Ghotki, eight in Kashmore, and three in Shikarpur. Six people have been rescued through a honey trap.

The abduction attempt was thwarted by the police taking timely action. The police and Rangers are conducting an operation in the raw area, and Alhamdulillah, the situation has improved

significantly. Addressing a press conference at Archives Complex Karachi, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the targeted operation is ongoing, and the law and order situation has significantly improved. Efforts are underway to control street crime. In the early days of April, 11 street criminals were killed and 60 injured in encounters by the Karachi police.

A total of 104 street criminals were arrested during this period. Additionally, 85 suspects involved in vehicle theft were apprehended, and 246 pistols, a rifle, 2 short guns, and 2 hand grenades were recovered from various suspects. In the past week alone, 6 street criminals were killed, 33 injured, and a total of 59 street criminals were arrested in police operations against street crime.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Excise and Taxation, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon addresses to media persons during press conference held in Karachi.

Lanjar calls for crackdown on highway robberies, public safety

By Tanveer Ahmed MIRPUR MATHELO: Sindh Home Minister Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar

emphasized the imperative of eradicating highway robberies, ensuring the safety of highways, and providing security to passengers during a meeting on the overall law and order situation in Ghotki.

Chairing the session, the Minister underscored the need to bring to justice those responsible for robbing individuals and vehicles on highways.

He stressed the necessity of preventing honey traps and kidnappings for ransom under all circumstances, emphasizing the importance of maintaining peace and harmony with utmost dedication.

The Minister pledged to review follow-up reports on the directives

within fifteen days and conduct field visits to ensure their implementation.

Sindh IGP Ghulam Nabi Memon, also present at the meeting, highlighted the police force's commitment to combatting crime, urging the police to execute their duties within the bounds of the law.

He stressed the importance of enhancing the effectiveness and coordination of police check posts along Sindh highways, particularly during snap checks, patrolling, and picketing.

Memon emphasized that decisive actions against criminals are essential for ensuring successful outcomes and advocated for intelligence-based operations to prevent dacoities and facilitate the apprehension of criminals.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Local Bodies Zeeshan Rafique presiding over a meeting to review progress of "Suthra Punjab" programme.

SACM pays surprise visit to TVC, checks attendance

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordhri paid a surprise visit to Vocational Technical and Vocational Centre, Gulbahar on Tuesday.

During the visit he checked the register, biometric attendance of staff, went to 13 different departments to review teaching and training programmes. He also met with the teachers and students and held a detailed discussion with the principal of the center.

Talking to the principal and other administrative and teaching staff of the center, he emphasized on the implementation of various suggestions to make the center financially stable and self-reliant while increasing the efficiency of the center. The Special Assistant said that there is

an urgent need to work on self-reliance proposals to financially stabilize the Vocational Centre of Gulbahar and the products produced here serve as samples for the market and make it able to produce to generate resources for its own annual budget.

He said that apart from training, the institution also needs to start working on the commercial level, saying it move the institution towards self-reliance. So, he said the skills imparted in the center will meet the demands of the market and will help those acquire skills to start their own business. The Special Assistant further directed the management of the center to take steps to implement the proposal and focus on various aspects of technical training. He further directed to ensure improvement in the attendance of the technical experts and other staff through biometric method.

CM, Nawaz reach public to find bread's price

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, along with her father and PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, reached public to ascertain the price of bread.

They met bakers at Adda Plot and asked them about the price of Roti and Naan. Both leaders also sought public opinion about the new price of bread. PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif assured the people that he would personally review the price of bread.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif also inspected the rate list on the occasion.

CM takes notice of 3-year-old girl's killing in Pasrur

LAHORE (APP): In a response to a tragic incident, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has taken strict notice of the recovery of the lifeless body of a three-year-old girl from a field in Pasrur.

The CM sought a detail report from the district police officer (DPO) Sialkot in the matter, saying that the murderer of innocent Jannat Fatimah will be brought to justice. She expressed sympathies for the parents the girl.

Three-year-old Jannat Fatima was missing from home since the second day of Eid.

Former CJP condole death of Manzoor Mughal

Independent Report KARACHI: Former Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Pakistan, Rtd. Chief Justice Mr. Anwar Zaheer Jamali has condoled with Mansoor Ahmed Mughal, Masroor Ahmed Mughal and Awais Ahmed Mughal on the demise of their father Rtd. DIG Police late Mr. Manzoor Ahmed Mughal at their residence in Karachi.

DIG conducts open Kachari for applicants

LARKANA (APP): DIG Larkana Division Nasir Aftab has conducted open Kachari in his office with public and met the applicants here on Tuesday. Petitioners belonging to Larkana, Qamber Shahdadkot, Shikarpure, Jacobabad and Kashmore Kandhkot districts he listened their problems and had received applications from them.



LAHORE: CCPO Lahore Bilal Siddique presiding over a meeting to review performance of Kamyana Cantt and Model Town divisions.

10 dead and 1352 injured in 1235 road traffic crashes in Punjab

Independent Report LAHORE: The Emergency Services Department (ESD) responded to 1235 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. In these RTCs, 10 people died, whereas 1352 were injured. Out of these, 605 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 747 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

The majority (73%) involved Motorbikes, therefore effective enforcement of traffic laws and lane discipline are essential to reduce the increasing number of road traffic crashes.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that 662 drivers, 36 underage drivers, 185 pedestrians,

and 515 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 265 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 293 persons placing the Provincial Capital at top of the list followed by 97 in Faisalabad with 113 victims and at third Multan with 80 RTCs and 83 victims. The details further reveal that 1362 victims were affected by road traffic crashes including 1046 males & 316 females, while the age group of the victims shows that 224 were under 18 years of age, 753 were between 18 and 40 years and rest of the 385 victims were reported above 40 years of age. According to the data 1084 motorbikes, 74 auto-rickshaws, 138 motorcars, 31 vans, 14 passenger buses, 20 trucks and 88 other types of auto vehicles and slow-moving.

DC chairs meeting to combat water pollution issue

HYDERABAD (APP): A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad on the instructions of the Chief Secretary Sindh on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner directed the officials of the Irrigation Department and WASA to immediately identify the industries, factories and other sources that emit poisonous water in the canals and submit a report in this regard, and installation of treatment plants in industries and factories should be ensured soon while strict action must be taken against those responsible for draining polluted water in canals.

He directed the concerned authorities to redress the complaints regarding polluted water immediately.

The DC made it clear that the WASA and other institutions responsible for providing safe water.

FC seizes prohibited items, drugs during extensive operations

Independent Report PESHAWAR: In a series of coordinated efforts across Chitral, Dir, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai and Swat, the



Frontier Corps North Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has conducted extensive operations to curb smuggling activities.

These operations targeted the trafficking of drugs, currency, and various foreign commodities, including food items, household appliances, clothing, tires, auto parts, and modern arms.

The recent operations

resulted in the successful confiscation and destruction of 42 metric tons of prohibited items, such as cigarettes, paan, chalya, and foreign

medicines. Additionally, the Frontier Corps intercepted six kilograms of illegally smuggled gold from Afghanistan, along with a significant amount of foreign currency.

In the fight against narcotics, the Frontier Corps seized a total of 5100 kilograms of various drugs, which have been handed over to relevant authorities for legal proceedings.

Meeting regarding prevention, action plan of dengue held

PESHAWAR (APP): Dr Shaukat Ali, Director Provincial Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah on Tuesday chaired a meeting regarding prevention and action plan of dengue.

Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah, brought together key stakeholders including



SUKKUR: Sindh Home Minister, Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar along with Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP), Ghulam Nabi Memon and others addresses to media persons during press conference, held at SSP Office Ghotki and Mirpur Mathelo, near Sukkur.

Minister stresses provision of best possible facilities to boost tourism in Mansehra

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Zahid Chanzeb, Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism and Culture has said that the KP government will not transfer the officers and employees with excellent performance. However, he cautioned that those officials who failed to perform will be removed from office. Zahid Chanzeb also reiterated the pledge of his govt that tourism will be promoted in Mansehra and the problems of the local population will be solved as soon as possible.

He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting regarding provision of facilities to tourists at tourist places and reviewing administrative matters of Mansehra in the forthcoming tourism

season on Tuesday. Deputy Commissioner Mansehra Captain Bilal Shahid Rao, DPO Mansehra Shafiqullah Gandapur, DG Galliyat Development Authority Shahrugh Ali Khan, DG Kaghan Development Authority Shabir Khan, DHO Health and officers of the concerned departments attended.

On this occasion the Advisor Tourism and Culture, was thoroughly briefed regarding the tourist spots and the measures taken for the promotion of tourism.

Zahid Chanzeb said that tourism police and motorcycles will be placed under the district administration at the tourist spots of Mansehra and provision of facilities to tourists will be ensured in any case.



SHAHBRA (Charsadda): A view of flooded Shahbra Charsadda village.

IT, Telecom sector having vast investment opportunities: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that there are vast opportunities for investment in the IT and Telecom sector of Pakistan. She said that the present government, under the vision of the Prime Minister, is committed for the promotion of investment in the country. Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja was talking to CEO Taavun (Pvt) Limited Muhammad Shahbaz Khan, and CEO

Wateen Adil Rashid who called on her here on Tuesday, said a news release.

She said that private sector will be fully supported as it has vital role in increasing our exports. About youth, she said youth are our great asset and the steps are underway for their development.

Shaza Fatima appreciated Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan of UAE for his special interest in further investment in Pakistan's Telecom sector.



WASHINGTON DC: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, met with Hela Cheikhrouhou, Regional Vice President for MCT, International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Finance Minister seeks foreign investments in IT, Agriculture, mining, energy sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb urged the influential Pakistani American businessmen and tech entrepreneurs to capitalize on the growing opportunities in Pakistan in key sectors of agriculture, Information Technology (IT), mining, and energy.

The minister during a meeting with businessmen and tech entrepreneurs, on the sidelines of the IMF/World Bank Spring

meetings in Washington D.C. lauded the important role of the Pakistani diaspora in the socio-economic development of Pakistan.

He termed them as bridge-builders in deepening trade and investment ties between Pakistan and the United States.

The Minister highlighted various initiatives taken by the government to improve the business-friendly environment and attract foreign investment in

Pakistan.

He specifically highlighted the potential of Pakistan in the IT sector as it hosted a community of over a million freelancers, ranked 3rd globally in the freelance market, and annually produced over 75,000 IT graduates from 250+ recognized universities.

On the occasion, the participants appreciated the government's efforts to improve the investment climate in Pakistan and expressed their keen interest in taking Pak-U.S.

economic ties to a new level.

Meanwhile, in a meeting with the members of the U.S. Pakistan Business Council (USPBC), the minister appreciated the important role of the U.S. corporate sector in strengthening Pak-U.S. economic ties.

He said that despite the challenges, the government was committed to implementing difficult but necessary reforms to ensure long-term economic growth and macroeconomic stability.

LCCI identifies key issues hampering economic growth

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan has all the abilities to emerge as an economic leader once the key economic issues including devaluation, closure of industries, high utility prices, inflation and high mark up rates are controlled with a collective approach, besides addressing the reservations of business community on rapid implementation of SROs for those who are already in the tax net including Tajir Dost Scheme. These all are discouraging the confidence of local investors. Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar expressed these views while addressing the participants of 35th Senior Management Course of the

National Institute of Management (NIM) here on Tuesday. LCCI Senior Vice Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry also spoke on the occasion while the delegation was headed by NIM Faculty Advisor Amir Fayyaz.

Kashif Anwar called for a business friendly taxation system saying that it would pave way for economic development of the country. To a question regarding Tajir Dost Scheme, he said that LCCI has reservations over this issue as the stakeholders were not taken into confidence before launching the scheme and there were issues in this scheme which needed to be addressed in consultation with stakeholders.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with CEO Taavun (Pvt) Limited Muhammad Shahbaz Khan and CEO Wateen Adil Rashid.

POL price hike caused by upward trend in int'l market: Finance Ministry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The fortnightly increase in prices of various petroleum products was caused by upward fluctuation in the international oil market, said Spokesperson of the Finance Ministry on Tuesday.

During the last fortnight, the prices of petrol and high-speed diesel in the international market increased by US\$ 3.82 and US\$4.30 per barrel, the spokesperson said in a statement.

Regulatory Authority (OGRA) had proposed to increase the price of petrol by Rs 4.53 and the price of high-speed diesel by Rs 8.14, the statement said adding the prices of petroleum products depended on the price fluctuations in the global market and the exchange rate.

The prices of petroleum products in the global market have also increased due to the uncertainty in the Middle East.

Oil and Gas



ISLAMABAD: A review meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee held under the chairmanship of Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for M/O Industries & Production and M/O National Food Security & Research.

President IWCCI says: No future of Pakistan sans tax policy reforms

ISLAMABAD (INP): Founder and President of the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI), Samina Fazil has said that Pakistan's future appears to be dismal if significant improvements to the country's tax policy are not implemented.

Addressing the business community here on Tuesday, she said that the harmful impacts of inflation and the sharp increase in energy prices can be ascribed to the failure of a large number of small and medium-sized businesses.

Samina Fazil said that there was possibility of increase in inflation as a result of the allowing sugar

exports; therefore, she urged that this practice be prohibited.

She said that Pakistan could not continue to exist with the current tax system, dismally low revenue and irresponsible spending which results in continued borrowing.

Therefore, the county needs short-term and long-term tax policy reforms while taxes on non-essential and luxury items should be increased.

The IWCCI President said that the government must make tough decisions to fix economic problems and implement recommendations of lenders to come out of the current economic mess.

Power Cutback at Neelum Jhelum Dam: Pressure Drop Forces 530 MW Reduction

MIRPUR-AJK (APP): The AJK-based Neelum-Jhelum Hydel Power Station has been restricted to reduce its electricity generation to 530 MW due to a decrease in Head Race Tunnel pressure detected on April 3, 2024.

According to Official Statement, The Neelum-Jhelum Hydel Power Station which had been operating at full capacity of 969 MW since March 28, 2024 has undergone comprehensive maintenance during this observation period. This maintenance included cleaning intake gates, flushing de-sanders and

pressure gauges, and inspecting generating unit components. This precautionary measure aimed at observing the pressure fluctuation will see the power station's output gradually increase after analysis and consultation with project consultants. The project's vast tunnel system, spanning 51.5 kilometers, necessitates careful monitoring and observation. Despite the current restriction, the Neelum-Jhelum Hydel Power Station has generated an impressive 19.829 billion units of electricity since its commissioning in 2018.



SARGODHA: Farmers are busy in harvesting wheat crop in their field.

Rupee sheds 07 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 07 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.29 against the previous day's closing of Rs278.22.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs277.5 and Rs280.25 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 89 paise to close at Rs295.53 against the last-day closing of Rs296.42, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs1.80, whereas a decrease of Rs1.17 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs346.01 compared to the last closing of Rs347.18.

NJHP generation restricted to 530MW

LAHORE (APP): Electricity generation from Neelum Jhelum Hydel Power Station (NJHP) has been restricted to 530 MW due to decrease in Head Race Tunnel pressure on April 03, 2024.

This precautionary measure has been taken to observe the behaviour of pressure fluctuation. Generation from the Power Station will be increased gradually after analysis and deliberations with the Project Consultants. WAPDA spokesman told media here Tuesday.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia finalise implementation mechanism to execute investment matters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Tuesday finalized a bilateral implementation mechanism to closely coordinate and execute investment related matters at the functional level to turn the sovereign commitments into tangible economic outcomes.

The matters related to the investment opportunities in Pakistan's multiple sectors were discussed at Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Investment Conference held here and attended by the visiting high-level Saudi delegation led by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin

Farhan Al Saud, according to a Foreign Office press release.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar warmly welcomed the Saudi delegation at the SIFC emphasizing the deep-rooted ties and mutual strategic interests between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

He highlighted the significance of enhanced bilateral strategic and economic partnership and the crucial role of Saudi investments in nurturing this relationship.

He explained how Pakistan through the SIFC

platform aimed to streamline investment processes and ensure rapid decision-making, fostering a flourishing investment-friendly environment in Pakistan.

The foreign minister showcased Pakistan's abundant opportunities in agriculture, IT, and mining sectors, inviting Saudi investors to engage in mutually beneficial partnerships.

He expressed confidence in the strengthened bonds between the two countries, envisioning significant economic growth and lasting benefits.



FAISALABAD: Labourers busy in unloading sacks of onion from delivery truck at Vegetables Market.

CCP issues policy note disclosure on 'Cement Packaging'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has issued a policy note recommending mandatory disclosure of manufacturing and expiry dates on cement packaging.

The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has issued a policy note under Section 29 of the Competition Act, 2010 to the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), according to a press release issued here on Tuesday.

The Policy Note recommends they amend the Pakistan Standard Specification for all five

types of cement and make it mandatory for the cement manufacturers to disclose the 'manufacturing/packaging and expiry/best before' dates on their cement bags.

The CCP observed that cement is inherently hygroscopic and begins to significantly lose its strength after 4 to 6 weeks of storage in bags in normal conditions and considerably sooner under adverse weather conditions or high humidity.

The CCP has, therefore, noted with great concern that the cement manufacturers do not voluntarily print the manufacturing, packaging,

Finance Minister brief IFC on economic reforms in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday briefed the International Finance Corporation (IFC) team on the government economic reforms in Pakistan.

He briefed on the ongoing reforms in the taxation, energy and privatization sectors, said a press release issued here.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday met with Ms. Hela Cheikhrouhou, regional vice President for MCT, International Finance Corporation (IFC).

He briefed her on the ongoing reforms in the taxation, energy and privatization sectors, said a press release issued here.

Moreover, he expressed the resolve of the Government of Pakistan to work closely with IFC in the priority areas of securitization of remittances, mining, airport management and capacity-building.

NPO to organize two-day online workshop on 'Advance Excel'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO) is going to organize a two-day online workshop on "Advance Excel" from April 24 to 25.

The workshop aimed at providing skills and knowledge which would allow the participants to learn MS Excel tools, techniques and create lookup functions, Excel working options, enhance charts, protect worksheet data, perform advanced data operations using summarizing, Pivot Tables, create data consolidations and use macros, said an NPO document shared here on Tuesday.

On the first day, the workshop highlights understanding basic

SECP issues report on Pakistan's potential for micro & inclusive insurance

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has published a report titled "Unlocking the Potential of Micro and Inclusive Insurance in Pakistan," which provides an overview of the current landscape and vast untapped potential market for inclusive insurance.

The report's draft version and synopsis were presented at the International Insure Impact Conference, 2023, held in Karachi.

The SECP's report explores inclusive insurance in Pakistan,

highlighting its untapped potential, comparing it to other jurisdictions, analyzing gaps, and proposing a future course of action.

The data collected indicates a concerning status of inclusive insurance market in Pakistan. A total of 12.56 million insurance policies were sold through microfinance banks/institutions. Out of these, 89 percent are credit life insurance, indicating a primary focus on covering the underlying credit risk. Moreover, of the 20 insurers offering inclusive insurance.



HYDERABAD: A farmer busy in leveling his field with help of bulls for next crop.

LESCO collects over Rs 6.05m from 326 defaulters in 24 hours

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company Central Circle; SE Zafarullah Saanghi collected Rs 0.11 million from 27 defaulters in South Circle; SE Muhammad Hussain recovered Rs 0.52 million from 27 defaulters in Nankana Circle; SE Najamul Hassan recovered Rs 2.10 million from 82 defaulters in Sheikhupura Circle; SE Jamsheed Zaman collected Rs 0.46 million from 25 defaulters in Okara Circle and SE Ahmed Shahzad Chughtai recovered Rs 0.69 million from 26 defaulters in Kasur Circle. During the 198 days, the spokesman added that the LESCO has recovered a total of Rs 2.85 billion.

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Israel's military chief says that Israel will respond to Iran's weekend missile attack

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel's military chief said that his country will respond to Iran's weekend attack, but he did not elaborate on when and how as world leaders urged against retaliation, trying to avoid a spiral of violence in the Middle East.

The Iranian attack on Saturday came in response to a suspected Israeli strike two weeks earlier on an Iranian consular building in the Syrian capital of Damascus that killed two Iranian generals.

It marked the first time Iran has launched a direct military assault on Israel despite decades of enmity dating back to the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Iran launched hundreds of drones, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles at Israel in the attack. The Israeli military said that

99% of the drones and missiles were intercepted, by Israel's own air defenses and warplanes and in coordination with a U.S.-led coalition of partners.

Iran says any action against its interests will get a 'painful' response

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran will respond to any action against its interests, President Ebrahim Raisi said on Tuesday, according to the Iranian Student News Agency, a day after Israel warned it will respond to Tehran's weekend drone and missile attack.

"We categorically declare that the smallest action against Iranian interests will certainly be met with a severe, widespread and painful response against any perpetrator," Raisi told the Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. Israel's military Chief of Staff, Herzl Halevi, said on Monday that Iran's attack on Israel - which was a retaliation after the April 1 bombing of the Iranian embassy compound in Damascus - warranted a response. Iran's deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani told state TV on Monday night that Tehran's counteroffensive following any Israeli retaliation would be "a matter of seconds as Iran will not wait for another 12 days to respond".



A woman stands with expressions of despair amidst the rubble of a collapsed building at Maghazi camp in central Gaza.

Biden administration announces new partnership with 50 countries to stifle future pandemics

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden's administration will help 50 countries identify and respond to infectious diseases, with the goal of preventing pandemics like the COVID-19 outbreak that suddenly halted normal life around the globe in 2020.

The U.S. program will rely on several government agencies — including the U.S. State Department, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health and Human Services and the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID — to help countries refine their infectious disease response.

The White House on Tuesday is releasing a website with the names of the countries that are participating in the program. Biden officials are seeking to get 100 countries signed onto the program by the end of the year.

Female Olympian wants Kabul to be kept out of Paris games over Taliban's rights record

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: Friba Rezaeye, the first woman to represent Afghanistan at the Olympics, has been appalled by the treatment of women since the resurgence of the Taliban and is now campaigning for the country to be kept out of the Paris Games.

Rezaeye, a judoka who competed at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, has called on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to ban Afghanistan due to the Taliban's human rights record. She has argued that under such a ban, Afghan women should still be allowed to participate as part of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team.

"Given tons and tons of evidence about the Taliban, about their brutal treatment of women and children, they are very dangerous," Rezaeye, who now lives in Vancouver, told Reuters. "If the IOC allows them to enter the Olympics at the heart of Europe, in

Australia offers French mall stabbing hero citizenship

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: Australia's prime minister on Tuesday suggested a visiting Frenchman who heroically fended off a knife-wielding Sydney mall attacker using only a bollard could be offered citizenship.

Damien Guerot has been dubbed "bollard man" and a "hero" of Saturday's attack that killed six people, including a Pakistani, and wounded a dozen more.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese singled Guerot out for praise on Tuesday, thanking him for his "extraordinary bravery" in confronting Joel Cauchi on an escalator and preventing the 40-year-old attacker from reaching more victims.

"I say this to Damien Guerot who is dealing with his visa applications.

The High Court ruled in February that the UK government had acted lawfully.

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A legal spokesman for Harry said at the time that he would try to turn to the Court of Appeal "to obtain justice". A judicial spokesperson, however, said that Harry had lost his initial bid to appeal against the decision.

Australia offers French mall stabbing hero citizenship

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: Australia's prime minister on Tuesday suggested a visiting Frenchman who heroically fended off a knife-wielding Sydney mall attacker using only a bollard could be offered citizenship.

Damien Guerot has been dubbed "bollard man" and a "hero" of Saturday's attack that killed six people, including a Pakistani, and wounded a dozen more.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese singled Guerot out for praise on Tuesday, thanking him for his "extraordinary bravery" in confronting Joel Cauchi on an escalator and preventing the 40-year-old attacker from reaching more victims.

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Rear Admiral Vasileios Gryparis speaks during a press conference at the European Union's naval mission "Aspides" headquarters in Larissa, Greece.

US Pentagon chief speaks with Chinese counterpart for first time since November 2022

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with China's national defense minister Tuesday morning, in the latest in a series of U.S. steps to improve communications with the Chinese military and reduce unsafe and aggressive incidents in the Indo-Pacific.

It was the first time Austin has talked to Adm. Dong Jun and the first time he has spoken at length with any Chinese

counterpart since November 2022. The call, which lasted a bit more than an hour, comes as Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected to travel to China this month for talks.

Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, said that Austin "emphasized the importance of continuing to open lines of military-to-military communication" between the United States and the People's Republic of China. And

he underscored the importance of respect for freedom of navigation on the seas, especially in the South China Sea.

Washington and Beijing have been working to expand communications and ease escalating tensions. Military-to-military contact stalled in August 2022, when Beijing suspended all such communication after then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, which China claims as its own.

Israel releases 150 Palestinians as region remains tense

Monitoring Desk
PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: Israel on Monday released around 150 detainees taken from the Palestinian territory, Gaza's crossing authority said, alleging that they were mistreated in detention.

Israel continued its assault on Gaza and launched dozens of air strikes overnight as tensions in the region remain high over fear of a wider escalation of the conflict.

World powers have urged restraint after Iran on Saturday launched more than 300 drones and missiles at Israel.

The latest detainees to be released were taken to Israel and returned via the Kerem Shalom border crossing before some were treated in a hospital in Rafah, in the south of the besieged territory, according to the Gaza crossings authority and an AFP journalist.

"It is very noticeable that there is severe mistreatment of these prisoners, as a number of them were sent to Abu Yusef al-Najjar Hospital for treatment," the spokesman for the Gaza Crossings Authority, Hisham Adwan, told AFP.

Singapore PM to step down, deputy to take over on May 15

Monitoring Desk
SINGAPORE: Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will step down next month and his deputy Lawrence Wong will take over, the second non-member of the Lee family to lead the wealthy nation.

"I will relinquish my role as Prime Minister on 15 May 2024 and DPM (Deputy Prime Minister) Lawrence Wong will be sworn in as the next Prime Minister on the same day," Lee said on social media on Monday. "I ask all Singaporeans to give Lawrence and his team your full support."



Vehicles are parked in a flooded parking lot following torrential rain in the Gulf Emirate of Dubai, UAE.

Kremlin suggests Ukraine would use Olympic truce to try to regroup

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: The Kremlin reacted coolly on Tuesday to French President Emmanuel Macron's call for a truce in international conflicts during the Paris Olympics, saying Ukraine might use it as an opportunity to regroup and rear.

Suspending armed conflicts under an "Olympic truce" is a longstanding tradition, and Macron said in an interview on Monday that he would work towards achieving one when Paris hosts the Summer Games from July 26 to Aug. 11.

Asked about this, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that both President Vladimir Putin and the Russian military had "noticed that, as a rule, the Kyiv regime uses such ideas, such initiatives to try to regroup, to try to rear, and so on and so forth". He did not cite any specific instance when Ukraine had behaved in that way. The war has raged since Feb. 24, 2022, when Putin launched what he called a "special military operation" in Ukraine, and there has been no truce during that period.

Israel still imposing 'unlawful' restrictions on Gaza aid, UN rights office says

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: Israel is still imposing "unlawful" restrictions on humanitarian relief for Gaza, the UN human rights office said on Tuesday, despite assertions from Israel and others that restrictions have eased. Israel's offensive in the Gaza Strip triggered by Hamas' cross-border attacks on Oct. 7 has turned much of the Gaza strip into a wasteland, with hundreds of thousands of people now displaced.

Colombo said it hoped to hold further talks "as soon as feasible" but the immediate risk was that without a compromise in the coming weeks, the next tranche of all-important IMF support money could potentially get delayed.

Judge finds staffer committed rape in Australian parliament

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: An Australian judge ruled on Monday that a conservative political staffer likely committed rape in parliament, a dramatic twist in a case that sparked national protests.

The judge threw out a defamation suit brought by the former staffer, Bruce Lehmann, against Network 10 television after it broadcast an interview with his alleged victim, Brittany Higgins.

Federal Court Justice Michael Lee made his findings on the balance of probabilities, as required in civil cases. In a criminal case, a conviction must be proven beyond reasonable doubt.

White House says Iran did not warn US about attack specifics

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Iran did not provide warnings to the United States last week about its timeframe for launching an attack on Israel or its potential targets, the White House said on Monday (Apr 15).

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby told reporters that the United States did exchange messages with Iran but that there were never any messages regarding Iran's timeframe or targets for its weekend attack.

Kirby would not be drawn into explaining what the messages were about. He said that reports suggesting Iran tipped off the United States about its plans were "categorically false" and "malarkey".

"Iran never gave us a message giving us the time or the targets," said Kirby. "This whole narrative out there that Iran passed us a message about what they were going to do is ridiculous."

Turkish, Jordanian and Iraqi officials said on Sunday that Iran gave wide notice days before its drone and missile attack on Israel, but US officials said Tehran did not warn Washington and that it was aiming to cause significant damage.

Iranian sources told Reuters last week Tehran signalled to Washington that it would respond to Israel's attack on its Syrian embassy in a way that aims to avoid major escalation and it will not act hastily.

Trump returns to New York criminal court for jury selection

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Donald Trump arrived at a Manhattan courthouse for the second day of his historic hush-money trial on Tuesday, as lawyers try to choose 12 jurors to consider the guilt or innocence of the first former U.S. president to face criminal charges.

The first day on Monday underscored the challenges of the task.

Roughly half of 96 potential jurors questioned were dismissed after saying they could not impartially judge the polarizing businessman-turned-politician, who is mounting a comeback White House bid while battling four separate criminal cases.

A New York native who now lives in Florida, Trump was a fixture in the city's tabloid press for decades before he won the presidency as a Republican in 2016.

But as a politician, he has never been able to count on the heavily Democratic city for votes.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, a Democrat, has charged Trump with 34 felony counts of falsifying business records to cover up a hush money payment to porn star Stormy Daniels shortly before the 2016 election. Daniels says she had a sexual encounter with Trump about a decade beforehand.

Trump has pleaded not guilty and denies an encounter took place.

To prove a felony, prosecutors must show that Trump covered up the payment to conceal a crime like an illegal campaign contribution.

Trump has said the payment was personal. His lawyers have said there could have been reasons beyond his campaign to make the payment, such as sparing himself and his family embarrassment.

In other jurisdictions, he stands accused of mishandling classified information and trying to overturn his 2020 loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

Sri Lanka debt restructuring stumbles as govt rejects bondholders' proposal

Monitoring Desk
COLOMBO: Sri Lanka on Tuesday rejected international bondholders' proposal to restructure more than \$12 billion in debt, putting at risk critical International Monetary Fund support and delaying its efforts to resolve a two-year-long debt crisis.

Some of the proposal's "baseline" assessments and a lack of a contingency option in the case of continued economic weakness were two of the main reasons the deal was not agreed upon, the government said in a statement.

Colombo said it hoped to hold further talks "as soon as feasible" but the immediate risk was that without a compromise in the coming weeks, the next tranche of all-important IMF support money could potentially get delayed.

Sri Lanka has already struck a deal with its main government creditors, but an "agreement in principle" with bondholders was also needed to secure IMF

Board approval for the next \$337 million installment of its \$2.9 billion programme.

The government said one of the main stumbling blocks had been that the "baseline parameters" of the bondholders' plan had not matched those embedded in its IMF programme.

It added that the bondholders' "steering committee" that it has been negotiating with in recent weeks had not wanted to extend "restricted discussions" - a key part of debt talks where they are held privately, behind closed doors.

As well as the divergence from the IMF, Sri Lanka disagreed with a proposal to link future repayments to bondholders to the country's macroeconomic growth, through "macro-linked bonds" or MLB for short. It said it was seeking more protections if Sri Lanka's economy were to underperform IMF's growth projections and a "test" for triggering both the upward and downward adjustments in the MLB.

India's Modi warns of 'black money' in political funding after old system scrapped by court

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: A Supreme Court decision to scrap a controversial political funding system has pushed contributions to parties towards "black money", or illegal funds, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in remarks broadcast on Monday.

India's top court in February scrapped an unconstitutional a seven-year-old election funding system through instruments called "electoral bonds" that allowed individuals and companies to make unlimited and anonymous donations to political parties.

Corporate funding of political parties is a sensitive matter in India and, while there is no suggestion that the funds from the bonds scheme were improper, opposition parties allege that Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) used its powers to coerce funding.

In his most detailed defence of the scrapped system days before India begins voting in a general election, Modi denied the accusations and said companies had also donated to the opposition.

He said the system was more transparent than previous ones, but added that there was room for policy improvement.

"In decision-making, we learn and improve. It is very possible to improve in this too. But today we have completely pushed the country towards black money," Modi said in an interview to news agency ANI, in which Reuters has a minority stake.

"And that is why I say everyone will regret it. When they will think honestly, everyone will regret it."

Data released on orders of the Supreme Court in March showed Modi's BJP was the largest beneficiary of the scrapped system.



Emergency service workers stand near Bondi Junction after multiple people were stabbed inside the Westfield Bondi Junction shopping centre in Sydney.

Saudi FM meets President Zardari Pakistan, KSA resolve to build strong partnership, promote economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on Tuesday reiterated their resolve to build a strong partnership and further promote economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of two brotherly countries.

This was discussed during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Welcoming the delegation, the president said that Pakistan and KSA enjoyed a long-standing and decades-old relationship and Pakistan intended to transform the existing ties into a long-term strategic and economic partnership.

The two sides discussed the regional dynamics and recent developments in the Middle East and called for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and end to the Israeli atrocities in Gaza.

Both sides also ex-

changed views on issues of bilateral importance and the challenges being faced by Muslim Ummah.

The Saudi foreign minister was accompanied by a high-powered delegation, comprising the Minister of Water and Agriculture, the Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources, the Assistant Minister of Investment, the Head of the Saudi

Special Committee and senior officials from the Ministry of Energy and Saudi Public Investment Fund.

Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Minister for Foreign Affairs Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister of Petroleum and Water Resources Musadik Masood Malik, Minister of Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Foreign Secretary Syrus Sajjad Qazi and senior government officials attended the meeting.

President Zardari also highlighted that the Government and the people of Pakistan had the highest regard for the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and would continue to stand with KSA.

He said that the prosperity of the Islamic world was linked to the progress of KSA.

The president lauded the courageous and visionary leadership of Crown Prince and Prime Minister of KSA Muhammad Bin Salman and the remarkable progress being made under the Vision 2030.

He also thanked the leadership of KSA for its support to Pakistan in difficult times.

The Saudi Foreign Minister said that KSA considered its relations with Pakistan very critical and was committed to building a strong partnership with Pakistan. He highlighted that both countries enjoyed strong bonds and had helped each other for decades.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud along with his delegation called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-i-Sadr.

FM Aurangzeb highlights Pak roadmap to address economic challenges

WASHINGTON (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, who is leading a Pakistan delegation in the IMF and World Bank-2024 Spring Meetings in Washington DC, on Tuesday highlighted the country's roadmap to cope with the confronted challenges and put economy on sustainable growth trajectory.

In an interactive session with Atlantic Council's Geo-Economics Center and South Asia Center titled "Opportunities and Challenges for the Pakistani Economy through 2024 and Beyond", he outlined Pakistan's key measures to achieve economic stabilization by increasing tax-to-GDP ratio, undertaking end-to-end digitalization of FBR, reforming State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), boosting exports, increasing

remittances, improving business environment and attracting foreign direct investments.

Sharing Pakistan's current economic landscape, he said the country had entered in a much better shape this year than the beginning of the last year, adding it had to do a lot with the nine-month SBA programme which in turn "ushered in a macroeconomic stability for the country."

He said the country's overall GDP was moving in the right direction, although the headline number was not that significant, however different sectors were performing well.

He said, agriculture witnessed 5 percent growth owing to bumper crops; services sector was moving quite well and inflation had come down from the peak of 37-38 percent to closer

to 20-22 percent while the exchange rate was stable.

"So all of this has moved us in the right direction, now we will take it forward from here [for which] we need, in the first instance, permanence in the macroeconomic stability," adding the government had initiated discussion with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the larger and extended programme that would help put economy on sustainable growth path.

The finance minister was of the view that the "timely decisions and timely executions" were the key aspects to run even a smallest institution or the largest country on the planet.

He said Pakistan does not need too many policy prescriptions as "we have known what and why, not for years but the decades."

At UN Pak calls for countering disinformation, fake news to safeguard rights

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has underscored importance of combating widespread cases of disinformation and fake news in order to safeguard human rights, and promote equitable access to digital resources.

Speaking in the final 'Interactive Dialogue on the Code of Conduct for Information Integrity on Digital Platforms', Ambassador Usman Jadoon, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, referred to the recent instances of disinformation employed by the Israeli military occupation authorities, such as the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and called for ensuring information integrity, particularly in digital spaces.

The dialogue was sponsored by the Department of Global Communication (DGC) of the United Nations.

The Pakistani envoy stressed the imperative of

protecting the rights of people under foreign occupation, condemning censorship, internet blackouts, and the spread of fake news by occupation forces and attempts to discredit legitimate freedom movements.

He also voiced concerns over the marginalization of minority communities through the weaponization of digital media platforms, emphasizing the violation of human rights conventions.

Ambassador Jadoon identified key challenges in regulating online content, including the decentralized nature of the internet, commercialization of online platforms prioritizing profit over accuracy, and the increasing use of AI tools for spreading false information. He called for the global principles that denounce digital imperialism and upholds core principles such as human rights, dignity, and equality.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Mehmet Pacaci called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

PPP CEC will decide on offer to join govt, says Faisal Karim Kundi

ISLAMABAD (INP): The People's Party's central executive committee will decide on the offer to join the PML-N led government, a PPP spokesman said.

"The CEC of the party will decide about joining or not to join the government, Faisal Karim Kundi said. He said that the People's Party wants to give the PML-N an open opportunity to rule the country.

"If the PTI has reservations over elections it should come for dialogue,"

PPP spokesperson said. There is the PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it first form a judicial commission in the province. "It should demonstrate moral courage and return the seats won by Fazal ur Rehman's JUI candidates," he said.

According to reports, after formation of the PTI-led opposition alliance, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) would request the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) again to join the federal cabinet.



WASHINGTON: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb spoke at the Atlantic Council on the "Opportunities and Challenges for the Pakistani Economy through 2024 and Beyond".

LHC nullifies notification of success of PML-N MNA from NA-81 Gujranwala

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has nullified the notification about success of PML-N leader Azhar Qayyum from NA-81 Gujranwala besides restoring the membership of Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) candidate Bilal Ejaz Chaudhry. The petition filed by SIC candidate Bilal Ejaz Chaudhry came up for hearing before Justice Shahid Karim Tuesday.

Rana Usman Ghani and Sardar Latif Khosa appeared in the court on behalf of the petitioner.

The counsel for petitioner took the plea in the court that Bilal Ejaz Chaudhry was declared success with lead of 8000 votes on recounting the Returning Officer (RO) decreased 2500 votes of the petitioner. It is requested to court to suspend the notification about success of PML-N candidate Azhar Qayyum from NA-81. The court declared the notification about success of PML-N candidate Azhar Qayyum from NA-81 Gujranwala besides restoring the membership.



LAHORE: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Justice Qazi Faez Isa in a group photo along with Malik Shehzad Ahmed Khan, Chief Justice Lahore High Court and other Senior Judges during his visit to Lahore High Court.

IHC rejects Bushra Bibi petition for her shifting from Bani Gala to Adiala jail

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has dismissed Bushra Bibi petition in connection with her shifting from Bani Gala to Adiala jail.

The court dismissed her plea being not persuaded.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb issued the order. The court while expressing annoyance over non appearance of lawyers of Bushra Bibi remarked they too don't want that she is shifted from home to jail. What relief they have sought it is not known either they want it or otherwise. They are playing politics with the court. They have made it joke. I had asked them but even then they did not come.

He gave these remarks

on Tuesday. State counsel said meeting was arranged between PTI founder and Bushra Bibi on the occasion of Eid.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked even they do not want this that she should go to jail from home. What relief they have sought it is not known whether they want it or otherwise. I had said we will decide this case after hearing it today. Even they did not come.

The court while addressing the state counsel said this side too is not working correctly. You are not doing correct too.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked Shoaib Shaheen had come and he too had returned. He has not come back.

CJP visits LHC with senior judges

LAHORE (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, along with other senior Supreme Court judges, visited the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday.

The CJP, accompanied by Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, and Justice Athar Minallah, arrived at the LHC during the tea break.

LHC Chief Justice Malik Shehzad Ahmed Khan welcomed the distinguished guests upon their arrival. Justice Shujaat Ali Khan, Justice Shahid Bilal Hasan, Justice Aliya Neelum, Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh, and other judges working at the LHC Principal seat were also present on the occasion.

ATC acquits 9 TLP activists in terrorism case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Tuesday acquitted nine activists of the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in a case registered under terrorism charges for creating disturbance and damaging state properties.

The court held that the prosecution failed to prove the charges against the accused. ATC Judge Arshad Javed conducted the trial proceedings and announced the decision after hearing detailed arguments from the defense counsel and prosecution.

Three killed in Nowshera firing

PESHAWAR (APP): At least three people were killed when unknown assailants fired at them in Malli Khel area of Akora Khattak in Nowshera district on Tuesday. Police said those killed by the firing of unknown assailants were close relatives adding that the dead bodies have been shifted to District Headquarters Hospital for medico legal procedure.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Welfare Fund Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis Zulfiqar Khan and IG Motorway Police Salman Chaudhry meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti

Health Dept. decides to enforce modular system in public sector medical colleges

Independent Report QUETTA: The Health Department of Balochistan has decided to enforce modular system in all public sector medical colleges operating in the province.

The decision to this effect was made unanimously in a meeting chaired by the Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan here on Tuesday.

The meeting attended by the Vice Chancellor of Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences Quetta, Professor Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehri, Principal, Bolan Medical College, Professor Dr Raza Muhammad Kakar, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ilyas Baloch, Director General Health, Dr Farooq Hoth, Principal Loralai Medical College, Professor Dr Bashirullah and heads of all

departments of medical education discussed about the modular system in the public sector medical colleges in the province.

It was mentioned that the objective behind introducing modular system is to improve the standard of medical education in the province.

It was decided to start the modular system in the medical colleges by April 22.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary Health said that the modular system of medical education is gaining popularity in the medical universities all over the world. The Secretary Health said that the Bolan Medical University would provide guiding principles for enforcement of the modular system in the medical colleges.



QUETTA: Member Planning Commission Rafiullah Kakar meeting with Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

Step afoot to provide sports opportunities to youth: DG Sports

QUETTA (APP): Director General (DG) Sports Balochistan Asif Longove on Tuesday said that all available resources were being utilized to provide sports opportunities to the youth and solve the problems of the employees.

He expressed these views while addressing a high-level meeting at the DG Sports office regarding the problems of sports department employees and their solutions and upcoming events.

Assistant Director Muhammad Asif Farooqi, PS to DG Sports Abdullah Baloch, Office Assistant Khuram Shahzad, Swimming Coach Wilayat Hussain, Supervisor Sanaullah Mubasher, and others participated in the meeting.

The problems of the employees and their solutions, the departmental development, and attendance were discussed in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Asif Longove said that the Sports Department was our home, and we have to work together for its development, welfare, and beautification.

We are a family and will support each other and work day and night for the development of the department, he said.

He said that the Secretary for Sports and Youth Affairs Balochistan was moving forward with the vision of Dr. Javed Anwar Shahwani adding that he had taken notice of the absenteeism of the employees and had given instructions to all the employees to attend and perform their duties efficiently.

Turkiye envoy calls on Defence minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, Mehmet Pacaci called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif here on Tuesday.

The minister expressed that Pakistan and Turkey have excellent bilateral relations based on common faith, culture, values, civilization and historical linkages," a news release said.

Bilawal meets delegation of PPP from GB

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday met with the PPP delegation of Gilgit-Baltistan Chapter.

The delegation comprised Amjad Advocate, Jameel Ahmed, Engineer Ismail, Sadia Danish, Imran Nadeem, Ayub Shah, Shahzad Agha and Kulsoom Mehdi, a press release said.

They informed Bilawal Bhutto about the overall political situation in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Nadir Gul Bareach says: PPAF stands with people of Gwadar, distributes rations to 400 families of flood victims

QUETTA (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PPAF, Nadir Gul Bareach has said that in response to the destructive floods that have wreaked havoc in Gwadar district.

He expressed these views while talking to the media representatives during distribution of relief aid to flood victims.

He said that the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) has swiftly launched an emergency relief operation to extend vital assistance to affected communities.

Heavy rainfall in February 2024 led to widespread devastation, with homes submerged, infrastructure damaged, and lives disrupted, he said.

He said that responding to the urgent need for aid, PPAF mobilized its re-

sources to offer immediate relief to those affected by the calamity.

Collaborating with Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO), PPAF devised a comprehensive strategy under the banner of the "Emergency Relief Assistance to 2024 Flood-Affected Communities in Gwadar" project, he mentioned.

He said that central to this effort was the procurement and distribution of essential relief items, meticulously curated to meet the immediate needs of flood-affected households.

The relief packages, funded by PPAF and implemented by SPO, comprised both food and non-food items tailored to provide sustenance, hygiene, and comfort to those in distress. Among the items dis-

tributed were rice, lentils, ghee, flour, salt, sugar, tea, milk powder, household items and hygiene kits. These relief items were distributed to the 400 families of eight wards of union council Surbandar, district Gwadar, he said.

CEO PPAF, Nadir Gul Bareach highlighted the importance of swift and coordinated action in times of crisis, stating, "Solidarity and support are crucial during such challenges." He further emphasized, "PPAF remains committed to standing with the people of Gwadar, providing hope and assistance when it is needed most." Through its swift and decisive action, PPAF has demonstrated its unwavering commitment to standing in solidarity with the people of Gwadar, providing crucial aid in their hour of need.



QUETTA: The administration successfully negotiated with the protestors and the protest ended on the assurance of bringing the missing persons to the scene, in Mastung.