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Meets Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei PM expresses unwavering solidarity with Iran at time of national tragedy

TEHRAN (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday met the Supreme Leader of Iran Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and expressed condolences on the tragic death of Iranian President Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and his companions. The prime minister underlined that President Raisi was a visionary leader who manifested steadfast dedication to serving his country and people. Recalling late President Raisi's recent visit to Pakistan in April 2024, the prime minister highlighted his commendable role in further strengthening of Pakistan-Iran bilateral relations, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Prime Minister Shehbaz expressed solidarity with the Iranian brethren and sisters at the critical juncture in history and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening the bonds of friendship and brotherhood with the Government and the people of brotherly Iran. He expressed the resolve to continue the vision of late president for strengthening of the bilateral relationship and trade between the two countries. He said that President Raisi's contributions for the unity of Muslim Ummah as well as for the besieged people of Gaza would be etched in history. The prime minister was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Federal Minister for Commerce Jan Kamal Khan, and Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar.

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said that they appreciated the sentiments of the Government and the people of Pakistan in the critical time and expressed gratitude to them.



TEHRAN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Acting President of Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Mohammad Mokhbar and offers condolence over the sad demise of Iranian President Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and his companions.

Pakistan firmly upholds one-China principle: President

President Zardari's remarks on One-China principle, highly appreciable: Wang Wenbin

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has reiterated that Pakistan firmly adheres to the one-China principle as the country always chooses to stand on the right side of history. "Pakistani people loved China as 'there is no conditionality between us," the president remarked in an interview with the Chinese media published on Wednesday, marking the 73rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. This was the first such interaction of President Zardari with any foreign media after being re-elected

for the second time in March. Recalling the rapport between the previous leaders of the two countries, Zardari said, "My late father-in-law, Pakistan's former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto told the nation to look East, to look towards China." President Zardari, who had visited China nine times during his first term as Pakistani president, reaffirmed Pakistan's stance of upholding the one-China principle, rejecting any form of "Taiwan independence." "Taiwan is part of China. There's no other way," the president said,

adding that Pakistan will always stand with China and safeguard China's core interests. Commenting on the development of Gwadar Port, a starting point of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Zardari said a lot of work had been done at the Gwadar Port since the launch of the CPEC 11 years ago, noting that the Port would always welcome investors from all over the world. Zardari said Pakistan is encouraging more schools to adopt the Chinese language into their compulsory curriculum.



TEHRAN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of Islamic Revolution.

Central, provincial govts taking steps to ensure good governance: Governor

Mandokhail exhorts PML-N parliamentarians to keep close & effective rapport with masses of their constituencies

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated it is our responsibility to fulfill promises made with the people and meet their expectations and adding exhorted the parliamentarians of PML-N to keep close and effective coordination with people of their respective constituencies every time and under every circumstances so that they are well acquainted about their issues and resolve them timely. The Governor was speaking to a delegation of provincial ministers and members of provincial assembly who called on him under leadership of the Speaker Abdul Khaliq Achakzai here at the Governor's House on Wednesday. The Governor stressed that the time has come to serve the masses by the elected representatives. He urged all the elected representatives to serve the masses with dedication and high spirit. He said that the federal and provincial governments are taking serious steps for ensuring good governance and stabilization of the economic system.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hanza Shaifqat meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Tarar lauds Intl organizations' support to strengthen electoral process in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Wednesday that the cooperation of international organizations to strengthen the electoral process in Pakistan was commendable. During a meeting with the United Nations Electoral Needs Assessment Mission, the minister appreciated the services rendered by the mission for the transparency of electoral process in Pakistan. In the meeting, provision of technical support to Election Commission of Pakistan through UNDP Election Programme, fake news, misinformation and disinformation were discussed. "Election campaigns in

PM meets Turkish VP, FM, Emir of Qatar

TEHRAN (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday met Vice President of Türkiye Cevdet Yılmaz and Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan at a commemoration ceremony organised in honour of late Iranian President Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and his companions. During their meeting, both sides discussed the bilateral and other issues of mutual interests, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. They also agreed to further enhance the bilateral ties between Pakistan and Türkiye in diverse fields. Separately, the prime minister also met with Emir of State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Similar sentiments were expressed during the meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Emir of State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Over 9100 SIM cards of non-filers blocked

ISLAMABAD (INP): The telecommunication companies on a recommendation of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) blocked over 9,100 SIM cards of non-tax filers. Talking to a private TV channel on Wednesday, FBR Spokesperson Bakhtiar Ahmed Khan said that they have provided data of 30,000 non-filers to cellular companies, hinting that more SIM cards will be blocked. Bakhtiar Ahmed Khan said that the FBR will provide data of 5,000 non-filers daily to telecom companies so that strict action could be taken against them. The spokesman said the FBR so far identified over 550,000 non-filers. Earlier, the FBR decided to impose an additional 87.5 percent withholding tax on non-tax filer phone users on mobile top-up.



KARACHI: Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani talking to media persons during his visit at Mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Dialogue only way to solve problems, says Gilani

KARACHI (INP): Acting president and Senate Chairman Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani says dialogue is the only way to solve the problems. He expressed these views during his visit to the mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to pay homage to the Father of the Nation on Wednesday. The acting president laid a floral wreath and offered فاتحه. He also recorded his impressions in the visitors' book placed at the mausoleum. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah was also present on the occasion. Speaking to the media, the acting president said Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a true and genuine leader of the Sub-Continent and our youth should be aware of the fact that he (Quaid) was the true leader and he had created Pakistan therefore we should not be running after a 'black cat in a dark room'.

Reshuffling of senior civil bureaucracy continues in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The reshuffling of senior civil bureaucracy is continued as administrative secretaries of three more departments were replaced in the province. According to an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department, the Secretary Communication and Works Department, Kambar Dashti has been transferred and posted as senior Member Board of Revenue while Secretary Planning, Planning and development, Lal Jan Jaffar has been posted as Secretary C&W. Similarly, Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan has been transferred and posted as the Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs and Saleh Muhammad Baloch, who was awaiting posting orders, has been posted as the Secretary Health.



QUETTA: Former Chief Minister Balochistan and President National Party MPA Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch and a delegation of SST Forum meeting with Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani

Arrangements made for return of students from Kyrgyzstan: Provincial cabinet constitutes committee to sort out issue of federal levies in Balochistan

Cabinet approves establishment of Forensic Science Agency, Women Police Station in Sibi & Pharmacy Council besides approving bills for prevention of early age marriage and domestic violence against women; Education of Qura'an declared compulsory for Muslim students

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan cabinet has approved to bring the federal levies force in the administrative structure of Balochistan levies force and constituted a committee to decide future of the federal levies and the related matters. The committee would be headed by the Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove with provincial ministers Sadar Sarfraz Domki, Noor Muhammad Dummer and Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran. The cabinet also accorded approval to the establishment of Forensic Science Agency and Women Police Station in Sibi. Besides, the cabinet approved bills for prevention of the early age marriages and domestic violence against women. In addition to this, the cabinet approved formation of Balochistan Pharmacy Council and increase in the renewal and issuance fees of the private security companies in the province. This and similar other information were shared by the spokesman, Government of Balochistan, Shahid Rind while briefing the media persons about the decisions made in the provincial cabinet here at the CM's secretariat on Wednesday. The two-day meeting of cabinet was chaired by the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. About the cabinet meeting, the spokesman of provincial government informed that the cabinet meeting remain continued for two days. During the course of meeting, some 30 points were discussed and important decisions made on different administration matters and about public interest. Shahid Rind said that the cabinet laid emphasis on improving governance in education and health sectors agreeing to bring about reforms in the province. He said that the cabinet members emphasized in the cabinet meeting that improvement in service delivery is necessary particularly in health and education sectors.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti chairing Provincial Cabinet meeting

Bruised PTI demands judicial probe into attack on Raof Hasan

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has demanded formation of a judicial commission to investigate the attack on party's Information Secretary Raof Hasan. The PTI information secretary was attacked on Tuesday afternoon by unidentified transgender persons with a blade in Islamabad's G-7 area. He suffered a cut in the face. Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly Omar Ayub said an attempt was made to kill party's spokesperson. "We reject the FIR launched by the Islamabad police. Why the sections of terrorism are not included in the FIR," questioned Ayub.

Two shot dead in Quetta

QUETTA (INP): Unidentified gunmen shot dead two people and injured a minor girl here at Sariab Road on Wednesday and fled the scene, police said. According to details, the incident took place near Awami Pump where unknown armed men sprayed bullets at three people. As a result of firing, two people were killed on the spot while a girl sustained bullet wounds. The assailant escaped the scene of crime. The bodies and injured were shifted to civil hospital for medico-legal formalities. Police said that the incident seems to be outcome of personal enmity. However, a case was registered against unidentified attackers and investigations were kicked off.

29 terrorists killed in operations along Pak-Afghan border since April 21: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces, in addition to other areas along Pakistan-Afghanistan border, are conducting effective operations in general area Sambaza in Zhob District of Balochistan, since April 21, that helped in neutralising 29 terrorists successfully in the past one month. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Wednesday, "Off late, Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terrorist incidents orchestrated from Afghan soil, wherein, terrorists from Afghanistan attempt to infiltrate through Pakistan-Afghanistan Border and target Security Forces as well as the innocent civilians." In the same series of

operations, during an intelligence based operation on May 14, Major Babar Khan also embraced, Shahadat, while fighting gallantly. "Pakistan's Security Forces are determined and remain committed to secure the borders and ensure safety of its citizens against the scourge of terrorism," the ISPR said. It added that Pakistan has consistently been asking Interim Afghan Government to ensure effective border management on their side of border. "Interim Afghan Government is expected to fulfill its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan," the ISPR said.



QUETTA: Balochistan Assembly's Speaker, Abdul Khaliq Achakzai pen message in a condolence book placed at Consulate General of the Islamic Republic Iran following the death of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.

Speaker & Deputy Speaker BA visit Iranian Consulate for condolences

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QUETTA: The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai and Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola visited the Iranian Consulate here on Wednesday. During the visit, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed condolence to the Deputy Consul General and other staff of the Iranian Consulate on sad demise of Iranian President, Ebrahim Raisani and other dignitaries of Iran in the helicopter crash. They also penned heartfelt condolence and tributes to the late Iranian President and others in the condolence book. It may be mentioned here that the process of condolence remained continued on second consecutive day, Wednesday over the sad demise of Iranian President and his companions in the Helicopter crash at the Iranian Consulate. The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and other personalities belonging to different walks of life have already visited the Iranian Consulate for offering condolence and فاتحه for the departed souls of those died in the Helicopter crash.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Bulldozed bill

Why is the Punjab government so keen on imposing dangerous legislation that would be unacceptable to any self-respecting society? The forced passage of the Defamation Bill 2024 over the protestations of both journalists and opposition lawmakers in the Punjab Assembly on Monday is a troubling reminder of how the PML-N has abandoned its principles ever since it returned to power.

Where once the party was championing the people and their voices, it is now devising new means to silence them. It has been said before but needs to be stressed again: this new law will likely come back to bite it. The party had previously introduced the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act, which became a noose around its neck once it fell out of favour with the establishment. Those who were urging the Punjab government to get all stakeholders on board merely wanted it to avoid repeating that mistake.

In a demonstration held after the Monday session of the Punjab Assembly, the Lahore Press Club president recalled that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had joined the protests when the PTI had been attempting to strengthen Peca to make it more effective in suppressing public criticism. But here she was now, going ahead with equally condemnable legislation "aimed at gagging the media".

Was her earlier position based merely on political expediency? Has her party considered what the consequences of such a law would be in case it once again runs afoul of the powers that be? The last time this happened, its leadership was still able to vent its frustration and publicly name those whom it held responsible. The ability to do so kept it alive politically. The next time it happens, the party and its leaders would be condemned to suffer in silence thanks to the law they have just passed.

Defamation is a societal problem, not something that concerns the Punjab government alone. The journalists' community had merely asked the Punjab government for a week to reconsider the law and arrive at a consensus. Meanwhile, the opposition had suggested certain changes to the law, some of which, it seems, could have improved it considerably. By involving these two stakeholders in its deliberations, the government in Lahore would have had the opportunity to make the law fairer and acceptable to everyone. That it chose to push them aside suggests a disinclination to honour the democratic principles of the legislative process and, instead, a tendency to impose its will on the people. This disregard for the opposition and other dissenting voices — now seen in multiple successive governments — is the primary reason why the Pakistani political process seems unable to deliver. The Punjab government must withdraw this dangerous bill and engage with other stakeholders. There is still time.

Preparing for crises

Naveen Hussain

If the society you live in was about to experience catastrophe or collapse due to climate change, rising geopolitical tensions and all-out war, or growing inequality leading to civil unrest, what would you do to protect yourself and your family?

A Karachiite of my acquaintance owns a small farm which has previously been used for weekends in the country. He fears that with rising inequality and hunger, civil unrest will increase. And if the US initiates another regional war, Pakistan may get dragged in again. He is preparing to move to his farm to become a full-time homesteader. He believes that this will be the safest place to ride out any coming storm.

Homesteading is an off-grid, self-reliant lifestyle. His farm is well stocked with fruit and vegetables, and he rears a few chickens and other animals. Solar panels provide electricity, and he has a water bore for clean drinking water. This is classic homesteading. All that's needed is to store non-perishable foods and pickle and preserve surplus fresh foods.

Adapting our lifestyles to survive is human nature, and yet popular culture depicts homesteaders as eccentric and possibly extremist. The Good Life, a popular BBC comedy, which aired in the 1970s, depicted a couple who gave up corporate life to start homesteading in their middle-class suburban house, much to the dismay of their wealthy neighbours. More recently, the Netflix film Leave the World Behind showed us what life might look like if the world we knew became hostile to us.

Not everyone owns a farm they can retreat to. Most city dwellers live in urban settings like apart-

ment blocks. These people are more likely to be 'preppers' rather than homesteaders. Preppers stockpile essentials against inevitable economic and climate crises. In the past, the most prepping an urban person might do was to carry a map, a torch, a spare tyre, and a tyre iron in their car boot. Drivers in harsh climates might also have kept blankets, dry clothes, energy bars, and water, as a precaution against the car breaking down.

Covid-19 was the first time that most people born into a globalised world experienced a truly global supply chain disruption. People in Europe began stockpiling dry pasta while those in Asia stockpiled rice. Hand sanitiser became a luxury item; my personal supply was stolen from my desk by 'persons unknown' and replacing it became a mission that took weeks for more sanitiser to be shipped, at great cost, from abroad. Most of us stockpiled something.

Online prepper guides and videos focus on the US and Australia, which are now regularly subject to large uncontrolled forest fires or hurricanes and require emergency evacuation from their homes. Increasing flooding in the UK has locals turning to prepping.

The basic needs of the prepper relate to water, food, and energy. They stockpile bottled water, tinned foods, dry rice, batteries, candles, matches, first aid equipment and essential medication. They have backup torches, solar-powered lamps, and a solar panel charger for mobile devices. Travel documents and ID are kept with other essentials in a 'go' bag or 'bug out' bag which can be grabbed easily if evacuation becomes necessary.

You may be sur-

prised to discover that your neighbours in Pakistan are also prepping. I have met families in ground floor apartments who have installed solar panels on their patios. Those who cannot install solar are ensuring they have portable, affordable solar lanterns. Increasingly, families who can afford to are stockpiling essentials and non-perishables, hedging against ever-increasing food prices. They may not discuss prepping, but they are taking comm-on sense precautions against uncertainty.

Climate shocks, rising geopolitical tensions, and a global cost-of-living crisis mean many people cannot afford to stockpile essentials. As rising prices force the middle class to devolve into the working poor, they become as vulnerable as the unemployed. The gap between the haves and have-nots becomes ever more extreme. When disaster strikes such unequal societies, what happens next? How far will people go to save their family?

Our species thrived because we lived in communities. Homesteading succeeds when the fruits of your labour are shared with labourers and other homesteaders. Prepping works best when people share their skills and pool their knowledge within their neighbourhood. As climate events become more brutal, individual survival becomes more difficult; we must look to our distant past and recognise that the manual labourer is as critical to our survival as the scientist or strategist.

We need community leaders within neighbourhoods and apartment blocks to build trust and put disaster provision plans in place now. It will be too late after a disaster strikes. -- Courtesy Dawn

Unusual trifecta

Mahir Ali

There appears to be no reliable source for the quote that there are decades when nothing happens and weeks when decades happen, commonly (and possibly apocryphally) attributed to Vladimir Lenin, but the beginning of this week felt a bit like that.

The likelihood that Iran's president and foreign minister had perished in a helicopter crash alongside seven others seemed obvious long before Tehran officially acknowledged the tragedy and announced five days of mourning. This was followed by reports that the International Criminal Court's (ICC's) chief prosecutor had sought warrants against leading figures in Israel and Hamas. Soon afterwards came the news that a pair of British judges had allowed Julian Assange the right to appeal against the British government's determination to extradite him to the US for a trial on patently absurd and politically motivated espionage charges.

Ebrahim Raisi, elected president in 2021 on a low turnout, and his foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, were guests in Islamabad last month after a period of tensions between the two countries and an exchange of hostilities targeting purported militants on both sides of the Balochistan border. Last Sunday, they were returning from a dam inauguration on the border with Azerbaijan also attended by the latter nation's president, Ilham Aliyev — the scion of Heydar Aliyev, who segued easily from a reliable Soviet apparatchik to a typical Central Asian potentate.

For the Iranians, the transport back to Tabriz relied on an old, US-designed helicopter, flying through hilly terrain in poor weather. A 'hard landing' was the initial

official description in Tehran, although segments of Iranian media were talking about a crash early on, and the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, tried to reassure the nation that the consequences would not be disruptive long before official sources admitted that there were no survivors.

Raisi will be succeeded by his unelected first vice president, Mohammad Mokhber, in an interim capacity, with fresh presidential elections due within 50 days. There is no reason to expect the pattern will be any different from the recent past, with the clerical hierarchy effectively picking the favoured candidate while offering the mirage of a democratic contest. It hasn't always been easy, though, with the clergy occasionally facing mild resistance from the likes of Rafsanjani, Khatami and Rouhani. Even the militantly conservative Ahmadinejad was too much of a loose cannon for it.

With Khamenei now 85, Raisi was considered a contender for the top job. The former is the second supreme leader since 1979. When Ruhollah Khomeini died 10 years later, the Khaleej Times put out a special edition. The only picture we could find of Khomeini with a foreign leader featured Yasser Arafat soon after the revolution. That found a prominent place in the paper — and one of the KT's photographers came close to being roughed up by Iranian mourners at a mosque in Dubai because of that image. The Palestinian leader had apparently turned into persona non grata since the early days of the revolution, after which the regime had welcomed arms from Israel as part of the Iran-Contra deal under the Reagan set-up.

Iran has lately stood

out as the only significant Middle Eastern power to meaningfully rage against the genocide in Gaza, but its motivations are suspect. Raisi had been implicated for decades in the repression that has stood out as a key characteristic of the regime that smothered the best aspects of the rebellion against the Pahlavi monarchy 45 years ago.

Iran might have been a very different country had the US not conspired seven decades ago to turn it into an Israel-friendly Middle Eastern satellite. Today, it is determined to defend Israel, with Joe Biden denying any 'equivalence' posted by the ICC between Hamas and the Zionist regime, notwithstanding their deadly inclinations — let alone the Israeli Defence Forces' military supremacy, courtesy of a steady supply of US military hardware.

As a s a n g e ' s WikiLeaks exposed the brutal absurdity of America's military endeavours in places where it has no right to be, which is why the Trump and Biden administrations have conspired to permanently silence him. It would make sense for Biden's government to drop the ridiculous charges, given that the British establishment would reprehensibly be unwilling to liberate him without Washington's imprimatur. The ICC's endeavour has been condemned by Hamas, Israel and Biden. That alone suggests it might be worthy, even though the prosecutor's request is yet to be processed by the judges. It is, of course, highly unlikely that either the Israeli or the Hamas leadership will ever find itself in the dock at The Hague, but pushing this genocidal conflict in the direction of accountability just might bring it to a halt. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on Gemstones.

Gold rates dip by Rs 300 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 300 and was sold at Rs 248,200 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs 248,500 on the last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 236 to Rs 212,791 from Rs 213,048 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs 195,059 from Rs 195,295, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained constant at Rs2,850 and Rs2,443.41, respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$3 to \$2,415 from \$2,418.

PM for steps to grant industrial status to gems, precious stones sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed the relevant authorities to take the required steps for granting the industrial status to the gems and precious stones sector of the country.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting on the gems and precious stones sector, called for necessary legislation and consultation with the provinces and the private sector to uplift the sector besides immediately activating the Gems and Jewelry Development Company.

He said that most of the country's areas particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir were rich with immense natural resources which needed to be fully exploited.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also called for ensuring the international certification of stone products and their display at international exhibitions.

He also instructed for launching training programs to promote value addition of the stone

products, and carry out the geological mapping of KP, GB and AJK on the availability of precious stones.

The participants of the meeting were told that a strategy was being formulated to promote investment in the fields of gems and rare stone.

Federal ministers Ahmad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Jam Kamal Khan and Dr Musaddik Malik, State Bank Governor Jameel Ahmed and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Musadik Malik says:

Govt. to enhance indigenous production of petroleum products

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik said on Wednesday that the government will enhance the indigenous production of petroleum products, including gas and crude oil.

Addressing an energy symposium, he said that the government has put blocks for bidding and is actively trying to attract global players in exploration activities.

He said that Pakistan is open for business and committed to completely digitizing the regulatory process to increase transparency.

Malik highlighted the importance of the TAPI gas pipeline project, which he said would provide cheaper gas. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring an uninterrupted and affordable energy supply, recognizing it as a top priority. He said that Pakistan currently spends over \$18 billion annually on energy imports.

The minister

reassured attendees that the government is expediting oil and gas exploration within the country and welcomes foreign companies to invest in this sector.

He said that investment processes and information regarding oil and gas exploration have been digitized and simplified to facilitate this.

To reduce electricity tariffs, the government is working on various proposals, he said. By supplying local gas to efficient power plants, the cost of electricity could be reduced to Rs 12 per unit, compared to Rs 24 per unit when using LNG.

He acknowledged the high theft and losses in the gas sector, particularly in Balochistan, where gas losses have increased in Sui-Southern. To combat urban gas theft, modern systems, including comprehensive monitoring of the gas network using technology, are being implemented.

He advocated for

increased utilization of Pakistan's abundant renewable energy resources, especially as the country's solar energy costs have significantly decreased.

He said that multiple policies have been formulated to boost local production after a long period.

Regarding the TAPI framework, he said that project financing would be jointly provided by Pakistan and Turkmenistan. He highlighted Turkmenistan's vast gas reserves and limited market, primarily China, and proposed that European countries purchase LNG from Turkmenistan to enhance their energy security.

He said that Pakistan has proposed to European countries the idea of purchasing LNG from Turkmenistan, which would provide energy security to Europe. He explained that a gas pipeline will come from Turkmenistan to Pakistan, and gas will then be supplied to Europe via a train.

Atif Ikram says:

Govt should make border management system more active to prevent smuggling

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that the government should make the border management system more active to prevent smuggling.

Movement of smuggled goods into the country is affecting tax revenue which can be increased only through

prevention of smuggling. We support the government's measures against non-filers in the upcoming fiscal year budget. Tax should be collected from those who are not in the tax net. Federation President Atif Ikram said that the tax target should be kept closer to reality in the next financial year. The business community is ready to help the government in increasing the tax net.

Green Energy Transition to help Pakistan build sustainable economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The experts at the Green Financing Summit held here on Wednesday underscored the need for Pakistan to embrace a paradigm shift in its policy to achieve renewable energy transition through subsidized energy frameworks helping to achieve a sustainable economy. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) under its

Network for Clean Energy Transition organized the virtual conference titled "Green Financing Summit: Driving Energy Transition through alternate and Green Financing Mechanisms". In his opening remarks, Deputy Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Sajid Amin said the discourse on clean energy transition was crucial as shift over green energy was the country's journey.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ambassador of the Republic of Korea Park Ki Jun called on Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where five ships, Hope Island, Conti Courage, Tethis-7, Al-Thakhira and Advantage Paradise carrying Container, Palm oil, LNG and Gas oil, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Elery Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile two more ships, Marathopolis and Torm Venture carrying Container and Gas oil also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day. A total of twelve ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships.

Industries Minister meets Korean envoy, discusses bilateral cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Park Ki Jun to discuss the bilateral cooperation.

The delegation from leading South Korean companies also accompanied the ambassador, said a news release issued here.

The minister said that both countries enjoyed historical and cordial relations and engaged in multifaceted bilateral cooperation in

many areas including in the field of economic and culture.

The matters of mutual interest, including bilateral cooperation and the challenges faced by Korean companies in Pakistan also came under discussion.

The minister assured the visiting delegation for prompt resolution of all pending matters. Rana Tanvir apprised the visiting ambassador that the government had taken a number of steps to boost up industrial activities in the country.

KP CM distributes scholarship certificates among 65 students

PESHAWAR (APP): The Chief Minister Education Endowment Fund (CMEEF) held a scholarship award distribution ceremony at Chief Minister's House Peshawar on Wednesday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur as the chief guest.

Provincial Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan Afridi, MNA Shahid Khan Khattak, officials of Higher Education Department and other concerned officials attended the ceremony.

The chief minister on this occasion, distributed scholarships and certificates among 65 deserving and talented students for graduate and undergraduate programs.

Briefing the participants about the scholarships so far awarded under Chief Minister Education Endowment Fund, it was informed that the fund was established in 2014 with seed amount of Rs. 940 million, under which, a total of 444 scholarships worth Rs. 546.47 million had been awarded till date.

According to the details, 107 graduate scholarships worth Rs. 47 million and 327 undergraduate scholarships worth Rs. 302 million, have been awarded in the orphan students in the province.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafiqe inaugurates In-door Pharmacy at Allied Hospital-II.

DIG Operations meets business community

LAHORE (APP): DIG (Operations) Lahore Muhammad Kamran held a meeting with business community to discuss security, law and order situation of the markets and the liaison between LCCI and Police Department, here at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Wednesday.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt and a large number of members including presidents of various markets participated in the meeting.

In his address, LCCI President Kashif Anwar said, "We sit safely in our homes due to the presence of our law enforcement agencies." He said that the police lay down their lives to protect the citizens. He said that there is a very good relationship between the police department and the LCCI. He said that during the previous visit of DIG (Operations), few issues were discussed including police verification of employees and workers in factories and markets.

Azma expresses deep condolences to acting Iranian Consul General

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Information Azma Bokhari expressed her deep condolences to the Acting Iranian Consul General Ali Asghar Moghari on the death of the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amr-Abdollahian.

The Provincial Minister also inked condolence comments in the Guest Book at the Iranian Embassy.

She said that the entire Pakistani nation is deeply grieved over the death of the Iranian President and Pakistan equally shares the grief of their Iranian brothers and sisters.

"We express our deep sense of sorrow and condolence over the martyrdom of the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amr-Abdollahian."

Azma Bokhari said that the President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi was a great Mujahid and a revolutionary leader of the Islamic World.



A delegation of People Lawyers Forum District Dir meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor's House Peshawar.

Kundi vows to present province's development case at every forum

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday said that the province is currently facing security and economic challenges, and he will present the case for the province's development at relevant forums, including the merged districts.

The Governor said that unemployment and law and order issues are the root causes of terrorism and emphasized that all political parties and the nation must unite with zero tolerance to eradicate menace of terrorism completely.

He expressed these views during a study tour of the 35th Senior Management Course participants at the Governor's House in Peshawar.

The participants included officers from various service groups and ministries.

The Governor apprised them on his constitutional obligations, powers, and responsibilities, and answered their questions about security, higher education, law and order, Afghan refugees, and political and economic stability.

PA Deputy Speaker visits site of Arts Council

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Malik Zaheer Iqbal Channar on Wednesday visited the ongoing construction work of the Divisional Arts Council Bahawalpur.

Deputy Commissioner Zaheer Anwar Jappa and Director Arts Council Sajjad Hussain was also present on this occasion.

The Deputy Speaker visited various sections of the under-construction building and inspected the progress. He emphasized the importance of completing the development work of the Bahawalpur Arts Council building on time with high standards.

Government committed to improve treatment facilities in hospitals: Health Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafiq on Wednesday said that the government under the dynamic leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was committed to improve medical treatment facilities in all hospitals on modern lines.

During his visit to Allied Hospital-I here, he said that huge funds were being spent on up-gradation and revamping of government hospitals where nursing staff would also be recruited soon to overcome their shortage in the hospitals.

He said that the Punjab Government was contemplating for providing Health Professional Allowance which would help improve performance of this sector. He visited various sections of the hospital and directed to complete revamping work till June 10. He said that Rs.2.7 billion were being spent on up-gradation of this hospital and this project would be completed on war-footing.

Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr Muhammad Faheem Yousuf briefed the Health Minister and said that 68 ventilators were in working condition in the hospital while paediatric ward was being upgraded.

Three die in separate incidents in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Three people were killed on Wednesday in separate incidents took place in different localities of Dera Ismail Khan district. According to details, a dumper fell into Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC) near Saidu-wali area of Tehsil Paharpur resulting, driver driven into the canal while four other people were rescued by the local people. Later, the body of the deceased driver was also fished out by the local people.

According to the Rescue 1122 team the dumper was also took out by using heavy machinery.

Punjab Governor says: Ibrahim Raisi great supporter of the unity of the Muslim Ummah

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan today visited the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Islamabad to extend his condolences to Iranian Ambassador, Raza Amiri Moghadam on the martyrdom of the Iranian president and his companions in a helicopter crash. He offered Fataha and prayed for the elevation of ranks of the deceased and patience to the bereaved families.

Punjab Governor, Saleem Haider Khan said that they equally share the grief of Iranian people and the government. Governor Punjab said that Ibrahim Raisi was a visionary leader. He added that Ibrahim Raisi was a great supporter of the unity of the Muslim Ummah. He said that the late Iranian president had recently made a successful visit to Pakistan in which important agreements were signed. Governor Punjab also signed the condolence book. Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghadam expressed his gratitude to the Pakistani people and government on behalf of the government and people of Iran for sharing their grief and standing with them in this difficult time.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider writing his condolence remarks during his visit to Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

New school building constructed in different rural areas with support of FFC inaugurated

By Tanveer Ahmed Soomro
MIRPUR MATHILO: Resident Manager of Fauji Fertilizer Company Mirpur Mathelo Brig (Retd) Muhammad Saleem Cheema, Col Shakael Ahmed Chatha, Col Shujaat Minhas, PRO FFC Amanullah Shar and Ahmed Ali Soomro along with F.F.C. Inauguration of the new school building constructed in different rural areas with the support of FFC, the school administration and local residents appreciated the efforts of Brigadier Muhammad Saleem Cheema in relation to education. In addition to providing, pay attention to the education of boys and girls because an educated man is the foundation of an educated society, resident manager Brigadier Muhammad Saleem Cheema told reporters.

According to the details of Fauji Fertilizers Company, an industrial enterprise of district Ghotki. Resident Manager Brigadier Muhammad Saleem Cheema, along with Colonel Shakael Ahmed Chatha, Colonel Shujaat Minhas, PRO FFC Amanullah Shar and Ahmed Ali Soomro, with the support of FFC administration.

International News

Iran's supreme leader prays for late president and others killed in helicopter crash

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran's supreme leader prayed Wednesday over the coffins of the country's late president, foreign minister and other officials who were killed in a helicopter crash earlier this week. Later, hundreds of thousands of people followed a procession honoring the dead down Tehran's main boulevard.

Iran's Shiite theocracy views mass demonstrations as crucial evidence of its legitimacy and the people's support.

Still, Wednesday's funeral service for President Ebrahim Raisi and others saw a turnout that onlookers described as noticeably lower than the 2020 procession honoring Revolutionary Guard general Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Baghdad.

Many of the participants said they came to Tehran for the ceremony from other cities and towns across the Islamic Republic, an indication of how those in Iran's capital viewed Raisi, who won the presidency in a record low turnout and later oversaw repeated crackdowns on dissent — including in the wake of the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini that sparked street protests over Iran's mandatory hijab, or headscarf. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who openly wept for Soleimani, also remained composed while reciting the standard prayer for the dead.

"Oh Allah, we didn't see anything but good from him," Khamenei said in Arabic, the language of Islam's holy book, the Quran. Iran's acting president, Mohammad Mokhber, stood nearby and openly cried.

The death of Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian and six others in the crash on Sunday comes at a politically sensitive moment for Iran, both at home and abroad.

Raisi, who was 63, had been discussed as a possible successor to Iran's supreme leader, the 85-year-old Khamenei.



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei performs prayer at a funeral for victims of helicopter crash that killed Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Abdollahian and others, in Tehran, Iran.

Israeli forces raze parts of Jabalia camp, hit Rafah

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: Israeli forces thrust deeper into the Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza on Tuesday, laying waste to residential districts with tank and air bombardments, residents said, while airstrikes killed at least five people in the southern city of Rafah.

The Israeli army used bulldozers to clear shops and property near the local market in Jabalia refugee camp, residents said, in a military operation that began almost two weeks ago.

Israel said it has returned to the camp, where it had asserted to have dismantled Hamas months ago, to prevent the group from regrouping.

Health authorities and Gaza Civil Emergency Service said dozens of bodies were trapped under rubble of houses and on the roads in Jabalia, but were out of reach of rescue teams.

DR Congo thwarts Kinshasa 'coup attempt': Army

Monitoring Desk
KINSHASA: The DR Congo military on Sunday thwarted an attempted coup near the offices of President Felix Tshisekedi in Kinshasa involving "foreigners and Congolese", the army spokesperson said.

The coup bid took place in the early hours of the morning outside the residence of economy minister Vital Kamerhe, in the Gombe area in the north of the capital, near the Palais de la Nation which houses the president's offices.

"An attempted coup d'etat has been stopped by the defence and security forces."



Palestinians evacuate Kamal Adwan hospital following an Israeli strike in Beit Lahia, the northern Gaza Strip.

Death of Iran's president has delayed talks with IAEA, Grossi says

Monitoring Desk
HELSINKI: The deaths of Iran's president and foreign minister in a helicopter crash have caused a pause in the UN nuclear watchdog's talks with Tehran over improving cooperation with the agency, the watchdog's chief Rafael Grossi told Reuters on Wednesday.

"They are in a mourning period which I need to respect," International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Grossi said in Helsinki, where he spoke at a nuclear conference.

"But once this is over, we are going to be engaging again," he said, describing it as a "temporary interruption that I hope will be over in a matter of days".

Grossi said the IAEA was planning to continue technical discussions with Iran but they had not yet taken place due to last weekend's helicopter crash that killed President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian.

US pushes for G7 response to China's industrial overcapacity

Monitoring Desk
FRANKFURT: US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said on Tuesday that the United States and Europe needed to respond to China's industrial overcapacity in a "strategic and united way" to keep manufacturers viable on both sides of the Atlantic.

Yellen told reporters during a visit to Frankfurt that G7 finance ministers shared US concerns about Chinese efforts to dominate clean energy industries, but did not need "detailed coordination" on trade actions following the imposition of steep US tariffs on Chinese goods. "But I do think that the concerns about China's strategy are shared and all I'm suggesting is that given that many countries share this concern, it's more forceful to communicate to China as a group," Yellen said.

In remarks on the US-European alliance in Fran-ckfurt, Yellen said China's excess industrial capacity threatened both American and European firms as well as the industrial development of emerging market countries. "China's industrial policy may seem remote as we sit here in this room, but if we do not respond strategically and in a united way.

UK's ex-Post Office boss Paula Vennells says she was 'too trusting'

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Former British Post Office boss Paula Vennells sobbed on Wednesday after telling a public inquiry the wrongful conviction of hundreds of postmasters had been caused by errors not conspiracy, and if anything she had been "too trusting" of others. More than 700 local post office branch managers, who were often at the heart of small communities, were convicted between 1999 and 2015.

Palestinian state is recognized by several European countries

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Norway, Ireland and Spain have recognized a Palestinian state in a historic move. Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris said on Wednesday it was coordinated with Spain and Norway, "an historic and important day for... Palestine."

Several other European countries have in the past weeks indicated that they plan to recognize a Palestinian state, arguing a two-state solution is essential for lasting peace in the region. European countries are recognizing a Palestinian state While dozens of countries have recognized a Palestinian state, none of the major Western powers has done so. The decisions from Norway, Ireland and Spain may generate momentum.

The recognitions mark a significant accomplishment for the Palestinians, who believe it confers international legitimacy on their struggle, especially amid international outrage over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Here's more on how and why the new European announcements could be important.

Ireland, Norway and Spain have recognized a Palestinian state. Several other European countries have in the past weeks indicated that they plan to make the recognition, arguing a two-state solution is essential for lasting peace in the region. Meanwhile, France indicated that it isn't ready to join other countries in recognizing a Palestinian state, even if it isn't opposed to the idea in principle.

Protesters interrupt Blinken's testimony over Israel policy

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken faced criticism from the right and left over Israel policy in Congress on Tuesday, with Republicans accusing the Biden administration of failing Israel and Democrats saying it's doing too little to help civilians in Gaza. Furious protesters interrupted Blinken as he began his testimony before the Democratic-controlled Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There was shouting that he has "blood on his hands," and Blinken flinched from a protester who approached him from behind waving a sign that said "criminal" before security officers carried her out of the room. Blinken reiterated the support of President Joe Biden's administration for Israel, but insisted it was focused on easing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

"In the Middle East, we were standing with Israel in its efforts to ensure what happened on October 7 never happens again, as we do everything we can to bring an end to the terrible human suffering in Gaza and prevent the conflict from spreading," he said.

Blinken was scheduled to appear later on Tuesday before the Senate appropriations subcommittee that oversees diplomatic and foreign aid spending. He returns to Capitol Hill on Wednesday for two more rounds of testimony at hearings of the Republican-led House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee and a House appropriations subcommittee. Republicans criticised Biden for saying this month that he would delay a shipment of bombs to Israel and consider withholding others if Israeli forces launched a major invasion of Rafah.

German defence minister not ready to compromise on 2025 budget demand

Monitoring Desk
LITHUANIA: German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius said on Wednesday he was not prepared to lower his demands for the 2025 defence budget or accept a compromise right now. Speaking during a visit to the Pabrade training ground in Lithuania, he told reporters he would neither disclose his negotiating strategy in talks with the finance minister nor send any signal whether he saw room for compromise.

"I am not prepared to do either," he said, responding to a question whether he might step back from his demand of topping up the 2025 defence budget by 6.7 billion euros (\$7.3 billion).

Due to the spending requests from ministries, the ruling coalition of Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and Free Democrats (FDP) will hold further talks on next year's budget.

Germany has for years been criticized for spending too little on defence, effectively relying on the United States to underpin its security despite being Europe's biggest economy.

Salik praises Saudi govt. for excellent Hajj arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhary Salik Hussain on Wednesday praised the Saudi authorities for the excellent arrangements made by them to make performing of the Hajj obligation convenient for the pilgrims.

"We are highly appreciative of the assistance and cooperation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the smooth conduct of Hajj every year," he said while talking to the PTV News.

The minister said innovative reforms had been

introduced by the Saudi authorities for the facilitation of intending pilgrims.

He urged the Pakistani Hajj group operators to follow the directives of the Saudi Government.

He said both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were firmly committed to make the Hajj inclusive for all segments of the society, especially women and special persons.

"We held productive discussions on how to further deepen our engagements and especially our cooperation for the Hajj next year", he added.

FIA seeks permission to file extra evidence in cipher case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Wednesday sought the permission of Islamabad High Court (IHC) to present the statement of US Assistant Secretary Donald Lu given before a Congress committee as evidence in the cipher case against the PTI founder and Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

The FIA, in a miscellaneous application submitted to the IHC bench of Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Mianqul Hassan Aurangzeb, requested for allowing it to file more evidence in the cipher case.

The chief justice expressed his concern that the FIA wanted to present extra evidence when the hearing of the appeals was about to complete.



ISLAMABAD: MNA Sardar Yaqoob Khan Nassar meeting with Chairman NHA Arshad Majeed.

Irrigation dept rebuttal news of corruption in 100 dams project

Independent Report
QUETTA: The spokesman, Irrigation Department has contradicted the report published in a section of press about the corruption and irregularities in the 100 dams project.

In an official press release issued here on Wednesday, the spokesman said that the report published in the media is not correct. The report published in the press was part of the 10-year audit report in which it was stated that there has been corruption and embezzlement in the 100 dams project at big

scale. Although the audit paras mentioned in the reports have already been settled, but these were made part of the report on the basis of misunderstanding among the departments, the spokesman stated.

He further stated that the officers and staff of Irrigation Department were engaged in serving the masses during the 2022 flood situation as a result of which, these paras could not be settled in DAC meeting and thus the issue couldn't be resolved timely.



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola condoling with Deputy Consul General of Iran Agha Syed Mehdi Shaqiri on sad demise of Iranian President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi and others.

Govt decision to block SIMs of non-filler still in effect: IHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) stated on Wednesday that the decision of the federal government pertaining to block the SIMs of non-fillers remained in effect as the injunction of the court was not related to blocking the SIMs of non-fillers.

Chief Justice Amir Farooq Malik of the IHC heard the case against the federal government's decision to block the SIMs of non-fillers.

The federal govern-

ment has filed a separate petition seeking to lift the stay order on the proceedings against the mobile network companies.

At the onset of the hearing, the chief justice clarified that the stay order was solely to safeguard the petitioner and that the injunction was not to block the SIMs. Therefore, the decision of the federal government was still in effect.

"We can understand that the federal government is focusing on economic reforms.

Tarar shares information of Raof Hasan incident with Senate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Azam Nazeer Tarar on Wednesday shared details with the Senate regarding the Raof Hasan incident and said that a First Information Report (FIR) had been registered and efforts were underway to apprehend the culprits.

Speaking in the Senate, he said the government is serious in addressing the issue and a special team has been constituted to investigate the incident and arrest those responsible.

He informed the Senate that footage and pictures of the incident have been sent to the forensic lab and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) for examination to help trace out the culprits. He expressed sorrow over the incident and said that such occurrences should not happen. "The seriousness of the government on the incident should not be questioned.

While talking to APP Deputy Superintendent Police (DSP) Galyat Muhammad Imtiaz said that a jeep bearing registration No. ARR 859, carrying passengers from Leeraan village Union Council Nambal had been returning after shopping from Azad Kashmir's Kalyaan Bazaar when their vehicle fell into a deep gorge resulting in the loss of lives.



GAWADAR: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a meeting regarding Gwadar Shipyard.

Seeks report from Commissioner CM concerned about shifting of Shipyard from Kapar to Sur Bandar in Gwadar

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed concern about the shifting of Shipyard in Sur Bandar from Kapar area of Gwadar.

The Chief Minister asserted that we would take

review of the matter that why the need of reviewing the Gwadar Shipyard Master Plan arises?

He insisted that why all aspects were not reviewed before establishing Shipyard in Kapar area of Gwadar?

While chairing a meeting about the Gwadar shipyard Master plan and related matters here on Wednesday, the Chief Minister sought detail report from the Commissioner that why the Shipyard established in Kapar according to the feasibility report was shifted in Sur Bandar?

He directed to present detail comparison report based on the two-side stance on the review of Shipyard site.

The Chief Minister announced that consulta-

tion would be made with all stakeholders before any change in the Master Plan of Shipyard.

In this regard, decision would be made on merit in light of the detail reports in next meeting, he added.

Those who were present in the meeting were included Provincial Ministers Mir Zahoor Buledi, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Chairman Gwadar Port Authority, Pasand Khan Buledi, Additional Chief Secretary Development, Abdul Saboor Kakar, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Special Secretary, Asfandiyar Baloch and senior Project Coordinator, Shahzad Hasan Jaffar.

Governor condoles killing of PS Asghar

QUETTA (APP): Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandukhel expressed his sorrow over the killing of PS Asghar Ali of Mir Asim Kurd Gello on Wednesday.

In his condemnation statement, he said that it was the responsibility of the government to protect the lives and property of the people.

Governor Balochistan prayed Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal abode with peace and granting courage to bereaved family members.

He directed to present detail comparison report based on the two-side stance on the review of Shipyard site.

The Chief Minister announced that consulta-



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Nawabzada Tariq Hussain Magsi and Ali Madad Jattak holding a meeting.

PML-N to review, amend party constitution

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz has decided to review and amend the party constitution, a notification has been issued in this regard.

A seven-member committee was formed to revise and amend the party constitution of the Muslim League-N. The provincial president of PML-N Punjab, Rana Sanullah, was appointed as the convener of the constitutional amendment and revision committee.

The Member National Assembly (MNA) Anush Rehman has been appointed as the Secretary of the Amendments Committee.

27 profession beggars held in Quetta operation

QUETTA (APP): At least 27 professional beggars were arrested in crackdown against professional bagging in various areas of Quetta city on Wednesday.

On the special directive of Deputy Commissioner Quetta Lieutenant Saad bin Asad following public complaints, a team led by Magistrate Abdul Hameed conducted crackdown against professional beggars and apprehended 27 professional beggars, handed them over the Social Welfare Department for further investigation.

It should be noted that Deputy Commissioner Quetta assigned special tasks to the district admin-

istration teams to take strict action in view of public complaints about increasing number of professional beggars. In this regard, the Deputy Commissioner said that many of the beggars were involved in serious crimes the district administration teams were eradicating the menace of begging from the city.

The DC said that operations against profession baggers would be carried out in all areas of Quetta including Jinnah Road, Qandahari Bazar, Meezan Chowk, Liaquat Bazar, Abdul Sattar Road and its surrounding areas on a daily basis with the aim to eliminate professional beggars' business.

No member of incumbent federal cabinet drawing salary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar stated on Wednesday that no member of the incumbent federal cabinet is drawing a salary, as they have all voluntarily decided not to withdraw it. Speaking in the Senate, the minister explained that ministers pay Rs. 143,000 in rent for their single official accommodation and cover the utility bills for their residences themselves. According to the rules, ministers are not entitled to have their utility bills, including gas and electricity, paid by the government, and these bills are covered by them personally.



QUETTA: Nazar Baloch along with others addresses to participants during Labour Conference organized by Pakistan Trade Union Defense Campaign held at Quetta press club.

6 died, 7 injured in road accident

NATHIAGALI (APP): At least six persons on Wednesday died and seven others were injured when a passenger van plunged into a deep gorge at village Leeraan Union Council Nambal, an area of Bokot police station Abbottabad.

While talking to APP Deputy Superintendent Police (DSP) Galyat Muhammad Imtiaz said that a jeep bearing registration No. ARR 859, carrying passengers from Leeraan village Union Council Nambal had been returning after shopping from Azad Kashmir's Kalyaan Bazaar when their vehicle fell into a deep gorge resulting in the loss of lives.

Students complete internships in port management in Gwadar

Gwadar Port. Under the guidance of industry experts and seasoned professionals, the students had the opportunity to immerse themselves in various aspects of port management, logistics, and maritime operations.

During the internship program, the students actively participated in a wide range of activities, including but not limited to port operations, logistics management, and infrastructure development. Prof. Dr. Syed Manzoor Ahmed, Executive Director of PCT&VI expressed his satisfaction over the successful completion of the internship.

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CPEC's projects enhancing developmental capacity for Pak: Chinese Ambassador

China-Pakistan friendship flourish and prosper forever: Jiang Zaidong

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said here last night that China-Pakistan Friendship will keep flourish and prosper forever.

In his address delivered at "friendship forever" event celebrating China Pakistan establishing 73 years of diplomatic relations held here at Pakistan-China Center, he said he is very happy to celebrate the 73rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan.

On behalf of the Chinese Embassy, he extended his warm congratulations and sincere gratitude to friends from all walks of life who have long been committed to China-Pakistan friendship!

President Xi Jinping said that China-Pakistan

friendship is like a thriving tree with deep roots and luxuriant leaves, he said.

He said, "Since the newly born People's Republic of China established diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in 1951, the two countries have embarked on a new chapter of China-Pakistan friendship.

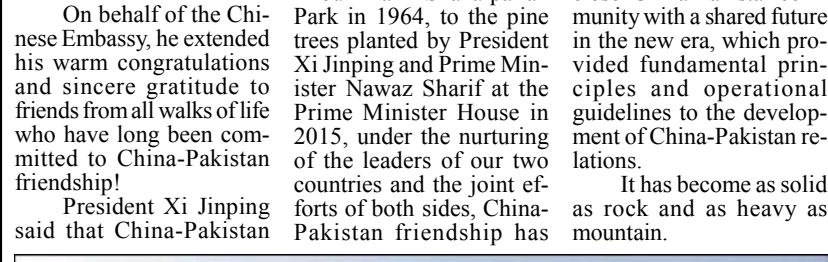
It has evolved into an all-weather strategic cooperative partnership. From the Chinese tallow tree planted by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in Shakarparian Park in 1964, to the pine trees planted by President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House in 2015, under the nurturing of the leaders of our two countries and the joint efforts of both sides, China-Pakistan friendship has

grown into a towering tree, deeply rooted in the hearts of the two peoples.

Over the past 73 years, leaders of the two countries frequently visited each other like close relatives, guiding the development of China-Pakistan relations.

In 2015, President Xi Jinping's historic state visit to Pakistan elevated the bilateral relations to all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, and set the goal of building an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, which provided fundamental principles and operational guidelines to the development of China-Pakistan relations.

It has become as solid as rock and as heavy as mountain.



HUB: Leaders and activists of political parties and petrol pump owners blocked the Quetta-Karachi Highway road as they are holding protest demonstration against the ban on Iranian petroleum products, at Winder area in Hub.

US believes in supremacy of human rights, stands with Kashmir cause: Terry Meza

ISLAMABAD (APP): A member of the Texas House of Representatives, Terry Meza has United States of America (US) believed in the supremacy of human rights and advocates for peace, peaceful coexistence, and democracy across the globe. She said this while addressing the Kashmir conference organized by Friends of Kashmir International (FoKI) in Texas, said a press release received here on Thursday.

"We stand with the oppressed against the oppressor, and soon a resolution will be presented in the Texas House to express solidarity with the Kashmiris," Terry Meza said.

While addressing the conference, Chief Guest Hurriyat leader and Vice Chairman of FoKI, Abdul Hameed Lone, said that Kashmiris were not only struggling for their inalienable right of self-determination but also for the completion of Pakistan. He noted that Kashmiris had resisted Indian aggression by making supreme sacrifices for the past 76 years.

Presiding over the Kashmir Conference, social activist Abdul Hafeez Khan (Tamgha-e-Imtiaz) emphasized that it was high time for the United States to play its role in mediating the Kashmir issue. He stated that the hearts of Pakistanis

living in America beat with their oppressed Kashmiri brothers and sisters and that they desired freedom from the clutches of the occupying Indian forces.

Ghazala Habib, the chairperson of Friends of Kashmir International and host of the conference, said that the Kashmiri diaspora would play every possible role in exposing Indian atrocities worldwide.

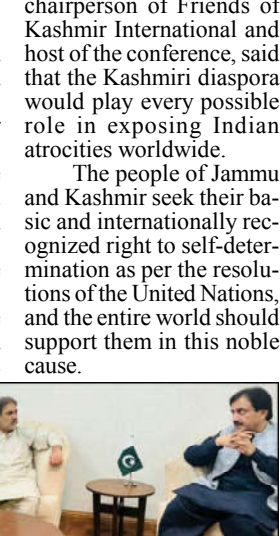
The people of Jammu and Kashmir seek their basic and internationally recognized right to self-determination as per the resolutions of the United Nations, and the entire world should support them in this noble cause.

Govt to ensure transparency in privatization of PIA: Aleem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Privatization, Abdul Aleem Khan, informed the Senate on Wednesday that the government will ensure transparency in the privatization of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).

Responding to a calling attention notice regarding the lack of transparency in all stages of the divestment and privatization of PIA—including the financial process, issuance of expression of interest, bidding, contract awarding, and segregation of core and non-core assets and liabilities—he assured that the entire process would be broadcast live and nothing would be hidden from the public and their representatives.

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ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary S&GAD Mir Liaquat Ali Lehri and leader of PML-N Fared Afghan meeting with acting Chairman Senate Saydal Khan Nassar.

Romina says: Climate Change ministry initiates GLOF-III project glacial water resources

ISLAMABAD (APP): PM's Coordinator on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam Wednesday said that the Ministry would initiate GLOF-III project to protect the glacial water resources of Pakistan.

In a meeting with Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik and it was agreed that National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and ministry of Climate Change would jointly work on this project.

The both sides reiterated to closely collaborate to overcome heat waves, natural disasters and upcoming floods in the country. It was also decided to formulate a joint strategy to save the wildlife vulnerable species during the upcoming floods.

The Chairman NDMA and PM's Coordinator also thoroughly discussed the upcoming COP29 and it was agreed that the both sides would closely collaborate on preparing of reports, documentaries, recommendations for upcoming United Nations global summit being held in Baku at the end of this year.

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The Chairman NDMA and PM's Coordinator also thoroughly discussed the upcoming COP29 and it was agreed that the both sides would closely collaborate on preparing of reports, documentaries, recommendations for upcoming United Nations global summit being held in Baku at the end of this year.

3 previous govts issued thousands of prohibited weapon licences

ISLAMABAD (INP): It has been revealed that thousands of licenses for prohibited weapons have been issued by the Ministry of Interior over the past five and a half years of last three governments.

A total of 50,966 arms licenses were issued during the last governments of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), and caretaker premier Anwaarul Haq Kakar's tenure.

Among these, 23,557 licenses were for prohibited weapons, and 27,409 were for non-prohibited weapons, the sources said.

During the caretaker government, a total of 12,621 licenses were issued in which 9,561 licenses of prohibited weapons and 3,060 licenses of non-prohibited weapons were included. In the previous coalition government of PDM's tenure, a total of 23,052 arms licenses.

DC Jhal Magsi urges doctors to provide health facilities to patients in hospital

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Jhal Magsi Syed Rahmatullah Shah on Wednesday urged the doctors that they should play their role to provide health facilities to patients in government hospital. He expressed these views while chairing meeting of health sector of the district.

The DC said that all the doctors and other staff should consider it a sacred duty and be busy in fulfilling their official duties.

He also emphasized to all the doctors that the first priority of the government of Balochistan is to provide free medicines and medical facilities to the poor people in government hospitals and other health centers.

For which the government of Balochistan is using all the resources on an emergency basis so that the poor people can benefit fully from these measures of the government, he said.

He issued instructions to the officials of the health department and said that the total number of staff of (BHU, s) (CD, s) (DHQ, s) and (RHC, s) should be posted in the health centers as soon as possible, prepare a detailed of available medicines, functional and non-functional (BHU, s) (CD, s) and ongoing development projects in the district.

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QUETTA: A delegation of PML-N Provincial Ministers and MPs led by Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (ret'd) Abdul Khailq Achakzai meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.



QUETTA: Nazar Baloch along with others addresses to participants during Labour Conference organized by Pakistan Trade Union Defense Campaign held at Quetta press club.