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Zamindar Action Committee ends protest sit-in outside Balochistan Assembly: All agricultural tube wells of Balochistan to be converted on solar energy in one month: CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has accepted all demands of zamindars of the province and as such all the agricultural tube wells would be converted on the solar energy in one month time. The Chief Minister said that electricity would be supplied to zamindars for six hours till one month.

As long as the tube wells are converted on the solar energy, increase in the duration of electricity would cost Rs. 4 billion, he added. The Chief Minister was addressing a hurriedly called press conference along with the provincial ministers and representatives of Balochistan Zamindar Action Committee here in his chamber of provincial assembly on Wednesday.

The Chief Minister said that our zamindars protested for their demands outside the provincial assembly, what's good that they didn't take law in their hands during the protest.

He said that the delegation of zamindars held meeting with him after negotiations. He said that the demands of zamindars are genuine. On this, he went to Islamabad and met with the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on the issues and demands of zamindars of the province.

He put forth the issues of zamindars before the Prime Minister who gave patient hearing to them, as mentioned by the Chief Minister. He said that the Prime Minister has accepted all demands of zamindars of the province.

Besides, the arrears of QESCO against the zamindars are under consideration and the issue would also be resolved in due course of time.

Referring the educational related issues including the financial ones of the public sector universities of the province, Chief Minister said that there is a need to improve the educational system in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Bugti along with officials of the Zamindar Action Committee addresses to media persons during press conference held at CM House in Quetta.

Pakistan, China agree to promote CPEC with third-party participation

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China on Wednesday agreed to advance their joint project - China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and endorsed finalizing the modalities for third-party participation.

Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at a joint press stakeout expressed satisfaction over the steady pace of CPEC and vowed to "further upgrade and expand this cooperation".

The two sides, after co-chairing the fifth Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue held here at Diaoyutai State Guest House, spoke about their in-depth discussion on the multiple facets of their bilateral relations including CPEC and cooperation on counter-terrorism.

Termining the Sino-Pak ties as "all-weather strategic partnership", Dar and Wang expressed commitment to continue extending support to each other on issues of core interest.

Ishaq Dar said the country looked forward to further enhancing China's "development footprint" as in last 10 years, the CPEC transformed Pakistan's economic landscape by eliminating power outages and by developing a robust infrastructure network.

The two sides, he said, would pace up the implementation of Main Line-1 railway line project, Gwadar Port development, realignment of Phase 2 of the Karakorum Highway, and boost cooperation in agriculture, mining, minerals, energy, information technology, and industry sectors.

"As we embark on second phase of CPEC, we look forward to developing corridors of growth, livelihood, innovation, green development, and inclusivity," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Balochistan, Shaikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

CM expresses contentment on successful operation of security forces in Zhob

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed his satisfaction over the successful operation of security forces against terrorists in Sambaza area of Zoh. In a tweet on his social media account on late Tuesday night, the Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the successful operation against the terrorists, however, expressed grief over martyrdom of Major Babar Khan in the operation.

He said that the martyrdom of Major Babar Khan can't be forgotten in the history. He said that the successful operation by the security forces against terrorists is commendable.

He said that our brave jawans are embracing martyrdom for protection of the motherland. He said that it is responsibility of the government to protect life and property of the masses besides maintaining law and order in the province.

He said that the people of Balochistan are security forces are united for establishing peace in the province.

ECC grants Rs. 23 billion for AJ&K government

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Wednesday approved the summary for "Provision of Rs. 23 billion as an additional grant for the Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJ&K) government."

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC).

The ECC gave approval to the summary for "Provision of Rs. 23 Billion as Additional Grant to the AJ&K Government" through Technical Supplementary Grant as proposed by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, said a press release issued here. Secretary Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan briefed the Committee that during a high-level meeting held on Monday, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Shehbaz Sharif, had authorized an additional grant of Rs. 23 Billion to the Government of AJ&K, in the paramount national interest.

Two-day Pakistan Literary Festival begins at BUTTEMS Pakistan Literary Festival to become source of enlightenment, says Speaker BA

Independent Report
QUETTA: Two-day grand Pakistan Literary Festival commenced at the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTTEMS) here on Wednesday.

The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai was the chief guest at inauguration ceremony of the Literary Festival held at the Arfa Karim Hall of the BUTTEMS.

The Provincial Minister for Culture, Sindh, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah as well as other eminent personalities from literature, arts, culture and journalism from all over the country participated in the inaugural session of the Literary Festival.

Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Balochistan Assembly hailed the Literary Festival and welcomed all those participating in it from all over the country.

He said that the power of literature unites the people. He said that those use good words to express their point of view have creative capabilities.

PTI to face consequences if refuses to apologise over May 9 mayhem, warns Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has warned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of consequences if the "non-serious party" refuses to tender an apology over May 9 riots.

"No one should be permitted to commit terrorism," Bilawal said while speaking on the floor of the National Assembly on Wednesday, adding:

Pakistan successfully tests Fatah-II rocket system

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Pakistan Army on Wednesday conducted the successful training launch of Fatah-II Guided Rocket System with a range of 400 kilometres.

Equipped with the state-of-the-art navigation system, unique trajectory and manoeuvrable features, Fatah-II is capable of engaging targets with high precision and defeating any missile defence system.

Fatah-II is being inducted in the Pakistan Army's artillery divisions for stand-off and precision engagement of deep targets. The rocket system will significantly upgrade the reach and lethality of Pakistan Army's conventional arsenal.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the launch was aimed at perfecting the launch drills and procedures.

The politico urged the opposition party to avoid practising "double standards" in politics.

He described the opposition members of the Imran Khan-founded party as "non-political and non-serious", lacking interest in the country's politics. He claimed that their leader was "crying" in jail for release.

Bilawal Bhutto said that PPP has been struggling to strengthen democratic institutions for three generations and this struggle for Pakistan would continue.

Governor calls on President Asif Ali Zardari
Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail called on the President Asif Ali Zardari in President House Islamabad on Wednesday.

During the course of meeting, different matters including those related to the federal development projects were discussed. Besides, the matters of mutual interests were also discussed during the meeting. The President on the occasion congratulated Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail on assuming the office of Governor Balochistan. He also expressed best wishes for the Governor. Moreover, both the leaders stressed on strengthening the relations between the federation and provinces.

QUETTA: Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai and others addressing Pakistan Literary Festival at BUTTEMS.



Govt slashes petrol price by Rs15.39 per litre in major relief

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a move aimed at providing relief to the public, the federal government has announced massive reductions in the prices of petroleum products.

According to a notification issued by the Federal Ministry of Finance, the price of petrol has been slashed by Rs 15.39, while the price of high-speed diesel sees a reduction of Rs 7.88. Additionally, the price of light diesel oil has been decreased by Rs 7.54.

Following these adjustments, the new prices stand at Rs 273.10 for petrol, Rs 274.08 for high-speed diesel, and Rs 161.17 for light diesel. "New prices of petroleum will be effective for next fortnight from May 16," it added.

Haq hails PM Shahbaz's efforts to resolve AJK protesters' issue

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq while paying tribute to Prime Minister Shahbaz

ernment was enabled by this package to slash the power tariff and increase wheat flour subsidy as demanded by the protesters however, he said that Joint Action Committee leadership was failed to timely announce the acceptance of their demands which led to few untoward incidents leaving loss of lives and property of the law enforcement agencies.

"Some miscreants being identified, were behind the chaos on the behest of enemies," Haq added saying law will take its course against them after due process and no one will be allowed to weaken the relationship between the people of Pakistan and AJK.

Maryam stresses quality education in govt schools

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif sought a monthly schedule for the five-year plan related to the education reforms, here on Wednesday.

The chief minister granted approval for providing 32,298 tablets to heads of primary schools. She presided over a special meeting pertaining to schools' education reforms in which public schools reorganisation programme was comprehensively reviewed.

The School Education secretary apprised the CM about progress being made on the schools nutrition project. It was agreed in the meeting to set up STEM IT and Science Labs in 1000

elementary schools.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide financial assistance worth \$100 million for establishment of STEM Labs.

An approval in principle was granted for the Google Certification Agreement for 3 lakh children in the government schools. Students will be provided opportunities to avail Google Certification under the Digital Journey for TECH Valley Project.

The proposals and recommendations for establishment of Punjab Education Curriculum and Training were reviewed in the meeting. It was informed during the meeting that more than 92

per cent free books have been delivered. The CM stressed the need to improve quality of education in the government schools under any circumstances.

Senator Pervez Rashid, Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Provincial Minister for School Education Rana Sikandar Hayat, MPA Sania Ashiq, Chief Secretary, Secretary Education, Secretary Finance, MD Punjab Curriculum & Text Book Board, MD Punjab Education Foundation, CEO Punjab Initiative Management Authority, MD Punjab Education Sector Reforms Programme and other concerned officers attended the meeting.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan addresses during the 3rd National Labour Conference held in Lahore.

VC UoS stresses importance of attracting top-tier

By Haroon Siraj

SWAT: The Vice Chancellor of the University of Swat, Prof. Dr. Hassan Sher, convened a meeting with all heads of departments and administrative sections on Wednesday to discuss various university issues and the upcoming Alumni Gathering event.

The meeting aimed to foster a sense of community among alumni, providing a platform for networking, sharing experiences, and contributing to the university's growth and development. Head of Departments briefed the meeting on their interactions with alumni from their respective departments.

Dacoit killed during police encounter

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): A dacoit was killed with the firing of own accomplices during police encounter in limits of Khair Pur Sadat police station.

According to police spokesperson, SHO Sheher Sultan police along with Khair Pur Sadat police on a tip off raided for the arrest of a proclaimed offender.

The suspects opened firing on a police party in which police personnel remained safe. The police van was partially damaged.

Gilani says he feels proud in serving South Punjab people

MULTAN (APP): Senate Chairman Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Wednesday said that he felt proud for the services he and his family had rendered for the uplift of education sector and vowed to take the same to new heights in the South Punjab. The Gilani family always served the people as their duty and obligation, he said while talking to different delegates at the Multan Circuit House.

Gilani said that his bond with the people of South Punjab, particularly Multan, would remain intact as they were like a family for him. Former Member of the

Punjab Assembly Malik Saleem Labar called on him and discussed matters of mutual interest. Gilani Law College Principal Dr. Samza Faima along with Associate Professor Dr. Muhammad Bilal held a meeting with Gilani and congratulated him on his election as Senate chairman. They acknowledged the services of Gilani family in establishing and upgrading education sector facilities in the South Punjab. A delegation from Civil Society Forum led by Shahid Mahmood Ansari invited the Senate chairman to join their campaign to plant 500 saplings in the city.



LAHORE: Information and Culture Minister of Punjab Azma Bukhari addressing a press conference at D.G.P.R office in the Provincial Capital.

Getting education is basic right of every child: DC Ghotki

By Tanveer Ahmed Soomro

MIRPUR MATHELO: Deputy Commissioner Ghotki Dr. Syed Muhammad Ali visited Special Education Center Mirpur Mathelo and reviewed it.



On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner said that getting education is the basic right of every child, providing vocational training to special children is a good initiative which encourages them.

He said that the Special Education Center is a good institution, he will try to provide more facilities to the institution so that the special children can get maximum benefit. On this occasion, Deputy Director Saifullah Mahar told the Deputy Commissioner that all the children are provided transport facility from school to home while also providing vocational training along with education.

Brother killed his brother in Shikarpur

Independent Report

SHIKARPUR: An other shameful Act of killing the real brother on the matter of property was occurred in Shikarpur District on Wednesday in the jurisdiction of Rahimabad police station.

According to initial reports reached here that one accused Muhammad Hashim Pahore accompanied with his nephews murdered his real brother identified as Qasim Pahore at village Noor Muhammad Shujrah and threw his dead body in ditch and buried there while tightening his arms and feet with rope.

While receiving the information, area police recovered the buried dead body of deceased Qasim Pahore and arrested to be accused brother Muhammad Hashim Pahore.

Police is busy in collecting further evidence and such matter is in process.

No FIR was registered till late evening.

Scabies transmits person to person through close skin contact: Skin specialist

HYDERABAD (APP): Scabies is a parasitic infestation caused by tiny mites that burrow into the skin and lay eggs, causing intense itching and a rash. Scabies can lead to skin sores and serious complications like septicemia (a bloodstream infection), heart disease and kidney problems.

Dermatologist / Skin specialist Dr Rajendar Dhirani expressed these views while talking to APP here on Wednesday.

He informed that Scabies spreads easily from person to person, especially among people who live close together. Children and older people in resource-poor areas are at higher risk. Scabies is found

in every country but is particularly common in many resource-poor tropical settings, particularly in children and older people. Prevalence among children in these settings may vary from 5% up to 50%. Recurrent infestations are common, he added.

He said that Scabies is transmitted person-to-person through close skin contact (e.g. living in the same residence) with an infested individual. The risk of transmission increases with the level of infestation, with highest risk due to contact with individuals with crusted scabies. Transmission due to contact with infested personal items (e.g., clothes and bed linens)

is unlikely with common scabies but may be important for individuals with crusted scabies. As there is an asymptomatic period of infestation, transmission may occur before the initially infested person develops symptoms.

To a question about the symptoms he said that it include severe itch, often worse at night; itchy lines (linear burrows) and bumps (papules) on the fingers, wrists, arms, legs and belt area; larger rash in infants and small children, including on the palms, soles of the feet, ankles and scalp.

About the precaution he said that avoid skin-to-skin contact with an infected person, especially if they

have an itchy rash; treat all members of the household if someone has scabies to prevent the mites from spreading to others; wash and dry bedding and clothing that has been in contact with the infested person, using hot water and drying in direct sunlight; a hot dryer cycle or dry cleaning; seal items that can't be washed in a plastic bag for a week to help eliminate the mites; and clean and vacuum or sweep rooms after an infested person has been treated, especially for people with crusted scabies.

He said that Scabies can be treated with topical creams or oral medication in more severe cases. Itchiness often gets worse for

1-2 weeks after treatment starts. Ivermectin taken orally is also highly effective, but it should not be taken by pregnant women or children who weigh less than 15 kg.

Treatments do not kill the parasite's eggs, and treatment should be repeated to kill newly hatched mites. People do not experience symptoms in the early stages of infestation. To reduce spread, all people in the household should be treated, even if they do not have symptoms. Other treatments may be needed to treat the complications of scabies. Antiseptics or antibiotics are used to treat bacterial skin infections or impetigo.

International News

Palestinians mark 'Nakba' anniversary as thousands flee Gaza's Rafah

Monitoring Desk

RAFAH: Tens of thousands of civilians fled the southern Gaza city of Rafah ahead of a threatened Israeli ground offensive, as Palestinians on Wednesday mark the anniversary of their "Nakba" or "catastrophe" of 1948.

During the war that accompanied Israel's creation, around 760,000 Palestinians fled or were driven from their homes and many took refuge in what would later become the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Wednesday's commemoration of the "Nakba" comes as multiple battles between Israeli troops and Hamas militants across the Gaza Strip force waves of Palestinian mass displacement.

Nearly 450,000 Pal-

estinians have been displaced from Rafah since May 6, and around 100,000 from northern Gaza, UN agencies said.

That means around a quarter of Gaza's population of 2.4 million people have been displaced again in about one week.

UN chief Antonio Guterres repeated his call for a humanitarian ceasefire to allow more aid into the besieged territory.

"I reiterate my appeal for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and for the release of all hostages. I call for the Rafah crossing to be re-opened immediately and for the unimpeded humanitarian access throughout Gaza," he posted Tuesday on social media site X.

The war and siege

have triggered a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, with the UN repeatedly lamenting aid restrictions as famine stalks the north.

Since Israeli troops moved into eastern Rafah, the aid crossing point from Egypt has remained closed and the nearby Kerem Shalom crossing lacks "safe and logistically viable access", a UN report said late Monday.

Qatar, which has been mediating peace talks, said Gazans "have not received any aid" since May 9.

Israeli police on Tuesday said they had opened an investigation after right-wing activists stopped and ransacked at least seven Gaza-bound aid trucks coming from Jordan, leaving food spilt on the road.



Palestinians hold Palestinian flags as they take part in a protest to mark the 76th anniversary of the Nakba, the "catastrophe" of their mass dispossession in the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation, in Ramallah, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Slovak PM shot after govt meeting, facing life-threatening injuries

Monitoring Desk

HANDLOVA: Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico suffered life-threatening injuries when he was shot and wounded in an attempted assassination on Wednesday, the government office said. Fico, 59, was shot and hit in the abdomen.

A reporter from the Dennik N daily saw the premier being lifted into a car by security guards and reported that police had detained the suspected gunman. "We confirm the attack on the prime minister," police spokesman Matej

Neumann told AFP. A Reuters witness heard several shots fired after the meeting in Handlova north-east of the capital Bratislava. Police detained a man and security officials pushed someone into a car and drove off, the witness said. Similarly, broadcaster TA3 reported that four shots were fired and that the leftist prime minister had been hit in the abdomen. The wounded prime minister was rushed to a hospital in Handlova for treatment and was referred to the capital Bratislava.

Jordan foils arms plot as kingdom caught in Iran-Israel shadow war

Monitoring Desk

AMMAN: Jordan has foiled a suspected Iranian-led plot to smuggle weapons into the US-allied kingdom to help opponents of the ruling monarchy carry out acts of sabotage, according to two Jordanian sources with knowledge of the matter. The weapons were sent by Iranian-backed militias in Syria to a cell of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan that has links to the military wing of Palestinian group Hamas.

One killed, 12 injured in Afghan air force helicopter crash

Monitoring Desk

KABUL: A helicopter used by the Afghan air force crashed as it attempted an emergency landing in central Afghanistan on Wednesday, killing one person and injuring 12, the defence ministry said.

The Mi17 aircraft encountered "technical issues" as it attempted to recover the bodies of people who had fallen into a river in the central Ghor province, Afghanistan's Taliban-run Ministry of National Defence said in a statement.

Former US military intelligence official says he resigned over Gaza war

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: A former US military intelligence official released a letter on Monday that explained to his colleagues at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) that his November resignation was in fact due to "moral injury" stemming from US support for Israel's war in Gaza and the harm caused to Palestinians.

Harrison Mann, an Army major, would be the first known DIA official to

quit over US support for Israel. A US airman fatally set himself on fire in February outside Israel's embassy in Washington and other military personnel have protested.

Mann said he kept quiet about his motives for resigning for months out of fear.

"I was afraid. Afraid of violating our professional norms. Afraid of disappointing officers I respect. Afraid you would feel betrayed."



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba hold a joint press conference, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Top US and Chinese officials begin talks on AI in Geneva

Monitoring Desk

GENEVA: Top envoys from the U.S. and China huddled in closed-door talks in Geneva on Tuesday to lay out their national approaches to the promise and perils of emerging artificial intelligence technology. The talks, which Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping agreed to launch in late 2023, are meant to open up bilateral dialogue be-

tween the world's two biggest economies — and increasingly geopolitical rivals — on a fast-moving technology that already has consequences for trade, lifestyles, culture, politics, national security and defense and much more. U.S. technology experts say the meeting — led on the American side by high-level White House and State Department officials.

Singapore swears in its first new PM in 2 decades

Monitoring Desk

SINGAPORE: Singapore's Lawrence Wong was sworn in on Wednesday as its first new premier in 20 years and only its fourth leader since independence, capping off a carefully calibrated power transfer aimed at ensuring continuity in the wealthy city-state. Wong, 51, comes from among a crop of so-called "4G" leaders, a new generation of politicians that were hand-picked by the long-ruling People's Action Party (PAP) to take over the reins of the key Asian trade and financial centre.

He is the first Singaporean leader born after its independence in 1965. Wong will retain his current position as finance minister and takes charge of a country led for two decades by Lee Hsien Loong, the 72-year-old son of Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern Singapore who stayed in politics until his death in 2015.

Putin hails China's 'genuine desire' to help resolve Ukraine war

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed Beijing's "genuine desire" to help resolve the Ukraine crisis, in an interview with Chinese state media published ahead of a two-day visit to the country.

Putin arrives in Beijing on Thursday to meet his "dear friend" Xi Jinping, seeking to win greater support from China for his war effort in Ukraine and isolated economy.

The visit, where he will also travel to the northeastern city of Harbin for a trade and investment expo, is Putin's first trip abroad since his March re-election and his second in just over six months to China.

"We commend China's approaches to resolving the crisis in

Ukraine," Putin told the Xinhua state news agency in a Moscow interview, which was also carried in English on the Kremlin website. "Beijing is well aware of its root causes and global geopolitical significance," Putin said, referring to a 12-point position paper published by China in February 2023 on reaching a political settlement to the crisis. "The ideas and proposals contained in the document show the genuine desire of our Chinese friends to help stabilise the situation," Putin said.

Days before Russia launched its full-scale military assault on Ukraine in February 2022, Beijing and Moscow declared a "no limits" partnership and have since boosted trade to record highs.

Qatar sees Israel's Rafah attack as setback for talks

Monitoring Desk

DOHA: Israel's military operation in Rafah has set truce negotiations with Hamas "backward", mediator Qatar said on Tuesday, adding that talks have reached "almost a stalemate".

"Especially in the past few weeks, we have seen some momentum building but unfortunately things didn't move in the right direction and right now we are on a status of almost a stalemate," Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told the Qatar Economic Forum.

"Of course, what happened with Rafah has set us backward."

Qatar, which has hosted Hamas's political office in Doha since 2012, has been engaged along with Egypt and the United States in months of behind-the-scenes mediation between Israel and the Pal-

estinian group.

"There is no clarity how to stop the war from the Israeli side. I don't think that they are considering this as an option... even when we are talking about the deal and leading to a potential ceasefire," Sheikh Mohammed said.

Israeli politicians were indicating "by their statements that they will remain there, they will continue the war."

And there is no clarity on what Gaza will look like after this", he added.

Israel continued to fight Hamas in Rafah on Monday, despite US warnings against a full-scale assault on the south Gaza city that is crowded with displaced Palestinians.

A senior US official said negotiations were "at a simmer, but are at a low boil", but that conversations with the parties were continuing.

Maulana Fazal says: I am not going to meet Imran in jail

FAISALABAD (Online): JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said no one is meeting Imran Khan. "No one is meeting Imran Khan. Our politics is like open book. Our institutions will have to stay in their respective parameters. Establishment has gone into blind alley. There is ceasefire from PTI side which is good omen. All political parties will have to sit together and block their way, he said this while talking to media men after condoling with JUI-F Punjab Naib Amir Syed Muhammad Zikria Shah on the death of Syed Javed Hussain Shah here Tuesday.

He stated ceasefire has taken place between PTI and JUI-F. I am not going to meet Imran Khan in jail. I don't know as to why such questions are being asked now a days, he inquired. All politicians will have to sit together for the sake of constitution. He held every election remained controversial. This will have to be rectified at every cost. He underlined that PPP is getting constitutional slots and is saying too that it is not part of the government. PPP is not in government, it means minority government is running here Tuesday.



ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal delivering keynote address during Pakistan Development Summit on the theme "5Es Framework: Roadmap to a Trillion Dollar Economy by 2035," at Pakistan China Friendship Center.

Governor exhorts LEAs to take solid steps for elimination of terrorism and extremism

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of Major Babar Khan during the operation of security forces against terrorists in Sambaza area of Zhob district. In a condemnation issued here on Wednesday, the Governor said that it is our responsibility to protect life and property of the masses. He said that the strong foundations can be provided to the economy and politics by establishing sustainable peace. The Governor exhorted the law enforcement agencies to take solid steps for elimination of terrorism and extremism in the province. Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail prayed for the departed soul of martyr Major Babar Khan. He also expressed empathy and condolence with the bereaved family of martyr military officer.

IMF expresses serious concerns over uncontrolled circular debt in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has expressed strong concerns over the uncontrolled growth of circular debt in Pakistan. The circular debt in the energy sector has surged by a staggering amount of Rs150 billion, raising alarms about its potential impact on the country's economy. There are apprehensions that the circular debt could reach a daunting Rs2.5 trillion by the end of the current fiscal year. The IMF had set a target to control the circular debt at Rs 2.31 trillion for the ongoing fiscal year, urging an increase in tariffs for power and gas.



QUETTA: MPA Asghar Tareen meeting with Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango.

BME successfully concludes 8-week internship program for Balochistan graduates

QUETTA (APP): Bolan Mining Enterprises (BME), a pioneering mining joint venture between Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) and Balochistan government has successfully concluded an intensive 8-week internship programme designed to nurture local talent and empower young graduates from the region. The programme, a testament to BME's longstanding commitment to community development and fostering skilled professionals for the mineral sector, the participants of 25 graduates' including seven women, for the first time, marking a progressive step towards gender inclusivity. The ceremony, held at BME's facility in Khuzdar, was graced by PPL's Chief Operating Officer, Sikandar Ali Memon. In his address, he underscored BME's unwavering dedication to nurturing young talent and equipping them with the requisite skills and knowledge to excel in the dynamic field of resource extraction and management through hands-on training and on-job experience. He also distributed certificates amongst graduating interns, comprising individuals from diverse educational backgrounds such as engineering, geology and management sciences. Throughout the internship programme that started off on March 8, the interns were provided with invaluable hands-on experience and exposure to BME's operational facilities in Khuzdar, gaining insights into the intricacies of extracting and processing barytes. BME's internship programme stands as a beacon of hope and opportunity for the youth of Balochistan, offering a platform for skills enhancement, professional growth.



KILLASAIFULLAH: Commandant Cadet College Brig. Muhammad Athar Sultan addressing students during parade.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chairing the meeting of Economic Coordination Committee.

Political stability, persistent policies imperative for growth: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's economic growth. Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal Wednesday underscored the need for political stability and continuity of economic policies to put Pakistan on a sustained growth trajectory and attain social prosperity. Addressing the Pakistan Development Summit, the minister said, "Pakistan is blessed with all natural resources and by mobilizing these resources, we can take the country on the path of rapid economic growth and social development within a ten-year time period." The theme of the event was "5Es Framework Roadmap to a Trillion Dollar Economy by 2035," which aimed to bring together stakeholders from industry, academia and sectoral professionals to shape the future of Pakistan's economic growth. About nine key thematic sessions under the topic of 5Es Framework would gather expert feedback and prepare a comprehensive plan of action to attain sustainable economic development and social prosperity. Speaking on the occasion, the minister stressed the need to form an economic charter, besides maintaining the continuity of these economic policies to turn around the national economy. He said that peace and political stability in the country were the other prerequisite elements to put the country on a fast track to economic uplift. Ahsan Iqbal also urged the need for an accelerated pace of economic growth and development not only to compete with the regional countries but to bring it at par with these economies. Highlighting the significance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project (CPEC), the minister said, "It was a game-changer project, which will help to transform local industrial and agriculture sectors." He also called for mobilizing domestic resources to meet the financial requirements and reducing the reliance on borrowing. The minister said that the income of the government was Rs7,000 billion and debt repayment was Rs8,000 billion, adding that it was borrowing 1,000 billion per annum to bridge the gap between income and expenditure. Meanwhile, the minister said, "More than half of the country's population does not pay the electricity bill, besides large businesses and traders are not paying their due taxes."



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa and Secretary C&W Qambar Dashti being briefed about expansion of Gai Khan Chowk to Western bypass road.

Shaheed Major Babar Niazi laid to rest with full military honours

RAWALPINDI (APP): Major Babar Niazi (resident of Mianwali district), who was martyred during an intelligence-based operation against terrorists in Sambaza area of Zhob district of Balochistan, was laid to rest with full military honours in his native area. A large number of serving and retired senior officers of Pakistan Army and Pakistan Air Force, relatives of the martyr and local people participated in the funeral prayer, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Salik visits Saudi Arabia to review Hajj arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain has arrived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to review the Hajj arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims. During his week-long visit, the minister will hold meetings with officials of the Pakistan Hajj Mission, including a briefing from the Director General Hajj on the arrangements for pilgrims.

Journalist shot dead in Muzaffargarh

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): Unidentified motorcyclists gunned a local journalist in a targeted attack here on Wednesday, police said. According to details, unknown culprits riding a motorcycle stopped a journalist Ishtaq Ahmed Sial at Thermal Bypass in Muzaffargarh and opened straight fire on him leaving him seriously injured. The attackers sped the scene after committing the crime.

Provincial Minister C&W says Improvement of road infrastructure in Quetta city included in priorities

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Communication and Works, Mir Saleem Khosa has stated that it is included in our priorities to improve the road infrastructure in Quetta city. The Provincial Minister for C&W was speaking on the occasion of inspection of different roads projects in Quetta city on Wednesday. The road projects were included Custom Flyover, Gahi Khan Flyover, expansion of Gahi Khan chowk to western bypass road and Nawan Killi to Sheikh Zayed Heart Hospital. Also present on the occasion were the Secretary C&W, Kambhar Dashti, Chief Engineer, Dr Sajjad Baloch and the concerned engineers and officers. Engineer Aslam Zehri briefed the Minister about the ongoing development projects. Mir Saleem Khosa on the occasion expressed displeasure over slow pace of development work on the ongoing projects. He directed to expedite the progress on projects and complete them well in time.



QUETTA: Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan Nazam Muhammad Baloch presenting a shield to Federal Ombudsman for Anti Harassment Fouzia Waqar.

JJ chief calls for resignations from ruling elites over Dubai property leaks

LAHORE (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami Amir Hafiz Naemur-Rehman has demanded immediate resignations from all individuals implicated in the Dubai Property Leaks scandal, citing widespread concerns over the transparency and legitimacy of their overseas investments. Addressing the latest revelation of Pakistani elite's vast property holdings in Dubai, Hafiz Naemur-Rehman condemned the pattern of wealth accumulation among the country's political and influential figures, characterizing it as a betrayal of public trust. With over 22 thousand Pakistanis reportedly owning properties worth a staggering \$12.5 billion in Dubai, the scandal has once again laid bare the extent of financial impropriety within the ruling class. Raising pointed questions regarding the origins and legality of funds used to purchase properties abroad, He called for full disclosure from those implicated in the leaks. He challenged the ruling elite to clarify whether these investments were duly declared.

PM for PSDP programs ensuring sustainable development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed upon initiation of such projects under Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) that ensured sustainable development in the country. While underlining the significance of third part validation of all the mega national development projects, he observed that with increase in revenues, enough funds could be made available for the uplift projects. The prime minister chaired an important meeting on the matters related to the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and Public Private Partnership Authority, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The meeting was attended by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister for Petroleum Musadik Malik, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jehanzeb Khan, PM's Coordinator Rana Ahsan Afzal and other relevant senior officials. The prime minister also directed for constitution of a cabinet committee headed by the minister for planning over the development budget and PSDP. The committee would furnish a mechanism over PSDP programmes through short, medium and long term proposals. The prime minister emphasized upon harmonizing the federal PSDP and provincial annual development programme and the need of improving links. He also asked for submission of proposals by all the federal ministries over public-private partnership projects.



FAISALABAD: Chairman Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), Mahmood Khan Achakzai addressing lawyers at District Bar Association Faisalabad.

NA Speaker says Strengthening standing committees essential for ensuring quality legislation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday said that enhancing parliamentary outreach is key to abridging space between public representatives and the public. "Digitalisation is key to transforming Parliament into a goal-orientated organization that produces quality and public responsive legislation," he expressed these views while chairing the 1st meeting of the National Assembly Strategic Plan Committee Special in Parliament House. He, further, emphasized the need to strengthen parliamentary staff through robust training. While emphasising the need to evolve a strong monitoring system for enhancing the efficiency of parliamentary supporting staff, he said that proper training and effective performance evaluation can render them more productive. He said, "Strengthening standing committees is essential for ensuring quality legislation." He said that the Women Parliamentary Caucus, Secretariat of Sustainable Development Goals, Young Parliamentarians Forum, Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS), and other parliamentary forums play proactive roles in enhancing parliamentary efficiency. Furthermore, he said that the rationalisation of the budget as per the strategic plan would make it more implementable and rational. While deliberating upon the contours for the formation of the strategic plan, Committee members unanimously decided to make a strategic plan led by parliamentarians. Speaking on the forum, Member National Assembly (MNA) Syed Naveed Qamar said that social media has gained undeniable importance in their age of social media and developing an independent proactive social media.

President lauds security forces for successful anti-terror operation in Zhob

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday lauded the security forces for conducting a successful anti-terror operation in Sambaza area of Balochistan's Zhob district. The president paid tribute to Major Babar Khan Shaheed, who was martyred in line of his duty during the operation, and applauded his bravery, patriotism and services to the country. Applauding the professional capabilities of the Pakistan Army, he reiterated the resolve to eliminate terrorism.

Pak-Latvia BPC review positive trajectory in bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 6th Round of Pakistan-Latvia Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) held here on Wednesday reviewed the positive trajectory of bilateral relations and agreed to expand bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, energy, education and technology, and labour mobility. Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe) Ambassador Shaqat Ali Khan led the Pakistani side while Deputy State Secretary-Political Director Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Andzejs Vilumsons, headed the Latvian delegation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a post on X account. They also discussed regional and global developments and underlined the need for collective efforts to address common challenges, it was added. Separately, Deputy State Secretary-Political Director Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Andzejs Vilumsons called on Foreign Secretary.



ABU DHABI: Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Envoy to the United Arab Emirates, CEO Abu Dhabi Airports Elena Sorlini and officials from both sides attended a ceremony that highlighted launch of PIA's flight from Al Ain to Turbat, Baluchistan at Al Ain airport.

Steps being taken for supply of water to people of Gadani City: Balach

QUETTA (APP): Executive Engineer (Xen) of Public Health Engineer (PHE) Hub Balach Amir on Wednesday said that measures were being taken on an emergency basis to continue the uninterrupted supply of water to people of Gadani city. He expressed these views while talking officers during assuming charge of his office. The Xen was briefed regarding the shortage of water and other issues of the Department. The directive of the district administration district Hub, Xen PHE has taken notice of the problem of water shortages were being faced by the public. He said that a crackdown would be launched against several water tankers and tractors involved in stealing water from the Gadani hydrant channel of District Hub saying that the operation against water tankers to be started with help of police.

Step afoot to end curse of copying system from examination centers: Ejaz

QUETTA (APP): Chairman of Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) Quetta Mir Ejaz Azeem Baloch on Wednesday said that measures were being taken to end copying culture from examination centers as it was a curse that was pushing the new generation of the country into the darkness of ignorance. He said that children have to become educated citizens but they have to serve the country and the nation today, those nations were developed in the world due to quality of education. He said that those who made knowledge their weapon and eradicated ignorance from their country, we also have to light the candle of knowledge for the development of our country. Chairman of Mir Ejaz