

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Hub

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 109, Zeeqad 20, 1445 AH Wednesday May 29, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs. 15

Country's economic indicators improving Nawaz fires broadside at Imran, facilitators after re-election as PML-N president

Ex-PM vehemently criticises decision by former chief justice Saqib Nisar, declaring it has been discarded as 'trash'

LAHORE (Agencies): Former prime minister and newly elected President of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Nawaz Sharif, has once again accused Imran Khan of relying on military support for his political ascent. Sharif was elected unopposed as the president of the ruling party earlier today, coincidentally, the same day Pakistan conducted nuclear tests in 1998 during the PML-N's second term in government.

"Imran Khan started his politics on the shoulders of the army. I personally approached him for collaboration, and he agreed, but then planned protests from London with a general, a cleric from Canada, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, and others. Protests began, and I was asked to resign. I said do whatever you

want; Nawaz Sharif never resigns," he remarked while addressing the party's general council meeting, where Sharif's presidency was confirmed on Tuesday.

Sharif quoted former ISI chief General (ret'd) Zabeerul Islam, saying he had said they tried different parties and allowed a third force, which they thought could deliver. He said that that force appeared in PTI. "Imran Khan should clarify if he was not the third force, then who was?" Challenging Khan, Sharif declared, "If you were not the third force, I promise to retire from politics. Your politics and the ousting of our government were founded with their help. You derailed democracy on their behalf. It was during the PTI's protests in Islamabad where it was said Nawaz Sharif would be dragged out of the

PM House with a rope around his neck. This was the umpire's finger that Imran Khan frequently referred to."

Sharif urged Khan to answer these questions before he could be engaged in a dialogue with the government. "We are of May 28, not May 9. When Bill Clinton offered \$5 billion to avoid nuclear tests, we refused and rejected the offer of \$5 billion of that time." Sharif also vehemently criticised the decision by former chief justice Saqib Nisar, declaring it has been discarded as "trash."

"Saqib Nisar removed me from the party presidency for life. Today, people have thrown his decision into the dustbin. Summon those who declared that Nawaz Sharif would be permanently removed, yet here I stand before you once again," he stated.

Nawaz's love, services to nation made him party President again: Shehbaz

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has said that Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has once again been elected unopposed as the President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz because of his great love and services to the people of Pakistan.

Addressing the PML-N General Council Meeting at a local hotel, he said that in the 2018 elections, Nawaz Sharif was defeated through various intrigues, adding that Nawaz Sharif's fault was that he transformed the country into a nuclear power and also put it on the path to speedy development. He said that unfortunately, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was implicated in the false Panama cases, asserting that his crime was that he served Pakistan and made Pakistan a nuclear power, while Pakistan had been progressing fast in industrial, agricultural and all other sectors. Under a sheer conspiracy, he said, attempts were made to defame Nawaz Sharif in the comity of nations by ruining his national services and he was forced to quit Pakistan but today, the faces of all those conspirators are tainted, while Nawaz Sharif has once again succeeded to foil all those unlawful tactics and intrigues.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif congratulates former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on being elected unopposed as President of PML-N in Lahore.

Going to announce result of tests conducted by SBKWU: All recruitments to be made in all departments on contract basis, merit to prevail, declares CM

"Provincial budget for next financial year to be presented on June 21 or 22; leaves of officers and staff of Finance, P&D departments cancelled; graph of non-development budget increasing at fast pace"

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically declared that all the recruitments would be made in all government departments on contract basis, and adding he assured that merit would prevail at all cost.

The Chief Minister was addressing a hurriedly called press conference at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Tuesday.

He was flanked by the Provincial Ministers Mir Zahoore Ahmed Buledi, Mir Ali Madad Jatak, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, MPA Zamarak Khan Achakzai and spokesman of provincial

government, Shahid Rind.

He said that we had received certain complaints about selling of the jobs in different departments, but there were no solid evidences about the issue.

However, we have firm commitment to ensure merit in recruitments to be made in future. Referring the tests conducted for teachers under the SBK women university, the Chief Minister announced that we are going to announce result of the tests conducted already.

He said that merit would prevail in the recruitments, and in this regard, a committee comprising senior bureaucrats would conduct interviews of the successful

candidates.

He reiterated his government's resolve to bring reforms in the education sector saying that the teachers would be appointed on merit.

He said that if we made compromise on recruitment of the teachers violating merit, then we would ruin our future generation.

Referring the next financial year's budget, the Chief Minister announced we are going to present the province's budget for the year 2024-25 on June 21 or 22. In this regard, we have cancelled leaves of all the officers of Finance and Planning and Development departments, he added.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing a press conference at CM Secretariat regarding the decision taken of posts in education department and other issues.

Governor directs Provincial Ombudsman to improve functionality

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has directed to the Provincial Ombudsman to take concrete measures for making his institution fully functional and improve its performance further at division level. He Governor was of the strong view that there is a dire need to improve performance of the institutions instead of establishing their branches. The Governor was speaking to the Provincial Ombudsman, Nazir Muhammad Baloch who called on him at the Governor's House on Tuesday, he Provincial Ombudsman presented annual performance report of the Ombudsman's secretariat.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor said that the

Provincial Ombudsman's secretariat is an important source of dispensation of timely and inexpensive justice to the people. Therefore, it should be made more effective at the division level, adding he stressed. He said that it is better to improve performance of the institutions further instead of establishing their branches so as to increase confidence of the people on them.

He also stressed the need to build capacity of the officers and employees in order to ensure transparent system.

He also urged the Provincial Ombudsman to focus on holding open katchehris (court) paying surprise visits and holding seminars for creation of awareness among the masses.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail in a group photo with participants of 13th National Workshop Balochistan

Gilani greets Nawaz Sharif on election as PML-N president

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday congratulated Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on his unopposed election as the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

The acting president, in a statement, reiterated to work with Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to promote democracy in the country.

Expressing good wishes for him, the acting president said that Nawaz Sharif rendered numerous services for strengthening the democracy in the country.

Hearing of cipher case likely today

ISLAMABAD (Online): Hearing of cipher case against PTI founder Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi could not take place on Tuesday being public holiday in connection with Youm-e-Takbeer and it is likely to be held today. A division bench of Islamabad High Court (IHC) comprising Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Amir Farooq and justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb will hear the case.

Prosecutor FIA, Zulfiqar Naqvi and Suleman Safdar and Taimore Malik counsels for Imran Khan will appear in the court.

PM for minimum load-shedding for public relief in sizzling summer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to minimise the ongoing load-shedding in different areas through better load management, considering the public relief in sizzling weather.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting on load management and power theft, reiterated that the government would deal strictly with the power thieves and the ongoing mission against them would be taken to the logical end.

Vowing to hold a monthly review of the power theft situation, he asked the provincial governments, law enforcement agencies and other departments to extend their support in the anti-power theft drive in the national interest and for the country's progress.

The prime minister told the participants of the meeting that the government in no way would tolerate the over-billing.

He directed to accelerate the privatisation process of the power distribution companies by engaging the experts and formulate a strategy to solarise the tube wells in Balochistan.

During the briefing on load management and power theft issue, it was told that under a joint strategy formulated following a conversation between

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister and federal minister for power, it had been agreed to reduce load shedding and line losses and ensure recovery of dues from defaulters in the province.

It was told that areas with more power theft and line losses and low recovery ratio were being subjected to load shedding and that the upgradation of the south-north power transmission line would help improve the system.

CM pledges to foil all types of conspiracies against Pakistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has made pledge to foil all types of conspiracies against Pakistan.

He said that the conspiracies were hatched for dividing nation on the basis of religion and linguistic besides terrorism. However, the Pak armed forces and nation foiled all kinds of conspiracies against the country through national unity and solidarity.

He said that it is everyone's democratic right to have individual opinion in a healthy society. However, it is necessary to analyze the personal opinion on the scale of ground reality and truth. Besides, the deep verification of any

Honorary CG of Germany meets CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Honorary Consul General of Germany in Quetta, Mir Murad Baloch met Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti in Quetta. During the meeting, they discussed the region's overall situation, ongoing development projects, and Germany's efforts in education, health, and clean water for the people of Balochistan.

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for international organizations' support for the province's welfare. He commended Germany's assistance in various sectors and highlighted the importance of cooperation in education, health, and clean water supply.

Pakistan Navy foils major drug smuggling bid in North Arabian Sea

Independent Report

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) Aslat on Tuesday seized a large quantity of narcotics in the North Arabian Sea during a regional maritime security patrol.

The seized drugs were worth thousands of dollars in the international market, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The successful operation against drug smuggling was the result of effective surveillance at sea by Pakistan Navy, it added.

Naval warships of Pakistan Navy regularly perform duties on Regional Maritime Security Patrol to prevent drug smuggling, piracy and human trafficking, he observed.

Grand rallies taken out as 26th Youm-e-Takbeer celebrated in Quetta, other parts befittingly

Independent Report

QUETTA: Grand rallies were taken out and programmes held to mark the 26th Youm-e-Takbeer in Quetta and different other parts of Balochistan on Tuesday.

The rallies were taken out from different parts of the metropolis including Airport Road, Sariab road and Nawan Killi.

The Provincial Minister, Bakht Muhammad Kakar led the rally taken out from the Nawan Killi while Provincial Minister Ali Madad Jatak headed the rally taken out from Sariab road. Similarly, MPA Zarak Khan Mandokhail led the rally from Airport road.

The participants of all rallies gathered at the Unity

chowk where grand gathering was held.

They were carrying national as well as their parties flags and raising slogans in favour of their leaders who played key role for the nuclear blasts.

Similar rallies were also taken out in different districts of the province.

Balochistan Minister for Agriculture Ali Madad Jattak said that the entire nation is celebrating Youm-e-Takbeer with zeal and enthusiasm, thanks to Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to make Pakistan a nuclear-armed nation.

He expressed these views while addressing a rally on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer. A rally was taken out from Sariab



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Haji Ali Madad Jattak, Bakhtar Muhammad Kakar, Parliamentary Secretary Meena Majeed Baloch, Shamal Khan Mandokhail, Farid Raisani and other addressing participants of a rally in connection with Youm-e-Takbeer in front of Balochistan Assembly

Road under the leadership of Provincial Minister Ali Madad Jattak, in which a large number of people participated.

Addressing the participants of the rally, he said that the successful nuclear test at Chaghai on this day in 1998, restored the bal-

ance of power in the region. He paid tribute to Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto whom he called the founder of Pakistan's

nuclear programme, for his strategic foresight and unwavering commitment to the cause. The provincial leader quoted Zulfiqar Bhutto who said we will eat grass even go hungry but we will make Pakistan a nuclear power. He said that this is a memorable day and Pakistan has the honor of becoming the first nuclear power in the Muslim world and seventh in the world.

On May 28, 1998, Pakistan responded to India's nuclear explosions. He said when the greatness of Pakistan was announced from the mountains of Balochistan, the ambitions of the enemy were crushed.

Balochistan Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development, Bakht

Muhammad Kakar on this day, the entire nation has paid tribute to the services of eminent engineers, scientists and military leadership who gifted a nuclear program on May 28, 1998 that rendered the nation's defense unbeatable. Bakht Kakar said that the nuclear tests made Pakistan's defense and security unbeatable and the arrogance of the enemy was also fall behind.

He said that the 26th anniversary of nuclear tests is being celebrated with zeal and enthusiasm on the occasion of the historic day of Takbeer Day across Balochistan. He expressed these views while addressing the participants of the rally on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer.

Bakht Kakar said that the enemy did not want Pakistan to become a nuclear power and having a strong defense system but there is no one who can look at the country with a bad eye. He said it is imperative to work together to make national defense impregnable through economic development.

He paid tribute to the personnel of Pakistan Army and security forces who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the country and thanks to them, as the entire nation sleeps peacefully. Kakar said that Shaheed Zulfiqar Bhutto is the creator of the nuclear program of Pakistan and the entire nation pays homage to him.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Afghan puzzle

When it comes to counterterrorism cooperation with the Afghan Taliban, we are moving in circles. While the authorities say that anti-Pakistan terrorists have havens in Afghanistan — particularly the banned TTP — Kabul's de facto rulers insist this is not the case.

The Taliban position, however, is difficult to believe in the face of evidence that various militant groups are indeed active in Afghanistan. Once more, the state has raised the issue of cross-border militancy, with the interior minister and Nacta chief telling a presser on Sunday that the TTP, backed by "enemy intelligence agencies", were responsible for the deadly March attack in Bisham in which five Chinese workers and one local were killed. The military had issued a similar statement a few weeks ago. Mohsin Naqvi called on the Afghan Taliban to prosecute the suspected terrorists, "or hand them to us". The interior czar did not rule out unilateral action if Kabul failed to act.

Several attempts have been made to take up the TTP issue with the Afghan Taliban, but the results have not been positive. For example, the matter has been discussed using official channels, while delegations of ulema and tribal elders have been dispatched to Kabul to communicate Pakistan's concerns. The state has also taken cross-border armed action after TTP terrorist attacks targeted Pakistani troops.

Yet, none of these measures has resulted in a cessation of terrorist violence. Therefore, different approaches are required. Unfortunately, there are few good options, and the authorities will have to work with the Afghan Taliban.

Expecting the Afghans to crush the TTP is an unrealistic expectation, as Kabul's rulers are not likely to take armed action against their ideological comrades, particularly if the Kandahar-based Taliban leadership has anything to say about it. Pakistan should, instead, demand that TTP fighters be relocated far from the border, and insist that the Taliban should take full responsibility to ensure no terrorist group is able to stage cross-border attacks.

Moreover, the Central Asian states have aired similar concerns about Afghanistan-based terrorist groups. Pakistan should work with these states, as well as China, Russia, and Iran, to pressure the Taliban into taking effective CT moves. The Taliban are particularly keen to attract Chinese investment due to their global isolation. Islamabad should coordinate with Beijing to ensure that investments are made only if the Taliban take concrete CT steps.

While the Taliban should do more to prevent cross-border terrorism, Pakistan must also ensure that internally, no space is available to the militants and their sympathisers. In the recent presser, the Nacta head listed numerous Pakistani suspects who had played a key role in the Bisham attack. Unless these elements are neutralised, it will not be possible to have the upper hand over terrorist groups.

More difficult now

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Sustaining hegemony over the masses has been a key aim and challenge for our elitist state. This exercise has caused endless political instability and insecurity, given the fightback by the people and the power tussles among elite ethnicities, classes and institutions.

The top gun position shifted often in the first decade: institutionally from the Muslim League to the bureaucracy, to the military; ethnically from Mohajirs to Punjabis; and from a mixed class clique to the middle class. The coordinates of raw power soon became conservative, older, male, military, elitist, Sunni, upper class and Punjab.

Since 1958, the unelected clique has kept its hegemony via close ties with global patrons, co-opting political and state elites, rigging politics and demolishing mass dissent, with religion and Kashmir as rallying narratives. It ruled unelected via large one-window but odious US aid: money, arms, veto cover, markets, technology, and multilateral loans. Linked to US security aims, it helped keep politicians out but caused violence too.

As US aid ebbed, it courted politicians to quell dissent and ruled covertly. The elected eras kept growing given the growing internal and external binds against autocracy. The first was from 1972 to 1977 with one (free) election. The second was from 1985 to 1999 with only one of five elections deemed fair (1988) and each assembly nixed early. The third is from 2002 to now, with two free elections (2008 and 2013) out of five. Four assem-

blies reached term but not the prime ministers, reflecting minor democratic gains. The early dismissals were due to civilian forays into what the establishment considered its own affairs, policy tiffs and claimed misrule. They were carried out via coups, no-trust votes, presidential powers, and forced exits. The mode and strength of covert rule varied, focusing on security and external policy from 2008-18 but more intrusively on politics and economics as well after 2018, erasing all democratic gains. Both eras saw big tiffs with out-of-sync civilians, with Nawaz Sharif to the establishment's left and Imran Khan to its right on the US, India, Taliban, etc.

State elements now face a unique challenge in sustaining their hegemony. Cosy ties with the US are over and other powers (China and Saudi Arabia) can't provide large, one-window aid. Arch-enemy India is now a global power and dwarfs our economic powers. Global sanctions have cut the ability to deploy jihadis. State elements have partially lost their narrative as the custodians of national piety and patriotism as Imran Khan acts as a stauncher custodian.

There are hostile extremist states on three sides matching our insulgencies in KP and Balochistan. The economy is unusually bad. Yet its residual powers are formidable — arms, agents, businesses — and keep all parties subservient.

The divorce with the PTI has created an elite middle-class alliance against older parties: middle-class parties (led by the PTI), media anchors, professional classes, expats and sec-

tions of the judiciary, bureaucracy, and reportedly even the ranks. Moreover, the insurgents are largely middle-class. Smaller middle-class parties had existed for long, like religious ones and the MQM. But the advent of social media has aided the rise of a pan-Pakistan middle-class party popular in all core regions: upper Punjab, Peshawar valley and Karachi and even beyond. But this party's governance and democratic records are poor too, like the older elite parties.

These trends are forcing elements of the state to resort to desperate ways of retaining its hegemony as its options dwindle: mutually conflicting ties with multiple global patrons to scavenge various bits of key aid, new docile elite allies, cruder rigging and gagging, not too covert co-governance in more domains and using force even in core regions against dissident ex-middle-class allies. Even so, this hybrid set-up remains divided and inept and may not survive, let alone thrive.

What options will unelected forces use if they fail? More force, overt rule or technocracy? But these won't succeed and will, in fact, upend critical Western support. So, good governance eludes all elite factions. Governance can only improve by nixing elite politics for organic pro-poor policies. Can society tame this unelected being? It may need a joint effort to overpower the flailing behemoth.

So, we enter a new phase of high turbulence: economic volatility, political instability, and high insecurity. Passengers must fasten their seat belts, if they have one, as the captain won't turn on the signs. — Courtesy Dawn

Methane moment

Jamil Ahmad

Methane gas is the second largest contributor to climate change. Methane emissions, caused by human activities, account for roughly a third of the current global warming and are over 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide in the near term. A steady rise in methane concentrations in the atmosphere is, therefore, worrisome. Methane's atmospheric concentration has more than doubled since pre-industrial times; it is second only to carbon dioxide in driving climate change during the industrial era.

Human-caused emissions of methane come from landfills and waste, coal mining, oil and gas systems, and agriculture — including livestock. While methane is a far more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, its lifespan in the atmosphere is much shorter. This means that reductions in methane made now can deliver immediate progress to slow the current rate of warming as we decarbonise.

Carbon dioxide historically received greater attention as the major contributor to global warming. This approach hindered policymakers from paying heed to controlling non-CO2 greenhouse gases, particularly methane. This is now changing. Having remained feeble for long, international efforts to lessen methane emissions have gained momentum.

Some of the key reasons why policymaking has been handicapped — such as lack of financial resources, scientific knowledge, and credible data — are finally being prioritised internationally and in national policies. Methane receives merely two per cent of the global climate finance.

The Global Methane Pledge launched in 2021 at COP26 brought to-

gether countries to reduce methane emissions 30pc by 2030. Pakistan also joined the initiative. More than 150 governments are participating.

UNEP has built a support system to meet the pledge's goal, including via methane policy roadmaps, through its Climate and Clean Air Coalition. In addition, UNEP's International Methane Emissions Observatory is bridging gaps in scientific data on the sources and scale of methane.

Additional national actions and funding pledges announced at COP28 in Dubai last year placed methane firmly in the spotlight. Donors committed \$1 billion in grant funding to assist low- and middle-income countries reduce methane emissions.

Overall financing for methane reduction increased from \$11.6bn in 2020 to \$13.7bn in 2022, according to a report by the Climate Policy Initiative. Even this amount is insufficient. For the effective abatement of methane, the world will need \$48bn annually by 2030 — more than a threefold increase from current levels.

Private sector and industry have also stepped in. In Dubai last year, more than 50 top oil and gas companies announced new steps to reduce methane in their operations. This sector emits about 35pc of human-caused methane, second only to the agriculture sector's 40pc. Its commitments must be matched by credible data provided by the likes of UNEP's Oil and Gas Methane Partnership 2.0.

Deeper and concerted action in these sectors will be a very cost-effective way to complement climate action and lift the SDGs out of trouble. One useful and win-win option is to capture methane from

waste and landfills for use as a fuel, reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

Methane emissions in Pakistan have increased by about 2pc annually since 1990, doubling over this period and putting the country among the top 10 methane emitters globally, thus aggravating its ambient air quality. Agriculture, and landfill account for most of Pakistan's methane emissions. Pakistan's climate change and clean air policies identify actions on short-lived climate pollutants as an important action area. At the national and provincial scale, Pakistan is identifying short-lived SLCP mitigation actions that will maximise climate and clean-air benefits. Including an SLCP emission reduction target in the updated Nationally Determined Contributions for Pakistan by 2025 is key to unlocking climate finance for multiple benefits. Additionally, a methane specific time-bound strategy developed as part of the country's climate policy will be necessary to control air pollution and move swiftly on implementing the Paris accord.

As the world continues to hit deadly climate milestones, it is high time for a serious conversation on how to accelerate action to reduce often-overlooked and high-emitting super pollutants. Controlling methane is a cost-effective way to help reduce global warming and keep hopes alive for the Paris target of keeping the rise in world temperature below 1.5 degrees Celsius. As the world enters the final stretch towards meeting the 2030 agenda, capturing the methane moment will instil vigour into efforts to deliver the SDGs and offer the best chance of avoiding the worst of the climate crisis. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, presiding over the 9th National e-Commerce Council (NeCC) meeting, underscoring the importance digital trade and eCommerce for Pakistan's economic future.



Chairman WAPDA reviews progress on Tarbela 5th exten. project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) reviewed progress on Tarbela 5th Extension during his visit to the Project, being constructed at Tunnel No. 5 of Tarbela Dam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Chairman inspected construction activities on various sites, which also include the raised intake, the powerhouse and the tunnel, said a press release.

Representatives of the Consultants and the Contractors briefed the Chairman about site-wise progress achieved so far. After the site visit, the Chairman also presided over a meeting at the Project office. A detailed

presentation was made about the key components of the Project. It was briefed that construction activities are being carried out simultaneously in all five areas i.e. intake, penstock and outlet, powerhouse, tail race culvert and canal and switch yard.

The implementation plan, comprising important benchmarks and their timelines, was also discussed in detail during the meeting. Addressing the meeting, the Chairman said the pace of work needs to be expedited on the Project to start electricity generation in 2025-26.

He directed the Contractor to deploy additional resources to meet the timelines stipulated in the implementation plan.

Adhering to the specified standards is a must to ensure the quality of work on the Project, the Chairman said.

Member Water, Member Power, Advisor Projects, Advisor Tarbela Dam, GM (Coordination & Monitoring) Water, GM Tarbela Dam, GM (Power) Tarbela, Project Directors Tarbela 4th and 5th Extension and Chief Engineer (Operation & Maintenance) Tarbela 4th Extension were also present on the occasion.

Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project is a component of the green, clean and least-cost energy generation plan of WAPDA.

Pakistan and Ethiopia President SCCI emphasizing the potential for enhanced trade and investment

SIALKOT (APP): President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Abdul Ghafoor Malik addressed the Ethiopia-Pakistan Business Forum, emphasizing the potential for enhanced trade and investment between Pakistan and Ethiopia.

According to SCCI, the event was held in Addis Ababa attended by prominent figures including Minister for Trade and Regional Integration Gebremeskel Chala, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Birtukan Ayano, Ethiopian

Investment Commissioner Hanna Arayaslassie, President ECCSA Eng. Melaku Ezezew, Chairman Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Zubair Motivala, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan Jamal Bekar and Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia Atif Sharif.

President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik highlighted Ethiopia's attractiveness as an investment destination due to its robust economic growth, strategic location and favorable investment climate. President SCCI

noted, "Ethiopia, with its rich history and large population, offers vast opportunities for Pakistani businesses seeking to explore new markets. Boasting one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa, Ethiopia has sustained an impressive average GDP growth rate of around 10% over the past decade."

Malik also stressed the importance of addressing trade barriers and building closer business-to-business linkages to capitalize on the untapped potential.

PBF says UAE \$10 bln pledge an irrefutable proof of foreign investors confidence

ISLAMABAD (APP): President, Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) Khawaja Mehboob ur Rehman lauded the announcement from United Arab Emirates (UAE) of a \$10 billion investment for Pakistan in the promising economic sectors.

PBF President while talking to APP on Tuesday said that we commended the UAE's development journey and emphasized Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its friendship with the UAE and expanding cooperation, especially in the economic, commercial, and investment sectors.

"He said this huge investment is an irrefutable proof of foreign investors' confidence in government's efforts to revamp the economy." UAE is home to 1.8 million Pakistanis who are contributing towards development, prosperity and economic growth of the two brotherly countries. In this regard PBF President suggested that there is a further need to increase cooperation between the two countries in the fields of aviation and tourism to increase people to people contact.

Pakistan, Cambodia sign MoU on trade, investment promotion

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and Cambodia on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of a joint trade committee.

The deal was inked in Phnom Penh between Cambodian Minister of Commerce Cham Nimul and Pakistani Ambassador to Cambodia Zaheeruddin Babar Thaheem, Xinhua reported while quoting a news release from Cambodia's Ministry of Commerce.

"This MoU will significantly contribute

to the elevation of the two countries' relations, particularly on trade and economic cooperation," Nimul said at the event.

"The joint trade committee established under this memorandum will serve as a mechanism that allows both sides to explore ways to create favourable conditions for businesses and investors and to diversify economies, expand production bases, and foster bilateral trade," she added.

PDMA issues advisory for farmers, herders

ABBOTTABAD (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Tuesday issued a comprehensive advisory urging farmers, herders, tourists, and the general public to take essential precautionary measures in light of the anticipated dust storms and severe weather conditions.

According to the details, the Meteorological Department has issued a weather alert indicating that weak westerly winds are expected to impact the

upper regions of the country starting May 28. This weather system is anticipated to bring intermittent rain, thunderstorms, and strong winds from the evening of May 28 to June 1.

The regions likely to be affected include Chitral, Dir, Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Malakand, Waziristan, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Bajaur, Mohmand, Karak, Khyber, Peshawar, Mardan, and Kurram.

Gold rates dip by Rs.500 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.500 and was sold at Rs.240,300 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs.240,800 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.429 to Rs.206,018 from Rs.206,447 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.188,850 from Rs.189,243, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

Food minister announces price reduction of bakery items

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Food Minister Bilal Yasin has said the government is on a mission of providing quality and affordable food items to the people of Punjab.

After the clear reduction in the prices of flour, roti and naan, on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister, the minister on Tuesday announced a significant reduction in bakery products. According to the details, after meetings and negotiations with the representatives of the bakery association and various brands, a reduction of Rs.30 has been made on the large bread, while the large bread available at less than Rs.200 is being reduced by Rs.20.

The Food minister said that a discount of Rs.10 has been given on small bread and Rs.5 on all kinds of buns. Bilal Yasin said that a decrease of Rs.10 for 200 grams of rusk is announced while the prices of all types of bakery products were reduced significantly.



SUKKUR: Vendor runs his juice business as people quench their thirst as demand of juices increased in city during scorching hot weather of summer season, in Sukkur.

President FCAA nominated Honorary Coordinator Federal Tax Ombudsman

PESHAWAR (APP): A prominent businessman from Peshawar and President of Frontier Custom Agents Association (FCAA), Zia ul Haq Sarhadi has been nominated as Honorary Coordinator of Custom Matters to the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO).

The nomination of Zia Sarhadi was announced by Federal Tax Ombudsman, Dr. Asif Mehmood Jah

(recipient of Hilal-e-Imtiaz and Sitara-e-Imtiaz) during his visit to Peshawar. Speaking to the business community of Peshawar at the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), FTO Dr. Asif Mehmood said the honorary designation has been awarded to Zia Sarhadi in recognition of his services for the promotion of commerce.

Political stability in the country the need of hour: Punjab Governor

PPP delegations meet governor, congratulate on assuming charge

Independent Report
LAHORE: Various delegations of Pakistan Peoples' Party Central Punjab met Governor Punjab met all the people one by one and listened to their problems. Secretary Information Shahzad Saeed Cheema and Secretary Records and Events Ahsan Rizvi were also present during the meeting. Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that political stability in the

country was the need of the hour. He added that everyone has to play a positive role for the betterment of the country. He said that the vision of our leadership is the prosperity of the people and a stable Pakistan. He said that fulfillment of his constitutional obligations and betterment of Punjab province was among his top priorities. Governor Punjab further said that he

rose to this position by dint of hard work and struggle. He added that he was well aware of the problems of working class. He said that the doors of Governor House are always open for the workers and the people of Punjab. Meanwhile, Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in his statement regarding Youm-e-Takbeer stated that May 28 was a big day in the history of Pakistan.



LAHORE: Various delegations of Pakistan Peoples' Party Central Punjab in a group photo with Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan after meeting at Governor House.



LAHORE: A delegation of JICA Pakistan Provincial Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir at PMU.

Minister Health inaugurates 250 KW solarization project at Women & Children Hospital

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Minister Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah on Tuesday inaugurated a 250 KW solarization project at the Women and Children Hospital in Charsadda, completed at a cost of Rs68 million with the support of UNICEF. This project will ensure an uninterrupted power supply to the maternity and neonatal care wards, as well as the oxygen production plant. The inauguration ceremony was attended by several notable figures, including MPA PK-64 Ifthikhar Ullah, Director General Health Dr. Muhammad Saleem,

Two killed, three injured in road mishaps

BUREWALA (APP): At least two persons including a minor kid were killed while three others sustained injuries in two separate road incidents. According to details, two persons on a motorcycle were taking turn when suddenly an overspeeding Vehari bounded bus ran over them near Multan road. As a result, 65-year-old Ghulam Ali died on the spot while woman sustained serious injuries. The bus driver managed to escape from there. In another incident, two motorcycles collided near Tufailabad Arifwala Road and were crushed by a trailer coming from behind. As a result, three-year-old child Imran died on the spot while his mother Abida Parveen.

PML-N working day & night for development of country: Minister

SIALKOT (APP): Provincial Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq has said that under the leadership of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Federal and Punjab government are working day and night for the development and prosperity of the country and the nation. History is a witness that whenever Muhammad Nawaz Sharif came into power,

Youn-e-Takbeer rally held in Dera

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): A rally was held on Tuesday to observe Youm-e-Takbeer anniversary of the nuclear tests conducted on May 28, 1998. Deputy Commissioner Mansoor Arshad led the rally in which government officials, civil society members, political party representatives, and social leaders participated, waving national flags and chanting slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Youn-e-Takbeer Zindabad". The rally commenced from the Deputy Commissioner's Office with participants and culminated after reaching Yadgar Chowk.

Pakistan defense made impregnable on May 28, 1998: Kundi

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi here Tuesday said that May 28 (Youn-e-Takbeer) was in fact a day of survival, integrity and security and now no one could dare to cast an ugly eye on Pakistan. In a message on Youm-e-Takbeer here, the Governor said that former Prime Minister Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had made a commitment of making Pakistan an atomic power after Indian nuclear

explosions and 26 years ago on this day Pakistan had achieved the status of first nuclear country of the Muslims world. He paid homage to civil and military leadership, scientists and engineers for making Pakistan an atomic power. He said Pakistan had been protected from all external threats and safeguarded its autonomy, sovereignty and independence after successful nuclear tests at Chagai Balochistan 26 years ago.

Ecotourism flourishes in Kalam following increase of temperature

KALAM (APP): Providing meal and cold water to tourists, Haji Ehsan Ullah (28), a resident of Osho village has reserved his guest house for visitors by earning maximum capital in the wake of arrival of influx of adventure and mountains sports enthusiasts from hot plain districts of KP and Punjab provinces to the picturesque Kalam valley. "No one can feel the pain of an unemployed married person better than me. I have opened my two room guest house for tourists on the advice of my grandfather and today he was earning a handsome amount enabling me to

fulfill my household expenses," said Ehsan, a resident of Osho village near Kalam while talking to APP. He said domestic tourists prefer small hotels and inns due to its affordable prices than expansive hotels at Kalam and majority of his villagers had opened their rest houses for accommodations of the tourists. Ehsan said that he provides free meal and water to tourists and obtain only Rs1500 rent for 24 hours stay. "I came from Wapda Town Peshawar to spend few days in pleasant weather of Kalam," said Kaiser Khan, a retired Wapda employee while talking to APP. Impressed by the hospitality of locals, he said that guest houses at Kalam were more economical than hotels and urged people here in large numbers to enjoy trout fish and paragliding besides rivers rafting. Although local tourism had flourished visibly in recent years at Swat yet unfortunately these bounties remained untapped to the maximum due to multiple reasons like insufficient projection, facilities for tourism and law and order situation in the past. Since Pakistan has a

meager share in global tourism earning from tourism, the experts believe that if the government fully employs the latest digital techniques and social media to highlight these hidden destinations, it can earn billions of dollars annually. Internationally recognized as home to six United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) heritage sites, second highest mountain peak, long coastline and vast cultural and religious heritage, Pakistan offers plenty of tourism activities for local and foreign tourists. It is also a unique

country with enchanting deserts, mesmerizing plains and snow covered peaks, adventurous sea shores and plenty of cultural and archeological sites, ancient Muslim architecture and religious sites of Buddhism and Sikhism. Archeological wonders of Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh, Harappa in Punjab, Buddhist Ruins in Takht Bhai and Sahri Bahlol in Mardan and Taxila, ancient Indus and Gandhara civilizations, Thal and Thar deserts and architecture of ancient rulers especially Mughal era can be future hot spots for tourism.

International News

Spain, Ireland and Norway recognise Palestinian state

Monitoring Desk
MADRID: Spain, Ireland and Norway formally recognised the Palestinian state on Tuesday in a coordinated decision slammed by Israel as a "reward" for Hamas, more than seven months into the devastating Gaza bombardment. The three European countries believe their initiative has a strong symbolic impact that is likely to encourage others to follow suit, defying Israel which had condemned the plan. After Ireland's government formally approved the measure, Prime Minister Simon Harris said the aim was to keep Middle East peace hopes alive. "We had wanted to recognise Palestine at the end of a peace process.

However, we have made this move alongside Spain and Norway to keep the miracle of peace alive," he said in a statement, urging Israel to "stop the humanitarian catastrophe" in Gaza. As Oslo's recognition went into effect, Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide hailed the move as "a special day for Norway-Palestine relations". After Spain's cabinet backed the move, Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares said it was a day that would be "etched in Spain's history". Earlier, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said the recognition was "essential" for peace, insisting the move was "not against anyone, least of all Israel" and the only way to

secure a future of two states living side-by-side "in peace and security". The decision also reflected Spain's "outright rejection of Hamas, which is against the two-state solution" and whose October 7 attacks led to the Gaza conflict, he added. Tuesday's move will mean 145 of the United Nations' 193 member states now recognise Palestinian statehood. On October 7, Hamas fighters stormed into southern Israel in an assault that killed more than 1,170 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli official figures. The Palestinian fighters also took 252 hostages, 121 of whom remain in Gaza. The Israeli army says 37 of them are dead.



Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares, Norway's Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide and Ireland's Foreign Minister Micheal Martin gesture after a press conference in Brussels, Belgium.

Security Council set to meet over deadly Rafah strike

Monitoring Desk
RAFAH: The UN Security Council was set to convene an emergency meeting Tuesday over an Israeli strike that killed dozens in a displaced persons camp in Rafah, as three European countries were slated to formally recognise a Palestinian state. AFP journalists on the ground early Tuesday reported fresh Israeli strikes overnight in the southern Gaza border city, where an Israeli attack targeting two senior Hamas members on Sunday night sparked a fire that ripped through a displacement centre, killing 45, according to Gaza health officials. The attack prompted a wave of international condemnation, with Pales-

tinians and many Arab countries calling it a "massacre". Israel said it was looking into the "tragic accident". "There is no safe place in Gaza. This horror must stop," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres posted on social media. UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths pointed to the widespread warnings of civilian deaths that circulated ahead of Israel's incursion into Rafah, saying in a statement: "We've seen the consequences in last night's utterly unacceptable attack." "To call it 'a mistake' is a message that means nothing for those killed, those grieving, and those trying to save lives," he added.



Palestinians travel in vehicles and on foot along with their belongings as they flee Rafah due to an Israeli military operation, in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip.

12 Indians killed in quarry collapse after cyclone rains

Monitoring Desk
SATKHIRA: Torrential rains in the wake of a powerful cyclone caused the collapse of a quarry in India's Mizoram state killing 12 people, government officials said on Tuesday. "So far 12 bodies have been found, we are looking for more," deputy commissioner of Aizawl district Nazuk Kumar told AFP. Rescue efforts in the quarry were being hampered by "heavy rains", police director general Anil Shukla said, NDTV news network reported. Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma offered compensation to families of the victims of the "landslide due to Cyclone Remal". "I pray for the success of rescue and relief operations and wish a speedy recovery of the injured," India's President Droupadi Murmu said on social media.

Iran talks suspended after Raisi's death, says IAEA

Monitoring Desk
VIENNA: Planned talks between Iran and the UN nuclear watchdog aimed at breaking the impasse over Tehran's nuclear programme have been put on hold after the death of President Ebrahim Raisi, an agency report said on Monday. The temporary suspension of talks between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) comes as its chief Rafael Grossi reiterated his concern over public statements made in Iran regarding its nuclear weapons capability. In the report, Grossi said that "further public statements made in Iran... regarding its technical capabilities to produce nuclear weapons and possible changes to Iran's nuclear doctrine only increase... concerns about the correctness and completeness of Iran's safeguards declarations." Iran has always denied any ambition to develop nuclear weapon capability, insisting its activities are entirely for peaceful purposes.

Russia invites Afghan Taliban to key economic forum

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Moscow has invited the Taliban to its biggest annual economic forum and is considering a proposal to remove the group from its terror list, a Russian diplomat was quoted as saying on Monday. Since the Taliban seized power in August 2021 as US-led forces withdrew after 20 years, Moscow has been slowly building ties with the Taliban, though the movement is still officially outlawed in Russia. The foreign and justice ministries have reported to President Vladimir Putin on the issue of removing the ban, Zamir Kabulov, an official at the Russian foreign ministry, told state news agency TASS.

As Israel attacks Rafah, Palestinians are living in tents and searching for food

Monitoring Desk
DEIR AL-BALAH: The tent camps stretch for more than 16 kilometers (10 miles) along Gaza's coast, filling the beach and sprawling into empty lots, fields and town streets. Families dig trenches to use as toilets. Fathers search for food and water, while children look through garbage and wrecked buildings for scraps of wood or cardboard for their mothers to burn for cooking. Over the past three weeks, Israel's offensive in Rafah has sent nearly a million Palestinians fleeing the southern Gaza city and scattering across a wide area. Most have already been displaced multiple times during Israel's nearly 8-month-old war in Gaza, which is aimed at destroying Hamas but has devastated the territory and caused what the United Na-

tions says is a near-famine. FILE - Palestinians displaced by the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip set up a tent camp in Rafah on Dec. 6, 2023. The tent camps stretch for more than 16 kilometers (10 miles) along Gaza's coast, filling the beach and sprawling into empty lots, fields and town streets. (AP Photo/Hatem Ali, file) Palestinians displaced by the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip set up a tent camp in Rafah on Dec. 6, 2023. (AP Photo/Hatem Ali, file) The situation has been worsened by a dramatic plunge in the amount of food, fuel and other supplies reaching the U.N. and other aid groups to distribute to the population. Palestinians have largely been on their own to resettle their families and find the basics for survival.

Doctor says Gaza hospitals operating in 'mediaeval' conditions

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: Gaza hospitals are reduced to practising "mediaeval medicine", a British surgeon recently returned from the bombed Palestinian territory said on Monday. "It's absolutely true to describe it as mediaeval medicine. It is what you would hear about or read about what would be happening in Europe maybe 300, 400 years ago," Dr Khaled Dawas, head of gastrointestinal surgery at University College London

Hospitals, said in an interview. Dawas described dire conditions in Gaza, with medical staff operating virtually without supplies, power supplies intermittent and patients lying on the floor. He returned at the end of April from his two-week stint to help overstretched Palestinian hospital surgeons - his second wartime stay there, following one in January. Dawas was in Brussels to describe his experience to European Union officials.

Storms kill 21 across four states in US

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Tornado-spawning thunderstorms that swept the US southern plains and Ozarks have killed at least 21 people as of Monday morning across four states and wrecked hundreds of buildings, with forecasters warning of more severe weather. The death toll over the Memorial Day weekend includes at least eight fatalities in Arkansas, seven in Texas, four in Kentucky and two in Oklahoma, according to tallies by state emergency authorities. Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear declared a state of emergency early on Monday while the National Weather Service said a severe thunderstorm watch was issued for parts of Georgia and South Carolina until at least Monday afternoon. "It was a tough night for our people," the Kentucky governor said on social media platform X on Monday. He later said in a press briefing that "devastating storms" had hit almost the entire state. Officials said 100 state highways and roads were damaged by the storms.

China calls for Red Sea attacks on civilian ships to end

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China called for attacks on civilian ships in the Red Sea to end and safe navigation there when China Foreign Minister Wang Yi met his Yemen counterpart in Beijing on Tuesday. Wang said China is ready to continue to play a constructive role in the matter, according to a foreign ministry statement.

China an important partner in economic development of Pakistan: PM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has China as an important partner in the economic development of Pakistan. A comprehensive plan has been evolved with reference to security of Chinese nationals.

“Chinese nationals will be provided with foolproof security in Pakistan. All the facilities will be extended to Chinese investors and industrialists,” he said while presiding over a meeting in Islamabad Tuesday regarding enhancing cooperation with China in various fields.

Different ministries presented important proposals with reference to bilateral economic relations between Pakistan and

China. Addressing the meeting PM Shehbaz Sharif said we invite Chinese businessmen especially the Chinese textile industry to set up industries in Pakistan.

He held out an assurance that the Chinese nationals will be provided with foolproof security in Pakistan. A comprehensive plan has been evolved with reference to security of Chinese nationals.

Shehbaz Sharif said preparations are being made for the next phase of CPEC. He said Gwadar port will be made a logistics hub with Chinese cooperation.

He said establishment of Agriculture Demonstration Zones will be an important project in the next phase of CPEC.

The Prime Minister directed the ministries concerned to prepare new projects aimed at enhancing Pakistan-China cooperation as well as undertake measures to promote business to business ties.

He said China is an important partner in Pakistan’s economic development and it can be helpful in framing a strategy for increasing our exports.

PM directed that the respective ministries should make preparations with reference to new projects of cooperation between Pakistan and China and steps be taken for enhancing business to business contacts.

Alem hold meeting with Tajikistan’s ministers to discuss various matters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Investment Board, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan, during his visit to Tajikistan held detail meetings with Transport Minister Azim Ibrahim and Minister for Economic Development and Trade Zavqizoda Zavqi Amin to increase bilateral trade between the two countries.

Aleem Khan agreed to the proposals for starting a pilot project at the ports of Gwadar and Karachi and increasing the “Organic Export”, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

The federal minister while expressing the determination to expand existing relation between two coun-

tries said that good neighbors are no less than a blessing. He mentioned that Tajikistan is the “Gateway” for trade with Pakistan for Central Asian countries.

He assured his all possible cooperation to start at least one direct flight in a week from Tajikistan to Pakistan. He added that both the countries should also increase “organic exports” while Pakistan’s trade may increase from Tajikistan via China and Afghanistan as well. Aleem Khan also agreed on the construction of standard and spacious highways between the two countries. Similarly, discussions were held on the increase of Business-to-Business visits between Pakistan and Tajikistan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Pakistan-China cooperation.

Pakistan reviving Belt and Road Initiative projects: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said here on Tuesday that the incumbent government was hopeful to inject some fresh momentum into projects that fall under China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as it tries to boost the country’s troubled economy.

The government is looking forward to joint ventures for renewable energy projects, agriculture collaboration and possibly enticing some Chinese companies to relocate to Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal, who also co-heads the committee responsible for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor said in an interview with Bloomberg.

“Yeah, I’m very hopeful because I was there in China recently and I had meetings with their senior leadership... So I see great interest on the Chinese side

to revive the momentum for CPEC and also to take it into the second phase,” he said.

Pakistan was seen as a flagship destination for BRI projects, with CPEC — which includes a port in the southern town of Gwadar and new power plants — the crown jewel. The progress on new projects stalled in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and amid Pakistan’s on-going economic difficulties that have required the International Monetary Fund’s intervention. According to Bloomberg report, projects worth about \$25 billion came online in the first phase, including power plants that ended the nation’s chronic power deficit. A Pakistani committee approved a long-delayed railway upgrade project last week.

The project will be done in two phases “so

there is not a big burden on Pakistan,” said Iqbal. The railway, in its first phase will run from Karachi, the southern coast city, to Multan, a little over halfway to the capital, Islamabad.

The government has also finished some key BRI projects that were pending for years: a water-supply project in Gwadar, dredging work at the port and an electricity transmission line from Iran.

“So all these things really help China see that the new government is again serious and it restored their confidence that now Pakistan is, you know, serious about CPEC initiatives,” said Iqbal.

To mark the tenth anniversary of CPEC last year, China’s Vice Premier He Lifeng unveiled five new corridors including one focused on growth to boost economic activity in Pakistan.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti distributing certificate among participants at concluding ceremony of National Workshop Balochistan.

Pak full spectrum deterrence capabilities leave Indian forces feel handicapped: Gen © Kidwai

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to National Command Authority (NCA) and former Director General Strategic Plans Division (SPD), Lieutenant General © Khalid Ahmed Kidwai on Tuesday at a lecture to commemorate Youm-e-Takbeer here said that the Indian armed forces were feeling in the past few decades due to Pakistan’s full spectrum defence capabilities.

The Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) as part of its distinguished lecture series organised the seminar titled “Celebrating Youm-e-Takbeer Evolution of Pakistan’s Full Spectrum Deterrence Policy” where the NCA Advisor was the guest speaker.

Lieutenant General ©

Khalid Kidwai said the full spectrum deterrence capabilities which was the combination of the conventional and most modern technology-based weapons capable to respond all threats from the enemy.

He added that the full spectrum deterrence helped in restoring the strategic balance of power that enforced peace in the region. “In the past few decades, the robust nuclear capability of Pakistan has enforced peace in the region. Pakistan does not adhere to the policy of no first use,” he said.

General © Kidwai explained that the nuclear programme of Pakistan was clearly divided into two periods; first from 1970s till 1999, the completion, and

the second from 2000s till date that involved great political leadership and diplomatic efforts to protect it.

The work in the second era was taken forward from converting it into an operationalised capability based on different weapons to attain minimum credible nuclear deterrence, whereas with a variety of ballistic missiles the entire horizon of missiles was covered horizontally and vertically from 2011 under the strategic, operational and tactical cores of nuclear weapons, he added.

“The reality of nuclear deterrence is proven from the fact that in February 2019 the world community and India and Pakistan moved consciously on the ladder of escalation.

No negligence to be tolerated in ongoing development projects in Kalat: Lango

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has warned that any negligence would not be tolerated in the ongoing development projects in Kalat.

He said that he would not hurt the trust of people, which has been demonstrated by them.

He said that steps are being taken for resolving the issues including law and order in the area.

The Provincial Minister

was addressing the meeting held to review progress of the ongoing development projects, law and order situation and other issues in Kalat on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner Kalat, Bilal Shabbir and other concerned officials were also present in the meeting. Meanwhile, the Provincial Minister visited Kalat city, Khaliqabad and other areas and gave patient hearing to the problems of people.

PM welcomes Spain’s announcement to recognise Palestine

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday welcomed the announcement by Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez to formally recognise Palestine as a state. The prime minister, in a statement, said that the recognition of Palestine as a state by Spain was a positive development in the international scenario which also manifested the rejection of Israeli barbarism against the unarmed Palestinians by the Spanish people and their Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez. He strongly condemned the recent unprovoked Israeli bombing of Rafah which martyred another 45 Palestinian people, and reiterated his call for an immediate end to the genocide of Palestinian population being carried out by Israel.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain alongwith Srilankan Minister for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Buddhasana, Vidura Wickremnayake inaugurating the Gandhara Symposium and exhibition.

Federal Govt. taking steps for reduction of poverty in Balochistan: Chairperson BISP

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme, Ms. Rubina Khalid has stated that the federal government is taking steps to alleviate poverty in Balochistan.

For the purpose, the BISP provides necessary economic support to the women of province.

These views were expressed by the Chairperson BISP while presiding over the meeting of stakeholders for cooperation and implementation of the BISP initiatives in the province on Tuesday.

The meeting was participated by the Secretary Information Technology, Ayaz Khan Mandokhail, Secretary Industries, Noor Ahmed Pirani, Secretary

Colleges, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Director General BISP, Abdul Jabbar and other concerned high ups.

The Chairperson BISP said that she is visiting Balochistan on directives of the President Asif Ali Zardari, who has directed to pay special attention on the province.

This speaks high about the interest of President of Pakistan in the province, she added.

Mrs. Rubina Khalid said that the professional training programme would be started by imparting training to the men and women of the province.

She announced that implementation on the programme would be started very soon.

On the occasion she underlined the need to improve the skills programme for reducing poverty.

She said that steps would have to be taken for bringing improvement livestock and healthcare sectors besides the handicrafts and packing of different goods.

Besides, we also have to go to quality training just because the world is in need of the skilled persons, he added.

Earlier the meeting was informed about implementation on the programme regarding health and education sectors.

It was also mentioned that social protection is also being provided to all the deserving persons of province under the BISP.



Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi calls on Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani in Islamabad.

BTTN organizes webinar on Pak Nuclear Journey, deterrence to sustainable dev.

QUETTA (APP): To commemorate 26th Anniversary of Pakistan’s successful Nuclear Tests, Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) organized a webinar on “Pakistan’s Nuclear Journey. Deterrence to Sustainable Development” on Tuesday. The webinar was moderated by Research Officer Ms Sumra Hamid.

While discussing the Emerging Challenges to Strategic Stability in South Asia, Dr Attia Ali Kazmi, Director Research CISS Islamabad, explained that the shifting regional circumstances have necessitated a robust deterrence capability for Pakistan’s national security, emphasizing peaceful development and self-defence.

Emerging challenges to

strategic stability in South Asia are exacerbated by India’s rapid development of first strike capability and its role in Asia Pacific strategy which destabilizes the region. This arms race and India’s strategic partnerships heighten instability and pose significant threats to regional equilibrium.

She pressed upon the fact that India’s growing sense of invulnerability could cause undesirable consequences to regional stability. She concluded by saying that all nine nuclear armed states must know the fact there is no victory in fighting a nuclear war thereby one must not fight one. Head of BTTN, Brig. Agha Ahmad Gul © paid tribute to all who contributed in Pakistan’s going nuclear and politico-military leadership.

According to sources these officials were appointed in Lodhran, Okara, Rajan Pur, Lahore, Vehari, Sheikhupura, Kasur, Jhang, Narawal, Sahiwal and Mandi Bahaud Din. The officials from Khanewal, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan, Gujrat, Attock, Multan, DG Khan, Khushab and Attock also remained involved in wheat smuggling. Sources said the trucks laden with wheat, sugar and rice were allowed to move from one city to other city unchecked. The officers involved in this scam facilitated the movement of these trucks from every city.

Heat stroke camp set up in Hub

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Hub Rohana Gul Kakar set up a “heat stroke” camp in the city on special directive of Provincial Adviser to Chief Minister Industry and Crafts Balochistan Mir Ali Hassan Zehri.

Cold water, ORS and other drinks are being served to the people suffering from heat in the camp. The Deputy Commissioner said that efforts were being made to provide health facilities to the people saying that in case of any citizen’s physical condition deteriorating due to heat stroke, dispensers of Jam Ghulam Qadir Hospital Hub were also present in the camp, who were ready to provide immediate medical assistance to the patient.

While discussing the Emerging Challenges to Strategic Stability in South Asia, Dr Attia Ali Kazmi, Director Research CISS Islamabad, explained that the shifting regional circumstances have necessitated a robust deterrence capability for Pakistan’s national security, emphasizing peaceful development and self-defence.

Emerging challenges to

Wheat smuggling scam: 108 govt employees including two ACs found involved

ISLAMABAD (Online): As many as 108 government officers and subordinate staff have been found involved in smuggling of wheat from Punjab to KP and Afghanistan.

The officials have been identified by the secret agencies. These officers were deployed on the duty of preventing wheat smuggling. They inflicted heavy financial loss on national kitty through massive smuggling.

The secret agencies identified 108 officers and subordinate staff of Punjab police, CTD and revenue department after complet-

ing the investigation.

According to sources these officials were appointed in Lodhran, Okara, Rajan Pur, Lahore, Vehari, Sheikhupura, Kasur, Jhang, Narawal, Sahiwal and Mandi Bahaud Din. The officials from Khanewal, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan, Gujrat, Attock, Multan, DG Khan, Khushab and Attock also remained involved in wheat smuggling. Sources said the trucks laden with wheat, sugar and rice were allowed to move from one city to other city unchecked. The officers involved in this scam facilitated the movement of these trucks from every city.



QUETTA: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Rubina Khalid presiding over a meeting of stakeholders

Pak ambassador presents Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam medal to ISDB Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ahmad Farooq on Tuesday presented ‘Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam’ medal to Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank (ISDB) Group Dr. Muhammad Al-Jasser, at ISDB headquarters in Jeddah.

The ceremony was attended by representatives from Pakistan’s missions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), a press release said.

‘Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam’ medal is one of Pakistan’s highest civil awards awarded to foreign nationals for special merit or their eminent services to Pakistan.

The President of Pakistan had conferred this medal on Dr. Al-Jasser for his instrumental role and for ISDB Group’s leadership in supporting Pakistan’s economic and development agenda and support at important world forums.

Pakistan gives counselor access to Indian HC to 2 Indian spies

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan while taking a major step on humanitarian basis has given Indian high commissioner counselor access to 2 Indian spies.

The counselor access was given on the request of Indian government.

The officers of interior ministry were also present during the meeting.

According to diplomatic sources counselor access was provided to Indian high commission authorities to two youths of Occupied Kashmir who were arrested on the charges of espionage.

These two spies including Feroze Ahmad Lon and Noor Muhammad Dani were arrested from Gilgit-Baltistan under spying charges. Feroz Ahmad Lon is 29 while Noor Muhammad Wani is 26.

Diplomatic sources said both the spies belong to Gurez area of Bandi Hora of Occupied Kashmir. Both the youths are missing from Occupied Kashmir since 2018. Both were arrested for crossing the border illegally and spying.



KARACHI: Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) Chief, Pir Sibghatullah Shah Rashidi exchanging views with Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) during meeting held in Karachi.

Gandhara Symposium: Salik for promotion of tolerance, unity to fight extremism, injustice

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Legacy of Gandharan Buddhism” held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here in connection with Vesakh Day.

The two-day event brought together religious leaders and experts from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, besides scholars, diplomats, historians, and art enthusiasts to provide them a platform to exchange ideas and foster connections. The minister said that the diverse gathering representing different countries and cultures underscored the deep and enduring ties between the nations, besides serving as a reminder of the profound connections that unite them in shared aspirations.

Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Tuesday emphasized the concerted efforts to promote tolerance and understanding as well as unity to fight the menace of extremism posing threats to the world’s peace and security. “In today’s world, extremism poses one of the most potent threats to peace and security... Let us promote tolerance and understanding recognizing that our diversity is our strength. We must stand united against extremism and injustice,” the minister said addressing a symposium titled “From Gandhara to the World:



KALAT: Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango alongwith Deputy Commissioner and other officers visiting different police stations

Government officials’ meeting held in Nushki

NUSHKI (APP): A meeting of all government departments of the district was held at the DC Office under the chairmanship of MPA Haji Mir Ghulam Dastgir Badini.

According to details, the meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Amjad Hussain Soomro, Assistant Commissioner, DSP Sharif Bareach, and heads of the health department, B&R, Principal Degree College, and PPHI district leaders.

Heads of the sports, finance, local government, PHE, irrigation, and education departments also participated in the meeting.

Department heads provided MPA Badini with detailed briefings on their respective departments’ funds, schemes, and issues.

MPA Haji Mir Ghulam Dastgir Badini instructed all departments to resolve public issues and

provide the best services.

He emphasized that addressing issues in education, health, and drinking water are top priorities.

He stressed that it is the responsibility of all departments to provide better services to the public.

He declared that absent doctors and those attached to other places would not be tolerated in the district, and their salaries would be withheld.

Badini highlighted the significant issues within the PHE department and instructed that all complaints should be addressed and drinking water tube wells should be made fully functional.

He expressed displeasure over the absence of the Deputy Director of Livestock at the meeting and stated that officers who fail to serve the public efficiently will not be tolerated.