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Shuhada and Ghazis are our national heroes: COAS

Army Chief confers military awards upon Army Officer's at GHQ Investiture ceremony

RAWALPINDI (APP): Paying tributes to Shuhada (martyrs) and Ghazis, the COAS said, "There is nothing more noble than laying one's life for defence of motherland and the sacrifices of our martyrs strengthen our resolve to fight with utmost dedication and spirit of sacrifice."

The Army Chief also lauded brave families of Shuhada for their high spirits and sacrifices rendered by them. The COAS said, "Shuhada and Ghazis are our national heroes and the nation owes its independence and security to the sacrifices of its valiant warriors. Our Shuhada are, indeed, the beacons of hope and resilience for the nation."

A large number of senior Army officers and families of awardees attended the ceremony. The officers & soldiers were awarded medals including Sitara-I-Imtiaz (Military) and Tamgha-I-Basalat. Medals of Shuhada were received by their family members, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), addressing GHQ Investiture ceremony held at General Headquarters Rawalpindi.

Prime Minister reiterated Government's resolve to ensure development of Balochistan

Says Federal Govt would provide all possible assistance regarding the conversion of agricultural tube-wells to solar energy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reiterated his government's resolve to ensure development of Balochistan, saying that the welfare of the people of province was its top priority. He said the government was providing equal opportunities of education and employment to the youth of the province to play role in the development. He was chairing a high level meeting to review the key issues of Balochistan province at the Prime Minister House.

The meeting was attended by Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Planning Minister Zahoor Ahmed Bili, Finance Minister Shoaib Noshirwani, Parliamentary Secretary Fisheries Haji Barkat Rand, Provincial Assembly Members Mir Rehmat Saleh Baloch and Haji Muhammad Khan, Zmarak Khan Achakzai, and Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir. During the meeting, the prime minister emphasizing the importance of Balochistan's development and prosperity, hoped that

the new provincial cabinet under the leadership of Chief Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti would play a vital role in resolving the province's issues and put it on the path to progress. The prime minister directed the speedy completion of the process of solarisation of agricultural tube-wells in Balochistan and said that the Federal Government would provide all possible assistance regarding the conversion of agricultural tube-wells to solar energy.

He directed that till the conversion of agricultural tube-wells to solar energy, load shedding of electricity should be minimized in Balochistan to ensure that production from crops and gardens was not affected. The prime minister directed that the pace of work on important development projects of the South Balochistan Package be expedited. The meeting was also attended by Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and other high officials concerned.

President for promoting business & trade ties with Bosnia & Herzegovina

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Asif Ali Zardari has underlined the need to promote business and trade ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina by opening banks, trading in local currencies, and promoting barter trade between the two countries.

The President expressed these views while talking to the Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina (B&H), Mr. Emin Cohodarevic, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today.

Welcoming the Ambassador, the President said that Pakistan's ties with Bosnia & Herzegovina were based on historic and friendly relations spanning over almost three decades. He added that both countries should continue bilateral engagements and interactions to further explore the avenues of cooperation in the areas of mutual interest. The Ambassador said

that his country wanted to deepen ties with Pakistan in the fields of economy, security, and culture. He highlighted that there was a vast scope for economic cooperation for Pakistani businesses in different industries in Bosnia & Herzegovina, including food, tourism, and textile.

The Ambassador expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of Pakistan for their support to Bosnia & Herzegovina during the war in the 1990s. He also solicited Pakistan's support for Bosnia and Herzegovina's draft resolution on Srebrenica in the United Nations General Assembly.

The President said that Pakistan would favourably examine Bosnia's request, adding that Pakistan stood in solidarity with the victims of the 1995 tragedy in Srebrenica.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina in Pakistan, Emin Cohodarevic called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Khawaja demands imposition of Article 6 against violators of constitution

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday called for imposing Article 6 on those who violated the Constitution and suggested that it should begin with Field Marshal Ayub Khan.

Speaking at the forum of National Assembly, he said, "I fully endorse the opposition leader's proposal to invoke Article 6, but it should be started from 1958 up to 2022, when the then Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri breached the constitution during the no-confidence process." The minister highlighted the Supreme Court's intervention at that time, which restored the Na-

tional Assembly and overturned the unconstitutional order.

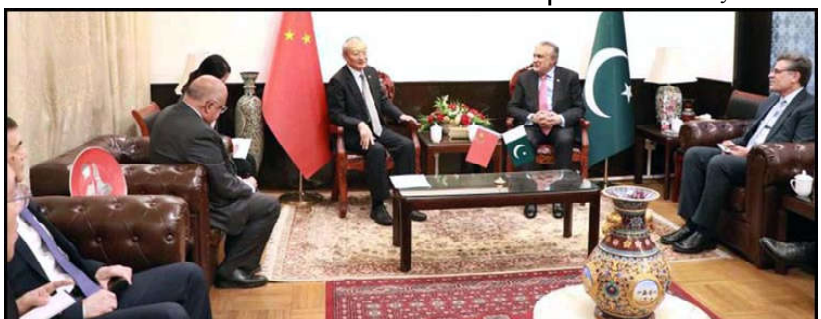
Khawaja Asif said that Pakistan has faced challenges from that period onwards, indicating that democracy has struggled to take root in the country. He asserted that leaders engaged in unlawful activities must face justice. The minister accused the opposition leader in the NA of consistently supporting dictatorship and unlawful actions, mentioning that his party had previously apologized for supporting General Zia-ul-Haq and now seeks the same from opposition members.

Electricity, flour prices slashed in AJK after PM Shehbaz orders release of Rs23b

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday ordered an immediate release of Rs23 billion to resolve the issues confronting the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and to ease the protests.

Shehbaz Sharif decided to provide funds after thoroughly examining the situation in the territory, in a special meeting chaired by him on the subject in Islamabad, a PM

Office press release said. Different parts of the AJK witnessed protest demonstrations during the last couple of days with the people seeking reduced electricity bills and taxes as well as subsidized wheat flour. Azad Jammu and Kashmir prime minister, AJK cabinet members and senior leadership attended the meeting besides the federal ministers and leaders of the coalition parties.



BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets with Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Ambassador Zhang Ming.

DPM Dar urges SCO states' collaboration to harness region's potential

BEIJING (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Monday met with Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Ambassador Zhang Ming here wherein he emphasised an effective collaboration among SCO member states to harness the region's potential for sustained progress and prosperity.

The deputy prime minister is on a four-day visit to China to co-chair the Fifth Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue with Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi which would cover the full spectrum of Pakistan-China relations. Senator Ishaq Dar re-

affirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the SCO Charter and the Organization's fundamental ideals as enunciated in the "Shanghai Spirit." He expressed Pakistan's strong commitment to advancing SCO's security and development cooperation agenda.

The discussion also touched on Pakistan's initiatives and contributions in its ongoing Chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of Government. Ambassador Zhang conveyed his best wishes to the Government of Pakistan on assuming the Chair and reiterated SCO Secretariat's continued support to Pakistan during its tenure as Chair of the Heads of Government of the Organization.

PM resigns as PML-N President

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has tendered resignation from his position as Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President.

According to PML-N Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb here on Monday, PM Shehbaz Sharif said, "Time has come for Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to resume his rightful place as the President of PML-N and provide his invaluable leadership and vision to steer the party forward."

Shehbaz Sharif said, "I remain steadfast in my commitment to serve the party diligently and with unwavering loyalty under the leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif."

It is pertinent to mention here that the premier has posted his resignation as party president to the PML-N Secretary General.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on the matters related to Balochistan province.

ECP suspends lawmakers elected on reserved seats denied to SIC

Membership of 77 women, non Muslim legislators of NA, provincial assemblies suspended

ISLAMABAD (INP): After the Supreme Court order on Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) petition regarding reserved seats, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Monday suspended 77 lawmakers elected on seats denied to the party.

The issue of reserved seats had been a point of contention between the SIC, which primarily comprises Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-backed independent candidates, and the ruling parties notably Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Mutahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), and others.

Dozens of members of the PPP, PML-N, MQM-

P, JUI-F and others had taken oath on reserved seats in different assemblies across the country following the PHC's verdict.

The ruling PML-N is the biggest loser as 44 of its members have been suspended while 15 lawmakers from PPP, 13 from Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) and one each from MQM-P, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, and Awami National Party, Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians. Following the top court's order, the ECP today withdrew the notification of 22 returned candidates who were allotted seats in the National Assembly. Out of the 22, 11 of them are female lawmakers given

seats in the NA from Punjab, 8 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 3 minority seats in the lower house.

On the other hand, in KP Assembly 21 lawmakers on reserved seats for women and 4 for minorities have been de-notified.

In the Punjab Assembly, 24 women lawmakers and 3 non-Muslim legislators have been de-notified. While in the Sindh Assembly, the commission de-notified 2 female MPs and a minority member.

All the lawmakers that have been de-notified belong to the PML-N, PPP, MQM-P, JUI-F, Awami National Party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians (PTI-P), PML-Q and IPP.

Relief on POL prices expected from May 16

ISLAMABAD (INP): "Big relief" in petrol and diesel prices is expected for consumers in Pakistan following a decrease in global oil prices. Sources said the government is expected to cut petrol price by Rs14 per litre and diesel by Rs10 on May 16 for the next fortnight revision. Last month, the government slashed the price of petrol and high-speed diesel for the next fortnight by Rs5.45 and 8.42, respectively. The current petrol price is Rs288.49 per litre and that of HSD is Rs281.96. Meanwhile, oil prices extended declines on Monday amid signs of weak fuel demand and as comments from U.S. Federal Reserve officials dampened hopes of interest rate cuts, which could slow growth and crimp fuel demand in the world's biggest economy.

PTI founder may face fourth Toshakhana case, says Barrister Gohar

RAWALPINDI (INP): PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan says efforts are afoot to file a fourth case against the party founder related to Toshakhana.

He alleged that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was being used against the PTI founder.

Speaking to media outside the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, Barrister Gohar quoted the PTI founder as having said apology should be sought from him (and not the other way round). He (founder) condemned the May 9 violence and underlined the need for a judicial commission to investi-

gate the matter. The PTI founder insisted he would pursue dialogue, not deal, for the betterment of Pakistan.

He stressed that personal interests would not drive these discussions. However, he lamented a lack of progress by the negotiation committee.

Addressing concerns raised by the former prime minister regarding tax collection and the IMF programme, Barrister Gohar said power should emanate from democratic channels.

Gohar urged the judiciary to expedite the hearing on the Iddat case and decide it without further delay.

SC deems investigation into attacks on journalists 'unsatisfactory'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Monday expressed dissatisfaction over police investigation report regarding torture and harassment of journalists.

The court adjourned further hearing into the matter till the month of June and final date would be announced later.

The court expressed dissatisfaction over the investigation report on torture of journalists including Asad Tur and Absar Alam.

The report on abduction and torture of Matullah Jan was also declared unsatisfactory.

Pak prosperity, progress hinges upon women's empowerment: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that empowerment of women is key to enhancing the development and prosperity of the country. He also added, "inclusion of women in socio-economic stratas is pivotal for their social inclusion and for the country's progress as no society can realize the dream of women empowerment without ensuring their security and well-being."

He expressed these views while welcoming the passage of a unanimous motion to form a committee comprising members of both Houses i.e. The Senate and National Assembly to recommend the initiatives for women's empowerment.

He, further, stressed the need to take special endeavours to ensure women's security while narrating an incident of harassment of a woman SSP in Lahore.

He also assured to extend full cooperation on behalf of National Assembly Secretariat for proper and smooth functioning of Special Committee.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq presiding the meeting to discuss matters related to present and upcoming Budget Session of National Assembly at Parliament House.

Pakistan, US reaffirm commitment to continue counter-terrorism coop.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the United States have reaffirmed their commitment to continue counter-terrorism, pledging to work together to address regional and global security challenges and promote stability in the region.

"The counter-terrorism dialogue underscores the cooperation between Pakistan and the United States in addressing the most pressing challenges to regional and global security, including Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and ISIS-Khorasan", a joint statement issued after the Pakistan-US counter-terrorism dialogue held in Washington D.C on May 10, said. Additional Foreign Secretary for the UN and OIC, Ambassador Syed Haider Shah, and US Department of State Coordinator for counter-terrorism,

Ambassador Elizabeth Richard, co-chaired the dialogue. Discussions centred on the counter-terrorism landscape in the region, with a focus on areas of mutual interest.

Pakistan and US senior officials emphasized the importance of expanded counter-terrorism collaboration and capacity building, including exchanges of technical expertise and best practices, investigative and prosecutorial assistance, provision of border security infrastructure and training, including the United States training of more than 300 police and frontline responders since the last Pakistan-US counter-terrorism dialogue in March 2023, and strengthening multilateral engagement such as in the UN and the Global counter-terrorism forum.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Spending restrictions

The consistent contraction in the size of the federal Public Sector Development Programme for the past three years is yet another sign of Pakistan's lingering financial and economic crisis. New official data shows that the government has squeezed federal infrastructure development to Rs353bn — less than 0.4pc of GDP — during the first 10 months of the ongoing fiscal year to April, as the cash-strapped centre slashes its expenditure to meet the IMF goal of producing a primary budget surplus of 0.4pc of GDP this year.

The total spending for the period under review is 38pc of annual PSDP allocations of Rs940bn, and is 12.3pc less than what was spent on development projects during the same period a year before. That the government does not have enough money for new projects, or even for maintaining existing ones, underlines the costs Pakistan's citizens are forced to pay to survive the country's worst economic crisis ever. The lingering financial troubles also mean that most of the millions of people affected by the devastating floods of 2022 are still waiting to be rehabilitated.

A media report suggests that the IMF wants Pakistan to bring down expenditure by around 163bn to Rs183bn — to make up for a significant revenue shortfall — as the Fund is not willing to make concessions on the goal of achieving a primary budget surplus this year. The government has hardly any choice in the matter, unless it is prepared to breach the IMF conditions for a primary surplus — which is an indication of a government's borrowing requirements — that was agreed to under the recently concluded short-term \$3bn Stand-by Arrangement. This would jeopardise its chances of getting a longer and larger bailout to stay afloat.

Another report suggests that, with the discussions on the new bailout approaching, Pakistan has committed to the IMF that it would aim for a primary surplus equal to 1pc of GDP in the next fiscal year. The Fund is already believed to have told the government to raise additional revenues of Rs1.7tr, contain its development expenditure, and increase the petroleum levy target by more than 24pc to about Rs1.1tr next year. The country has achieved a sort of economic stability in recent months and economic fundamentals have shown some signs of improvement.

But this 'recovery' remains fragile and any shock at this point can mean a relapse. The IMF, therefore, has been insisting that Islamabad persevere with economic contraction as long as the fiscal and governance reforms suggested under the SBA — and which are likely to be part of the next programme — create enough fiscal space to put the country back on the growth trajectory. In this context, it would be naive to expect the government to bolster investment in public infrastructure development anytime soon.

A lost future

Samia Liaquat
Ali Khan

College campuses across the US have erupted into student demonstrations and sit-ins protesting the genocide in Gaza. Students across every religious denomination are involved. Columbia University, my alma mater, has been most prominently in the news. Not only for being the first set of students to call out their university, but also for the harsh retaliation by its administration. The university's current president is a woman of Egyptian descent — Baroness Nemat 'Minouche' Shafiq.

Great progress around women's and minorities' rights has been made since the turn of the century. More and more, we see men and women of colour populate what used to be the domain of 'white' Westerners. There was much celebration when Shafiq was announced Columbia's next president. In the UK, Rishi Sunak became the first prime minister of South Asian origin. Pakistanis had witnessed the journey of Malala Yousafzai from a traumatised child victim of extremist violence to a young woman at ease in the company of Western political and social elites. While controversy surrounded her, she epitomised struggle and achievement to me.

Today, conversely, as we watch six months of the Israel-Palestine war unfold, with a continuing genocide occurring before our eyes, the role of women and minority-origin leaders in the Global North seems like a sinister reprisal of the old colonial mantra of divide and rule.

The 1990s were a different period, espe-

cially for the youth. There was heady victory in the air — whether in Pakistan or even the US. The return of Benazir in 1988 had galvanised hope in our breasts — and it was still alive and kicking. President Bill Clinton's government felt fresh and exciting, and his choices for who would join him in his administration showed a genuine desire for inclusivity. Take, for example, his first national security advisor — Anthony 'Tony' Lake. He was one of my college professors, and I remember, when the course ended, thinking to myself that if there were more like him in the US administration, the world would be a better place.

The hope that globalisation meant carving a better future for everyone was propelled by events of the time. Watching on TV the 1999 protests against the World Trade Organisation, historically dubbed the 'Battle of Seattle', and studying it later, it became clear to me that there were 'protesters' on both sides of the barricades. Those on the inside believed they would be able to bring about better policies by participating in the process, while those on the outside created the pressure that would achieve global publicity. I read the columns of the inimitable Robert Fisk, writing on the Middle East, with awe and delight in the way he clearly understood the view from the other side (our side). The fall of the apartheid government in South Africa and Nelson Mandela's reconciliation process brought us face to face with what our higher selves could achieve.

But this did not preclude the darkness that was also present.

The Balkan conflict and genocide of Muslims, the genocide of the Tutsis by the Hutus in Rwanda — these were hauntingly terrible events that told of existing failures in attitudes by governments and the UN system. Good and evil, present side by side. Yet, in those few brief years, good seemed to be ahead. And then came 9/11, and the world changed forever.

The two decades of the 21st century have been a time where a new world order has been created, one which is far more cynical and insidious than what it was in the last two decades of the 20th century. The 'with us or against us' mantra has led to a decimation of free thinking, dialogue and debate, with compromise and trust losing out against winner takes all. In this taking, a new set of rules was also created. The fashioning of a global elite, consisting of people like us, bought with offers of money, power, glamour and status. We convinced ourselves that Western democracy models and the global neoliberal capitalist framework were the only ways forward.

Will Minouche Shafiq realise the responsibilities of her position to her own community? Could she be playing out a strategy that brings her public revile, but creates fundamental change from within? Is there a possibility that Malala will realise that her true strength lies not in reliance on Western puppet masters but in finding her own truth, different from what has been created for her? It may lead to her being shunned by those in power today, but who can predict where one's destiny lies? Only time will tell.

Shadow of the moon

Huma Yusuf

Thanks to my seven-year-old child, I have a newfound interest in space technology. We followed the Chang'e-6 mission and enjoyed seeing images of the moon transmitted by Pakistan's first lunar satellite. This is a promising development months after Pakistan launched its first National Space Policy in December. But can we keep up the momentum?

For years, I was a space sceptic, frustrated that developing countries would expend precious resources on space programmes when citizens' basic needs were barely being met. But times and tech have changed; space technologies are now key to public welfare. Pakistan's renewed push to manufacture and deploy domestic satellites is timely and strategic. Consider me a space convert!

The launch of our space policy emphasised the need for resilient telecommunications and cybersecurity. But satellite technologies offer so many other advantages for developing countries. A 2020 report by London Economics highlighted that space technologies offer cheaper options for critical data collection required to boost economies and save the environment. Space solutions are now central to managing food security, predicting climate risks, monitoring forest resources and disaster preparedness.

Developing countries are using their satellites to track the spread of water-borne diseases and inform irrigation approaches in water-scarce regions, as well as urban planning. Real-time satellite data transfers underpin advances in telehealth, rural banking, and virtual education. To be truly inclusive, economies and societies must now look to the stars.

Pakistan already uses international satellites for storm tracking and agricultural planning, but given how climate-vulnerable it is, we must invest in domestic space infrastructure to take full advantage of the myriad uses of satellite technology at lower cost. But to do this, we have to get our programme right.

Writing for Chatham House in 2022, Val Munsami, a former CEO of the South African National Space Agency, argued that for a developing country to make the most of a space programme, it needed to consider four elements: availability of human capital, an industrial base to capitalise on the sector's commercial potential, presence of technological infrastructure, and an appetite for international cooperation. Viewed from this angle, our space ambitions seem precarious.

The biggest risk is the paucity of STEM education. Home-grown images of the dark side of the moon and talk of sending the first Pakistani citizen into space can inspire a generation of scientists to drive a domestic space programme, but only if there exists an appropriate pedagogical culture that values scientific curiosity and a robust educational sector. This we sadly lack. While the space policy acknowledges this gap, hopes to improve the quality and reach of STEM education in Pakistan remain slim.

One argument for developing countries investing in space infrastructure is that the sector can attract FDI, create new industries, and motivate manufacturing facilities to upgrade and update.

This is only true if a country can strike the right balance between investing in indigenous infrastructure and the

cost efficiencies of importing increasingly cheap satellites. The continued lack of funding for our space programme (compare Suparco's \$26 million budget for 2023 with the Indian space agency's \$1.5 billion) means the likelihood of getting this balance wrong is high.

Another risk is that the programme becomes highly securitised, with cybersecurity, counter-espionage, surveillance and space defence becoming priorities over the need to collect data to inform sustainable policy planning. Intentions matter, and Pakistan should learn from the Philip-pin-ees, which launched a space programme driven by a desire for disaster preparedness after experiencing Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. The space policy must go further in terms of articulating priorities that put the Pakistanis and basic service delivery and sustenance first.

Finally, Pakistan should not miss out on the opportunities for Global South collaboration that space offers. While superpowers continue to lead the space race, developing countries are playing an impressive game of catch-up. The African Union, for example, has ranked its space strategy as one of 15 key programmes in its Agenda 2063, and more than 20 national space institutions have been established across the continent in recent years.

Global South space programmes are focused on tech that can support inclusive telecommunications and climate risk management, issues key to Pakistan's success. We should be careful not to put all our satellites in one (Chinese) basket, and instead ensure that the space collaboration is diversified as part of holistic foreign and economic development policies.

Commerce News

PM orders developing mobile phone App for fair wheat procurement; censures delay

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the authorities concerned to develop a mobile phone application to ensure transparent procurement of wheat and ordered the suspension of two senior officers of PASSCO over their negligence in this regard.

The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting to review the demand and supply and procurement of wheat by the federal government, ordered the suspension of the Managing Director of Pakistan Agricultural

Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) and Meneral manager Procurement for their failure to implement the earlier directives of utilising the technology in the wheat procurement.

Calling for crops' insurance and a third-party audit of PASSCO's stock, he instructed the organization to procure an additional 400,000 metric tonnes of wheat through a transparent process.

The prime minister said the government would not tolerate any economic loss to the farmers and

resolved to take all-out measures for their prosperity and bringing food security in the country.

He assured that the government would reward the outstanding PASSCO centers and officers during the procurement process.

Federal cabinet members Muhammad Aurangzeb, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Ahad Khan Cheema, Jam Kamal Khan, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Coordinator to PM Rana Ehsan Afzal and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding wheat stocks.

Thousands of trucks stranded FPCCI demands immediate reopening of Chaman border: Atif

Independent Report
KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that the Chaman border has been closed once again for the past one week, and thousands of trucks and other vehicles have been stuck under vulnerable, uncertain and hostile circumstances. It is complete chaos once again on the important and indispensable trade route between Pakistan and Afghanistan, he added.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, henceforth, demanded that Chaman border should be opened

immediately to alleviate the sufferings and financial losses of the traders — and, allow essential supplies like food and medicines to get through the border. It is a humanitarian and socioeconomic crisis as well, he added.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh explained that Chaman border nestled in the heart of the region's complex geopolitical landscape; and, has long been a significant point of interaction between Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly as a hub for cross-border trade between the two neighboring countries.

Flour prices decreasing cross the country, easing burden on consumers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The flour prices across the country, including the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi have witnessed a notable decline in recent weeks, offering relief to consumers.

According to official documents of Ministry of Food Security and Research, the cost of a 20 kg bag of flour has dropped significantly in

various cities. In Islamabad, for instance, the price has plummeted by an impressive Rs 850 within just one month.

Last month, residents of the capital were paying around Rs 3,000 for the same quantity, but now they can purchase it for as low as Rs 2,053, with the maximum price capped at Rs 2,133.

Gold rates dip by Rs 1,200 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 1,200 and was sold at Rs 242,300 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs 243,500 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 943 to Rs 207,733 from Rs 208,762 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs 190,422 from Rs 191,365, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs 2,650 and Rs 2,271.94 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$10 to \$2,349 from \$2,359, the Association.

International Cattle Festival on May 30-31

FAISALABAD (APP): University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) in collaboration with International Goat & Bull Association will organize the 26th International Cattle Festival 2024 here on May 30-31. A spokesman for the association said here on Tuesday that various animal competitions would be arranged in the festival including heavy goat, beautiful goat, heavy camel, heavy ram.

Maryam to establish Punjab's first plug and play garment city

Independent Report
LAHORE: "All facilities will be available in the first plug and play Garment City," said Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif while chairing a special meeting to decide on the establishment of Punjab's first plug and play garment city. She added, "Organize technical training of workers of the garment industry."

Madam Chief Minister directed the authorities concerned to solicit expressions of interest from major apparel industries for the Garment City, and formed a high-

level committee led by Minister for Industries Chaudhry Shafay Hussain for the purpose.

Earlier, Madam Chief Minister was briefed, "Sheds and other facilities like weaving, dyeing and other related units will be established in the Garment City." It was also briefed that the proposed Garment City will be energized with green/solar energy systems.

Moreover, garment cities will be established in other areas gradually, after the success of first garment city pilot project.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Mehmet Pacaci, paid a courtesy call on the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema.

NTDC adds 250 MVA auto-transformer at 220kV Grid Station Rohri

ISLAMABAD (APP): The project Delivery (South) team of National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited (NTDC) has successfully added another 220/132kV, 250 MVA auto-transformer (T-4) and 220 kV half Dia D-4 & 132kV transformer bay E-13 at 220kV Grid Station Rohri.

The auto-transformer after installation has also been energized, according to a statement issued by NTDC. This project was part of a power transmission capacity enhancement program to

improve the capacity of the NTDC transmission network. This work has been completed under the National Transmission Modernization Project (NTMP-I), funded by the World Bank and NTDC's own resources. The completion of this component of NTMP-I will benefit the domestic, agricultural, and industrial consumers of the SEPCO region, it further said.

This addition of an auto-transformer will improve the loading capacity of 220 kV grid station Rohri and provide relief to the areas under the SEPCO region.



QUETTA: A delegation of Chaman Chamber of Commerce led by Haji Jamalud Din Achakzai meeting with Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

PCJCCI, FTO hold awareness session on redress of taxpayers complaints

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) organized an awareness session for "Outreach programmes with respect to Role and functions of FTO (Federal Tax Ombudsman) office on account of redress of complaints of taxpayers against FBR" here at the PCJCCI Secretariat on Monday.

The speakers for the event were Dr. Ahmed Shahab, Advisor, Adeela Rehman, Advisor FTO and Nazim Raza, Director FTO. The session was

attracted by huge interest from diverse stakeholders comprising representation from companies and young entrepreneurs.

Adeela Rehman, Advisor FTO, briefed that Federal Tax Ombudsman is working tirelessly for the improvement of tax services and systems in the country. She said that the main purpose of FTO is to redress the injustice done to taxpayers by FBR, Revenue Division and Government of Pakistan. "We try our level best to deal and resolve the complaints within 45 days.

PSX stays bullish, gains 713 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 713.61 points, a positive change of 0.98 percent, closing at 73,799.11 points against 73,085.50 points the previous trading day. A total of 721,597,885 shares valuing Rs 25,649 billion were traded during the day as compared to 741,196,400 shares valuing Rs 25,268 billion the last day. Some 387 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 241 of them recorded gains and 120 sustained losses, whereas the prices of 26 remained unchanged.

CM orders sustainable water drainage system for Lahore

Reviews C&W's road construction, maintenance projects

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, during a meeting on local government here on Monday, reviewed the state of drainage and sewerage system besides progress on repair and rehabilitation measures.

The CM said, "No street in Lahore should remain unpaved. A sustainable water drainage system should be devised."

Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA), Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) and other bodies concerned should work in close coordination, adding that people cannot bear the inconvenience caused by

standing water in a street. She said it is painful to see dirty water and overflowing sewerage in broken streets and roads. "All institutions should not ignore problems of the people," she mentioned. She also reviewed progress on streetlights, parks and horticulture in suburban areas.

Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Provincial Minister Local Government Zeeshan Rafique and Special Assistant Zeeshan Malik attended the meeting. Chief Secretary, Chairman P&D, Secretaries, Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner Lahore, DGLDA and other

relevant officers were also present.

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif reviewed the ongoing road maintenance and construction projects carried out by Communication and Works (C&W) department, here on Monday.

During a meeting with Punjab Minister for Communication and Works Soheb Ahmed Malik, she was briefed about the maintenance and construction of roads across Punjab.

The CM was briefed that the work on repair and rehabilitation of 590 roads covering a distance of 11500 kilometers across Punjab has been started.



MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani honored Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi with a high tea at Gilani House.

100,000 people avail free health facilities under Sehat Card: Minister

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah on Monday said that so far 100,000 people of the province have availed free health facilities under Sehat health card initiative since the month of Ramadan.

In a release issued here, he said that the treatment was provided to the citizens of KP admitted to different hospitals of the country and the province, adding that so far 2.7 billion rupees had been spent on the treatment of these

citizens.

He appreciated the Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur for reviving the health card soon after coming to power and termed it a gift to the deserving people of the province.

The Minister said that a review was going on to check the quality of registered hospitals on the health card panel so that quality health services could be ensured on Sehat card. Shah noted that the health card had also helped improve the services of government hospitals.

PFA cracks down on fake beverages, seizes 1,100 Liters

ATTOCK (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has seized a staggering 1,100 liters of counterfeit carbonated and fizzy drinks during a successful raid in the Jehri Kass area near Hassanabdal, on Monday.

According to PFA spokesperson, the PFA's enforcement team led by Assistant Food Safety Officer Muhammad Zahid collaborated with the local police to intercept a pickup truck transporting the illicit beverages.

KPCM for allocation of funds in ADP 2024-25 for all sectors

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting was held on Monday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair regarding preparation of draft Annual Development Program (ADP), for the financial year 2024-25.

During the meeting, the discussion was made on proposed projects of Irrigation, Public Health Engineering and Road sectors to be reflected in the upcoming ADP.

Besides Provincial Minister for Irrigation Aqib Ullah Khan, Minister for Public Health Engineering, Pakhtunyar Khan, Minister for Communications &

Works, Shakeel Khan and Advisor to Chief Minister on Information Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, the meeting was also attended by administrative secretaries and other high ups of the concerned departments.

A detailed briefing was also given in the meeting about the on-going and proposed projects of these departments that will be included in the ADP 2024-25.

While issuing policy directives about new ADP, the CM directed the high ups of these departments to give top priority to the ongoing schemes specially those which are due for completion in the allocation of developmental funds.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif along with students addressing the inaugural ceremony of Chief Minister Skills Development Initiative.

Heat stroke units setup at LU Hospital

HYDERABAD (APP): Medical Superintendent Liaquat University Hospital Hyderabad/Jamshoro Dr Aijaz Ahmad Abbasi has said that according to the Meteorological Department, a possible heat stroke is encountered during the increase in the intensity of heat.

In this regard the hospital will immediately impose emergency measures and all the doctors, and para-medical staff leave will be cancelled.

He said that in view of the increase heat stroke

in Hyderabad and its vicinity, we have set up air-conditioned units in University Hospital Hyderabad and Jamshoro to provide medical treatment.

Along with supplies and medicines, senior Dr Muhammad Aslam Rajput whose mobile number is 0311-3077700 for Civil Hospital Hyderabad and Dr Faheem Lashari RMO whose phone number is 0332-1318881 for Jamshoro Hospital. They have been appointed as Heat Stroke Focal Person.

Father and daughter-in-law murdered by unknown gunman

MANSEHRA (APP): Two people were shot dead by unknown gunmen on Monday in the village of Tarnain Bala in the jurisdiction of Shankyari police station Mansehra.

According to police sources, unknown gunmen barged into the house of Fazal Deen and killed him and his daughter-in-law Ansa Bibi. Shankyari police registered a case of double murder against unknown people and started an investigation. The family of the deceased have refrained from accusing any specific individual in their murder case filing. The postmortem report revealed that Fazal Deen sustained three gunshot wounds, while Ansa Bibi received two. Following the completion of medico-legal formalities, Shankyari police handed over the bodies to their heirs. Later, the funeral prayers for both victims were offered in the village of Tarnain Bala.

Opposition in PA slams government over worsen situation in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The opposition leader in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Dr Ibadullah, while starting debate on the budget on Monday said that there is confusion regarding the budget as the chief minister is saying that there is no fund in the province while the Finance Advisor is claiming that the budget is surplus.

Dr Ibadullah said that the province has been destroyed from all aspect which is financially or law and order. He said that the constituency of chief

minister has been disconnected no go area.

Dr Ibad raised question that police stations have been established in public property and rented buildings at merged districts so where is the Rs1000 billion in the context of the war on terror gone.

He said that the situation has reached such a point that the session judge is being kidnaped. According to media reports, a transaction was made for payment of ransom.

718 more meters disconnected on gas theft

LAHORE (APP): The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) disconnected 718 connections during its on going crackdown against gas pilferers in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, imposing Rs 24 million fine. According to a spokesman for the SNGPL, in Lahore and Sheikhupura, regional teams disconnected 549 connections on illegal use of gas and imposed a fine of Rs 19.6 million against gas pilferers and also lodged 21 FIRs. In Multan and Bahawalpur, 139 connections were disconnected on illegal use besides imposing Rs 3 million fine.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the 2nd meeting of Health Insurance working group Sub Committee.

Minister directs for early completion of beautification projects

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government & Rural Development, Arshad Ayub Khan Monday said that all incomplete beautification projects to be completed as soon as possible. Presiding over a meeting regarding development schemes in the annual budget, he said that annual development programme has been framed while keeping in view the opinion of the people. Besides, Secretary Local Government & Rural Development, Dawood Khan, other authorities

concerned also attended the meeting. The provincial minister directed the inclusion of digitization projects of the local government sector in the annual budget to bring transparency in the governance. He said that all possible relief would be provided to the people in the upcoming annual budget.

He said that schemes including women development centre, parks, footpaths and construction of roads are being included in the budget to provide best facilities to the people of the district Haripur.

International News

Turkey's Erdogan says US, Europe not doing enough to pressure Israel into Gaza truce

Monitoring Desk

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday that the United States and European countries were not doing enough to pressure Israel to agree a ceasefire in Gaza, after Palestinian militant group Hamas' move to accept a truce proposal. Turkey has denounced Israel's attacks on Gaza, called for an immediate ceasefire, and criticised what it calls unconditional support for Israel by the West.

Ankara has halted all trade with Israel and said it had decided to join South Africa's initiative to have Israel tried for genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Speaking to Muslim scholars in Istanbul, Erdogan said Hamas had accepted a ceasefire pro-

posal by Qatar and Egypt in a "step in the path toward a lasting ceasefire", but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government did not want the war to end. "The response of the Netanyahu government was to attack the innocent people in Rafah," he said, referring to the Gazan city that Israel is targeting. "It has become clear who sides with peace and dialogue, and who wants clashes continuing and more bloodshed."

"And did Netanyahu see any serious reaction for his spoiled behaviour? No. Neither Europe nor America showed a reaction that would force Israel into a ceasefire," Erdogan's intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalin met with Hamas leaders in Doha on Sunday to discuss ceasefire talks and the access of humanitarian

aid into Gaza, a Turkish security source said.

Israel's military conduct in Gaza has come under increasing scrutiny in recent weeks, as the civilian death toll and devastation in the enclave mount.

Its planned assault on Rafah, hosting some 1.4 million Palestinians mostly displaced in the war, has helped fuel the deepest tensions in relations between Israel and its main ally Washington in generations.

Ankara on Friday welcomed the United Nations General Assembly's backing for a Palestinian bid to become a full UN member. Erdogan on Sunday called on countries not recognising a Palestinian sovereign state to do so after the vote, but slammed Washington and others who voted against.



Nominee for the post of Russia's Defence Minister Andrei Belousov attends a hearing held by the defence and security committee of the parliament's upper house Federation Council as part of a confirmation process for a new government line-up, in Moscow, Russia.

Indonesia floods, landslides kill 34, 16 missing

Monitoring Desk

TANAH DATAR: At least 34 people were killed and 16 more were missing in western Indonesia after flash floods and cold lava flow from one of the archipelago's most active volcanoes damaged homes, roads and mosques, officials said on Sunday.

Hours of heavy rain caused flooding in Agam and Tanah Datar districts in West Sumatra province on Saturday evening, threatening thousands of people after the down-

pours swept ash and large rocks down Mount Marapi.

"I heard the thunder and the sound similar to boiling water. It was the sound of big rocks falling," housewife Rina Devina said, adding that three of her neighbours were killed.

"It was pitch black, so I used my cellphone as a flashlight. The road was muddy, so I chanted 'God, have mercy!' over and over again," she said of her evacuation to a local official's office.

Seven killed in attack on Russian flats

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: At least seven people were killed and 17 injured when a whole section of an apartment building in Belgorod collapsed after being hit by a missile fired by Ukraine, Russian officials said.

In one of the deadliest attacks to date on the region of Belgorod, Ukraine launched what Russian officials said was a massive missile attack with Tochka ballistic missiles and Adler and RM-70 Vampire (MLRS) multiple launch rocket systems.

27 killed in renewed clashes in Sudan: UN

Monitoring Desk

PORT SUDAN: Clashes reignited between the Sudanese army and rival paramilitaries earlier this week in the key Darfur town of El-Fasher, the United Nations said on Sunday, killing at least 27 people in one day. Eyewitnesses have reported air strikes, artillery fire and machine gun clashes battering the city since Friday, when an hours-long battle left an estimated 850 people displaced, according to the UN. It also killed at least 27 that day, based on what the UN said were "unconfirmed reports", as the city suffers a near-total communications

blackout, with medics and human rights defenders barely able to get news to the world. The fighting has since continued, eyewitnesses said on Sunday, reporting air strikes and artillery shelling that left "houses on fire", one resident said. According to French medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF), two children and a caregiver were killed in an intensive care unit Saturday following a nearby military air strike. Since April of last year, Sudan has been in the grips of a devastating war between the army, headed by the country's de facto leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

Israel strikes Gaza after fresh Rafah evacuation order

Monitoring Desk

RAFAH: Israeli forces continued to conduct air strikes on Gaza on Sunday after it expanded an evacuation order for Rafah, with the United Nations warning an outright invasion of the crowded southern city risked an "epic" disaster.

Gaza's civil defence agency said two doctors were killed on Sunday in the central town of Deir al-Balah amid heavy gunfire from Israeli helicopters.

Witnesses said Israel had carried out strikes in Rafah near the crossing with Egypt on Saturday and smoke was seen rising over the city.

Israeli troops defied international opposition and entered eastern areas of the city, effectively shutting a key aid crossing and

suspending traffic through another.

Israel expanded an evacuation order for eastern Rafah, after 300,000 people had fled the city earlier this week.

"We don't know where to go," said Farid Abu Eida, who was preparing to leave Rafah, having already been displaced there from Gaza City.

Residents piled water tanks, mattresses and other belongings onto vehicles and prepared to flee again.

"There is no place left in Gaza that is safe or not overcrowded... There's nowhere we can go." Residents were told to go to the "humanitarian zone" of Al-Mawasi, on the coast north-west of Rafah.

International outrage mounted at Israel's operations in Rafah.

Putin replaces Shoigu as Russia's defence minister in cabinet shakeup

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday replaced Sergei Shoigu as defense minister in a Cabinet shakeup that comes as he begins his fifth term in office.

In line with Russian law, the entire Russian Cabinet resigned Tuesday following Putin's glittering inauguration in the Kremlin, and most members have been widely expected to keep their jobs, while Shoigu's fate had appeared uncertain. Putin signed a decree on Sunday appointing Shoigu as secretary of Russia's Security Council, the Kremlin said. The appointment was announced shortly after Putin proposed Andrei Belousov to become the country's defense minister in place of Shoigu. The announcement of Shoigu's new role came as 13 people were reported dead and 20 more wounded in

Russia's border city of Belgorod, where a 10-story apartment building partially collapsed after what Russian officials said was Ukrainian shelling. Ukraine hasn't commented on the incident.

Belousov's candidacy will need to be approved by Russia's upper house in parliament, the Federation Council.

It reported Sunday that Putin introduced proposals for other Cabinet positions as well but Shoigu is the only minister on that list who is being replaced.

Several other new candidates for federal ministers were proposed Saturday by Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, reappointed by Putin on Friday. Shoigu's deputy, Timur Ivanov, was arrested last month on bribery charges and was ordered to remain in custody pending an official investigation.



Police officers detain a demonstrator during a protest against a bill on "foreign agents" in Tbilisi, Georgia.

India inks 10-year deal to operate Iran's Chabahar port

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: India signed a 10-year contract with Iran on Monday to develop and operate the Iranian port of Chabahar, the Narendra Modi-led government said, strengthening relations with a strategic Middle Eastern nation.

India has been developing the port in Chabahar on Iran's south-eastern coast along the Gulf of Oman as a way to trans-

port goods to Iran, Afghanistan and central Asian countries, bypassing the ports of Karachi and Gwadar.

US sanctions on Iran, however, slowed the port's development.

"Chabahar Port's significance transcends its role as a mere conduit between India and Iran; it serves as a vital trade artery connecting India with Afghanistan and Central Asian Countries."

Russia says it downs 16 Ukraine-launched missiles, 31 drones

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: The Russian defence ministry said on Monday its air defence systems destroyed 16 missiles and 31 drones that Ukraine launched at Russian territory overnight, including 12 missiles over the battered border region of Belgorod.

Five houses were damaged in Belgorod, but according to preliminary information, there were no injuries, Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

On Sunday, 15 people were killed in Belgorod when a section of an apartment block collapsed after being struck by fragments of a Soviet-era missile, launched by Ukraine and shot down by Russian forces, Russia said.

The Russian defence ministry said on Monday the 12 guided missiles were launched from a Ukrainian Vilkhva multiple rocket launcher.

Pakistan keen to learn from Korean expertise in IT, industrialisation: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that Pakistan was keen to learn from Korea's experience of industrialization and SME sector growth as well as in the field of Information Technology (IT), including artificial intelligence.

The prime minister, talking to Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan Park Ki Jun, who called on him, also offered to enhance export of skilled manpower from Pakistan to meet Korea's human resource needs.

The Korean ambassador congratulated the prime minister on behalf of the Korean leadership upon his re-election.

The prime minister

thanked the Korean leadership for the warm message of greetings that he received and expressed the desire to work closely to further strengthen bilateral ties.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that Pakistan and Korea enjoyed good relations, particularly in trade and investment sectors.

He said both countries had cooperated since 1960s for economic development and conveyed admiration for Korea's remarkable transformation into a modern technologically advanced economy.

To promote mutually beneficial trade, he proposed the exchange of business delegations between Seoul and Islamabad. In

this regard, Prime Minister Shehbaz said that he would instruct relevant cabinet members to coordinate with the Korean side to discuss existing investments by Korean companies as well as to explore new opportunities.

He also extended an invitation to President Yoon Suk Yeol to undertake an official visit to Pakistan.

The Korean ambassador thanked the prime minister for receiving him and conveyed the desire of the Korean government to enhance its bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in a number of areas of mutual interest, particularly trade, investment, IT, culture, tourism and people to people exchanges.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

NA informed Accreditation tests for foreign-qualified doctors to be held twice in year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Azam Nazeer Tarar informed the National Assembly on Monday that the accreditation examinations for doctors getting degrees from abroad would now be held twice a year.

Responding to a calling attention notice about changes in the policy by the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council regarding the accreditation examination

for foreign-qualified doctors, Minister Tarar stated that the first test would take place in June and the second in December.

The examinations would be conducted regularly as per the new instructions, he added.

The minister said that the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council had redesigned the examination format and reduced the passing benchmark from 70 per cent to 60 per cent.

He highlighted the importance of such examinations, saying it was crucial for every country to conduct accreditation tests or equivalence examinations for international degree holders, especially in matters concerning precious human lives.

He affirmed that Pakistan could overlook the responsibility and must ensure proper evaluation of foreign-qualified doctors through such tests.

Students to have knowledge of climate change in summer camps: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Monday said that summer camps would impart special education on climate change to students for sensitising them on pressing issue of global warming and environmental degradation.

She said this during a meeting with UNICEF Country Director for Pakistan, Abdullah A. Fadil here, a news release said.

Romina Khurshid Alam apprised the UNICEF Country Director that with the collaboration of Secretary Federal Education & Professional Training and Chairman Higher Education

Commission, the climate change related contents were being incorporated in the curriculum.

She also added that ministry of climate change was going to establish a COP cell to swiftly work on climate actions, climate risks which Pakistan would present in upcoming UNFCCC global environmental conference COP-29 to be held in Baku.

Both sides discussed different ideas to promote climate tourism, climate entertainment, climate sports, climate economy. The UNICEF representative vowed to further strengthen their support for these ambitious tasks besides collaborating on COP-29.



ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam along with UNICEF county Director for Pakistan Mr. Abdullah A. Fadil, sitting on a bench manufactured by confiscated single use polythene bags by EPA, ministry of Climate change.

Registration of Al-Qadir trust IHC expresses resentment over non filing of report by chief commissioner

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has expressed resentment over non filing of report by Chief Commissioner Islamabad in the case of registration of Al-Qadir University Trust under new Islamabad Trust case.

Justice Mian Gulhassan Aurangzeb remarked "Keep it in mind that the sitting government will remain in power for only 5 years. If PTI founder comes to power in future then registration will be presented by placing it in plate.

The plea for registration came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Justice Mian Gulhassan Aurangzeb

Monday. Counsel for PTI founder said Al-Qadir trust is not being registered. Court should give order to Chief Commissioner.

The court expressed resentment over non submission of report by chief commissioner.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb inquired why the government officials are feeling fear. The government officials should fear from Allah only. Keep it in mind that the sitting government will remain in power for five years. If PTI founder comes to power in future then registration will be presented by placing it in plate.

IHC adjourns PTI founder's bail petition till today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) adjourned hearing till tomorrow on bail petition of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) founder in a graft reference of 190 million pounds.

A two-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard the case.

During hearing, National Accountability Bureau (NAB) prosecutor Amjad Pervaiz said that top court had issued order regarding the money transferred from Britain to Pakistan.

The first transaction was made in November 2019, second on December 3, 2019 and third on March 11, 2022.

The chief justice asked that how the transaction was done in November 2019 without the approval of the cabinet.

Amjad Pervaiz said that a confidentiality deed was signed between Malik Riaz and National Crime Agency (NCA) Britain on November 6, 2019. The then Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Shehzad Akbar also signed the deed, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Provincial President Majlis Wahdat Muslimin Gilgit-Baltistan, Agha Syed Ali Rizvi and other leaders addressing a Press Conference at NPC against the government indifference regarding the public demands in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Crackdown on price gouging: ICT admin arrest 20, seals unscrupulous shops

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration on Monday launched a series of inspections targeting price gouging and regulatory violations, in a decisive move aimed at ensuring fair prices and consumer protection in the Federal Capital.

According to the Spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration, the Assistant Commissioners were taking a firm stand against unfair pricing practices that burden consumers and undermine the integrity of the market.

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz

Memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Shalimar, conducted rigorous inspections at F-10 area. These inspections have led to swift action, with nine individuals apprehended and the closure of two naan/tandoor shops for flouting the government rates.

Meanwhile, the Assistant Commissioner Industrial Area, conducted inspections and vendors found guilty of overcharging and failing to comply with pricing regulations faced the consequences, as authorities cracked down on unethical practices.

Similarly, Assistant Commissioner Pothohar paid a surprise visit to I-10 Markaz.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Korea H.E. Park Ki Jun called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PRCS chairman discusses humanitarian efforts with permanent representative of Pakistan to United Nations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari held discussions with Bilal Ahmed, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in Geneva, focusing on humanitarian collaboration and cooperation.

The meeting, which held at the embassy of Pakistan in Geneva, addressed various topics including the services provided by the Red Crescent, fostering relationships with humanitarian organizations in Geneva, and strategies to enhance humanitarian efforts aimed at alleviating the suffering of vulnerable communities particularly flood affected people in Pakistan.

During the meeting, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari provided an overview to permanent representatives of Pakistan to UN in Geneva Bilal Ahmed regarding Red Crescent's

assistance to flood victims and its active participation in the preparatory meetings for the upcoming 34th International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Geneva.

Chairman Laghari stressed the need for strengthening ties with international humanitarian organizations in Geneva to ensure continued support for ongoing recovery programs benefiting families affected by floods in Pakistan.

Ambassador Bilal Ahmed commended the exemplary services rendered by the Red Crescent and expressed appreciation for Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari's leadership in advancing humanitarian initiatives.

He also affirmed the commitment to extend all possible cooperation in all human assistance program.

On this occasion, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari also

shared his impressions in the new visitor book at the embassy.

It is worth mentioning here that Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari represented the National Society exceptionally well at the preparatory meetings and sessions held by the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Geneva for the upcoming 34th International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement, "Navigate Uncertainty - Strengthen Humanity".

Ambassador Bilal Ahmed, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, also took part in these preparatory meetings. The meetings covered a range of topics, including International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Climate Change, Anticipatory Actions in emergencies, and Disaster Risk Reduction.

IG Islamabad pins rank badges to newly promoted 52 Inspectors

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, a series of departmental promotions are underway in Islamabad Police, a public relations officer said.

He said that, in this regard, a prestigious ceremony was held to promote new officers to the rank of Inspector at Police Lines Headquarters Islamabad.

IGP Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi graced the event as a special guest, while senior police officers, and the families of newly promoted inspectors were also present on this occasion.

scale promotions in a short time to reassure the officers.

IG Islamabad said that we have worked hard day and night to complete this six-month process as soon as possible to bring smiles and happiness to the faces of the officers and their families.

If your shoulders shine, then your hearts will shine, and the faces of your children will shine with happiness and this is my goal, IG said.

My prayer is that whatever promotion you have achieved, may Allah Almighty give you the grace to do justice with it. May your children consider you their hero, may your mother feel proud of you.



IG Islamabad pins rank badges to newly promoted 52 sub-inspectors to the rank of inspector, he congratulates them, and expresses good wishes for their future endeavors.

On this occasion, IGP Islamabad presented commendation to the Chairman of the Departmental Promotions Committee, DIG Headquarters Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanyeer, and his team for ensuring such large-

We will try our best to bring happiness to your families, to provide you with promotion and rewards, to end the punishments given to you, but in return, you have to do one thing, and that is to fulfill the promise you made, which is to eliminate crime, to provide immediate justice to the citizens, to ensure the safety of their lives and property, he added.

Saudi Public Security warns against fake Hajj advertisements, clarifies official channels

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Saudi Directorate of Public Security has issued a warning to citizens and residents regarding fake advertisements circulating on social media platforms offering services related to Hajj, such as arranging pilgrimages for others, securing sacrificial animals, selling Hajj bracelets, and providing transportation, with the intention of committing fraud.

The Directorate emphasized that those who fall prey to such scams not only risk financial loss but also violate Hajj regulations.

Those caught engaging in these deceptive practices will be subject to strict legal repercussions, it added.

Clarifying the legitimate channels for procuring Hajj-related services, the Directorate high-

lighted The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Project For Utilization of Hady & Adahi as the official authority for selling and marketing Hady, Adahi, alms, and charity bonds on behalf of pilgrims.

These services can be accessed or tracked through the project's official website (adahi.org), electronic platforms like the Ehsan platform, or certified outlets, it said, adding that additionally, a unified inquiry and order tracking number (920020193) had been established for convenience.

Urging compliance with Hajj regulations, the Directorate called upon citizens and residents to report any violations by dialing (911) in Makkah, Riyadh, and the Eastern Provinces, and (999) in all other regions of the Kingdom.



ISLAMABAD: Labourers working on sewage water project on Chak Shahzad road in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: The central leaders of Jammu Kashmir People's Action Committee, Saqib Shaheen, Sardar Aftab and others, addressing a press conference at NPC, on the current situation of the people's movement in Azad Kashmir and the Indian propaganda against the movement.

Randhawa says: Businessmen real face of Capital, to be taken on board in decision making

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Mohammad Ali Randhawa has termed the business community as real face of the capital city which has been playing an important role in its development and said that it would be taken on board in the decision makings.

This was stated by him while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) led by its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari which called on him here on Monday.

Mohammad Ali Randhawa expressed the hope that by adopting the best practices, coming out of comfort zones and adhering to the practical approach we will be able to overcome all the problems relating to the development of the city adding that he along with his team will soon visit the Chamber House to get firsthand knowledge of the problems facing the business community.

The Chairman CDA further said that he himself by visiting different markets turn by turn, holding meetings with traders' leaders then and there direct the concerned Officers for the solution of their problems.

Earlier, ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari felicitated the Chairman for assuming the charge, introduced his team members and highlighted the key issues of the business community.

He said that by sensing the seriousness of the issue of clean drinking water, he himself has taken the initiative of installing filtration plants in different markets from his own pocket.

He extended an invitation to the Chairman CDA for a visit to ICCI which he accepted by saying that he will make it possible at the earliest possible time to have a comprehensive acquaintance of the community's problems.

CDA to establish water, sanitation Agency in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) will set up Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) in the federal capital with an aim to up-grade the existing infrastructure.

The WASA, Islamabad is being established to significantly improve water supply, sewerage, and drainage facilities across the capital. In this regard the preliminary discussions are underway to start the work at earliest.

Similarly, this project would include rehabilitation and expansion of current systems, the construction and up-gradation of water treatment plants to increase sewage treatment capacity, and enhancing drainage systems.

Tourists throng Kaghan-Naran after road's reopening

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign and domestic tourists are thronging to Naran after the reopening of the road to enjoy their trips at recreational spots of the scenic valley.

Talking to APP, a Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) official said the Kaghan Development Authority (KDA) has reopened the Kaghan Highway for all kinds of commuters after seven months of closure.

He said the tourists embarked on their travel towards Naran to observe the scenic beauty through Naran road which was fully operational for tourists to visit their destinations.