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ISLAMABAD: A delegation of international beverages manufacturing companies met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

Govt's business-friendly policies coming to fruition: PM Shahbaz

Directs preparing tariff rationalization for export sector industries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that the business-friendly policies pursued by the incumbent government were coming to fruition.

The prime minister, talking to a delegation of international beverages companies which called on him here, said that the government was extending its maximum support to the foreign investors and business community to make them create employment opportunities, boost exports and contribute to the national economic development.

The delegation members appreciated the prime minister for his government's pro-business policies.

They told the prime minister that 25 plants of international beverages firms were operating in Pakistan and had employed around 130,000 workers.

Apprising the prime minister of their largest recycling system, the delegation told that the beverage firms were contributing to the national exchequer through huge amount of taxes.

Prime Minister Shehbaz urged the companies to play their productive role under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). He also instructed the relevant au-

thorities to hold consultations on the companies' proposals and resolve their issues at the earliest.

The delegation was led by Vice President of Coca Cola for Pakistan and Afghanistan Volkan Onguc and CEO of Pepsi Co Pakistan and Afghanistan Muhammad Khosa.

Federal ministers Jam Kamal Khan, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Abdul Aleem Khan and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned to immediately prepare a strategy regarding tariff rationalization for the export sector industries.

Chairing an important meeting here to discuss the provision of facilities to the industrial sector, the prime minister emphasized the importance of industrial development and export growth. He said the government would ensure the supply of electricity and gas to the industries at affordable rates.

The prime minister also directed the relevant authorities to prioritize addressing the issues facing the industrial sector.

Pakistan is ready to counter any threat to its security, regional integrity: FO

Unending sufferings of Kashmiri families with over 22,000 women widowed, 107000 children orphaned

ISLAMABAD (Online): Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said on Friday that Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar visit to China and meeting with Chinese authorities remained useful.

Both countries agreed on peace in the region and investment, this was said by Mumtaz Zahra Baloch during weekly press briefing here in Foreign Office Friday.

There are solid brotherly relations with Iran, she said adding we support pleasant relations with Afghanistan.

During the visit, various investment issues including CPEC were discussed in the meetings of Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar.

Discussions were also held regarding work on the second part of CPEC. Various issues including regional peace and stability were discussed. The Foreign Office said that during

meetings of Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar with the Chinese authorities, both sides expressed their resolve to curb terrorism and eliminate forces that sabotaged peace. She said India was involved in human rights violations in occupied Kashmir and Indian forces were continuing their aggression in the occupied valley. The international community should take notice of the ongoing Indian atrocities in held Kashmir.

SC serves show-cause notices to Faisal Vawda, Mustafa on anti-judiciary remarks

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Friday served show-cause notice to Senator Faisal Vawda and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)'s leader Mustafa Kamal and summoned them in person on the next hearing in a suo-moto case about remarks against judiciary.

The court directed the politicians to clarify that why a contempt of court proceedings shouldn't be initiated against them on controversial remarks about judiciary.

A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Naeem Saad Khan, heard the suo-moto case on a press conference of Senator Faisal Vawda and remarks by Mustafa Kamal. During the hearing, the chief justice sought the details of the press conference of Faisal Vawda and also inquired from the additional attorney general whether the content of media talks did come under contempt.

The AAG said that the words were muted in the

press conference transcript which he had witnessed.

The Chief Justice said that there had been some remarks against him but he just ignored, and apparently this emboldened them to make comments in public.

The CJ said: "We will not allow to target the institution and if someone has done wrong, then point out it by naming the person."

He further remarked that the institutions belonged to the people and any act defaming was not a service to the country.

He said: "If someone has some way out for improvement, then he should write to him or to the Registrar office and we wouldn't allow targeting the institution as it affects public's trust in judiciary."

He said the Constitution and laws related to freedom of speech and contempt of court were clear and there was no ambiguity in this regard. The politician held a conference, instead he could have expressed these views in the parliament, he added.



President Asif Ali Zardari administering the oath of office to Mr. Ali Pervaiz as the Minister of State, during an oath-taking ceremony, held at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Ali Pervaiz sworn in as Minister of State

ISLAMABAD (APP): Member of the National Assembly Ali Pervaiz took the oath of the office of Minister of State here on Friday. President Asif Ali Zardari administered the oath to Ali Pervaiz in a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. The swearing-in ceremony was attended by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, parliamentarians, and notables from different walks of life. Ali Pervaiz was elected as MNA from NA-119 constituency of Lahore on the ticket of the Pakistan Muslim League-N in the recently held by-election.

Pakistan's hockey team brought immense pride to nation: COAS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir on Friday, commending the Pakistan Hockey team over outstanding performance, on Friday said the hockey team had brought immense pride to the nation.

The Army Chief received the Pakistan Hockey team at General Headquarters whereas the meeting was also attended by President Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) Tariq Hussain and other PHF officials, an Inter Services



Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. During the interaction, the COAS said: "We are committed to providing them with comprehensive support to ensure their continued success." He also extended his best wishes to the players for their future endeavors.

The President of PHF expressed gratitude to the COAS for the opportunity to meet and interact with the team.

CM wears Elite Force's uniform 'Elite Force officers render services with unwavering commitment,' Punjab CM



LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz did it again donned a uniform of the Elite Force while attending a passing-out parade in Lahore on Friday. Not bothered about the harsh criticism she faced last time she wore a uniform, Maryam Nawaz appeared on screens of TV channels on Friday morning wearing the uniform with broad smile on her face.

Late last month, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had caused quite a stir when she attended a passing-out ceremony for women constables and traffic assistants decked out in a Punjab police uniform. Addressing the gradu-



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting at NADRA headquarters.

CNIC's issuance, renewal to be made available at UC level: Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi on Friday visited the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) headquarters and chaired an important meeting during which various proposals were discussed to make NADRA more people-friendly.

Several significant decisions were made to facilitate the public, including the provision of identity card issuance and renewal facilities at the union council level across Pakistan. Additionally, biometric machines will be installed at union council levels nationwide. Mohsin Naqvi directed that a plan be devised

within a few days to finalise the issuance and renewal of identity cards at the union council level. He also sought a plan to make the Identity Card system foolproof, better, and efficient.

He emphasized the need for a plan that would facilitate visitors to NADRA centres and ensure prompt service without delay. Considering the long queues of citizens, the minister also sought a plan to increase NADRA centres in six major cities, including Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, Islamabad, and Rawalpindi within seven days. e also ordered effective action against the fake identity card mafia.

Supreme Court bans cell phones in court rooms

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) has banned carrying cell phones in courtrooms, following the leaked picture of the PTI founder during a video link hearing of the NAB amendments case.

The SC staff has barred the law clerks and lawyers from carrying their cell phones in the courtroom and asked them to leave them outside the courtroom. The staff is also checking the attendants in the SC courtroom. The journalists are already barred from carrying their cell phones in the SC courtroom.

USIP warns of terrorist threats from Afghanistan targeting Pakistan

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has issued a warning that Afghanistan territory is being used by terrorist groups to target Pakistan.

The report highlights the growing regional threat posed by these organizations, which operate with apparent support from the Afghan Taliban. According to the USIP, despite repeated warnings, the Afghan Taliban has not cut ties with terrorist groups like the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which conducts attacks on Pakistani soil.

The report indicates that the Taliban provides these groups with financial support, arms, weapons, and secret hideouts.

Maritime Affairs Minister visits Naval HQ

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Friday visited Naval Headquarters, Islamabad and called on Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf. During the meeting, professional matters of mutual interest and Pakistan Navy's role in regional maritime security and Indian Ocean region came under discussion, said a press release.



Both the dignitaries also dilated upon prospects of maritime economy and its importance for overall economic growth of the country.

Later on, a detailed briefing was given to the Minister regarding Pakistan's maritime challenges, opportunities and steps taken by Pak Navy to facilitate awareness and development of this crucial sector for future economic progress of Pakistan.

KP Govt makes botch attempt to maintain credibility by attributing false statement to PM: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaulah Tarar on Friday said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government was making a botch attempt to maintain its credibility by attributing a false statement to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The minister, in a statement, said that the KPK Food Minister had attributed a false statement to the prime minister which was based on assumptions and contrary to the facts.

He said the KP government wanted to confront with the Federal Government by consistently churning out lies especially about electricity, wheat and other crops.

He regretted that the KP chief minister had been persistently threatening "to at-

tack Islamabad and seize the Peshawar Electricity Supply Company".

He had even given a 15-day deadline to the Federal Government in that regard, the minister added.

Tarar said their "nefarious designs" would not succeed as the Federal Government was fully capable to protect state institutions and public property. Nobody would be allowed to take the law into their hands, he said, vowing that a strict action would be taken against those who would dare to do so.

He said the Federal Government would continue to play its due role in protecting the rights of KP people and ensuring the provision of resources for their welfare according to the Constitution, regardless of political differences.

KP Governor lauds Saudi Arabia investment in Pak



PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi and Ambassador to Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan H.E Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy met at Islamabad where they discussed enhancement of cooperation in different sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two

Kundi on assuming the office of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor and expressed best wishes to him. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor said that relations between the two brotherly countries were deep-rooted and people of both countries were connected in a strong bonds of religious, culture and historical values.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Dangerous law

Our political leaders never seem to learn from their mistakes. The Punjab Assembly is due to vote on a new defamation law for the province, which, its government says, has been designed to 'stop fake news'. Speaking at a press conference on Wednesday, the provincial information minister sought to assure the media's growing apprehensions regarding the proposed law in the following words: "[Only] a person who lies under the guise of a journalist with a specific agenda will face the music under this proposed law."

Her choice of words is telling. The PML-N, which leads the government in Punjab, has had a rough few years as far as its image-building efforts are concerned. Even though it has returned to power at the centre and Punjab, its public image has proven extremely difficult to rehabilitate. The minister's words merely reflect the frustration her party feels at those who have been making the job more difficult.

The PML-N's first attempt at putting a muzzle on this new class of 'influencers', which set the narrative on social media platforms like X, Facebook, TikTok and others, took the form of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 — a law that was widely criticised for placing draconian limitations on Pakistanis' digital rights. Later, the PTI, too, tried to build on Peca to make its worst aspects more 'effective' in silencing critics. Thankfully, both efforts were largely neutralised, owing to the efforts of journalists and rights activists who identified the severe consequences for freedom of speech and expression that such legislation would entail. Unfortunately, the PML-N has now returned with what seems to be an even sharper weapon to silence criticism.

Much more detailed than the Defamation Ordinance 2002, it will replace, the new Punjab Defamation Bill, 2024 goes even further than the dictatorship-era regulations laid out in the original law. With a dangerously loose definition of defamation, much higher financial penalties and blanket restrictions on commenting on ongoing cases, it seems to have been drafted with the sole purpose of striking fear in anyone who may be contemplating criticising or expressing their frustrations at those currently in power.

Worst still, the law has been finalised without seeking input from civil society, journalists' unions or even the political opposition. Already, several media organisations and journalists' representative bodies have denounced the proposed law and intend to fight it. The Punjab government would be well-advised to put the brakes on this bill till it can get key stakeholders on board. It must remember that the same law can be weaponised against it one day, just as Peca was when the PTI took power. Online defamation is a growing problem, but one cannot cut off the nose to spite one's face. This issue must be handled with utmost care.

April enigma

Naseer Memon

The country is in the grip of an enigmatic weather cycle. Snowfall drifted its way from December-January to February-April. A startlingly wet April baffled weather oracles.

Upcountry mountains were enveloped in snowfall, and westerly systems brought frequent and heavy rain spells. Torrential rains in southern Balochistan during February-April avoided the previous trajectory. Gwadar, located on the shore, experienced nightmarish urban flooding. Standing and harvested wheat in the fields of Potohar was battered by untimely downpours.

Regional countries were also pummeled by cloudbursts. The UAE, dwarfing a 75-year record, received almost two years' rainfall in a single day, leaving Dubai's drainage system crippled and the city under waist-deep water. Just before, Oman had been lashed by an abnormal downpour, leading to fatalities.

Moving eastward, in April, southern China experienced over double the normal precipitation for the month, the second-highest level since 1961. Guangdong's provincial emergency department had to relocate over 100,000 residents amid a massive surge in the Beijiang river. The El Niño-stricken East and South Asian countries, including the Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh and India, endured blistering heatwaves. Half the districts in the Philippines experiencing a drought and heatwave, compelled the government to suspend in-person classes.

In Bangkok, muggy weather pushed the heat index to 52 degrees Celsius amid real temperatures of over 40°C. Bangladesh also had to close schools as temperatures soared to 42°C

in some areas. In India, an intense heatwave has affected the voter turnout in the ongoing elections. India's election commission has constituted a task force to monitor the impact of heatwaves before each round of voting. Inclement weather attacked East Africa where at least 155 people lost their life in Tanzania and more than 100 in Kenya in the flooding generated by the rainfall in April.

Bewildering bouts of rain and snowfall in April could be the precursor of a wet monsoon. In April, the weather took a sharp turn in Pakistan. In early April, the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) predicted a 30 per cent water shortage in the early Kharif season. (This was subsequently reversed after improved Kabul river flows.) Sluggish flows in the Indus river forced Hyderabad's water and sanitation authority to stop the consumption of drinking water from the Kotri Barrage canals due to contaminated flows from Manchar lake. Additional water had to be released to lessen the intense pollution at Kotri Barrage.

However, soon Pakistan was struck by a series of westerly weather systems that brought substantial rain, hailstorm and snowfall. A flood of over 110,000 cusecs in the Kabul river augmented flows in the Indus zone. Within a fortnight, an abrupt climate twist nullified Irsa's calculations regarding the early Kharif flows. By the end of April, the country received rainfall which was more than 150pc of the usual for the month. Balochistan received an astound-ding 500pc excessive rainfall. In KP and Sindh, the amount of rainfall was almost double that usually observed in the month.

This portentous behaviour of climate can lead to a dangerous situation during the next

monsoon. The climate outlook for the 2024 southwest monsoon season was finalised during the 28th session of the South Asian Climate Outlook Forum held on April 29 in Pune, India. The outlook anticipates above-normal rainfall during 2024 in most parts of South Asia except some areas in the northern, eastern and north-eastern parts.

This forbidding monsoon scenario should be taken seriously by the authorities. Sindh and Balochistan, the two worst-affected provinces in the 2022 floods, have not yet recovered from that apocalyptic disaster. Although breaches in dykes and cuts in roads have been plugged, the root causes of the disaster remain unaddressed. The Sindh High Court's Sukkur bench, in its verdict on a petition filed by several flood affecteds, ordered the revival of natural waterways and storm drains.

The court order reads "there is also utmost necessity to improve the drainage of storm water from both sides of Indus river by reviving the natural water ways including constructing new surface / storm drains in the left over area. Simultaneously, there is need to accelerate the work of RBOD (Right Bank Outfall Drain Project)". Sadly, neither have the encroached waterways been unclogged nor the two major drains, namely, the Left Bank Outfall Drain and RBOD, improved to transport flows of a similar scale. Inadequacy of flood prevention measures is a cause of consternation. Trepidation is mounting as the monsoon approaches. The fact is that, just as in 2022, this year, too, we are not prepared to manage a freshet. -- Courtesy Dawn

New way to learn

Zubeida Mustafa

Pakistan is not famous for its reading culture. Few people read books and the publishing industry has never flourished here as in other countries where books sell by the millions. But we shouldn't be surprised. After all, education is also in the doldrums in Pakistan and the co-relationship between the two is obvious.

An ideal solution would be to combine the two by prioritising books, with teaching literacy following much later. This may sound ridiculous and untenable. But it is not and those who have experienced the joy of reading from an early age would testify to the feasibility of this approach.

Here is how books, libraries and education can be integrated systematically, not randomly, to make an impact. My friend of long-standing with whom I have shared an interest in books, education and language, actually outlines a plan. Considering that "reading is the first and vital step for all gain in knowledge", my friend (she prefers anonymity) says our focus should be on the library. On the contrary, very few schools have a functioning library with a full-time librarian. Even in the public discourse on education, the library hardly ever finds a mention.

To "kindle children's interest in reading", it is important to introduce them to books as early as possible. My friend, a children's book writer of merit herself, describes her "dream library" as one that is spacious, "airy and well-lit". It should be comfortably furnished — even if sparsely — and ideally with mats, cushions and rugs and appropriately designed tables and chairs. It must have writ-

ing and drawing material, including a white board, markers, pencils and paper, and electronic equipment as is suitable for promoting storytelling.

Books, mostly in a language familiar to children, should be attractively arranged in open-access shelves. The most essential component should be a child-friendly librarian who has a passion for books. The walls should be adorned with colourful pictures with some wall space for the students to hang the pictures they draw. The aim should be to help the child relax by allowing her to browse and draw, without compulsion.

What will a child learn in this library? She will acquire confidence, agency and the love of books. In the process, she will also pick up library etiquette which will come naturally to her if the librarian gently demonstrates to the children what is expected of the library user. The librarian should encourage children to discuss the books they read. She should also facilitate book-related activities such as famous people being invited to tell their own life stories. Essay writing, illustrating a text and reviewing books would draw children to the library.

Another feature of her plan pertains to the importance of nourishment for the child. She strongly suggests that all children in a school should be provided some nourishment, such as milk and a boiled egg every day. Children are known to have fainted in school as they get no breakfast at home and come to school hungry. Given the fact that nearly 50pc of Pakistan's children are malnourished and stunted, the idea of feeding them is an excellent one.

The dream library

could have a snack bar attached where the school could offer edibles to the students before they entered the library.

The plan outlined here could be tried on an experimental basis in one school in each province. The primary classes should have a library period every day that should be free of the rigours of 'normal' schooling. The results can be assessed a year later to decide the future of school libraries. I am confident that if tested in its true spirit this plan should be a great success. Here are the reasons why I believe it would show promising results.

Maria Montessori, whose philosophy on early childhood learning has revolutionised education in many countries, places emphasis on the first six years of a child's life. This phase is marked by the mind's capacity to absorb. She talks of the unconscious mind acquiring consciousness and memory. What the child experiences in this period remains in her psyche. The child's book experience — if she has had one — would shape her passion for reading. This should spur on the self-directed learning drive every child possesses. It will stimulate her creativity and self-discovery instinct as well as her curiosity. Montessori talks of some children learning to read without the teacher's guidance if she has been given the right exposure.

Here is food for thought for the readers. A child enticed by a kindly librarian to come to the library she had hitherto shunned, remarked excitedly, "What lovely books. I had always believed all books are like my textbooks and I am bored stiff of them." -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Govt taking steps on priority basis to increase foreign investment in country: PM

Invites Chinese firm to invest in mining; assures maximum facilitation

ISLAMABAD (Online): A Chinese Company MCC Tongsin Resources has expressed deep interest in increasing its investment in the mineral and mining sector of Pakistan.

The interest was expressed by Chairman of MCC Tongsin Resources Wang Jicheng during a meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. The company gave a detailed briefing to the Prime Minister regarding the construction

of a mineral park in Pakistan and informed about the further investment plan. Welcoming the Chinese company, the Prime Minister said the government is taking steps on priority basis to increase foreign investment in the country. The Prime Minister invited the Chinese company to invest in the mineral sector in Pakistan from mining to the production of export goods. He said the investment will be extended

full facilitation for extraction of minerals, their processing and export of their products in order to enhance the country's exports. The Prime Minister directed the concerned federal ministers and officers to consult with the Chinese company. He also directed to include the Chief Minister of Balochistan and relevant departments and stakeholders of the province in the consultation process.

Shehbaz Sharif said China is Pakistan's long-standing friend and important partner in development. He said China helped Pakistan in difficult times, for which the entire Pakistan nation, is grateful to the Chinese leadership and people.

He said that being a time-tested friend, China supported Pakistan in every difficult hour for which the Pakistani nation was grateful to Chinese leadership and people.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman MCC Tongsin Resources Mr. Wang Jicheng calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhary Shafay Hussain witnessing the MoU ceremony between TEVTA and Pakistan Coating Association.

FBR holds meeting with trade unions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on Friday convened a meeting with representatives from various trade unions of the country aimed at addressing concerns raised by the trade and business community over implementation of the "Tajir Dost Scheme".

The meeting was attended by Chief coordinator of the Tajir Dost Scheme Naem Mir and other senior officials to foster a collaborative approach towards the success of scheme, said a press release issued by the FBR. During the meeting, representatives of the trade unions emphasized the

need for clear guidelines on taxation for newly registered traders under the Tajir Dost Scheme. They were of the view that retailers' reluctance to register stemmed from ambiguity surrounding the taxation regime, potentially hindering the scheme's effectiveness in enrolling traders.

Additionally, the representatives highlighted the absence of facilitation, tax exemptions or incentives to convince retailers to register under the scheme. FBR officials and the Chief coordinator of the Tajir Dost Scheme agreed to consider the trade community's reservations and recommendations.

Rupee gains 20 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Friday gained 20 paise against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.20 against the previous day's closing at Rs 278.40.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.50 and Rs 280.20 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 86 paise to close at Rs 301.84 against the last day's closing of Rs 302.70, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

PIC directs FBR to disclose information on tax evasion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) has directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to disclose detailed information regarding tax evasion investigations involving prominent enterprises.

The order comes in response to an appeal filed after the FBR failed to provide requested information under the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 to the applicant, said a press release.

KUST & KKKUK sign MoU with OGDCL

KARAK (APP): Vice Chancellor of Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak, and the Vice Chancellor of Kohat University of Science & Technology (KUST), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naeem Ud Din, recently held productive meetings with representatives of Oil and Gas Development Corporation Limited (OGDCL) in Islamabad.

The Vice Chancellor was accompanied by a delegation from KUST and Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak.

The Vice Chancellor met with OGDCL General Manager Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Abdur Raziq Khattak, and other senior officers of the company. The OGDCL authorities expressed their willingness to extend assistance to both universities in plantation initiatives and other projects aimed at benefiting students and the local populace.

Memorandum of understanding (MoU's) were also signed between KUST and OGDCL as well as KKKUK and OGDCL showing the commitment between the universities and OGDCL.

SBP injects Rs 809.7 billion into market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan, Friday, injected Rs 809.7 billion in the market through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO) cumulatively. According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on May 17, 2024 for tenors of 7 and 28 days.

The central bank received two quotes for 7-day tenor amounting to Rs 89 billion offered at the rate of return ranging between 22.09 to 22.10 percent and 13 quotes for 28-day tenor amounting to Rs 827.7 billion at the rate of return ranging between 22.05 to 22.10%.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships, America, Aljalaa, Chemroad Journey, Pan IVY, Gaslog Sydney and World Virtue scheduled to load/offload Container, Fuel oil, Palm oil, Chemicals, LNG and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Oil Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Grain Terminal, Elengy Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Thursday.

German Consul General assured to prioritize visas to businessmen: Atif Ikram

Independent Report

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has said that the German Consul General in Karachi, H. E. Rüdiger Lotz, has apprised the business, industry and trade community from the apex platform of FPCCI that the business visas will be given priority in the visa issuance to Pakistani citizens as economic relations top the agenda. It is pertinent to

country. He put forward the top areas of B2B cooperation as startups, research & development, women empowerment, vocational training and facilitation of business tourism. Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon expressed his pleasure that the German Consulate has appointed a prominent woman member of FPCCI, Ms. Sahibzadi Mahin Khan, as their focal person on trade and



note that top German diplomats visited FPCCI Head Office in Karachi to attend a high-profile, interactive session with the business community.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, invited the business community and chambers of Germany to be their partner in growth and development of Pakistan; whereas, he outlined the principle objective of FPCCI's Vision 2030 as achieving \$100 billion in annual exports for the

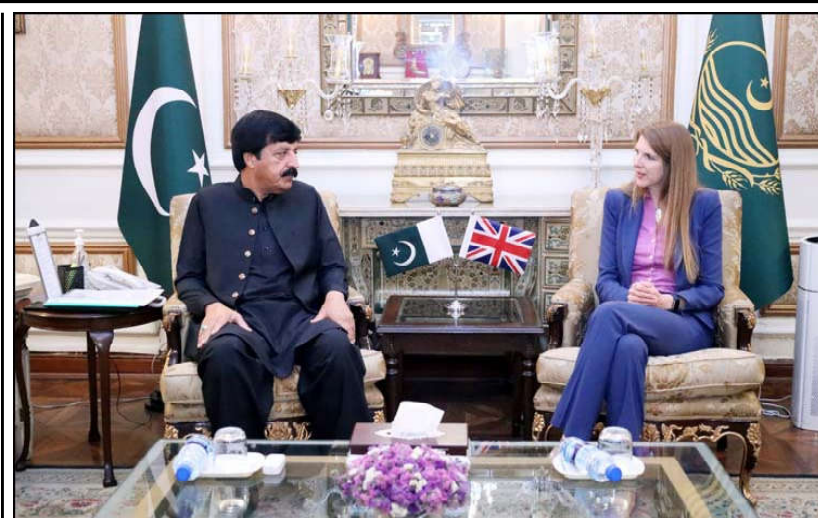
investment for Sindh and Balochistan region. Mr. Shabbir Mansha, former VP FPCCI, requested that the German consulate should issue long-term visas to the business community after due diligence of their papers as it can result in enhanced collaborative partnerships between the private-sectors of two countries. Additionally, he proposed that Pakistan has a large, young and skilled pool of human resources; which can be employed across various industries.

British HC calls on Punjab governor, discusses promotion of bilateral relations

Independent Report
LAHORE: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore, today. In the meeting, issues of mutual interest, ways to strengthen bilateral relations, climate change and important issues including wheat crisis were discussed in detail. Head of Lahore Office, Clara Strandhoj was also present during the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Britain. He said that Britain has supported Pakistan in every difficult time including floods, earthquake, which is duly acknowledged by the Government of Pakistan. Governor Punjab further said that Pakistan has suffered a colossal loss in the form of flash floods due to climate change. He said that climate change was also having adverse effect on the agricultural sector of Pakistan. Governor Punjab expressed hope that Britain would highlight the issue of Pakistan being affected by climate change in

international forums. He said that Pakistan is an agricultural country and it is very important to support farmers for the development of the agriculture sector. He said that Pakistan People's Party has always taken steps for the welfare of farmers and labour class. He said that the government was trying to resolve wheat crisis issue on priority and the situation had already improved. Governor Punjab said that as a representative of the federation in Punjab, he would play a positive role in the improvement of Punjab.



LAHORE: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

LHC gives 3-week time to Punjab govt to appoint special court judges

Independent Report
LAHORE (Online): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday granted the provincial government three-week time to appoint judges to special courts, including anti-terrorism courts.

LHC Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan issued the orders while hearing a petition, filed by the provincial government, seeking the transfer of certain cases from Anti-Terrorism Court-1 Rawalpindi to another court.

At the start of proceedings, members of the provincial committee tasked with finalising the appointments of judges, including Marriyum Aurangzeb and Mujtaba Shujaur Rehman, appeared in court, following directions issued at the previous proceedings.

Advocate General Punjab Khalid Ishaq informed the court about the steps taken so far for appointment of judges. Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb highlighted the government's commitment to making transparent appointments, while Provincial Law Minister Sohaib Ahmad assured that appointments would comply with the legal standards.

However, the chief justice expressed dissatisfaction over the delay in appointment of judges, stating that timely appointments would lead to prompt decisions.

In response, Marriyum Aurangzeb mentioned that the Punjab government had formed a committee for judges' appointments, with a request to suggest a panel of judges, assuring that the appointments would be made from the given list.

Health minister lauds new air ambulance service as 'gift from CM'

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Health and Emergency Services Khawaja Salman Rafique has appreciated the introduction of the air ambulance service as a gift from Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the people of the province.

Presiding over a meeting at the Emergency Head Office on Friday, he underscored the government's commitment to enhancing welfare of Punjab's citizens through improved emergency services.

"Emergency Services is the department dedicated to welfare of the people of Punjab," the minister added. "We are focusing on our capacity building for our field staff to ensure they can meet the demands of emergency situations effectively."

The minister highlighted ongoing efforts to review and enhance emergency services on motorways and improve the existing motorbike service. He also emphasised that public projects under the Department of Emergency Services Punjab will undergo weekly reviews to ensure their efficacy and progress.

Punjab Emergency Services Department Secretary Dr. Rizwan Naser, aligning with the minister's vision, detailed the department's achievements.

LHC links distribution of motorcycle to students scheme to NOC

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has linked Distribution of motorcycle to students scheme to NOC.

LHC has sought detailed report regarding bikes distribution scheme from Punjab government till May 27. The petitions regarding elimination of smog came up for hearing before LHC Friday.

Justice Shahid Karim of LHC took up for hearing petitions filed by citizen Haroon Farooq and others Friday. Justice Shahid Karim remarked the issue of pollution is grave which cannot be ignored.

During the hearing of the case related to distribution of motorcycles to students scheme the court said in its remarks non-obtaining environmental NOC before project is criminal case.

The court ordered to submit report regarding restoration of 7 sports complex of LDA and cutting of tree.

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FAISALABAD: Participants hold a banner during awareness walk on the eve of World Mental Health at Allied Hospital in the city.

Punjab Finance Minister announces interest-free loans for farmers

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Finance Minister Mujtabi Shujaur Rehman has announced the provision of interest-free loans to farmers during the crucial crop sowing season for bolstering agricultural endeavors. This financial assistance seeks to empower farmers and facilitate their agricultural activities. Furthermore, Minister Rehman emphasized the need to ensure swift financial support, within a timeframe of three months, to the wives and children of employees who tragically lost their lives during their

tenure of service. This measure reflects the government's commitment to providing comprehensive support to the families of deceased employees. These announcements were made during the fourth session of the Standing Committee on Legislation and Privatization of the Cabinet, presided over by Minister Rehman. The meeting was attended by notable figures including Provincial Minister for Law and Communications Malik Sohob Bharat, Provincial Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Malik, and key officials from related departments.

ANF recovers 133 kg drugs in five operations

Independent Report
RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 133 kg drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that 65 kg hashish was recovered from Piski Gwadar while 36 kg hashish and 2.2 kg opium were recovered from Khushab and two accused were arrested.

Jinnah House attack: ATC issue warrants for 11 PTI workers over non-appearance

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday issued bailable arrest warrants for 11 workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), who were out on bail, due to their non-appearance in a trial related to Jinnah House attack. The court issued bailable arrest warrants of accused, Abdul Razzaq, Qasim Liaqat, Majid Rais, Aman Ullah, Maqbool Murad.

KPRA continues crackdown against non-compliant hotels

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA) Friday continued raids on the business premises of non-compliant taxpayers in Peshawar to improve tax compliance and discourage tax evasion.

A team of KPRA Peshawar including Assistant Collector Khalid Mansoor, Assistant Collector Roohullah Khan, Assistant Collector Shah Nawaz Khan, Assistant Collector Muhammad Imran Khan, Inspector Muhammad Afzal Abid, Auditor Hadi Hussain Bangash and Auditor Sikandar Hayat conducted a raid on a restaurant located in Peshawar Saddar Cantonment area and confiscated its record. On the directives of Director General KPRA Fouzia Iqbal, KPRA has launched a crackdown against non-compliant taxpayers across the province.

Governor administers oath to Chairman PPSC

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on Friday administered oath to the new Chairman Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC) Lieutenant General (R) Muhammad Abdul Aziz during a ceremony at the Governor's House.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Peshawar, Zubair Ali addresses to media persons during press conference, at Peshawar press club.

International News

Putin says Russia wants a buffer zone in Ukraine's Kharkiv but has no plans to capture the city

Putin says oil pipeline could run alongside planned new gas link to China

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday that Moscow's offensive in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region aims to create a buffer zone but has no plans to capture the city.

Putin's comments on a trip to China were his first on the offensive launched on May 10, which opened a new front in the war and displaced thousands of Ukrainians within few days. It came hours after a massive Ukrainian drone attack on Russian-occupied Crimea early Friday caused power cutoffs in the city of Sevastopol while damaging aircraft and fuel storage at an airbase. In southern Russia, Russian authorities said the attack also

set a refinery ablaze. Speaking to reporters Friday on a visit to Harbin, China, Putin said that Moscow launched attacks in the Kharkiv region in response to the Ukrainian shelling of Russia's Belgorod region.



Taiwan lawmakers argue and exchange blows during a parliamentary session in Taipei, Taiwan.

North Korea fires multiple short-range ballistic missiles, Seoul says

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea fired multiple short-range ballistic missile towards the sea off its east coast on Friday, South Korea's military said, the latest in series of weapon tests carried out by Pyongyang in recent months.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the projectiles were fired from the east coast town of Wonsan, while Japan's public broadcaster NHK reported a short-range missile appeared to have been launched and had already fallen, citing a government official.

Rescue efforts halted after South African building collapse where 33 died

Monitoring Desk
JOHANNESBURG: Officials in the South African city of George halted the search for survivors and more bodies on Friday at the site of a collapsed building where 33 people died.



Russian President Vladimir Putin delivers a speech during the 8th Russian-Chinese EXPO and the 4th Russian-Chinese Forum on Interregional Cooperation in Harbin, China.

Fierce fighting in northern Gaza, as aid starts to roll off US-built pier

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli forces battled Hamas fighters in the narrow alleyways of Jabalia in northern Gaza on Friday in some of the fiercest engagements since they returned to the area a week ago, while in the south militants attacked tanks massing around Rafah.

Residents said Israeli armour had thrust as far as the market at the heart of Jabalia, the largest of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, and that bulldozers were demolishing homes and shops in the path of the advance.

Russia says US 'playing with fire' in 'indirect war' with Moscow

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: A top Russian diplomat said on Friday the United States had long since entered into a state of indirect war with Moscow and was playing with fire over Ukraine by behaving in such a way that the situation could spin out of control.

Iran arrests over 250 in raid on 'satanist network'

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iranian police announced on Friday they arrested more than 250 people, including three foreigners, over promoting "satanism" west of the capital Tehran, state media reported.

"Three European citizens" were also arrested during the police operation in Shahryar City, west of Tehran, on Thursday night. "Symbols of satanism, alcoholic beverages and psychoactive substances along with 73 vehicles were seized" during the raid, police added in the statement.

Slovakia's PM Fico still in intensive care after assassination bid, govt says

Monitoring Desk
BANSKA BYSTRICA: Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico remains in intensive care, the government said on Friday, two days after he was shot at close range in an assassination attempt that stunned the small Central European nation and drew international condemnation.

'Our supplies will not last', warns doctor at Gaza trauma centre

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: At a field hospital that has become one of Gaza's main trauma centres, a doctor who has worked in a dozen war zones described the situation as the most "catastrophic" he had ever seen.

150-bed facility made up of numerous white tents and shipping containers. Since the first evacuation orders for Rafah were issued on May 6, ahead of a long-feared ground invasion of the southernmost part of Gaza, nearly half of the 1.4 million people who have been sheltering there have left, according to UN agencies.

There has been a massive movement of population, Ali said, adding that most had avoided Al-Mawasi, which was already dramatically overcrowded, heading instead for the war-scarred city of Khan Yunis, which was a battleground until just last month.

Those arriving were "exhausted, they are scared, they don't have resources".

Ukraine allows some convicts to join armed forces in manpower push

Monitoring Desk
UKRAINE: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a law allowing some convicts to join the armed forces as it battles to hold the line against Russian offensives in Ukraine's northeast, east and south, the parliamentary database showed on Friday.

Manpower has long been an issue for Kyiv's military as it fights a much larger and better-equipped foe. The problem has grown more acute in recent months, prompting authorities to introduce stricter measures for draft evaders.

PM directs launching nationwide programme to overcome child stunting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned to launch a nationwide programme, in coordination with the provincial governments, to overcome the challenge of child stunting.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the issue of child stunting, also called for the formulation of a comprehensive plan for the protection of children against fatal diseases, for population welfare and for coping with the health sector issues.

According to the World Health Organisation, child stunting refers to a child who is too short for his or her age and is the result of chronic or recurrent malnutrition. Stunting is a contributing risk factor to child mortality and is also a marker of inequalities in human development.

Prime Minister

Shehbaz said that the Federal Government, in collaboration with the provincial governments, would take priority measures for better child growth to achieve the country's bright future. Similarly, a nationwide awareness campaign was also equally essential to do away with the issue of stunting, he added.

He thanked the international experts participating in the meeting which featured the presentation of statistics on the children's growth by the World Bank.

The participants were told that a significant ratio of children in Pakistan suffered stunted growth caused by the lack of basic healthcare and nutrition, contaminated drinking water, poor cleanliness, and lack of awareness of children's growth.

Besides, the statistics about the prevalence of

TB, hepatitis, diabetes and other fatal diseases in Pakistan were also highlighted and suggestions were put forward to overcome them.

The prime minister instructed the relevant authorities to immediately present a comprehensive plan on the matter.

Federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, PM's Coordinator Malik Mukhtar Ahmed, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Jahanzeb Khan, World Bank Country Director Najib Benhassine, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan Abdullah Fadi, Country Director of World Food Program Coco Ushiyama and other internationally renowned experts attended the meeting.

The provincial chief secretaries Dr Zulfiqar Ali Bhutta, Dr Sajid Sufi, Dr Ijaz Nabi and other experts joined the meeting via video link.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to discuss the issue of child stunting.

Mining a top priority under CPEC Phase-2: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal said Friday that mining sector was the priority area of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Phase-2.

During a meeting with a MRDL Saindak, a Chinese mining company working in Chaghi Balochistan, he commended the company's decades long efforts to promote mining sector in the resource rich area of Balochistan.

In response to the company's request to seek inclusion of their latest project in CPEC, the min-

ister directed them to prepare their proposal, according to press release issued by the Planning Ministry.

It was discussed during the meeting that if their energy needs are met by establishing a national power grid, the operational cost of all mining projects in the province will be reduced.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Saindak Copper-Gold Project in Balochistan is operated by MCCT Resources Development Company Pvt Ltd (MRDL).

MCCT has submitted a proposal of establishing a mineral industrial park in Pakistan which consists of

copper/lead/zinc refining and deep processing, giving more value addition to the mineral products.

With the development of more mining projects, establishing such an industrial park will become feasible.

The mineral industrial park will also attract investors to invest in metal refineries and processing plant which produces wires, rods, plate and other products.

Meanwhile, power supply, water supply, transportation and other industries can also develop to facilitate the industrial park, the statement added.

Khawaja asks for enhanced security measures within premises of NA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Friday stressed to ensure elaborate security measures within the premises of National Assembly building and its lobbies.

Speaking in the National Assembly, the minister said that a large number of unidentified individuals are often present at the building's entrance.

Khawaja Asif noted that people congregate outside the hall, in front of the elevators, and in the corridors, posing significant security risks.

The minister said there was a system for issuing passes to the Members of National Assembly in the past, which should be implemented strictly to maintain security in the Parliament.

Khawaja Asif said that enhanced security measures

are crucial to avoid any untoward incident. Referring to an incident in Dasu, where a suspicious vehicle remained in Pakistan for ten days without any checks.

He also expressed concern about the behavior of individuals seated in the gallery, who often engage in slogan chanting, thereby undermining the sanctity of the House.

The minister stressed that such activities should cease and that the National Assembly is not a place for protests or demonstrations.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that verbal instructions had been issued previously, followed by written directives on May 14.

Ayaz Sadiq said that guests visiting from the Senate also come to the National Assembly, and random checks are being conducted.



ISLAMABAD: IUCN country representative Mahmood Akhtar Cheema presenting an annual monitoring and evaluation report on UGPP & forestry to the PM's Coordinator on climate change Romina Khurshid Alam.

Amir Muqam participates in farewell reception of outgoing Federal Secretary SAFRON

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of States & Frontier Regions (SAFRON) on Friday arranged a farewell party in the honour of outgoing Federal Secretary SAFRON Naheed S. Durrani.

The farewell reception was participated by Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam as a chief guest, said a press release.

The farewell reception was attended by senior officers of SAFRON, Joint Secretary Agha Waseem, Joint Secretary Azra Jamali, Chief Commissioner Afghan Refugees Muhammad

Abbas Khan, Filiberto Gabresti Principal Adviser, Heidi-GIZ Islamabad and Dr Imran Zeb-UNHCR Consultant.

Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam said that Naheed S. Durrani was a principled and competent Secretary and her services for Ministry of States and Frontier Regions will always be remembered. The Minister also lauded the federal secretary's efforts for the promotion of Ministry. Outgoing Federal Secretary thanked Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam and all the officers for their support and acknowledgement.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan Frederico Silva, speaks during a ceremony on the eve of World Day of the Portuguese Language and the Lusophone Culture at the residence of Brazil Ambassador in the Federal Capital, Ambassador of Brazil to Pakistan, Olyntho Vieira and Prof. Guomar de Grammont is also seen in the occasion.

KSrelief concludes 4 more medical camps in Sindh, Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) has wrapped up its sponsorship of four more medical camps in Pakistan, marking the second phase of a vital project aimed at combating blindness and eye diseases.

Collaborating with the Al-Basir International Foundation and Al-Ibrahim Eye Hospital Karachi, these camps provided advanced eye care facilities to individuals facing financial constraints or lacking access to specialized treatment.

Strategically positioned in rural and urban areas of Sindh and Balochistan, these camps addressed regions with limited eye care services.

The primary goal was

early detection and treatment of eye-related issues to prevent blindness and enhance thousands of lives.

Over the course of the program, more than 18,056 medical examinations and 1,633 surgeries were successfully conducted. Furthermore, 3,116 pairs of corrective glasses were distributed, along with prescribed medications, ensuring comprehensive care for all patients.

The impact of this initiative has been profound, touching communities across Sindh and Balochistan provinces.

Held in Karachi, Sukkur, Kandiaro in Sindh, and District Kharan in Balochistan, these camps provided specialized eye care services, restoring vision and offering hope for a brighter future.



DOHA: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari witnessing MoU between Red Crescent Qatar and Red Crescent Pakistan during visited the Qatar Red Crescent Society headquarters.

Chairman PRCS visits Qatar Red Crescent HQs in Doha

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari visited the Qatar Red Crescent Society headquarters in Doha on Thursday. He was warmly received by Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) Secretary General, Faisal Mohamed Al-Emadi, and the head of programs.

Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari held talks with the top officials of QRCS.

The meeting shed light on bilateral humanitarian relations and the current humanitarian picture across the region. Speaking on this occasion, the Chairman highlighted the steadfast support from brotherly Qatar through both good and challenging times.

He praised the Qatar Red Crescent Society's relentless dedication, which has been crucial in their collaborative efforts to address major crises in Pakistan.

25 illegal buildings sealed under CDA anti encroachment operation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development, on the directives of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Friday sealed 25 illegal buildings and issued warning to a private housing society during its operations conducted against illegal constructions, encroachments,

illegal housing societies and violation of building bylaws all over the city.

In this connection strict action was taken against the violation of layout plan (LOP) in Jinnah Garden Extension and all the roads including the entrances built beyond the LOP were removed, a news release said.

Dengue defense: ICT's admin launches public education campaign

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory Administration with the collaboration of District Health Office Friday started an awareness campaign to combat the dengue outbreak in the Federal Capital.

According to the Spokesman of ICT's Administration, Deputy Commissioner, Irfan Nawaz Memon, and District Health Officer, Dr. Zaem Zia, led the campaign by engaging directly with the public.

They handed out informational pamphlets to residents, aiming to educate them about preventive measures against dengue. The DC highlighted that the success of the dengue prevention campaign relies heavily on the active participation of citizens. He urged everyone to adhere to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) designed to prevent dengue. To tackle the issue effectively, joint teams have been established to locate and eliminate dengue larvae across the city. These efforts were part of a broader initiative to ensure the community remains vigilant and takes necessary precautions.

SP Dolphin orders Squad officials to perform their duty efficiently

ISLAMABAD: According to details, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the SP Dolphin held a meeting with the Dolphin Squad officers, a public relations officer said.

He said that, the SP Dolphin Syed Kazim Naqvi emphasized the need to make patrols more effective in combating crimes in Islamabad, particularly by positioning themselves strategically in areas with higher crime rates.

Encouragement was extended for arrests of criminals, and a strict zero-tolerance policy against corruption within the police force was underscored.

Furthermore, the SP Dolphin reiterated the importance of all police officers and officials in the prevention and control of crimes, emphasizing their role in ensuring the safety of lives and property of the citizens.

Salik interacts with Pakistani Hujjaj to get feedback on arrangements

MADINAH al-MUNAWWARAH (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain made surprise visits to different hotels and interacted with Pakistani Hujjaj staying there to get their feedback on the arrangements made by Pakistan for their facilitation in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The minister's humble gesture resonated deeply with the Hujjaj, who expressed their delight and appreciation for this rare opportunity to connect with their leader in such a spiritually significant setting. He was accompanied by Additional Secretary Dr Ata-ur-Rehman and Director Haji Madinah.

Some pilgrims complained about non-activation of the mobile sim cards provided by the government for Hajj days in Saudi Arabia, upon which, Chaudhry Salik directed the Mouavneen (Hajj supporting staff) to provide technical assistance.

Following which, a female pilgrim commented that her mobile phone sim got activated today, which enabled her contact with the family back in Pakistan.

After elderly Hujjaj asked they were unable to get themselves registered with the Nusuk app to get permit to enter the Riazul Jannah, the minister informed them that all such pilgrims would be sent in groups to visit the sacred site between the Minbar (pulpit) of Masjid-e-Nabvi and Roza-e-Rasool (SAW).

Federal Minister of Religious Affairs and Ynterfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain meeting with Pakistani pilgrims.

MADINAH: Federal Minister of Religious Affairs and Ynterfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain meeting with Pakistani pilgrims.

CUI arranges open house, job fair

ISLAMABAD (APP): COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), Wah campus organized an Open House and Job Fair for the graduating students of Spring semester 2024.

A total of 595 students from Electrical and Computer Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Management Sciences, and Computer Sciences departments showcased 204 Final Year Projects (FYPs) which portrayed their professional skills and expertise for industries. Representatives from 136 companies evaluated projects, conducted interviews, and short listed students for job placements, said a news release issued here.

Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Bhatti, Incharge of the Career Development Center (CDC), highlighted the CDC's role and the event details.

The Campus Director, Prof. Dr Muhammad Abid, welcomed the participating industry, guest, students and FYP evaluators. He shared that the CUI Wah

believes in transparency and digitization of such scientific projects and researches to show the world. He briefed the industry that all FYPs presentations and student's resumes are available on website providing global visibility of the CUI Wah graduates.

He added that when industry and academia work together, students will be able to benefit from real-world experiences and practical training that helps them to prepare for their future careers and to succeed in the competitive job market. The Campus Director also pointed out the availability of the best talents here at CUI Wah Campus and persuaded the companies to utilize skills of students for the betterment of industry and country. Assistant Vice President at Systems Ltd., Imran Latif graced the occasion as the chief guest in the opening session of event. He stressed the importance of industry-academia partnerships and support of the Systems Ltd's for making graduates industry-ready.

Edu. ministry to ensure clean drinking water in ICT schools

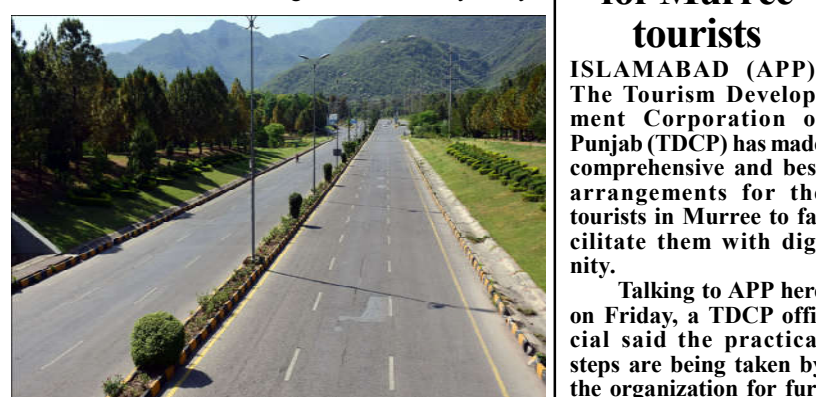
ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Education has taken an initiative to ensure the safety of drinking water within educational institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

According to the Education Ministry, it has been decided to conduct testing of the water quality in all schools and colleges in Islamabad, aims to identify any impurity in water quality and ensure to take appropriate measures to rectify them promptly. Following the testing, schools and colleges are required to take necessary actions to address any issues found and ensure the provision of clean and safe drinking water for students and staff.

TDCP makes best arrangement for Murree tourists

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP) has made comprehensive and best arrangements for the tourists in Murree to facilitate them with dignity.

Talking to APP here on Friday, a TDCP official said the practical steps are being taken by the organization for further promotion of tourism in Murree.



ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted 7th Avenue due to hot weather in the Federal Capital.

Japan important dev. partner of Pakistan: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that Japan was an important development partner of Pakistan and Tokyo's support in difficult times has always been valuable for the people of Pakistan. During a meeting with Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan Wada Mitsuhiro here, he said Pakistan and Japan enjoyed a long-standing relationship of friendship and cooperation. In the

meeting, bilateral diplomatic relations, cooperation in media sectors, fake news, economic initiatives of the government, and other important issues of mutual interest were discussed.

The two countries agreed to further expand the scope of cooperation in various sectors. The minister appreciated Japan International Cooperation Agency for its support for the development of Pakistan.

AIG Operations holds Khuli Kachehri to address grievances of public

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali

complaints of the citizens and marked their applications to the concerned officers for timely action on merit. He also directed them to send reports to his



Nasir Ali Rizvi, the AIG Operations Islamabad Anayat Ali Shah said that the Islamabad Police is committed to resolve public issues on priority, a public relations officer said.

He said this while listening to the complaints and issues of the public as well as police officials during the Khuli Kachehri held at Central Police Office Islamabad. Citizens, student volunteers of the Friends of Police program, and senior police officers were also present on this occasion.

During the Khuli Kachehri, he listened to the

offices in the given time frame. He further said that strict action will be taken against officials involved in bribery or corruption and a zero tolerance policy will be adopted in this regard.

He emphasized that Islamabad Police would not leave any stone unturned to secure the lives and property of the citizens. "Such interaction would be continued in future to provide maximum relief to the citizens," he added.

AIG Operations further said that interaction during "Khuli Kachehri" would help to promote friendly policing.