

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 125 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Wednesday May 29, 2024, Zeeqad 20, 1445 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

Elected PML-N president unopposed

Country's economic indicators improving: Nawaz Sharif

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) newly elected President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government for showing good performance and said that economic indicators were already improving.

Addressing the general council meeting (GCM) at a local hotel he urged Shehbaz Sharif to work with passion and commitment as there would be some one to two years of hardship but then prosperity would arrive.

He said, "Let party workers rejoice today and asked the workers to be happy as today the decision in Panama Papers case by former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar stands no where." Nawaz Sharif said, "Call those who decided that Nawaz Sharif is disqualified forever."

He said, "With the

grace of Allah Almighty, Nawaz Sharif is standing before you again." Why was the decision made and for what reason, he questioned and told that just because Nawaz Sharif didn't take salary from his son.

He congratulated his party members and brother Shehbaz Sharif for steadfastly holding on to the party banner through thick and thin.

Nawaz Sharif alleged that many forces had tried to harm his relationship with his brother and the PML-N supporters but Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif continued to stay loyal.

The PML-N President claimed that many years ago his brother was offered the prime minister's seat on the condition of sidelining Nawaz but Shehbaz Sharif rejected the offer.

He also lauded Maryam Nawaz and Hamza Shehbaz for facing many trials, in-

cluding prison sentences, with "bravery and strength" for the party and country's sake.

He also appreciated Rana Sanaullah, Bashir Memon, Ishaq Dar, Ameer Muqam, Shah Ghulam Qadir, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Khawaja Asif, Hanif Abbasi, Ahsan Iqbal, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Mian Javed Latif and others for extending unwavering support to the party even during difficult times.

He said, "The credit goes to the PML-N that whenever it has come to power, it turned around the country in the real sense."

He said that if success journey had not been halted then today Pakistan would have been biggest power of the region and even in the continent Asia.

Nawaz Sharif said that it was very unfortunate that leg pulling had been continuing since 1947 and

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

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

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

was still ongoing and this thing had weakened the country a lot. Earlier Former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was once again elected unopposed as president of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) after six years.



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

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

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

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

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

the country's progress.

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

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

During the briefing on load management and power theft issue, it was told that under a joint strategy formulated following a conversation between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister and federal minister for power, it had been agreed to reduce load shedding and line losses and ensure recovery of dues from defaulters in the province.

It was told that areas with more power theft and

line losses and low recovery ratio were being subjected to load shedding and that the upgradation of the south-north power transmission line would help improve the system.

The meeting participants were told that task forces were being formed at provincial and divisional levels to eliminate the power theft which would undergo a weekly performance review.

The meeting was attended by federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Dr Musaddik Malik and Awaiz Ahmed Leghari, Minister of State Ali Pervaiz Malik, Coordinator to PM Rana Ehsan Afzal, WAPDA chairman and relevant senior officers. The provincial chief secretaries and inspector generals of police joined the meeting via video link.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Electricity Supply Load Management and Anti-Power Theft Campaign.

China an important partner in economic development of Pakistan: PM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has China as an important partner in the economic development of Pakistan, and we desire increase of Pakistani exports to China.

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

Different ministries presented important proposals with reference to bilateral economic relations between Pakistan and China. Addressing the meeting PM Shehbaz

Sharif said we invite Chinese businessmen especially the Chinese textile industry to set up industries in Pakistan.

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

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

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

Gilani greets Nawaz Sharif on election as PML-N president

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

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

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

PM takes notice of fire erupted again at Margalla Hills

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday took notice of the fire which erupted again at the Margallah Hills, instructing the authorities concerned to extinguish it before spreading further.

The prime minister asked the relevant departments to immediately mobilize their teams to control the fire which broke out again a day after it was extinguished through a joint operation by the Pakistan Army, NDMA, Islamabad administration and the climate change ministry.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also directed the departments concerned to control the fire by ensuring the safety of human lives.



Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi calls on Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani in Islamabad.

Pakistan Navy foils major drug smuggling bid in North Arabian Sea

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

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

Naval warships of Pakistan Navy regularly perform duties on Regional Maritime Security Patrol to prevent drug smuggling, piracy and human trafficking at sea, the ISPR said.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad

Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday commended the efforts of Pakistan Navy in thwarting narcotics smuggling attempt in the Northern Arabian Sea. The prime minister appreciated the crew members including officers and Jawans of PNS Aslat for intercepting the vessel used for drug smuggling, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The Pakistan Navy had been working round the clock to safeguarding the maritime frontiers; and controlling pirates and human trafficking, he observed. The prime minister further said that he along with the entire nation lauded the officers and personnel of Pak Navy who had been performing duties away from their near and dear ones.



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Ship ASLAT seizes narcotics in the North Arabian Sea during Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP).

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

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

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

The secret agencies identified 108 officers and subordinate staff of Punjab police, CTD and revenue department after completing the investigation.

According to sources these officials were appointed in Lodhran, Okara, Rajan Pur, Lahore, Vehari, Sheikhpur, Kasur, Jhang, Narowal, Sahiwal and Mandi Baha ud Din. The officials from Khanewal, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan, Gujrat, Attock, Multan, DG Khan, Khushab and Attock also remained involved in wheat smuggling.

Sources said the trucks laden with wheat, sugar and rice were allowed to move from one city to other city unchecked. The officers involved in this scam facilitated the movement of these trucks from every city.

Sources said the federal government has sent a letter to Punjab government directing it to take departmental action against these employees forthwith.

Pakistan reviving Belt and Road Initiative projects, says Ahsan Iqbal

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

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

"Yeah, I'm very hopeful because I was there in China recently and I had meetings with their senior leadership... So I see great interest on the Chinese side to revive the momentum for CPEC and also to take it into the second phase," he said.

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

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

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



OTTAWA: Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Senior Judge SC of Pakistan meeting with Chief Justice of Canada Honorable Richard Wagner.

Hearing of cipher case likely today

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

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

Aleem hold meeting with Tajikistan's ministers to discuss various matters

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

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

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

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

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

Pakistan gives counselor access to Indian HC to 2 Indian spies

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

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

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

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

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

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

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Afghan puzzle

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

More difficult now

Dr Niaz Murtaza

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Methane moment

Jamil Ahmad

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Commerce News



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

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

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

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

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

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

PDMA issues advisory for farmers, herders

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

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

Gold rates dip by Rs.500 per tola

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

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

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

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

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

“He said this huge investment is an irrefutable proof of foreign investors’ confidence in government’s efforts to revamp the economy.”

UAE is home to 1.8 million Pakistanis who are contributing towards development, prosperity and economic growth of the two brotherly countries. In this regard PBF President suggested that there is a further need to increase cooperation between the two countries in the fields of aviation and tourism to increase people to people contact.

Pakistan, Cambodia sign MoU on trade, investment promotion

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

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

“This MoU will significantly contribute

Chairman WAPDA reviews progress on Tarbela 5th exten. project

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Representatives of the Consultants and the Contractors briefed the Chairman about site-wise progress achieved so far.

After the site visit, the Chairman also presided over a meeting at the Project office. A detailed

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

He directed the Contractor to deploy additional resources to meet the timelines

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

Food minister announces price reduction of bakery items

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



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

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

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

President FCAA nominated Honorary Coordinator Federal Tax Ombudsman

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

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

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

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

PPP delegations meet governor, congratulate on assuming charge

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

Two killed, three injured in road mishaps

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

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

SIALKOT (APP): Provincial Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq has said that under the leadership of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Federal and Punjab government are working day and night for the development and prosperity of the country and the nation. History is a witness that whenever Muhammad Nawaz Sharif came into power, the country became stronger economically, ideologically and geographically. He expressed these views while speaking as a special guest at Kissan Mela 2024 in Koriky of Pasur tehsil. Member Provincial Assembly Chaudhry Naveed Ashraf, former Vice Chairman District Council Chaudhry Jameel Ashraf, Dawood Bukhari besides dignitaries of the area were present in large numbers.

Youm-e-Takbeer rally held in Dera

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

Pakistan defense made impregnable on May 28, 1998: Kundi

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

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

Ecotourism flourishes in Kalam following increase of temperature

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

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

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

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

International News

Spain, Ireland and Norway recognise Palestinian state

Monitoring Desk
MADRID: Spain, Ireland and Norway formally recognised the Palestinian state on Tuesday in a coordinated decision slammed by Israel as a "reward" for Hamas, more than seven months into the devastating Gaza bombardment. The three European countries believe their initiative has a strong symbolic impact that is likely to encourage others to follow suit, defying Israel which had condemned the plan. After Ireland's government formally approved the measure, Prime Minister Simon Harris said the aim was to keep Middle East peace hopes alive. "We had wanted to recognise Palestine at the end of a peace process. However, we have made this move alongside Spain and Norway to keep the miracle of peace alive," he said in a statement, urging Israel to "stop the humanitarian catastrophe" in Gaza. As Oslo's recognition went into effect, Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide hailed the move as "a special day for Norway-Palestine relations". After Spain's cabinet backed the move, Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares said it was a day that would be "etched in Spain's history". Earlier, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said the recognition was "essential" for peace, insisting the move was "not against anyone, least of all Israel" and the only way to

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



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

Security Council set to meet over deadly Rafah strike

Monitoring Desk
RAFAH: The UN Security Council was set to convene an emergency meeting Tuesday over an Israeli strike that killed dozens in a displaced persons camp in Rafah, as three European countries were slated to formally recognise a Palestinian state. AFP journalists on the ground early Tuesday reported fresh Israeli strikes overnight in the southern Gaza border city, where an Israeli attack targeting two senior Hamas members on Sunday night sparked a fire that ripped through a displacement centre, killing 45, according to Gaza health officials. The attack prompted a wave of international condemnation, with Palestinians and many Arab countries calling it a "massacre". Israel said it was looking into the "tragic accident". "There is no safe place in Gaza. This horror must stop," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres posted on social media. UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths pointed to the widespread warnings of civilian deaths that circulated ahead of Israel's incursion into Rafah, saying in a statement: "We've seen the consequences in last night's utterly unacceptable attack." "To call it 'a mistake' is a message that means nothing for those killed, those grieving, and those trying to save lives," he added.

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

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



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

Doctor says Gaza hospitals operating in 'mediaeval' conditions

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: Gaza hospitals are reduced to practising "mediaeval medicine", a British surgeon recently returned from the bombed Palestinian territory said on Monday. "It's absolutely true to describe it as mediaeval medicine. It is what you would hear about or read about what would be happening in Europe maybe 300, 400 years ago," Dr Khaled Dawas, head of gastrointestinal surgery at University College London Hospitals, said in an interview. Dawas described dire conditions in Gaza, with medical staff operating virtually without supplies, power supplies intermittent and patients lying on the floor. He returned at the end of April from his two-week stint to help overstretched Palestinian hospital surgeons - his second wartime stay there, following one in January. Dawas was in Brussels to describe his experience to European Union officials.

12 Indians killed in quarry collapse after cyclone rains

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

Iran talks suspended after Raisi's death, says IAEA

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

Storms kill 21 across four states in US

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

Russia invites Afghan Taliban to key economic forum

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

China calls for Red Sea attacks on civilian ships to end

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

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

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

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

Lieutenant General @ Khalid Kidwai said the full spectrum deterrence capabilities which was the combination of the conventional and most modern technology-based weapons capable to respond all threats from the enemy. He added that the full spectrum deterrence helped in restoring the strategic balance of power that enforced peace in the region. "In the past few decades, the robust

nuclear capability of Pakistan has enforced peace in the region. Pakistan does not adhere to the policy of no first use," he said.

General @ Kidwai explained that the nuclear programme of Pakistan was clearly divided into two periods; first from 1970s till 1999, the completion, and the second from 2000s till date that involved great political leadership and diplomatic efforts to protect it.

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

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



ISLAMABAD: People hanging on the passenger van risking their lives at Satra Meel area on the outskirts of Islamabad, need the attention of the concerned authorities.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi shaking hands with the personnel of Emergency Services at CDA Headquarters.

Naqvi announces five initiatives to provide relief to residents of Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday during his visit to Capital Development Authority (CDA) headquarters announced five initiatives with the aim to facilitate and provide best and fastest services for the residents of Islamabad.

He announced to launch of Capital Emergency Services in Islamabad and establishment of Capital Waste Management Company in Islamabad besides, establishment of Capital Safe City Authority, establishment of CBD Islamabad and Capital WASA will be built for the convenience of the citizens

of Islamabad. Mohsin Naqvi assigned the task to Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa to expedite the projects.

"Inshallah soon Islamabad will be made a model city," said Mohsin Naqvi.

During his visit to CDA headquarters, the minister met the staff of Ambulance 1122 and Fire Brigade and urged them to perform their duties diligently.

He directed to merge Ambulance, Fire Brigade and Water Rescue Services under Capital Emergency Services.

He said that citizens will be able to avail emergency services by calling at Rescue 1122 in case of any emergency and a unified emergency control room will be established in CDA for live tracking of vehicles through GPS.

He directed to pay special attention on the staff training of staff while ordering for setting up new emergency services 1122 stations in the city.

He also directed to fill the sanctioned vacant positions in Capital Development Authority (CDA) on merit while the number of ambulances may also be increased in Islamabad, he added.

DG Hajj highlights measures to facilitate pilgrims in Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General Hajj Abdul Wahab Soomro said on Tuesday that numerous steps were being taken to facilitate Pakistani pilgrims during their stay in Saudi Arabia. Talking to Pakistan Television News in Makkah, he emphasized the timely acquisition of space for pilgrims in Mina and the availability of train services to transport them to Mashayer.

This year, over sixteen thousand pilgrims have opted for a new short Hajj package introduced by the government, designed for those wishing to complete

Hajj in a shorter duration of 25 to 30 days, he said.

He said that the short hajj package was a great idea that attracted the nation's interest in a big way. DG highlighted that the government Hajj scheme primarily focuses on benefiting the low-income segment of society. He urged pilgrims to understand the spiritual significance of Hajj and maintain their composure during the sacred religious activities. Additionally, Abdul Wahab Soomro praised the special cooperation and efforts of Saudi Arabia in facilitating Pakistani pilgrims.

Syed Ali Raza assumes charge as DIG Islamabad

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Syed Ali Raza took charge of his post as DIG Islamabad he was previously posted as SSP (Operations) Lahore. After taking charge of his post as DIG Islamabad, he visited the branches and held an introductory meeting with the staff. While addressing the officers Syed Ali Raza has stated that we all were duty-bound to uphold the rule of law, protect the life and property of the common citizens.

He made it clear that if anyone thinks that he will misuse the power of uniform, it will not be acceptable. "All of us together as a team will play our role in making this city a cradle of peace in this best environment" he affirmed.

Moreover, DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza was considered a professional, experienced and crime fighter officer.



"It should be clear to all that we all have to uphold the rule of law, protect the life and property of the common citizens."

CDA implements efficiency, discipline rules for improved governance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Muhammad Ali Randhawa has approved the new Efficiency and Discipline Rules, 2020 to ensure transparency, effective internal accountability and streamline procedures within the civic body.

The rules aim to expedite inquiries and disciplinary actions, addressing delays.

Approval was granted during a headquarters meeting that assessed the Administration Wing's performance, encompassing Human Resource Development, Discipline Directorate, and other units.

Chairman CDA emphasized implementing a reward and punishment system to enhance service delivery and overall employee performance. He highlighted the adoption of Efficiency and Discipline Rules, 2020, to ensure swift conclusion of inquiries and disciplinary proceedings, emphasizing strict accountability.

The Chairman was informed that currently, there

is no set timeframe for concluding proceedings, leading to prolonged cases. He stated that the new rules will establish clear timelines for each step and hold inquiry officers accountable for delays in finalizing inquiries.

The Chairman of CDA was briefed that the Discipline Directorate is actively handling inquiries. Nearly 60 inquiries have been concluded in the last 4 to 5 months, with 55 new inquiries initiated during the same period.

Over the past three years, 998 inquiries and disciplinary proceedings against CDA officers and officials have concluded. Among them, 103 officers and officials faced major penalties, such as dismissal, compulsory retirement, and demotion.

The Accounts Officer and Cashier of the Land Payment Section were dismissed for their roles in a fake payment scam. Additionally, 631 officers and officials received minor penalties for inefficiency and misconduct, including the withholding of annual increments.



ISLAMABAD: People hanging on the passenger van risking their lives at Satra Meel area on the outskirts of Islamabad, need the attention of the concerned authorities.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Tuesday emphasized the concerted efforts to promote tolerance and understanding as well as unity to fight the menace of extremism posing threats to the world's peace and security.

"In today's world, extremism poses one of the most potent threats to peace and security... Let us promote tolerance and understanding recognizing that our diversity is our strength. We must stand united against extremism and injustice," the minister said addressing a symposium titled "From Gandhara to the World: The Legacy of Gandharan

Buddhism" held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here in connection with Vesak Day.

The two-day event brought together religious leaders and experts from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, besides scholars, diplomats, historians, and art enthusiasts to provide them a platform to exchange ideas and foster connections.

The minister said that the diverse gathering representing different countries and cultures underscored the deep and enduring ties between the nations, besides serving as a reminder of the profound connections that unite them in shared aspirations.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain along with Sri Lankan Minister for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Buddhadasa, Vidura Wickremnayake inaugurating the Gandhara Symposium and exhibition.

DIG Operations holds meeting with Traffic police officials

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to the details, DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Ali Raza chaired a meeting at Traffic Police Headquarters, the meeting was attended by SSP Traffic Muhammad Sarfraz Virk and zonal DSPs.

On this occasion, DIG Operations Islamabad emphasized the importance of providing better travel facilities and maintaining smooth traffic flow throughout the city. He stressed that officers must perform their duties efficiently while adhering to the law.

taken against unlicensed drivers.

During the meeting, DIG Operations issued directives to police officers to focus on traffic-related public facilities for public convenience.

Mobile services related to traffic police should be provided at educational institutions and important locations, and illegal parking at key commercial spots should be eliminated, he added.

He further directed that the Islamabad Traffic Police FM Radio be made more active, the welfare of officers on duty on the



He directed that, the Islamabad Traffic Police education team be made more effective, campaigns against one-wheeling be intensified, and actions against vehicles with fancy number plates and tinted glasses should be accelerated. Actions should also be

roads be improved, and the performance of outstanding officers should be encouraged. Ensuring the protection of citizens' lives and property and maintaining smooth traffic flow in the federal capital are among our top priorities, he maintained.

NDMA warns of deceptive website FERU

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday warned the masses to be aware of a website titled "FEDERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE UNIT-PAKISTAN" which was falsely representing the organisation.

The website has been unlawfully advertising job vacancies and soliciting application processing fees, a news release said.

"We strongly advise public to exercise due diligence and verify the legitimacy of any employment offers through NDMA's official website and other contact channels. <http://www.ndma.gov.pk/>

The official website of NDMA Pak is the sole source of authentic information regarding job opportunities and other related information," the NDMA said.

The NDMA appreciated public cooperation in remaining vigilant against such practices.

Hearing of recovery of missing poet case today

ISLAMABAD (Online): Hearing of recovery of missing poet Ahmad Farhad case will be held today (Wednesday) in Islamabad High Court (IHC).

Its live streaming will be made. The sector commander was summoned to appear before the court in person.

IHC has issued written order of hearing of missing Baloch students case.

It has been said in the written order that Attorney General (AG) has assured every person about whom it is alleged to have gone missing will reach his family at every cost.

Hearing of contempt of court case on letter of Justice Mohsin on 30th

ISLAMABAD (Online): Hearing of contempt of court case on the letter of justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani will be held on May 30 (Thursday).

Senior journalist Hamid Mir, president PFUJ, senior lawyer Ahmad Bilal Sufi and Said Ahmad Hassan Shah will appear as amici curiae.

A larger bench of IHC comprising Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) Amir Farooq, Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir will hear the case.

This bench had issued written order for hearing contempt of court case.

IHC had said in its order that PEMRA should prepare transcript of interviews of Waqas Malik and file it in the court before next hearing.

Youm-e-Takbeer day of national pride, courage, determination: Zafar

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Tuesday said that Youm-e-Takbeer is a day of national pride, courage and determination. In a press statement, he said that May 28, 1998, is celebrated as the day when Pakistan became the first nuclear power of the Islamic world.

It's a day to renew our commitment to defending our country and our freedom, he said adding that the government has declared May 28th as a national holiday to commemorate this achievement.

The day marks the failure of external and internal enemies' evil plans against

Pakistan, he said adding that the nuclear tests ensured the country's regional integrity, independence and sovereignty. He said that business community will continue to contribute in national building and economic development of the country.

He also expressed his firm commitment to support the efforts of the government and armed forces of the country for economic uplift and social prosperity. He said that a strong and stable economy was prerequisites for further strengthening the defence capabilities. Ahsan Zafar also lauded the efforts of all those who contributed in making Pakistan as a nuclear power.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Tapas Adhikari visiting the Gandhara Symposium and exhibition of Pakistan's Gandhara heritage on Vesak Day 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Office at Federal Capital.

Speakers say: Anti-state elements seeking to sabotage Pakistan's emotional attachment to Kashmiries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers here on Tuesday at a seminar expressed their views regarding the ongoing freedom movement in Occupied Kashmir, they said that the anti-state elements in Azad Kashmir are seeking to sabotage Pakistan's emotional attachment to Kashmiris and their struggle for Kashmiris.

Jammu Kashmir Students Organization of International Islamic University Islamabad organized Kashmir Festival and Kashmir Conference at Shah Abdul-lateef Bhattai Auditorium here in which political and Hurriyat leaders of Azad Jammu Kashmir and Occupied Jammu Kashmir participated, said a press release.

Among these leaders are Altaf Hussain Wani, Chairman of Kashmir Institute of International Relations, Chief Guest of Friends of Kashmir International, Hurriyat Leader Abdul Hameed Lone, Hurriyat Leader Syed Manzoor Ahmad Shah, Senior Journalist Abid Hameed Lone said that India's conspiracies against Pakistan will be resisted and our struggle will continue until the people of Jammu and Kashmir get justice.

He said that India should think a hundred times before attacking Azad Kashmir and if India does such an act, then India will have to suffer severe punishment. He said that since 2010, Modi is actually fooling the Indian people and this rhetoric and threats are only for power. Abdul Hameed Lone said that every citizen of Azad Jammu and Kashmir is a soldier of Pakistan without uniform.

The speakers said that the mission of the zealous people of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir is to support the oppressed people of Jammu and Kashmir against the illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir by India and the fulfillment of our