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dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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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: FO Spox

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, fig that various investment issues including CPEC were discussed in the meetings of Foreign Min-

ister 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.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah exchanging views with Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, President Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh during meeting held at CM House in Karachi.

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 Afghani and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, heard the suo-moto case on a press conference of Senator Faisal Vawda and remarks by Mustafa Kamal.

Minister orders to nab culprits involved in temple theft immediately

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Home Minister Ziaul-Hasan Lamjar Friday ordered to nab culprits involved in temple theft immediately, the minister took strict notice of goods theft from a temple in Tando Adam.

The Sindh Home Minister had also sought a

report from Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Hyderabad.

He said that any kind of injustice to the minority community was intolerable. He directed to ensure that the culprits involved in the theft of stolen idols and other goods will be arrested soon.

Sharjeel Inam Memon says: People's Bus service to be launched from Sukkur to Larkana, Khairpur, parking plaza to be build in Hyderabad

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Senior Minister for Information, Transport & Mass Transit and Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control Sharjeel Inam

tehsils with the district headquarters. 'We are considering bringing the scheme under this vision.' He said that under the instructions of Chairman Bilawal



Secretary of Transport Asad Zaman, Sindh Mass Transit Authority MD Kamal Hakeem Dayo, and other officials participated in the meeting. The Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the vision of PPP Chairman Bilawal Shafiq Zardari and President Asif Ali Zardari is to connect the

Bhutto, people's bus service will be started from Sukkur to Larkana and Sukkur to Khairpur.

On the occasion, Memon was given a detailed briefing on the construction of various BRTs, signals, and reconstruction of bus terminals, as well as the construction of a U-turn for the People's Bus Service. Additionally, it was decided to construct a parking plaza to reduce traffic pressure in the central ar-



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

Sindh IGP calls on CM; briefed him about law & order in province

CM directs IG to recover stolen idols, other goods from Ramapir Temple

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah Friday directed Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ghulam Nabi Memon to have 'complete control' over street crimes and other criminal activities.

The IGP called on the Sindh CM and briefed him about the overall law and order in the province, particularly the street crime in Karachi. Ghulam Nabi Memon stated that street crime has been 'controlled' to an extent and further action is underway.

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that with the political will of the government and the hard work of the police and Rangers, the street crime has come down from 254 per day in January 2024 to 170 in April 2024.

He said, "When we took over [Sindh government] in the last week of February 2024, there were 152 cases of street crime per day and now, we have controlled them to 170 per day but we are not satisfied with the crime rate and controlling it further," a statement issued from the CM House said.

The IGP briefed the CM that in January the street crime rate per day was 254 in January, in February 252, in March 245 and in April it came down to 170. At this, the CM said that it was considerable that the street crime has come down, but it must be controlled further.

To a question, IGP told the CM that the police had conducted a complete survey under which 3000 scrap dealers were working

in the city, of them 354 have been identified as dealers of stolen scrap. He disclosed that 32 teams were constituted to keep an eye on them and were doing a good job. The CM was told that the police have registered 77 FIRs, arrested several scrap dealers, and recovered engines and other stolen vehicle materials, and steel grills removed from the main roads.

The CM directed the IGP not to tolerate vehicle theft or lifting and to go hard against the culprits dealing with stolen material. He also directed IGP to start a similar action against the shopkeepers dealing with stolen mobile phones. "I want you [IGP] to start a crackdown against the shopkeepers purchasing and selling stolen mobile phones or their

spare parts," he said.

At this, the IGP told the CM that such action was in progress and its details would be shared with him within a week. The CM told the IGP that he has already released Rs1.4 billion for the Security-4 project under which CCTV cameras are to be installed at all the toll plazas of the city and other exit and entry points. At this, the IGP Ghulam Nabi Memon told the CM that out of 48 toll plazas 40 have been equipped with CCTV cameras and connected with the main Command & Control Center at CCPO.

The CM was told that 90 per cent of CCTV camera installation work had been completed and the remaining would be completed within the next one and half months.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori addressing a ceremony in honour of renowned poetess Dr. Nighat Iftekhar at Governor House

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.

Irrigation Minister holds meeting to review water, drainage scheme

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Irrigation and Food Department Jam Khan Shoro presided over a meeting to review new and old water and drainage schemes here on Friday.



In the meeting, a detailed briefing was given regarding the ongoing and new schemes of the Irrigation Department in various regions and CC lining project and other new schemes of Kotri, Sukkur, Larkana and other districts. Irrigation Minister directed the concerned departments to expedite the work and warned that any delay would not be tolerated. The officers concerned were also directed to submit the schemes before the end of the financial year. He said that Sindh government has desired for development of the irrigation department and all possible measures would be taken to achieve the objectives, he added.

Sindh Assembly to meet on May 20

KARACHI (APP): The Provincial Assembly of Sindh is going to meet on May 20, Monday at the Sindh Assembly Building at 2pm.

Atta Tarar gets additional portfolio of National Heritage & Culture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday assigned the additional portfolio of National Heritage and Culture to Attaullah Tarar who already holds the portfolio of Information and Broadcasting.

The prime minister, in terms of rule 3 (4) of the Rules of Business, 1973, has been pleased to allocate the additional portfolio (business of Government) of National Heritage and Culture.

Chief Secretary Sindh chairs meeting to review heatwave preparedness measures

Independent Report

KARACHI: Chief Secretary Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, presided over a high-level meeting today to assess and strategize comprehensive measures to address the impending heat wave expected to hit the province from May 21 to May 27.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Energy, Secretary Rehabilitation, Commissioner Karachi, Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (DG



PDMA), and other key officials. Additionally, all Divisional Commissioners participated via video link. During the meeting, DG PDMA briefed the participants on the alert issued to

all relevant organizations regarding the anticipated heat wave.

The detailed session involved discussions on various preventive measures and plans imple-

mented by the commissioners to mitigate heat stroke risks.

Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah recalled the severe heat wave of 2015, which resulted in significant loss of life. He highlighted the government's improved preparedness in 2016, which successfully saved many lives.

This historical perspective underscores the importance of current efforts to mitigate the impact of the impending heat wave.

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

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 authorities 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.



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

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



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

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.

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.

The USIP recommends several measures to combat this threat, including increased military and intelligence operations and enhanced counter-terrorism cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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 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 night-marish 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. In the east, 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.

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



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

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

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.

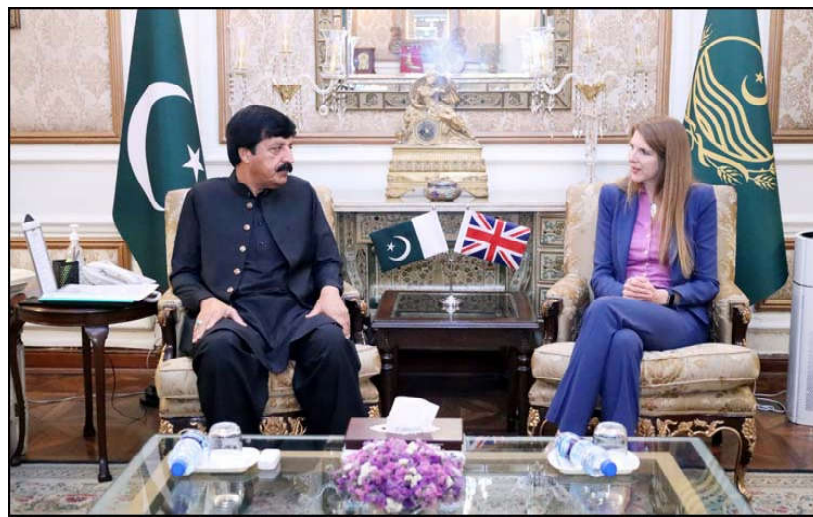
British HC calls on Punjab governor, discusses promotion of bilateral relations

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

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

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 capacity building for our



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

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 made the motorcycle distribution to students scheme conditional to NOC.

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



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 Sohail 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 Pinni 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 Razaq, 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,

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.

The Governor Punjab congratulated Lieutenant General (R) Muhammad Abdul Aziz on assuming the post of Chairman PPSC and expressed his best wishes.

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.

"I have said publicly that if it continues we will be forced to create a security zone, a sanitary zone," he said.

Putin said that Russian troops were "advancing daily according to plan" and said that there were no plans to capture Kharkiv, for now.

Ukrainian troops were fighting Friday to halt Russian advances in Kharkiv region that began late last week.

The town of

Vovchansk, located just 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the Russian border, has been a hot spot in the fighting in recent days. Ukrainian authorities have evacuated some 8,000 civilians from the town. The Russian army's usual tactic is to reduce towns and villages to ruins with aerial strikes before its units move in.

By starting a new offensive in the north of Kharkiv region on May 10, Russian troops "expanded the zone of active hostilities by almost 70 kilometers," in an effort to force Ukraine spread its forces and use the reserve troops, Ukraine's military chief Oleksandr Syrskyi said Friday.



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

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. The comments by deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov in an interview with state TASS news agency reflect growing Russian concern over what Moscow casts as dangerous Western escalation in Ukraine.

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. "The Police Information Centre announced the identification, dismantling, and widespread arrest of members of the satanist network," the IRNA state news agency reported, citing a police statement. Police arrested "146 men and 115 women

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.

Earlier, local media reported that Slovak doctors would meet on Monday to assess whether Fico, who underwent hours of surgery,

'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. "It is devastating," said Javed Ali, International Medical Corps's head of emergency response in Gaza.

Speaking to this news agency from a field hospital northwest of the areas of Rafah ordered evacuated by Israel, he said the situation around the far-southern city was "dire".

The hospital, in the coastal area of Al-Mawasi which Israel has designated a "humanitarian zone", has swelled in a matter of months into a more than

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 had 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.

The new law offers parole to convicts who sign a contract to join the army, a move that some officials have said could generate a maximum of 20,000 soldiers for the Ukrainian war effort.

Those convicted of the most serious crimes, such as the premeditated murder of two or more people, rape and crimes against

national security, would still not be allowed to enlist.

Separately, Zelenskyy signed a law increasing fines for draft dodgers to up to 8,500 hryvnias (\$218), according to the parliament's website. The average monthly wage in Ukraine is about \$560.

The lack of manpower is seen by some military analysts as Ukraine's biggest problem. Weapons supplies that have been significantly delayed, particularly from Washington, are expected to reach the frontline soon. Ukraine has already lowered the draft mobilisation age from 27 to 25. The upper limit is 60. In tandem, the government has also temporarily suspended consular services for men of military age who reside abroad, complaining they were not helping the Ukrainian state fight for its survival.



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.

North Korea has launched ballistic and cruise missiles as well as tactical rockets in recent months, describing them as part of a programme to upgrade its defensive capabilities.

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.

Rescue personnel and volunteers have been combing through the rubble for 11 days, after the five-storey residential building under construction in the city east of Cape Town crumbled, leaving a cloud of dust in its wake.

The Western Cape government said it now believed 62 people were at the site at the time of the disaster. Twenty-nine people survived after being rescued. At one stage municipal officials believed 81 people were on site when the building came down. "The site is empty. We have done our job," Anton Bredell, a Western Cape provincial official, told reporters.

UN projects Pakistan's economy to grow by 2% in 2024 as global economic prospects improve

NEW YORK (APP): Pakistan, which faces significant economic challenges, is expected to have "modest" growth, with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) projected to expand by 2 per cent in 2024, according to a major United Nations report. Noting that Pakistan had entered into a Stand-by Arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) worth \$3 billion, the mid-year World Economic Situation and Prospects report said that the programme was expected to help stabilize the economy, increase the country's foreign exchange reserves, and facilitate fiscal adjustment while also protecting crucial social spending.

At the same time, it said that in South Asia tight financial conditions and fiscal and external imbalances will continue to weigh on growth in the near term. "In addition, geopolitical tensions – including the ongoing war in Ukraine and the conflict in Western Asia – will expose net-oil-importing countries in the region, including India, to the risk of sudden oil price spikes." Most countries in South Asia, according to the report, experienced currency depreciation pressures during the second half of 2023. Between July and October, the United States dollar climbed by around 6.5 per cent against a basket of global currencies, reaching its highest level in 11 months, mainly supported by the strong performance of the American economy and high interest rates.

"Thus," it said, "between July and October, the Sri Lanka rupee depreciated by 3.2 per cent against the U.S. dollar, while the Indian rupee depreciated by 1.2 per cent. After raising policy rates in 2022, most central banks in South Asia paused monetary tightening or started lowering their key policy rates in 2023, with a few exceptions. In this regard, the report noted that the State Bank of Pakistan has kept its policy rate unchanged at a record high of 22 per cent since June 2023. In 2023, it said, the number of people facing acute food insecurity increased in Bangladesh and Pakistan and decreased in Sri Lanka. Afghanistan continued to be the country most affected by the food crisis in the region, with around 46 per cent of the population facing acute levels of food insecurity.



KARACHI: A delegation of business group of Germany inspecting ration bags under Taqatwar Pakistan at Governor House

Commissioner Larkana imposes ban on tractor trolleys passing through canal embankments

LARKANA (APP): The Commissioner Larkana Division Ghulam Mustafa Phul under section 144 under CrP through notification issued by the provincial government, on Friday imposed a ban on tractor-trolleys for lifting sand (reti) from the rice canal passing through the municipal limits of the city, for a period of 120 days (3 months) with immediate effect.

According to the notification, it had been widely reported that tractor-trolleys were carrying sand from various locations of the rice canal passing through the municipal limits of Larkana, causing damages to the canal embankments, edges of roads on left and right banks of the canal.

Measles Rubella vaccination campaign launched in Matiari

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC), Matiari Muhammad Yousif Shaikh and District Health Officer (DHO) Pir Ghulam Hussain inaugurated a 6-day Measles Rubella Outbreak Response (OBR) vaccination campaign, which will continue from May 20 to 25, aims to vaccinate children from 6 months to 5 years old.

Following the inauguration ceremony, an awareness walk was also held from taluka hospital to press club Matiari, where medical professionals and people from all walks of life participated, emphasizing the need for full cooperation with health department teams to save the children from disease.



SUKKUR: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Haleem Adil Shaikh addresses to media persons during press conference, in Sukkur.

Sindh govt directed to build public toilets in 32 districts

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh High Court has ordered the provincial government to construct toilets at public places in 32 districts of the province. A hearing was held in Sindh High Court on a petition against non-construction of toilets at public places on Friday. The court accepted the application of Tariq Mansoor Advocate, filed in 2009. The decision on the application was announced by a two-member bench headed by Justice Salahuddin. In its verdict, the court remarked that not constructing public toilets is a violation of fundamental human rights. In his petition, Tariq Mansoor Advocate said that women, children and disabled people face difficulties due

to lack of public toilets in public places. The government should be directed to construct toilets at bus stops, shopping centers, parks, graveyards and other places, the petitioner argued. According to the United Nations Convention, the Sindh government is obliged to build public toilets at the official level, Tariq Mansoor Advocate said in petition. According to law, the government is required to construct public toilets in the district and non-construction of public toilets is a violation of Articles 4 and 19 of the Constitution, the petitioner said. Sindh government should be ordered to construct public toilets in public places, petitioner requested the court.

Federal Ombudsman's regional head visits NBP

HYDERABAD (APP): The Regional Head of the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat, Ambassador (Retd) Dr. Rizwan Ahmad accompanied by Associate Advisor Dr. Sheikh Imtiaz Ali, visited the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) Fatima Jinnah Branch.

The visit was prompted by public complaints regarding ATM machine malfunctions, lack of cash availability, and the absence of receipts.

During the visit, Dr. Rizwan Ahmad emphasized the need to improve the bank's operational procedures and reduce customer waiting times.

DIG appreciates performance of outgoing SSP Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): The DIG Hyderabad Tariq Razzak Dharejo Friday appreciated the outgoing SSP Hyderabad Amjad Ahmed Shaikh for his good performance during his stint as the city's police chief.

In a letter of appreciation issued here, the DIG stated that at a meeting on May 15 he had evaluated the performance of all the nine SSPs posted in as many districts in Hyderabad Police Range.

"Your performance was evaluated and it showed your excellent supervision and professional skills to maintain the writ of the law," reads the letter.

The DIG mentioned that during Shaikh's tenure 68 gangs of outlaws were busted, 119 encounters occurred, 23 suspected outlaws were shot dead and 102 were injured in addition to the arrest of 3,286 accused or wanted suspects.

Police raid wrong flat, arrest two in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): In a shocking incident, police investigation department raided a wrong flat and arrested two of the family in Ahsanabad apartments, Karachi.

As per details, the Site Super Highway police conducted a raid to vacate a flat but they raid on a wrong flat which was rented by a teacher.

The family claimed that police thrown out their belongings and broke their beds and other items. They took two of the family to police station after beating them and left an 80-year-old woman and her three daughters stranded on road in the dark.



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

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.

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.

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.

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



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh President, Nisar Ahmed Khuhro addresses conference on reconciliation vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto organized by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Chair held in University of Karachi.

SFERP team visits Water Supply schemes in Mirpurkhas district

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project (SFERP) team, currently visited different water supply schemes in Mirpurkhas district and reviewed the pace of rehabilitation and assess its quality of work.

According to statement issued by the SFERP, all schemes in Mirpurkhas would be rehabilitated in the month of May while the timeline for completion of schemes was December 2024. All water supply schemes to be rehabilitated under Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project, at the time of its completion and these would provide safe drinking water to the locals through the installation of hypo chlorinator equipment keeping in view the health requirements of local population.

The water supply scheme at village Diyal Garh, Distt Mirpurkhas, has been made fully functional and water for daily use is being provide to the residents of village. Both the water reservoirs were rehabilitated by removing silt from storage ponds and plastered and mechanically updated, statement added.

A solar system has also been installed to ensure the uninterrupted water supply to the residents of village Diyal Garh. Both water reservoirs have a capacity of almost half a million gallons per day. The water supply scheme at village Wagari has also been rehabilitated as both the water reservoirs are now in a working condition. The scheme had become non functional due to silting of reservoirs during floods and local population was facing a lot of difficulty in getting water for daily use from other sources. The water supply scheme at village Ghulam Mohammad Leghari at District Mirpurkhas is almost complete as well with a storage capacity of 0.625 million gallons and would provide water to both Jiskani and Leghari villages.



KARACHI: Residents of Lines area hold a protest at a road, against electricity load-shedding in the provincial Capital.

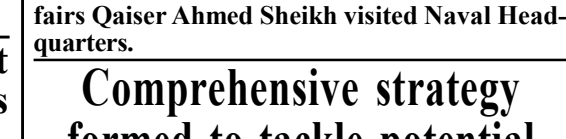
CNIC's issuance, renewal to be made available at UC level: Naqvi

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 finalised within a few days to devise 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 emphasised 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. He also ordered effective action against the fake identity card mafia.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh visited Naval Headquarters.

Comprehensive strategy formed to tackle potential monsoon rains in Sanghar: DC

HYDERABAD (APP): A comprehensive and multi-faceted strategy has been devised in Sanghar to handle the anticipated monsoon rains. Relevant departments have been instructed to ensure proper drainage arrangements, clean rain drains and maintain pumping machines in working condition. Additionally, a District Control Room will be established in the Deputy Commissioner's Office to monitor the situation during the rains.

Deputy Commissioner stated that the district administration has completed all necessary preparations in advance of the expected monsoon rains, and efforts to ensure timely drainage of potential rainwater are ongoing across all talukas. Moreover, pumping machines are in working order to facilitate timely drainage from low-lying and urban areas.

Art is important for youth: D.C Larkana

LARKANA (APP): Deputy Commissioner of Larkana Dr. Sharjeel Noor Channa has said that imparting artistic training to the youth is the most important need of the time, with this they can get better employment.

He expressed these views in his office on Friday while presiding over a meeting with the principals of learning centers under the management of Stewta. In the meeting, the Regional Director of Stewta and other officials gave a briefing to the Deputy Commissioner Larkana about the affairs and problems of their organization.

New SSP Sukkur takes his charge

SUKKUR (APP): Amjad Shaikh, a grade 19 officer of the Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), on Friday assumed the charge of the senior superintendent of police (operations) Sukkur.

After taking over the charge, he held meetings with his staff and asked them to facilitate the citizens coming to their offices. He told the police officials that no highhandedness with any citizen would be tolerated. He also appealed the people to cooperate with the police for elimination of crime and ensuring peace in the district. He said the citizens could inform the police through Rescue 15 in case they observed any suspicious activity.



KARACHI: Karachi Development Authority (KDA) Director General, Syed Shujaat Hussain being briefed by Tahir Siddiq, Secretary GYM Karachi Press Club during his visit to Karachi press club.

SHRC hosts awareness session on Sindh Hindu Marriage Act implementation

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with the Local Government department, organised an awareness session for local government officials in Mithi, Tharparkar.

The session aimed to promote the implementation of the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018, and empower community leaders. The Board Member of SHRC Sukhdev Hemmani gave a comprehensive briefing on the powers and functions of the Sindh Human Rights Commission and elaborated in detail on the provisions of the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act 2018. He stressed that the legislation should reach all segments of the community to benefit them.