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SC expresses annoyance over Faizabad commission report If Faizabad sit-in order was implemented, May 9 would not have happened: CJP

Says what did the commission do? It just wasted time, Probe body not even aware of its responsibility, wonders "what level of mindset" compiled the report

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has summoned report from federal government till next hearing with reference to Faizabad Dharna.

The SC while seeking written reply on court's observation from Dharna commission has said commission can appear in person if it wants so.

The court said in its written order after hearing on Monday that commission filed on March 6 report containing 149 pages and 7 volumes. To our opin-

ion report is not according to terms of reference. It is strange that statement of not a single member of Tehreek-e-Labbaik was recorded. Commission assumed that journey to Islamabad for protest was not in line with the constitution. While SC had written in its order that peaceful protest is right. Provincialism glimpses from the commission report.

The hearing of the case was adjourned for two weeks.

The Chief Justice of

Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa while expressing annoyance over report remarked It is the will of government. Report has been filed in the court. Report has been commented upon already. It is not known how it came out. We come to one relevant question. Why did the government not legislate in the light of our decision. Is another May 9 being waited. Had you been alert earlier for legislation then May 9 would have not occurred.

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Chief justice Balochistan High Court Justice Hashim Kakar administers oath to newly appointed Governor Balochistan Shaikh Jaffer Mandokhail at Governor House.

Sworn in as 24th Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffer Mandokhail pledges to play role of bridge between province, federation

Says relations with provincial government would remain excellent; would play his part to get resolved issues with federation

Independent Report

QUETTA: The senior politician belonging to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Sheikh Jaffer Khan Mandokhail was sworn in as the 24th Governor Balochistan here at a simple but impressive ceremony on Monday.

The Chief Justice Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar admin-

istered oath to the new Governor, Sheikh Jaffer Mandokhail at the ceremony held at lush green lawns of the Governor House.

The outgoing Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Deputy Speaker Provincial Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola, provincial ministers, sena-

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Saudi Assistant Minister of Investment, H.E. Ibrahim Al-Mubarak delivers a speech at the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan Investment Forum 2024.

SC suspends PHC verdict regarding NA's reserved seats

PTI foresees return to power after favourable Supreme Court's verdict

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday suspended the verdict of Peshawar High Court (PHC) regarding allocation of reserved seats in the National Assembly.

The three-member bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and comprising Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, which heard the appeal of "Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), referred the matter to the judges committee for forming a larger bench.

The Supreme Court, in its order, said that the court decision would apply to the political parties to the extent of additional reserved seats only.

It declared that it would hear the case on a daily basis from June 3.

On the occasion, the Federal Government requested the court to form a larger bench to which the matter was sent to the

judges committee.

The court said that the members of the reserved seats allotted in the second phase would not be able to vote until the final decision.

Addressing the Attorney General for Pakistan, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah asked that how the political parties could get the additional reserved seats as they could take seats according to their proportion. "Can the remaining seats be given to them? Is there anything like that in the law?" he further questioned and said if it was not so in the law, then it was not against the constitutional scheme to do so.

INP adds: The Supreme Court's decision to suspend the Peshawar High Court (PHC) verdict on the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) reserved seats has rekindled the embattled Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) hopes to return to power.



QUETTA: President Asif Ali Zardari addressing the banquet hosted by the Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffer Khan Mandokhail is also present

PM assures all out support to Saudi investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday assured his government's blanket support to the Saudi investment, enabling the investors and businessmen to accomplish their future projects in Pakistan expeditiously with joint ventures and replicate them within short time for the mutual benefits of the people of both countries.

Addressing a dinner gathering hosted in the honour of visiting delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the prime minister said that time waited for none and stressed that they should overcome the challenges if they really wanted to make use of this oppor-

tunity as the Saudi leadership and their leading investors and business people wanted to help Pakistan.

The prime minister reiterated that it was not the government's job to do businesses but it had to offer policy frameworks, act like a catalysts and remove all the hurdles for speedy achievement of economic targets.

He said that the government had resolved and was committed to remove all the bureaucratic hurdles and red tape in the way of foreign investment.

Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, federal ministers, Saudi ambassador in Pakistan,

members of the delegation and senior officials were present during the event. The prime minister said that

Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was the very robust and all encompassing vehicle to attain all those projects in the interest of people of Pakistan and the Saudi investors, leading to further strengthening of mutual co-operation and partnership.

The SIFC was a model acceptable to the Saudi delegation and they were fully satisfied over the existing opportunities, he observed.

The prime minister said that from diverse projects,

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti being briefed about Communication Department

KSA, Pakistan economic partners, share common vision: Al Mubarakon

KSA wants to see Pakistan as one of our leading international partners; Saudi gov, companies consider Pakistan high priority economic opportunity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Assistant Minister for Investment, Ibrahim Al Mubarak said that Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were major economic partners and both countries have always supported each other with a common economic vision.

He said that 'Pakistan's

Diaspora including many professional and skilled workers in Saudi Arabia were playing a major role in the economic development of Saudi Arabia.

He said this while addressing at the Pakistan-Saudi Arab Investment

Forum.

Continued on page 2

Dawood posted as Commissioner Makran: Secretaries of Education and other departments replaced

Independent Report

QUETTA: The administrative secretaries of different provincial government departments have been transferred in the province.

According to an official notification issued by the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) here on Monday, the Secretary Colleges, Higher and Technical Education, Zafar Buledi has been transferred and directed to report in the S&GAD.

According to the notification, Hafiz Muhammad

Tahir, who was awaiting posting orders, has been posted as the Secretary Education.

Similarly, the Director General Gwadar Development Authority, Dawood Khilji has been transferred and posted as the Commissioner Makran Division.

His predecessor Saeed Ahmed Umrani has been transferred and directed to report in the S&GAD.

The Deputy Commissioner Dera Bugti, Azhar Shahzad has been transferred and posted as the Director General Sports.

Bilawal forms committee for talks with gov on privatisation matters

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman and former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has constituted a committee to engage with government over privatisation issues.

According to a notification issued by the PPP chairman's secretariat, the members of the committee included Sherry Rehman, Syed Naveed Qamar and Saleem Mandviwalla. The high-level PPP panel will hold talks with the government on the affairs relating to the privatization.

PTI nominates Sheikh Waqas as chairman PAC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Political committee of PTI has nominated Sheikh Waqas Akram Chairman Public Accounts Committee (PAC) instead of Sher Afzal.

PTI looked confused over the selection of chairman PAC. First Sher Afzal Marwat was nominated then Sahibzada Hamid Raza and now the political committee has nominated Sheikh Waqas Akram who is MNA from Jhang.

President, Balochistan CM, ministers discuss issues of national, provincial interests

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, acting Speaker Provincial Assembly, Ms Ghazala Gola, senior leader of PPP and former Chief Minister, Nawab Sanaullah Zehri and the provincial Ministers called on the President Asif Ali Zardari here at the CM House on Monday.

The Provincial Ministers meeting the President Zardari were included: Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani, Ali Madad Jatak, Mir Zahoor Buledi, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, Mir Saleem Khosa, Sardarzada Faisal Jamali and Advisor to Chief Minister, Ali Hassan Zehri.

During the course of meeting, matters regarding

development of the province and different others were discussed.

Earlier the President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday reached Quetta on two-day official visit. Upon his arrival, the President Zardari was accorded warm welcome at the Quetta airport.

Among those who received the President were included: Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffer Khan Mandokhail, Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, provincial ministers, members of provincial assembly and leaders of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) including its president and Senator, Mir Changez Jamali, former Chief Minister Nawab Sanaullah Zehri besides other provincial high ups.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a banquet organized in honor of the delegation of businessmen and investors led by the Saudi Deputy Investment Minister Ibrahim Al-Mubarak, in Islamabad

Government's facilitation approach builds investor's confidence: Jam Kamal

Govt. committed to ending red tape: Dr. Musadiq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan said Monday that the government's fresh approach of focusing solely on facilitation has successfully bolstered the confidence of investors and businessmen in its commitments, paving the way for a new era of economic growth and cooperation.

Addressing a press conference on the sidelines of two-day Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Investment Conference, the minister said, unlike in the past, the incumbent government has limited

its role to facilitation and promotion of businesses to build a robust economy, which he said was imperative in shaping foreign policies and fulfilling commitments respectfully.

The minister was flanked by Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar and Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadiq Masood Malik.

This new approach had already yielded positive results, with Saudi investors expressing confidence in the government's

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, Information & Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar and Minister for Petroleum Musadiq Masood Malik addressing the media regarding the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan Investment Forum 2024.

CM appoints MPAs as Parliamentary Secretary for different departments

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has appointed 11 members of provincial assembly as Parliamentary Secretaries for different departments.

According to an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) on Monday, Sardar Masood Ali Khan Luni has been appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary for Forests and Wildlife while Haji Barkat Ali has been appointed as Fisheries and Coastal Development.

Similarly, Asfandyar Khan Kakar has been appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary for Urban Planning and Development and Ms. Meena Baloch has been appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary for

Inter-Provincial Coordination.

Moreover, Liaquat Ali Lehri has been appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary for Services and General Administration while Sanjay Kumar has been appointed as Parliamentary Secretary for Minorities Affairs and Ubaidullah Gorgaj has been appointed as Parliamentary Secretary for Prosecution.

Samad Khan Gorgaj has been appointed a Parliamentary Secretary for Law and Parliamentary Affairs and Abdul Majeed Badini has been Parliamentary Secretary for Transport. Muhammad Asghar Rind has been appointed as Parliamentary Secretary for Energy and Muhammad Khan Lehri has been appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Excise and Taxation.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani presiding over meeting of Vice Chancellors of Public Sector Universities of the province

PM loan scheme distributes Rs 83.6 billion to young entrepreneurs: Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashood has underscored the success of the Prime Minister's (PM) Youth Business Loan Scheme under which Rs 83.6 billion has been disbursed to young entrepreneurs, including 16,000 female entrepreneurs, since its relaunch by Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on January 24, 2023.

While inaugurating the launching report of the "State of Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Pakistan" at a local hotel on Monday, he said that the scheme has provided loans to 140,000 youths, including those engaged in agriculture, microfinance, and interest-free ventures enabling them to turn their innovative ideas into thriving businesses.

In his keynote, the Chairman PMYP commended the collaborative efforts behind the report and emphasized the government's unwavering commitment to supporting youth entrepreneurship in Pakistan.

He also highlighted the transformative initiatives undertaken by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme to promote entrepreneurship across Pakistan.

"The Prime Minister's Youth Programme remains committed to empowering the next generation of entrepreneurs, and we call upon our development partners and the private sector to join us in implementing the recommendations outlined in the report."

Additionally, Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan

emphasized the impact of the National Innovation Award, which provides financial support, mentorship, and incubation resources to help young entrepreneurs realize their full potential and foster a culture of innovation and creativity in Pakistan.

"I am delighted to witness the launch of the 'State of Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Pakistan' report, which provides invaluable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing young entrepreneurs in our country," he added.

The Commonwealth Secretariat, in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan and the Islamic Development Bank, launched the highly anticipated report titled "State of Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Pakistan."

A division bench of IHC comprising justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani and justice Ijaz Ishaq Khan took up the case for hearing Monday.

Faisal Chaudhry appeared in the court along with his counsel Ali Bokhari. Prosecutor Rafay Maqsood and others from NAB appeared in the court. The court inquired



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressing the launching ceremony of "State of Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Pakistan" Report.

IHC wraps up Faisal Ch petition on statement of NAB prosecutor

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has wrapped up the petition of Faisal Chaudhry advocate brother of Fawad Chaudhry against summoning by NAB on NAB prosecutor statement.

NAB prosecutor has said the petitioner has joined inquiry. There is no need of arresting him at present.

He gave this statement on Monday.

During the hearing the mention about wheat import inquiry was also made during the hearing of the case.

Justice Ijaz Ishaq Khan inquired from NAB prosecutor These are small matters. Tell when the inquiry into wheat import has to be conducted. On wheat scandal you will hold inquiry perhaps in next government.

A division bench of IHC comprising justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani and justice Ijaz Ishaq Khan took up the case for hearing Monday.

Faisal Chaudhry appeared in the court along with his counsel Ali Bokhari. Prosecutor Rafay Maqsood and others from NAB appeared in the court. The court inquired

Wafaqi Mohtasib's inspection team visits traffic police office

ISLAMABAD: A Wafaqi Mohtasib's Inspection Team today visited the Islamabad Traffic Police Office (ITP) under the instructions of the Federal Ombudsman, Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, to ascertain difficulties being faced by the general public and the quality of services being extended by the ITP. Headed by a Senior Advisor, the Inspection Team listened to the complaints of the general public and gave on the spot instructions to the ITP administration for their prompt redressal.

The Team directed that One-Window facilities may be provided at the Traffic Office expeditiously so that the general public may benefit themselves from such facilities

Earlier, the Inspection Team was informed by the ITP administration that Online facilities are available for issuance and renewal of the driving licenses and the ITP is also providing these facilities at the doorsteps of the people, in addition to the educational institutions and public places through its mobile teams.

The SSP, Traffic, in a briefing, informed that the population of the Federal Capital has now risen to 2.4 million with a phenomenal increase in the number of vehicles plying on the road, which rose to 1,986,810 at the end of the year 2023 and there is a need for corresponding increase in the number of officials working at the ITP Office to handle the additional workload.

He further informed that they are setting up a new ITP Office at Faizabad on self-help basis. He said that the office deposited a revenue of Rs.22,081,450/- in the national exchequer during the year 2021, which rose to Rs.294,444,400/- during the year 2023.



under one roof. The Team also directed to develop a mechanism for keeping the motorcyclists and heavy duty vehicles on extreme left side of the road. It also instructed that necessary facilities may be provided for seating the customers under the shade alongwith provision of cool drinking water there.

Operations coordinator, ICRC Asia Pacific Region calls on Chairman PRCS

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Operations Coordinator of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Asia Pacific Region, Yoann Davison, affirmed in a courtesy meeting with Chairman Pakistan Red Cross Society (PRCS) Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari at the PRCS National Headquarters here on Monday. The primary objective of the meeting was to strengthen cooperation between PRCS and ICRC on various humanitarian programs and initiatives.

Head of ICRC Delegation, Nicolas Lambert and ICRC Movement Coordinator in Pakistan, Wasif Jan accompanied Mr Davison.

During the meeting, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari provided a comprehensive overview of the various PRCS programs supported by ICRC, highlighting the Red Crescent's crucial role in assisting in natural disasters and emergencies. He shared insights into the 2022 monsoon flood response and the ongoing recovery efforts in affected areas and outlined PRCS's plans aimed at strengthening its humanitarian outreach.

Chairman Laghari emphasized the importance of enhancing collaboration between PRCS and ICRC to advance ICRC-supported programs like National Society Development, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Restoring Family Links, First Aid, Media and Communication, as well as Risk Awareness and Safer Behavior initiatives.

Yoann Davison on the occasion commended the exemplary services provided by the Red Crescent, acknowledging Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari's leadership in driving humanitarian initiatives forward. He reiterated ICRC's commitment to continued collaboration with PRCS, expressing readiness to enhance programs for the benefit of humanity further. Nicolas Lambert said, "Our partnership with the PRCS is a cornerstone of our mission in Pakistan, adding together, we're stronger in our commitment to serve communities, providing vital aid and support in times."



ISLAMABAD: Children listening Radio during an Art Exhibition titled "Mureed-e-Murshad" by Muhammad Sajjad Akram at Pakistan National Council of the Arts in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan's satellite mission ICUBE-Qamar milestone in space tech development: Gul

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Tehreek-e-Jawanan Pakistan (TJP), Mohammad Abdullah Gul on Monday termed Pakistan's first satellite mission on the moon "ICUBE-Qamar" as a milestone in the country's space technology development.

In a statement issued here, the TJP chairman quoted the verses of Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal stating that the motherland bears great potential if channelised properly and the country's satellite mission was positive development in that regard.

Gul said that Institute of Space Technology (IST) students, teachers and Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) deserved felicitations on the occasion. "This proved that if given good opportunities, Pakistanis are second to none in modern science and technology. The only way out to end economic depression is to provide favorable environment and opportunities to youth in IT and other modern technologies.

We pray to Allah to make this satellite mission a success," he added.

He said that since it was the first satellite that was sent to the moon that would provide the advantage that if Pakistan succeed in landing on the moon in the future, it would need to seek no help from any space agency to communicate with its own space vehicles.

"This is the first milestone that we will achieve with the help of China. This satellite will inform us about the situation there.



Students of Beacon House School, I-9 Campus, Islamabad visiting Senate Museum at Parliament House, Islamabad.

Nayyar stresses for unity among all political parties to steer country out of challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) senior leader Nayyar Hussain Bukhari Monday stressed that all political parties' unity was essential to drag the country out of the prevailing crises and present government was focusing to ensure real public welfare, progress and economic prosperity of the country.

Talking to a Private news channel, he said that his party was trying its best to change the destiny of the common people and the welfare of common man was the first priority of the present government.

He stressed that the parliament should remain a forum for constructive debate, not a battleground for personal gains.

Replying to a ques-

Facilitation center to be operational from 9 am to 9 pm: CDA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Chaudhry Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Monday directed that the operational hours of the authority's Facilitation Center to be extended from 9 am to 9 pm for the convenience of residents of the federal capital.

During his visit to the Facilitation Center, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali directed the relevant staff to ensure their presence at the counters to provide maximum assistance to the public.

He stressed the urgent need to digitize all records and expedite the ongoing development work at all facilitation centers of the authority.

Additionally, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali personally listened to residents' complaints during the visit and issued directives to promptly resolve these issues.

BISP, NADRA mobile van service registers persons with disabilities in capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has started the process of registration of persons with disabilities and their families and issuance of smart cards through the Mobile Registration Vans (MRV) in the federal capital, like other parts. The process of registration with BISP and issuance of smart cards is being carried out through these MRVs launched with joint efforts of BISP and NADRA.

According to an official source, the vans are visiting different spots to facilitate the persons with disabilities in the registration process with BISP as well as obtaining the smart cards from NADRA.

The objective behind the idea of launching MRV was to facilitate the "special persons" who are living below poverty line and intend to register with the BISP for availing its different schemes. While the facility of issuance of smart card will also be given to them. BISP is the largest social protection program launched in the history of this country which is serving the needy people through its multi-faceted schemes including Benazir Kafalat, Benazir Undergraduate Scholarship Program.

190m reference Hearing of bail plea of PTI founder adjourned

ISLAMABAD (Online): Hearing of bail plea of PTI founder has been adjourned without any proceedings in 190 million pounds reference in Islamabad High Court (IHC).

The hearing was to take place on Monday. The cause list of two members bench of Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamer Farooq and justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri was cancelled Monday.

The hearing of bail plea of PTI founder was adjourned without proceedings due to cancellation of cause list.



ISLAMABAD: CDA staffers removing different structures in Sector G-8 during anti-encroachments drive in Federal Capital.

Randhawa directs to make Islamabad Model Jail operational in 100-day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa Monday directed to make Islamabad Model Jail fully operational within 100-day.

While chairing a meeting on development and construction work of Islamabad Model Jail, he said that more delay in the construction work will not be tolerated.

Muhammad Ali said that a site inspection is scheduled on May 8 (Wednesday) to evaluate the ongoing construction work at Islamabad Model Jail.

Court extends Swati interim bail in controversial tweet case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Special Judge Central Islamabad has extended interim bail of PTI leader Azam Swati till May 15 in controversial tweet case.

The controversial tweet case against Azam Swati came up for hearing before Special Judge Central Islamabad Hummayun Dilawar Monday.

Counsel Ali Bukhari took the plea Azam Swati was bailed out on merit.

Prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi said court's concession was misused.

DPC recommends 48 SIs elevate to next ranks

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to details, following the special directions of the Inspector General of Police

ing was chaired by DIG Headquarters Dr. Syed Mushtaq Tanveer and attended by SSP Operations, AIG Establishment, and records and one telecommunications inspector to IG Islamabad. After approval from IG Islamabad, notifications for promotions to inspector positions for all 48 inspectors will be issued.

IG Islamabad said that promotion is a fundamental right of every police officer. All officers who have passed the departmental promotion courses will be promoted according to their seniority to vacant seats.

He further said that he will personally rank the officers who achieve promotions. In the ranking ceremony, officers' families will also be specially invited. The police Force's welfare is among my top priorities, he maintained.

Islamabad Police committed to resolve public issues on priority; DIG Operations

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Ali Rizvi, the DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari said that the Islamabad Police is committed to resolve public issues on priority, a public relations officer said.

He said this while listening to the complaints



and issues of the public as well as police officials during the Khuli Kachehri held at his office. Senior police officers were also present on this occasion.

Pak-Saudi brotherly relations based on mutual respect: Tahir Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Ulema Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi Monday said that Pakistan-Saudi relations are special and close brotherly ties between two countries are based on the common religion, mutual respect, history and culture, which were further strengthening with the passage of time.

"Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were brethren countries and the relationship between them was based on mutual respect, cooperation and trust," he said while

ACs pay surprise visits to ICT's hospitals

ISLAMABAD (APP): All the Assistant Commissioners (ACs) of the Federal Capital have inspected hospitals and dispensaries across the city following orders from Chief Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa.

According to the Spokesman of Chief Commissioner Office, Nouman Nazim, the aim was to assess the state of healthcare services and ensure proper functioning in various medical facilities.

During their visits, the ACs checked the availability of doctors and the overall level of care provided to patients.

They also took stock of medicine and vaccine supplies to ensure hospitals had adequate resources to meet patient needs.

AIOU to hold Int'l moot on Ijtihad Bil-Maqasid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is hosting a three-day international conference on "Ijtihad Bil-Maqasid" from May 22 to May 24.

This conference is being organized by the Department of Islamic Thought, History, and Culture, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, AIOU.

Several international and national religious scholars and academicians will present papers on the importance, scope, and objectives of Ijtihad during the conference.



(IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, a meeting of the Departmental Promotion Committee was held at the Central Police Office Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

He said that, the meet-

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Plugging the gap

In Pakistan, bias begins at birth for the girl child as discriminatory norms, orthodox attitudes and poverty impede progress. However, Unicef Pakistan recently presented a National Gender Strategy (2024-2027) to generate a transformative shift for multitudes of girls between 10 to 19 years. It believes that effective implementation of the policy in rural and urban areas can tackle inequalities and improve female lives, including those defined by disability. A significant component of the plan is to engage leaders, clerics, boys and men so that existing narratives change and all women have agency. Unicef also highlights the lamentable fact that Pakistan has nearly 19m child brides, 54pc were pregnant before the age of 18, and 88pc of underage girls live in poverty. The UN's 2023 Gender Social Norms Index was not a cheerful read either. It stated that improvement in prejudices against women had been static for a decade. In this scenario, the UN agenda to attain gender equality by 2030 for all countries is a long shot.

There is no denying that several social mores propel gender inequality and deal a blow to women's freedoms. As more people are pushed below the poverty line in a moribund economy, indigence is set to widen the gender gap with reduced access to healthcare, education and profitable opportunities. In these circumstances, perhaps Unicef Pakistan's gender equitable programming ought to start with areas where the honour of men depends on making women invisible, as in parts of Balochistan and KP. Females in hyper-conservative areas are entirely disenfranchised, trapped in the culture of bride price, the sale of girls for monetary gain or to resolve disputes, and the absence of reproductive rights and socioeconomic liberties. All this must change with schooling, healthcare and employment and cultivating empathy and awareness among men. Closing gender gaps matters because it promises social justice and prosperity. It is a long road but we cannot finish last.

Tahir Mehdi

Indian elections are no less than a nightmare for psephologists: election experts. To begin with, the scale of the exercise is mind-boggling. Every sixth adult walking on earth is registered as a voter in India.

Add to this the complex interplay of a multitude of political discourses centred on caste, class, religion, ethnicity, language, and ideologies and it becomes impossible to navigate through the maze. However, thanks to robust and trustworthy data on past elections, one can still dig out some features that can help in at least understanding the current scenario.

India has a first-past-the-post poll system. The contestant securing the highest number of votes is declared the winner whether or not he or she gets the majority of votes polled in a constituency. This complicates the correlation between votes polled by a party and the number of seats it wins. To quote an example, the third biggest party in the

2014 election, the UP-based Bahujan Samaj Party, secured 23 million votes but could not win a single seat while the Bengal-based Trinamool Congress polled 2m less votes than the BSP but won 34 of 543 Lok Sabha seats.

There is, however, some method deep inside this madness. Historical data shows that while uncertainty about the number of seats won remains high for a party securing less than 30 per cent of the total polled votes, a simple majority in Lok Sabha (272 seats) comes within its reach as soon as it crosses this mark. The BJP won the majority of seats in 2014 and 2019 while polling 31pc and 37pc of the total polled votes respectively.

Past data also shows that if a party crosses the 40pc mark, it will hit the two-thirds majority (363 seats) jackpot. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2024 campaign slogan 'abki bar, 400 par' is pinned on hopes of bettering the party's vote share by at least five percentage points. But hold on. A 5pc increase means at least 30m more voters

coming out in support of Modi compared to 2019. This would be no mean feat at a time when voters are identifying rising inflation and unemployment as their main concerns while the inauguration of the Ram temple has failed to impress them.

Indian voters' dissatisfaction is already finding expression as fewer people are turning up this time than the previous election. In the first two of the seven phases of voting, the turnout has been almost five percentage points lower than in 2019. The turnout in India has traditionally hovered around 60pc. It was the Modi wave that inspired it to take a leap of faith in 2014 when it reached its highest-ever level of 66.4pc representing an increase of 8.3 percentage points over 2009. The wave pushed it up further in 2019 by one percentage point. The BJP has been the sole beneficiary of a high turnout as no other party could increase its percentage share in the votes in these elections.

But now that the turnout is dropping, will the BJP suffer the most? This is possible but if it succeeds in deflecting this downturn towards regional parties, it may actually benefit from the dip as much as it had from its rise.

Data shows that voters in India have remained evenly poised between regional and national parties. In eight general elections since 1991, regional parties have on average been favoured by 49pc of voters while the remaining 51pc were divided between the two national parties. This in itself is a reflection of Indians' collective perception of their state.

The BJP couldn't damage this equation much in its first elections under Modi. As the party increased its share in polled votes by 12 percentage points, Congress lost nine and regional parties three. However, after ceding its arch rival, the sultan of Delhi turned towards the rajahs and ranis of India's 28 states. The BJP's share in polled votes rose by six percentage points in the second election under Modi while that of regional parties re-

duced by the same measure. Since then, the BJP is trying to get deeper into the den of regional parties. The crackdown on leaders of these parties, launched just before elections, implicating them in corruption and criminal cases, is aimed at demoralising their support bases, thereby compensating its own potential loss in polled votes. The BJP, however, has its own Achilles' heel: new voters instrumental to its phenomenal rise are now disgruntled by unemployment and inflation.

An unprecedented 117m new voters were added to the rolls in 2014 and supplemented by a euphoric turnout; 137m more had appeared in polling stations in this election than previously. The BJP had pocketed a hefty 93m of these.

Congress not only failed to attract them, it lost 12m of its 2009 voters. Regional parties, however, braved the Modi wave and added a good 58m to their collective vote bank. The rolls for 2019 swelled further by 78m. Congress held its ground this time sustain-

ing its depleted percentage share of 2014 but regional parties conceded substantial ground to the BJP. Their collective share in votes dropped to 43pc, the lowest since 1984.

Another 58m voters have been added in 2024. Will regional parties claim lost ground? Can the BJP continue to shepherd the 150m voters it rounded up in the past two elections? Will they stay loyal to the third avatar of Modi, which now carries a blurred halo? Will INDIA prove to be a new janam for India? We will know the answers on June 4.

If, however, the BJP succeeds in bulldozing the regional half of Indian politics, it will fundamentally change Indian politics.

One cannot say whether Modi's victory in 2024 will finally midwife 'one nation' conceived by his party but it will surely smoothen India into 'one market' with no local bumps and blips. That may be actually what BJP's sponsors — the rising Indian capitalist elite — want it to deliver. -- Courtesy Dawn

India's new birth

Budget 2025: beyond accounting

Dr Khaqan Hassan Najeeb

Fiscal policy is a key arm of macroeconomic policy, one under the direct control of the government of Pakistan. Fiscal policy works through changes in the amount and structure of government spending, the amount and kind of taxes and levies imposed, and the amount and form of government borrowing.

The government can directly influence economic activity through current and capital expenditure. The indirect influence comes through the impact of the framework of subsidies, transfers to the private sector and investments.

We have learned the damaging effects of fiscal account deficits (government expenditures exceeding revenues) through various empirical works. Fiscal account deficits (FAD) lead to macroeconomic volatility, crowd out private investment, and impede economic growth.

Fiscal Year (FY)24 is the third year running with Pakistan's economy estimated to clock a FAD nearing a whopping 8.0 per

cent of GDP — the largest on record. In nominal terms, it translates to an FAD of over Rs8,300 billion or \$30 billion, the highest number in the country's history. FAD bloated to 7.9 per cent of GDP in FY22 similar to FY19, sadly the highest in over two decades. FY23 is no different with FAD at 7.8 per cent of GDP. Surely, the authorities must be concerned.

Elevated FAD has left Pakistan struggling with slugflation, dwindling private and public investment levels, and rising debts. Debt distress has worsened with a painful weakening in the key sustainability indicators. Debt to revenue, interest to revenue, and especially the ratio of debt servicing to exports show issues of sustainability and liquidity being much more severe in FY24 compared to the past.

However uncomfortable the numbers, we cannot give up hope that somehow Budget 2025 will be more than an accounting exercise, and will recognize the gravity of economic vulnerabilities. It will be a response to the crisis. It will not burden the average Joe but rather address inflationary pressures by undertaking a fiscal correction.

Inevitably, the budgetary discussion in Pakistan hovers around the dismal federal tax-to-GDP ratio, huge tax gaps, and differential treatment of the same levels of income from different sources. The more informed folks highlight the tax structure as being distortive and unfair. There is a discussion of its inability to provide sufficient resources to pay for critical government services, while pushing the misallocation of resources within the economy by incentivizing unproductive sectors where hundreds of billions of illicit wealth is stashed. These are hard facts. One fully endorses the need to reform all these areas.

Intellectually, the discussion on the revenue side needs to be broadened to include provincial budgets. Provincial revenues remain uncomfortably low at less than one percent of GDP. Urban property tax, General Sales Tax on services, motor vehicle tax, and agriculture income tax are all in the provincial domain. Certainly, they have high potential which is hardly

being tapped. Truth be told, the ideas debate for Budget 2025 has to focus equally on the issues in the expenditure side of the fiscal equation — in terms of quality and quantity. The expenditure side is a less well-understood and researched area. Since the 7th NFC Award in 2010, especially with ballooning fiscal deficits, the authorities should have undertaken a worthwhile in-house review of the budgetary expenditure. Handling the growth in Pakistan's federal spending is critical to ensuring fiscal and debt sustainability and improving the social contract between the state and its citizens.

Issues that must be addressed in Budget 2025 include settling the fiscal devolution of subjects on the current and development sides and a framework for sharing subsidies with provinces. For eons, we have talked about targeting the subsidies in power, gas, and agriculture, but failed in our execution. Hopefully, there will be the realization to put our money where our mouth is and divert the resources that can benefit the poor.

Bold reforms can in-

clude a move to a contributory pension scheme for new entrants, a ban on new recruitment for a couple of years, and abolition of all vacant positions. Further, monetization of the perks and privileges of the civil and military bureaucracy can help reduce pilferages. This work has to be formalized by a team of actuaries. Several committees over a decade have been a wasteful exercise — we still have not begun to scratch the surface in this regard. Not being serious has been a recipe for disaster.

Similarly, a ban is required on forming new divisions and districts for a few years. A meaningful restraint on travel with a shift to video connectivity may not save billions but is good for optics. The size and structure of development spending needs to be reconsidered. The authorities should show restraint with additional projects till the backlog of ongoing projects is substantively reduced. Project design for the future should be based on a bang-for-the-buck analysis and emphasis on the economic value proposition. The quality of development expenditures needs revision with

the objective of improving human development indices.

Pakistan's debt, both external and domestic, is only sustainable with adjustments. The projections of the International Monetary Fund on Pakistan's debt profile are looking quite uncomfortable. The central government debt from Rs68,342 billion at the end of FY23 is estimated to rise to Rs119,918 billion in FY28 (a 75 per cent rise). Pakistan's external and domestic debt review with the view of debt restructuring, recycling, debt for development, and environmental swaps are doable options.

The country's budget FY23 (the latest available) entails tax exemptions and concessions for income tax, sales tax, and customs duty of about 2.7 per cent of GDP or Rs2,200 billion. It is imperative to wean off the underserving from this state largesse. Strengthening the budgeting process including fully operationalizing the Treasury Single Account can help reduce public borrowing needs. -- Courtesy TheNews

Improving skills

Neda Mulji

Many teachers complain about the lack of continuous professional development opportunities or resources to update their teaching and learning skills. Like any other profession, teaching calls for creating opportunities on the job, taking initiative to learn new techniques and to continually revise teaching methods for greater efficiency. Churning the same wheel has never been gratifying — at best, it may help teachers keep their jobs and continue on the same path for decades.

The world is evolving rapidly and those in employment today are being referred to as Generation Transition for they have had to keep abreast of massive changes to stay relevant in their professions. Al may not be taking up teachers' jobs — at least yet — but it has done enough to show teachers what they don't know and how much there is to learn. It has shown more efficient ways of working in a minimal amount of time. From strategy to projected outcomes, from planning to design and execution, it has a quicker solution for work that would otherwise take days if not months to accomplish.

With new developments in technology, creating opportunities for oneself has never been easier. Learning new skills or upgrading old ones no longer requires huge effort. Most teaching programmes are free and can be accessed anywhere, anytime. The doors to teaching and learning from successful trends in other societies are no longer closed. There is a treasure trove of research for teachers to dip into. It is now possible for teachers to learn

from the professional experiences of individuals far and wide and to stay abreast of global developments, without relying on colleagues and managers to fill their coffers with knowledge and expertise.

A teacher who has taught successfully for decades wrote to me recently, worrying that he is no longer relevant, not motivated enough and that his managers don't value him the way they did before. The question that may need to be answered is, 'what is he doing differently to upgrade his teaching and to enable or empower his students?' Motivation can come from external factors, and appreciation or approval from colleagues may be temporarily beneficial, but external factors are never sustainable. Reliance on the external environment means we change when our environment changes and we no longer feel worthwhile when our colleagues don't pump up the gas to help us feel valued.

Instead of relying on external factors, the more successful teachers find motivation within themselves to upgrade their skills and contribute to reshaping their external environment. Often teachers feel demotivated as they procrastinate, delay grading or reuse lesson plans knowing well that new, upgraded ones are required. They wait to be called out on that, wait to be told what to do, wait for an opportunity to feel better and to do better. Yet, a lot can change with an individual's willingness to take initiative — to start with doing a few things differently and watch the outcomes closely.

A small example is that of a teacher who complains through the term about a couple of students who do not study, don't complete

their homework and don't show interest in class. A good place to start would be to do something differently for those students — perhaps start with active 'inclusion' techniques that develop a sense of comfort and well-being for the child.

Many teachers choose to stick to tried and tested methods that have worked for them, but, unfortunately, are a thing of the past, such as teacher-led explanations and note-taking. Hundreds of schools still follow this strategy in a bid to 'cover' the syllabus. If they were to venture into learning more effective ways of student-centred teaching, they would find it works so much better in our world of massive 'transition'.

Not only do the students benefit from upgraded teaching methods, teachers themselves would find it gratifying and motivating. There are virtual conferences, webinars and massive open online courses that can enable teachers to bring technology into the classrooms.

According to a McKinsey 2023 report, The Skills Revolution and the Future of Earning and Learning', a skills-first approach transforming the learning paradigm is critical for the students' readiness for the 21st century.

The same report states that "high-performing teachers can raise the performance of students by 53 percentage points in PISA scores, on average, over that of similar students with low-performing teachers".

Given the critical role of teachers, keeping up with technological changes and focusing on upgrading skills can yield lifelong returns for students and teachers. -- Courtesy Dawn

Leaky buckets

Zarrar Khuhro

It's IMF time. Which means it's time to trot out the clichés and platitudes that we have grown old listening to: reforms must be undertaken: radical, structural, painful reforms that will shift the paradigm, synergise the grassroots and unleash Pakistan's geo-economic potential. The game will change, memoranda will be understood; all windows bar one will be sealed shut and all pages save one will be burned. Under our collective weight the adamantine begging bowl will shatter. This time it'll happen. Seriously. For Real.

Leave aside the fact that if we had a single dollar for every time we've heard all this we wouldn't need an IMF programme, and let's take a realistic look at just how many leaks in our bucket need to be fixed and how we've gone about fixing them.

Our tax sector has been called 'ineffective, unfair and fragmented', and that's a charitable description; massive tax evasion thanks to smuggling and illegal trade can also be seen in tea, tyres and auto lubricants, pharmaceuticals and, of course, the infamous real estate sector. Put together, according to a 2022 report by IPSOS, annual tax evasion in these sectors is estimated to be Rs956 billion, with the lion's share in real estate.

Burden is placed on the already burdened while whole sectors get away without paying — at best they pay only indirect taxes. And because policies are formulated by officials as far removed from reality as we are from ancient Assyria, they backfire spectacularly.

For example: we increase taxes on products and with a stroke of a pen

our policymakers calculate that this will result in X amount of revenue which in turn would balance out the resulting reduction in consumption. In some cases, like cigarettes, this would even be a good thing if it were to result in people smoking less. But no one bothers to understand that without curbing illicit production or smuggling all this means is that consumption switches to smuggled brands; see how many smokers are now puffing on smuggled milanos without even a paisa being added to government coffers. Sure, every now and then such smuggled goods are intercepted but this seems to have no real effect on their supply.

Another sector which should arguably be taxed in order to reduce consumption is carbonated drinks. In a country with one of the highest rates of diabetes incidence in the world, sweet fizzy sugar-laden drinks should be priced out of the market. But here we see that arguably healthier fruit juices have been placed in the same tax category as carbonated drinks, which will, of course, lead to an increase in their retail prices. Again, this burden is placed only on the documented (and thus tax-paying) sector while undocumented trade flourishes unchecked, and in fact, emerges as a more attractive option for consumers. When (not if) that happens, the price will be paid by farmers who supply the fruit from which the legally produced juices are made as a reduction in demand for juices will mean a reduction in fruit procurement.

Speaking of farmers, look at the current wheat scandal where growers are in a crisis due to the government's inability or unwillingness to purchase wheat in sufficient quantities. This fiasco

can be traced to the decision of the caretaker government to import over 3.5 million tons of wheat when it was already clear that wheat had been planted on a record amount of land and there were expectations of a bumper crop. Best of all, record wheat plantation had been done in response to a government drive asking farmers to plant more wheat. This crisis will birth more crises as farmers struggle with the next crop and plant less wheat next year.

No wonder, then, that the same farmers are keen to sell their land to housing societies, since real estate seems to be the only viable business left in Pakistan. Highly profitable and almost completely unregulated and untaxed, it provides the perfect haven for all your grey, and often black money. You pay no overheads, employ no one and generate no real economic growth, and yet your profit is assured.

The same authorities that enable this also shout about the need for exports. But that requires industrial growth and exportable surpluses, while we're in an advanced state of de-industrialisation. In part, this is because our growth figures are fuelled by consumption, and that too of largely imported goods. Governments have found it easier to collect duties on such goods rather than promote local industrial growth.

So why would we not be de-industrialising? Why would anyone set up an industry or be compliant with regulations when there is such an attractive option available? Why suffer the slings and arrows of an uneven tax regime and pay exorbitant utility costs and navigate spools of red tape and extractive authorities when you can buy a plot or 12? -- Courtesy Dawn

5th Meeting of the Provincial Cabinet KP cabinet approves essential expenditures of the Province

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cabinet Monday approved essential expenditures of the Province for the month of May while directing all departments to finalize their budget proposals for the next financial year. The approval of the essential expenditure was necessitated by the fact that in the absence of the Assembly, budget for the current Financial Year was approved by the caretaker cabinet at different intervals. It also resolved to timely convene the budget session of the Provincial Assembly for approving budget for the next Financial Year.

Presided by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur the meeting was held in Pakhtunkhwa House Islamabad on Monday in which detailed deliberations were held on various other agenda items.

Minister, Advisors, Special Assistants along with relevant government officers attended the meeting. Explaining the details of the decisions of the cabinet meeting, Adviser to the Chief Minister on Information and Public Relations Barrister Dr. Saif said that the provincial cabinet has taken important decisions in its fifth meeting. He said that the provincial cabinet has decided that such ministers who do not belong to Peshawar and do not have an official residence will be given Rs. 200,000. If taken, rent will be paid by the government and the utility bills of the house will also be included in the same rupees. Barrister Dr. Saif said that since 2014, the ministers who had the facility of official residence were deducted Rs. 70,000. Barrister Dr Saif said that house rents have increased in 2024 and a suitable house can be found on this

amount. It is merit to mention here that the Cabinet approved amendment in the "NWFP Ministers Salaries, Allowances and Privileges Act 1975" as well as revision of the terms and conditions of the Adviser and Special Assistants to Chief Minister. The amendments have been carried out to facilitate residential accommodation of the Ministers due to shortage of government residences and non-availability of rented homes as per rates fixed in the Act. Barrister Dr. Saif said that keeping in view the backwardness and security situation of the merged districts the provincial cabinet has also approved 503 million rupees for the deputy commissioners of the merged districts for the next three years. He said that the expenditure will go through a process of audit and nothing will be kept secret.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over the joint meeting of National Highway Authority and Sindh Works and Services Departments.

US officials discuss bilateral cooperation with KP Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy, Andrew Shofer and US Consul General in Peshawar, Shante Moore, called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at the Governor's House on Monday. During the meeting, the Deputy Chief of Mission and the Consul General congratulated Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on assuming office. They discussed various matters of mutual interest, including collaboration between US development agencies and the provincial government, as well as bilateral cooperation in different sectors. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa emphasized the need to promote two-way relations and connections between the people of the two countries. He also stressed the

importance of peace for the development and prosperity of the province, particularly in the tribal and southern districts, which have been severely affected by terrorism. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi expressed his desire for good relations with all neighboring countries, including Afghanistan, and acknowledged the decades-long hospitality extended to Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and across the country. He also mentioned the ongoing process of dignified repatriation of illegal Afghan refugees living in the country. Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy, Andrew Shofer, mentioned that American development and aid organizations are working in the province, aiming to improve public welfare and well-being.



LAHORE: Clara Strandhøj - Head of Lahore Office, British High Commission meeting with Provincial Minister for Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal Sohail Shaukat Butt.

Child protection training of merge districts' staff completed

PESHAWAR (APP): In a significant step towards ensuring the protection and welfare of children in the Merged Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a 10-day training on Child Protection Case Management, at a Foundational Level was successfully conducted from 25th April to 6th May 2024 at a local hotel here.

The training was organized as a mandatory course for all the staff of nine newly established Child Protection Units (CPUs) in Merged Districts with the support from UNICEF. Considering the severity of child protection issues and its long-term impacts on children's wellbeing and development, the Directorate of Social Welfare Merged Districts has prioritized addressing child protection issues in communities, including issues of children on the move and Afghan Refugees.

To fulfill this mission, the department have established nine Child Protection Units (CPUs) in all the Merged Districts including the Sub-division Peshawar, and Sub-division Lakki. These CPUs are staffed with Child Protection Officer, Psychologist and Social Workers. This 10-day training program, aimed to equip the professionals of Child Protection Units with essential skills and knowledge necessary for the proper assessment of child protection concerns of children reported to the CPU and ensuring their comprehensive case management and referral services including legal protection through judicial system. Sohail Ahmad, Child Protection Specialist from UNICEF, highlighted the objectives and significance of this mandatory foundational course to the staff of CPUs.

Three persons die in road mishap as truck ramed into fodder shop

MULTAN (APP): Three persons were killed and one seriously injured when a truck ran into a fodder shop due to a burst tire near Model Town here on Monday. According to Rescue 1122, the truck was on its way to its destination when suddenly its tire burst and ramed into the fodder shop. Resultantly, a man in a fodder shop and another customer who was sitting in a car died. An unknown kid who was passing from the site was also crushed to death. In this mishap, one motorcyclist sustained injuries. Rescue 1122 completed the operation by recovering the dead body of a person who was stuck in the car. Local police are investigating the incident.

2 plots sealed over illegal construction

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) sealed two residential plots on a charge of illegal construction in addition to removing encroachments from Satiana Road. A FDA spokesman said on Monday that Estate Officer FDA Aneeb Aslam Randhawa received complaints that owners of Plot No143 and 144 in Chuhar Majra had started illegal construction on his plots without approval of the map and permission of the concerned authority. The FDA enforcement team sealed the plots and warned their owners to get their construction maps and plans approved.

Protection of property, life of masses top priority: DPO

SARGODHA (APP): Newly-appointed District Police Officer (DPO) Dr Asad Ejaz Malhi has said safety of lives and properties of people is a top priority of the district police and all available resources will be utilized for the purpose. He said this while talking to APP here on Monday at his office. The DPO said that action against drug peddlers, criminals and proclaimed offenders was going on without any discrimination on a daily basis.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif addressing the newly appointed Assistant Commissioners.

CM Maryam directs ACs to redress public grievances

LAHORE (INP): "Keep your doors open to the public and listen to them patiently," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif while chairing a meeting of the Assistant Commissioners appointed across Punjab. She directed them to bring ease and convenience in people's lives. Madam Chief Minister said, "People's representatives should be respected, but don't listen to anyone's wrong words including those of mine." She said, "My Assistant Commissioner is like my eyes, ears and arms." She added, "The public service agenda must be fulfilled in any case." She directed them to ensure implementation of merit. She highlighted, "I have a zero tolerance policy for corruption."

She said, "Public

service is not only the responsibility of officers, but it is their first duty." She added, "Responsibility is not given, but it must be taken." She said, "Young officers have to prove themselves with performance." She highlighted, "The writ of the government should be upheld in any case, but human dignity should also be maintained." She said, "Everyone should do the right thing, no one should do the wrong thing. All issues including education, health, price control should be given full attention." Maryam Nawaz directed the Assistant Commissioners to ensure the sale of bread @Rs 16 and Naan @Rs 20 in their respective areas. She said, "Artificial inflation should be reduced through price control mechanisms."

Chief Secretary GB chairs meeting of DCs

GILGIT (APP): Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Abrar Ahmed Mirza chaired deputy commissioners meeting at the Chief Secretary Secretariat Gilgit. The conference was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary Development, Administrative Secretaries, Divisional Commissioners and all Deputy Commissioners of respective districts via video link. On this occasion, all Deputy Commissioners briefed about the performance of their respective districts, progress on developmental projects, and the law and

order situation. The chief secretary issued directives for concrete steps to improve governance, enhance public service delivery, strengthen the functioning of local administrations, and activate the system of punishment and mentoring. He emphasized on implementing biometric attendance and task management systems in government offices to improve the quality of work and performance. He directed to ensure the timely completion of development projects within approved budgets and take actions on a priority basis.



PESHAWAR: Deputy Chief of Mission U.S. Embassy Islamabad Mr. Andrew Shofer and U.S. Consul General Mr. Shante Moore called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

KP Govt to start 3 lac MT wheat procurement from May 7: Minister

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government would start procurement of three lac metric tons (MT) of wheat from May 7 at a cost of about 29 billion rupees, said Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru. In a statement issued here, he said that wheat would be purchased from local farmers at the rate of Rs 3900 hundred per 40 kg sack. He said committees have been formed at the district level to check the quality and quantity of wheat. The committee would consist of the district food controller, assistant food controller, district administration, agriculture, revenue department, representative members of the flour mills association, and officials of NAB and anti-corruption department as observers. The food department had set up 22 procurement centres in Peshawar, DI Khan, Bannu, Malakand, Dargai, Dir Lower, Hangu, Lakkhi Marwat, Mardan, Haripur, Manshehra, Kark, Battagram, Kohat, Abbottabad, Nowshera, Charsadda, Chitral Upper, Chitral Lower, Buner, Swabi, Azakhel, and Swat for procurement of wheat. The Minister said that CCTV cameras have been installed at all the centers to monitor the purchase process, adding that purchases would be made from farmers on a first come first serve basis. The provincial government has introduced a mobile application for procurement to enable online registration.

CM meets New York police officers to share experiences, explore ways to train provincial police in NY

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah met with a delegation of 22 members from the Pakistani American Law Enforcement Society (PALES) of the New York Police Department and discussed their respective policing systems and shared experiences. During the meeting, PALES offered the chief minister to train provincial local police officers in dealing with street crime, petty crimes, intelligence work, traffic management, and vigilance. The 22-member delegation of the PALES was led by Rohail Khalid. In the delegation the officers of different police

assignments such as Integrity Control officer, Traffic Enforcement, Intelligence, Training Bureau, Identification Bureau, Patrol, and others. Sindh Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, IG Police Ghulam nabi Memon, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, and others also attended the meeting. The chief minister welcomed the New York Police Department delegation and discussed the issue of terrorism in Karachi, which he attributed to the Afghan war and regional politics. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by the police and law enforcement agencies, with the support

of his government, to eliminate terrorism in the area. The chief minister further highlighted the challenge of street crime in the city, against which the police and Rangers have initiated operations. He also mentioned that the government was working on amending laws to utilise technology in dealing with repeat criminals. The delegation members emphasized that only a small group of 10 per cent of the population was responsible for committing crimes against 90 per cent. They suggested that if criminals were aware of being watched, they would avoid committing crimes.

Speeding van-trailer collision in Hyderabad claims 3 lives

HYDERABAD (APP): At least three persons were killed while other several wounded when an over speeding van collided with a trailer coming from opposite side in Hyderabad on wee hours of Monday. According to details, rescue sources said that the accident occurred at the Motorway M9 in the jurisdiction of Bola Khan Police Station in Hyderabad where a van collided with a trailer due to over-speeding, in a result three persons lost their lives on the spot and critically injuring several others, private news channel reported. Rescue teams reached the spot after being informed and shifted the dead.



KARACHI: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto in a group photo with Speaker Sindh Assembly Awais Shah during a meeting.

Minister Sohail stresses collective efforts to uplift underprivileged class

LAHORE (APP): A delegation of the British High Commission, British Council and UNICEF led by Clara Strandhøj, head of the British High Commission Lahore, visited the Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal office here on Monday. The delegation held a meeting with Punjab Minister for Social Welfare Sohail Shaukat Butt and explored potential collaboration in several social welfare projects. The meeting was attended by Secretary of Social Welfare Iqbal Hussain, Director General of Social Welfare Aamna Munir, Ali Naqvi from FCDO, Deputy Head of the British High Commission Saeed Ul Hassan, Tanya Durani from UNFPA, Yasmin Zaidi and Arshad Mahmood from Aawaz II, and Zahida Manzoor and Azlan Butt from UNICEF. During the session, the secretary of social welfare provided an

orientation on potential collaboration in several social welfare projects with partners. Social Welfare Minister Sohail Shaukat Butt expressed gratitude to Clara Strandhøj and the delegation, emphasizing the importance of uplifting underprivileged classes through cooperation with the British High Commission and other stakeholders. He stressed the need for strict implementation of legislation concerning gender-based violence, assistance to victims, and prevention of child marriage. Highlighting the role of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, he emphasized the importance of timely enforcement of laws, especially through programmes aimed at assisting vulnerable women and children. Plans were discussed for improving conditions in shelters, orphanages, and other institutions.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan addressing the One Day Conference on Quality Assurance of Secondary & Post Secondary Education and Role of Boards at KIU.

FO Advisor hears peoples' complaints against departments

VEHARI (APP): Regional Advisor to Federal Ombudsman, Multan, Mahmood Javed Bhatti on Monday heard complaints of the people at an open court held at DC office in Vehari under FO's 'Justice at Door Step' program and issued orders to the federal departments to address their grievances. Earlier, the Advisor also chaired an awareness seminar at a private college in the city and held an interactive session with the students wherein he answered various questions from youth on working of the FO and how the justice is delivered to the complainants at their

doorstep in 60 days only. Speaking at the seminar, Mahmood Javed Bhatti said, the procedure to file complaint against any federal government department was easy adding that people can write their grievances on a plain paper or can also avail modern information communication facility like sending SMS to 1055, email, or social media platforms like whatsapp and instagram. Bhatti apprised students of the objectives and performance of the Federal Ombudsman office and added that seventeen (17) regional officers were working across the



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique addressing participants of CEOs Health and MSs Conference. Secretary Health Ali Khan and others are also present.

Pakistan wants 'larger, longer' IMF bailout, PIA privatization by early July: Minister

ISLAMABAD (INP): Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Monday Islamabad was seeking a "larger and longer" bailout program from the International Monetary Fund, whose mission would arrive in Islamabad within the next ten days to start discussing a new loan deal.

Pakistan last month completed a short-term \$3 billion program, which

helped stave off sovereign default, but the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has stressed the need for a fresh, longer term program. Pakistan's financial year runs from July to June and its budget for fiscal year 2025, the first by Sharif's new government, has to be presented before June 30.

The IMF has not specified the dates of its

Islamabad visit, nor the size or duration of any new program. "We have requested the IMF... that we want to go into a larger and a longer program with the fund and they have acceded that request, and we are expecting the mission to arrive here within a week to 10 days, where we will start discussing the contours of the next program," Aurangzeb said while

addressing a conference in Islamabad. He said Pakistan needed a new IMF program to bring "permanence" to macroeconomic stability and continue to carry out "structural reforms."

The IMF has said accelerating reforms was more important than the size of a new program, which would be guided by a package of reforms and balance of payments needs.



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Finance addressing the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan Investment Forum 2024.



GEORGIA: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema meets with President of Asian Development Bank (ADB) on the sidelines of the 57th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors in Tbilisi.

Pakistan, Japan discuss bilateral cooperation in industry, food security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan, Wada Mitsuhiro, here on Monday met with Federal Minister for Industry and Food Security, Rana Tanveer Hussain.

According to a press statement, both sides discussed matters of mutual interest, including bilateral cooperation and the challenges faced by Japanese automakers in Pakistan.

Rana Tanveer Hussain expressed Pakistan's desire to strengthen its friendship with Japan, which he said

was a close friend of Pakistan. He highlighted the significant role Japan can play in Pakistan's auto industry and expressed the hope that more Japanese companies will invest in Pakistan. The minister assured that the current government is committed to providing facilities to investors for the development of industry and agriculture, which is their top priority. He also emphasised the importance of food security and the need for cooperation between the two countries in this sector.

SECP approves PIA's scheme of arrangement

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan has approved the Scheme of Arrangement between Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Limited (PIA) and PIA Holding Company Limited (HoldCo).

Earlier this year, the Federal Cabinet approved the legal segregation plan of PIA and the Scheme and, inter alia, directed the Aviation Division, PIA, and HoldCo to undertake the required corporate and regulatory actions to implement the Scheme.

Last month, the scheme was also approved by the shareholders and creditors of PIA, said a press release issued by the Commission.

The restructuring entails the legal separation of PIA's core aviation business from its non-core activities and the transfer of its non-aviation-related business from PIA into HoldCo.

The approval of the scheme paves the way for HoldCo to own 100% shareholding in PIA and simultaneous issuance and allotment of shares by HoldCo to the qualifying shareholders of PIA.

IPL seeks power supplier license to supply 4.53 MW to ITPL, IFPL

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ms Ittehad (Pvt) Ltd (IPL) has sought to grant power supplier license to supply 4.53 megawatt (MW) to Ittehad Textile Pvt Ltd (ITPL) and Ittehad Fabrics Pvt Ltd (IFPL).

In a petition to the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), the company maintained that it had set up a 4.563 MW natural gas fuel based generation facility at Faisalabad which supplies specifically to a designated consumer/Bulk Power Consumer-BP (in the name of Ittehad Textile Pvt Ltd and Ittehad Fabrics Pvt Ltd).

It was further said that the generation facility is working at 440 voltages and supplying electricity through its own dedicated feeders to the sister organizations without using network of National Transmission and Dispatch Company.

Jam directs to consult all stakeholders to solve problems of industrial zones

Independent Report

KARACHI: A meeting was held in the Sindh Secretariat under the chairmanship of Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo. Provincial Secretary Industries and Commerce Muhammad Yasin Shar Baloch, MD SITE Ghazanfar Qadri and other officers also attended the meeting. Addressing the meeting, Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo directed to solve the problems of SITE employees on priority basis. He further said that strict action should be taken against incompetent

and absent employees. Biometric systems should be activated to ensure attendance and coordination with concerned departments should be improved for completion of SITE development projects. Jam Ikramullah Dharejo said that meetings would be started with the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce across the province to solve the problems of the business community while progress was being made on the Industrial and Commerce Policy. He also directed to consult all the stakeholders to solve the problems of industrial zones.



KARACHI: Labourers busy in preparing tourist boats on Fish Harbor.

ADB reaffirms continued support to Pakistan

TBILISI (INP): Asian Development Bank (ADB) has reaffirmed continued support to Pakistan.

The assurance was given by President Asian Development Bank Masatsugu Asakawa during a meeting with a Pakistani delegation led by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema in Georgian Capital Tbilisi.

The President ADB reposed trust in Pakistan's reform agenda and appreciated the required tough stabilization measures taken by the Government to bring about macroeconomic stability in the country. He assured Pakistan of its continued support in the areas of Public Private Partnership, climate and disaster resilience enhancement, Domestic Resource Mobilization, promoting Women Inclusive Finance and Energy Sector reforms.

The Minister urged ADB to deploy the additional resources towards high impact interventions including climate actions in the most vulnerable countries. Earlier, speaking during the business session of the ADB's Board of Governors, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema highlighted Government of Pakistan's firm commitment to wide-ranging program to unlock Pakistan's economic growth potential. He said the economy is now on the consolidation path with improvements in inflation and some recovery of economic growth.

Ahad Cheema also held meetings with the senior leadership of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and European Investment Bank to discuss their ongoing development portfolios in Pakistan and priority areas for future support. He also held meetings with bilateral development partners including the United Kingdom, Germany and USA.



HYDERABAD: Labourers busy in preparing bangles at local bangles factory.

Enhance investment opportunities Dawood Hercules Corporation, Engro Corporation approve restructuring plan

Independent Report

KARACHI: The Boards of Dawood Hercules Corporation Limited (DH Corp) and Engro Corporation Limited (Engro Corp) have, in principle, approved a proposal to restructure the shareholding between the two companies, aiming to enhance investment opportunities of the enterprise. The restructuring proposal is subject to final Board and shareholder approvals.

The proposed restructuring would

enhance investment opportunities by harmonizing the investment efforts of both companies. DH Corp is a capital allocation firm that has experience in deploying funds to a broad range of sectors and assets, while Engro Corp has a successful track record of developing and managing large-scale industrial projects in 5 business verticals. Both companies have clear investment strategies and have delivered healthy returns to shareholders; however,

a testing external environment necessitates a wider and more agile investing approach at a time when large-scale investments are challenging to make. The proposed restructuring aims to enable such an approach. Following a two-step process, it would result in DH Corp being rebranded as Engro Holdings Limited, and Engro Corp becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of Engro Holdings. As a part of this process, Engro Corp's minority shareholders.

Musadik urges Private sectors of Pakistan, SA to collaborate towards economic diversification, value addition

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Federal Minister for Petroleum Musadik Malik Monday urged the private sectors of both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia (SA) to collaborate towards economic diversification and value addition.

Addressing a Two-Day Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Investment Conference, he said, "We invite the private sectors of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to participate in building critical infrastructure to unlock the assets and wealth potential of both countries." "We are already exporting food products, but unfortunately, around 35% of Pakistani perishable food products go to waste. We aim to connect our agricultural

assets to the food security needs of the GCC," he said.

The Minister said that Saudi Arabia wanted to become a food corridor for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and called for joint efforts to address challenges such as food wastage, proposed that Pakistan's agricultural assets be leveraged to enhance food security not only in Saudi Arabia but across the GCC and beyond.

He underscored the conference's focus on private sector engagement, particularly in food and agriculture, urging investments in downstream activities like food processing and value-added industries such as fruit, juice, cheese, and meat production for international markets.

He described the conference as an opportunity for investors from both countries to establish relationships and explore collaborations, highlighting Pakistan's interest in participating in religious and family tourism.

He called for integrated tourism experiences, including luxury hotels and ski resorts in northern Pakistan, inviting collaboration between private sector entities from both countries to develop these ventures.

He emphasized the shared visions of economic prosperity between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Govt committed to address problems of farmers on priority basis: Rana Ehsan

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ehsan Afzal Monday assured that government was taking all possible steps to protect the rights of farmers on priority and formulating fruitful policies for the welfare of farmers which will improve crops to enhance productivity.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that all necessary steps regarding the purchase of wheat and said that there should not be any delay in the procurement of wheat so the farmers can get reward for their hard

work. The authorities concerned strictly directed by PM to complete the procurement of wheat from farmers, he said, adding, the wheat procurement target was also increased from 1.4 million tonnes to 1.8 million tonnes. An strict inquiry committee was constituted to probe a wheat import scandal which will submit its report to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said, adding, after getting details we will take further decisions. Replying a question, he said that the inflation falling towards the lowest level which was a sign of improvement.



FAISALABAD: A worker is busy in his work at a local Polyester factory in the city.

Pak rupee drops 3 paise against USD

KARACHI (INP): The US dollar gained 03 paise against the Pakistani Rupee on Monday at the interbank market, closing at Rs 278.24, according to SBP report. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market.

Serious efforts needed to pull country out of economic quagmire: S M Tanveer

ABBOTTABAD (INP): Former Provincial Minister and Patron-e-in Chief of United Business Group S.M. Tanveer has said that the country is passing through a challenging time and industries are being closed.

Instead the neighboring country Afghanistan is strengthening its economy by promoting its industrial and textile sectors, he said. "We have to vigorously pursue Quaid's saying 'work, work, and work' if we really want to come out of the existing economic quagmire," he said and added that Hazara is blessed with natural resources but badly overlooked.

Addressing a ceremony in Abbottabad held by Abbottabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Industrialists Association of Abbottabad S.M. Tanveer went on to say that we have to enhance our exports by focusing attention on quality production through

industrial development. He added that by promoting tourism, the mineral sector and providing cheaper electricity to industry we can come out of the existing economic problems.

On this occasion ban on leasing of mines and the issue of joint ventures also came under discussion and President FPCCI Atif Ikram Shaikh was apprised of the community's difficulties at length.

In his address Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari said that Abbottabad is an important trade and cultural hub of KPK and that UBG is determined to provide every possible cooperation for its development as well as for the resolution of the problems of the community.

The Ceremony was also addressed by President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Shaikh.



FAISALABAD: Farmers busy in cutting wheat crop in their field.

Putin orders tactical nuclear weapon drills to deter the West

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia said on Monday it would practice the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons as part of a military exercise, after what Moscow said were threats from France, Britain and the United States. Since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, Russia has repeatedly warned of rising nuclear risks — warnings which the US says it has to take seriously, though US officials say they have seen no change in Russia's nuclear posture. Russia says the US and its European allies are pushing the world to the brink of confrontation between nuclear powers by supporting Ukraine with tens of billions of dollars of weapons, some of which

are being used against Russian territory. Russia's defence ministry said it would hold military drills, including practicing the preparation and deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons. President Vladimir Putin ordered the exercises, the ministry added. "During the exercise, a set of measures will be carried out to practice the issues of preparation and use of non-strategic nuclear weapons," the ministry said. It added that missile forces in the Southern Military District, aviation and the navy will take part. The exercise aims to ensure Russia's territorial integrity and sovereignty "in response to provocative statements and threats by certain Western officials

against the Russian Federation", it said. Russia and the US are by far the world's biggest nuclear powers, holding more than 10,600 of the world's 12,100 nuclear warheads. China has the third-largest nuclear arsenal, followed by France and Britain. Russia has about 1,558 non-strategic nuclear warheads, according to the Federation of American Scientists, though there is uncertainty about exact figures for such weapons due to a lack of transparency. No power has used nuclear weapons in war since the United States unleashed the first atomic bomb attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.



People grab flour bags from a truck after the Israeli military began evacuating Palestinian civilians ahead of a threatened assault on Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

Taiwan must invest in building its own 'strengths', vice president-elect says

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan is grateful for continued US security assistance but must invest in building its own "strengths" first and show the world its support for the island is worth it, Vice President-elect Hsiao Bi-khim said on Monday. Hsiao, who takes office with President-elect Lai Ching-te on May 20, is Taiwan's former de facto ambassador to Washington, and is expected to play a key role in further strengthening ties with the United States given her fluent English and deep ties in the US capital. The United States is Chinese-claimed Taiwan's most important supporter and arms supplier, despite the lack of diplomatic ties. Speaking to a think-tank forum, Hsiao expressed appreciation for

US President Joe Biden last month signing into law legislation to boost Taiwan's defences, part of a broader package of assistance for Ukraine and Israel. "This bill demonstrates the US' continuing commitment to supporting allies and partners in the face of geopolitical challenges," she said. "But beyond thanking our international friends for their support, it is important that as Taiwanese we invest in building our own strengths first," she said. "Through our own efforts in building a resilient Taiwan, we must have the confidence that Taiwan is worthy of galvanising international support." China has ramped up its military pressure against Taiwan over the past four years.

France sends envoy to Putin inauguration as Berlin boycotts

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: France will send its ambassador to the inauguration of Russian President Vladimir Putin for his next six-year term in office on Tuesday, a French diplomatic source said on Monday, in contrast with Germany which said it would not be represented. Paris' decision suggests a potential split in the Western camp with several countries, including the Baltic states, vehemently opposed to giving Putin any form of legitimacy and potentially undermining Ukraine in its war with Russia after Moscow launched an invasion more than two years ago. Putin won a record post-Soviet landslide, cementing his already tight grip on power, in Russia's presidential election, held in March just weeks after Putin's most prominent opponent Alexei Navalny died in jail.

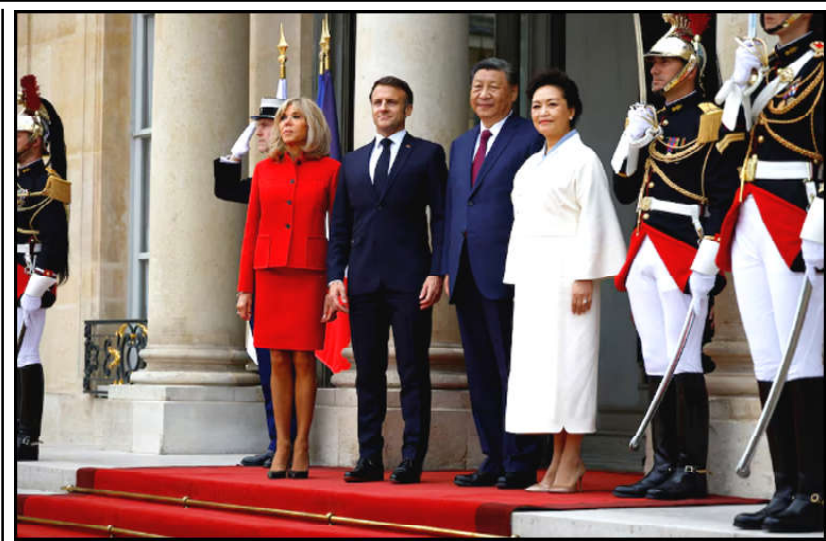
Chad holds presidential election after years of military rule

Monitoring Desk
N'DJAMENA: Voters in Chad headed to the polls on Monday to cast their ballot in a long delayed presidential election that is set to end three years of military rule under interim president, Mahamat Deby Itno. Deby Itno seized power after his father who ran the country for more than three decades was killed fighting rebels in 2021. Last year, the government announced it was extending the 18-month transition for two more years, which provoked protests across the country. There are 10 candidates on the ballot, including a woman. Some 8 million people are registered to vote, in a country of more than 17 million people, one of the poorest in the world. Analysts say Deby Itno is expected to win the vote. A leading opposition figure Yaya Dillo, the current

president's cousin, was killed in February in circumstances that remain unclear. The oil-exporting country of nearly 18 million people has not had a free-and-fair transfer of power since it became independent in 1960 after decades of French colonial rule. Chad is seen by the U.S. and France as one of the last remaining stable allies in the vast Sahel region following military coups in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger in recent years. The ruling juntas in all three nations have expelled French forces and turned to Russia's mercenary units for security assistance instead. Earlier this year, Niger's junta ordered all U.S. troops out, meaning Washington will lose access to its key base in Agadez, the center of its counter-terrorism operations in the region.

Aid groups issue urgent appeal for Yemen funds

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Nearly 200 aid groups appealed on Monday for funds to bridge a \$2.3 billion shortfall in assistance for war-torn Yemen, warning of potentially "catastrophic consequences" for the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country. A joint statement from 188 humanitarian organisations, including several UN agencies, warned that 18.2 million people—more than half the population—were in need of help after nine years of war between Huthi rebels and a Saudi-led coalition. Their appeal came a day before a meeting of high-ranking EU officials in Brussels to discuss the aid programme for Yemen, which is suffering one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.



French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron welcome China's President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan as they arrive at the Elysee Palace in Paris as part of their two-day state visit in France.

Israel strikes Gazan city of Rafah

Monitoring Desk
RAFAH: Israel's military carried out airstrikes in Rafah on Monday, residents said, hours after Israel told Palestinians to evacuate parts of the southern Gaza city where more than a million people uprooted by the war have been sheltering. Fears are growing of a full-blown assault in Rafah, long threatened by Israel, against holdouts of the Palestinian militant group Hamas as ceasefire talks in Cairo stall. There was no immediate comment from Israel,

which Hamas-affiliated Al-Aqsa TV said had targeted areas in eastern Rafah near neighbourhoods given evacuation orders. Instructed by Arabic text messages, phone calls, and flyers to move to what the Israeli military called an "expanded humanitarian zone" 20 km (7 miles) away, some Palestinian families began trundling away under chilly spring rain. Some piled children and possessions onto donkey carts, while others left by pick-up or on foot through muddy streets.

Germany recalls its ambassador in Russia for a week in protest over a hacker attack

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Germany said Monday it recalled its ambassador to Russia for a week of consultations in Berlin following an alleged hacker attack on Chancellor Olaf Scholz's party. Germany last week accused Russian military agents of hacking into the top echelons of Scholz's Social Democrats' party and other sensitive government and industrial targets. Berlin has joined NATO and fellow European countries in warning that Russia's cyberespionage would

have consequences. The Foreign Office in Berlin said Monday that the government is taking the latest incident "seriously" and that Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had decided to call back German Ambassador Alexander Lambsdorff. He would return to Moscow after a week, it said. "The German government takes this event very seriously as behavior against our liberal democracy and the institutions that support it," Foreign Office spokeswoman Kathrin Deschauer said.

Afghan diplomat in India quits after smuggling allegations

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Afghanistan's top diplomat in India resigned days after she was reportedly caught by airport authorities smuggling nearly \$2 million worth of gold into the country. Zakia Wardak, the Afghan consul-general in India's financial capital Mumbai, posted a statement on social media platform X announcing her resignation. Afghanistan's embassy in New Delhi shut down in November, more than two years after the Taliban returned to power in Kabul following the collapse of the Western-backed government, leaving Wardak as the country's most senior representative in India.

Philippines says won't raise South China Sea tensions, won't use water cannons

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said on Monday the country will not use water cannons or any offensive weapons in the South China Sea. The last thing the Philippines wants to do is to raise tensions in the strategic waterway, Marcos told reporters.



U.S. soldiers fire 155mm and 105mm Howitzers during a live fire exercise in the annual joint military exercises between U.S. and Philippine troops called "Balikatan" or shoulder-to-shoulder, at Laoag, Ilocos Norte, Philippines.

Australia denounces China over 'unsafe' aerial confrontation

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: A Chinese fighter jet endangered an Australian military helicopter during an "unsafe" and "unacceptable" confrontation over the Yellow Sea, Australia said on Monday. The Chinese air force J-10 jet dropped flares above and several hundred meters ahead of an Australian MH60R Seahawk helicopter which was on a routine flight on Saturday in the Yellow Sea as part of an operation to enforce sanctions against North Korea, Defence Minister Richard Marles said in a statement. The helicopter, flying

from destroyer HMAS Hobart, dodged the flares, but the possible impact would have been "significant". "This is a very serious incident, it was unsafe and it is completely unacceptable," he said. "We have formally expressed our concerns about this incident, and formally expressed that this was both unsafe and unprofessional." The confrontation put the aircraft and those on board at risk, although no one was hurt, the Department of Defence said in a separate statement.

Italy calls for Ukraine truce, peace talks with Putin: report

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy's Defence Minister said on Monday economic sanctions against Russia had failed and called on the West to try harder to negotiate a diplomatic solution with President Vladimir Putin to end the war in Ukraine. Guido Crosetto told an Italian publication that the West had wrongly believed its sanctions could stop Russia's aggression, but it had overestimated its economic influence in the world. "Instead... the only way to resolve this crisis is to involve everyone, first (to obtain) a truce and then peace," Crosetto said.

China offers flexible jobs for women after childbirth

Monitoring Desk
HONG KONG: Chinese provinces are urging companies to offer women flexible job roles called "Mama's Posts" that make it easier to balance work and childcare, the official Xinhua news agency said on Monday. Authorities are trying to encourage more women to have children after China's population fell for a second consecutive year in 2023 and births touched a record low. "Mama's Post is a position specially created for mothers... the working hours are relatively flexible.

No place to pray for Muslim workers in Italian city

Monitoring Desk
MONFALCONE: It's Friday prayers in the northeastern Italian city of Monfalcone, and hundreds of men are on their knees in a concrete parking lot, their heads bowed to the ground. They are just a fraction of the city's Muslims who since November have been banned from praying inside their two cultural centres by Monfalcone's far-right mayor. Instead, they assemble in this privately owned construction site as they await a court decision

later this month to settle a zoning issue they say has barred their constitutional right to prayer. Among them is Rejaul Haq, the property's owner, who expresses frustration over what he and many other Muslims see as harassment by the city they call home. "Tell me where I should go? Why do I have to go outside of Monfalcone? I live here, I pay taxes here!" lamented Haq, a naturalised Italian citizen who arrived from Bangladesh in 2006.

UN nuclear watchdog chief travels to Iran as its monitoring remains hampered

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: The head of the United Nations' atomic watchdog traveled Monday to Iran, where his agency faces increasing difficulty in monitoring the Islamic Republic's rapidly advancing nuclear program as tensions remain high in the wider Middle East over the Israel-Hamas war. Rafael Mariano Grossi already has warned Tehran has enough uranium enriched to near-weapons-grade levels to make "several" nuclear bombs if it chose to do so. He has acknowledged the agency can't guarantee that none of Iran's centrifuges may have been peeled away for clandestine enrichment. Those challenges now find themselves entangled in attacks between Israel and Iran, with the city of Isfahan apparently coming under

Israeli fire in recent weeks despite it being surrounded by sensitive nuclear sites. Grossi is likely to attend an Iranian nuclear conference there while on his two-day trip to Iran. "Problems will not disappear," Grossi told an International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors' meeting in March. "They will only get worse. So, we need to address this in a serious way." In Tehran, Grossi and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian shook hands in front of journalists before going into a meeting. Authorities offered no immediate comment on their discussions. Tensions have grown between Iran and the IAEA since then-President Donald Trump in 2018 unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

Macron, von der Leyen press China's Xi on trade in Paris talks

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron and EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen urged China to ensure more balanced trade at the start of President Xi Jinping's visit to Paris, during which Macron was also set to press him on Ukraine. Xi was in Europe for the first time in five years, at a time of growing business tensions that include the European Union investigating Chinese industries such as electric vehicle exports, while Beijing probes mostly French-made brandy imports. Macron said Europe and China needed to resolve structural difficulties, in particular on trade. "The future of our continent will also very clearly depend on our capacity to further develop in a balanced way our relationship with China," he said as the three sat at a round table under the gilded ceilings of the Elysee Palace. Von der Leyen was more blunt, saying the relationship was hurt by unequal market access and Chinese state subsidies. After the meeting, she told reporters that the EU "cannot absorb massive over-production of Chinese industrial goods flooding its market". "Europe will not waver from making tough decisions needed to protect its market," she said. The EU's more robust stance on trade with China dovetails with Washington's approach. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has warned China that Washington would not accept new industries being "decimated" by Chinese imports.

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Biden meets Jordan's King Abdullah as Gaza ceasefire hopes dim

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden will meet Middle East ally, Jordan's King Abdullah II, at the White House on Monday with prospects for a Gaza ceasefire appearing slim and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas and Israeli officials blaming each other for the impasse. On Sunday, Hamas reiterated its demand for an end to the war in exchange for the freeing of hostages, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu flatly ruled that out. Hamas also attacked the Kerem Shalom crossing into Gaza that Israel said killed three of its soldiers. A Jordanian diplomat told Reuters Monday's meeting between Biden and King Abdullah is not a formal bilateral meeting but an informal private meeting. It comes as the Biden administration and Israeli officials remain at odds over Israel's planned military

incursion in the southern Gaza city of Rafah where it told Palestinians to start evacuating some parts on Monday. Biden last met King Abdullah at the White House in February and the two longtime allies discussed a daunting list of challenges, including the looming Israeli ground offensive in southern Gaza and suffering of Palestinian civilians. Jordan and other Arab states have been highly critical of Israel's actions and have been demanding a ceasefire since mid-October as civilian casualties began to skyrocket. The war began after Hamas stunned Israel with a cross-border raid on Oct. 7 in which 1,200 people were killed and 252 hostages taken, according to Israeli tallies. More than 34,600 Palestinians have been killed and more than 77,000 wounded in Israel's assault, according to Gaza's health ministry.

Low-budget Chinese travellers highlight shift in Hong Kong tourism

Monitoring Desk
HONG KONG: Cost-conscious Chinese tourists have replaced many of the cash-rich mainland travellers who once flocked to Hong Kong, with some only interested in free walking tours of the city and staying across the border in Shenzhen overnight to save money. During China's Labour Day holiday last week, Laura Li, 28, and her cousin Diego Deng, 20, from northeastern Liaoning province, were among the younger visitors to Hong Kong who preferred to follow walking guides on social media rather than join tour groups or shop in luxury stores. The Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu, also known as Little Red Book, is the must-have app for China's Generation Z - the 280 million people born between 1995 and 2010 - to explore Hong Kong neighbourhoods and offers travel tips to tourists. "Personally, I don't like to be with tour groups because the degree of free-

dom is too low," Li said outside the Yau Ma Tei Police Station, a neo-classical Edwardian-style building that has featured in local TV dramas and films and is popular with mainland tourists. "I prefer the kind of aimless city walk." Daniel Leung, an assistant professor at Hong Kong Polytechnic University's school of hotel and tourism management, said the shift in travel and spending habits was mainly due to a slow economic recovery in mainland China. "The China economy's recovery speed was not as good as we expected. When people utilise their disposable income, they now become more cautious," Leung said. The low-budget travellers coming to Hong Kong from mainland China contrast with the once cash-rich and luxury-spending mainland tourists who used to visit the city in the years before the pandemic. Coupled with a surge in Hong Kong people travelling to the mainland for shopping and entertainment.



Women train with plastic baby dolls as they take part in a nursing skills class for confinement carers, at Yipeitong training centre in Shanghai, China.

OIC Contact Group on Jammu & Kashmir calls for early resolution of J&K dispute

ISLAMABAD (Online): OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir has called for an early and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Its meeting was held in Banjul, The Gambia on the sidelines of the 15th Islamic Summit of the OIC.

The participating delegations from different member states expressed support for the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiri people for realization of their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ishaq Dar, who led the Pakistan delegation briefed the Contact Group on India's ongoing efforts to transform Kashmiris into a disempowered community in their own land.

He apprised the meeting that India was systematically denying the Kashmiri people their fundamental rights and freedoms. Ishaq Dar said the Indian authorities have created an environment of fear and intimidation in the IIOJK to crush dissent.

He urged the international community to take cognizance of the Indian leaders' provocative statements and unwarranted claims about Azad Jammu and Kashmir, which constitute a serious threat to regional peace. The Deputy Prime Minister also stressed that India must release all the political prisoners, lift curbs on the outlawed political parties, revoke the illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019 and the subsequent steps aimed at demographic change and political engineering, and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

APP adds: The Contact Group of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Jammu and Kashmir met here Monday wherein Pakistan stressed that India should revoke all of its unilateral actions of August 5, 2019 in IIOJK and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir dispute.

Held on the sidelines of the 15th Islamic Summit of the OIC here, the meeting reviewed the political and security environment in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).



SKARDU: Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization & Board of Investment, Abdul Aleem Khan inspecting land slide in Skardu.

Aleem Khan reviews Skardu-Gilgit highway situation after landslide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization & Investment Board Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday reached Skardu and inspected the damage caused by landslides on the main highway connecting Gilgit and Skardu.

He reviewed the current situation along with Director General of Frontier Works Organization Major General Abdul Sami and Federal Secretary Communications Ali Sher Mehsud.

He directed that more attention should be given to the main highway connecting Gilgit and Skardu. Aleem Khan further said that all possible measures should be taken to prevent the fall of rocks and mud and to protect lives and properties.

He asked Frontier Works Organization (FWO) to ensure an extensive survey of these highways with heavy machinery to take immediate steps. He said that in case of any untoward incident, maximum relief may be given in the minimum possible time with adequate measures.

Abdul Aleem Khan was briefed by FWO Director General Maj. General Abdul Sami and Federal Secretary Communications Ali Sher Mehsud and assured that they will continue efforts for the restoration of highways in the shortest possible time in the Northern Areas. Similarly, maximum machinery and manpower will be deployed in typical areas of land sliding so that masses should not face any kind of difficulty.



QUETTA: Former Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar holding farewell meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Officers awaiting posting for orders get postings in various departments

Independent Report
QUETTA: The officers of different cadres awaiting posting orders and those serving as Additional Secretary in different departments have been granted postings in the province.

According to an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department on Monday, the PAS officer of Grade-18, Sahibzada Najeebullah, awaiting posting order in S&GAD, has been posted as the Additional Secretary, Irrigation Department against an existing vacancy.

Similarly, Qurban Ali Magsi, awaiting for posting orders, has been posted as the Additional Secretary Health Department.

Major (Retd) Ilyas Kibzai, serving as Additional Secretary, Transport has been transferred and posted as the Additional Secretary, Home and Tribal Affairs. The BCS officer of Grade-19, Murad Khan Kasi, serving as Additional Secretary Home and Tribal Affairs, has been transferred and directed to report in the S&GAD. Similarly, the BCS officer of Grade-19, awaiting for posting orders, has been posted as the Additional Secretary, Transport. The PAS officer of Grade-18, Mansoor Ahmed Qazi, awaiting for posting orders, has been posted as the Additional Secretary for Mines and Mineral Development and Abdul Qadeer Kakar (BSS/B-19).



QUETTA: Activists of different Political Parties are holding protest rally for acceptance of their demands, at Mannan Chowk.



GAMBIA: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar briefed the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir, on the sidelines of the 15th OIC Islamic Summit Conference, in Banjul, the Gambia.

Sustainable development not possible without peace: Ahsan

NAROWAL (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said on Monday that it was the duty of every individual, especially the youth, to fight against the miscreants who spread intolerance and misinformation in the society, saying that sustainable development was not possible without peace.

Talking to the participants of Peace, Education and Development Conference held under the auspices of the University of Narowal, at Narowal Sports Gymnasium, he said the biggest challenge faced by Pakistan was propaganda stemmed in misinformation fracturing the very basic ethics and value set of our society.

Ahsan Iqbal said that without peace there would be no sustainable progress and development, adding that the foundation basis of Islam was 'peace and peace' only. The Federal Minister said that in past, unfortunately our politics had become a victim of intolerance and bigotry and even some have used religion to victimize their opponents but salute to a people who rejected such elements with the power of their vote. He said the purpose of today's conference was that we had to make this country a citadel of peace as progress and prosperity depend on peace.

Ahsan Iqbal said that today youngsters should dive deep into the reason behind Pakistan's creation, it was struggle for peace which then was not possible as Muslims felt vulnerable as a minority - Thus, today, it was the duty of every Pakistani to protect it's minorities and their rights.

He said: "If we want Pakistan to enter top economies then we need to embrace 'Mera Pakistan Movement' for each Pakistani working in different sectors, his or her circle of influence is their Pakistan".

Citing the attack on him in past, the Federal Minister said that today's event on 6th May marks the sad day when a 'vulnerable young individual' fell victim to hate and bigotry propagated by intolerant elements of the society. However, with the grace of Allah Almighty, he survived to champion Peace, education and development to prove that hate would always be defeated by positivity, he added. He said: "When the seeds of prejudice and hatred were planted in the mind of a person, then we have to consciously make every effort to get rid of this hatred so that we are not devoid of rational thinking".

Today, he said that disinformation had become a big challenge for peace in the world, at this time it was responsibility of every individual to protect ourselves and the people around us.



QUETTA: Candidates of Balochistan who passed CSS examination photographed with Chief Justice Balochistan High Court Mr. Justice Muhammad Khan Kakar

DPM Ishaq interacts with Pak community

BANJUL (GAMBIA) (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar held an interaction with the Pakistani community based in The Gambia, during his visit to the country for the 15th OIC Summit.

Deputy prime minister and foreign minister apprised the Pakistani community about the activities of the Pakistan delegation led by him at the 15th OIC Summit, said a press release on Monday.

Ishaq Dar highlighted his meetings and activities during the summit to highlight the issues of Kashmir and Islamophobia.

Pakistani community members expressed their appreciation for the deputy prime minister and foreign minister to allow them the opportunity for an interaction. They highlighted some of their concerns and requested Deputy PM for his consideration. They also presented proposals to strengthen the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Gambia. Honorary Consul General of Pakistan to The Gambia Keba Krubaly, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Ambassador Syrus Qazi and Ambassador of Pakistan to Senegal accredited.

French Ambassador lauds Pakistan's role in regional stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of France, Nicolas Galey called on Minister for Defence and Defence Production Khawaja Muhammad Asif and appreciated Pakistan's role in regional stability here on Monday.

On the occasion, the Defence Minister highlighted that Pakistan attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with France, a news release said.

He emphasized enhanced collaboration between the Armed Forces of the two countries.

The Defence Minister expressed that Pak-France bilateral relations are based on principles of mutual respect. He stated that Pakistan was committed to stability and peace in the region.

He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to address global challenges of terrorism and extremism.

The visiting dignitary ensured to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

RDMC inaugurates a purpose-built, solar powered Health Center at Humai

Independent Report
NOKKUNDI: The Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC) strengthened its existing healthcare set up in Humai by inaugurating a newly constructed Community Health Center in partnership with the renowned Indus Hospital & Healthcare Network (IHNN). This is the second healthcare initiative undertaken in the village in partnership with IHNN. Apart from a smaller clinic which was inaugurated in September 2023, RDMC has also established a primary school for the village and invested in making an RO plant functional to ensure provision of potable water for the village residents.

Guided by patient data recorded at the first clinic and recommendations of the Par-e-Koh Community Development Committee (CDC), the management of RDMC decided to enhance the available healthcare facilities at Humai. The structure for the purpose-built Humai Community Health Center has a modern design, powered by solar energy with panels forming part of the design structure. The well-planned layout has independent clinics for consultation as well as a general triage area, a procedure room, a pharmacy and a laboratory. Qualified medical staff deputized by IHNN shall be deployed at this facility to ensure visitors get access to quality healthcare.

Iran, Pakistan committed to completing gas pipeline project: Iranian CG

KARACHI (APP): Iranian Consul General (CG) to Karachi, Hassan Nourian on Monday lauding the foolproof security efforts of Pakistan during the Iranian President's visit, said that Iran and Pakistan were committed and fighting tooth and nail to complete the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project.

He said that the project was to be completed in 2024 but delayed due to political and technical reasons.

Speaking in Karachi Press Club (KPC)'s Meet the Press Programme, Hassan Nourian said that Pakistan and Iran were one soul in two bodies.

He said that Iran wanted to help resolve energy crises of Pakistan and ready to assist in its development.

The Consul General said that Iran was self-sufficient in crude oil and other resources and wanted to meet the needs of the region.

He said that Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project started in 2009 as Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project but owing to a few reasons India pulled herself out of the project.

Later, Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline came into existence and commenced work on the project in 2012.

The time period of the project was extended to ten years, which was expected to be completed in 2024 and could not meet its deadline, he said adding that the political leadership of Pakistan had tendency to complete the project.



KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf awarding medal to an officer during Pakistan Navy Investiture Ceremony held in Karachi.

Naval officers, civilians conferred Awards

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf on Monday conferred Military Awards to Navy Officers, CPOs, Sailors and Sailors as the chief guest of the investiture ceremony.

In the ceremony, 4 officers were awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military) and 4 officers were awarded with Tagha-i-Imtiaz (Military). 104 Chief Petty Officers and Sailors were awarded Tagha-e-Khidmat (Military) Class-I, II and III, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Some 44 Officers, Chief Petty Officers/Sailors and Civilians were also awarded Letters of Commendation by the Chief of the Naval Staff.

A large number of serving and retired officers of Pakistan Navy participated in the ceremony.

No compromise to be made on timely provision of quality food to masses, says Dumar

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Food, Noor Muhammad Dumar has stated that the provincial Food Department has decided to procure 0.5 million wheat from the farmers of province for directives have been issued to the Finance Department to release Rs. 5 billion. He asserted that negligence would be tolerated to maintain quality of wheat preserved in the province.

In addition to this, no compromise would be made on timely provision of quality food to the masses.

The Provincial Minister was on visit of the PR Center of Food Department here on Monday.

The Secretary Food, Asghar Harifal and former Provincial Minister Sikandar Umrani were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Noor Muhammad Dumar said that it is top priority to provide standard and cheaper wheat to the people. In this regard, the provincial government has decided to purchase wheat from the growers of the province.

Meanwhile, the Minister inspected the stock of wheat present in the PRC.



PISHIN: Provincial Food Minister Haji Noor Muhammad Dumar inspecting wheat stock at PR Center

Bakht Kakar, Naseem greet Jaffar Mandokhail on becoming Governor

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development, Bakht Muhammad Kakar and Advisor to Chief Minister for Environment, Naseem Rehman Mulalkhail have congratulated Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail on taking oath as Governor of Balochistan. In their separate felicitations messages issued here on Monday, they said that the appointment of Provincial President of Muslim League-N Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail as Governor of Balochistan is a very welcoming and appreciated move for Balochistan.

They said that Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has countless services for whole Balochistan. We hope that new Governor would try his level best to solve the long-standing problems of the province seriously as he has always played a role to solve the problems of far flung areas of the province. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have seen Sheikh Jaffar as a suitable candidate for governorship. Provincial Minister of Livestock and Dairy Development further said that Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail will take all the political parties of the province along with the provincial government to serve the people irrespective of caste and colour. The coalition government of the province will ensure and overcome all issues in the province.



QUETTA: MPA Zabid Reki meeting with Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango