

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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May 9 perpetrators, facilitators will have to be punished as per Constitution, law: DG ISPR

May 9 riots not limited to army, concerns whole nation: No talks will be held with any political leader, or group which attacks its own army and indulges in propaganda; Terrorists trying to disrupt peace in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

RAWALPINDI (Online): Director General Inter-Services Public Relations, Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has disclosed that plot to kill Chinese engineers in Besham was hatched in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Addressing a news conference in Rawalpindi Tuesday, he said the suicide

bomber was the Afghan national and the vehicle used in the attack was also prepared in Afghanistan. He said four other key culprits have been arrested by the law enforcement agencies.

The DG ISPR pointed out that there are twenty-nine thousand Chinese nationals in Pakistan. Of them, twenty-five hundred



Chinese are engaged with CPEC-related projects and 5500 others are working on other development projects.

Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said it is our priority to ensure security of all Chinese nationals and all possible steps are being

taken in this regard.

The DG ISPR said the attack on Chinese engineers was aimed at sabotaging Pakistan-China friendship and hurt the CPEC project.

He expressed firm commitment to completely dismantle terrorist groups and ensure protection of the people.

Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said security forces conducted thirteen thousand one hundred and thirty-five intelligence based operations against terrorists and their facilitators.

He said about one hundred



President Asif Ali Zardari being briefed about the law and order situation and the ongoing development projects in Balochistan, Quetta.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

PM, UAE President reaffirm resolve to enhance bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a telephonic conversation with President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The Prime Minister conveyed heartfelt condolences to the UAE President on the sad demise of his beloved uncle Sheikh Tahnoon bin Mohamed Al Nahyan and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul as well as patience for the Royal Family to bear this irreparable loss.

The Prime Minister said that the people of Pakistan have always held the UAE Royal Family in high esteem and respect, particularly lauding the leadership of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who was a great friend of Pakistan.

The UAE President thanked the Prime Minister for the telephone call. Both leaders reaffirmed their resolve to enhance bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries.

They also agreed to meet soon at a mutually convenient date.

Naqvi & Zia express resolve to eliminate terrorism from country

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi and Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove have expressed the resolve to fully eliminate terrorism from the country including Balochistan.

They were in meeting here on Tuesday. The Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs welcomed the Federal Interior Minister upon his arrival in the metropolis.

Also accompanied with him was the Federal Secretary Interior, Khurram Agha.

They discussed the overall law and order situation in Balochistan. Speaking on the occasion, Ziaullah Langove said that it is included in the provincial government's priority to maintain law and order in the province. For the purpose, all out efforts are being made, he added.

He pointed out that Balochistan has suffered a lot due to terrorism. However, every possible steps are being taken to ensure protection of life and property of the masses, the Minister Home mentioned.

SRO for wheat procurement issued during PTI Govt: Kakar

QUETTA (APP): Former caretaker prime minister and Senator Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday said the allegations of corruption against the caretaker government regarding wheat procurement were baseless and contrary to the facts.

"The procurement was conducted in accordance with prevailing laws and SROs (Statutory Regulatory Orders). The SRO for wheat procurement was issued during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, and no additional permits were given by the caretaker setup," he clarified.

Senator Kakar, while talking to the media, noted that speculations in the

Continued on page 2

Judges letter suo motu notice: Govt not doing anything about interference in judicial matters: SC judge

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has adjourned for indefinite time hearing of Judges letter suo motu notice till the availability of bench.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has remarked if any judge can do nothing then he should sit in home. Such judges should not be judge who do nothing on seeing interference. It is obligation of we judges to work for independence of judiciary. You did not take oath. I have taken oath. There can be several pressures. We are paid salary for this job. We should appreciate our heroes who faced martial law dictators. Those who have not taken oath under martial law are our heroes.

Justice Mansoor Ali

Shah remarked I have been chief justice of Lahore High Court. If some one hurls shoes on any civil judge then it is said go for compromise.

Justice Jamal Mandokhail said we had called Prime Minister (PM) that he would ask who had made interference. Did he do something.

During the hearing of the petitions filed in SC seeking investigation into the allegations leveled by six judges of Islamabad High Court in connection with interference in the affairs of judiciary, Justice Athar Minallah remarked there is interference in the judiciary at present too. The letter from six judges

Continued on page 2

Some forces are against stability in Balochistan, Pakistan: President

Expresses willingness to engage with all political forces for the future of the province

QUETTA (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday said that certain quarters did not want stability in Balochistan and in the country and for the future of the province, they would talk to all the political forces in the province.

The president was given a briefing on the law and order and the progress on different ongoing development projects in the province.

The meeting was attended by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Governor Balochistan Shaikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhel, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, provincial ministers and senior federal and provincial authorities, Presi-

dent Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the president underscored the need to eliminate smuggling which was causing damage to the national economy and observed that there was a deep link between terrorism and narcotics smuggling.

He also stressed upon an effective mechanism for provision of job opportunities to the people living at the border areas. In the meeting, it was decided to commence consultations regarding adopting a joint national narrative against terrorism.

The president directed the law enforcement agencies to continue their efforts

against terrorists. He said that they were fully cognizant of the backwardness and the frail economic situation of the residents of the province, adding that the province lacked health facilities when compared with other provinces.

President Zardari also suggested that for the training of youth in the nursing and other sectors, system of Sindh government could be emulated, besides seeking its services in the health sector as well. He opined that both the provinces could evolve a joint strategy for cooperation in different sectors of public welfare.

The president stressed

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Reforms being introduced in multiple sectors to transform Pak: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that the country standing at the crossroads was going through transformation and various reforms were being introduced in multiple sectors.

Addressing a press conference along with Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb and Minister for Law



and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar here he said that the country's economy was on the right track and all the indicators were positive.

The minister said that international organizations including financial journals had confirmed that the figures about the economic stability were correct.

He said after coming into power, steps were taken by the government to reduce its expenses and privatization of loss-making public sector entities was part of that plan.

"Reforms in pension structure are being mullied in the government institutions across the board", he remarked.

Interior Minister calls on CM Balochistan: Naqvi assures every possible cooperation for improving law, order situation in Balochistan

Mir Sarfraz Bugti says protection of life and property of masses being ensured while establishing writ of State

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi has assured every possible cooperation for improving law and order situation in Balochistan.

He categorically stated that there is very important role of Balochistan in development of the country, as such all kinds of resources are ready for the province.

The Federal Interior Minister was speaking to

the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti to whom he called here at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Tuesday.

Also present in the meeting were included the Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove and Federal Secretary Interior, Khurram Agha besides other concerned high ups.

During the course of meeting, different matters

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Interior Minister & Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi and Senator Anwaarul Haq Kakar addressing a Press conference

We want sustainable solution to peace in Balochistan: Provision of basic facilities to people big challenge because of lack of communication infrastructure: CM

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti expects very cooperation of President Zardari for resolving issues of province

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that the provision of basic facilities to the people is major challenge because of lack of basic communication infrastructure in the remote areas of province.

The Chief Minister said that the provincial government is facing challenges of

governance, climate change and law and order.

He said that Balochistan faces hardships in timely completion of the projects due to slow release of funds allocated for the federal public sector

development programme or other mega projects in the province.

These and similar views were expressed by the Chief Minister while

speaking at a meeting held on law and order situation and development projects in presence of the President Asif Ali Zardari here at the CM's secretariat on Tuesday.

The Chief Minister said that timely release of the funds is necessary for rehabilitation of the Kachhi canal phase-I and construction

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IGPs of Balochistan & Sindh vow to ensure protection of life & property of masses

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Inspector Generals of Police, Balochistan and Sindh have vowed to ensure protection of life and property of the masses at every cost.

They strongly believed that protection of life and property of the masses is topmost responsibility, which would be fulfilled by any means. The IGPs of Balochistan and Sindh were in a meeting held on the situation of crime and law and

order in the two provinces, here on Tuesday. The IGP of Balochistan, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh along with IGP Sindh, Ghulam Nabi Memon co-chaired the meeting.

The Deputy Inspectors General of Police of Sindh and Balochistan briefed the meeting about the situation of law and order in their respective areas through video link.

They also briefed about the measures taken for im-

proving law and order. The IGPs of both the provinces directed DIGs and SSPs to determine the reasons of crimes through investigation.

They also directed them to prepare best strategy to ensure basic rights and justice to the masses.

Earlier, the Inspector General of Police Sindh met the IGP Balochistan and discussed the matters of mutual interest besides the law and order situation in their provinces.

Saudi investment delegation's visit significant headway in bilateral ties: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the visit of Saudi investment delegation to Islamabad was a significant headway in the relationship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting of the Federal Cabinet, appreciated the federal ministers, government officers and staffers for their efforts to ensure the success of the Saudi delegation's visit, a PM Office press release said.

The cabinet, on the recommendation of the Ministry of Aviation, accorded

approval to Air Sial to launch its flight operations for China, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Türkiye, the United Kingdom and Kuwait. The approval was granted under the National Aviation Policy 2023 and Air Services Agreement.

It also gave a nod to the signing of Memorandum of Understanding for formation of the Joint Trade Committee between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Columbia.

The cabinet approved to transfer the control of Directorate General of Special Education from the Human Rights Ministry to the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Nawabzada Tariq Magsi meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhel

Sheikh Jafar Mandukhel assumes charge as Governor Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandukhel formally assumed charge as Baluchistan Governor on Tuesday.

Earlier, Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandukhel was warmly welcomed by Principal Secretary to Governor Balochistan Hashim Khan Ghalzai and Military Secretary to Governor Balochistan Lt Col Tanveer Hussain on his arrival at Governor House Quetta here.

Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jafar Mandukhil was given an introductory briefing by the staff of his office about the affairs of the Governor's House and Secretariat.

On this occasion, Governor Balochistan said that he is happy that there were very experienced and conscientious officers in the Governor's House and Secretariat.

My desire and effort is

to play my role effectively with my team for the development, prosperity and security of the country and the province, he said.

He expressed the expectation that all officers and staff would perform their duties with sincerity, honesty and patriotism.

A smartly turned out contingent of Balochistan Constabulary presented guard of honour to the Governor after taking the oath of the office yesterday.

Provincial Minister Nawabzada Tariq Magsi, Vice Chancellor of Bolan Medical University Professor Dr. Naqibullah Achakzai, Sardar Yahya Khan Nasir, former Coordinator Chief Minister of Balochistan Fateh Jamali, Munwar Khan, Mandukhil and Javirra Tareen met separately with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandukhel at Governor House Quetta.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding border markets

Govt. to take decisions in national interests to meet energy needs: Deputy PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Tuesday said that Pakistan was a sovereign country and the present government would take decisions in the best national interests to meet its energy requirements and fulfill international obligations.

Addressing a press conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, to a query regarding Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline, said that the government would take the decisions in the national interests and would not allow interference into its international obligations.

He also termed the Iranian President's visit to Pakistan as very productive. To another query, he replied that Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman would undertake a bilateral visit to Pakistan soon and they would receive a date in this regard, in the current month.

Earlier, initial and business to business meetings had taken place which helped in finalizing the groundwork for the top Saudi leadership's visit to Pakistan, he added.

The recent Saudi delegation comprising private sector companies had termed their meetings with the Pakistani counterparts

as very productive and they were very impressed with the progress made in this regard, he said, adding that the present government would facilitate such like processes in the economic sector. The deputy PM and foreign minister further said that Pakistan wanted stability and peace in the region and was desirous to have good friendly relations with all including the neighbouring country Afghanistan.

He said that in recent terrorism incidents including an attack on Chinese nationals, reports confirmed that the 'masterminding, planning and triggering took place from the Afghan soil'.

Federal Interior Minister visits CMH Quetta

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Combined Military Hospital Quetta on Tuesday.

During the visit, the Federal Minister inquired about the health of six personnel injured in exchange of fire in Killa Abdullah the other day.

He appreciated the spirit and morale of the injured personnel.

He also prayed for the early recovery of the injured persons.

Mohsin Naqvi said that the injured persons fought with bravery against the miscreants. He praised the medical treatment being extended to the injured.



Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi enquiring about the health of officials injured during the clash with the terrorists in Quetta



MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani in a meeting with the members from different Housing Association at Circuit House.

Pakistan team off to Ireland for T20 matches ahead of World Cup

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan cricket team departed for Ireland to play T20 series ahead of world cup. The team, led by Babar Azam, flew off to Ireland from the Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore. Fast bowler Muhammad Amir could not accompany the team due to visa delay. He will join the team shortly. Acting Punjab governor Muhammad Ahmed Khan saw the team off at the airport. He wished the national team all the success in the Ireland and England tour.

In Ireland, Pakistan will play three T20 matches on May 10, 12 and 14. Thereafter, the team will depart for England against whom it will play four matches on May 22, 25, 28 and 30.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday unveiled the national team's kit for the T20 World Cup. At the unveiling ceremony held at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi, along with captain Babar Azam,

Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi, and other PCB officials, were present.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi expressed confidence that the national cricket team would bring home the T20 World Cup trophy, just as they did in 2009. He said if were up to him, he would have announced a prize of more than \$100,000 for the team. He stated that the national cricket team possesses immense talent and will receive additional rewards for their victory.

He plans to travel to the United States to watch the Pakistan-India match. Skipper Babar Azam expressed the hope that the Green Shirts would win the T20 World Cup being played in the United States and the West Indies next month. "In the past also our focus was to bring the trophy, and I hope that we will return with the trophy," Babar said during a press conference at the Gaddafi Stadium here.

Provision of...

Continued from page 1
tion of Phase-II besides the southern Balochistan package.

He said that the timely completion of public interest development projects would be possible with timely release of the funds from federal government.

In this regard, we have lot of expectations and expect cooperation of the President Asif Ali Zardari, he insisted.

He said that we want sustainable solution to the peace in Balochistan. He said that no one can deny negotiations for preparing future course of action. However, there is a need to decide with consensus at national level as with whom negotiations are held and on what points.

The Additional Chief Secretary for Home, Zahid Saleem briefed the meeting about law and order situation in the province.

The Additional Chief Secretary for Planning and Development, Abdul Saboor Kakar briefed about the development projects in the province.

PM for strict departmental proceedings against negligent officials over T&T system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed for initiation of strict departmental proceedings against the officials held responsible in an inquiry report for showing negligence in the enforcement of Track and Trace System (T&T) with flawed planning and inflicting losses to the national economy.

The prime minister chaired a high level meeting over Track and Trace System of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The system was introduced to monitor production at cigarette manufacturing, fertilizer, sugar and cement industries, identification of counterfeit products and ending of smuggling.

The prime minister observed that due to faulty planning in the system and negligence in its enforcement of the system caused the national economy to suffer.

A report of the inquiry committee formed to probe the issue was presented

before the prime minister. The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers including Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jahanzaib Khan, Chairman FBR Malik Amjad Zubair Tiwana and other relevant officials. The members of the inquiry committee Secretary Finance Imdad Bosal, Awais Kundi, Nauman Khalid and Babar Majid Bhatti also attended the meeting.

The prime minister questioned why certain important provisions were neglected with a haste over the enforcement of the significant national project?

According to inquiry report, project director and member operations inland of that period were found guilty of neglect whereas the report also fixed the main responsibility on the subsequent officials working on those posts.

The FBR chairman working during that tenure was also held responsible for the poor administrative supervision.

May 9 perpetrators, facilitators...

Continued from page 1
dred operations are carried out on daily basis.

The DG ISPR categorically said nobody will be allowed to disturb law and order situation in the country. He said the Army Chief has stated that there is no place for terrorists inside Pakistan.

He said it is because of the sacrifices of the security forces personnel and the people that the country is fast heading towards peace.

He said those involved in terrorist activities have no links with the state of Pakistan and Islam.

Referring to the situation on the eastern border, the DG ISPR said Pakistan's civil and military leadership is fully cognizant of the planning being made in India to divert attention from its internal anarchy.

Alluding to the Indian ceasefire violations, the DG ISPR said Pakistan Army has responded in a befitting manner and it will continue to do so in future. He said Pakistan is fully prepared for the defence of its integrity and sovereignty.

The DG ISPR said Pakistan stands by their Kashmiri brothers and sisters and will continue to extend political, diplomatic and moral support to them for their right to self-determination.

He said India is also involved in extra territorial killings of Sikhs. He said there are also evidences of the involvement of India in assassination of people inside Pakistan.

When asked about May 9 incident, the DG ISPR said it is not the case of Pakistan Army, but of the whole Pakistani nation.

Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry emphasized that those involved in the attacks on military installations and disgrace of martyrs' memorials should be brought to justice at the earliest in accordance with the law of the land and the constitution.

SRO for wheat...

Continued from page 1
media arose due to ignorance of national import policies and prevailing laws. Wheat procurement was conducted through a legal process where not even a single penny of corruption could be committed.

He regretted the media trial of the caretaker government on the basis of misinformation, which, he said, was due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of laws and procedures pertaining to government affairs.

Regarding the procedure for wheat procurement from abroad, the former prime minister said, "It is carried out under wheat import policies and national laws. The relevant authority issues notifications and holds deliberations on taxation and other matters before final approval."

Pakistan, he said, "produces around 27 million metric tons of wheat annually, with a shortfall of three to four million metric tons, which is addressed through its procurement following a formal legal process."

After the 18th Constitutional Amendment, he said, all the provinces sent their wheat requirement details to the Food Security and Research Department.

He said the Federal Government, based on the recommendations of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and the provinces' needs, "takes a decision regarding wheat procurement". In line with the recommendations of ECC during the PDM (Pakistan Democratic Movement) government, under his command, facilitated the private sector to meet the requirement of ordinary citizens and mitigate the possibility of wheat shortfall in the country, he said while clarifying the "misconception about the wheat import". The SRO for wheat procurement was issued during the PTI government, and the caretakers did not give any special approvals, he reiterated.

Replying to another question, Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry made it clear that the armed forces had nothing to do with the recent elections, except to provide a secure environment for the polling. He said armed forces do not work in the form of allegations and counter allegations.

On this, the Chief Minister thanked the Federal Interior Minister for cooperation in law and order in the province.

He said that all available resources are being mobilized for restoration of peace in the province.

He said that all the security institutions are determined to ensure peace through better coordination.

He said that the protection of life and property of the masses is being ensured while maintaining writ of the state.

Govt not doing anything...

Continued from page 1
is that is the country running under constitution or otherwise.

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) filed its proposals. It was said therein that SCBA will not compromise on independence of judiciary. Investigations should be conducted against those interfering in affairs of judiciary.

The court while adjourning hearing of case for indefinite period remarked this case will be fixed for hearing in the event of availability of bench.

During previous hearing it was asked intelligence agencies are running under what law. Why the interference is being made. Political parties don't want to end interference. Due to interference in 2018 one party was benefited. At present benefit is being provided to some one other.

A 6-member larger bench of SC presided over by the CJP Qazi Faez Isa

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Continued from page 1
to lack of basic infrastructure and communication network in the province, in the far flung areas, the provision of basic facilities was a real challenge and stressed upon expeditious release of PSDP and other allocated funds for the mega development projects.

The early release of allocated funds could lead to timely completion of public welfare projects in the province, he added. Bugti further said that they were working seriously for maintaining peace in the province and for the future course, holding of negotiations could not be ruled out, adding that agenda in this regard should be reached with consensus at the national level.

During the meeting, cooperation of the federal government was sought over different uplift projects including Burj Azam Khan Dam, Kachhi canal, Hub-Dareji to Dadu road, besides other projects related to Gadani Ship Breaking Yard, Gwadar Port, imparting skills to youth and climate change.

The chief minister highlighted the governance, climate change issues and security challenges in the province. He said that due

to lack of basic infrastructure and communication network in the province, in the far flung areas, the provision of basic facilities was a real challenge and stressed upon expeditious release of PSDP and other allocated funds for the mega development projects.

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QUETTA: Former Caretaker Provincial Minister Yahya Nassar and Fateh Jamali meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-232405405563 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The Divisional Forest Officer Duki invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates

Tender Fee Rs.1000/- and Bid Security 2%

S.No	Name of Work/s	E/Cost
1	Raising of 600 acres Second Woodlot Plantation at Duki	6,000,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 4,200,000 PKR Amount in 1 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 1,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 22 May, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 22 May, 2024 till 11:00 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 12:00 PM Address: Divisional forest officer duki Phone no: 0333787163 Email: attataransdo@gmail.com

Divisional Forest Officer
Forest & Wildlife department
District Officer Duki

PRQ No.2188/7-5-2024

REQUIRED

POSTGRADUATE TRAINEES (REGISTRAR) COMBINED MILITARY HOSPITAL QUETTA

Applications are invited in following specialities for FCPS-I training:

• GENERAL MEDICINE	• SPECIAL SURGERY
• RADIOLOGY	• OPHTHALMOLOGY
• GYNAECOLOGY	• ENT
• PHYSICAL MEDICINE & REHABILITATION	• CHEMICAL PATHOLOGY
• PAEDIATRICS	• ANAESTHESIA
• DERMATOLOGY	• HAEMATOLOGY
• PSYCHIATRY	• HISTOPATHOLOGY
• PULMONOLOGY	• THORACIC SURGERY
• INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE	• PLASTIC SURGERY
• NEUROLOGY	• UROLOGY
• GASTROENTEROLOGY	• NEURO SURGERY
• NEONATAL PAEDIATRICS	• ORBIT & OCULOPLASTIC

Please attach attested photocopies of following documents

- CV, Domicile, MBBS 5 years DMC/MBBS Transcript, House Job Certificate, Experience Certificate (if any), Publications (Int/Pak journal) FCPS Part-I result, Rs. 500 Bank Draft (Comdt CMH Qta) any bank (non-refundable), CNIC copy, 3 x Passport size photographs, Police Verification. Those having foreign qualifications to submit HEC / PMDC equivalency certificate.
- Incomplete / late applications will not be accepted. Last Date of submission 10 Jun 2024.
- Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview
- Interview: 20 Jun 2024.
- Start of Training: 01 Jul 2024.

TRAINING BRANCH
COMBINED MILITARY HOSPITAL QUETTA
Chiltan Road, Quetta Cantt Ph-081-2827457-9.

PAKISTAN RAILWAYS
Divisional Office, Quetta

OPEN AUCTION OF NEW SHOPS AT JOINT ROAD QUETTA AND NEW SHOPS NEAR RAILWAY STATION MACH AND NURSERY NEAR RAILWAY STATION KOLPUR.

1. Pakistan Railways intends to open auction of new shops located at Joint Road, Quetta, New shops near Railway Station Mach and Nursery near Railway station Kolpur.

The detail of land lease seal bid auction is as under:

S. No.	Date of auction	Purposes.	Location	Period.	Participation fee	Bid Security money.	Venue of auction
1	22.05.2024	23 Nos new shops	Joint Road, Quetta	5+5 years	Rs.10000	Rs.150000	DS Office, QTA
2	28.5.2024 to 29.5.2024	27 Nos new shops (12'x15')	Station & link Quetta road, Mach	5+5 years	Rs.10000	Rs.70000	AEN office, Mach
3	30.5.2024	Nursery	Near Railway Station Kolpur.	3+2 years	Rs.5000	Rs. 50000	AEN office, Mach

2. Bid security money in shape of Cash Deposit Receipt (CDR) from Scheduled Bank in the name of Divisional Accounts Officer, Pakistan Railways, Quetta will be deposited by the bidder/ participant for each bid for item before auction. The bid security money will be returned/ refunded to unsuccessful bidders and will be adjusted in payable of successful bidder.

3. The Railway Authority reserves the right to accept or reject the bidder bids without assigning any reasons.

4. The participants are bound to deposit prescribed participation Fee "non refundable" will be deposited before the auction.

5. Other terms & conditions will be mentioned in auction forms.

(Muhammad Touseef Zafar)
DEN-II
For Divisional Superintendent
PAK Railways, Quetta

PID(Q)322/23



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding FBR's Track and Trace System.

Policy reforms, series of sector specific consultations in offing for CBAM awareness: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Tuesday said policy reforms, sector specific interventions, series of interactions with public and private stakeholders are in the offing to increase sensitisation on Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) impacts on the country's export industry. She was addressing the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and German Development

Organisation (GIZ) seminar on Energy Transition in the Textile Sector: The way Forward through Electricity Market Reforms and Green Financing. Romina Khurshid said there is broader consensus on the subject matter and issues related to textile industry whereas market reforms and green financing strategies, detailed interactions and consultations of relevant sectors are in the pipeline. She added that think tanks and academia are in-

Naqvi orders crackdown against electricity theft

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday ordered to speed up crackdown to stop over-billing and electricity theft. He ordered an indiscriminate action should be continued against the officers who burden the citizens through over billing. Zero tolerance policy on over billing will continue, said Mohsin Naqvi adding that it is absolutely unacceptable to punish citizens for the incompetence and negligence of DISCOs. He said, it is a priority to give relief to electricity consumers in over-bill-

PUC launches nationwide reconciliation drive for political stability, national unity: Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) on Tuesday announced the initiation of a comprehensive nationwide reconciliation drive in a bid to foster political stability and national unity. The PUC Chairman, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, unveiled the decision in a press conference underscoring the critical importance of bridging differences among political and religious factions to propel Pakistan towards progress and prosperity. Emphasizing the need for concerted efforts, he disclosed that the PUC was

initiating a mass contact campaign to mitigate the adverse effects of current polarization and foster a culture of harmony and understanding through dialogue and constructive engagement across the nation. Ashrafi expressed hope that this initiative would promote peace, tolerance, and national cohesion, transcending ideological and political divides. By facilitating dialogue and reconciliation, he said the council intended to create a conducive environment for constructive engagement and cooperation among diverse stakehold-



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addressing a Press conference at Maaz bin Jabal (Markazi Jamia Masjid) I-8/3.



ISLAMABAD: UNFPA Representative, Dr. Luay Shabaneh addressing to Media briefing on EUNFPA launched the annual report on the State of the World Population 2024 under the theme Interwoven Lives, Threads of Hope: Ending Inequalities in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

FIA, NAB, Islamabad police file details of cases against Ali Amin Gandapur in IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): FIA, NAB and Islamabad Police have filed report in Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the matter of provision of details of cases against KP Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur. It has been told in the report filed on Tuesday that only one inquiry is running against Ali Amin Gandapur in FIA. Report has been called from interior ministry on how many cases are registered against Ali Amin Gandapur in other provinces. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani took up the case for hearing Tuesday. Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Usman Ghumman, NAB prosecutor Raja Zulfqarnain and

Mechanical sweeping operations to be shifted at night: CDA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Chaudhry Muhammad Ali Randhawa directed on Tuesday that mechanical sweeping operations for cleanliness in the federal capital should be shifted to nighttime instead of the morning. During a meeting focused on measures to enhance the cleanliness and beautification of the city, he emphasized the simultaneous washing of roads with water during mechanical sweeping to ensure that cleanliness tasks are completed before the city wakes up. The Environment Wing of the CDA provided detailed briefings to the Chairman during the meeting. Chairman CDA directed that waste transport to dumping sites with trucks should be adequately covered, and clearly defined schedules for all garbage trucks must be implemented.

IGP Islamabad visits Poly Clinic hospital to inquire about injured officer

ISLAMABAD (APP): According to the details, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited Poly Clinic hospital and met with Constable Nasir, who was injured in the firing by dacoits, a public relations officer said. He said that, IG Islamabad met with doctors and received a briefing on the injured officer's health. He issued directives for the better treatment of the injured officer. The department stands shoulder to shoulder with its brave officers and has issued directives to senior police officers for the best possible treatment for Constable Nasir.



IGP Islamabad expressed pride in Constable Nasir, calling him a hero and emphasizing that he is a lion of ours. He praised the officer for his dedication to the department.

Hashmi stresses reforms for speedy justice

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (N) Senior Leader Nehal Hashmi Tuesday stressed the need for introducing judicial reforms in the country to provide speedy justice and support to the deprived sections of society. Talking to a private news channel, he said that our vision should be of such an improved judicial system in which there is easy justice, speedy justice, and justice for all. PML-N government would bring in drastic and much-needed improvements in the judicial system, he added. He further emphasized that the country was facing economic challenges and collective efforts were needed to steer the country out of current challenging situation. He also called for taking positive steps, saying harmony among state institutions is the need of the hour to pave the way for the development of the country. Replying to a question, he said that his leadership always believes in rule of law and supremacy of the constitution, adding,

Notification on conversion of dismissal of Justice Aziz to retirement issued

ISLAMABAD (Online): Law ministry has issued notification on conversion of dismissal of former judge of Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui into retirement. According to notification issued on Tuesday, Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui will be deemed to have been retired from June 30, 2021. Law ministry has withdrawn its October 11, 2018 notification regarding dismissal of Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui. It is pertinent to mention here on May 03, president Asif Ali Zardari had accorded approval to issue notification of retirement of Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui. President gave approval for issuance of notification under article 195 of the constitution. Under this approval, the retirement notification will apply from date of completion of retirement age of Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui on June 30, 2021.

ISSI holds second round of dialogue with ASEAN Committee in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) held the second round of dialogue with ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI) comprising heads of missions of ASEAN member states here on Tuesday. The ASEAN delegation was led by the current ACI Chair, Ambassador Maria Agnes M. Cervantes, Ambassador of the Philippines to Pakistan Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, led the ISSI side, a news release said. In his opening remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the special significance Pakistan attaches to ASEAN as part of its "Vision East Asia." While noting ASEAN's standing as a global economic powerhouse and a successful model of regional cooperation, he underlined Pakistan's growing engagement with ASEAN member states, both bilaterally and on the institutional plane. Among other things, he noted that the two-way trade volume between Pakistan and ASEAN had reached \$11.8 billion, highlighting the potential for further growth with the \$3 trillion economy of the region. Tracing the history of Pakistan's Sectoral Dialogue with ASEAN he emphasized the efforts being made for its elevation to Full Dialogue Partnership status. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood also highlighted the initiatives taken by the ISSI for promoting Pakistan-ASEAN relations, which include establishing a first-of-its-kind "ASEAN Corner" in the ISSI Library last year.

Rank Pinning ceremony of newly promoted Head Constables held at Safe City

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a distinguished ceremony was held at Safe City Islamabad to honor the promotion of 10 officers from Constables to Head Constables. The event was organized by the CPO Safe City/Traffic, in line with this initiative, organized the prestigious ceremony to honor the promotion of 10 officers from Constables to



nized by the CPO Safe City/Traffic in recognition of their exemplary dedication and commitment to their duties. The newly promoted officers were acknowledged and congratulated by CPO Safe City/Traffic and DSP Safe City. Following the special directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the process of de-

Randhawa directs to complete construction work of Islamabad Expressway by end of July

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chaudhry Muhammad Ali Randhawa Tuesday directed that the ongoing development and construction work on the Expressway should be completed by the end of July without any further delay. During his visit to the Islamabad Expressway, he said that the construction work on the Islamabad Expressway project should be expedite. Chairman CDA was briefed that 75 percent of the work on package one, of the Islamabad Expressway project has been completed. The briefing also included information about the inclusion of the construction of a railway bridge in package one of the project. Muhammad Ali directed that package one of the Islamabad Expressway must be finalized by July 15. The briefing to Chairman CDA covered the components of the Islamabad Expressway project, including the T-Chowk intersection with two major bridges and an underpass. Chairman CDA emphasized that any further delay in the Islamabad Expressway project will not be tolerated at any cost.



ISLAMABAD: Labourers are busy installing new gas pipeline with the help of heavy machinery at Zero point area during development work.

PYS on Climate Change brings together parliamentarians, universities, youth advocates

ISLAMABAD (APP): "Citizen Journalism and the Importance of Youth in Reducing Climate Change," participants engaged in various activities focusing on raising awareness and fostering action on climate issues. From blog writing to articles and video messages, students showcased their commitment to mitigating the climate crisis through innovative forms of storytelling and advocacy. MPA Uzma Kardar, in her keynote address, underscored the pivotal role of youth in controlling climate change, emphasizing the urgency for collective action and grassroots initiatives. She commended the efforts of the organizers in providing a platform for youth to amplify their voices and drive meaningful change, said in a Press Release issued here on Tuesday. The U.S. Consul General highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts between Pakistan and the United States in addressing the global challenge of climate change. Emphasizing the need for cross-border partnerships and knowledge exchange, he expressed optimism about the potential for joint initiatives to make a tangible impact on climate resilience and sustainability. Syed Kausar Abbas, Executive Director of SSDO, shed light on the organization's ongoing efforts to mitigate climate impacts and promote sustainable development practices. He underscored the critical role of youth in tack-

ling the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change, urging young leaders to step up and champion innovative solutions. The Punjab Youth Summit on Climate Change served as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and action, galvanizing a new generation of climate advocates committed to building a more sustainable and resilient future for all. In her remarks, Clara Strandhøj, the Consul General of British High Commission in Lahore highlighted the pivotal role that youth play in combating climate change. By stressing the need for reduced carbon production, she underscored the urgency of addressing climate issues. Strandhøj expressed optimism about the potential of young people to make significant contributions to climate mitigation efforts. Her emphasis on youth involvement reflects a recognition of their energy, creativity, and determination to effect change. Overall, she conveyed a sense of hope and anticipation for the remarkable impact that the youth can have in shaping a sustainable future. MPA Hina Pervez Butt advocates climate-friendly initiatives and social journalism through social media. She shared that the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was taking pro women initiatives and engaging young women to play their part on environmental protection in Punjab.

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President Zardari's crucial visit to Quetta

President Asif Ali Zardari arrived in Quetta on a three-day visit to Balochistan on Monday. The newly sworn-in Governor Balochistan Shaikh Jaffar Mandokhail, Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, provincial ministers and parliamentarians received the president at the airport.

Needless to mention here is that it is the maiden visit of President Zardari to Balochistan after taking over his office.

During the visit, the President was briefed about overall law and order situation in Balochistan. In addition to this, he was also apprised of development projects in the province.

On first leg of his visit, the Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti and provincial ministers called on President Zardari at the CM House. The provincial ministers included Mir Sadiq Umrani, Ali Madad Jattak, Mir Zahoor Buledi, Sardar Abdur Rehman Kethran, Mir Saleem Khosa, Sardarzada Faisal Jamali, Gazala Gola and Nawab Sanaullah Zehri, a member of the provincial assembly and senior PPP leader.

At the dinner hosted at the CM House, flanked by CM Bugti and Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, President Zardari reaffirmed the government's commitment to Balochistan's prosperity terming it as a "priority".

Accentuating the province's "special importance" due to its mineral resources and coastline, the president reassured that Balochistan's barren lands will be made capable of increased agricultural production.

The President Zardari stated the federal government was committed to prioritize development and prosperity in Balochistan. He said that the province was important to the country due to its abundant mineral resources and extensive coastline.

The President pledged efforts to increase agricultural production by irrigating barren lands in Balochistan. He also mentioned the 18th amendment in the country's constitution that empowered provinces and its importance in promoting national development.

Zardari also talked about Balochistan's untapped potential in the oil and gas sector. He stated that modern extraction methods were needed to harness the resources for economic growth.

The President pledged support for low-income families through programmes like the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) for the country's; least developed and sparsely populated province. He vowed to expand such initiatives to ensure "broader coverage".

Zardari also assured the attendees that maximum efforts would be undertaken for the province's development. He pledged support to the Balochistan government in "creating" development opportunities for its people.

The President also echoed Bugti's statement on the importance of political dialogue in resolving Balochistan's issues.

It may be mentioned here that CM Bugti detailed the significance of Balochistan for the country. Addressing the President, the CM noted that it was the first visit by a President in a long time.

The CM mentioned issues plaguing Zardari's first term as the country's president. He also talked about how granting political autonomy to all four provinces was important in resolving interprovincial issues, especially of Balochistan.

Bugti outlined various challenges confronting his province, including climate change, peace, and governance issues.

He envisioned a "sustainable and green" Balochistan that rested on political reconciliation across Pakistan to address these challenges properly. The government and political circles are expecting much from the President's crucial visit to Quetta. It is generally believed that the President's crucial visit would help resolve the longstanding issues of the province in a big way.

Arifa Noor

It has been almost a year since May 9. In the coming days, much will be said and written about this unfortunate day, its significance and tragedy. There will also be heated discussions about the many individuals accused — imprisoned or not — and the unrepentant PTI.

But as with much else, there will be little serious discussion on how to move forward in a meaningful way, because honesty is rarely possible in public discussions. And a candid discussion would focus on the relationship between the establishment and the PTI and how this impacts the country.

Take the PTI first. Notwithstanding the gloomy predictions about its demise and the quick departures of its stalwarts 12 months ago, the party managed to do well in the elections despite all the odds against it. But now, it seems stuck once again in old and new challenges. Even when in power, the PTI was a noisy organisation with little

discipline. In these trying times, this hasn't changed. With limited access to Imran Khan, the party appears to be a headless chicken. And, as old rivalries are maintained in time-honoured PTI tradition, new entrants such as lawyers and the older lot of politicians are also jostling with each other.

Decision-making has become even more chaotic. Dependent on when party leaders can meet Khan and who talks to the media after meeting him, the decisions at times are the famed 'U-turns,' while at others it seems that the entire lot is stuck at a roundabout, unable to locate any exit. Consider the choice of KP finance minister. It seems that the chief minister-designate was able to ignore Khan's instructions because of his personal discomfort.

Or the absolute confusion about who was going to be the party's choice to head the Public Accounts Committee. For weeks, there was no clarity on whether or not Sher Afzal Khan Marwat, a missile who lands as often on the PTI as it does

on its rivals, would be the party's choice or someone else. The issue was resolved with the party choosing Sheikh Waqas, according to Dawn, but after much drama, with little logic.

Poor decision-making has been held responsible for the party's misfortunes rather than its run-ins with the establishment. This may not matter in the long run. What is more critical is the party's limited choices. Its popularity is now at a point where it can no longer be denied by anyone — but it comes at a cost. Keeping in mind the mood of the electorate, the PTI will lose support if it reaches an understanding with the current set-up or the establishment. (The PML-N's diminishing support proves this.) But neither can it sustain the stand-off.

Consider the dynamics in KP, where the initial euphoria is giving way to criticism; Ali Amin Gandapur especially, and the party in general, are being accused by workers of being compromised. This has been particularly true of the

government's silence in the face of the disappearance of a PTI worker in recent days. Indeed, every small 'instance' of compromise or inaction is being seen as a sign of betrayal — such is the level of emotion.

But without developing a working relationship with the centre or the establishment, how will the party govern? For now, the party has no answers. (Similar pressures are at work in Punjab.) However, this is not just a dilemma for the PTI, but also the establishment, which historically has always engaged with popular forces after confrontation.

This happened with the PPP in the 1980s and the PML-N in the noughties. Many argue it won't be any different this time, though of course the time frame in each of the two cases has been closer to a decade. But that was when the country wasn't in the midst of an intractable economic crisis — a principal reason why the PTI has become the force it is.

Indeed, carrying the burden of an unpopular

government as well as the economy is not all that easy for an establishment that has usually been able to lay claim to public support from regions such as Punjab. But this time around, there are no goodies to share to make up for sidelining a popular party; in fact, there is just bad news in the shape of taxes or higher bills. It appears, as the last one year indicates, that the only way to manage such a situation is to use repressive measures on ordinary people, politicians and mainstream and social media.

The problem, however, with an enforced quiet is that it has to be enforced — continuously. Even then, it cannot overcome the lack of legitimacy or support; which is why in the past the establishment has always opted for a 'reset' eventually. In other words, the establishment faces just as difficult a choice as the PTI. If nothing changes, the pendulum will continue to swing in Khan's favour. Consider that before Khan was arrested, there was chatter about how he continued in com-

fort at the expense of his party and its members. But then, he was arrested and the criticism died down. Now it is worth asking what the price of easing restrictions on Khan will be. Will it be possible to control the public reaction if he is allowed out in public in the near future, even in terms of a simple court appearance? And if there is no ceasefire, how will the establishment manage public anger and expectations, especially as it prepares for the next IMF programme?

That there is realisation of this explains the constant pressure for or discussion of how the political parties need to 'talk'. Doubting Thomases find it hard to believe this stems from the charter of democracy fandom or those who want to cheer on the establishment and the PTI together. A year on, something has to give. Reason demands this, even though it has been in short supply in Pakistan for quite some time. In the process, both the PTI and the establishment will have to pay a price.

Finding political legitimacy

Mosharraf Zaidi

I wrote about the CAR framework last month and posited that governance has become much more challenging because 'capability', 'accountability' and 'responsiveness' have all become compromised.

These qualities have been made even more elusive by the changes in ground realities that have taken place, globally and locally, in how the public discourse is conducted. It doesn't help that Pakistan has a population that keeps growing but an elite whose ego and sense of purpose keep shrinking.

Capability, accountability, and responsiveness don't quite capture the increasingly important issue of legitimacy. Legitimacy, as a concept, has always been relevant to political governance everywhere. In Pakistan, it assumed greater urgency since the eighth of February this year, given the substantial and undeniable discontent that electoral manipulation has produced.

The legitimacy issue seems to be an increasingly burdensome albatross, undermining even the very positive and long-needed

efforts being attempted in recent days. When we scan the big governance news items recently, they all seem to have this Achilles' heel.

Change at the FBR, through the placement of two dozen officers on OSD, has been welcomed with scepticism about the intentions of the current FBR chief. Slow but meaningful progress on investments from Saudi Arabia are met with cynicism about the wider geopolitical compromises this may entail. Support for education initiatives like the Daanish schools is responded with questions about the relative cost of these efforts. The cabinet approval for hiring consultants quickly and without PPP rules is seen as the product of conflict of interest ridden players that have found their way into the corridors of power. Every day, even those that are broadly supportive of the need for stable government, are compelled to ask questions that will invariably be seen as undermining political legitimacy.

What is the answer? It isn't as simple as Imran Khan supporters will suggest. It is also not as complicated as the ruling establishment seems intent on making it. Banning social media, setting up a new agency to police the internet, tightening the screws on an already problematic environment of fear and intimidation when it comes to free speech — these are not answers to the challenge of legitimacy. They are all ingredients for deepening the crisis of legitimacy. The big question isn't whether good governance can be achieved this way. It cannot. The big question is whether political legitimacy is an achievable objective for Pakistan's rulers.

What is political legitimacy? One of the useful definitions I found was in a 2006 paper by then Princeton scholar Bruce Gilley. Having then discovered the extremely problematic evolution of Gilley's ideas (including his support for the re-establishment of Western colonialism and his unapologetic pro-Israeli genocide slant), I eschew sharing Gilley's definition.

Instead, perhaps the clearest description is Fabienne Peter's: "Political legitimacy is a virtue of political institutions and of the decisions — about laws, policies, and candidates for po-

litical office — made within them". Peter helps frame legitimacy through a Weberian, and non-normative lens, "that a political regime is legitimate means that its participants have certain beliefs or faith ('Legitimitätsglaube') in regard to it: "the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige".

Another useful way to think about political legitimacy is framed in Peter Stillman's 1974 paper, "Legitimacy is the compatibility of the results of government output with the value patterns of the relevant systems — a government is legitimate when it protects and enhances the values and norms of its citizens, when it preserves and expands their culture and when it behaves itself in foreign affairs".

There is a substantial quantum of literature within political theory and in international development that identifies legitimacy as a vital informant of good governance, especially when dealing with 'fragile states' (Merilee Grindle's "good enough" governance offers

valuable perspectives in this regard). There is much less academic discourse and research around the role of political legitimacy in shaping governance from the economists' lens.

A new paper by Imran Arif and Nabamita Dutta published in the Journal of Institutional Economics marks a pioneering effort to correct this gap. In 'Legitimacy of government and governance', the authors examine data from sixty-six countries and try to figure out whether political legitimacy has any systemic and discernible impact on good governance.

The authors explore several interesting themes through their research. They acknowledge for example, that good governance and political legitimacy are mutually self-reinforcing. This is not an immediately obvious point, but it has grave implications for what happens when there is low legitimacy. They also, quite usefully, acknowledge alternative hypotheses about political legitimacy that leads to better governance as potentially pre-cursing the erosion of the rights of minorities (citing libertarian Florida economist Randall Holcombe). FWIW: the au-

thors' research debunks Holcombe's ideas.

The overall conclusion of the paper is not shocking: across all 66 countries and through a battery of tests for robustness and taking into account a range of factors that could skew the findings, there is a clear, positive and statistically significant effect of political legitimacy on governance. The research also finds that the effect of legitimacy on governance is enhanced and shaped by the level of trust citizens have in public institutions.

Just how significant are the interactions between political legitimacy and governance outcomes? The research suggests that one standard deviation increase in political legitimacy leads to a one-third of a standard deviation improvement in governance. The authors helpfully put this in perspective by adding real country proxies to these changes. In essence, when you increase the political legitimacy found in Mexico to the level of the political legitimacy found in Estonia, the impact of governance is the same as advancing the quality of governance from what it is in Jordan, to what it is in Latvia or Poland.

Extra baggage

Naeem Sadiq

Undisputedly, the most important, most versatile and most indispensable person in a government office is the naib qasid, often the only moving component of an inert piece of machinery. He is the critical hub, an integral element of a governance system designed for a colonial era. He not only knows the location but also the contents of files and papers that drive and define a government. Naib qasids carry files from one office to another, perform house-keeping, ask visitors to wait, serve tea to their masters, and search, shelf, lose, find, misplace or retrieve files and records — depending upon their mood and motivation.

Using the 'right to information' law, our research, which is spread over a sample of 15 well-known and highly esteemed government organisations, such as National Savings, the Benazir Income Support Programme, the Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI), the Supreme Court and the Wafaqi Mohtasib, yields startling results. First, 23 per cent of the entire government of Pakistan consists of just one category of individuals — often called 'qasids', 'naib qasids' or 'daftaris'. As per the data provided under the right to information law, the Supreme Court (SC) tops this list with 283 (34pc) qasids and naib qasids, out of a total of 833 regular and contingent employees.

Another prominent mention is BISP, that employs 473 qasids out of a total of 2,356 employees. Such governance through naib qasids would be inconceivable in any developed country, where officials must perform their own

chores.

The study gets yet more overwhelming as it reveals that the employees designated as upper division clerks, lower division clerks or steno typists constitute 26.8pc of the entire government of Pakistan. Although most offices have acquired computers and most senior officers have obtained laptops (at taxpayers' expense), there is no let-up in the demand or number of UDCs and LDCs. One wonders why emails, used by the rest of the world for the last 30 years, are still not an accepted form of official correspondence. Have low skills and high status become our biggest hindrance to progress? Should the conditions of employment not specify that every bureaucrat must carry his own briefcase, drive his own (private) car, clean his own table, receive, respond and file his own mail electronically, make his own tea, etc?

The next mind-boggling segment of employees — 22.7pc of government — sadly comprises chowkidars and private security guards. National Savings, with 1,270 security guards, champions this class, followed by Pakistan Post's 754 guards and BISP's 386 chowkidars. There is also no guilt for cruelty on the part of our esteemed organisations who engage guards through private security companies, not registering them with the EOBI and paying them less than half the minimum legal wage for performing 12-hour duty each day.

From this, we can conclude that 72.5pc of the entire government of Pakistan consists of three categories of employees: qasids/ naib qasids, UDCs/LDCs, and guards/chowkidars. Like ministers, many are inducted on

considerations of 'relative', 'friend', 'party', 'clan', etc. Must we not ponder why Pakistan Railways operates with 315 employees per train, as opposed to the Indian Railways' 53, and Japan Railway's 5.9? Why does the SC operate with 833 employees and its British counterpart with 64 employees for around the same number of judges? It is time to admit that only by shedding 70pc of our government workforce will Pakistan see progress.

There are at least two main approaches to reducing the size of this mountain — firstly, by using technology to perform all those functions that can enhance efficiency and convenience. National Savings' latest software, which req-uir-es no citizen to visit a savings centre and to automatically receive profits in a designated bank, is a brilliant example. Resultantly, National Savings can potentially cut down 70pc of its employees and branches. The other approach is to eliminate all that is redundant or ceremonial. Almost all commissions and bureaus (NCHR, NCRC, NCSW, etc.) can be closed and their functions performed by their parent ministries.

Numerous ministries such as health, human rights, religious affairs and overseas Pakistanis could be merged and renamed the 'Ministry for Health & Population'. In this manner, Pakistan could reduce the total number of ministries (and logically the ministers) from 32 to 10. These two approaches ought to be identically emulated by the defence services as well as the provincial governments. Our governance system is dysfunctional and bloated. It exists only to preserve the luxuries of an extractive class. Its dismantling is a prerequisite for the progress of Pakistan.

Tasneem Noorani

A few days after the triumphant arrival of Ayatollah Khomeini in Tehran in February 1979, four Pakistani students were having a meal in a suburban restaurant when they were surrounded

by Kalashnikov-bearing Iranian Revolutionary Guards, who were inexperienced and more nervous than the students. They were like this because the Shah's ruthless regime had ensured that no one, other than state functionaries, possessed a weapon.

As one of the four students, I recalled the incident at the time of the visit of the Iranian president to Pakistan recently. I was studying in an institution set up by the Harvard Business School, on the request of the Shah, to give Iranians a modern business education in their own country.

The public was so happy when the Shah fled that shops selling sweets ran empty. People, delirious with joy, were out on the streets displaying currency notes with the Shah's picture torn out. Young people were shouting "Shah rahi" (the Shah's left). APCs and tanks, looted from abandoned cantonments, were being driven on the streets of Tehran by euphoric teenagers.

The four of us, all raised in a Western-oriented, English-medium environment, were confused. We felt sympathy for the citizens of Iran, who had been taken over by the mullahs. We felt fortunate to be citizens of Pakistan, where despite all our democratic shenanigans (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was on trial but had not been hanged yet), we still had a tolerant government. There was nothing equivalent to Iran's secret service Savak, which had its fleet of 'Vigos' to 'fix' and elimi-

nate dissidents.

Khomeini's arrival heralded the curbing of civil liberties. For instance, women, many of whom were used to wearing tight jeans and short skirts in public, could now no longer leave their homes without hijab. Our sympathies were with our Western-oriented class fellows, most of whom had to flee the country. We felt Iran was in for the long grind at the hands of an inexperienced and dogmatic clergy.

Forty-five years later, after watching the Iranian armed forces take on the biggest bully in the region, Israel, and scaring it into backing off through guts, technology and a very well thought-out military manoeuvre, I am compelled to change my mind.

The Iranians have shown that they value their self-respect and beliefs more than their worldly comforts. They have not blinked in 45 years against the most dominant country in the world — the US — and its allies, despite having undergone isolation and economic deprivation, and the harassment of Iranian citizens.

Because of their grit and national pride, they have become a self-reliant and proud nation with their own, indigenous industry, both commercial and military. Their military prowess, despite facing sanctions, is creditable. A photo in the media showing their military high command sitting at the feet of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, when he congratulated them on the Israeli operation, felt unreal to a Pakistani.

Despite a domineering Islamic regime, the Iranians' pride in their culture and history is supreme. The Iranian new year, Nowrooz, which is basically a Zoroastrian festival, is still the most important event in the Iranian calendar. The country closes down for three

weeks to celebrate it. The celebration of two Eids is hardly notable in this context.

The Islamic government greatly respects citizens' privacy (chador and chardiwari) and believes in the principle that what you do inside your home is your business. I asked an Iranian friend about this contradiction in the perceived harshness of the regime. He said that during the Shah's time, "we used to drink publicly and pray privately; now we pray publicly and drink privately".

People who have travelled to Iran recently talk about a clean and developed country, with good roads, an efficient and modern railway system and huge modern shopping malls. Their literacy level is 89 per cent compared to our 58pc; their expenditure on education is 23pc of the budget, while we spend 11.5pc; on health, they spend 23pc, while we spend 4.3pc. These figures indicate that they prioritise human development. True, Iran has its problems, including corruption, but it still ranks 24 on the Global Corruption Index, while we are at 133rd position.

It is depressing to compare ourselves with our other neighbours too. India and Bangladesh are way ahead of us, economically and in human development indices. Even Afghanistan seems to be better than us in the context of law and order. On the economic front, their currency is stronger and stabler than ours. Four Pakistan rupees is equal to one Afghan.

The reasons for the continued decline of Pakistan are many, but the primary one for me is that the people who control power are not made accountable. While I felt proud as a Pakistani 45 years ago, I am not sure I do anymore.

Happy to listen people of Larkana Sindh CM chairs meeting of party workers and office bearers of all the districts of Larkana division

PPP Larkana workers demands public interest schemes

LARKANA (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday presiding over a meeting of the party workers and office bearers of all the districts of Larkana division vowed to include the important schemes of up-gradation of Trauma Center, NICVD Satellite for Kambar-Shahdadkot district, Degree College and fire tenders for Kashmir-Kandhkot district, additional funds for the towns given PHE pumping stations and Peoples Bus Service to the districts of Larkana division in the next budget.

Shah said that he was happy to listen to the people of Larkana Division who have demanded schemes of public interest such as universities, hospitals, dualization of roads, people Bus Services

and fire tenders which was the manifestation of their socio-political awareness. "Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has strictly directed me and my cabinet to interact with the party workers at the local level to resolve their issues in consultation with the party workers that's why I am with you here today," he said and added that he has given proforma to the workers and office bearers of the party for recording their recommendations for the next development works.

The meeting was held at Banquet Hall Sachal Colony, and was attended by PPP Sindh President Nisar Khuhro, provincial ministers - Sharjeel Memon, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Haji Ali Hassan Zardari, PPP Sindh General

Secretary Waqar Mahdi, Khursheed Junejo, Mukesh Chawla, Dr Sohrab Sarki, Mumtaz Jakhani, MPAs, district presidents and general secretaries, all local bodies representatives and party workers in a large number.

The party workers have demanded agriculture university, up-gradation of Emergency of the teaching hospital and repair and maintenance of the roads damaged by the heavy rains/floods of 2022.

Workers and local bodies representatives raised different issues for which the chief minister directed the minister concerned to note them and resolve them.

The people of the Kashmir District demanded that the work on the ongoing Girl College may be accelerated.



KARACHI: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi along with others paying homage to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah during his visit to Jinnah Mausoleum.

Maryam chairs P&D meeting, reviews development projects

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired a comprehensive meeting of Planning and Development Board to review special development projects and health related initiatives, here on Tuesday.

The CM directed to complete 33 development projects on time. "We should work day in and day out for the timely completion of these projects, especially those related to health" she remarked.

The CM directed to complete the first phase of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Lahore within one year, besides opening the OPD of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cardiology in Sargodha by December 2025.

Earlier, the CM was briefed that seven mega projects in the health sector are under completion in the province at a cost of Rs 145 billion. She was also apprised that the first phase of construction and rehabilitation of rural and primary health centers will be completed in October, while revamping of major hospitals will be done by June.

The meeting was briefed by the authorities

concerned that five expressways on important routes in Punjab will be constructed at a cost of Rs 176 billion. The construction and expansion of Multan-Vehari Road, Chicha Watani-Chowk Azam, Sahiwal-Samandari Bahawalpur-Jhangra, and Faisalabad-Chinot-Sargodha Road were also reviewed.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed to designate a single complaint number for all departments. She was briefed that the construction of a 204-bed three-storey Safe City.

LHC seeks reply from govt on petition seeking fixation of new price of wheat

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought reply from federal government on miscellaneous petition seeking fixation of new price of wheat.

A two members bench of LHC presided over by Justice Baqar Ali Najafi took up the petition filed by advocate Bilal Ahmad for hearing Tuesday.

Advocate Bilal Ahmad has taken plea in the petition that government imported 35 lac tons wheat despite availability of 40 lac metric tons wheat in the country.

The step of importing wheat by federal government caused loss to the tune of 1 billion dollars to national kitty.

It has been further said in the petition Punjab government has maintained the same price which was fixed last year. The inflation has surged by 20 percent but rate for farmers was not increased.

Advocate Bilal Ahmad requested the court to order government to fix new price of wheat. Court should summon report from federal government with reference to wheat crisis.

It is pertinent to mention here that the court had called reports from government of Punjab and agriculture department Punjab in its order dated April 30. LHC while seeking reply from federal government till May 14 adjourned the hearing of the case.

FIA arrests two on visa fraud

LAHORE (APP): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Tuesday arrested two individuals involved in human smuggling and visa fraud, here from the city.

According to a spokesman, Human Smuggling Circle Lahore during the ongoing crackdown arrested Syed Akbar Ali Shah and Syed Ali Jan Shah from General Bus Stand.

The suspects were found to be involved in defrauding innocent citizens by offering them employment abroad and extorting millions of rupees. As many as 35 Pakistani passports were recovered from their possession and the suspects failed to provide authorities with satisfactory explanations regarding the passports. The investigation has been initiated.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the first meeting of Health Insurance Working Group Sub-Committee.

Malkani says: Development of education sector, top priority of Govt

KARACHI (APP): Provincial Minister of Universities and Boards Muhammad Ali Malkani said that the first priority of the Sindh government is to develop the education sector on better lines, because development without education is not possible. Many new projects are underway and soon you will see a pleasant change.

He was speaking at the launch of the magazine of the Alumni Association Government College University Hyderabad (Karachi Chapter) and the function in honor of dignitaries.

The history of Government College is over 100 years old. This educational institution has produced rare gems for Politics, Journalism, Bureaucracy, Film Television, Judiciary, Sports, Medicine and other

ATC grants post-arrest bail to 10 accused in Jinnah House attack case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Tuesday granted post-arrest bail to 10 accused involved in the Jinnah House attack case of May 9 riots.

The court ordered the accused to furnish surety bonds of Rs 100,000 each to avail the relief of bail.

ATC Judge Arshad Javed heard the post-arrest bail petitions of the accused and announced the verdict upon completion of arguments by the parties.

The accused who were granted bail are: Atif Nisar, Muhammad Naeem, Syed Mazhar Hussain, Khalid Iqbal, Muhammad Riaz, Muhammad Nadeem Ali, Rana Islam Mubarak, Tanvir Ahmad and Muhammad Tanvir.

Meanwhile, the court adjourned hearing of 14 post-arrest bail petitions of other accused till May 9 in connection with the case.

Minister reviews health insurance program

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique chaired a first working group meeting of Punjab Health Initiative Management Company (PHIMC) on health insurance, here on Tuesday.

The meeting took place at the Specialized Healthcare & Medical Education Department (SH&ME) and brought together key stakeholders to discuss reforms and improvements in the health insurance program.

Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique reviewed the health insurance program's progress and discussed necessary reforms. Experts shared valuable insights and recommendations, emphasizing the program's potential for significant improvement.

Khawaja Salman Rafique expressed optimism about enhancing the health insurance program. He acknowledged past challenges faced by health insurance initiatives but reaffirmed the

government's commitment to addressing these issues.

The minister stressed the need to rectify any shortcomings in the health insurance program and hold accountable those who exploit it for political gains. He also highlighted the importance of strengthening government hospitals' capacity and ensuring financial sustainability for the health insurance program.

The minister pledged to improve the financial model of the health insurance program, ensuring that it serves the best interests of the public and promotes equitable healthcare access.

SH&ME Special Secretary (Development) Syed Wajid Ali Shah, Vice-Chancellor of University of Child Health Sciences Prof. Dr. Masood Sadiq, King Edward Medical University VC Prof. Dr. Mahmood Ayaz, PHIMC CEO Dr. Ali Razaq, Prof. Dr. Anjum Jalal from PIC and others attended the meeting.



LAHORE: Provincial Local Government Minister, Zeeshan Rafique giving the keys of vehicles purchased for Anti-encroachment drive in the Metropolitan Corporation of the provincial capital to Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider.

A game-changer project delayed for two years despite tall promises of PTI leadership

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Being a gateway to the Central Asia Republic (CARs) and landlocked Afghanistan, Peshawar is a unique strategic city of Pakistan where kings, invaders and monarchs had constructed roads and highways for speedy transportation and promotion of trade in a bid to prolong their rule in the subcontinent.

These invaders used the famous Khyber Pass, which is the major trade and business route connecting Pakistan and Afghanistan via Torkham border, and onward the gas rich CARs.

Witnessed the vigour of Kings Sikandar Azam, Mehmood Ghaznavi, Mughal and British army, Khyber Pass' significance has been further enhanced after construction of Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) on 1000 kanal land in Nowshera district.

Designed by National Highway Authority (NHA) and KP Govt, KPEC is financed with about \$460.6 million IDA concessional credit from the World Bank and \$22.15 million from the government. Khyber Pass Economic Corridor (KPEC) documents has revealed that the World Bank's concessional financing has a maturity of 30 years and an interest rate of 1.25 percent after a 5-year grace period.



KARACHI: JI, Karachi Interim Chief, Munam Zafar Khan along with others addresses to media persons during public press conference against the worst load-shedding by K-Electric and the possible cruel increase in power tariffs, outside Gizri K-Electric Head Office in Karachi.

Team Europe launches youth-centric program for green jobs creation in KP

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The European Union launched a new programme to empower the youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with essential skills demanded by the job market. The launch event held at the Vocational Training Centre of Excellence in Hayatabad established with previous European Union support, marked a significant milestone of the Team Europe Initiative on building back better to support creation of green jobs in KP province.

Through this programme, the European Union (EU) and the Government of Germany aim at transforming the vocational training landscape in KP through dedicated support to selected VET schools

across the province that will be better equipped, have better trained staff and curricula better catered for the demand of the labour market, thus paving the way for economic prosperity and sustainable development. The EU's support will particularly focus on improving skills in key sectors such as agribusiness, water, and energy. The new support programme is not just part of the broader Team Europe Initiative involving the EU, France, Germany and Italy to build back better through green jobs creation, but also contributes to the EU's Global Gateway Initiative in which the EU is trying to leverage public and private sector investments by investing in skills of young people in Pakistan.



LARKANA: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah interacts with party workers during a meeting of PPP Larkana Division held at local hall in Larkana.

Minister for completion of development schemes on priority basis

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister for Communications and Works, Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bherth Tuesday directed to take the public representatives on board in district's ongoing development projects for removal of obstruction. He also directed for completion of schemes on priority basis which were hampered due to minor hurdles. He said this while presiding over a review meeting on development schemes of Rawalpindi district, held here.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Engineer Amir Khattak also accompanied the minister. Bherth asked public representatives to compile the details of schemes which were stopped even having major work done, in their respective constituencies.

He said the means of transportation and road network played vital role in ensuring economic

development of any country. Our top priority was to complete main roads in the first phase and link roads in the second phase, he said.

The minister directed MD WASA to activate the filtration plants and tube wells across the city where water sources were already available, to fulfill city's water shortage.

Bherth directed to ensure the allocation of 1% of every new project for plantations to counter prevailing environmental pollution. Similarly, for the elimination of encroachment from the city, a systematic plan should be prepared, and its implementation should be ensured, he said.

Commissioner Rawalpindi while giving a detailed briefing about the development schemes of Rawalpindi district, informed that under the annual development program (2023-24).



HYDERABAD: Children patients of Thalassemia being blood transfusions at Fatimid Foundation Center in connection with International Thalassemia Day.

PoG provided historic relief by reducing flour, roti prices: Bilal Yasin

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Food Minister Bilal Yasin said on Tuesday the Punjab government successfully provided a historical relief to people in 'flour and roti' prices in the province.

Presiding over a cabinet committee meeting at the Civil Secretariat, he said the price of a 20 kg bag of flour was reduced by Rs 1000 within a month and a bag of 20 kg flour was available in the market for Rs 1700 to 1800 while a bag of 10 kg for Rs 900.

Bilal Yasin claimed that 'Naan and Roti' were available across Punjab at notified prices. He said that government's full attention was focused on the relief for common man and reduced the price of Roti with a strong strategy. He said that 50

percent of population of the province lived in cities and the poor people were happy about the reduction in the flour price.

The provincial food minister said that there was a carry-forward stock of 23 lakh metric tonnes of wheat in Punjab which was enough for the next year. The provincial food minister said that during the caretaker period, the unnecessary import of wheat created a crisis for the farmers. The prime minister has formed a fact-finding committee to inquire into the matter, which would submit a report soon, he added.

Provincial Minister of Agriculture Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja Rehman, Secretary Food Punjab Moazzam Iqbal.

KPK Governor calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): The Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi visited the Governor of Sindh Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House here on Tuesday.

They together went round the IT marquee, where the students warmly welcomed them.

The IT students took selfies with the two Governors.

Tessori on the occasion said that he wanted to put the youth on their feet through IT courses.

He said that after Karachi, the courses of IT will be started in Hyderabad and other cities of the province.

The Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa said that all the initiatives of the Governor Sindh for public welfare were commendable.

He further said that IT courses were the guarantee of a better future for the youth.

German CG calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): The German Consul General (CG) to Karachi Ruediger Lotz called on Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House on Tuesday.

They discussed the bilateral relations, investment, trade promotion and other issues of mutual interests.

The Sindh Governor said that Pak-German bilateral relations span over decades, which were getting stronger with the passage of time.

He further said that German investment will improve the infrastructure in the province. Tessori said that Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) will be supportive and helpful for foreign investment in the country. The German Consul General said that German investors were keenly interested in investing, especially in the energy sector.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Food Bilal Yaseen chairs cabinet committee meeting at Civil Secretariat. Provincial Ministers Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman and Ashiq Hussain Kirmani are also present.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Japanese businessmen and investors led by Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM assures resolution of issues facing Japanese businessmen within week

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday, while calling for enhanced Pakistan-Japan trade and investment cooperation, assured that the government would resolve the issues facing Japanese businessmen within a week through mutual collaboration.

The prime minister, in the meeting with a delegation of Japanese companies and business figures in Pakistan led by Japanese Ambassador

Wada Mitsuhiro, said a committee had been formed to resolve the issues confronting the Japanese firms to promote their business activities in the country.

He told the delegation that the Japanese companies should exploit Pakistan's existing immense potential for investment in the industry of electric vehicles.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that being time-tested friends, the trade relations between

Pakistan and Japan spanned over decades.

He said it was high time both countries promoted trade and investment ties in multiple sectors, reiterating the resolution of problems facing Japanese industrialists and traders.

The delegation members expressed confidence in the Government of Pakistan's pro-business policies and measures to promote investment.

The Japanese

ambassador apprised the prime minister of the upcoming visit of a 20-member delegation of renowned Japanese firms which would prove to be a milestone in enhancing the bilateral trade and investment.

The delegation members viewed that a special focus on investment and pro-business policies of Prime Minister Shehbaz-led government would help enhance the confidence of foreign investors.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan discuss collaboration in IT sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, and Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin on Tuesday discussed collaboration in the field of IT and Telecommunication between the two countries.

During the meeting, the minister expressed Pakistan's interest in strengthening ties with Kazakhstan in the IT and telecom sector.

She proposed the formation of a joint working group between the two countries to facilitate connections between tech companies from both sides, said a news release.

Shaza Fatima also suggested initiating technology transfer and IT experts' exchange programs between Pakistan and

Kazakhstan.

Highlighting the investment opportunities in Pakistan's IT and Telecommunication sector, she invited Kazakhstan tech companies to consider investing in this promising sector.

Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin affirmed his country's commitment to increasing cooperation with Pakistan in the IT and Telecom sector, emphasizing that the ties between the two countries in this domain would be further strengthened.

The meeting was also attended by Additional Secretary of MoITT Aisha Humera Moriani, Chairman of Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) Muhammad Zohaib Khan, and DG International Coordination Syed Jawwad Ali Sherazi.

Finance Minister says: Prudent economic governance boosts investor's confidence

ISLAMABAD (APP): Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said that the country's economic indicators were going in the right direction and had increased the confidence of foreign investors in the economic governance of Pakistan.

Investors from the European Union and America, including Saudi Arabia, had reached Pakistan and they were meeting us and the talks were going on, the minister said.

He said this while addressing the press conference along with Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah

Tarar and Federal Minister for Law, Azam Nazeer Tarar.

Aurangzeb said the recent visit of a delegation of Saudi's investors to Pakistan was also a part of pave way for this economic cooperation.

The minister said that export-led growth, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and excess to capital were the priority of the government.

The senator said that due to the prudent economic policies of the government and the progress in the economic indicators, foreign investors were ready to invest in Pakistan.

The minister said that all the economic indicators

were going positive in the country's economy, which was the proof of progress of the country's economy.

He said that current account surplus was going on in macroeconomic indicators positive.

The minister said that the foreign reserve was stable at \$15 billion and it would increase further, adding that the current tax to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio was 9% which would be increased to 13%.

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) had increased the record federal revenue in current fiscal year, he added.

The minister said that inflation had gone down and reached at 17 percent.



ISLAMABAD: Head of Pakistan for Onic, Omer Bin Tariq and Muntaqa Peracha, CEO Foodpanda sign an agreement for the integration of Foodpanda on Onic's digital platform to jointly develop a comprehensive ecosystem for enhancing the digital lifestyle of customers during ceremony held in Islamabad on Tuesday. President and Group CEO PTCL and Ufone 4G, Hatem Bamatraf and Fahad Sheikh, Head of Partnership and Acquisition Foodpanda also witnessed the signing ceremony.

Revenue officials ordered to meet targets

SARGODHA (APP): Commissioner and Municipal Corporation (MC) Administrator Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti has issued a warning to revenue officials, making it clear that employees failing to meet targets would not be tolerated.

He has also ordered immediate disconnection of water and sewerage connections for non-compliant government offices. These directions were issued during a meeting. It was attended by the Chief Officer and municipal officers along with revenue staff.

The Commissioner emphasized expediting revenue collection and ensuring 100% collection by the end of the current fiscal year. Notices will also be sent to water bill defaulters every three months, with instructions to pay bills monthly.

It was announced that an MC app would soon be functional for ease of revenue payment by consumers, along with the provision of online payments through the postal service.

Building inspectors were instructed to survey all residential areas and carry out commercialization without delay.

ONIC announces partnership with foodpanda to expand digital lifestyle ecosystem

ISLAMABAD (APP): ONIC, Pakistan's first digital telecommunication brand, dedicated to enhancing the lives of its consumers announced a partnership with foodpanda, the country's premier online delivery platform.

This collaboration marks a significant milestone in Onic's journey to enhance its digital offerings and create a comprehensive digital lifestyle ecosystem for its users, said a news release. Through this partnership, Onic aims to integrate foodpanda's robust delivery services into its existing digital platform, providing customers with seamless access to a diverse range of culinary options at their fingertips at greater prices.

By leveraging foodpanda's extensive network of restaurants and delivery capabilities, ONIC

will empower users to order food and groceries conveniently with the vouchers provided.

The partnership was solidified between Omer Bin Tariq, Head of Pakistan for ONIC and Muntaqa Peracha, CEO, foodpanda.

Commenting on the partnership, Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G, said, "We are excited to join hands with foodpanda to elevate the digital lifestyle experience for our customers. Pakistan's market is rich with space to grow in and provide unparalleled services to our consumers. With this partnership, we are only delivering on the promise of a truly digital brand. While our core is digital telecommunication services, we want to also communicate to our consumers."

Justice @ Khilji advises business community to settle disputes via mediation

KARACHI (APP): Managing Director Musalaha International Center for Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (MICADR) Justice (Retd.) Arif Hussain Khilji, Tuesday, advised the business community to settle their business related and other disputes through arbitration and mediation.

Justice @ Khilji, while speaking at a meeting during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), urged the business community to look into the possibility of resolving their disputes without a trial through MICADR which offers cost-effective and expedient mediation.

Justice Khilji noted that many countries around the world have adopted out of court settlement through arbitration with Singapore taking the lead while Turkey has resolved 3 million cases through mediation and Chinese court referred 5.1 million cases to court-recognized mediation centers.

"The concept of mediation is relatively new

in Pakistan but it has started picking up some pace since 2022 when the High Court of Sindh recognized MICADR as approved Alternate Dispute Resolution Center," he added.

Co-Founder and Senior Manager MICADR Sarha Rasheed, while delivering a presentation to raise awareness about the services offered by MICADR, stated that a total of 2.1 million cases were pending in Pakistani courts to be heard by 3100 judges. She informed that MICADR, with its offices situated in Karachi and Islamabad, deals with several types of cases including landlord and tenant disputes, commercial disputes, insurance disputes, unfair contract terms, labor disputes, mortgage default and foreclosure, family disputes and disputes on possession of immovable property.

Highlighting MICADR's contributions to ADR ecosystem, she informed that more than 130 judges.

Gold rates dip by Rs 500 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 500 and was sold at Rs. 240,000 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs. 240,500 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 429 to Rs 205,761 from Rs 206,190 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs 188,615 from Rs 189,007, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs 2,620 and Rs 2,254.80 respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H.E. Yerzhan Kistafin called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

Zi Solar, Trina Solar join hands to accelerate solar energy adoption

ISLAMABAD (APP): Trina Solar, a global leader in solar photovoltaic (PV) and smart energy solutions, and Zi Solar, a prominent engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) company have joined hands to collaborate on advancing solar energy adoption nationwide, with a specific focus on deploying 120 MW of solar energy.

Both the companies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard, said a news

release issued here on Tuesday. With a focus on technology integration, project development, market expansion, and research and development, the partnership aims to drive sustainable energy development and address the growing demand for clean energy solutions.

By leveraging Trina Solar's cutting-edge solar panel technology and Zi Solar's expertise in delivering turnkey solar solutions, the companies are poised to accelerate solar energy adoption nationwide.

Ch. Shafay chairs meeting of Price Control Council

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain presided over the first meeting of Price Control Council (PCC) here at Civil Secretariat on Tuesday.

Provincial Minister for Food Bilal Yasir, secretaries of Food Department and Livestock Department, Special Secretary Agriculture, Additional Secretary Commerce, DG Industries and other officers concerned attended the meeting that considered a three-point agenda.

The meeting approved

representation of DG Industries and field officers in the Price Control Council, while two agenda items were postponed until the next meeting. The price control mechanism was reviewed in detail in the meeting.

The Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce said that due to the government's measures, there is a trend of reduction in the prices of essential commodities and there has been a significant reduction in the prices of chicken. He said that the draft of Punjab Price Control of Essential Commodity Bill 2024.

She assured her full support for Pakistani and Dutch companies operating in the dairy sector. She said that Pakistan and the Netherlands have been engaged in what she calls historic cooperation in the dairy and livestock sector. As part of this partnership, a comprehensive knowledge-sharing framework will be established to equip farmers with the skills and insights needed to adopt modern farming and livestock management techniques to cater to the increasing demand for dairy and protein needs and to meet the food security challenges as well as to uplift the quality of produce to meet the international standards for export.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where a container ship 'MSC Archimidis' berthed at Container Terminal on Monday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Maersk Yorkton, MH Sandef Jord and Ionic Artemis scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice and Mogas also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

A total of eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Majestic Noor, African Loon and Gaslog Geneva left the port on today morning. Meanwhile three more ships, MSC Archimidis.

SECP proposes enhanced disclosures for Shariah Stock Screening of listed companies

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has proposed amendments to the Fourth Schedule of the Companies Act, 2017.

These amendments enhance the list of disclosures made in financial statements of listed companies for Shariah stock screening shares, according to a press release issued here on Tuesday. Listed companies will be required to provide crucial information about their subsidiary companies for Shariah stock screening purposes to align the regulatory framework with

market needs for a fair trading environment. Additionally, the language of the Fourth Schedule has been simplified to bring clarity to the Shariah stock screening of shares to include in Islamic indices maintained by the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

The proposed revisions have resulted from SECP's engagements with stakeholders during a series of Islamic finance sessions. The changes are aimed at enhancing transparency, fostering investor confidence and aiding in informed decision-making.



SIALKOT: Secretary Labor and Human Resources Punjab Naem Addressing to meeting of Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Pak dairy, beef sectors need to be transformed through precision farming

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan's dairy and beef sectors need to be transformed through precision farming to bring the country at par with the other developed nations of the world.

This was the upshot of the industry experts' input shared at an event that marked the partnership between Cloud Agri Pakistan, with NASNA, an Australian livestock company, one of the leading exporters in live animals, and Denkavit Netherlands, the Dutch global leader in feed for young animals with over 90 years of knowledge and experience in the field of young animals' feed solutions.

The experts were of the view that Pakistan

being the 4th largest milk producer in the world and major sub-sectors of agriculture, contributing along with livestock, over 60 percent of value-added agriculture and 11.7 percent of the total GDP, the country's dairy sector faces persistent challenges that hinders its optimal potential. With a population of 240 million people to meet their protein and dairy needs, Pakistan's dairy and beef industry is largely underperforming, which requires huge efforts to improve it, they added.

Dr. Rana Shaikat Hussain, CEO of Cloud Agri Pakistan & Global Business Director of Cloud Agri Group, said, "By joining forces with NASNA and Denkavit, we

are not only facilitating the introduction of superior livestock and nutrition solutions but also fostering a platform for knowledge exchange and the implementation of international best practices to Pakistan dairy and beef farmers." The collaboration, he said, is poised to bring unprecedented benefits to the Pakistani dairy and beef sector. NASNA will serve as the exclusive provider of high-quality Australian dairy and beef animals, while Denkavit will supply state-of-the-art calf rearing solutions to meet the diverse needs of Pakistani livestock farmers. By supplying superior cattle breeds from Australia and introducing advanced calf nutrition

solutions, the partnership aims to elevate Pakistan's dairy and livestock sectors to global standards going forward. This strategic alignment is set to empower local farmers and stakeholders with the tools and knowledge necessary to enhance the production, improve animal health, and drive overall industry advancement, he maintained. Ms. Henny Fokel de Vries, Dutch Ambassador to Pakistan, hoped that partnership between Dutch and Pakistani company Cloud Agri will lead to developing the Pakistani livestock sector on modern lines. She said over 50 Dutch companies are operating in Pakistan, including in the dairy and agriculture sectors.



SARGODHA: Chief Commissioner FBR Sargodha Region Dr. Faheem Mohammad is addressing meeting with stone crusher market officials.

Amid Rafah evacuation order, Hamas accepts truce proposal

Monitoring Desk
RAFAH: Hamas said it had accepted a proposal for a truce in the seven-month-old war in Gaza, after Israel told Palestinians in Rafah to evacuate ahead of a long-threatened invasion of the city. The Hamas announcement brought cheering crowds onto the street amid tears of happiness, chants of "Allahu Akbar" (God is greatest) and celebratory shooting in the air. There was no immediate official response from Israel, and its close ally the United States said it was "reviewing" Hamas's response. Hamas in a statement said that its leader Ismail Haniyeh had informed mediators Qatar and Egypt "of Hamas's approval of their proposal regarding a ceasefire agreement".

A senior Hamas official said Israel must now decide whether it accepts or "obstructs" a truce in the Palestinian territory after seven months of war. "The ball is now in the court of Israel, whether it will agree to the ceasefire agreement or obstruct it," the official told AFP, requesting anonymity to discuss the negotiations. Earlier in the day, Israel called on Palestinians to leave eastern Rafah, amid increasing global alarm about the consequences of an Israeli ground invasion of the southern Gaza city bordering Egypt. Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, condemned the order and said it would be "impossible to carry out safely". The evacuation call followed disagreement between Israel and Hamas over the Palestinian group's demands to end the war, during weekend negotiations in Cairo. Egyptian state-linked media said the talks stalled after a rocket attack claimed by Hamas's armed wing killed four Israeli soldiers on Sunday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to send ground troops into Rafah regardless of any truce, defying international concerns. Cairo's foreign ministry warned in a statement of "grave humanitarian risks" for more than one million Gazans sheltering there and urged Israel to "exercise the utmost restraint". US President Joe Biden and Netanyahu spoke and Biden restated "his clear position" against an invasion of Rafah, the White House said. It also said the Israeli premier "agreed to ensure the Kerem Shalom crossing is open for humanitarian assistance for those in need".



Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian meets UN atomic watchdog chief Rafael Grossi.

Media organisations launch criticism as Israeli cabinet shuts down Al Jazeera's local offices

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: International media organisations and journalists Monday condemned the decision of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet to shut down the local operations of Qatari-owned TV station Al Jazeera. The Israeli cabinet shut down the network a day ago for as long as its military offensive bombardment in Gaza continues, saying the outlet threatened national security.

Al Jazeera said the move was a "criminal action" and the accusation that the network threatened Israeli security was a "dangerous and ridiculous lie" that put its journalists at risk. "The incitement channel Al Jazeera will be closed in Israel," Netanyahu posted on social media following a unanimous cabinet vote. A government statement said Israel's communications minister signed orders to "act immediately", but at least one lawmaker who supported the closure said Al Jazeera could still try to block it in court. The measure, the statement said, includes closing Al Jazeera's offices in Israel, confiscating broadcast equipment, cutting off the channel from cable and satellite companies and blocking its websites. It did not mention Al Jazeera's Gaza operations.

Several international media organisations slammed the decision of the cabinet. The Foreign Press As

Columbia University cancels graduation ceremony after demonstrations

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK/AMSTERDAM: In view of the Israeli military offensive unleashed on civilians in Gaza over the last few months, students at institutes of higher education across the globe have been demonstrating in a bid to force their universities to divest and disassociate with groups "enabling the Israeli military occupation and assault on Palestine".

The wave of protests began with an encampment set up by students at Columbia University and soon spread to campuses across the United States. The student-led movement to divest and disassociate from groups with ties to Israel, is now popping up at universities across the globe. The turmoil on campuses has prompted several colleges and universities across the United States to relocate, modify.

Mozambique's ruling party announces Chapo as presidential candidate

Monitoring Desk
MAPUTO: Mozambique's ruling FRELIMO party has announced Daniel Chapo will be its presidential candidate in an election scheduled for October.

FRELIMO has governed the southern African country since gaining independence in 1975 and hopes Chapo will lead the party to another victory in the Oct 9 election.

"The soap opera of speculation is over, including speculation about the third term," President Filipe Nyusi said on state television on Sunday, dismissing the prospect of contesting elections again. "We must all unite around comrade Daniel Francisco Chapo."



Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, president of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and CEO of flag carrier Emirates, kicks off the mega travel and tourism exhibition event, Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, in Dubai.

Taliban say order restored after Afghan opium poppy protests

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: The Afghan Taliban said on Tuesday they have quelled protests in a northern province over security forces' attempts to eradicate opium poppy cultivation which generates income for many impoverished farmers.

Taliban authorities were holding meetings in Badakhshan, spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a Whatsapp message, after several days of protests, in which two people were killed. Mujahid said in a separate statement that a delegation from Kabul, led by the defence chief of staff, would this week travel to Badakhshan to investigate, a rare official acknowledgement of civil disturbance since the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

Since then, they have vowed to restore control over the entire war-torn nation and have at times forcefully broken up protests in urban areas.

IAEA chief in Iran as concern grows in West over nuclear plan

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: UN atomic watchdog chief Rafael Grossi arrived in Iran on Monday, where he is expected to speak at a conference and meet officials for talks on Tehran's nuclear programme.

The visit comes at a time of heightened regional tensions and with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) criticising Iran for lack of cooperation on inspections and other outstanding issues. News agencies reported Grossi's arrival "at the head of a delegation to participate in the nuclear conference and negotiate with top nuclear and political officials of the country". He met with Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and is scheduled to meet Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran chief Mohammad Eslami.

Grossi later said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, that at his meeting with the foreign minister he proposed "concrete practical measures" with the "aim of restoring process of confidence building and increasing transparency".

Seven killed in attack on Russia's Belgorod region

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Seven people were killed and at least 35 injured in an air attack on Russia's Belgorod region, on the border with Ukraine, on Monday. A Ukrainian drone attack hit vehicles carrying workers in Russia's frontier region, killing six people and injuring 35, the governor said. "Unfortunately, as a result of an explosion, six people died at the scene from their wounds," Vyacheslav Gladkov said. He added that "35 people were wounded" in the attack near the village of Berezyovka. Gladkov said the attack hit two vans transporting employees of a nearby factory as well as a passenger vehicle.

Hindutva goons ruthlessly beat up Muslim trader in Karnataka state

Monitoring Desk
BANGALORE (INP): In yet another hate crime against followers of Islam in India, a group of goons associated with the Hindutva outfit Bajrang Dal brutally thrashed a Muslim cattle trader in Karnataka state.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the victim identified as Bande Nawaz was transporting two bulls.

Emirates' CEO kicks off mega travel, tourism exhibition in Dubai

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, president of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and CEO of flag carrier Emirates, has kicked off the mega travel and tourism exhibition event, Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, in Dubai.

A press release from the Dubai government's media office said the "leading global travel and tourism event" is being held at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) from May 6-9, hosting 2,300 exhibitors from 165 countries in its "largest edition to date" and welcoming some 41,000 attendees.

"Policymakers, industry leaders, and travel professionals will gather at the event to explore the theme 'Empowering Innovation: Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneurship'." The four-day conference agenda of ATM 2024 through May 9 will feature 200 speakers across more than 50 sessions at the DWTC, the press release said. It added that ATM was launched in 1994 with 300 exhibitors and 7,000 trade visitors and had now established itself as a "globally renowned event integrating" multiple travel sectors and verticals from leisure and luxury hospitality to corporate travel. "Exhibitor participation has increased by 26 per cent this year, with growth recorded across all event verticals," the press release said. At the inaugural event, Sheikh Ahmed said that the "massive interest" generated amongst ATM 2024 attendees reaffirmed Dubai's standing as a "major destination".

"The equipment which was confiscated, the loss that we suffered from stopping our broadcast, all of that is subject matter for legal action," Nagm said. The Israeli government on Sunday said the order was initially valid for 45 days, with the possibility of an extension. Hours later, screens in Israel carrying Al Jazeera's Arabic and English channels went blank, apart from a message in Hebrew saying they had "been suspended in Israel". The shutdown does not apply to the Israeli-occupied West Bank or Gaza Strip, from which Al Jazeera still broadcasts live on Israel's fighting with Hamas. Al Jazeera immediately condemned Israel's decision as "criminal", saying on social media site X that it "violates the human right to access information".

Al Jazeera to pursue legal action 'until the end' over Israel ban

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: Al Jazeera will look to pursue all possible legal action "until the end" to challenge Israel's ban on its operations there, the TV network's news director told AFP in an interview.

The Qatar-based station was taken off air in Israel after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government voted on Sunday to shut it down over its coverage of the Gaza conflict. Speaking on Monday, Al Jazeera English news director Salah Nagm said the network would "follow every legal path", adding: "If there is a possibility of challenging that decision we are going to pursue it until the end." Under a cabinet decision which Netanyahu said was "unanimous", Al Jazeera's Jerusalem offices were shuttered, its equipment confiscated and its team's accreditations pulled.

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Turkiye's Erdogan opens Byzantine church to Muslim worshippers

Monitoring Desk
ISTANBUL: Turkiye on Monday reopened a mosque converted from an ancient Orthodox church in Istanbul for Muslim worship, four years after the president ordered its transformation.

Erdogan on Monday declared Kariye Mosque reopened for worship remotely during a ceremony at the presidential palace in the capital, Ankara. A picture from the mosque showed one worshipper wave a Turkish flag before the congregation who performed their prayers on a brick-red colour carpet on Monday afternoon.

The Kariye Mosque was formerly a Byzantine church, then a mosque and then a museum. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan ordered the building to be reconverted into a Muslim place of worship in 2020.

Images also revealed that two mosaics carved into the walls of the ancient church on the right and left sides of the prayer room were covered with curtains. Most of the mosaics and frescos however remained visible to visitors. "I had the opportunity to visit the place before and I was initially a little afraid of the work that could have been carried out," said Michel, a French tourist, who would give his full name. "But ultimately we must recognise that it's well done, that the frescos are accessible to everybody," the 31-year-old researcher said.

His order came followed a similarly controversial ruling on the UNESCO-protected Hagia Sophia — a cathedral in Istanbul that was converted into a mosque and then a museum, before becoming a mosque again.

The changes were seen as part of Erdogan's efforts to galvanise his more conservative and nationalist supporters. But they have also added to tensions with prelates in both the Orthodox and Catholic churches.

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Paris 2024 gearing up to face unprecedented cybersecurity threat

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: Paris 2024 is getting ready to face an unprecedented challenge in terms of cybersecurity, with organisers expecting huge pressure on the Games this summer.

Organised crime, activists and hostile states will be the main threats during the July 26-August 11 Olympics and the August 28-September 8 Paralympics.

Paris 2024, which has been working hand in hand with the French National Agency for Information Security (ANSSI) and cybersecurity companies Cisco and Eviden are looking to limit the impact of cyber attacks.

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"We can't prevent all the attacks, there will not be Games without attacks but we have to limit their impacts on the Olympics," Vincent Strubel, the director general of ANSSI, told reporters.

"There are 500 sites, competition venues and local collectives, and we've tested them all." Strubel is confident that Paris 2024, which will

"We're expecting the number of cybersecurity events to be multiplied by 10 compared to Tokyo [in 2021]." "In terms of cybersecurity, four years is the equivalent of a century," Eric Grefrier, head of partnerships at Cisco, explained. In 2018, a computer virus dubbed "Olympic Destroyer" was used to attack the opening ceremony of the Pyeongchang Winter Games.

India BJP's election videos targeting Muslims and opposition spark outrage

Monitoring Desk
AHMEDABAD: Animated videos shared by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party targeting the opposition Congress and the Muslim community have evoked complaints and outrage, as the political climate in India heats up midway through its six-week long election.

A set of guidelines mutually adopted by political parties for how they should conduct themselves during the election period prohibits them from creating "mutual hatred" between caste, religious or linguistic groups. Manipulated videos on social media have also become a contentious issue in this election, such as fake videos showing top Bollywood stars criticising the prime minister.

The videos, shared by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on social media platforms Instagram and X over the last ten days, depict the Congress giving disproportionate benefits to India's minority Muslim community, at the cost of certain disadvantaged tribal and Hindu caste groups. The Congress, in a complaint to the poll watchdog Election Commission, said on Sunday that the video was shared "clearly with an intention to wantonly provoke rioting and promote enmity between different religions".

On Monday, the commission warned parties against the misuse of AI tools to create deep fakes and told them not to publish and circulate such videos. It also said parties had been directed to remove such content within three hours of it being brought to their notice. Modi, the face of the Hindu-nationalist BJP, seeking a rare third consecutive term, had focused his campaign largely on his government's performance on economic growth and welfare benefits.

Wall Street inches higher with more corporate earnings on the way

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Wall Street pointed toward gains early Monday, kicking off a quiet week for economic data but another full slate of corporate earnings reports.

Shares in Spirit Airlines slid 3.5% before the bell after the budget airline came up short on Wall Street's sales and profit targets for the quarter. The company, which hasn't turned a full-year profit since 2019, has been in cost-cutting mode, deferring plane orders and furloughing pilots.

Futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were both 0.4% higher before the bell.

Meat processor Tyson Foods rose 2.6% in premarket after it easily beat analysts' profit expectations even as it fell a hair short of sales forecasts.

Modi walked out of a polling booth early morning in the city of Ahmedabad while holding up a finger marked with indelible ink, flanked by security personnel and cheered by supporters.

"In the grand ritual of democracy, everyone contributing their share deserves congratulations," Modi told reporters. "Once again, I tell Indians... to come in huge numbers to vote and celebrate the festival of democracy."

The Indian premier's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is expected to win the election convincingly, but since the vote began on April 19.

Modi votes as India's marathon election heats up

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi cast his ballot Tuesday in India's ongoing general election after giving several inflammatory campaign speeches accused of targeting minority Muslims.

Turnout so far has dropped significantly compared with the last national poll in 2019, with analysts blaming widespread expectations that Modi will easily win a third term and hotter-than-average temperatures heading into the summer.

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A police officer stands guard at a nearly empty Columbia University campus after police cleared out a Gaza protest encampment in New York City.



QUETTA: PPP's MPAs, office bearers and workers meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari. Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti is also present

Pakistan and China deepen collaboration on CPEC Phase-2

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday expressed the firm commitment of the government to expedite the implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project (CPEC) for further strengthening the bilateral relations between both the countries. The minister co-chaired a meeting with the Ambassador of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, Secretary Planning, Awaiz Manzoor Sumra and other senior officials from the ministry also attended the meeting, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Planning.

The discussions focused on further strengthening collaboration on projects related to energy, infrastructure, industry, food security, agriculture, and transportation within the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the importance of deepening the longstanding friendship between the leadership of China and Pakistan and expressed the government's firm commitment to expediting the implementation of CPEC and stated that the upcoming visit of the prime minister to CPEC projects would usher in a new era of cooperation in all sectors.

The minister elaborated on the core objective of CPEC: promoting cooperation in all sectors, including industry, energy, infrastructure, social development, agriculture and regional connectivity within Pakistan. He expressed a desire to enhance cooperation with China through the transfer of modern technology in various sectors, including transportation and agriculture.

He emphasized Pakistan's aim to establish industrial zones for the manufacturing of electric cars in collaboration with China, leveraging Pakistan's competitive advantage to reduce overall production costs and create employment opportunities for Pakistani workers.

Ahsan Iqbal also discussed the upcoming South Asian Games 2025, underlining the importance of comprehensive training programs for Pakistani athletes.

Pakistan pushes for preventing weaponization of outer-space to avert threats to peace

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for steps to prevent the weaponization of outer space, saying such a course would avert a grave danger to international peace and security.

"The threats to security in and from outer space have escalated sharply in recent years. This is evident from the placement of weapons in space, and its increasing characterization as the next war-fighting frontier in the military policies and doctrines of major powers," Ambassador Muneer Akram told the UN General Assembly on Monday.

The 193-member Assembly was debating Russia's veto in the Security Council last month which blocked a draft resolution aimed at preventing a new extraterrestrial arms race.

Due to the negative Russian vote, the 15-member Council failed to adopt last month's text, which received 13 votes in favour, with China abstaining. The draft resolution was introduced by United States and Japan and co-sponsored by over 60 nations.

In his remarks, Ambassador Akram said that the US-Japan draft resolution rightly recognized that the prevention of an arms race in Outer Space would avert a grave danger for international peace and security; underscored the importance of the Outer Space Treaty; and reiterated that the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

Pakistan, he said, has always maintained a principled position that resolutions on global disarmament issues should be deliberated and concluded in an inclusive and transparent manner within the appropriate forums—the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the UN Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, which deals with disarmament and international security matters.

The Pakistani envoy regretted that there has been no progress on a Treaty to Prevent an Arms Race in Outer Space for over four decades.

"Initially," he said, "some dismissed the possibility of an arms race in outer space.

Chief Minister Bugti hails announcement: Naqvi announces to install floodlights in Bugti Stadium within three months

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Federal Interior Minister and Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Mohsin Naqvi has announced to install floodlights in Bugti cricket stadium within three months.

He also announced to bring international cricket in Quetta and Gwadar.

These very announcements were made by the Federal Interior Minister while speaking to the media persons during visit to Bugti Cricket Stadium here on Tuesday.

The Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove, former caretaker Prime Minister Senator Anwarul Haq Kakar were also present on the occasion.

Mohsin Naqvi said that the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti especially invited him to visit Quetta cricket ground.

He said that the PCB has decided to install floodlights in the Bugti cricket stadium. He announced that the floodlights would be installed in the stadium in three months. He said that we are also looking into the matters regarding participation of Balochistan in the PSL. He also said that we want that the international cricket may come to Quetta.

Regarding his visit, he said that he participated in the meeting on law and order besides visiting the cricket ground in Quetta.

Earlier, speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said he is thankful to the Federal Interior Minister on visiting Quetta and Bugti Cricket stadium.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti along with Federal Minister for Interior, Chairman of PCB Mohsin Naqvi and Ex-Interim PM Anwaar-ul Haq Kakar inspecting at Bugti Cricket Stadium

Minister Education stresses need to prepare comprehensive policy to resolve issues of universities

Rahila Durrani chairs meeting of VCs of public sector universities: says it is shameful for us to see teachers while protesting on roads for their salaries

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Education, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani presided over a meeting of the vice chancellors of public sector universities of the province here on Tuesday.

The vice chancellors of 10 universities participated in the meeting, and briefed about the overall functioning and matters of their respective institutions.

The matters highlighted during the meeting were included the strength of students studying in the universities as well as the number of departments and faculties besides the shortage of funds being faced by them.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister Education said that there's no denying the fact that education system has reached the brink of destruction in the province. She said that it is her dream and party's vision to enforce better education system in the province.

She desired that the education system should be so good that the children from outside Balochistan may come to the province to acquire education.

She underlined the need to prepare a comprehensive policy to resolve the issue of universities, which are varying from each other.

In this regard, there is also a need to form think tank and council so as to find out solution together, she maintained.

She said that it is shameful for us that the teachers are protesting on roads for their salaries.

She said that she respects teachers a lot, and wants to secure respectable status for them in the society. She noted with concern that our scholars are leaving the country. She said that our scholars are our precious asset, and we would be requiring their services for education, she added.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Haji Noor Muhammad Durrani, Mir Ali Madad Jattak, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Agha Shakeel Durrani and Amjad Afridi meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti

Govt to introduce pension reforms to lessen burden: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday said that the government would introduce pension reforms to lessen the burden on economy.

The structural reforms in the institutions were part of government's agenda as per the vision of the Prime Minister, he said, adding that practical steps were need of hour for economic growth.

The minister stated this while addressing a press conference here.

He said that political and economic stability were interconnected, adding that the Parliament should also adopt the pension reforms unanimously.

The Parliament, he said, had introduced first legislation with regard to tax collection. Now it was an internationally admitted fact that only a country with economic stability would progress, he added.

The minister said that a committee had been formed on pension reforms which would view the different proposals regarding it.

He said that the pension reforms would be implemented in every government institution across the board.

Nothing was going on under the carpet, he said, adding that the decisions would be shared with the public.

Nawaz Sharif files acquittal plea in Toshakhana reference

ISLAMABAD (Online): PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif has filed acquittal plea in Toshakhana reference.

The hearing of Toshakhana vehicles reference against President Asif Ali Zardari, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and Yousuf Raza Gillani took place in Accountability Court (AC) Islamabad Tuesday.

Rana Muhammad Irfan appeared in the court as pleader of Nawaz Sharif and he filed acquittal plea in Toshakhana vehicles reference on behalf of his client.

Prosecutor said he sends this application to NAB Headquarters.

AC issued notice for May 22 for arguments on the acquittal plea of Nawaz Sharif.

Counsel Arshid Tabrez said president Asif Ali Zardari enjoys presidential immunity. The case cannot run to his extent.

Gilani vows to continue mission of masses services

MULTAN (APP): Delegations from different parts of Multan called on Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani at the local circuit house here Tuesday and felicitated him on being elected as Chairman of Senate of Pakistan.

Different delegations including those representing Housing Societies, Private Schools Association besides others led by notables including Babar Shah, Habib ur Rehman Sanghera, Husnain Abbas, Dr Sattar, Fareed Khan Bangash, Imtiaz Khan, AD Khan, Malik Rizaz were present at the circuit house.

They apprised the chairman Senate of their problems and sought his help to get these resolved.

Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani said on the occasion that he and his forefathers had always served the people wholeheartedly with specific thrust on education and health and added that the Gillani family enjoyed strong political, educational and spiritual relationships with the people. He pledged to continue to serve the masses in future too and promised to resolve problems of the people.

Negative propaganda drive against judges: Justice Mohsin Akhtar writes letter to CJ IHC for contempt of court proceedings

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamer Farooq will likely to constitute a larger bench for initiating contempt of court proceedings in the matter of social media campaign against Justice Babar Sattar.

Sources had said following the publication of personal information about him and his family members including US permit for residing therein, Justice Babar Sattar has requested CJ IHC Aamer Farooq to launch contempt of court proceedings.

According to sources the letter written by Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani has come to open seeking initiation of contempt of court proceedings in negative propaganda campaign against judges matter.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani has written a letter to Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) Aamer Farooq for initiating contempt of court proceedings in the matter of Negative Propaganda Campaign against judges.

Upon his arrival, the Federal Minister was welcomed by the Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove and other concerned high ups.

The Federal Interior Minister participated in the law and order meeting held in the metropolis.

He also had meeting with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and discussed the matters about law and order in the province.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa being briefed by Secretary C&W Qambar Dashti during his visit to site of under construction Customs and Gahi Khan flyover

Power Division demands Rs 130 billion in subsidies to K Electric, AJK

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Power Division, operating under the Ministry of Energy, has urgently demanded the immediate distribution of approximately 130 billion rupees in subsidy payments to K Electric and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. With the financial year drawing to a close, various ministries and divisions have compiled a series of supplementary grants for approval in a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet, chaired by Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday. According to a local TV, topping the list is the Power Division's request for an advance subsidy release of Rs 70 billion in relation to K Electric's outstanding arrears, followed by a demand for the payment of 55 billion rupees in tariff differential subsidy arrears for Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Additionally, the Power Division has called for another technical supplementary grant of 2.5 billion rupees.

Interestingly, a supplementary grant of Rs 5.9 billion has also been sought for the erstwhile Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA). Furthermore, the ECC will review a summary for an additional grant payment of 4.8 billion rupees to the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. The ECC will also deliberate on a summary from the National Food Security Ministry, proposing an increase in the wheat procurement.

Envoy Hashmi visits CATIC HQs, meets Chairman Liu

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi visited headquarters of CATIC and met Chairman, Liu Yu here on Tuesday.

During the visit, the ambassador was briefed on the company's high-quality equipment and products.

As longstanding partners, the two sides discussed ways to further strengthen defense cooperation between Pakistan and China.

Senior officials of the Embassy of Pakistan Beijing accompanied the ambassador.

"Pleased to visit headquarters of CATIC, and meet Mr. Liu Yu, Chairman, Received briefing on the company's high-quality equipment and products. As longstanding partners, we discussed ways to further strengthen our defense cooperation," the ambassador posted on his social media account X after the visit.

Defence ties form a major plank of Pakistan-China relations.

Officers to pay attention on solving problems of public: DC Kachhi

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Kachhi Captain Retired Jameel Ahmed Baloch Tuesday directed all officers that they should pay special attention to solving the problems of the people.

He gave this directive while chairing a review meeting of all district heads at his office. All the officers briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the ongoing development projects and public interest issues in their respective departments.

DC Captain Retired Jameel Ahmed Baloch directed all officers that they should pay special attention to address the complaints facing by masses regarding the projects from people and resolve them immediately.

He said that the district administration was keeping an eye on the performance of all the departments so that efforts should be made to leave no stone unturned in the service of the public. The Deputy Commissioner specially instructed the officers to pay attention to the cleanliness of the cities and to make special arrangements for cleanliness in markets and other public places in all concerned cities to keep the area clean. While instructing the Xens, he said that the quality of ongoing development projects across the district should not only be ensured, but prioritized for their completion so that people would get benefit from completion.

Mohsin Naqvi arrives in provincial metropolis

QUETTA: The Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi arrived in Quetta on one-day official visit on Tuesday.

Upon his arrival, the Federal Minister was welcomed by the Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove and other concerned high ups.

The Federal Interior Minister participated in the law and order meeting held in the metropolis.

He also had meeting with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and discussed the matters about law and order in the province.

Toshakhana case: Court grants exemption
Gilani, reviews immunity claim
ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Accountability Court (IAC) on Tuesday accepted the request Chairman Senate Yousuf Raza Gilani for exemption from appearance on the reference of Toshakhana vehicles.

Meanwhile, the court has scheduled arguments of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's acquittal petition on May 23.

Hearing the Toshakhana vehicles reference, Nawaz Sharif's plea for acquittal was filed.



QUETTA: Former Chairman of the Ruet-e-Halal Committee and Religious Scholar, Mufti Muneebur-Rehman addressing a Press Conference at Quetta press club.

UK police close Shahzad acid attack probe for finding no suspects: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): The UK police have shut down a probe into a reported acid attack on former Assets Recovery Unit (ARU) head Shahzad Akbar after finding no suspects during an around six-month-long investigation, according to a media report published Tuesday.

"We have explored all lines of enquiry and have not been able to identify any suspects," the report quoted a police source linked with counter-terrorism policing.

Calling it an extremely complex investigation, the Hertfordshire Constabulary said, "Since November, officers have been working hard to try and trace those involved. On this occasion, we have explored all lines of enquiry and have not been able to identify any suspects. Incidents of this nature are thankfully rare in Hertfordshire and the safeguarding of any victim remains our priority. Should any new information come to light, we will act on this accordingly." The media report also quoted an intelligence source confirming that the investigation has been closed after no suspects were found during the "dedicated investigation" marking the review of several hours of footage including the entry and exit points of the local area.