

# Independent

Member APNS &amp; CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vd: XXV No. 258, Shawwal 30, 1445 AH Thursday May 09, 2024 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

## Aspires highly educated Pakistan PM declares Education Emergency to enroll 26m out-of-school children

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday declared an 'Education Emergency' across Pakistan to enroll around 26 million out-of-school children and promote literacy to make the country regain its lost space and develop it as one of the most educated societies in the world.

"Today, with iron conviction, and the support of provinces, we will handle the challenge of 26 million out-of-school children. We will bring them back to school... I declare from this moment an Emergency in Education all over Pakistan... The way we did it in Punjab, we will do it in Pakistan," the prime minister said addressing the

National Conference on Education Emergency.

He told the gathering of federal ministers, parliamentarians, vice-chancellors, diplomats, and development partners that he would personally supervise the programme and meet all the chief ministers, setting aside political affiliations, with a vision to march in unison, expressing the hope that the provinces too would extend their support.

"This is about our children and our future... This is a very challenging task, no doubt. But nations which had faced difficulties and defeat in the past arose from the ashes of defeat. Germany and Japan are the examples. Why can't Paki-

stan be? I guarantee, if we move in unison to find our space, Pakistan will emerge as one of the most educated societies one day," he remarked.

The prime minister, recounting the achievements of the Punjab Government during his chief ministership, highlighted the boosted enrollment rates, especially for girls, through initiatives like the Zavar Taleem Programme, and rescuing 90,000 boys from brick kilns to sending them to schools.

He also mentioned outsourcing of 10,000 poorly performing schools to improve education quality and established Daanish

*Continued on page 2*

QUETTA: A delegation of Dera Bugti meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and MPA Maulvi Noorullah are also present.

## 'Ready to face inquiry into 2014 sit-in', Imran responds to military flak

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister and incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, Imran Khan, has said that he is ready for any inquiry into his party's 2014 sit-in, a day after the chief military spokesperson hinted at a judicial probe into the event. "I will be happy if I am presented before the inquiry committee. All the allegations leveled against me regarding the 2014 sit-in are false... the 2013 election was the election of ROs," he remarked while interacting informally with the media at Adiala Jail on Wednesday.

The army on Tuesday

sought a sincere and public apology from Khan and asked him to shun what it called "politics of anarchy and hate" to revive his political fortunes. However, at the same time, it dismissed the possibility of any 'deal' with the PTI founder, saying there won't be any talks with "anarchists."

At a press conference, DG Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Major General Ahmed Sharif said that there was no doubt that the PTI was behind the May 9 riots. However, he said that yet some people were demanding the judicial commission to probe the events of May 9.



QUETTA: Representative of Germany Government Dr. Fronsos cutting ribbon to inaugurate the BISP Mobile Registration Center for provision of facilities to women.

## State and LEAs are closely related to each other, says Governor Balochistan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that the State and law enforcement agencies are closely related to each other and all national installations are our joint assets.

Moreover, there is a key role of law enforcement agencies including the

armed forces in protection of the life and property of the masses besides in promoting national unity.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, the Governor said that unfortunately attack on the security institutions and public properties on May 9 last year was a condemnable act.

## May 9 to be remembered as Black Day in Pakistan's history: Attaullah Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has said the nation will never forget the perpetrators of the 9th May incidents nor allow the repetition of such criminal acts against the country. Ad-

ressing a news conference in Islamabad this evening, he said May 9 will be remembered as a black day in the history of Pakistan when a chaos-prone political gang hatched a conspiracy and attacked Pakistan's integrity, security, and development.

## President leaves for Islamabad after 3-day visit to Quetta

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The President Asif Ali Zardari left for Islamabad after completing his three-day visit to Quetta on Wednesday.

The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti saw him off at the Quetta airport.

During his stay in Quetta, the President presided over meetings on the progress of development projects and law and order in the province.

He also had meetings with the Governor and Chief Minister besides with the provincial ministers, members of assembly and leaders of the Pakistan Peoples Party.

## Governor summons BA session today

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The session of Balochistan Assembly is scheduled to be held at 11:00 AM today (Thursday) here.

According to the notification issued here by the Provincial Assembly's secretariat on Wednesday, the Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has summoned the session.

The notification mentioned that the entry of all government and private armed security guards would remain banned in the assembly's secretariat during the session.

## Anas appointed as Media Communication Strategist, CM Secretariat

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Anas Abdullah has been appointed as the Media Communication Strategist in Chief Minister Secretariat on Wednesday.

This was announced in an official notification issued here.

According to the notification, the appointed Anas Abdullah as the Media Communication Strategist, Chief Minister Secretariat.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the National Conference on Education Emergency.

## Mathew Miller says: US supports Saudi crown prince's visit to Pakistan

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States of America said it encourages diplomatic engagements among its partners and supports the upcoming visit of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to Pakistan, expected sometime this month.

The statement by State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller was issued in response to a question about diplomatic activities in the region, including Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's official tour of the South Asian state.

The Saudi crown prince's visit to Pakistan is likely to occur amid high-level exchanges between the two countries, as Islamabad seeks foreign investment to address its economic challenges.

"We always support diplomatic engagement between our partners," Miller said during a media briefing. "I don't have any further

comment on the visit between the Saudi crown prince to Pakistan, but it's — that kind of diplomatic engagement is routine and something that we support and encourage."

In response to a question regarding Senator Chuck Schumer, the Majority Leader of the US Senate, had met with the Pakistani ambassador and discussed the protection of PTI leaders, including Imran Khan and if the US State Department also considers the protection of PTI leaders a top priority, Miller said that he was not aware of any such conversation between the State Department and Senator Schumer.

Miller addressed reports of Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer's reported warning to Pakistan regarding the safety of Imran Khan, affirming the

*Continued on page 2*

BEIJING: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiative Prof. Ahsan Iqbal presenting commemorative coin and postage stamp which launched to celebrate the "Decade of CPEC" to Vice Foreign Minister of China H.E. Sun Weidong at Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## Pak-China all weather friendship Ahsan, Weidong hold wide-ranging discussions to solidify

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal met with Chinese Vice Foreign Minister, Sun Weidong here on Wednesday and held wide-ranging discussions, aimed at even further solidifying the "All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership."

Discussions also included a review of successful

culmination of the first decade of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and the progress achieved in its second decade, especially on the five corridors, namely growth, livelihood, openness, inclusivity and innovation, as outlined by Chinese Vice Premier, He Lifeng last year. In this regard, he

*Continued on page 2*

## Speaker BAAchakzai terms 9th May incidents as heinous conspiracy against country

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai has described the 9th May 2023 incidents as heinous conspiracy against the country.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, the Speaker Balochistan Assembly said that the manner at-

tempt was made to create law and order situation on May 9 in the country was unprecedented in its history.

He said that those took part in the nefarious conspiracy on May 9 by attacking the national installations and monuments were actually the enemies of Pakistan and nation.



ISLAMABAD: Participants attending a seminar titled "Tahafuz e Ain e Pakistan kesy aur kiun" under the auspices of Tehreek Tahafuz Pakistan in the Federal Capital.

## Pak-Uzbekistan to start work on trade corridor with Afghanistan: Uzbek Minister

### PM reiterates commitment to complete trade, connectivity projects with Uzbekistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Uzbek Deputy Minister for Transport and Aviation, Jasurbek Choriev has said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan have decided to start work on the trilateral trade corridor with Afghanistan, which is of great importance in regional economic integration.

Including Afghanistan, all three parties are willing to complete this trade corridor and its completion will increase regional trade and boost economic activities in the regional countries, Jasurbek Choriev said this at the Tashkent International Investment Forum (TIIF) while talking to APP.

The minister said that Pakistan was our foremost priority economic partner

as well in the recent future, with which we are working in many spheres at the economic and trade level.

He said that the Pakistan-Uzbekistan partnership is of great importance in regional economic and trade integration and Uzbekistan considers Pakistan will have a significant partner in this regard.

The Minister said that Uzbekistan is the central country of Central Asia and similarly, Pakistan is also a Geo-Strategically important country of South Asia located in the neighbouring Central Asia.

He said that air, rail and road connectivity between Pakistan and Uzbekistan is essential to

*Continued on page 2*

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan H.E. Bakhtiyor Saidov called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Naqvi lauds FC North Balochistan's role for peace, development in province

QUETTA (INP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the headquarters of Frontier Corps North Balochistan today (Wednesday).

Mohsin Naqvi was welcomed by FC North IG Major General Amir Ajmal Chaudhry and saluted by troops of FC North.

Minister Naqvi paid homage to the martyrs by laying a floral wreath at the martyrs' memorial and reciting Fatha (prayers). He paid tribute to martyrs' sacrifices for the nation.

During his tour, Minister Naqvi explored the museum and examined the

latest tools utilized by FC North, showing keen interest in historical artifacts.

A special session was convened under his presidency at FC North and commended the FC North's role in maintaining peace and order in Balochistan. In his address, Minister Naqvi reiterated the pivotal contributions of FC North in ensuring the prosperity of the region.

He commended the professional capabilities and courage of the officers and young men of FC North, stating, "We are proud of their dedication to duty."



QUETTA: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi offering fatha at the Martyrs Monument during his visit to Frontier Corps Balochistan (North) Headquarters.

## Balochistan lawyers' leaders call for making process of judges' appointment transparent

**Member PBC demands to postpone process of judges' appointment in Supreme & High courts; condemns incident of baton charge against lawyers in Lahore**

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The leaders of Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) and different Balochistan Bar Associations have underlined the need to make the process of appointment of judges in the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the High Courts fair and transparent.

They stressed that the process of judges' appointment must be fair and transparent.

The leaders of different bar associations were addressing a joint press conference here at the High Court Bar Room on Wednesday.

The Member PBC Munir Ahmed Kakar said that the lawyers of Balochistan are on one page

on the matter of judges' appointment.

He said that the appointment of judges was made controversial in the 18th amendment.

He alleged that merit was violated by appointing the "blue-eyed" judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts.

The Member PBC pointed out that hundreds of thousands cases are pending in the courts all over the country.

More than 57,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court only, Munir Ahmed Kakar mentioned.

He mentioned that the Chief Justice of Pakistan formed committee for

*Continued on page 2*

## Google provides up to 45,000 scholarships

ISLAMABAD (APP): Google has launched Google Artificial Intelligence (AI) Essentials, a new course to help more people unlock AI skills for the future, besides providing up to 45,000 scholarships for Google Career Certificates in 2024, and adding two new programmes to upskill freelancers and women.

The Google AI Essentials is a new self-paced, online course taught by AI experts at Google. This course requires no previous experience with AI, and is designed to help teach people across roles and industries get essential AI skills to boost productivity, and gain hands-on experience via a variety of AI tools, according to a news release.

With this course, people will learn how to use AI tools to brainstorm ideas and speed up daily work tasks. It will also learn how to write effective prompts and use AI responsibly by identifying AI's potential biases. Google AI Essentials is available on Coursera in English.

In addition to Google AI Essentials, the Google Career Certificates (GCC) prepare learners for entry-level jobs in fast-growing fields, whether it is Data Analytics, Cybersecurity or Digital Marketing. New resources have been added to the certificates to help learners discover how professionals in their fields are using AI, while gaining

hands-on experience applying AI to a workplace scenario.

From the first launch in 2022, 80% of GCC graduates in Pakistan reported the programme had helped them advance in their careers.

In addition, according to partner-led surveys (IRM/TechValley, 2023), 28% of women who graduated from the programme reported experiencing financial growth, 24% stated they obtained a new job or got promoted, and 91% felt more confident after completing the programme.

Pakistan is home to the third-largest freelancing economy in the world and it is critical to ensure that the country's freelance talent remains competitive, especially in today's rapidly evolving digital environment. This year, Google, in partnership with the Pakistan Freelancers Association (PAFLA), has developed a programme that will help the freelance community in Pakistan address challenges around soft skills areas such as personal branding, and communication skills. Up to 50,000 PAFLA freelancers could benefit from the programme taught by Google experts.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori meeting with Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, H.E. Nawaf bin Saed Ahmad Al-Malkiy.

## PM declares Education..

Continued from page 1

Schools which offered free high-quality education and boarding for underprivileged children. The Punjab Education Endowment Fund provided scholarships to hundreds of thousands of deserving students based on merit. He said the enrollment of 26 million out-of-school children and stunted growth were major challenges facing Pakistan which required huge financial resources. "But the real challenge is the will to do," he commented and recalled Pakistan's manifestation of the commitment to become a nuclear power despite international pressures, and eliminating terrorism by sacrificing around 80,000 lives to establish peace in the country as well as the globe.

In his address, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Dr Khalid Maqbool

Siddiqui said the education sector needed immediate actions and urgent responses as Pakistan stood at the crossroads of destination with no option to lose. "The statistics of education in Pakistan are disturbing, alarming and disheartening. More than 26 million children are out of school. This number is greater than the population of 150 countries in the world," he commented.

Union Representative in Pakistan Abdullah A. Fadi said over 70% of children of age 10 in Pakistan could not read or understand text. Despite constitutional guarantees, education in Pakistan was neither compulsory nor free.

He said through enhanced investment in education and young people, Pakistan could regain its lost stature as the first Nobel Laureate in Physics belonged to Pakistan and that the country also re-

cently sent a space mission to moon.

British High Commissioner in Islamabad Jane Marriott said that Pakistan with 60% population under 30 years of age was at a crossroads to make tough choices. She said the conference called for urgent actions like enhanced funding, inclusivity, multiple shifts schools and retaining the children, and assured her country's all-out cooperation to make Pakistan achieve the goal. World Food Programme Country Director Coco Ushiyama in her video message said food security and education went hand in hand and school meals was one of the best programmes to invest in the country's future.

World Bank Vice President Martin Raiser said Pakistan was faced with 40% children having stunted growth and the ratio was around 60pc in poor districts.

## AJK govt determined to ensure foolproof security for foreign engineers: Anwaar

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwaar ul Haq has said that the main purpose behind the deployment of Punjab and Frontier Constabulary was to provide foolproof security to foreign engineers working on different hydro-power projects in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking in the state metropolis, the prime minister said that a strong, stable, and prosperous Pakistan was the greatest eye-sore for India. The AJK government, he said cannot compromise on the protection of life, honour and dignity of the citizens of the state. The PM said that the government wanted to resolve all issues through negotiations by engaging with representatives of the Action Committee.

Referring to Action Committee leader Shahkhat Nawaz Mir's statement.

## Ahsan..

Continued from page 1

lauded services of Minister Planning Ahsan Iqbal as called him Mr. CPEC and noted the 5-E's framework i.e. Export, Energy, Equity, E-Pakistan and Environment, envisioned by the Government of Pakistan, to implement these five corridors under CPEC.

Both sides also discussed early implementation of ML-I, KKH realignment and other key infrastructure projects in Pakistan.

The minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the high-quality development of CPEC, outlining future cooperation under CPEC phase-II in such priority sectors as IT, agriculture modernization, textile, minerals and renewable energy, among others.

He thanked China for its support to make CPEC a flagship project of BRI, adding the project had helped Pakistan modernize its energy and logistics infrastructure.



QUETTA: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi during his visit to Frontier Corps Balochistan (North) Headquarters.

## Hollywood film on Pakistan's culture to highlight country's soft image: Attaullah Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Wednesday that the production of Hollywood film on Pakistan's culture will give people around the world an opportunity to know more about the country and highlight its soft and positive image.

This he said during a meeting with the members of the Hollywood production team visiting Pakistan to shoot an international film on Pakistani culture.

He said the film produced by the Hollywood production team will be an important milestone for the Pakistani film industry.

In the meeting, discussions were held regarding the great cultural heritage and history of the country, including the preparation of a film based on Pakistani culture.

The minister also appreciated the Hollywood production team about the progress in the film industry in the country.

He thanked the Hollywood production team for deciding to produce a film on Pakistani culture.

"It is a great honour for our culture and people," he said adding Pakistan was a country with a great cultural heritage.

"Our history, literature, music, and art are

unique and appreciated worldwide," Attaullah Tarar maintained.

The minister said he believed that this film would give the world a new opportunity to see the beauty and diversity of Pakistan.

While throwing light on the measures taken by the government for cinema revival, he said it was the only industry in Pakistan that enjoyed tax amnesty.

The government under the leadership of Shehbaz Sharif restored the film policy in its previous term," he said and added that the film sector had been given the status of an industry.

## US supports..

Continued from page 1

US commitment to human rights. He said Senator Schumer might have coordinated with the State Department while telling the Pakistani ambassador that Imran Khan's safety was a high priority in Washington but he (Miller) was not aware of that conversation.

Miller further said "But obviously, we want to see safety and security of every prisoner in Pakistan or anywhere else in the world." He added "It's something that every person, every detainee, every prisoner is entitled to basic human rights and protection under the law."

However Miller emphasized that the US prioritizes the safety and security of all individuals, including political leaders, and supports the protection of human rights and the rule of law in Pakistan.

Reacting to the meeting between US Ambassador Donald Blome and PTI leaders, including Omar Ayub and other opposition members, Miller stated that the meeting discussed important issues related to bilateral relations, economic reforms, human rights, and regional security.

He reiterated that the US does not take a position on Pakistan's internal political matters or support any specific political party. The US prioritizes the protection of human rights and supports democratic values in Pakistan.

## Balochistan..

Continued from page 1

amendment in the rules after the endeavours of representatives of lawyers and members of the Judicial Commission.

The Member PBC pleaded to the CJJ not to make compromise on the principles.

He said that we reject the extension to be made for personal gains and interests.

He demanded to postpone the process of judges' appointment in the Supreme and High courts of the country.

He said that there are talks about giving extension to the CJJ Mr Justice Qazi Faez Isa, but we hope that he (CJJ) would not get extension by following the constitution.

To a query, the Member PBC stressed that we have to sit together to put the country on right track.

He on the occasion condemned the baton charge used against the lawyers in Lahore.

He announced to observe boycott of courts' proceedings against the Lahore incident.

He also opposed the move of government about fencing in Gwadar saying that the local population is affecting due to the fencing in port city.

The senior lawyer, Rahib Buledi said that we would never allow any individual to make amendment in the country's Constitution.

## Pakistan, Japan to lock horns in Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final on May 11

Sports Desk MALAYSIA: Pakistan have sailed through tough matches to the final of the ongoing Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2024 in Ipoh, Malaysia, in which they would take on Japan on May 11 at the same venue.

Pakistan and Japan have qualified for the final of the ongoing Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2024 in Ipoh, Malaysia after they finished at the top of the points table. The two sides will lock horns on May 11 at the same venue.

Pakistan are at the top of the table after four

games. They have registered three wins and a draw. Meanwhile, Japan also have the same number of wins and a draw.

Malaysia and New Zealand are placed at third and fourth respectively with six points. Korea have registered three points and are at five while Canada with no wins, are teetering at sixth. Earlier, Pakistan claimed a 5-4 win over Canada to increase their chances of qualifying. Canada had taken a 2-0 lead within the first 17 minutes to put Pakistan on the backfoot.



QUETTA: MPA Nawab Saanullah Khan Zehri and his son Nawabzada Ameer Hamza Zehri meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari.

## Pak-Uzbekistan to..

Continued from page 1

increase bilateral trade between the two countries.

Jasurbek Choriev said that the direct flight between Pakistan and Uzbekistan will start in October this year 2024.

He said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a central role in global and regional trade and the strategic partnership of the two countries can usher in a new era of economic prosperity in the region.

Replying to a question, he said that the economic and trade relations between the two countries started from the historic Silk route and both countries are determined to revive the old Silk route.

Great Silk Road is a historical trade artery between East and West, which is of great cultural, economic and geopolitical importance, he said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated that Pakistan was committed to working with Uzbekistan to speed up and complete all bilateral trade and connectivity projects.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov, who is currently on a two-day visit to Pakistan, reaffirmed Pakistan's readiness to provide access to Uzbekistan to Pakistani Ports, a PM Office press release said.

He also emphasized the importance of Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Railway Project and Pakistan's commitment to its early completion.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Conservator of Forests, Planning/ Deputy Project Director, Upscaling Green Pakistan Programme (Revised) - Forestry Balochistan, Quetta, Forests and Wildlife Department invites bids from Eligible Bidders for Procurement of following *Furniture & Fixtures* under the Project "Upscaling Green Pakistan Programme (Revised) - Forestry Balochistan, Quetta PSDP No.3303/ FY2023-24: Tender Fee Rs. 1000/-

S.No.	Particular	E/Cost
1	Furniture & Fixtures	PKRs.4,999,895/-

Procurements shall be made under B-PPRA, Rules 2014 (amended upto date). **Eligibility of Bidders:** The bidder must have completed three (03) assignments of a similar nature of work in the last three (03) years. Turnover of at least PKR 5.00 million in three (03) years showing financial capacity of the firm Bank certificate to be attached with bid. Registration with relevant taxation departments (FBR, Sales Tax, Income Tax). **Method of Procurement:** Single Stage-Two Envelope Procedure. **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of **Call Deposit or Bank Guarantee** of amount (5%) 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 upon payment of the bidding document fee (non-refundable) through **Green Challan under head C-03370- Other Forest Receipt**. (The NIT & Bidding Document can also be downloaded from [www.bppra.org.pk](http://www.bppra.org.pk) under **TSE No.232405408321**) **Issuance of tender Documents:** From the date of publication of NIT to 21.05.2024 (or 15 days), during office hours on weekdays. **Last Date of bid submission:** The tenders should be submitted on **21.05.2024 till 2:00 PM** at the office of the undersigned. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on the same day at the office of the under-signed at 3:00 PM (technical Bid) and Financial Bid will be opened on 22.05.2024 at 2:00 PM. **Address for opening of tender:** - Conservator of Forests, Planning/ Deputy Project Director, Upscaling Green Pakistan Programme (Revised) - Forestry Balochistan, Spiny Road, Quetta.

Conservator of Forests Planning, Quetta  
 PRQ No.2168/7-5-2024  
[www.dpr.gov.pk](http://www.dpr.gov.pk) @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr\_balochistan

**TENDER NOTICE**

TSE-232405406843 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 Conservator of Forest Zhub@ Lorlai 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 Works	E/Cost
1	CONSTRUCTION OF RESIDENCE FOR RANGE FOREST OFFICER MUSAKHAIL	7,835,000

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 3 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 5,484,500 PKR Amount in 3 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 21 May, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 21 May, 2024 till 01:30 PM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 02:30 PM **Address:** Office of the Conservator of Forests Lorlai  
 Phone no: 082460691

**CONSERVATOR OF FOREST LORALAI**  
 PRQ No.21707-5-2024  
[www.dpr.gov.pk](http://www.dpr.gov.pk) @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr\_balochistan

**TENDER NOTICE**

TSE-232405408913 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 Conservator of Forests, Zhub City Division 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 Works	E/Cost
1	Construction of Residential Building for DCF-Zhub at Zhub	9,850,000

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 3 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 6,895,000 PKR Amount in 3 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 24 May, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 24 May, 2024 till 09:15 AM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 10:15 AM **Address:** Office of the PD, UGPP (TTPT) Spinny Road Quetta  
 Phone no: 0333781654 Fax no: Email: kakarfarooq7@gmail.com

**CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, ZHUB**  
 PRQ No.2195/8-5-2024  
[www.dpr.gov.pk](http://www.dpr.gov.pk) @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr\_balochistan

**TENDER NOTICE**

The Directorate of Education (Schools) invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. **TSE-232405406081 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. Tender Fee Rs.10000/-**

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Educational Lab Equipment (Total Item(s) Count: 159)	3%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 2,500,000 in Previous 3 Years. Turn over of at least 2,000,000 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. JV is not permissible. Submission of the required Bid Security in case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as in-eligible and non-responsive. Submission of the required Bidding Document Fee. The bidder must have functional corporate office having PTCL phone No. in Balochistan. Last 3 year audit Report. All supply order must be obtained through BPPRA/reputable organizations and international entities. (2021-2023). Qualified bidder must provide sample of quoted items. Affidavit on stamp paper Rs.100/- Duly notarized to the effect that the bidder has submitted correct & Complete information along with the bid/offer. If any document/information is found forged/engineered/fake/bogus at any stage, the bidder may be declared as blacklist in accordance with law & performance guarantee & Payment. Validity 30-06-24 with a code ME06 PEC valid Having Specialized relative Code and meet project cost limit ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 OF PNAC Procedure **Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 3 % 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 10,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 20 May, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 20 May, 2024 till 09:00 AM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 10:00 AM. **Address:** Directorate of Education (Schools) Balochista Brewery Road Quetta **Phone no: 0819202102** Email: [programdirectoremis@gmail.com](mailto:programdirectoremis@gmail.com)

Director  
 Directorate of Education (Schools)  
[www.dpr.gov.pk](http://www.dpr.gov.pk) @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr\_balochistan

**TENDER NOTICE**

TSE-232405406833 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 Executive Engineer Buildings Zhub invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

**Tender Fee Rs.1500/- and Bid Security 2%**

S.No	Name of Works	E/Cost
1	COVID Response & Natural Calamities Programme 2021-22 (District Zhub) 1- Rehabilitation of DHQ Hospital Zhub	20,000,000

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 1 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 14,000,000 PKR Amount in 2 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. Similar Nature of Work (Building) on-going of Minimum value 70% of the project cost, bidder must provide attested copy of work order from the issuing client. Similar Nature of Work (Building) Completed of Minimum value 75% of the project cost in last five year, bidder must provide attested copy of work order and completion certificate from the issuing client. CDR of 2% of Estimated Cost from a verified bank in favour of Executive Engineer (Buildings) CWPP&H Department Zhub. Green Challan of Rs. 1,500 in CDR of 2% of Estimated Cost from a verified bank in favour of Executive Engineer (Buildings) CWPP&H Department Zhub. Specialised code of CE-10 (General Civil Engineering Works). **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 1,500 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 24 May, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 24 May, 2024 till 01:30 PM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 02:30 PM **Address:** District Zhub  
 Phone no: 3013763038 Email: [farooqtareem2018@gmail.com](mailto:farooqtareem2018@gmail.com)

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (BUILDINGS) CWPP&H DEPARTMENT ZHUB**  
 PRQ No.2224/8-5-2024  
[www.dpr.gov.pk](http://www.dpr.gov.pk) @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr\_balochistan

**TENDER NOTICE**

TSE-232405409253 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 Executive Engineer Building PP&H District Ziarat 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 Works	E/Cost
1	BHU KILLI TAND SALAM DAG SINJAWI DISTRICT ZIARAT	13,055,000

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 3 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least 10,000,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two 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 27 May, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 27 May, 2024 till 12:00 PM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 01:00 PM **Address:** Executive Engineer Building PP&H District Ziarat  
 Phone no: 3013239187  
 Email: [executiveengineer2ziarat@gmail.com](mailto:executiveengineer2ziarat@gmail.com)

Executive Engineer Building  
 CWPP&H District Ziarat  
 PRQ No.2222/8-5-2024  
[www.dpr.gov.pk](http://www.dpr.gov.pk) @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr\_balochistan

**Pakistan desires to strengthen trade, commerce ties with Uzbekistan: Dy PM Dar**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said that Pakistan desired to enhance its ties with Uzbekistan in multiple sectors, including trade and commerce.

The deputy prime minister discussed bilateral relations in a meeting with Uzbek Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov, who is on a two-day official visit to Pakistan.

On his arrival at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ishaq Dar received the guest, which followed their one-on-one meeting.

The deputy prime minister said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan enjoyed strong and friendly relations.

The Uzbek foreign minister expressed his pleasure in visiting Pakistan, saying they considered Pakistan their second home.

In the meeting, the two sides underscored the cultural, civilizational and historical ties between Pakistan and Uzbekistan which provided a solid foundation for robust partnership in multiple domains.

They also expressed satisfaction at close security and defence cooperation and robust engagement at multilateral fora such as the United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

The two sides reaffirmed commitment to early implementation of the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Railways project, which would give a boost to bilateral and regional trade, and become a bridge between South and Central Asia.

They discussed at length economic cooperation, trade, investment and connectivity between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. They noted that following operationalization of the Transit Trade Agreement, bilateral trade had increased 1.4 times during the previous year and had the potential to reach the targets set during the last Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) held in Tashkent in February 2023. They agreed to identify new areas of economic cooperation and emphasized the importance of a liberal visa regime especially for the business community to promote linkages and people-to-people contacts.



**ISLAMABAD:** Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov held delegation level talks at Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**May 9 to be remembered darkest day in Pakistan's history: Ayaz Sadiq**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Wednesday said that May 9 will always be remembered as the darkest day in Pakistan's history when the very foundations of the country were attacked by the miscreant elements, compromising the integrity and prestige of martyrs.

He also said that every patriotic Pakistani has categorically denounced the conspiracy to create a wedge between the nation and its armed forces, said a news release.

"Pakistan owes its existence and integrity to the sacrifices rendered by brave personnel of our security agencies," he expressed these views while denouncing the nefarious designs and mayhem perpetrated by anti-state elements, involved in the riots on May 9, 2023.

While strongly denouncing the nefarious activities of rioters of May 9, the Speaker also reiterated that every Pakistani would continue to safeguard the integrity and respect of martyrs who had rendered their lives for the honor and integrity of the motherland.

He also said the rouge elements had committed such heinous crimes which were not only unimaginable for every peace-loving and patriotic Pakistani but which even the enemies of Pakistan could never have dared.

**Zumrad for collective efforts to create awareness about Thalassemia**

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pattern-in-Chief, Pakistan Sweet Home (PSH) Zumrad Khan on Wednesday said that collective efforts were required to create awareness about Thalassemia.

Addressing an event organized by Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in connection with World Thalassemia Day, he said that thalassaemic children needed special attention.

He further stressed on the need for promoting and encouraging these children to make them a useful segment of society.

This year's theme was "Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress: Equitable and Accessible Thalassemia Treatment for All".

International Thalassemia Day is a powerful call to raise awareness about this condition and its impact while celebrating solidarity of resilient Thalassemia community worldwide.

The thalassemia are inherited blood disorders characterized by decreased haemoglobin production.



**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Secretary for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Zulfiqar Haider paying a courtesy call on the Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, H.E. Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy.

**ETPB recovers Rs 38B in properties, Rs 600M in dues**

ISLAMABAD (Online): Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) has efficiently reclaimed properties worth Rs 38 billion and retrieved outstanding dues amounting to Rs 600 million from defaulters since December 2023, to date, under the guidance of chairman Arshad Farid Khan.

According to ETPB spokesman, the special teams, constituted by the board chairman, have successfully recovered Trust Board's land and commercial properties in various locations, including Paktattan, Mahant Darshan, Okara, Sahiwal, Dipalpur, Hasan Abdal, Karachi, and Lahore.

In Nankana Sahib, he said security personnel and other staff were deployed to conduct an operation against the land grabber mafia. As a result, thousands of acres of land were reclaimed, and illegal constructions were demolished.

Additionally, thousands of kanals of departmental land, previously withheld due to pending cases, reached resolution, thereby incorporating them into the trust pool. The revenue has been boosted to Rs 429 million through the modernization of the billing system for urban properties. Rigorous monitoring has led to the issuance of WhatsApp numbers to deter any forms of corruption and bribery, he added.

**ICCI organizes seminar on mental health**

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari Wednesday urged the pressing need to provide essential information and vital resources to individuals navigating mental health issues.

Addressing a seminar on mental health care in times of financial constraints, he said that awareness sessions on such crucial issues always proved beneficial for the patients to help them come out of the stress and thereby lead a normal life.

The ICCI always remained in forefront to address such issues of the business community and the general public, he said adding that it was also committed to organize such sessions in future for the benefit of the general public and promote awareness about mental health.

The resolution of public problems are top priority of President Zardari and stressed the need for working round the clock on public welfare projects, she added.

She said that PPP's mission is to solve and address public grievances.

**IRSA curtails water shortage from 30% to 21% for Punjab, Sindh**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday curtailed the shortages for the early Kharif period till June 10th, from the initial 30% to 21% for Punjab and Sindh provinces, while allowing full indentured supplies for Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the already approved exemption.

The authority, which met with Chairman IRSA Abdul Hameed Mengal in the chair here, reviewed the water situation from April 1st to 30th, 2024, and noted that the actual inflows of 10.35 million acre feet (MAF) far exceeded the forecasted inflows of 7.03 million acre feet, with a 47% increase, said a state.

**World Thalassemia Day observed with call for equitable treatment**

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Thalassemia Day was observed on Wednesday, with the theme "Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress, Equitable and Accessible Thalassemia Treatment for All".

The day aims to raise awareness about this inherited blood disorder and its impact on patients and their families. "Thalassemia" is a condition characterized by decreased haemoglobin production, leading to anemia, fatigue, and weakness. If left untreated, it can cause organ damage and even death. However, with regular blood transfusions and Chelation therapy, the condition can be well-managed. In a message on World Thalassemia Awareness Day, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz emphasized the need for public awareness to prevent Thalassemia.

During an inspection of the Blue Area Parking Plaza and other ongoing projects of the federal capital, he assured that there would be no further delay or extension in the completion timeline for the project.

On the occasion, the official of the CDA had provided detail briefing of the project and informed that the parking plaza would comprise two basements, a ground floor and five additional floors.

He said the first floor of the parking plaza, including the construction of 18 shops, along with a restaurant and cafe on the rooftop. The official said the parking plaza was designed to accommodate up to 1200 cars simultaneously.

Randhawa directed to complete the construction work of the ground floor shops within 20 days, with a focus on action/rental basis.

Chairman CDA stressed the allotment of shops on the first floor facing Jinnah Avenue should be made on action/rental basis.

Randhawa also visited the Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area F-9/G-9 expansion project.



**ISLAMABAD:** World Bank's Regional Vice President for South Asia Martin Raiser, along with a delegation including country representative Najib Benhassine called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

**Moshin Naqvi visits CDA for briefing on administration, management, development**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Moshin Naqvi on Wednesday visited Capital Development Authority (CDA) for briefing on the administration, management and development of Islamabad. Chairman CDA Mohammad Ali Randhawa welcomed the minister. The minister directed to immediately start development work in sectors which were not developed for 20 years and also to allot plots to the allottees who have not received, despite paying the amount for years.

He also directed to formulate a comprehensive strategy for early possession of the plot because despite paying money, no possession of the plot is an insult of the citizens which is definitely not acceptable. Moshin Naqvi's order to digitization of land records of Islamabad and in this regard CDA tasked for computerising land records in 6 months.

It was decided in the meeting that CDA will have a fast one-window system which is a major initiative for the convenience of the citizens of Islamabad.

CDA should ensure the provision of services without delay to the citizens of Islamabad so that there is no hassle of waiting, Moshin Naqvi directed.

The Minister ordered to provide more services online and enable CDA's smart app within three months.

He also Instructed to ensure availability of call centre facility at all times and construction of cycling and walking tracks on green balance should be completed soon.

Naqvi asked for a landscaping and beautification plan in Islamabad and the Diplomatic Enclave will be made the most beautiful area of the city in 3 months.

CDA should start work on opening new sectors, Moshin Naqvi directed adding that he will not tolerate any further delay in the sectors which have not yet been given possession to the people.

After introduction with the senior officers of CDA the minister planted a sapling in the lawn of CDA head office.

Federal Interior Secretary Khurram Agha, IG Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Memon, Director Admin ICT Attendance of all CDA members in the meeting.

**Fruitful policies of institutions need of hour: Sherry Rehman**

ISLAMABAD (Online): PPP parliamentary leader in the Senate Sherry Rehman Wednesday stressed for introducing fruitful policies of institutions which would not only encourage efficiency but also facilitate the employees.

Talking to a private news channel, she said that said Pakistan People's Party always believed in the politics of public welfare and prosperity of Pakistan.

The resolution of public problems are top priority of President Zardari and stressed the need for working round the clock on public welfare projects, she added.

She said that PPP's mission is to solve and address public grievances.

Replying to a question about privatization, she said that PPP believe that if the federal government does not want to operate Steel Mills and PIA anymore, the Sindh government would be willing to acquire it, adding, we are confident we can revive it by running it under the same public-private partnership.

Bilawal Bhatto Zardari Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman has constituted a three members committee to engage government over privatization issues as PPP had the best record of protecting the worker's rights and taking initiatives for their welfare, she mentioned.



**ISLAMABAD:** Interior Minister Moshin Naqvi chairing a meeting at CDA Headquarters.

**Randhawa directs to complete Blue Area Parking Plaza by June's first week: Randhawa**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Randhawa Wednesday directed to complete the construction work of the Blue Area Parking Plaza by the first week of June at any cost.

During an inspection of the Blue Area Parking Plaza and other ongoing projects of the federal capital, he assured that there would be no further delay or extension in the completion timeline for the project.

On the occasion, the official of the CDA had provided detail briefing of the project and informed that the parking plaza would comprise two basements, a ground floor and five additional floors.

He said the first floor of the parking plaza, including the construction of 18 shops, along with a restaurant and cafe on the rooftop. The official said the parking plaza was designed to accommodate up to 1200 cars simultaneously.

Randhawa directed to complete the construction work of the ground floor shops within 20 days, with a focus on action/rental basis.

Chairman CDA stressed the allotment of shops on the first floor facing Jinnah Avenue should be made on action/rental basis.

Randhawa also visited the Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area F-9/G-9 expansion project.



**ISLAMABAD:** Additional Secretary Asia Pacific, Imran Siddiqi in a group photograph with Bangladeshi media delegation led by Iktidar Ahmed at Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Six cattle markets for sacrificial animals on the cards**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) will set up six cattle markets for sacrificial animals to facilitate the buyers ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.

"Three each cattle market will be set for big and small animals at various locations in the federal capital," an official in the MCI told APP.

About the sites for the cattle markets, he said the authority will establish cattle markets for big animals in Sangiani, I-15 and I-12 while for small animals Bharu Kahu, Lehtrar Road near Sultana Foundation and Zia Masjid along Expressway.

**ANF arrests couple supplying drugs in educational institutions**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) arrested an accused, including a woman involved in the supply of drugs in educational institutions.

According to spokesperson of ANF, the accused were supplying drugs to a major educational institution in Islamabad on a tip-off.

The woman was arrested with drugs from the gate of the educational institution and the other accused arrested along with another accused works in the canteen of an educational institution. During the search of the arrested suspect's room, hashish, opium and more tokens of ice were found.

**Pak attaches high importance to its ties with Iran: Pirzada**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Wednesday said that Pakistan attached high importance to its brotherly ties with Iran.

He was talking to Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghaddam, who called on him.

Pirzada said that it was an honour for him to meet and welcome Iranian President Ayatollah Ibrahim Raisi and accompany him during his visit to Pakistan.

The minister acknowledged the ambassador's tireless efforts for strengthening the two countries' relationship.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed various bilateral issues.

They emphasized the shared commitment of Iran and Pakistan to standing up for the rights of the people of Kashmir and Palestine.

They noted that the two countries had been resolute in their support for the two long-standing conflicts.

Minister Pirzada lauded the stance taken by Iran on the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Palestine.

The ambassador commended the efforts and arrangements made by the government to facilitate the visit of the Iranian President, underscoring the importance of such high-level exchanges in strengthening bilateral ties. He expressed appreciation for Minister Pirzada about his speech in the National Assembly upon the Iranian President's recent visit to Pakistan. Moghaddam also highlighted the positive outcomes of the visit, including the release and transfer of Pakistani prisoners held in Iran, as per mutual understanding.

Ambassador Moghaddam commended the efforts and arrangements made by the government to facilitate the visit of the Iranian President, underscoring the importance of such high-level exchanges in strengthening bilateral ties. He expressed appreciation for Minister Pirzada about his speech in the National Assembly upon the Iranian President's recent visit to Pakistan. Moghaddam also highlighted the positive outcomes of the visit, including the release and transfer of Pakistani prisoners held in Iran, as per mutual understanding.



**ISLAMABAD:** H.E. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan called on Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Federal Minister for Housing and Works at his office.

**USAID's locally-led development in education, health transforms Buner, Upper Dir districts**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on Wednesday gathered government officials, local and international partners, and communities from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)'s Buner and Upper Dir districts to celebrate the conclusion of \$10 million Human Development Activity.

Over four years, the project empowered local communities and organizations to achieve sustainable development outcomes in health and education.

Through collaboration with the KP government, the project provided grants to Pakistani organizations to implement education and health interventions, including operating accelerated learning program centers and restructured and strengthened the Primary Care Health Committee to include women members.

The event underscored the instrumental support of the KP provincial departments of Education, Health, and Population Welfare.

These departments contributed to the interventions' design, implementation, and oversight, fostering a deeper understanding of government priorities among local partners, addressing implementation challenges, and promoting the integration of health and education services.

The government officials expressed gratitude to USAID, the implementing partner Palladium, and the local organizations.

They affirmed their commitment to leveraging the insights and experiences gained from the project, including their continued support to over 1,000 out-of-school girl students enrolled in 34 accelerated learning program centers.



**ISLAMABAD:** PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam addresses Pakistan Gender Climate Award 2024 ceremony.

**PAL announces Rs. 5.2m awards for Pakistani writers, poets**

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) on Wednesday announced nomination of Prominent writer, Hassan Manzoor for Kamal-e-Fun Award for the year 2022, given on the best literary books written during the year 2022 in Urdu and other Pakistani languages during a press conference held here.

According to the decision of the panel, for Urdu Prose (Creative Literature) Saadat Hasan Manto Award is given to Ahmad Saleem on his book "Meri Dharti Mere Log" (Judges: Muhammad Hameed Shahid, Asghar Nadeem Syed and Khalid Fateh Muhammad).

For Urdu Prose (Criticism and Research), Baba-i-Urdu Molvi Abdul Haq Award is given to Dr. Aurangzeb Niazi on his book "Urdu Adab Maholiati Tanazur" (Judges: Dr. Moeen ud Din Aqeel, Dr. Khalid Iqbal Yasin and Dr. Nasir Abbas Nayyar).

Thursday May 09, 2024

## Narcotic darkness

We have plenty of smoke with fire. Citizens, particularly parents, caught in Pakistan's grave drug problem are on edge. Despite frequent reports of police and the ANF busting drug cartels, information about legal actions against peddlers is as scant as the conviction rate. The Organised Crime Unit of Lahore has captured an international ring that provided narcotics and 'party drugs' to elite youth. These criminals — the Jordan Gang — ran a network from Central Asia, Mexico, Canada, the US and other countries, and supplied exorbitantly priced drugs in Lahore and Multan, targeting select students in academic institutions. Their modus operandi — offer deals to youngsters on the internet through fake IDs and in partnership with corrupt GPO and police officials — should be a cause of concern for the authorities. This is not the first attempt at infecting the young: last August, two security officials at the Islamic University of Bahawalpur were caught with crystal meth and offensive videos of teachers and students. The Punjab Police released an alarming report last month: some 234 police officers were involved in the drug trade across Punjab.

Young people are experimental, anxious and restless, keen to dodge routine with a heady hit. Small wonder, then, that public health experts urge policymakers and law enforcement to understand that punishment-driven strategies are counterproductive. Instead, they must weed out rogue personnel and powerful groups who claim a lion's share of the profits from narcotic rackets, so that sealing supply routes, including those along a porous border, is successful. The crisis also demands awareness campaigns and collaboration among parents, NGOs and educational facilities to identify signs of addiction and provide therapy and rehabilitation. Long-term success hinges on restructured narcotic courts so that faster trials can ensure a rise in conviction levels — the latter should, ideally, match the regularity of narcotic seizures. This country cannot allow addiction to rip through society and ravage our future generations.

Riaz Riazuddin

What goes up must come down. This truth also applies to economic trends, which exhibit cycles of ups and downs. However, the pace of going up and coming down depends not on gravity, but on economic policies. We are now seeing the effects of higher interest rates, which are slowly taking the steam out of inflation in the consumer price index (CPI). Year-on-year inflation has come down from its peak of 38 per cent in May 2023 to 17.3pc in April 2024.

How long does it take to contain high inflation and to lower it? If we take high inflation to mean anything higher than 15pc, then the current spell has been persisting for the last 22 months. The bad news is that in our inflation history, we have witnessed CPI inflation persist above 15pc, peaking at 29.3pc, for 28 months straight — from July 1973 to November 1975. Let us hope that this inflation history does not repeat itself in terms of the length of that spell. If we take high inflation to mean anything in the double dig-

its (10pc or higher), then we have experienced a spell of high inflation that lasted for almost 46 consecutive months during 1972-1976.

Another episode of inflation pertained to the global financial crisis of 2008. CPI inflation in Pakistan shot up above 10pc in January 2008. After touching a peak of 26.1pc, it started to decline, but stayed over 10pc for 18 consecutive months till June 2009. However, just after five months, inflation again crossed single digits and stayed at higher levels for almost 30 consecutive months till June 2012.

These episodes of high inflation show that once inflation starts spiralling, it is not only difficult to bring it down, it also takes a long time to do so. This is one of many reasons that central banks around the world aim at maintaining price stability around a low, single-digit inflation figure. The current pace of sluggish disinflation could have been speeded up had the government shown fiscal prudence or the State Bank increased the policy rate beyond 22pc. However, the bank's Monetary Policy Committee made the right move in

not stifling the economy by killing growth altogether in FY24.

Inflation is not the only malaise hurting us. With the onslaught of high inflation, our real GDP declined by 0.2pc in FY23, and is expected to grow around 2pc in FY24. This is a combination of low growth and high inflation known as stagflation. The inflation history cited here was accompanied by high growth of 6.8pc and 7.5pc in FY73 and FY74, respectively. The economic situation is much worse now, perhaps the worst in our history in terms of low growth and high inflation. This combination is playing havoc with the poverty situation. While Pakistan had commendably reduced its poverty rate between 2001 and 2018, this progress has slowed down due to macroeconomic instability, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the devastating flood of 2022, and unending political polarisation. The World Bank recently estimated the lower-middle-income poverty rate to be 40.1pc (\$3.65 per day at 2017 purchasing power parity) for FY24, which is about the

same as the poverty rate in 2018. This means there will be seven million more poor individuals in 2024 compared to 2018.

What should be done to bring down inflation further, increase growth, and reduce poverty? Reducing inflation requires both tight monetary and fiscal policies. While the State Bank had been maintaining a tight monetary policy with historic high interest rates, fiscal policy remained lax in terms of high fiscal deficits and government borrowing from commercial banks. Unless the government achieves a surplus in its primary balance, fiscal policy will remain lax. The good news is that under the IMF's Stand-by Arrangement, the fiscal authorities have shown some prudence, and the first three quarters of FY24 showed a GDP surplus of 1.5pc in the primary balance, while maintaining a fiscal deficit of 2.3pc of GDP.

Will fiscal prudence continue in the fourth quarter of FY24? The April to June quarter traditionally shows very high government expenditures and fiscal deficits. In FY23, the fourth quarter alone added

4.1 percentage points to the fiscal deficit, which took the FY23 deficit to 7.7pc of GDP. Similar pressures are likely in the current quarter, which will cause the fiscal deficit to mount further. Will the fiscal excesses of the fourth quarter convert the cumulative primary surplus of the first three quarters to a deficit? There is still some hope that primary accounts will show a surplus, otherwise the likelihood of getting a medium-term IMF facility will be diminished. Any policy missteps will also increase the risk of the resurgence of inflation.

Growth promotion requires an increase in investment, both domestic and foreign, as well as an increase in productivity. While there is a lot of talk about attracting foreign investment, there is a dearth of focus on attracting domestic investment. Promoting domestic investment requires, among other factors, lower interest rates, which can only emerge if the inflation trajectory continues to show a downward trend. Therefore, continuing with prudent macroeconomic policies will lead to lower in-

flation and lower interest rates, which is conducive to higher investment. Both fiscal and monetary prudence will promote domestic savings, necessary for domestic investment. The government has already engaged with the IMF to secure a new medium-term programme that will increase the likelihood of policy prudence, at least for that period.

What happens in the current quarter will be crucial for the government and our economy. While we are not in an IMF programme now, the tendency has been to go on a borrowing binge. Repeating this behaviour may cost the government dearly. It must show the foreign investors it has been wooing that it is now fiscally prudent and very serious. It must also show that our policy talk will soon translate into policy walk in the coming days. This will not be easy, as the government will be under a lot of pressure to dole out money to the usual suspects (power-brokers and resource-deavouring groups) in our economy this quarter. -- Courtesy Dawn

## How the US sees us

Atta-ur-Rahman

Prof Fred Hayward, an eminent US education expert, recently published a book titled 'Transforming Higher Education in Asia and Africa'. One chapter of this book is devoted to Pakistan, and it makes fascinating reading of the ups and downs of the higher education sector during the last 20 years.

Prof Hayward is a former professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and presently a consultant at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In 2003-2008, Prof Hayward led a USAID team to carry out a comprehensive study of Pakistan's Higher Education Commission (HEC) programmes.

The team members made several visits to Pakistan and visited 18 universities and research institutes in Islamabad, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Lahore, Karachi and other cities to determine the impact that HEC reforms were having on the ground, particularly focusing on the quality aspects of these reforms.

Students, faculty members, administrative

staff, technicians and vice chancellors as well as officials of the HEC, the Ministry of Education and others were interviewed over a 12-month period. The result was a 153-page report by USAID, which paid glowing tributes to the reforms introduced by the HEC and the impact they were having on improving the quality of teaching and research in our universities.

The report concluded with the following remarks: "What is most impressive is the breadth of reforms — faculty development, quality assurance, infrastructure rehabilitation, information technology staff training, research facilities, academic publications, increased access, improved accountability, expansion of campuses, and improved salaries and working conditions — and its insistence on quality improvement throughout the system. We applaud the leadership of the HEC for its vision, planning, and project implementation — one of the most successful models in the developing world."

A long-standing issue in the higher education sector in Pakistan has been the uncontrolled expansion of

higher education institutions without the availability of faculty, appropriate infrastructure and funding for running a large number of new universities. To gain political mileage, Pakistani politicians announce the establishment of new universities (or of campuses of existing universities), but when it comes to funding there is none.

To control this corrupt practice and on my insistence, the federal cabinet in 2005 laid down certain minimum criteria that must be met in terms of faculty, library facilities and infrastructure before a university could be recognized. Many university campuses were shut down and admissions banned by the HEC.

Other quality measures introduced included: the HEC laid down strict criteria for the award of PhD degrees involving strict plagiarism checks of every PhD thesis through a watchdog mechanism within the HEC involving the use of plagiarism detection software like iThenticate and Turnitin. All PhD theses were evaluated by eminent foreign scientists. This curbed the tendency of sending doctoral theses to local colleagues of

supervisors.

As quality comes from good faculty and not from brick and mortar, several thousand students were sent abroad for PhD-level training at good foreign universities. The world's largest Fulbright programme was launched with 50 per cent of funds being provided by the HEC. To encourage students to return after their foreign training, arrangements were made to ensure that they had employment with good salaries under the newly introduced tenure track system.

The opportunity to apply and win up to a \$100,000 research grant for a year before their return from abroad, access to a huge digital library, and free access to sophisticated instrumentation resulted in an amazing 97.5 per cent return rate. Quality enhancement cells were established in all universities for the first time in the history of the country.

I feel greatly humbled by the following observations of Prof Fred Hayward in his book: "Especially important to success was the outstanding leadership and staff of the HEC. Professor Atta-ur-Rahman, (chairman) was a true vi-

sionary and had the ability to bring on board the president of Pakistan, legislators, and most higher education leaders with his eloquence and brilliance.

"He was a noted organic chemist with many international awards for his research and writing. Among the most famous is his series: 'Studies in National Products Chemistry'. A number of successes occurred during this early period of implementation of the strategic plan, including the addition of distance education which became very popular — The Digital Library provided access to over 20,000 research journals, e-books, and other materials for faculty members, staff, and students.

"This digital library later became a model for several other countries. Part of the success was due to the dogged effort of the HEC to improve quality and meet or better its institutions in relation to international standards."

Comprehensive reports applauding the reforms were written by many neutral experts and international agencies. These included the World Bank, British Council, USAID as well as Prof

Michael Rode (Chairman UN Commission of Science, Technology and Development), and famous German scientist Wolfgang Voelter.

"The world's leading science journal, 'Nature', applauded these programmes in four editorials, and they were recommended as a model for other developing countries to follow, in a book titled 'A New Golden Age' published by the world's most famous scientific society, The Royal Society (London).

Pakistan overtook India in per-capita research output in quality international journals in 2018 — no small achievement. According to Web of Science data, the number of research publications from Pakistan rose from about 800 per year in 2001 to about 25,000 per year in 2023.

A detailed presentation about HEC

programmes was made to the Indian prime minister and cabinet members on July 22, 2006. It was reported by Neha Mehta in 'Hindustan Times' on July 23, 2006 in the article 'Pakistan Threat to Indian Science' -- Courtesy TheNews

## Fly on Great Wall

Shahzad Sharjeel

As our great neighbour becomes greater by the day, we are moving from being 'another brick in the wall' to nothing more than a fly on the wall — the Great Wall, that is. Geographical proximity and the mostly congenial nature of ties notwithstanding, do we really know China?

Folklore in the Gilgit-Baltistan region would have you believe that before the ancient mountain passes fell into disuse, one could run with a hot chapati and arrive on the Chinese side with the bread still warm. Exaggeration, perhaps, but the road distance between Islamabad and Tash-

kur-gan, the Chinese border town, via the Khunjerab Pass is half the distance between the federal capital and Karachi. Besides the fabled Silk Road, the Great Wall, the Xinjiang region, and the names of a few cosmopolitan centres like Beijing and Shanghai, most of us would be hard-pressed to name a couple more cities or regions.

All of it can't be blamed on the lack of curiosity on the part of China's neighbours, particularly in the subcontinent. The ebb and flow of our interest in knowing China has also been regulated by policy decisions in great Chinese capitals over the millennia. How two of the greatest civilisations on earth can live cheek by jowl and yet be barely acquainted has been discussed in detail by Shyam Saran, former diplomat and author, in his wonderfully narrated book How China Sees India And The World.

How the subcontinent and China have managed to remain indifferent towards each other for most of recorded history is marked by epochs of respectful distance and eons

of self-importance bordering on disdain on the latter's part. In the first millennium, people of the Middle Kingdom regarded India with some awe as an emblem of Eastern sophistication and spirituality.

In the second millennium, everything beyond the core of the Mandate of Heaven began to be considered 'barbaric'. Trade caravans through the storied Silk Road — in reality, a microcosm of routes and maritime exchanges through the ports in southern India — preceded the even more talked-about Indian export, the teachings of Lord Buddha. Monks from both sides crisscrossing the mountain passes, Central Asian steppes, sea routes, and the Tibetan plateau never outnumbered the merchants of silk, porcelain, jade, and spices. Tibet and the fight over it between the two neighbours came much later.

It's unimaginable today that Tibet, a Shangri-La wrapped in a mythical mist between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> CE, extended its control to present-day Yunnan, Sichuan, Inner Mongolia, and the Mongolian People's Republic. Images of Tibet for us swing between the sublimity of Buddhist monasteries, to things as pedestrian as a plaza famous for auto parts in Karachi, and a moisturiser-cum skin-lightening agent named after snow from the roof of the world.

The difficult-to-translate Arab tradition of al-wala, wal-bara (embrace the beneficial and disavow the harmful) can be seen at work during Mao's speech to the politburo in 1962, before the Indo-Chinese border war. Like describing the 'one-and-a-half' prior wars between them, he declared a skirmish between a Tang dynasty diplomatic mission to India in 647 CE and a local adventurer who tried

to usurp King Harsha's throne in Kanauj a full war, whereas Timur's attack in 1398 merited only the status of a 'half war', owing to his Mongolian identity.

How interesting that a Muslim invasion against their coreligionists' rule in India, and the indiscriminate horror unleashed by the conquering hordes, is owned by another country, albeit half-heartedly because of Timur's Mongol identity. Ev--eryone outside of the Middle Kingdom, the centre of the Chinese civilisation between the Yellow and Yangtze rivers, qualified, at best, as 'half-Chinese.' This sort of accounting can also be described as 'too clever by half' or 'dedh-hoshiyari', its Urdu equivalent.

The two-way influences of the Chinese and Indus-Gandhar civilisations are too numerous to list here. A few disparate ex--amples are 'Tanchoi', commonly known as the 'Banarasi' sari, which derives its name from three Gujarati artisans who travelled to Shanghai in 1856 as apprentices to one Mr Chhoi, a famous silk weaver. 'Tan' means three in Gujarati dialects, and when the weavers returned to Surat, Tanchoi was born. As demand for the fabric decreased, the artisans and their craft shifted to Banaras, and the name has stuck since. 'Zen', meaning meditation, evolved from the Sanskrit word 'dhyana'. 'Bokhara', is a variation of 'vihara', meaning monastery. Central Asia was a bastion of Bud-dh-ism before the Muslim influence. Archae-olo-g-ists like Aurel Stein called the entire Central Asian zone 'Serindia'. The affinities and irritants between Pakistan and China have been left out for another piece. -- Courtesy Dawn

Mahir Ali

Waking up yesterday to the news that Hamas had accepted a ceasefire proposal came as a pleasant surprise, but it did not last long. It was accompanied by reports of Israel's long-threatened infiltration into Rafah, a day after it had urged 100,000 'civilians' to evacuate a city in Gaza that has become a refuge for almost 1.5 million Palestinians.

The sector subsequently began to be pounded — presumably with ammunition supplied by the US and UK — under the apparent assumption that any Hamas operatives in the area would not have left among the tens of thousands who evacuated on foot, by vehicles or on donkey carts.

Almost every international ally of the Zionist regime has seemingly tried to talk it out of invading Rafah, yet their weapons keep flowing to Israel. Global history is peppered with instances of hypocrisy, but seldom have they been as egregious or stark as in 2024. In the past, sufficiently serious cautions from Washington have often produced the desired effect by at least temporarily reducing Israeli excesses.

Benjamin Netanyahu, however, falls in a different category. Any semblance of a pause in hostilities, let alone a sustainable ceasefire, would spell his doom.

The revived demonstrations in Israeli cities are by no means dedicated to securing a ceasefire, although some of the protesters support that goal. Their demands on Gaza are somewhat more oblique, but invariably entail the return of the surviving hostages — which would inevitably involve at least a temporary cessation of hostilities. But any kind of peace, however fragile, does not suit Netanyahu. Apart from the

## Gaza's fate

indictments for corruption, he presides over a regime that ignored — possibly deliberately — the clear warning signs of a Hamas assault against kibbutzim on the periphery of Gaza, populated to a considerable extent by Jews who do not buy into the narrative of exclusively Jewish nationhood.

Netanyahu and his more vicious allies are almost as contemptuous of conciliatory Jews, Israeli or otherwise, as they are of Palestinians. In their blighted vision, the Jewish students participating in protests in the US, UK or Australia are far more problematic than the goyim who can more easily be dismissed as antisemitic.

The anti-genocide protests have been spreading beyond the US to Europe and even Australia, with the encampments routinely derided by antagonistic politicians pointing out that Jewish students feel intimidated — albeit presumably not as much as children, women and men in Gaza, where the death toll since Oct 7 is approaching 35,000.

Later this week, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) is expected to vote on whether to admit Palestine as a full member, yet a probable vote overwhelmingly in favour of the proposition won't cut ice with the Security Council, where the US veto will prevail, as it has so many times whenever a challenge to Zionism has been considered.

Almost 50 years ago, in November 1974, Yasser Arafat addressed the UNGA, having arrived with his holster and an olive branch, famously declaring: "Today I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand". In his landmark speech, Arafat decried Zionist acts of "barbarism" and the "temerity" of the

"Zionists and colonialists ... to describe this struggle of our people as terror".

A couple of decades before the post-Oslo Palestinian Authority he initially presided over became a handmaiden of the Zionist occupation, Arafat pointed out to the UN that "when it became obvious that the Palestinians would not recuperate one inch of Palestine through exclusively political means, our people had no choice but to resort to armed struggle".

He made no mention of a two-state so--lution, which is currently the favoured option among many of those who have contributed over the decades towards diminishing the possibility of such an outcome. Arafat held out a long-term hope for "one democratic state where Christian, Jew and Muslim live in justice, equality and fraternity".

That remains a dead man's dream. Neither a one-state nor a two-state outcome is on the cards, and that would not change with Netanyahu's replacement by a superficially less obnoxious figurehead. The drift towards Palestinian genocide dates back at least to 1947-48, and the resistance to it has been equally evident since then. The olive branch that Arafat brought to the UN didn't fall. It was effectively wrested from his hand. All too many olive trees have been chopped down since then, particularly after the Oslo "process", when the trend towards illegal settlements was ramped up, backed by successive US governments.

Replacing the Netanyahu regime with an equally absurd alternative would only mean that, after further 50 years hence, future generations will still be marvelling at the impotence of their ancestors. -- Courtesy Dawn

## 300,000 MT wheat to be procured from leftover areas: CM Sindh

HYDERABAD (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday has announced that the provincial food department out of 900,000 tons of wheat has procured 600,000 tons and the remaining crop is being procured from the areas where growers missed out. CM Murad Shah said that the problem of wheat procurement was aggravated when the caretaker federal government started arriving at the port. "In principle importance of wheat was not feasible when the local crops were being harvested," he said and added this caused loss to

the local growers. Talking about wheat procurement situation in Sindh, CM said that the Sindh food dept had 400,000 tons of wheat in its godowns, and only 900,000 tons were required to meet the provincial requirement, therefore, a procurement target was set at 900,000. He added that so far 600,000 tons of wheat has been procured and the remaining 300,000 tons would be procured from the areas where complaints of judicious distribution of bardana were received. CM said that after receiving the complaints of unfair distribution of bardana for wheat procurement he has already ordered an inquiry into the complaints. "Minister Irrigation & Food Jam Khan Shoro is conducting an inquiry and so far, I have suspended four District Food Controllers (DFCs)," he added. This he said while speaking at the consultative meeting of elected representatives and party workers of Shaheed Benazirabad Division at a banquet hall. Talking about holding consultative meetings with party workers at the grassroots level, Murad Shah said that it was essential for the inclusive development of the province.



MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani in a meeting with the different delegations at Circuit House.

## CM KP launches wheat procurement process

**Independent Report**  
DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur inaugurated the wheat procurement drive in the province here on Wednesday. Accompanied by Provincial Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru, the chief minister launched the province-wide procurement process in a ceremony held here at Provincial Reserve Center. The chief minister was also briefed about wheat procurement and its storage-related matters. During the briefing, it was informed that that about 600,000 metric tons wheat would be purchased

in the province under a project worth Rs 29 billion. Out of which 300,000 metric tons of wheat would be purchased from local farmers. As part of procurement process, 40,000 metric tons of wheat would be purchased from local farmers in Dera Ismail Khan as a stock of about 10500 metric tons was already available in the district. Addressing the ceremony, the chief minister said "the payment of purchased wheat would be made within 24 hours." He said the government was committed to the welfare of farmers and priority was being given to provision of facilities to them. "Farmers are hardworking people so their welfare and provision of facilities to them was among our priorities," he said. He emphasized that transparency and quality assurance as core principles of the procurement process and in this regard, he added, effective measures had been made. "Not buying wheat from Pakistan Agricultural Storage & Services Corporation Limited (PASSCO) resulted in a benefit of Rs 12 billion which would be utilized in the construction and maintenance of warehouses," he said.



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi showering flowers at the grave of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto during at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh, Larkana.

## Health minister leads efforts to ensure peace, order across province

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has said the government will ensure peace and order throughout the province. He was chairing the fourth meeting of the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Law and Orders, held at the home department here on Wednesday, on the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif. The minister paid tribute to the Punjab policemen, who were injured while fighting the enemies of law and order. During the meeting, instructions have been given to the law and order agencies to speed up the Katcha area operation. The committee gave approval to the Punjab Police for rearrangement of various police stations in the interest of the people. During the meeting, approval was given to form a JIT on various incidents. Action against drug peddlers, kite making factories and electricity thieves will be continued across the province. The health minister made a detailed review of law and order in the entire province, arrangements for by-elections in Multan and Muzaffargarh, Katcha area operation and other issues. Earlier, the officers concerned, Additional IG South Punjab and Commissioner DG Khan gave a briefing. Punjab Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman, and Transport Minister Bilal Akbar participated as members. Provincial Minister Chaudhry Shafay Hussain participated in the meeting through video link. Special Secretary Home, Additional IG Sahbazada Sultan, AIG Sahbazada Bilal Umar, DG Punjab Forensic Science Agency and other officers participated in the meeting.

## CM takes notice of schoolteacher torture

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has taken note of a torture incident, committed against a teacher at the Government High School 9/95 L, Sahiwal. She sought a report from Commissioner Sahiwal in this regard and ordered for arrest of the accused at the earliest. The CM ordered to provide the best medical treatment facilities to the injured schoolteacher. She strongly condemned the attack, committed by boys on their teacher. She said, "Attack being perpetrated on a schoolteacher is unacceptable under any circumstance. The respect of a teacher is mandatory in civilised societies."

## US Consul General visits FF Steel

PESHAWAR (APP): US Consul General, Shante Moore visited FF Steel in Peshawar on Wednesday to reinforce bilateral trade and investment ties between the US and Pakistan. During his visit, he met with the senior management team, and praised FF Steel's contributions to Pakistan's economy. FF Steel is one of Pakistan's leading steel manufacturers, known for producing high-quality steel products and investing in research and development. The visit is expected to further enhance economic cooperation between the two countries, which already have a strong bilateral trade relationship with nearly \$2.08 billion in trade in 2023.



GILGIT: Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Nazir Ahmad Advocate addressing during Red Cross/Red Crescent Day celebration.

## CM's directive prompts relocation of mother and children to welfare center

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: On the directives from Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, the district administration has relocated a mother and her kids to social welfare rehabilitation center after a video surfaced on social media depicting them sleeping in pathetic conditions along the roadside. Under the supervision of the Child Protection and Welfare Commission and Social Welfare Department,

a rescue operation was conducted at Kareem Pura Bazaar. The woman and children were subsequently shifted to a social welfare rehabilitation center. The viral video showed the woman and her children begging in the city's markets, with the children lying on the footpath. Responding promptly to the Chief Minister's instructions, a rescue operation was carried out at night, resulting in the woman and children being shifted to a social welfare rehabilitation.

## Inspector, SI, ASI among 14 police official suspended for facilitating drug dealers

PESHAWAR (APP): The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations has suspended 14 police officials including an inspector, sub inspectors, ASI and others on charges of facilitating the drug dealers. According to an order of the office of the SSP operations, the 14 police officials have been suspended and closed to police lines with immediate effect and a proper charge sheet and summary of allegations issued to them separately.

## 12 dead, 1,426 injured in Punjab road accidents

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: At least 12 people were killed and 1,426 others injured in 1,332 road traffic crashes in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 609 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 817 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The statistics show that 289 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 312 persons placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by Multan 100 in with 109 victims and at third Faisalabad with 91 accidents and 93 victims.

According to the data, 1,182 motorbikes 86 auto-rickshaws, 132 motorcars, 32 vans.

## PHC issues notices in suspension of Mashal advocacy license case

PESHAWAR (APP): A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Sahibzada Asad Ullah on Wednesday heard a petition challenging the suspension of advocacy license of Advisor to the Chief Minister for Social Welfare, Mashal Yousafzai by the PHC Bar. The counsel for the petitioner, Qazi Anwar told the bench that on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, police allegedly maltreated Advocate Alamzab at the gate of PHC and the same was highlighted by the petitioner Mashal on social media as a witness of the incident. Following her post, he said, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council suspended the license of Mashal Yousafzai, adding that on a request of the petitioner, Chairman KP Bar Council reinstated her license however, the KP Bar filed an application with Pakistan Bar Council that again suspended her license. The Chief Justice inquired whether the language used in the post was appropriate for a lawyer? Advocate Qazi Anwar replied in negative and said he had already denounced the language of the post.



LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique chairing the fourth meeting of the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Law and Order, held at the home department.

## Governor visits mausoleum of Bhutto family during Sindh visit

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi visited mausoleum of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, Garhi Khuda Bakhsh during his visit to Sindh and offered fateha. He also visited graves of Mir Murtaza Bhutto, Mir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Ameer Begum and offered fateha. He laid floral wreaths on graves of Bhutto family members and prayed for grating eternal peace to them.

Provincial Minister for Culture, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, MPA, Jamil Ahmad Soomro, Deputy Commissioner Larkana, Sarjeel Noor were also present on the occasion. Later KP Governor went to Shewan Sharif and visited mausoleum of Sindh Sufi poet Sakhi Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. He laid floral wreath, offered fateha and prayed for progress and prosperity of the country. The governor was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Jamshoro, Ali Zulfiqar Memon and concerned officials.

Faisal Karim Kundi also met with Sind Governor, Kamran Khan Tessori and matters of mutual interest. Senior Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon was also present during meeting.

Later they went to I T Marquee and interacted with students. He also appointed a group of Sindh government for betterment and welfare of students.



LAHORE: After clashes between lawyers and police in Lahore GPO Chowk, lawyers are throwing iron barriers to enter the High Court.

## Punjab CM reviews health reforms

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presided over a special meeting to review health reforms, here on Wednesday. The chief minister expressed her dismay over the previous government not paying any attention to the public health issues. She expressed her severe indignation over the loss of Rs. 4 billion caused to the government exchequer in the Murree hospital project. The meeting decided that legal action would be taken against those who caused huge losses to the government exchequer by delaying the project. The CM said it was highly heart-rending and deplorable to impede provision of health facilities to people during the previous government's tenure. "It is our duty to safeguard people's money and we cannot permit its loss. We want to establish state-of-the-art health facilities for people in every district. We will provide high quality treatment facilities to the common man." The proposal to establish a medical college with the help of public-private partnership in Attock, Mianwali, Vehari, Bhakkar and Jhelum was reviewed. A comprehensive briefing was given on the construction, rehabilitation of hospitals; 'Clinic on Wheels', free medicines and other matters, along with undertaking health reforms and other affairs were reviewed during the meeting. The CM ordered early completion of 2,500 BHUs and 300 RHCs upgradation projects. She ordered to undertake prompt measures for establishment of a new hospital in Murree. She ordered to ensure provision of angiography machines in Jhelum, Attock, Mianwali.



FAISALABAD: Chairman Ulema Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addressing a press conference.

## Marriyum Aurangzeb orders swift completion of CM's 33 special projects

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has issued directions for swift completion of Punjab chief minister's 33 special projects, and prioritising health development initiatives on an urgent basis. In a statement issued here on Wednesday, she said that according to the vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, seven mega projects in the health sector, worth Rs. 145 billion, were nearing completion. She disclosed that the first phase of the Nawaz Sharif Cancer Institute in Lahore would be completed in a year, while the opening of the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cardiology in Sargodha was scheduled for December 2025. Additionally, the first phase of construction and renovation of rural and basic health centers will be completed by October, with the vaccination of

major hospitals to be completed by June. Furthermore, Expressways on key routes will be constructed with an investment of Rs. 176 billion, she added. The senior minister announced establishment of a dedicated complaint number for all departments, as per directives of CM Maryam Nawaz. Under the Punjab Daycare Fund Society, daycare centers would be established in government offices, she added. She outlined various developmental plans, including infrastructure expansion on Multan, Wahdat Road, Chichawatni to Chowk Azam, Sahiwal, Samundri, Bahawalpur to Jhang Road, Faisalabad, Chinioi, and Sargodha Road, establishment of wildlife centers, formation of Wildlife Rescue Force, Veterinary doctors' recruitment, and tackling food shortages through aquaculture shrimp and fish farming and trading.

Children up to the age of one year will be vaccinated free of charge while 59 teams will vaccinate at temporary fixed points at different places. Rizwan Qadeer said that all arrangements have been finalized to maintain the cold chain of the vaccine. Mobile App training has also been provided to all supervisors to monitor the campaign.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest demonstration for release of PTI Founder Imran Khan, at a camp near Peshawar press club.

## Tahir demands punishment for May-9 culprits

FAISALABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council/President International Faith Harmony Council Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has demanded deterrent punishment for the culprits involved in the May 9 incident and said that such an incident would not occur in future if mastermind of the incident was punished. Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, he said it was a pity that culprits of the incident were not punished so far, despite lapse of one year. He said May 9 was a black chapter in the history of Pakistan, because many political leaders like Nawaz Sharif, Benazir Bhutto, etc. were arrested in the past, but no such incident happened. He said a fair and transparent investigation was imperative to identify real culprits. The video recordings clearly indicate and identify of the accused and they should be punished accordingly. However, if any innocent was arrested in this regard, he should be released without any delay.

Tahir Ashrafi also paid the best tributes to the services of Pakistan Army, rendered for the cause of Pakistan. He said some elements hatched conspiracies to create rift between the nation and the Army. They also tried their best to divide the nation, but their nefarious designs were foiled as people were well aware of what was good for the country, he added. He said the Pakistan Ulema Council would arrange an ulema convention in Lahore.

# PM directs early establishment of Pakistan Skill Company, Skill Development Fund

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed the authorities concerned to immediately initiate the process of establishing the Pakistan Skill Company and Pakistan Skill Development Fund to unify the technical and vocational education countrywide and provide better employment to

Pakistani workers abroad. The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting to review the matters of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, and National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), decided to introduce reforms in the said organisations.

He instructed to further activate the NAVTTTC to provide world-class technical and vocational training to the young workforce and also called for ensuring the globally renowned and international certifications in all technical fields. The prime minister also emphasised the collaboration between the center and provinces to

elevate the quality of Pakistan's technical manpower and human resource development. He called for establishing an integrated system of regulating the manpower equipped with the best and world-class professional technical skills. Besides, in coordination with NADRA.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a sectoral briefing regarding NAVTTC and Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain chairing a meeting of Fertilizer Review Committee.

## IT, Telecom role vital for economic uplift: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level delegation of Telecom Infrastructure Services Company EDOTCO Group led by its Group CEO Mohamed Adlan Ahmad Tajuddin on Wednesday called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja and discussed matters of mutual interest and related to Telecom infrastructure. The other members of the delegation included Anis Sheikh Mohammed, Group CFO, Noreen Sabrina Mohd Noor, Group Head of Corporate Communications, Abdul Aziz, Country Managing Director, and Muhammad Rehan Farooqui, Director of Corporate Affairs and Planning, said a news release.

said that steps are being taken for digitalization in the country. She said that the present government is committed to the provision of quality broadband and Internet services to the masses. Shaza Fatima said that the IT and Telecom sector has an important role in the economic uplift of the country. She said that the Ministry of IT & Telecom was taking alongside the telecom industry, adding that issues confronting the Telecom industry will be resolved. The minister noted that EDOTCO Group support was vital for the development of the telecom industry, urging EDOTCO to play its role in the digitalization process in Pakistan.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where three ships, Maersk Yorktown, Wide Alpha and MH Sandef Jord, berthed at Container Terminal and Multi-Purpose Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile five more ships, Maersk Cape Town, MSC Roma, Capricorn, PH Giang Minh and Huang Shan-16 scheduled to load/offload Container, Iron Ore, and Palm oil also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

A total of seven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Wide Alpha, Maersk Yorktown and Jessie left the port on today morning.

## DC addresses SCCI meeting

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Zulfarman addressed an important meeting at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), here on Wednesday. President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President (SVP) Wahab Jahangir, VP Amer Majeed Shiekh, President Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCIS) Mariam Nouman, Khawar Khawaja, Ejaz Ghouri, Malik Zulfikar, Ayub Khan, Lubna Tabassam and representatives of various trade unions were also present. The DC told the meeting the purpose of

## Pakistan, Algeria to boost trade relation

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan and Algeria agreed to further strengthen bilateral ties in diverse areas of mutual interests, particularly to boost economic ties. The two sides agreed to boost bilateral trade volume through enhancing economic activities. The notion to elevate bilateral economic ties was discussed during a visit by Dr. Brahim Romani, Ambassador of Algeria to Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) here on Wednesday. During the visit, a meeting between the visiting ambassador and RCCI officials was held in which both sides expressed

## Jam Kamal urges Pakistan, Belarus trade boost: Potential yet to be fully exploited

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Wednesday stressed the need for Pakistan and Belarus to elevate their bilateral trade relations to fully exploit their potential. Pakistan has been exporting a diverse range of goods to Belarus, including medicaments, optical/medical apparatus, rice, leather articles, textiles, cutlery, footwear, sports requisites, cotton garments, salt, and mangoes, said a press release issued here. He urged the exploration of new avenues and potential to capitalize on this opportunity, proposing that Belarus

upgrade its tractors to meet Pakistan's agricultural requirements. Despite a recorded total trade volume of \$19.05 million, Minister Jam Kamal Khan indicated that this figure falls short of the true potential of trade between the two nations. He referenced the outcomes of the 6th Pakistan-Belarus Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) session held in Minsk from January 12-13, 2023, where both parties evaluated ongoing bilateral cooperation in trade.

## Fertilizer companies not to be allowed to take undue profit: Rana Tanveer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industries & Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday said that fertilizer companies must not be allowed to take undue profit. Steps should be taken to ensure uniform price of the urea fertilizer across the country for the convenience of farmers, he directed while chairing a meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee. Besides the Federal Secretary of Industries and Production and agriculture secretaries of the four provinces, the meeting was attended by the representatives of Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited, Engro, Fatima Fertilizer Company and Kisan Ittehad, a news

release said. The minister regretted that the fertilizer companies had raised the prices of urea without realizing the plight of farmers. He asked the companies to roll back the recently increased urea prices on their own, or otherwise the government would fix the same. All the fertilizer companies and dealers would have charge same price of the urea, he reaffirmed, adding the government had decided to get conducted third party audit to determine their cost of production and profit margin. The minister said the government was committed to ensure uninterrupted supply of gas to the fertilizer industry.

## PSX loses 159 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Wednesday witnessed bearish trend and shed 159.38 points, a negative change of 0.22 percent, closing at 72,601.82 points against 72,761.20 points the previous trading day. A total of 970,325,029 shares valuing Rs 23,514 billion were traded during the day as compared to 621,826,404 shares valuing Rs 24,970 billion the last day.

Some 388 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 149 of them recorded gains and 208 sustained losses, whereas the prices of 31 remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 407,883,727 shares at Rs 1.51 per share, K-Electric Limited with 68,032,121 shares at Rs 4.68 per share and Hum Network with 56,105,156 shares at Rs 9.03 per share.

## CCP initiates Phase II Review of PTCL's acquisition of Telenor

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has successfully concluded Phase I of its review of Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL)'s acquisition of Telenor Pakistan and initiated work on Phase II. This strategic transaction, involving the consolidation of telecom services, marks a significant development in the telecommunications sector for the growth and improvement of services for the customers, said a news release issued on Wednesday. Owing to the size of the transaction as well as

its impact on market competition, CCP has decided to undertake a more detailed assessment in Phase II of the review process. This decision also aligns with CCP's precedence for evaluating Mergers & Acquisitions within the telecom industry. PTCL, a leading telecommunications provider, expresses confidence in the review process and hopes for expeditious final clearance and is actively cooperating with CCP, providing comprehensive information and documentation to facilitate a thorough evaluation.

## LCI, PVTC to make joint efforts to bridge skill gap in industrial sector

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and Punjab Vocational Training Authority (PVTC) Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) under which both sides would collaborate to conduct regular surveys and workshops to identify industry specific skill gaps and incorporate them into PVTC's curriculum. Moreover, joint committees comprising PVTC and LCCI representatives would be constituted to review and update training programmes regularly, besides organizing seminars, workshops and networking events where researchers and industry experts would

share insights and findings. LCCI President Kashif Anwar and PVTC Managing Director Mehboob Ahmad signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations, while Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, LCCI Executive Committee Members Muhammad Tauqeer Malik and Jabbar Khalid also attended the MoU signing ceremony held here at Lahore Chamber. On this occasion, Kashif Anwar said that lack of skilled human resources is one of the biggest problems being faced by the industrial sector therefore PVTC should develop human resources as per needs of the industry.

## SCCI demands establishment of state of art lab for gemstone certification

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry demanded establishment of a state of the art laboratory for certification of precious and semi-precious stones in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to carry out proper cutting and polishing on scientific methods and enhance export Pakistan gems and earn hefty foreign exchange for the country. The demand was made by senior vice president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Sanaullah Khan while chairing a meeting regarding promotion of gems and jewelry sector held here at the chamber house on Wednesday. The meeting was attended by Director Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Noman Bashir, Director Gems and Gemological Institute Peshawar (GGIP) Naveed Masood, Coordinator Gems and Jewelry Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shahid Khan, an executive member of the chamber Quat Ul Ain.

while chairing a meeting regarding promotion of gems and jewelry sector held here at the chamber house on Wednesday. The meeting was attended by Director Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Noman Bashir, Director Gems and Gemological Institute Peshawar (GGIP) Naveed Masood, Coordinator Gems and Jewelry Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shahid Khan, an executive member of the chamber Quat Ul Ain.

## May 9th incidents condemnable, Business community stands with Pak Army: Atif Ikram

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has strongly condemned the events of May 9 and said that the business community stands in solidarity with the Pakistan Army. We pay tribute to the services of Pakistan forces and the proud spirit of martyrdom for Pakistan. The efforts of the Special Facilitation Council (SIFC) to bring investment to the country are commendable, he expressed these views while addressing a meeting of the business community. President Atif Ikram said that on May 9 last year, Jinnah House, sensitive installations, government and private

properties were vandalized and surrounded by fire, and the country's prestige was damaged at the forces are our pride due to which national defense is in country's hands. Therefore, the Pakistan Army is



President FPCCI Atif Ikram said that Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatisation, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan presiding over a meeting of "Ease of Doing Business".

## SECP organizes workshop on Capital Markets Surveillance

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Wednesday organized a workshop for Council Energy and Economic Journalists (CEEJ), focusing on oversight of trading activities at the Pakistan Stock Exchange. The SECP team explained that the stock exchange played an important role in capital formation, financial inclusion and diversification of investments, said a press release issued here. The participants were briefed on the trading, clearing, settlement and custodial functions.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with EDOTCO Group delegation.

## Vice President WB calls on Chairman FBR

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Vice President World Bank (WB) Martin Raiser on Wednesday visited Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and met with Chairman FBR Amjed Zubair Tiwana. He was accompanied by Country Director Najy Benhassine, Operations Manager Gailius J Draugelis, Haque Lead Country Economist, Tobias Akhtar and Public Sector Specialist Ms. Irum Touqeer, said a press release issued by the FBR. Member Reforms and Modernization FBR Ardsher Saleem Tariq and Member Digital Initiative Karamatullah Khan Chaudhry also attended the meeting.

## First phase of Tajir Dost Scheme limited to only registration: FBR

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, Regional Tax Office (RTO) Peshawar, Zafar Iqbal Khan Wednesday said that the first phase of the Tajir Dost Scheme is limited to only registration of new taxpayers and urged the leaders of the trading community to persuade retailers in their respective areas to register. He was addressing a meeting regarding Tajir Dost Scheme here at Tax House. Those who attended the meeting included Malik Mehr Elahi, president of Tanzim-e-Tajirgan, Shehzad Ahmad Siddiqui, Shaukat Ali, Shehzad Arif, Bakht Said Jan Durrani, Haji Amjad Khan, Waheed Khan, Malik Inam, Ali Jehangir Khan and others. The Chief Commissioner said that the development of the country was linked with depositing of taxes, saying it is taxes that strengthen the country on economic front. He said that the first phase of the scheme is

limited only to the registration of new taxpayers. Therefore, the leaders of the trading community persuade the retailers for the purpose. The scheme launched on April 1 will continue till June 30, 2024. Under the scheme the taxpayers have to get 25% concession on depositing of the whole amount of the outstanding tax. On filing the tax returns for the year 2023, the non-filers will also get 25% concession in head of monthly advanced tax and 50% concession for those depositing annual advance taxes in single installment and filing of tax returns. Otherwise, those failed in registration will face legal proceeding including cash penalty. On this occasion, Commissioner Peshawar Zone, Dr Farooq Jamil highlighted the utilities of Tajir Dost Scheme and explained its salient features. For the guidance of the traders, he also distributed the pamphlets of the scheme among the participants of the meeting.

## Putin tells the West: Russia will talk only on equal terms

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Vladimir Putin has been 'honoured', in similar fashion to a 'Russian tsar' from the country's past. During his swearing-in for a fresh six-year term as Russia's President, Putin had a double-edged message for the West: "the Kremlin is ready to talk but Russia is girding for victory in Ukraine".

Putin, rose to the senior-most position at the Kremlin only eight years after the fall of the Soviet Union. He is now set to overtake Josef Stalin and effectively become Russia's longest-serving ruler since 'Empress Catherine the Great', should he complete the term.

The 71-year-old, who is also former KGB 'spy' exuded confidence

in the carefully choreographed inauguration. The West and his opponents (who are mainly in jail or abroad) cast this as 'a fig leaf of democracy', 'covering a corrupt Russian autocracy'.

As the Russian elite waited in the Hall of Saint Andrew within the Grand Kremlin Palace (where the imperial throne once sat), Putin dissected documents in his office. After this, he walked down the corridors of the Kremlin saluting guards and even stopped to 'leisurely' study a picture on the wall.

"We do not refuse dialogue with Western states", Putin stated after being sworn in. He added that he was ready for talks on 'security and strategic stability' but only on the condition that there was no "ar-

rogance" on the part of the United States and its allies.

Russia's chief (of more than 24 years) promised 'victory' and said all Russians were now "answerable to our thousand-year history and our ancestors." He departed from the ceremony to the music "Hail" from Mikhail Glinka's opera "A Life for the Tsar". The words "Hail, hail, my Rus! Hail you are my Russian land" rang out in the Kremlin. The original words are "Hail, hail, our Russian tsar!".

"The authority of our president is higher than ever, higher than the American president, higher even than the Russian tsar. So much depends on our president" said Gennady Zyuganov (a leader of the Communist Party).



Palestinians inspect the site of an Israeli strike on a house in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip.

## Israel seizes Rafah crossing amid global outcry

**Monitoring Desk**  
RAFAH: Israel sent tanks into Rafah in southern Gaza, seizing control of the border crossing with Egypt, an operation the UN said denied it access to the key humanitarian passage.

The military's thrust into the eastern sector of the city packed with displaced civilians came with negotiators and mediators due in Cairo in the latest effort towards a prisoner release and ceasefire in the

seven-month-old Israeli offensive. A senior Hamas official, requesting anonymity to discuss the negotiations, warned that it would be Israel's "last chance" to free the estimated 128 prisoners still held in the Palestinian territory, including 35 the military says are dead.

A Hamas delegation was headed "shortly" to Cairo, the official said. Israel has said it would also send negotiators, and mediator Qatar announced it was dispatching a team as well.

## John Swinney elected as Scotland's new leader

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Scotland got its second leader in as many years on Tuesday, as parliament approved political veteran John Swinney to lead the country as first minister.

Swinney, 60, succeeds Humza Yousaf, who formally resigned from the role earlier in the day, following his announcement last week that he would step down after just over a year in charge.

Yousaf, 39, announced his resignation last Monday before a confidence vote in the Scottish parliament that he was set to lose, having ditched his junior coalition partners, the Scottish Green Party.

## Italy PM Meloni in Libya to sign cooperation deals

**Monitoring Desk**  
TRIPOLI: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni began a visit to Libya on Tuesday to sign cooperation agreements, and was set to meet leaders from rival administrations in the conflict-torn country. Accompanied by a ministerial delegation on her second visit to Libya since taking office in October 2022, Meloni met the head of the Tripoli-based government, Abdelhamid Dbeibah, Libyan officials said.

"Declarations of intent" were due to be signed on cooperation in health,

education, and research as well as youth and sports, an Italian government statement said. It said the agreements come as part of Meloni's long-awaited "Mattei Plan" named after Enrico Mattei, founder of the Italian energy company Eni. In the 1950s, he advocated for cooperation with African countries to develop their natural resources. On her first visit to Libya early last year, Meloni signed a major deal with the North African country, the continent's richest in hydrocarbon reserves.

## Brazil polls show mixed scenario for Lula's approval ratings

**Monitoring Desk**  
SAO PAULO: Brazilian opinion polls released this week show a mixed scenario for the approval ratings of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's administration, with two surveys indicating a decline while a third one sees an improvement.

Approval of his government fell to 33% in May from 35% in February, a Genial/Quaest poll showed.

## Australia boosts funds to Taiwan-ally Tuvalu amid Pacific contest for influence with China

**Monitoring Desk**  
SYDNEY: Australia will quadruple its financial assistance to Tuvalu, a Pacific Island nation at risk from rising seas, to cement a landmark climate migration and security deal as China also courts small island states.

On a visit to Tuvalu, foreign minister Penny Wong said on Wednesday evening Australia has committed \$110 million (\$72.27 million) in its national budget to Tuvalu.

The sum includes \$550 million (\$32.85 million) to build the first undersea cable connecting the island's residents to global

telecommunications services, and \$19 million for a land reclamation project to fortify Tuvalu's coastline from rising seas.

Another \$15 million will be spent on a national security coordination centre, as well as \$10 million in direct budget support.

The funding is a significant boost on the \$17 million (\$11.17 million) Australia provided to Tuvalu in 2023-24.

China's ambitions for a greater security presence in the Pacific became an election issue in Tuvalu in January, as two leadership contenders said Tuvalu

should consider switching ties from Taiwan to Beijing for more funds, and revise a new security pact with Australia.

Neighbour Nauru cut ties with Taiwan a fortnight before Tuvalu's vote, after China built a port and promised more aid.

Tuvalu's new prime minister Feleti Teo pledged to stick with Taiwan, and to ratify the Falepili Union signed with Australia in November. The treaty allows Tuvalu citizens to migrate to Australia for work or study, while recognising Tuvalu continues to exist despite the rising sea levels.

## 3 policemen killed in bomb attack in northeastern Afghanistan

**Monitoring Desk**  
KABUL: Three policemen were killed and five were wounded on Wednesday when a sticky bomb was detonated next to a security convoy tasked with clearing illegal poppy crops in northeastern Afghanistan, the interior ministry said.

The improvised explosive device (IED) was attached to a motorcycle which targeted a convoy of police vehicles in Faizabad, the capital of mountainous Badakhshan province, around 11am local time.

"The bomb exploded while the convoy of police forces was on its way to destroy poppy cultivation," Taliban Interior Ministry spokesman Abdul Mateen Qani posted on X.

The explosion comes days after Taliban security officials and residents clashed over the violent clearance of poppy crops in two Badakhshan districts, leaving two dead and sparking rare protests.

Afghanistan was the largest producer of opium before poppy cultivation was banned in a decree by the Taliban supreme leader in April 2022.

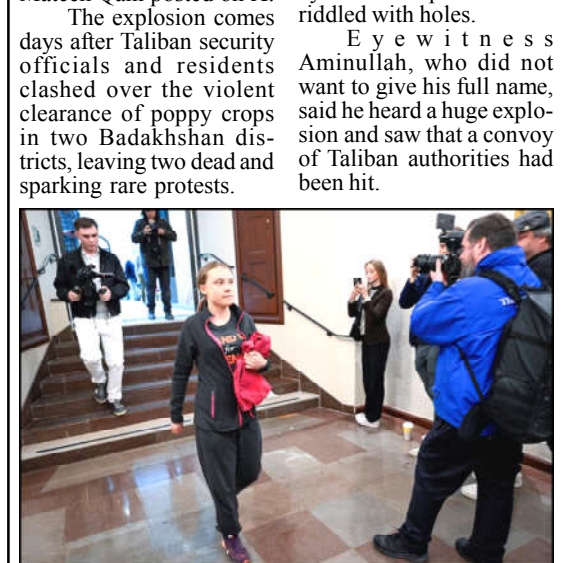
Farmers have been encouraged to plant different crops, but none compete with the financial draw of the poppy, leading some to continue discreetly cultivating small plots.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

An AFP journalist saw Taliban authorities searching homes and detaining dozens of people near the scene.

Images posted on social media, but not immediately verified by AFP, showed a charred motorcycle and a police truck riddled with holes.

Eye witness Aminullah, who did not want to give his full name, said he heard a huge explosion and saw that a convoy of Taliban authorities had been hit.



Greta Thunberg arrives at the Stockholm district court, which is holding the main hearing in the case where the climate activist is charged with two cases of disobedience to the authorities after protest actions at the Riksdag, in Stockholm, Sweden.

## Russia hits Ukraine's power grid with a 'massive' attack on a day marking the WWII defeat of Nazism

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Russian forces unleashed a nighttime barrage of more than 50 cruise missiles and explosive drones at Ukraine's power grid, targeting a wide area in what President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called a "massive" attack on the day the country celebrates the defeat of Nazism in World War II.

The bombardment blasted targets in seven Ukrainian regions, including the Kyiv area and parts of the south and west, damaging homes and the country's rail network, authorities said. Three people, including an 8-year-old girl, were injured, according to officials.

Russia has repeatedly pounded Ukraine's energy infrastructure during the war that is stretching into its third year and has claimed thousands of lives. By taking out the power, the Kremlin's forces aim to rob Ukrainian manufacturing of its energy supply, especially military plants, and crush public

morale.

Russian attacks have damaged nearly half of Ukraine's power infrastructure since the start of the Kremlin's full-scale invasion in February 2022, officials say. The damage is estimated at \$12.5 billion, with \$1 billion inflicted during the past two weeks, according to the chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament's Committee on Energy and Housing Services, Andrii Herus.

Zelenskyy noted that Wednesday's attacks occurred on the day that Ukraine observes the end of European fighting in World War II and equated Ukraine's current struggle with that conflict, saying on social platform X that "only a united free world" can stop Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Ukraine last year changed the date of the Day of Remembrance and Victory over Nazism to avoid its coinciding with Russia's own Victory Day commemorations on May 9.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy shake hands at a press conference in Berlin, Germany.

## Philippine military chief accuses China of 'malign influence effort'

**Monitoring Desk**  
MANILA: The Philippines' military chief accused China of a "malign influence effort" on Wednesday, after a local newspaper reported a Filipino vice admiral had made a deal with Beijing to de-escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

The Manila Times published what it said was a transcript of a phone conversation during which it said a Philippine admiral had agreed to China's proposal of a "new model", where the Philippines would use fewer vessels in resupply missions to

troops at the disputed Second Thomas Shoal, and notify Beijing about missions in advance.

Reuters has not heard the reported phone conversation and could not verify the contents of the published transcript.

The Manila Times said the conversation had taken place in January and the transcript was provided by a "ranking Chinese official", which it did not name.

The shoal has been a flashpoint for a series of heated confrontations between China's coast guard and Philippine vessels in the past year.



SAMBHAL: People queue to vote at a polling station during the third phase of the general election.

## UK will expel Russian defence attache over 'malign activity'

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Britain will expel Russia's defence attache, remove diplomatic status from some properties and limit the length of Russian diplomatic visas in response to what interior minister James Cleverly called Moscow's "malign activity".

Addressing parliament on Wednesday, Cleverly said Britain was already "an extremely challenging operating environment for Russian intelligence services" but the measures would "only serve to strengthen our resilience to the Russian threat".

Britain has introduced several waves of sanctions on Russian companies and individuals since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and Cleverly said the Conservative government would not falter in its support of Kyiv.

"We will expel the Russian defence attache, who is an undeclared military intelligence officer," Cleverly said.

## Probe launched after Boeing cargo plane lands in Istanbul without front landing gear

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: A FedEx Airlines Boeing cargo plane landed at Istanbul Airport on Wednesday without its front landing gear, a Turkish Transport Ministry official said, adding there were no casualties and authorities had launched an investigation.

The aircraft, flying from Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport, informed the control tower in Istanbul that its landing gear had failed to open and touched down with guidance from the tower, managing to remain on the runway, a ministry statement said.

Airport rescue and fire fighting teams were

scrambled before landing, but no one was injured. The ministry gave no reason for the failure. The aircraft involved is a nearly 10-year-old Boeing 767 freighter, one of the most common cargo planes and based on the 767 passenger model dating back to the 1980s.

An official from Turkey's transport ministry said its teams were conducting examinations at the scene as part of the ongoing investigation, but did not provide further details. Boeing referred queries to FedEx, which said in a statement it was coordinating with investigation authorities.

## Protest song 'Glory to Hong Kong' now banned in city after appeals court overturns ruling

**Monitoring Desk**  
HONG KONG: An appeals court on Wednesday granted the Hong Kong government's request to ban a popular protest song, overturning an earlier ruling and deepening concerns over the erosion of freedoms in the once-freewheeling global financial hub.

"Glory to Hong Kong" was often sung by demonstrators during huge anti-government protests in 2019. The song was later mistakenly played as the

city's anthem at international sporting events, instead of China's "March of the Volunteers," in mix-ups that upset city officials.

It was the first time a song has been banned in the city since Britain handed the territory back to Chinese rule in 1997. Critics have said prohibiting broadcast or distribution of the song further reduces freedom of expression since Beijing launched a crackdown in Hong Kong following the 2019 protests.

بے حرمتی انکی گوارا نہیں  
ہونے دینا اب دوبارہ نہیں  
#9MayNeverAgain

وزارت اطلاعات و نشریات  
حکومت پاکستان

GovtofPakistan www.moib.gov.pk

PID06798-D23

# Pakistan, World Bank agree to New Partnership Framework for reforms, development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the World Bank on Wednesday agreed to collaborate on a new, robust and ambitious Country Partnership Framework (CPF) to carry forward the country's reform and development agenda.

The agreement was reached during a meeting between Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and a delegation led by Regional Vice President of the World Bank for South Asia Martin Raiser.

Welcoming Martin Raiser, Prime Minister Shehbaz lauded the contribution of the World Bank to the development of Pakistan.

The prime minister appreciated the support extended by the Bank for building the climate resilient infrastructure in the wake of 2022 floods in Pakistan. He briefed the delegation on the reform agenda of the government including digitization of the entire tax system, power sector reforms, enhancing per acre yield in the agriculture sector, addressing the issue of child stunting, etc.

Appreciating Pakistan's aggressive reforms agenda, Martin Raiser said the World Bank was ready to collaborate with the country in its journey of transformation of the economy aimed at sustainable development.

Both sides agreed to engage in a long-term, focused partnership under a new Country Partnership Framework with an annual review mechanism to assess progress and ensure that results are achieved. The strategy will include flexibility for future course correction. The new partnership will have the ambition to achieve transformational impacts over a decade on a selective set of critical development priorities for Pakistan.

The initial set of priorities that were discussed in the meeting included structural economic reforms including domestic resource mobilization, particularly via digitalization and tax policy reforms.



QUETTA: President Asif Ali Zardari being seen off by the Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti at the conclusion of his official visit to Quetta.

## 9th May to be remembered as a dark day in Pakistan's history: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has said that 9th May 2023, will always be remembered as a dark day in Pakistan's history when a politically instigated mob ran amok across the country, damaging public property and military installations.

Condemning the violence, he said that the unfortunate incidents severely tarnished the country's image, which only served the interests of Pakistan's enemies.

The president, in his message, termed the mob attacks an attempt to challenge the writ of the state, undermine the rule of law and weaken the institutions.

He said that peaceful demonstrations and constructive criticism were the essence of democracy, emphasizing that Pakistan's Constitution enshrined the fundamental rights of assembly and expression.

Nonetheless, he stressed the vital importance of exercising "these rights with utmost responsibility, adhering strictly to the bounds of constitutional and legal provisions".

He affirmed that any attempt to misuse "these rights to incite violence will never be tolerated. We have never seen such vandalism in responsible democracies, with violent mobs wreaking havoc on state properties for political gains."

The president expressed pride in Pakistan's Armed Forces and its institutions, which had been a vanguard in defending the nation against various threats. He emphasized that those responsible for the May 9 violence should be held accountable according to the law.

President Zardari observed that Pakistan faced numerous challenges, and such irresponsible acts by political forces not only hindered the progress achieved as a nation but further exacerbated socio-economic challenges. "The current political situation demands that all political parties work towards promoting tolerance, democratic values, and political dialogue, and provide a clear direction to the nation."

The president urged political parties, the Parliament, the media, and civil society to strengthen democracy by upholding the rule of law.

## 11 Hajj flights carrying 2,160 Pakistani pilgrims to land in Madinah today

MADINAH AL MUNAWARA (APP): Marking the launch of a regular month-long pre-Hajj flight operation, 11 flights are scheduled to arrive in Madinah on Thursday from five major cities of Pakistan, carrying approximately 2,160 intending Hajj pilgrims.

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam, and requires every adult Muslim to undertake the journey to the holy Islamic sites in Makkah at least once in their lifetime, if they are financially and physically able.

These flights will transport pilgrims from Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Multan, and Peshawar to the Prince Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz International Airport (Madinah Airport), beginning a massive influx of devotees from Pakistan and other parts of the world.

Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy will visit Islamabad and Karachi airports, operated under the Road to Makkah initiative, to bid farewell to Pakistani Hajj pilgrims bound for the holy land. The pilgrims will be received by authorities concerned at the Pakistan Consulate General and the Hajj Mission of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The pre-Hajj flight operation, which will continue until June 10, will facilitate the arrival of thousands of pilgrims in the holy city. Five airlines - Pakistan International Airlines, Air Arabia, Saudia, Etihad Airways, and Qatar Airways - will be participating in the operation.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Excise & Taxation Muhammad Khan Lehri meeting with Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

## Whole nation stands by security institutions against May 9 like incidents: Ghazala Gola

QUETTA: The Deputy Speaker of Balochistan Assembly, Ms Ghazala Gola has stated that the incidents like May 9 are condemnable and the whole nation are united and standing by their security institutions against these incidents.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, the national installations and important monuments were attacked by a specific group on May 9 last year, which is strongly condemnable.

She said that it was attack on the nation and sovereignty of the country. The Deputy Speaker said that we were standing with our institutions and would continue to stand by them in future.

She said that as a nation, we value the services and sacrifices of the institutions. We don't allow anyone to target those who sacrificed their lives for the country and nation, she added.

She stressed to take immediate and decisive action against the criminals.

Ms Ghazala Gola also stressed that all political leaders must make pledge to play their role for stability and peace in the country.

We should also support each other for development and stability of the country, she maintained.

## CDWP recommends three projects worth Rs126bln to NEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Central Development Working Party has recommended three projects of 126 billion rupees to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council for approval.

The recommendation were given in a meeting chaired by Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan in Islamabad today.

The first project is the improvement, up gradation and widening of Jaglot - Skardu Road worth 33270.600 million rupees, referred to ECNEC for further consideration.

Secondly, the project of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of N-5 from Moro to Ranipur worth 57,245.400 million rupees referred to ECNEC for further consideration.

The project shall be financed through Special Financing in the Form of Flood Emergency Loan from Asian Development Bank amounting to 150 million dollars.

## PM calls special cabinet meeting to declare May 9 as 'Black Day'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to call a special cabinet meeting tomorrow (Thursday) to declare May 9 as a 'Black Day' due to the vandalism of the opposition party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on this day last year.

The special meeting of the federal cabinet presided by PM Shehbaz Sharif will be held in the Parliament House on Thursday.

In the meeting, the sources said the Prime Minister would give a special message to the nation on the May 9 incidents from the forum of the federal cabinet.

## Lashkari Raisani donates 200 books to Quaid Library

QUETTA (APP): Former Senator and Tribal Chief, Haji Lashkari Raisani generously announced to donate 200 books to the recently restored Quaid-e-Azam Library Ziarat, which had been closed for 17 years. Talking to APP, the senator Lashkari lauded the efforts of Deputy Commissioner Ziarat Hamood-ur-Rehman for restoring the historic library in its original architecture.

"To support the cause, Balochistan Peace Forum will send 200 books for the bibliophiles," he remarked. He said that under his supervision, Balochistan Peace Forum has been formed that strives for revising the book reading culture in the country.

"So far, as many as 75000 books have been gifted to different institutions and libraries, with ongoing efforts to continue this initiative. Expressing concern over the decline of book reading culture in society, Senator Raisani urged the youth to embrace knowledge for its intrinsic value, rather than merely pursuing degrees.

## Saudia says anyone violating Hajj regulations b/w June 2-20 will be punished

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's Interior Ministry has announced that violators of the Hajj regulations and instructions without a permit during the period June 2-20 will be punished.

Citizens, residents, and visitors to the Kingdom caught violating Hajj regulations and instructions without a permit in Makkah, the area around the Grand Mosque, Hajj sites, the Haramain station in Al-Rusayfah, security control centers, sorting centers, and temporary security control centers during the specified period will be fined SR 10,000 (\$2,666).

## Govt striving to improve quality of education in Balochistan: Raheela

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Education Minister Raheela Hameed Durrani on Wednesday said that provincial government was taking steps to improve quality of education through elimination of cheating culture from examination centers.

She expressed these views while talking to Chairman Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) Mir Ijaz Azeem Baloch while visiting various ongoing intermediate examination centers in respective areas of Quetta City. She said that cheating in examinations was a scourge which all stakeholders have a joint responsibility to eradicate the source of copying culture from the province because standard of education was essential for development of the province.

The current government was trying to implement transparent examination process in the province in an efficient manner, she noted and added that in the light of the special instructions of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, steps were being taken to prevent copying in the examination centers across the province.

The minister said that the best arrangements were being made to prevent cheating in the exams saying that you could pass the exam by copying but you could not get the qualification, students, teachers and parents have to play their role to prevent copying culture. Earlier, the Provincial Education Minister attended the ceremony held to honour the students who secured prominent positions in the examinations last year. On this occasion, she said that students should keep one thing in their minds for the rest of their lives that what was written as it was not written on degree so be friendly with books and spend your free time reading books, it would increase your knowledge.

## Ministry confirms moon unseen, Ziqad to begin May 10

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on Wednesday announced that the moon of Ziqad 1445 AH has not been sighted. Following the directive of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee.



QUETTA: MNA Nawabzade Mir Jamal Khan Raisani cutting the cake with children on the eve of World Thalassaemia Day at BMC Hospital.

## Walk-a-cause held on World Thalassaemia Day in Quetta

QUETTA: The walk-a-cause was organized by Fatimid Foundation Quetta chapter marking the World Thalassaemia Day here in the premises of Balochistan Institute of Nephro-Urology Quetta (BINUQ) here on Wednesday.

The Head of Fatimid Foundation and former caretaker Provincial Minister for Health, Dr. Ameer Muhammad Khan Jogezeai led the walk arranged for the cause of creating much needed awareness among general public about prevention of thalassaemia disease.

The health experts as well as patients including children suffering from thalassaemia disease and their parents also participated in the walk.

Dr. Ameer Muhammad Jogezeai and other experts underlined the need to create awareness about prevention of the blood disease among children.

They said that the thalassaemia disease is rising with passage of time, however, it can easily be prevented if the preventive measures are adopted in advance.

They said that a simple health check up for Thalassaemia carrier status before starting a family can save the children from becoming a patient of the Thalassaemia major, unending cycle of injections, suffering and misery.

## Edotco delegation visits PTA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Major General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman met with Edotco delegation to discuss the role of the company in the purview of recent advancements in Pakistan's telecommunications sector. The delegation was led by Mr. Mohamed Adlan Ahmad Tajuddin, Group CEO.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed Edotco's future plans for strengthening connectivity infrastructure in Pakistan and investment opportunities available in the local market to further boost digital transformation of the country.

## PTI's penchant for baseless allegations and stirring controversy: Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defense Minister Khawaja Asif said on Wednesday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has a penchant for baseless allegations and a tendency to stir controversies.

Speaking to a private news channel, he said that PTI has resorted to inconsistent statements and actions over the past years.

He said that PTI's actions have detrimental effects on state institutional integrity and public discourse.

Responding to a question about the potential for dialogue with PTI, he said, "We are open to dialogue, but certain conditions must be to make it productive".



QUETTA: Secretary Health Balochistan Abdullah Khan presides over the online meeting to review progress of MSs of various hospitals in Districts.

## Fareeda posted as DC Sohbatpur: Another female civil officer gets posting as DC in Balochistan

QUETTA: Yet another female civil officer belonging to Balochistan got posting as Deputy Commissioner in Balochistan province.

The officer of Balochistan Civil Service, Ms. Fareeda Tareen (BS-18), awaiting posting orders in the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD), has been posted as the Deputy Commissioner Sohbatpur.

It may be mentioned here that Ms. Fareed Tareen is the fifth lady civil officer to be appointed as Deputy Commissioner in a district of the province.

Prior to his posting, four female officers have been performing as Deputy

## Polio virus detected in four environmental samples

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Institute of Health (NIH) said on Wednesday that four new environmental samples had tested positive for wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1), bringing the total number of positive samples this year to 112.

The four new samples were collected from Karachi and Pishin district in Balochistan province, and were genetically linked to the imported YB3A cluster of WPV1. This cluster had been responsible for all positive samples and two human cases reported in Pakistan this year, private news channels reported. The NIH warned that the virus posed a significant threat to children under the age of five.