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QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing participants of concluding ceremony of Pakistan Literary Festival at BUITEMS

Pakistan will continue extending support to Kashmiris So-called legislation, court decisions cant' absolve India of its int'l obligations on Kashmir: PM

Assures implementation of understanding with AJK; stresses permanent solution to people's issues; Directs to constitute committee on Neelum-Jhelum project

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that no so-called legislation or court verdicts could absolve India of its obligations on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, under international laws.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of Hurriyat leaders of Jammu and Kashmir during his daylong visit here, said that Pakistan categorically rejected the Indian unilateral and illegal actions in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) regarding the revo-

lution of its special status. He said Kashmir was an internationally recognised dispute that remained on the UN Security Council's agenda for the last seven decades and awaited settlement as per the UNSC's resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The Hurriyat leaders appreciated the prime minister's role in handling the recent situation in the AJK and also thanked Pakistan for its steadfast stance in condemning Indian unilateral actions and solidarity with the

Kashmiri people. Prime Minister Shehbaz assured the delegation that Pakistan would continue extending its moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people and cited the recently held OIC summit in Gambia where Pakistan effectively raised the Kashmir issue.

He assured that the Foreign Ministry as well as Pakistan's diplomatic missions would play their role to highlight the Kashmir cause at international fo-

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ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Development, prosperity of Balochistan's people Govt top priority: Syedaal Khan

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar Thursday said the development and prosperity of the people of Balochistan is the key priority of the government. He said that senators from Balochistan are given the opportunity to represent the people of the province in the upper house.

He expressed these views in a meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti to discuss the overall political and economic situation of the province, development projects. They expressed pledge to

work together for the development of the province and the welfare of its people.

Syedaal Khan said that the Upper House is determined to resolve the problems faced by the provinces and provide opportunities for development and prosperity to its citizens. He said the development and prosperity of Balochistan will ensure the economic stability of the country.

He said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project is a

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QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa meeting with Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango

Jatak assures to take steps for making over 180 employees of Market Committee permanent

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Mir Ali Madad Jatak has assured that steps would be taken for making over 180 contract employees of the Market Committee permanent immediately.

The Provincial Minister for Agriculture was speaking to the media persons and office bearers of All Balochistan Fruit and Vegetable Commission Agent Association after briefing in the office of Market Committee Hazar

ganji on Thursday. The Director Economics and Marketing Syed Abdul Sattar briefed the Minister Agriculture about the Market Committee.

Also present on the occasion were Rafu Gul Baraich, Mumtaz Shah, Jeeyand and others.

Speaking on the occasion, Ali Madad Jatak said that the provincial government of Peoples Party is taking steps for resolving issues of the people on priority basis.

PTI founder appears before SC via video link in NAB amendments case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder on Thursday appeared before the Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan larger bench to present his arguments in the National Accountability (NAB) Ordinance 1999 amendment case.

A five-member SC bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice

Athar Minallah and Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi, is hearing the case. Arrangements to ensure the PTI founder's appearance before the Supreme Court bench via video link were finalised in light of the apex court's order.

The case is not being live-streamed but images of the PTI founder go viral on social media. At the outset of the hearing, Advocate Khwaja Haris came to the

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Well without learning modern skills Our youth can't benefit from modern science & technology : Governor

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that the importance of skills is equally increasing along with education in the ever changing world.

Our youth can't benefit from the modern science and technology well without learning modern skills. The Governor said that unemployment can be brought down by making the technical and vocational institutions functional at the provincial level.

The Governor was speaking to different delegations and personalities who called on him here at

the Governor's House on Thursday.

Those who met were included former Vice Chancellors of different universities Brigadier (Retd) Agha Ahmed Gul, Engineer Ahmed Farooq Bazai, former Provincial Ministers Sultan Tareen and Mir Umar Jamali, former Members of provincial assembly, Akhtar Hussain Langove and Ahmed Nawaz Baloch, Abdul Mateen Akhuzada, Mir Imran Jatak and Naseeb Kakar Advocate.

The Governor said that the Programme of Prime Minister about imparting skills to the new generation is excellent.



QUETTA: Deputy Chairman Senate Saydal Khan Nassar meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Qaiser chairs meeting to boost economic activity in Gwadar area

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh presided over a meeting aimed at boosting economic activities in Gwadar Port area, emphasizing the government's commitment to accelerate growth and regional development in Balochistan region on Thursday.

Federal Secretary Maritime Affairs, representatives from ministry of finance, industries & production, fisheries department, ministry of commerce attended the meeting, a news release said issued here.

The federal minister stressed the strategic importance of Gwadar Port

as a key player of Pakistan's economic prosperity and emphasized the need for concerted efforts to enhance import operation and business activity.

He reaffirmed the government's commitment to this cause, citing directives from the prime minister to take decisive measures to enhance import of government goods through Gwadar Port.

Furthermore, the federal minister emphasized the significance of previous decisions made by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and the directives of the prime minister in 2008 and 2022, respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh chairs a meeting regarding the enhancement of Import at Gwadar Port.

Two-day Pakistan Literary Festival concludes: State wants reconciliation and talks with those displeased with Government: CM

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that the State of Pakistan wants to hold dialogue and reconciliation with those who are displeased with the government.

"I am ready to embrace the youth and would do his best to resolve their issues." But talks would not be held with those who want to dismantle the country or involved in the insurgency.

He mentioned that the State of Pakistan has also engaged in the reconciliation with the people in past, and still it wants to engage the people, but with whom talks be done?

He regretfully pointed out that the organized conspiracy had been hatched against the State of Pakistan

in the past. The first insurgent of Balochistan was given shelter in Afghanistan. The real facts should be made public about the history.

The Chief Minister was addressing the closing ceremony of two-day Pakistan Literary Festival concluded at the Balochistan Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) here on Thursday.

The provincial high ups and other celebrities from art, literature, media and other segments of the society from all over the country including Balochistan participated in the ceremony.

The Chief Minister maintained that we have certain plans for our youth to work on and implement

in future. He said that we have plan to send our talented youth to abroad for doing Ph.Ds and other higher education so that they are able to shoulder their future responsibilities after coming back to their country and province.

He said that we would also be sending our youth to abroad after learning their different skills.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that we destroyed our education system at our own by killing the teachers and professors, and so the governance in the province, no one came from Punjab or other areas to destroy the system.

Now we have to mend our way and correct the affairs at our own, adding Chief Minister stressed.

He said that the government

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MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the meeting of the Cabinet of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Registrar IHC No constitutional restriction on holding dual citizenship for becoming judge

Independent Report ISLAMABAD (Online): Registrar of Islamabad High Court (IHC) has given reply to the letter from Faisal Wadwa stating that there is no restriction on holding dual citizenship or residency in other country in the constitution for becoming judge.

No information about dual citizenship is sought from a lawyer on the occasion of becoming judge of high court.

Holding dual nationality or residence in other country does not disqualify any one from becoming judge as per constitution.

Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Iraq: Asif

ISLAMABAD (Online): Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has emphasized that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Iraq and wishes to expand cooperation in all fields of mutual interests especially defence.

He expressed these views while talking to Iraqi Ambassador Hamid Abbas Lafta, who called on him in Islamabad Thursday.

The Defence Minister said both Pakistan and Iraq should work closely to share their experiences and build capacities of their Armed Forces.

Youth Facilitation Centers to be made functional: CM directs to formulate Balochistan Youth Policy as per needs of youth

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has directed to the concerned authorities to formulate Balochistan Youth Policy 2024 in accordance with the needs of youth of the province.

He directed to the concerned quarters to present the draft of Youth Policy based on comprehensive recommendations within 10 days.

He said that the Balochistan Youth Policy would reflect the effective representative of youth of the province.

The Chief Minister was chairing a high level meeting on the Balochistan Youth Policy 2024 here on Thursday.

The Member National Assembly, Mir Jamal Khan Raisani, Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Youth Affairs, Javid Anwar Shahwani, Chairperson of Balochistan

Commission on Status of Women, Ms. Fauzia Shaheen and other concerned were present.

The meeting was briefed about the Balochistan Youth Policy 2024 by the Youth Affairs Department.

The meeting decided to make Youth Facilitation Centers functional in the province.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that guidance of youth in right direction is very necessary.

He stressed the need to keep in mind the gender equality in the Youth Policy of the province.

He also stressed that the provision of opportunities should be made part of Youth Policy for utilizing capabilities of the youngsters.

In this regard, consultation of all stakeholders should be ensured in the Youth Policy, adding the Chief Minister directed further.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Hamid Abbas Lafta, Ambassador of Iraq called on Minister for Defence & Defence Production Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

Session on higher education in Literary Festival: Brain drain emerging major issue as experts, scholars, doctors & teachers are leaving country: Rahila Durrani

Provincial Minister for Education stresses need to bring improvement in our education system; cheating in examinations major issue

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Education, Miss Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani has regretfully pointed out that the brain drain is emerging a major issue in the country including Balochistan as many of our experts, scholars, doctors and teachers are leaving the country or want to leave.

She said that there's a gap in our system that there

is a brain drain of our people from the country. This gap has to be filled in order to put an end to the trend of brain drain.

The Minister Education said that our education system needs a lot of improvement. We need to improve the standard of our teachers and enhance their capacities. We would also be needing a big team for bringing improvement in education sector.

Miss Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani was speaking at the special session on education arranged in the Pakistan Literature Festival here at the Balochistan Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) on Thursday.

The eminent scholars, intellectuals and experts from different parts of the

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PM orders policy on financial security for sportsmen through jobs in departments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed formulation of a policy to employ athletes through departments to ensure their financial security and promote sports in the country.

He tasked Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood to personally oversee the policy and ensure its implementation within one week.

The prime minister was addressing an event held to celebrate the achievement of Pakistan hockey team that recently won silver medal in the final of 30th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2024 in Malaysia.

PM Sharif said jobs for athletes would free them from the struggles of earning livelihood, thus helping them to focus on their sports.

He lauded the outstanding perfor-

mance of the national hockey team, terming it a step to revive the glory of national sport.

He said the hockey team had won the hearts of the entire nation, adding that winning or losing was part of the game.

"The way you came up with a challenging and competing spirit in the final shows a high potential of several victories in future," he told the hockey team as Pakistan made it to the final of Azlan Shah Cup after 13 years.

PM Sharif said the government was taking steps to promote sports in the country with a special focus on hockey. The renewed interest in hockey throughout Pakistan signalled a promising trend for future, he added.

"The days are not far when the glory of hockey will be revived in Pakistan and we will have more leg-

ends like Islahuddin, Samiullah and Shahbaz," he said.

He appreciated the hard work of team, coaches and officials of sports board.

He announced to soon invite the relevant officials from sports board to discuss ways for the revival of hockey in the country.

The prime minister gave away cheques to the players of hockey team as a token of appreciation.

Captain of national hockey team Ammad Shakil Butt expressed his passion to keep up the spirit of his team and bring more laurels to the country.

Hockey legends including 'Flying horse' Samiullah, Olympian Islahuddin and Shahbaz Ahmed on the occasion lauded the keen interest of PM Shehbaz Sharif for the promotion of national sport in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with Pakistan Hockey Team.

PCB 'in a fix' over T20 World Cup 2024 squad

KARACHI (INP): As the deadline for the squad announcement nears, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is facing a difficult situation with regards to the finalisation of its 15-member team for the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024, Geo News reported citing sources.

The PCB will announce the squad after first match of the T20I series against England on May 22 as the International Cricket Council (ICC) has set deadline of May 24 for announcing a 15-member WC squad.

It should be noted that Haris Rauf, Usman Khan and Salman Ali Agha did not get a chance to play in Ireland. While, Hasan Ali, who was added to the team as Rauf's backup, played one match during the Ireland series.

The sources said Rauf would have to prove his 100% fitness in the coming days ahead of the World Cup. Whereas, Usman, Salman, Hasan are expected to be incorporated in the squad as travelling reserves. Pakistan are in Group A of the World Cup alongside arch-rivals India, Ireland, Canada and the USA.

The national side will play their first T20I World Cup match on June 6 against the USA in Dallas. While, the most anticipated clash of titans between Pakistan and India will take place on June 9 (Sunday) in New York. After concluding the three-match T20I series against Ireland, the Green Shirts have reached England to play four T20Is from May 22 to 30, which would be their last outing before the mega event.

Ishaq Dar invites Chinese entrepreneurs to set up labour intensive industry in Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Thursday that the government under economic reforms agenda offers attractive incentive for investment and asked the Chinese entrepreneurs to take advantage of the friendly policies and set up labour intensive industry in Pakistan. The labour cost is very competitive and much less as compared to the current labor cost in China. Agriculture, textile, mining and Information Technology (IT) are the prime areas where there is a great scope to do business in Pakistan.

He made these remarks in his keynote address at the Pakistan-China Business Roundtable Conference organized by the Pakistan Embassy, Beijing.

Ishaq Dar said that the government has expedited construction of special economic zones and offered attractive incentives for establishment of different industrial units. "We have worked out 13 key areas having great potential for the Chinese and Pakistani entrepreneurs to establish industry on ownership basis or through joint venture with Pakistani business people", he added. He said that Pakistan being at the crossroads of Central Asia, Southeast and Middle East provides a great potential for the export-oriented industry.

Ishaq Dar suggested the Chinese companies to do value addition and export to all these markets which have almost one and a half billion population. The Chi-

nese businessmen could enjoy preferential market access to major economies such as the European Union, Gulf, China itself and other countries which have free trade agreements with Pakistan, he added. He said that there are competitive and lucrative incentives especially in special economic zones, export processing zones, Gwadar free zone, and special technology zones. These are the four areas where the Chinese businessmen could set up business with special fiscal and economic incentives, he maintained.

The deputy prime minister highlighted that the process of privatising certain state-owned enterprises could also be looked into from the business point of view.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister For Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh chairs a meeting regarding exemption from Import/Export Policy order and foreign currency issues for Gwadar Zone.

So-called legislation, court decisions...

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Kashmiri people.

He, addressing the special cabinet meeting of the AJK during daylong visit here, instructed the formation of a committee to discuss issues like water charge, Neelum Jhelum and others for the benefit of the AJK people.

Referring to the recent movement run by the AJK people for their rights, Prime Minister Shehbaz said the people raised their voices for their genuine demands but amidst that some miscreants tried to create riots and cause killings. He consoled the killing of a police official and some citizens during the movement and announced that his government would support their respective grievance families under the Shuhada Package.

He told the participants that Rs 23 billion approved by his government had been released to the AJK government and assured that, after the completion of IMF team's visit, the federal minister and secretary for power would consult with the AJK authorities to seek a permanent solution to the issues and prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

State wants...

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ment jobs had been selling in province in the past, but he would not let it do in future. He said that he has asked the people to provide him some proofs of selling of jobs, the severe punishment would be awarded to those involved in it, he asserted.

The Chief Minister said that we can reduce the distances with people through dialogue and good governance. He said that he is ready to talk with everyone and wants to engage youth of the province.

He highly appreciated the Literary Festival held in Quetta and said that it was his desire to attend all the sessions arranged in the festival. He on the occasion urged the President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmed Shah to conduct similar literary festival in Gwadar next time.

PTI founder appears before...

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rostrum. The chief justice said he (Haris) was a counsel in the original case and his absence was strange. The CJP said the court would like to hear his stance. "Did you submit the bill for the fee as a lawyer?" asked Justice Isa.

Haris replied that he did not need a fee. "You are senior to all lawyers," the CJP remarked. Haris said he would assist the court in the matter. Justice Isa asked him to present his arguments loudly so that the PTI founder could hear him on the video call. Federal government's lawyer Makhdoom Ali Khan argued that the NAB amendment case was sub judice before the IHC.

"Was the petition pending before the high court accepted for hearing?" Justice Minalallah asked. The lawyer replied in the affirmative. The chief justice then sought the complete record of the case in the IHC. "What were the registrar office's objections to the PTI founder's plea back then?" Justice Minalallah asked, to which

Sharif strongly condemns "shocking" attack on Slovak PM

Makhdoom responded that the petitioner had not approached any other forum for the matter.

At the outset of the hearing, a letter by the PTI founder was presented before the court in which he had prayed the court to allow him to present his arguments in person. The chief justice said that according to the letter, the PTI founder wanted to appear before the court in person.

Justice Jamal Mandokhail said he [PTI founder] had to decide whether he wanted to appear in person or through a lawyer. Justice Athar Minalallah remarked that if the PTI founder wanted to appear in person, he should be brought here. He is a party to this case, how can we deny him the right to appear before the court. This is a case regarding NAB and it is his right to appear in person.

CJP Isa observed that this is a constitutional matter and not a case of personal rights. "We have to see how can a person who is not even a lawyer help us?"

Our order was that he could present arguments through his counsel."

Sharif strongly condemns "shocking" attack on Slovak PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday strongly condemned the "shocking" attack on his Slovak counterpart Robert Fico.

"Strongly condemn shocking attack on Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico our thoughts and prayers (are) with him and his family. Wish him a quick recovery and good health," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline. According to the media reports, Robert Fico has been shot multiple times and critically injured in an assassination attempt. He was shot by a gunman five times on Wednesday and underwent several hours of emergency surgery. "We stand by the government and people of Slovak Republic in these critical moments," the prime minister remarked.

Tarar felicitates AEMEND's newly elected office-bearers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Thursday felicitated the newly elected office-bearers of the Association of Electronic Media Editors and News Directors (AEMEND).

The minister, in a message, highlighted the critical role of AEMEND in the area of journalism and broadcast.

He expressed the hope that the newly elected body of AEMEND including its President Azhar Abbas, Senior Vice President Ayaz Khan, Vice President Muhammad Usman, Secretary General Tariq Mehmood, Joint Secretary Mian Tahir, Joint Secretary Rehman Khan and Finance Secretary Shahab Mehmood, would play its role in curbing fake news in the country.

Development, prosperity of...

Continued from page 1

game changer for the development and prosperity of the country and Gwadar Port is the hub of business. The quality of life of the people of Balochistan would be improved with the early completion of ongoing projects under CPEC in the province, he added.

He further said that economic development is dependent on industrial development, therefore effective measures must be taken to further promote industries in the province. He said that the government is taking special interest in the

development of industrial sector and resolving the problems faced by industrial circles. The Deputy Chairman Senate said that public representatives can bring positive changes in living standard of the public by utilizing their skills.

Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said that the early completion of ongoing projects under CPEC in Balochistan is a guarantee of development and prosperity of the province. He said that the efforts of Deputy Chairman Senate for the development of Balochistan and prosperity of the people are worthy of praise.

TENDER NOTICE

The Balochistan Institute Child Health Services Quetta invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. **TSE-232405415821 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 Not Required**

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Electrical & Electronic items (Total Item(s) Count: 1)	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 800,000 in Previous 3 Years. Turn over of at least 800,000 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 ineligible and non-responsive. Bidder must submit the following undertaking on an attested affidavit of PKR: 100/- from Bidder having following undertaking: a) Bid Validity Compliance (90 Days) b) Delivery Period Compliance (30 Days) c) Non-Black Listing d) Price Reasonability e) Compliance of warranty period. f) Agreement with all terms & conditions g) Agreement of operations of plant during the warranty period. The firm must be registered with anyone of following: Registrar of Firms / SECP / Chamber of Commerce. Bidder must mention in technical Bid the Make, Model, Country of Manufacturer and Country of Manufacturing. Bidder must attach the data sheet / brochure of the equipment quoted. Bidder must be manufacturer authorized distributor or sub distributor. **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 **Issuance of tender Documents:** From the date of publication of NIT to 30 May, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The tenders must be submitted latest by 30 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: Quarry road Quetta

Phone no: 3337666375 Fax no: 0812823712
Email: habibullahabbar0@gmail.com

Chief Executive Officer
Balochistan Institute Child
Health Services Quetta

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-232405415643 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 PHE DIVISION BARKHAN invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates

S.No	Name of Work/s	EC/Cost
1	D/development of Local Bore WSS Basti Jan Khan Phuliani Zakriani Chawata District Barkhan PSDP No. 8019-2023-24	2,920,000

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 2,044,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. PEC Category Code is C-6 and above (Upto 25 million) and Specialized Code is CE09(ii) & CE10. Income Tax Registration certificate is required. 03 successfully similar work completion certificate each of estimated cost or above, for the last 03 year. The bidding Firm must submit Company's latest Bank Account Statement or Bank Credit Line Certificate. Authority Letter addressed undersigned, specifically for this NIT issued by the owner of the firm on judicial stamp paper. The bidder should have fully operational office/branch. The firm must be provide from last 3 year audit report duly issued by the registered with ICAEP. The bidder must submit the Income Tax Return of the last (3) three year. The Bidders must comply with all prevailing all Govt taxes as notified by FBR from time to time. The firm must be Deposited a Tender fee Amounting to Rs. 1000/- in the head of account No. CO-2725 Through green challan. Submission of the required Bid Security in original. Affidavit on stamp paper of Rs. 100/- duly notarized to the effect that iii. Bidder has submitted the correct and 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 Blacklisted in accordance with law and the performance guarantee and payment, if any may be forfeited Signature & company/firm seal on every page of the bidding document. **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 03 June, 2024 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The tenders must be submitted latest by 03 June, 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: Barkhan

Phone no: 0829668242 Fax no: 0829668242
Email: wahab.qta@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE
DIVISION BARKHAN

PRQ No.2397/15-05-2024
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Brain drain...

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country including Pirzada Qasim, Ghazi Salahuddin, Sadiqa Salahuddin, Dr. Quratul Ain Bakhtiar, Mazhar Abbas and others participated in the session.

Speaking on the occasion, the Provincial Minister for Education said that no improvement has been marked in Balochistan during last 75 years. She pointed out that we could not utilize our resources and funds for improving the education sector in the province.

She said that the are a lot of problems in the education system, for instance, right persons are not working at the right place.

She said that every province knows better it's problem, so one has to take decisions at it's own.

She said that we definitely need guidance of the federation to put things on right track. Miss Rahila Hameed Durran said that education is a challenging ministry and there a lot of expectations of the people, but no one is ready to play one's part. She stressed that everyone has to fulfil one's responsibility to bring improvement so as to resolve the issues. Referring the issues in education system, the Minister Education regretfully pointed out that the cheating is major issue in the examinations. She said the exam centers are also sold in this regard, which is a big concern for her. She emphasized upon changing mindset of the people mainly students, parents and teachers in this regard.

CORRIGENDUM

Reference to PRQ No.2033/29-04-2024, published in daily newspapers dated 30-04-2024 under TSE-232404400713. Now the last date of bid submission has been extended to 23 May, 2024 at 11:30 A.M. The Bids will be opened electronically on the same day at 12:30 P.M. All other terms and conditions shall remain same

PRQ No.2411/16-5-2024

DIRECTOR ELECTRICITY (NORTH) ENERGY DEPARTMENT

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-232405415593 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. 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 PHE DIVISION BARKHAN invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates

S.No	Name of Work/s	EC/Cost
1	Supply/Installation of Solar System 21-Nos for various WSS in District Barkhan PSDP No.8015, 8016,8017, 8018, 8019, 8020 & 8021 -2023-24.	58,002,000

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 40,601,400 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years. showing financial capacity of the firm. PEC Category Code is C-5 and above (Upto 65 million) and In Relevant Category, And Specialized Code is CE09(ii) (Water Supply), EE11(iii) (Solar Energy system), CE11(i) (General engineering Works only). Income Tax Registration certificate is required. Valid General Sales Tax Registration Certificate. similar work completion certificate each of estimated cost or above, for the last 03 year. The bidder must be registered with Alternative Energy Development Board. The bidding Firm must submit Company's latest Bank Account Statement or Bank. Credit Line Certificate. Authority Letter addressed undersigned, specifically for this NIT issued by the owner of the firm on judicial stamp paper. The bidder should have fully operational office/branch. The firm must be provide from last 3 year audit report duly issued by the registered with ICAEP. The bidder must submit the Income Tax Return of the last (3) three year. The Bidders must comply with all prevailing all Govt taxes as notified by FBR from time to time. The firm must be Deposited a Tender fee Amounting to Rs.2000/- in the head of account No. CO-2725 Through green challan Submission of the required Bid Security. Affidavit on stamp paper of Rs. 100/- duly notarized to the effect that iii. Bidder has submitted the correct and 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 Blacklisted in accordance with law and the performance guarantee and payment, if any may be forfeited Signature & company/firm seal on every page of the bidding document. **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 NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk. **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk. **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 03 June, 2024 till 11:00 AM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 12:00 PM on EPPS System Address: Barkhan

Phone no: 0829668242 Fax no: 0829668242
Email: wahab.qta@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PHE DIVISION
BARKHAN

PRQ No.2395/15-05-2024
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Sharaf Bibi with regards to movable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Faiz Muhammad citizen number 5440004118561 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:

1. Sharaf Bibi (Spouse)

On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.

INCHARGE S.U. NADRA QUETTA-SU

PUBLIC NOTICE

Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Rahmat Bibi with regards to movable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Abdullah Jan citizen number 5440004118561 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:

1. Bibi Samina (Daughter) 2. Ailya Jamadani (Daughter) 3. Bibi Aafia (Daughter) 4. Bahmat Bibi (Spouse) 5. Muhammad Imran (Son) 6. Muhammad Umar (Son) 7. Muhammad Usman (Son)

On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.

INCHARGE S.U. NADRA QUETTA-SU

PID (I) No.6971/23

NDMA observes School Safety Day with safety kits handover, evacuation drills at federal schools

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Gender and Child Cell (GCC) of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in collaboration with Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) and Aga Khan Agency for Habitat Pakistan (AKAHP) organized an event at Islamabad Model School for Girls to mark School Safety Day.

This event underscores the Authority's unwavering commitment to Comprehensive School Safety and Climate Change Adaptation and Risk Reduction (CCDR/M), a news release said on Thursday.

The NDMA's GCC has organized a three day refresher and Training of Trainers (ToT) under "Pakistan School Safety Framework" for Federal Directorate of Education Teachers.

Likewise drills for school children were conducted encompassing a variety of disaster scenarios, including earthquakes and fire emergencies, to ensure that students, teachers, and

staff are well-versed in emergency protocols and crisis management techniques.

In a significant move to bolster disaster preparedness and proactive response mechanisms, the NDMA presented All-Inclusive School Safety Kit consisting 20 items to School Safety Committee.

The NDMA's Gender and Child Cell in partnership with key stakeholders including Education Ministers, UNICEF, British Council, School of Leadership, and AKAHP, has meticulously developed the Pakistan School Safety Framework (PSSF).

The PSSF initiative aims to enhance awareness and preparatory measures among students and educational institutes. NDMA's PSSF is the most robust and comprehensive School Safety Framework in the Asia Pacific Region recently lauded during UNICEF Regional Knowledge Exchange on Child Centered DRR/M in Kathmandu.



ISLAMABAD: Governor KPK, Faisal Karim Kundi calls on Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah at Parliament House.

Shaza inaugurated new branch of MARS BPO to generate 1000 more jobs for ICT sector

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Mars BPO, a leading name in the BPO industry, announces the inauguration of Mars Capital, its latest branch located in Gulberg Greens Islamabad. The inauguration ceremony was graced by the presence of Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, who officially inaugurated Mars Capital.

Established by entrepreneur Mr. Shoaib Akram, Mars BPO has emerged as a beacon of success in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. With a dedicated team of over 2,000 professionals, Mars BPO has achieved remarkable milestones over the past decade, under his

leadership. Mars Capital signifies a new chapter in the company's journey, representing its commitment to expansion and growth. This newest addition to the Mars BPO network is set to uphold the company's reputation for excellence and redefine standards in the industry. During the inauguration ceremony, the President of Mars BPO highlighted the company's vision for expansion, and he presented new ideas to broaden Mars' footprint across Pakistan and beyond.

"The inauguration of Mars Capital marks a significant milestone in our journey, symbolizing our unwavering commitment to expansion and excellence."



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja cutting ribbon to inaugurate Mars Capital office.

Process to finalize standing committees process to be completed today: Dr Fazal

ISLAMABAD (INP): A leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary, informed the National Assembly on Thursday that the process of forming Standing Committees has been completed. Speaking in the National Assembly, he explained that there was a slight delay in the process due to the decision to suspend the membership of members of reserved seats.

He said that the Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, had set a deadline for the completion of the standing committee process by Friday.

He added that all details of the standing committees would be submitted to Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq by the following day. The PML-N leader further said that seating arrangements had been finalized, adjustments made, and documents signed by parliamentary leaders had been submitted to the Speaker's office.

He assured that the seating arrangements would be completed before the next session of parliament.

UEP, NUST join hand to support students

ISLAMABAD (Online): United Energy Pakistan Limited (UEP), the nation's foremost gas and oil exploration and production company, has demonstrated its commitment to supporting financially disadvantaged students enrolled at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) by establishing circular endowments to facilitate their education.

To formalize the agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was recently signed between the two important parties. Representatives from

UEP, including Ali Abbas Mirza, Manager C&EA, Syed Imran Ali Shah, Team Leader, Planning, and Gulam Ali, Head of Management Services, visited NUST for this purpose.

Dr Rizwan Riaz, Pro Rector Research, Innovation, and Commercialization, along with Arooba Gilani, Director of the University Advancement Office, were also present during the signing ceremony.

Later, the team visited the National Science and Technology Park. The team was also briefed about the innovation ecosystem at NUST.



ISLAMABAD: Signing of MOU between Sehat Sahulat Program, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination and Health Services Academy. Dr. Malik Mukhtar Coordinator to PM on National Health, Dr. Luo dapeng WR WHO, Muhammad Arshad, CEO Sehat Sahulat Program, Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor Health Services Academy, Franz Von Ronne, Principal Advisor (SP-SHP) GIZ, Dr. Shoaib Suddle, Chairman One Man Commission on Minority Rights witnessed the ceremony.

Education Ministry to conduct review of OOSC to formulate plan for targeted interventions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Under Prime Minister directives and its declaration as part of National education emergency, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training will conduct a comprehensive review of Out-Of-School Children (OOSC) and formulate the plan for targeted interventions.

According to the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, the plan would be shared for formal approval of the Prime Minister.

The ministry informed that Out-of-School Children Fund, by earmarking minimum Rs. 25 billion in 5 years, would be established to support innovative and effective strategies,

aimed at reducing out-of-school children in the country.

However, the ministry will also propose a task force, with the approval of Prime Minister, to devise and implement strategic solutions to the educational crisis at national as well as provincial levels.

The task-force shall report directly to the Prime Minister's Office, comprising of provincial representatives and bilateral/multilateral partners.

The ministry further told that best efforts to gradually increase budget (Federal/ Provincial allocation for education to 4 percent of GDP shall be considered for infrastructural improvements and provi-

sion of quality education by 2029.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Federal Education, in coordination with provincial governments, will initiate a fast-track quality recruitment across the country to further improve educational standards.

"A comprehensive national nutritional programme shall also be launched for improving health of school-going children enhancing their learning capabilities. BISP will also take school meals initiatives in all backward district on priority" the ministry added.

Sharing additional details, the sources from Ministry of Federal Education said that community based

teaching will be incentivized, ensuring participation of every literate citizen to impart education at relevant levels.

Pakistan Education Endowment Fund will be established for sustainable financial support to students in backward districts of the country, incorporating provision of merit-based scholarships to underprivileged students, the Ministry added. It was informed that Daanish School system would be established in provinces as Centres of Excellence.

However, National Skill Development Programme shall be launched to train 60,000 students with international certifications.

IHC summons Zartaj Gul

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday sought complete record of cases against former minister Ms Zartaj Gul from authorities and summoned her in person on next hearing.

During the hearing, the court was told that there were five cases against the former minister and her name was included in Provisional National Identification List (PNIL) on the request of Islamabad and Punjab police.

The IHC heard the case seeking removal of Zartaj Gul's name from the Exit Control List (ECL). The state counsel informed the court that the name of the petitioner was included in PNIL.

The petitioner's lawyer argued that his client had been granted bails in the cases registered against her. The court sought the record and adjourned further hearing.

AIOU extends admissions deadline for continue students

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has extended enrollment deadline of Spring Semester 2024 for continuing students of Associate degree in Arts (BA General), Associate degree in Commerce (B.Com), Associate degree in Education, BS (ODL) programs, B.Ed programs, BBA, postgraduate diploma programs till May 30, 2024.

A significant number of students who were unable to pay their admission fees for various reasons requested the university authorities for an extension in the enrolment deadline, said a press release on Thursday.

In response to the requests, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood approved the extension, emphasizing that AIOU is implementing all necessary measures to support the students.

IRSA releases 192,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 192,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 200,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1470.57 feet and was 72.57 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 56,600 cusecs and 65,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1174.60 feet, which was 124.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Rubina Khalid, leads a pivotal discussion on the operational framework of the Skill Training Voucher (STV) program, accompanied by representatives from NAVTTC, PSDF, POEPA, and Akhuwat Foundation, at BISP Headquarters.

BISP intends to build a sense of pride in its beneficiaries: Rubina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Rubina Khalid has said that the BISP wants to build a sense of pride in its beneficiaries.

While highlighting the significance of skill training as a means to tackle the issue of youth unemployment, in a meeting with representatives of NAVTTC at the BISP Headquarters today, Rubina Khalid said that the major focus of their technical institutions should be to provide quality skill training and proper counselling so that youth could get jobs easily.

The meeting primarily aimed to deliberate on the operational modalities of the Skill Training Voucher (STV) program, a collaborative effort between BISP and NAVTTC.

The initiative seeks to equip children of Benazir Income Support

Programme beneficiaries with the necessary technical skills to secure employment opportunities, both within Pakistan and abroad.

Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme Rubina Khalid emphasised the significance of training programs such as Hospitality Management, Graphic Designing, Gems and Stone Polishing, Beautician, Nurse Care, and Plumbing, stating that they are highly practical and in demand. These fields offer ample employment opportunities for youth, either in established industries or through entrepreneurship, allowing them to establish their small businesses, she added. Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad, highlighted the pilot phase of the STV program as a pioneering initiative aimed at lifting people out of poverty.

Under this phase, he said that BISP will collabo-

rate with NAVTTC to identify and provide data on eligible Benazir Income Support Programme beneficiaries for skill training. The formal launch of the pilot phase is imminent, he added.

Executive Director of NAVTTC, Muhammad Aamir Jan, outlined the plans for the pilot phase, stating that 1000 children of Benazir Income Support Programme beneficiaries from selected districts will receive technical skill training. He said that upon completion of the program, they will be provided with employment opportunities, thereby contributing to their socioeconomic empowerment.

Addl. Secretary BISP, Dr Muhammad Tahir Noor, DG (CI) BISP Saira Atta and representatives of PSDF, POEPA, and Akhuwat Foundation were also present in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Vice-President Islamabad High Court Bar Association, Mujahid Asif Islam presenting souvenir to Hurriyat Leader, Shamim Shawl on the occasion of International Mother's Day, a tribute to mothers of Kashmir and Gaza.

Traffic volunteer students of Iqra University visits Safe City, Operation division

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: The student volunteers of Iqra University on Thursday visited the Safe City Islamabad and SSP Operations office under the "Friend of Police Program" and met with the senior police officers.

A public relations officer said that in response to the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the SSP Operations Division and SSP Safe City welcomed the student delegation of Traffic Police volunteer of Iqra University at Safe City and Operation division and briefed them about operational police

work, a public relations officer said.

He said that, the delegation visits the command and control center, the data hub unit, modern technology-equipped cameras, and the police operations center hall. They were fully briefed about the procedures and advantages of this Safe City Islamabad project.

Additionally, the student delegation was informed that Safe City Islamabad is playing a significant role in various departments through modern techniques, including the Police Operations Center, Emergency Control Center, Data Hub Unit.

while senior police officers, and the families of newly promoted Assistant Sub-Inspectors were also present on this occasion.

IG Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi graced the event as a special guest,

Randhawa stresses transparency, innovation in ICT's governance

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Diplomatic Insight Group recently hosted an exclusive reception to honour Muhammad Ali Randhawa on his appointment as Chief Commissioner of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) and Chairman of Capital Development Authority (CDA).

In his address, the Chief Commissioner Randhawa outlined his strategic plans for the development of Islamabad, focusing on key areas such as infrastructure, urban planning, and socio-economic growth. He highlighted the importance of collaboration with various stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector entities, and the diplomatic community, to achieve these goals, said the spokesman of Chief Commissioner Office Nouman Nazim here.

Randhawa emphasized the need for transpa-

rent and inclusive governance, ensuring that all residents of Islamabad benefit from the city's progress. Specifically, he discussed plans to improve the city's infrastructure, including roads, transportation systems, and utilities, to support the growing population and economic activity. He also emphasized the importance of sustainable development practices, such as green spaces, waste management, and renewable energy initiatives, to preserve Islamabad's natural beauty and environment. Furthermore, Randhawa stressed the role of technology and innovation in driving efficiency and effectiveness in government services and public administration. The event provided an opportunity for dignitaries, including ambassadors and diplomats, to offer their congratulations and express their support for Randhawa's vision.



ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam gifting a plant to Ivonne Julitta Bollow, Senior Vice President of Metro AG Global.

China to see stable growth in ICT spending amid AI boom: IDC

ISLAMABAD (INP): China's spending on information and communications technology (ICT) is projected to experience steady growth as various industries adopt the latest wave of digital transformation driven by artificial intelligence (AI).

According to global market research firm International Data Corporation (IDC), China's ICT spending is expected to increase by 9.8 percent year-on-year in 2024, surpassing the global average by two percentage points.

IDC further predicts that the growth rate of ICT spending in China may reach 10.2 percent year-on-year in 2025, continuing to outpace the global average.

"We are observing that the ICT sector is entering a new phase of transformation characterized by extensive integration of AI," said Wu Lianfeng, IDC China's vice president and chief re-

search analyst, during the IDC Directions 2024 event held in Beijing on Wednesday.

According to Wu, many Chinese firms have prioritized leveraging AI to drive business growth.

In particular, the financial sector and retail industry in China are expected to witness a compound annual growth rate of over 20 percent in spending on digital transformation from 2024 to 2027.

IDC also predicts strong growth in spending on generative AI in China. A recent study revealed that approximately 28 percent of the surveyed enterprises achieved a return on investment within one year after investing in generative AI.

In recent years, China has been actively promoting the integration of digital technologies across various industries.



ISLAMABAD: NDMA handed over school safety kit to Islamabad Model School for Girls on account of School Safety Day.

IG Islamabad pins rank badges to newly promoted 120 ASIs

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, a series of departmental promotions are underway in Islamabad Police, a public relations officer said.

He said that, in this regard, a prestigious ceremony was held to promote new officers to the rank of Assistant Sub-Inspector at Police Lines Headquarters Islamabad.

IGP Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi graced the event as a special guest,

assistant Sub-Inspectors, he congratulated them, and expresses good wishes for their future endeavors.

On this occasion, IGP Islamabad welcomed and congratulated the police officers and their families who participated in the ceremony. The happiness I am feeling today is beyond words. Your happiness is our happiness, and our hardships are shared, he added.

Today, this rank has been bestowed upon my friends and my family members. These ranks are for discipline. Every mem-

ber of this family, who thinks about serving humanity with full dedication, every person who aims to eliminate criminals and protect the lives and property of citizens is an Inspector General of Police, said IGP.

He further said that all the families present here are my family because our life's purpose is to save everything for the people without hesitation. If our purpose is one, then our family is also one. You all should have a spirit of serving humanity.

Today, Allah has honored you and has enlightened your shoulders. Now, after adorning this rank on your shoulders, your responsibilities given by Allah will also increase. You will become the voice of the oppressed and a shelter for the helpless and this is our



training. We are part of a department that is the inheritance of Ghazis and martyrs. Your job is only to eliminate anti-social elements and criminals, and protect the lives and property of people.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
Friday May 17, 2024

Dubai properties

Dubai, with all its glitter and glamour, has long been a destination of choice for wealthy individuals looking to expand their property portfolio abroad. As a high-income developing market economy, as well as a 'brotherly' Muslim state, many Pakistanis see it as an attractive destination to live and put down some roots in. At the same time, however, the emirate seems to have become a haven for those looking to hide their wealth — whether lawfully or unlawfully acquired — away from the taxman's watchful eyes. This concern has long been held by Pakistani authorities, who, insiders confirm, have tried on multiple occasions to get information on properties owned by Pakistani nationals in the emirate but have been turned down each time. Now, a trove of leaked data, reported on for the first time by Dawn and 74 other media outlets in 58 different countries, shines an unprecedented light on who owns what in a place often referred to as a playground for the rich.

The 'Dubai Unlocked' data, a consolidation of property ownership information till 2022, was recently made the subject of an international investigation. According to data seen by Pakistani journalists, their compatriots came second in terms of the combined number and value of properties held by foreign nationals in the state. For a country that can barely keep its head above water, this is a startling fact. Many individuals who have been part of present or past governments, individuals known to be associated with them, as well as several military generals were found to be in ownership of properties worth millions in Dubai — a revelation that is unlikely to sit well with the struggling masses, who generally view power with suspicion. In a country where mega-corruption scandals are all too familiar, questions will follow.

Of course, many of the properties owned by Pakistanis may have been acquired lawfully, and the state must not harass ordinary citizens about where they want to spend their money. At the same time, the authorities have a responsibility to approach the C4ADS and OCCRP, which are in possession of the Dubai data, and ask for it to be shared so that they may determine if any criminals, politically exposed or sanctioned persons are on the Dubai property register.

The FBR chairman has told Dawn that the authority will, once it gets access to this data, ensure that all tax evaders are caught. It is hoped that any investigation that is conducted will be fair and that no wrongdoing will be excused, regardless of how much favour any of the culprits enjoy in the current political configuration.

An opportunity has been provided to close the net around powerful elements. It must be seized.

Rafia Zakaria

On Oct 6, 1802, Ludwig van Beethoven penned a letter to his brothers. The letter reflected perhaps the lowest point in the famous composer's life, for it showed his frustration with the fact that he was becoming deaf. Beyond the physical dimensions of the situation, imagine an artist who cannot see or a composer who cannot hear. It is said that a deaf Beethoven, who had been conducting his masterpiece the Ninth Symphony, had to be turned around to witness the wild applause of the audience. For years, it was a mystery. Why did Beethoven become deaf?

Luckily, those who wonder about such questions may now get answers, as scientists can glean information from organic matter belonging to people who lived a very long time ago. DNA analyses have now progressed to the extent that the hair of those who lived hundreds, even thousands of years ago, can be analysed

for information about health and disease, and by extension, the environment in which they lived. In the case of Beethoven, the locks of hair that have recently been analysed are bits that were cut off from his head perhaps as he lay dying. They have been confirmed by DNA analysis to have belonged to him.

An Australian who owned three locks of Beethoven's hair wanted to honour the composer's rather prescient wish that future scientists may figure out why he had been so sick. This is how two locks of the hair ended up at the Mayo Clinic in the US, where scientists tested it to see what chemicals and metals it might contain, which would bear clues to what happened to one of the greatest composers of all time.

As it turns out, Beethoven's hair is now shown to have extremely high amounts of lead, some of the highest concentrations that the scientists studying the hair had ever seen. Beethoven had lead poisoning along with

likely poisoning from mercury and arsenic, which were also present in high amounts in his hair. Lead poisoning can cause several effects in the nervous system and these effects can include deafness. One possible source for the high levels of lead may have been cheap wine whose taste was sweetened by the addition of 'lead sugar'. This could build up in the body over time to cause lead poisoning.

It is not just Beethoven's hair that apparently solved the mystery regarding his deafness. Some years ago, the hair of another long dead person was tested. She was Isabella of Aragon, a princess of Naples, who is believed by some to have been the model for Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. Isabella died in 1524. Her hair was also found to contain high levels of mercury — up to 50 parts per million, which is deemed toxic by the World Health Organisation that advises a limit of 5ppm. However, what is more likely to have killed Isabella was a form

of leishmaniasis. Tests conducted on her bones point to this fact. Besides damaging the organs, the disease causes skin lesions that are difficult to cure. The mercury poisoning that Isabella had, scientists say, artificially suppressed her immune system, which prevented her body from fighting against the disease. Ironically, the physicians at the time administered mercury, which was considered to be a remedy for skin diseases.

If such secrets from Beethoven and Isabella of Aragon can be divulged from hair and bone analyses, then naturally using medical technology to scrutinise the remnants of Egyptian mummies, including various dead pharaohs, would yield a treasure trove of information. Some years ago, Cairo-based radiologist Sahar Saleem scanned the mummified body of Pharaoh Amenhotep I who died 3,500 years ago. It was found that the pharaoh was five feet six inches tall and looked a lot like his father. He had been buried with jewellery and amulets.

Apparently, a dead wasp was found trapped in the sarcophagus, very likely attracted by garlands of delphiniums, safflower and other flowers that adorned the coffin.

There are countless preserved locks of hair and other such items available from important figures in the history of other civilisations as well. However, the time and effort that is dedicated to scientifically analysing the remnants of kings and queens and ordinary folk, especially in Western and pharaonic history, there appears to be little interest in such research in our part of the world, even though we stand at the crossroads of old civilisations. It would be very interesting to know more about the life and the times of the warriors and merchants and others who travelled to the subcontinent or settled there. Even more crucially, it would be fascinating to find answers to the mysteries and questions that surround ancient lore.

In all settings though, the past informs

the present, and deeper knowledge of life as it was thousands of years ago can help a people understand their own evolution, especially in terms of health and disease, and how they learnt to adapt to specific environments. For instance, it would be fascinating to learn more about what ailments women suffered, what sort of bone and oral health they enjoyed — all the way from ordinary women to princesses. Such analysis can also create a sequence of knowledge that can help reveal how certain patterns of life and behaviour that are carrying into the present day may be affecting female health in the same way.

Science has a lot to tell us about the past; the mysteries of the lives of ancient people may be upheld or rejected.

The question, as the world steps into this new era, is that of which mysteries deserve resolution and which ones are perhaps better left alone as ambiguities. -- Courtesy Dawn

Unending genocidal war**Zahid Hussain**

Defying international pressure, Israel has begun its long-threatened military assault in the southern Gaza city of Rafah. It is speeding up the ongoing genocide of the occupied population. Israel's latest military offensive has forced hundreds and thousands of people to flee the city. In the words of a UN official, there is "no safe place in the enclave".

A full-blown famine has already begun in the territory, with Zionist forces closing all access to relief supplies. According to the UN, "a staggering 85 per cent of the total population of Gaza — 1.9 million civilians — have been forcibly displaced amid Israel's military operations." The genocide that has entered its eighth month has so far left more than 35,000 people dead — most of them women and children.

Such savagery is unparalleled in modern history. Yet the world has failed to stop the catastrophe. The latest Israeli offensive and the relentless bombardment of the civilian population has alarmed even Israel's Western patrons. But still, they are not

willing to act effectively to stop the genocide of a hapless population. The latest evacuation has affected close to a million people in Rafah.

US President Joe Biden's decision to pause the supply of some of the most lethal bombs to Israel is mere hogwash. While withholding the delivery of 3,500 high-payload bombs, which Israel has been using to kill thousands of Palestinians, the US remains the biggest supplier of weapons to the Zionist state. This makes it an accomplice in the genocide. It is not surprising that the right-wing Israeli government is going ahead with the ground invasion of Rafah, ignoring the US warning.

In fact, the US president's pledge to continue with his administration's "ironclad" support for Israel renders his decision to suspend the supply of some weapons irrelevant. The Israeli leadership has vowed to continue the military assault on Rafah notwithstanding the US warning, and perhaps knowing that it would not cause relations with Tel Aviv's staunchest ally to rupture.

Nothing could expose

America's hypocrisy more than the statement by White House National Security Council coordinator John Kirby, who said that the "operation along the Gaza-Egypt border in eastern Rafah was not a full-on invasion of the city that President Joe Biden has repeatedly warned against on humanitarian grounds". Israel, according to him, had described it as "an operation of limited scale and duration".

Such a statement in the midst of the relentless bombardment of the city and Israeli tanks rumbling on the outskirts, forcing the eviction of some 300,000 people, is an attempt to provide justification for the invasion. Israeli tanks and planes have attacked several areas and homes in Rafah in the past one week. The American defence of Israeli action comes as the UN and aid agencies are warning of a "full-blown famine" because of the closure of two main crossings near Rafah.

According to some media reports, Israel sent its ground forces into Rafah and took control of the Palestinian side of the crossing hours after Hamas said it had accepted a ceasefire

proposal put forward by Qatari and Egyptian mediators. Israel said the proposal fell short of its requirements. Whatever leverage the US claims to have doesn't seem to be working as Israel continues with its genocidal war.

Meanwhile, Israel's extension of the war to Rafah has intensified public outrage the world over, including in the US. Campus protests against the Gaza war are spreading despite police actions against student encampments. In many cases, the faculty has joined protesting students — reminiscent of the anti-war protests of the 1960s. The rising anti-war sentiment, particularly among the young voters, will hugely affect President Biden's bid for a second term in the November presidential elections. The Gaza war has changed America's political landscape.

The protests have also spread to Western Europe, increasing pressure on governments there to call for a ceasefire. Israel's refusal to ease hostilities and its latest military offensive in Rafah has increased Tel Aviv's international isolation. Many of its Western European allies have now

openly condemned Israel's killing of the civilian population, though Germany and Britain have not halted weapons supply to Tel Aviv.

Israel's growing international isolation was demonstrated in the overwhelming support at the UN General Assembly for Palestine's bid to become a full member of the UN, with 143 countries voting in favour and nine (including the US and Israel amongst others) abstained. The UNGA wants the Security Council to "reconsider the matter favourably".

Those who voted in favour included France and many other European countries, demonstrating the widening breach in the pro-Israel bloc amid the growing public backlash against Israel's genocidal policy. The overwhelming support for Palestine has been a rebuke for the Zionist state as well as the US. The resolution was put before the UNGA after the US had vetoed a similar motion for granting Palestine full member status in the Security Council.

The Security Council's approval is still

needed for the resolution to come into effect that would lead to Palestine sitting among the member states and participating in discussions on all matters. It seems certain that the US will again use its power of veto to block it. Nevertheless, it has been a huge moral victory for the Palestinian cause.

Despite relentless bombing and ground action that has killed thousands of people and turned most of Gaza into rubble, Tel Aviv has still not been able to achieve its objectives. Israeli forces are back in northern Gaza, which it had earlier claimed to have cleared of resistance. They are now engaged in an intense battle with Palestinian fighters. Israel is paying a huge cost for invading Gaza. It's a no-win war for the Zionist state despite American backing and its military superiority. The prolonged war and increasing international isolation have worsened Israel's predicament. But there is still no sign of Israel ending hostilities. The international community must act to stop the genocidal war before Israel turns the entire occupied enclave into a graveyard.

Red-light areas**F.S. Aijazuddin**

Narendra Modi and Sanjay Leela Bhansali have something in common: they both view Pakistan through warped lenses. Modi's perception is of a country overrun by terrorists on the lookout for Indian soft spots to attack. Bhansali uses his camera lens to create spectacular falsities. His latest is an eight-part Netflix series on Lahore's red-light area Heera Mandi. (It derived its name from Raja Hira Singh, a favourite of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.)

Bhansali — a talented filmmaker, producer, writer, and composer — is the despair of his critics. He challenged them with films such as a saccharine adaptation of Shakespeare's romance Romeo and Juliet, titled Ramlila. It invoked the ire of some orthodox Ram bhakts. He was forced to change its name, elongating it to Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela.

His detractors made him run the gauntlet of the Delhi High Court, and then the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court, which, a week after the film's release, banned the movie's showing in Uttar Pradesh. Despite these obstacles, GKRRL became the fifth highest-grossing film of 2013.

Bhansali's next project Bajirao Mastani (2015) extolled the love between the Maratha hero Peshwa Bajirao I and his second wife Mastani. The descendants of Bajirao and Mastani disowned the film, claiming that "excessive creative liberty by Bhansali caused wrongful portrayal of their ancestors". The Bombay High Court, when approached for a stay, tactfully refused. Again, Bhansali answered his critics; this film became one of the highest-grossing Indian films of all time.

Bhansali's Padmaavat

(2018) pulled out of oblivion (as Bhansali would have his audiences believe) of Lucknow's cloying culture and fawning finesse. His multilingual cast parrot their Urdu dialogues passably well but ignore the niceties of proper pronunciation. His heroines are gorgeously dressed; his muscular male actors often underdressed; and only the lower orders — the maids and a Sikh love-sick swain — speak Punjabi.

His dancers swirl like dizzying dervi-sh-ehs, imitating their older sisters in earlier Muslim social dram-ams, particularly Mughal-i-Azam and Pakeezah. His men inexplicably wear furry caps once popularised by the late actor/ chief minister of Tamil Nadu M.G. Ramachandran.

Over the years, Lahore's Heera Mandi, like its denizens, began to lose its allure. Trade shifted from the old city to newer locations, giving way to Lahore's Food Street. The kothas that once resonated with the sound of ankle-bells are now pricey restaurants. London's Soho, after the 1970s, underwent a similar transformation — from steamy fleshpots to steaming cooking pots.

Some may recall that in 1959, the UK promulgated the Street Offences Act. It made loitering and solicitation in a public place an offence. Its aim was to clean British cities of importuning streetwalkers. Comedian Peter Ustinov questioned its utility, suggesting that cleaning the streets was rather like clearing the table after a meal: "One has to put the crockery somewhere." Over the years, the crockery from Lahore's Heera Mandi has moved to richer exurbia. If that Heera Mandi exists at all, it is as a fictional red-light suburb of Bhansali's technicolour mind. -- Courtesy Dawn

Breathing space**Khaqan Hassan Najeeb**

Literature, including several cross-country empirical studies, highlights three broad macroeconomic outcomes of a country's programme engagement with the IMF. Programmes lead to an improvement in the current account deficit, a build-up in foreign exchange reserves, and a fall in inflation albeit at a slower pace. This can broadly be defined as macroeconomic stabilisation. The consequent effect of adjustment policies used to achieve some level of stabilisation is a slowing of economic growth, at least in the short run.

Since embracing the Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) with the IMF in July 2023, Pakistan's economy is behaving according to the book. The current account deficit has been restricted to \$0.5 billion during July-March (FY24) compared to \$4.1bn in the same period last year. Foreign exchange reserves with the State Bank rose from a meagre \$3.9 billion in June 2023 to \$9.1bn on May 3, 2024. Inflation tapered off from a high of 38 per cent year on year in May 2023 to 17.3pc in April 2024. Growth is estimated to remain subdued at nearly 2pc for FY24. Pakistan's economy has reacted in the way economies are expected to respond when they enter into an engagement with the IMF.

Also, the SBA helped avert debt default in July 2023, stabilised the rupee's free fall, and ensured that other lenders (bilateral, multilateral, and friendly countries) come on board to plug Pakistan's external gross financing gap, at least for FY24. Unfortunately, new commercial funding and international bond issuance remain out of reach.

Engagement with the IMF has enabled Pakistan's access to new debt to pay off the earlier one, fund the current account deficit, and thus stay afloat. Hence, Pakistan's external public debt rose from \$94.8bn in June 2023 to \$98.1bn in September 2023 and to \$99.7bn in December 2023.

The adjustment policies under the SBA helped stem the alarming slide of the economy. These policies included a tighter monetary and fiscal stance and a flexible exchange rate regime to curb imports and push exports. In Pakistan, energy sector price pass-throughs are an additional conditionality as we delay adhering to regulators' price determinations. The nine-month SBA gave policymakers the necessary breathing space to embark on a reform mission to remove the distortions in the economy.

So where do we go from here? We know that macrostabilisation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for sustainable growth and prosperity. Deep reforms are the only way to repair and meaningfully alter the economy's fundamentals. A growth framework based on unleashing a competitive domestic private sector, redesigning Pakistan's crumbling energy sector away from the public sector-led constellation, and repairing the fiscal framework are akin to survival.

Severe weaknesses in these areas have put the country in a perennial liquidity crunch in the external, energy, and fiscal sectors. Due to the shortfall of both dollars and rupees, the state has limited resources to materially improve the lives of the millions living an impoverished existence. They are debilitated by the poor quality of healthcare and education in a coun-

try which has weak opportunities and rising inequality. It is of little surprise that with each passing day, the citizenry becomes more dissatisfied with the functioning of a lethargic state and feeble democracy.

A successful attempt to reform the economy demands a few prerequisites. First, those at the helm should alter their perception of government functioning. They have to see the government as an enabler, not a deliverer.

Second, some serious islands of competence and expertise are needed within the public sector. Undertaking reform surgeries and executing the next Extended Fund Facility (EFF) will be difficult with a weak professional team.

Third, when we look at Pakistan's medium-term macro framework, we realise that the numbers on investment, productivity, exports, and debt will improve only marginally without a home-grown Herculean effort. That leads us to the fourth and last of the prerequisites — the realisation that whereas another programme supported by the IMF is a necessity, reconfiguring the economy on a productive footing goes much beyond the purview of a three-year EFF facility.

Neverending technical assistance and foreign-funded projects have had little impact on a dysfunctional tax system. This should be an eye-opener to take matters into our own hands.

The nation waits for the government to redefining its functioning based on the ideas highlighted by the aforementioned four prerequisites. The nation must hold the policymakers' feet to the fire on all these counts to ensure accountability. -- Courtesy Dawn

Governor, CM Punjab resolve to work together for public welfare, development

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan met Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and expressed determination to work together for sustainable development and improvement in quality of life of common man in the province during a meeting at Jati Umrah, here on Thursday.

CM Maryam Nawaz congratulated the governor on assuming his office and expressed her best wishes for him. Economic development, wheat crisis, governance, education, health facilities, law and order and other important issues including climate change were also discussed during the meeting.

Senator Pervez Rasheed, Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Information Minister Azma Zahid Bukhari and other officials were present.

Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz reiterated their commitment to work together for welfare of people of Punjab during the meeting.

The governor said "our focus is to serve people and work together for development, prosperity and stability of the country. All political parties should put aside their differences and should be on the same page," he stressed.

He also resolved to play his role in improving communication between the federation and the provincial government.

He expressed the hope that the Punjab government would resolve the wheat procurement issue on priority. He said

that the Punjab government would get full support from the Governor's House to ensure implementation of the constitution and the law.

Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that every constitutional position was respectable adding that efforts would be made to ensure supremacy of the rule of law in the province. She said that the governor was a constitutional position, which was a link between the provinces and the federation.

The CM said that Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) was being made more effective across the province, adding that many projects of education, health, road infrastructure and information technology have been started in Punjab.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a meeting with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif at Jati Umrah.

Sindh govt, UNICEF to launch Child Protection Program

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and UNICEF Country head Abdullah A Fadil agreed to launch a Child Protection program to strengthen evidence-based policy and legislation.

In a meeting held here at CM House on Thursday, the chief minister and the UNICEF Country representative discussed matters related to Child protection program.

Minister of Health Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary School Education Zahid Abbasi, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, Secretary Health Rehan Baloch, Secretary Social Welfare Sajid Jamal Abro, PD Zubair Channa were also present on the occasion. The UNICEF delegation members include Chief Field Officer Prem Chand, Executive Officer Ms. Xene, health Specialist Dr Kamal and others. The CM and the UNICEF Country chief after a thorough discussion, agreed that UNICEF would foster enabling environment to strengthen evidence-based policy and legislation under child labour survey, child protection policy, birth registration by-laws, protection from child online abuse and exploitation and prevention strategies would be carried out to reduce child protection violations and harmful traditional practices.

The key points of the program for child protection include prevention of child marriage, parenting packages for positive parent-child interaction, Child Online Protection-ethical and safe use of cyber technology. Strengthening of community-based protection structures, Service Strengthening to deliver equity-based gender-responsive services for children and adolescents, Case management and referral system including Certified of Proficiency in information system management (CPMIS).

Assembly passes budget as opposition withdraw cut motions

PESHAWAR (APP): The session of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly chaired by Speaker Babar Salim Swati here Thursday passed eleven months excessive budget of Rs 1456 billion for 2023-24 after approving all demands for grants.

The ministers tabled demands for grants of their respective departments while opposition withdrew their cut motions on the request of treasury benches. Afterwards, the budget was passed when Speaker approved all 66 demands for grants.

At the outset of session, treasury member, Mushtaq Ahmad Ghani, opposition members including Sobia Shahid of PML-N, Ejaz Muhammad and Rehana Ismail of JUI presented their cut motion when law minister tabled demands for grants of Rs 5.84166 billion that was being spent by caretaker setup. Sobia Shahid demanded action against culprits of May 9 vandalism and said that monuments of martyred were damaged and building of Radio Pakistan was set ablaze on that day.

She said that people might start protest again if perpetrators were not punished Mushtaq Ghani also demanded judicial inquiry on May 9 incident to sift fiction from reality.

He withdrew cut motion later when Speaker placated him and said that budget would be revised if cut motions were accepted.

All the members withdrew cut motion after assurance of law minister to accept demands of opposition members.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Transport and Mass Transit, Information and Exise and Taxation Sharjeel Inam Memon talking to media persons at Orangi Town.

Qasim takes important initiative to prevent Leishmania epidemic

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 32 kg drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters here on Thursday.

He informed that 320 grams Ice was recovered from a parcel booked for Italy at a courier office in Rawalpindi.

Twelve kilogram hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up in Hayatabad Peshawar while 9.6 kg hashish was recovered from a drug smuggler netted near Lakeview Park Islamabad.

the support of MSF, Syed Qasim Ali Shah said, adding, Glucantime injections have been sold through UNICEF for the treatment of Leishmania.

The next batch of injections will arrive in two weeks, Syed Qasim Ali Shah informed.

He said, Glucantime injections will be delivered to other districts of the province including southern districts in two weeks. Syed Qasim Ali Shah said that if the usual measures are not taken in time, certainly will face an epidemic like situation.

He said they would conduct joint campaign against Leishmania with Livestock Department.

Bail of CM KP confirmed in 12 cases

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Malik Ejaz Asif of Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi has approved bail of Chief Minister (CM) KP Ali Amin Gandapur in the case registered in police station civil lines. This way bail of Ali Amin Gandapur has been approved in 12 cases related to Rawalpindi.

The court has approved bail of 10 accused including former federal and provincial ministers Taj Gul, Raja Basharat in the cases registered in police station civil line and New Town.

These accused appeared in the court along with their lawyers including Malik Muhammad Faisal advocate on Thursday.

During the hearing of the case Malik Muhammad Faisal advocate argued that all the cases registered against the petitioner are based on malafide intent and political victimization. The petitioner is not nominated in any one case.



LAHORE: Activists of Young Doctors Association holding a press conference for their demands in the Provincial Capital.

MUST, DHQ signs MOU to modernize healthcare services in Mirpur

MIRPUR-AJK (APP): Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST) and Mirpur Divisional Headquarters (DHQ) Teaching Hospital have teamed up to transform healthcare services in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), signing a landmark agreement to develop a cutting-edge Hospital Management System.

According to APP Correspondent, Mirpur University and DHQ Hospital have taken a significant step towards modernizing healthcare services in the region. The two institutions have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance and develop the Hospital Management System (HMS), revolutionizing the hospital's digital infrastructure. The partnership will see the university's Network and Telecommunication Centre (NTC) providing expertise and resources to improve patient care, streamline operations, and increase efficiency.

This collaboration will strengthen the bond between MUST and DHQ Hospital, advancing healthcare services and education in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Senior officials from both institutions attended the MoU signing ceremony.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Haji Gulbar Khan presiding over the meeting of Power Steering Committee at CM Secretariat.

Meeting discusses matters relating to provision of funds to KPHA

PESHAWAR: Provincial Finance Advisor, Muzamil Aslam Thursday chaired a meeting to discuss provision of funds to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Highways Authority (KPHA) for land purchase.

The meeting discussed provision of funds to KPHA for continuation of ongoing projects and to purchase land for future projects. Participants concurred to invite suggestions from Accountant General Office about payments of outstanding dues.

The advisor said that government is utilizing resources to complete public welfare projects and strategy was being prepared to pay the outstanding amount. He also directed participants to present their proposals and suggestions relating to matter in next meeting.

Provincial Minister for Communication and Works, Shakil Ahmad, Secretary Works, Dr. Asad Ali, Secretary Law, Akhtar Saeed Managing Director KPHA, Asad Ali and concerned officials also attended the meeting.

Deputy Speaker SA calls on Governor KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly Anthony Naveed called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House here on Thursday.

Bishop of Pakistan Humphrey Sarfaraz Peter was also present at the meeting.

Deputy Speaker and Bishop Sarfaraz Peter congratulated Faisal Karim Kundi on assuming the post of Governor and presented him with a bouquet.

The Governor thanked Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly Anthony Naveed and Bishop Sarfaraz Peter for coming to congratulate him.

Ensuring cooperation and playing a role on a priority basis in solving the problems faced by the minorities in the province, the Governor assured them.

Governor KP appreciated the role of the minority community in the development.

The services of all the minorities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially the Christian community, in all sectors including the education sector, are commendable, Faisal Karim Kundi said.

Online open court at Tax House Peshawar on May 21

PESHAWAR (APP): An online open court will be held at Tax House Peshawar to address the genuine problems of the taxpayers from 12:00 P.M to 1:00 P.M on May 21, 2024.

Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue Regional Tax Office (RTO) Peshawar, Zafar Iqbal Khan will participate in the proceedings while Commissioner Withholding Syed Khalid Shah, Commissioner Peshawar Zone Dr Farooq Jameel, Commissioner Corporate Zone Fazal Malik, Additional Commissioner Headquarters Bahadar Sher Afridi, Deputy Commissioner Headquarters Riaz Ahmad Khan and Assistant Commissioner/Focal Person Sheraz Ahmad Khan will be present for the assistance of the Chief Commissioner.

Trading community and other taxpayers have been invited for participation in the online open court to redress their problems through website www.facebook.com.

AG KP agrees to ensure withholding of sales tax on service

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Director General (DG) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA) held a meeting with the Accountant General (AG) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday to discuss issues relating to withholding of Sales Tax on Services from bills processed through the AG office. The Accountant General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Naseer Uddin Sarwar welcomed DG KPRA Fouzia Iqbal at his office for the meeting. Advisor to KPRA on Tax Enforcement Fazal Amin Shah and Assistant Collector (Withholding) Hizbullah Khan also accompanied the DG KPRA.

The DG KPRA and her team presented the agenda for the meeting and briefed AG Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and his team that the exemption to erstwhile Federal Administered Tribal Area (FATA) and Provincial Administered Tribal Area (PATA) has expired on October 31, 2023 and the sales tax on services is extended to the regions so AG Office.

ANF seizes 32 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 32 kg drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters here on Thursday.

He informed that 320 grams Ice was recovered from a parcel booked for Italy at a courier office in Rawalpindi.

Twelve kilogram hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up in Hayatabad Peshawar while 9.6 kg hashish was recovered from a drug smuggler netted near Lakeview Park Islamabad.



LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique in a group photo with Vice Chancellor and Faculty Members after inauguration of the Store Management System (SMS) at Mayo Hospital.

Punjab Health Minister inaugurates SMS at Mayo Hospital

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique inaugurated the Store Management System (SMS) at Mayo Hospital on Thursday.

The new system, a modern software for store management, aims to enhance transparency and efficiency in hospital operations.

He congratulated the Mayo Hospital management for the important initiative, emphasizing use of this technology in all hospitals to improve transparency

and ease the patient care. "This software will provide real-time information on current stock, supply requirements, purchase orders, and other critical data," he said. "It will significantly reduce manual work and human resource needs," he added. The minister highlighted that the SMS would soon be implemented in other hospitals across the province. "We must ensure transparency through measures like these. Our government took principled steps in 2012 to

recruit pharmacists in government hospitals. Today, principals and medical superintendents have been appointed on merit to various hospitals across Punjab. This real-time software will benefit not only Mayo Hospital but the entire province," he added. Vice-Chancellor of King Edward Medical University Professor Mahmood Ayaz expressed gratitude for Minister Salman Rafique's support. SMS CEO Professor Ahsan Nauman provided detailed insights into the digital inventory system.

IGP orders further improving quality of investigation

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has said that the ongoing campaigns of drug-free Punjab, crimes related to women and children should be accelerated with effective supervision; justice should be provided to citizens without delay by giving real punishment to dangerous criminals.

While presiding over a video-link meeting at the Central Police Office, he ordered to improve the quality of investigation to bring the criminals to justice. He stressed that forensic sciences, artificial intelligence and professional skills should be fully utilised to solve blind murder cases.

The IGP said that the follow-up of the criminals of robbery murder, blind murder, kidnapping for ransom, rape should be carried out more diligently to ensure arrest of culprits.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister for Social Welfare, Special Education Mashal Yousafzai addressing during the closing ceremony of Child Protection Case Management Foundation Training for District Child Protection Units.

9 community NGOs pledge cooperation to end polio

LAHORE (APP): Heads of nine key community organisations in Punjab have pledged their full support to eradicate polio from the province, extending their cooperation from major cities to all districts.

The commitment was made at a jirga, organised at the office of the Director General Health Punjab here on Thursday, attended by over 30 representatives from significant community organisations including Pakhtun Falahi Tanzeem, Mohmand Loya Jirga, Afghan Refugees Aman Committee, Khattak Welfare Association, Marwat Welfare Association, Bajaur Welfare Association, Hazara Welfare Organisation, Minzal Welfare Organisation, and Pakhtun Qabail Movement. The session was chaired by Khizer Afzaal, the head of the polio programme in Punjab and Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Coordinator. During the jirga, the organisations reviewed past initiatives aimed at eradicating polio in Punjab, such as awareness campaigns.



KARACHI: Pakistani Shiite Muslim protesters shout anti-Israeli slogans, marking the 76th anniversary of Nakba of what the Palestinians call the "Nakba" or "catastrophe," referring to their uprooting in the war over Israel's 1948 creation, during a protest in Karachi.

PM orders urgent inquiry into Neelum-Jhelum project's technical fault

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed for an urgent probe, within days, into reasons for the technical fault in the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project (NJHP) that led to suspension of power generation.

The prime minister issued the directives at the project site during his day-long visit to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) where he was briefed by the officials of NJHP Company about the recent technical fault during the last month.

The 969 megawatts project first faced suspension of power generation in 2022 due to the fault in head race tunnel and was later restored

after a year in September last year, and the recent one in April this year due to the same technical fault.

The prime minister, while speaking on the occasion, expressed his displeasure that the findings of the inquiry into the recent fault were still awaited and directed the officials concerned to submit the report within days and restore the power generation after repair work as early as possible.

He said it was unfortunate that \$5 billion had been spent on the project despite an initial estimate of \$40 million, but it was still facing technical issues. "I am very much clear. I need a thorough probe whether lapses were in the design or in the construction, and the responsibility should be

fixed. No more delay will be acceptable," he added.

PM Shehbaz said it was a project of national significance in the power sector after Tarbela and Mangla dams with a huge cost and must remain functional for decades.

He directed that the inquiry should be carried out by third party experts and not by the designer or contractor of the project.

He also directed the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and NJHP Company to complete the repair work of the tunnel at the earliest and resume generation. The prime minister appreciated the WAPDA chairman and his team for their efforts to repair the fault in the tunnel and resumption of generation last year.



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses at Neelum-Jhelum Hydro Power Project.

Commerce minister chairs high-level Committee on export facilitation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday chaired a high level meeting to address pressing issues in Pakistan's export and business sectors.

On the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, a high-level committee was notified to address issues and challenges faced by the business sector, said a press release issued here.

Attendees included top exporters, business leaders, the Director General of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Maj. Gen. Tabassum Habib and various ministry representatives from the FBR, finance, industry, maritime and information technology sectors.

The meeting focused

on creating actionable solutions by directly engaging with stakeholders and relevant government bodies on matters periodically communicated by chambers of commerce, the Pakistan Business Council (PBC), the business community, and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) to the ministry.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan stressed the need for high-ranking officials to ensure effective decision-making. He expressed concern over the absence of the FBR Chairman, SBP Governor, and Secretary of Finance, emphasizing their importance in future meetings.

Exporters and business representatives voiced concerns, which were directed to pertinent departments for an

immediate response, with feedback required within 24 hours. Key issues included liquidity challenges, high business costs, an expanded Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), tax facilitation, industry status recognition, and better management of the Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA). Participants also highlighted the lack of a regulatory body for shipping companies, tariff rationalization, infrastructure deficiencies, and security issues.

The minister reiterated the government's commitment to a conducive business environment and referenced Prime Minister Sharif's recent session with business leaders in Karachi, which focused on boosting the economy through exports.

Integrated system to be evolved to promote trade, investment: Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan Thursday said that a coordinated and integrated system in collaboration with the provinces would be evolved to promote trade and investment, besides ensuring the investors protection.

While presiding over a high level meeting on "Ease of Doing Business", organized by the Board of Investment, the minister said that the consultation with the provinces would be done for legislation to be enacted at provincial level so that the investors can get a more satisfactory environment.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Advisor to Prime Minister Rana

Ehsan Afzal attended the meeting, where as federal secretaries and Chairman Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan were also present in the meeting, said a press release.

Aleem Khan said that all the four provinces and their chief ministers would also be taken into confidence in this regard, adding that ease of doing business would provide a clear road map for the promotion of business in the country while its related proposals, legislation and other important issues would be finalized soon.

He further said that the proposed investment and business promotion projects along with the time line would be submitted to the Prime Minister for final approval.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja addresses the inaugural ceremony of Pak-Qatar IT Tower.

Aurangzeb says: No new legislation under consideration to extend tax, for erstwhile FATA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb Thursday informed the National Assembly that there is no new legislation under consideration to extend tax and duty exemptions for the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) regions. In response to a calling attention notice regarding the proposal to withdraw tax and duty exemptions for these regions, the minister explained that these exemptions had been in place for six years and are now set to expire on June 30 of this year.

Textile exports reach \$13.68bln in 9 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned \$13.683.251 million from exports of textile products during the first ten months of the current financial year (2023-24), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported here on Thursday.

The exports of the textile products however, witnessed a slight decline of 0.19 percent during July-April (2023-24) when compared to the exports of \$13,709.246 million during July-April (2022-23).

The textile commodities that witnessed positive trade growth included raw cotton, the exports of which grew by 319.91 percent, from \$13.357 million last year to \$15.944 million this year.

Likewise, the exports of cotton yarn increased by 32.83 percent, from \$636.832 million last year to \$845.923 million this year and bed wear by 1.82 percent, from \$2,249.778 million to \$2,290.796 million. The export of towels also surged by 4.81 percent from \$824.879 million to \$864.547 million whereas the export of made-up articles.



LAHORE: Senator (R) Lt Gen Abdul Qayyum Chief Patron Pak China Business Forum (PCBF) in a group photo with Chinese investors in FPCCI office Lahore.

Rs.842.3m imposed on 8080 electricity thieves: FESCO

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has imposed a fine of Rs.842.3 million on 8080 electricity thieves caught during last 250 days of anti-power-theft campaign in FESCO region.

FESCO Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said here on Thursday that FESCO had launched a vigorous anti-theft drive in 8 districts of its region and during 250 days of this campaign the anti-theft teams of the company caught 6418 power pilferers including 31 electricity thieves during last 24 hours.

The company had imposed a total fine of Rs.842.3 million on the pilferers under the head of detection units of 18.8 million in addition to getting cases registered against 7948 accused whereas the police had arrested 6418 electricity thieves so far besides recovering Rs.61.5 million.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan chairing a high level meeting to address pressing issues in Pakistan's export and business sectors.

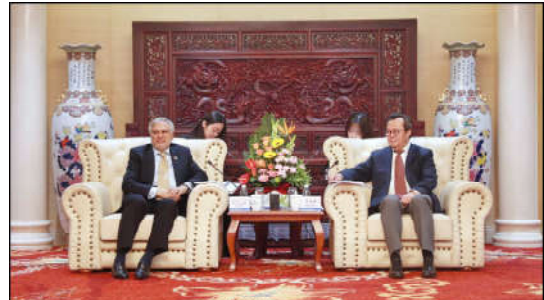
Jazz invests Rs 5.3b to strengthen Pakistan's digital infrastructure

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, invested over Rs 5.3 billion to further strengthen the digital ecosystem across fintech, cloud services and digital entertainment verticals in the first quarter of 2024, taking its overall investment in the country to \$10.6 billion.

A substantial portion of Jazz's capital expenditure in the quarter was allocated towards network expansion and upgrade, said a news release. This resulted in a significant increase in the 4G customer base to 45.9 million. Overall, the subscriber base reached 71.7 million, with monthly active users across its digital platforms reaching 67 million. Furthermore, Jazz emerged as the largest Voice over LTE (VoLTE) network in the region, boasting over 23 million

daily active VoLTE customers. The introduction of JazzFi, allowing users to communicate over Wi-Fi connections, garnered over 4 million users within months of its launching.

Commenting on the strategy, Jazz CEO Aamir Ibrahim said, "we are expanding the outreach and capacity of our 4G network, especially in semi-urban and rural areas, we are also serving as our customers' digital lifestyle partner with platform Tamasha, driving financial inclusion with Pakistan's leading fintech JazzCash; and bolstering our cloud & cyber-security offering through Garaj. The growing engagement levels across all our platforms, and the fact that more than 42% of the industry-wide 4G subscriptions in the quarter were contributed by Jazz.



BEIJING: Chairman of EXIM Bank of China Wu Fulin calls on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

Telenor Pakistan hosts women leadership program

ISLAMABAD (APP): Telenor Pakistan hosted the Women Leadership Program designed specifically for young female professionals.

The event marked a significant milestone in their commitment to achieve gender equality and accelerate the advancement of more and diverse women into leadership, said a news release issued here.

Khurram Ashfaq, CEO of Telenor Pakistan stressed the importance of digital inclusion and narrowing the gender gap. Ashfaq emphasized that women play a vital role in shaping the future.

"We remain dedicated to promoting women's leadership and assisting young female professionals in realising their full potential. Prioritising inclusivity is crucial, especially in this digital age. Women play a vital role in shaping the future, and their unique skills and talents can ensure that future technologies and

structures benefit everyone."

He also mentioned Telenor's programs to help women return to the workforce after extended breaks, increase their representation in all job groups, and create a fair and desirable working environment.

The program featured prominent speakers like Mohammad Khosa (PepsiCo Pakistan CEO), Ehsan Sava (Daraz Managing Director), Fiza Farhan (CEO ORA Global Development Advisors/Convenor MCC Pakistan, Jehan Ara (Katalyst Labs CEO), and Aisha Sarwari (The Coca-Cola Company Public Affairs Director). These leaders discussed navigating leadership challenges, overcoming barriers, and effective communication. "Digital Transformation holds vast potential for the empowerment of women and girls, but it requires collective action bringing together policy.

PSX stays bullish, gains 266.72 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 266.72 points, a positive change of 0.36 per cent, closing at 74,930.70 points against 74,663.98 points the previous trading day.

A total of 407,625,139 shares valuing Rs 16,978 billion were traded during the day as compared to 572,420,772 shares valuing Rs 25,947 billion on the last day.

Some 377 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 161 of them recorded gains and 194 sustained losses, whereas the prices of 22 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were P.I.A.C (A) with 34,846,148 shares at Rs26.20 per share, Pak-Electric with 28,542,422 shares at Rs 26.47 per share and World Call Telecom with 24,078,585 shares at Rs 1.38 per share.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships, Maersk Cabo Verde, Scio Spirit, Alba Gas and Hv Alice carrying Container, Palm Kernel, LPG and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Sui Southern Gas Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile six more ships, Obe Queen, Advantage Paradise, Chan Shen-303, Pan Ivy, World Virtue and Flag Filia carrying Fertilizer, Gas oil, Chemicals and Coals also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours. A total of ten ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Maersk Cabo Verde, Asia Inspire, Jag Pavitra and Hv Alice are expected to sail on today afternoon.

Cargo volume of 135,189 tonnes comprising 118,226 tonnes imports cargo and 16,963 tonnes export cargo.



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

Deputy PM lauds EXIM Bank's robust support for development projects in Pak

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chairman of EXIM Bank of China, Wu Fulin called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar in Beijing Thursday.

The Foreign Minister and Chairman EXIM Bank discussed the EXIM Bank's long-standing cooperation with Pakistan and its interest in future investments in Pakistan.

He outlined

Pakistan's efforts for financial and economic stability and business friendly policies. Ishaq Dar particularly noted the stellar performance of Pakistan Stock Exchange and renewed confidence of international investors in Pakistan's economy. The Foreign Minister appreciated EXIM Bank's robust support for important development projects in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: The federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb was called on by Alternate Executive Directors (AED) of Asian Development Bank (ADB) at Finance Division.

IT sector's uplift key priority: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja Thursday said that the development of IT sector was the first priority and the government welcomed this investment by Pak-Qatar Group in Pakistan's IT infrastructure uplift.

While addressing the inaugural ceremony of Pak-Qatar IT Tower, she said there were number of opportunities for our youth in this era of technology.

She said the government is going to digitize economy, governance and society under National Digitalization Plan, adding that digitalization would ensure transparency in the system and facilitation for

the masses. Shaza Fatima said that steps were underway for better IT and Telecommunication infrastructure and connectivity in the country.

She said Pakistan and Qatar have brotherly relations and it is welcoming that investment from Qatar is moving towards IT sector.

She said that Pakistan needed foreign investment as the atmosphere for FDI was conducive.

Meanwhile, addressing the inaugural ceremony of Mars BPO, Minister of State for IT said Pakistan has huge youth population and the BPO sector has a great potential of creating jobs for them.

Gold rates up by Rs 1,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 1,600 and was sold at Rs 245,600 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs 244,000 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 1,371 to Rs 210,562 from Rs 209,191 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 193,016 from Rs 191,758, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.



ISLAMABAD: MD SIDB directs revival of skilled imparting centres.

MD SIDB directs revival of skilled imparting centres

PESHAWAR (APP): Managing Director (MD) Small Industries Development Board (SIDB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Habibullah Arif has directed the revival of the skilled imparting centers to prepare skilled manpower for the industries of the province.

He was speaking during a visit to the office of the SIDB Employees Union here on Thursday. Besides, Deputy Managing Director (DMD), Nauman Fayyaz, DMD Zulfikar Ali Sahibzada, Director Finance, Mohammad Bashir, president of the employees union, Sahibzada Nasim Khan, Adnan Gul, Mohammad Bilal, Roz Khan, Mohammad Sami and Haji Imtiaz were also present on the occasion. The Managing Director SIDB said that the provincial government would be contacted for the development wood sector to once again bind the public sector institutes to procure furniture from Pak-German Wood Works, which has no match in the quality of furniture. He also commended the role of the employees union in getting furniture sale orders, which could not be ignored.

On this occasion, he has also shown a personal interest in the resolution of the problems.

China and Russia reaffirm their close ties as Moscow presses its offensive in Ukraine

Monitoring Desk BEIJING: Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Thursday reaffirmed their "no-limits" partnership that has deepened as both countries face rising tensions with the West, and they criticized U.S. military alliances in Asia and the Pacific region.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping attend an official welcoming ceremony in Beijing, China.

West, and it continues to supply key components needed by Moscow for weapons production. China, which has not criticized the invasion, proposed a broadly worded peace plan in 2023, calling for a cease-fire and for direct talks between Moscow and Kyiv. The plan was rejected by both Ukraine and the West for failing to call for Russia to leave occupied parts of Ukraine.

China also gave a rhetorical nod to Russia's narrative about Nazism in Ukraine, with a joint statement Thursday that said Moscow and Beijing should defend the post-World War II order and "severely condemn the glorification of or even attempts to revive Nazism and militarism."

Biden, Trump agree to first presidential debate next month

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Incumbent President Joe Biden and Donald Trump agreed on Wednesday to hold the first presidential debate in June. The Democrat president challenged his rival to "make my day" and the scandal-plagued Republi-

can promptly responded that he was ready to "rumble." CNN announced it plans to host the first debate on the 27 of June, in Atlanta (Georgia). Biden proposed a second debate in September and Trump accepted.

Iran switches to Friday, Saturday weekend Monitoring Desk TEHRAN: Iran's parliament approved changes to the working week for all government employees on Wednesday that would establish a 40-hour working week with a Friday-Saturday weekend.

The legislation, which still requires a green light from constitutional watchdog the Guardian Council, would replace the existing 44-hour working week with a half-day Thursday and a full-day off Friday.

The change had been hotly debated, and 136 lawmakers voted in favour with 66 against and three abstentions, the official IRNA news agency said.

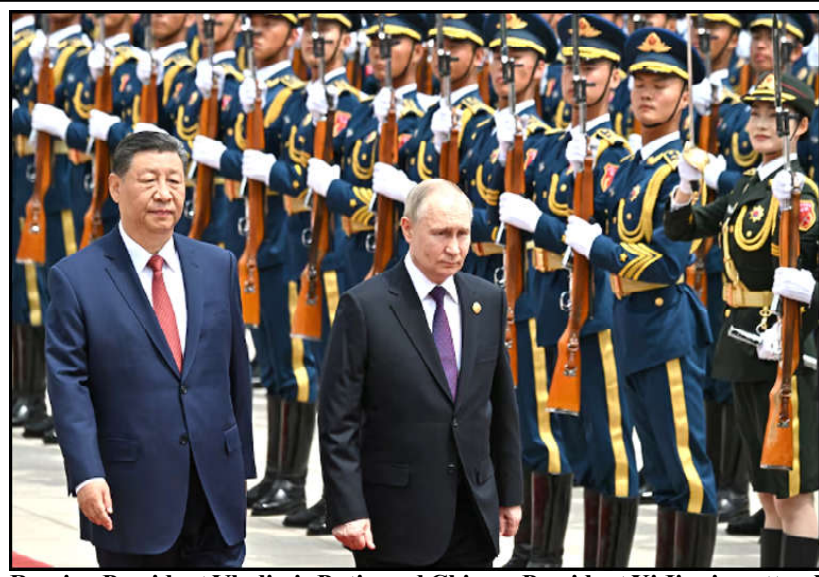
Lawmaker Mohsen Pirhadi told parliament on Wednesday that leading cleric Ayatollah Javadi Amoli had raised no objection to Saturday as a weekend day.

Brazil flooding will take weeks to subside, experts warn Monitoring Desk PORTO ALEGRE: Brazil's southernmost state capital may suffer severe flooding for weeks to come, experts warn, compounding the struggles of half a million people forced to abandon their inundated homes.

Parts of Rio Grande do Sul state have seen more than 630 mm (25 inches) of rain so far this month, national weather service INMET reported - more than London's average rainfall in a year.

The waters of Lake Guaiba, which breached its banks to flood state capital Porto Alegre, have risen again this week to 5.22 meters (17.13 feet), well above the flood level of 3.0 meters and close to last week's all-time record of 5.33 meters.

Chile's capital faces fiercest cold snap in decades Monitoring Desk SANTIAGO: Chileans are bundling up with more clothes and clutching cups of hot coffee as the country faces the most intense cold snap in nearly 70 years, bringing winter weather in the middle of autumn.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping attend an official welcoming ceremony in Beijing, China.

US questions China's no-first-use nuclear call given buildup

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: China has not responded to US nuclear-weapons risk-reduction proposals and Washington has questions about Beijing's call for no-first-use talks while China continues to build up its arsenal, the top US arms control official said on Wednesday.

Under Secretary of State Bonnie Jenkins told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the US estimates China currently has 500 operational nuclear warheads and will probably have more than 1,000 by 2030.

France declares state of emergency in New Caledonia Monitoring Desk SYDNEY: France declared a state of emergency on the Pacific island of New Caledonia on Wednesday after three young indigenous Kanak and a police officer were killed in riots over electoral reform.

The state of emergency will give authorities additional powers to ban gatherings and forbid people from moving around the French-ruled island. Police reinforcements have been sent - and more are on the way - after rioters torched vehicles and businesses and looted stores. Schools have been shut and there is already a curfew in the capital.

Turkey says it killed PKK members in northern Iraq Monitoring Desk ANKARA: Turkey hit northern Iraq with air strikes on Wednesday and claimed to have killed 12 members of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) sheltering there.

The Turkish defence ministry said the PKK militants had been "neutralised" in the Gara and Hakurk regions of northern Iraq. The ministry's use of the term "neutralised" commonly means killed. The PKK, which has been waging an insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984.

More than half of Zimbabwean population will need food aid, cabinet says Monitoring Desk HARARE: More than half of Zimbabwe's population will need food aid this year following a devastating drought that led to widespread crop failure as humanitarian organisations seek funding to save many from hunger, the country's cabinet heard late on Tuesday.

Zimbabwe is among the worst hit countries by the El Nino induced drought in Southern Africa, with Zambia and Malawi also facing food shortages.

Inmate escapes as gunmen ambush van in France, kill two Monitoring Desk ROUEN: Gunmen attacked a prison van at a motorway toll in northern France on Tuesday, killing at least two prison officers and freeing a convict who had been jailed last week.

Dance videos of Modi, rival turn up AI heat in Indian election Monitoring Desk MUMBAI: An AI video shows an ecstatic Narendra Modi sporting a trendy jacket and trousers, grooving on a stage to a Bollywood song as the crowd cheers.

UN's top court opens hearings on the Israeli military's incursion into Rafah Monitoring Desk THE HAGUE: The United Nations' top court on Thursday opened two days of hearings into a request from South Africa to press Israel to halt its military operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population has sought shelter.

Ukraine says it has checked Russia's offensive in a key town, but Moscow says it will keep pushing Monitoring Desk KYIV: Ukrainian units locked in street battles with the Kremlin's forces in a key northeastern Ukraine town have halted the Russian advance, military officials in Kyiv claimed Thursday, though a senior Moscow official said the frontline push had enough resources to keep going.

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South Africa said the situation was getting worse in the war-ravaged area. "Israel's genocide has continued at pace and has reached a new and horrific stage," said Vusumuzi Madonsela, South Africa's ambassador to the Netherlands. Israel has portrayed Rafah as the last stronghold of the militant group, brushing off warnings from the United States and other allies that any major operation there would be catastrophic for civilians.

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Monitoring Desk KYIV: Ukrainian units locked in street battles with the Kremlin's forces in a key northeastern Ukraine town have halted the Russian advance, military officials in Kyiv claimed Thursday, though a senior Moscow official said the frontline push had enough resources to keep going.

Russian attempts to establish a foothold in the town of Vovchansk, which is among the largest towns in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region with a pre-war population of 17,000, "have been foiled," Ukraine's general staff said in a midday report. It was not possible to independently verify the claim.

Six people were injured Thursday in one Russian daylight attack on Vovchansk using cluster munitions, local officials said, as emergency workers and volunteers were rescuing people affected by shelling. Among the injured were two medics, he said.

Ukrainian authorities have evacuated some 8,000 civilians from the town. The Russian army's usual tactic is to reduce towns and villages to ruins with aerial strikes before its units move in.

Vovchansk, located just 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the Russian border, has been a hotspot in the fighting in recent days. Russia launched an offensive in the Kharkiv area late last week, significantly adding to the pressure on Ukraine's outnumbered and outgunned forces which are waiting for delayed deliveries of crucial weapons and ammunition from Western partners.

Ukraine has repeatedly tried to strike behind Russian lines, often using drones though Russia's response to the new technology used in unmanned vehicles has improved in recent months.

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TENDER NOTICE TSE-232405416923 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.

Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Works, Bid Security. Row 1: 1 Manufactured Vehicles & Accessories 2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List. Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan.

Masked residents watch activists amid protests in Noumea linked to a debate on a constitutional bill aimed at enlarging the electorate for upcoming elections in the overseas French territory of New Caledonia.

PRQ No.2423/16-5-2024 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION KHUZDAR

Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Works, Bid Security. Row 1: 1 CONST. OF PCC WALL AT SONEJIAREADIST 10,000,000

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TENDER NOTICE TSE-232405417003 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.

Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Works, Bid Security. Row 1: 1 CONST. OF PCC PROTECTION WALL AT KILL 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.

PRQ No.2425/16-5-2024 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION KHUZDAR

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Advertisement for 'Tishir' (تیشیر) featuring a woman in a blue dress and text in Urdu. Includes contact information for 'رجسٹرڈ عدالت عالیہ بلوچستان کوئٹہ'.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti presiding over a meeting regarding Balochistan Youth Policy 2024

Interest free loan to be provided to veterinary doctors: CM directs to advertise 92 vacant posts of veterinary doctors in Livestock dept. at earliest

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has directed to the concerned high ups to advertise 92 vacant posts of the veterinary doctors in Livestock department at the earliest. The Chief Minister announced to provide interest free loans to the unemployed veterinary doctors under the Soft Loan Programme.

The Chief Minister was speaking to a representative delegation of the Balochistan Veterinary Doctors Association here

on Thursday. The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Livestock Department, Muhammad Tayyab Lehri and other concerned high ups were also present in the meeting.

Speaking to the veterinary doctors, Chief Minister said that the veterinary doctors would be provided interest free loans under the Soft term loan Programme.

Under the programme, the veterinary doctors would be able to establish their service centers in the field, the Chief Minister added.

They would also be able to start their earning and livelihood in a dignified manner by providing professional services and facilities to the livestock breeders. He said that at the time when world is heading towards the corporate farming, then we would also have to pay attention on the corporate farming.

The Chief Minister assured the members of delegation to provide suitable opportunities to the youngsters for provision of other veterinary services by formulating effective policies in the province.



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir with regard to 960 MW Dudhial Hydropower Project.

Revolutionary changes to be brought in agri sector, pledges Jatak

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Mir Ali Madad Jatak has stated that revolutionary changes would be brought in the agriculture sector of the province.

He said that at present the major issue being faced by the zamindars is electricity supply. He assured that every possible steps would be taken to provide relief to the zamindars resolving their issues.

The provincial government has prepared strategy for converting the agricultural tube wells of the province on solar energy in collaboration with the federal government.

The Provincial Minister for Agriculture was speaking on occasion of the visit to Directorate General of Water Management here

on Thursday. The Director General Water Management Maqsood Ahmed briefed the Minister about the overall functioning of the institution.

Also present on the occasion were the senior officers of Water Management from all districts.

Ali Madad Jatak said that water management is very important section of the Agriculture department. On one hand zamindars benefit from the water management but it also plays important role for stopping wastage of water, he added.

The Minister said that every possible effort would be made to remove hurdles for bringing improvement in the water management sector and release funds for it.



USTAMUHAMMAD: Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani talking with mediamen

China's high quality development model offers new opportunities for Pakistan: Jiang Zaidong

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chinese Ambassador, Jiang Zaidong at a well-attended symposium on the Transformation of China's Economy to High-Quality Development Model organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) said the keenness on Pakistan's side to greatly enhance the ongoing commercial cooperation was welcoming as it would inject new impetus into China-Pakistan cooperation as China enters a new development phase.

Dispelling the impression of an overcapacity problem being faced by

China, Ambassador Zaidong said that China did not have a problem of "overcapacity" as China was exporting to the whole world and had a matching production capacity. "China is ready to work with Pakistan to implement the important consensus reached by leaders of the two countries," he said in a news release.

Ambassador Zaidong explained that to promote an in-depth integration of China's new development of 5Cs (5 Corridors: growth corridor, livelihood-enhancing corridor, innovation corridor, green

corridor and open corridor) Pakistan and China needed yet closer cooperation both at the governmental as well as the societal level.

While China's new energy product exports were already benefiting the world and making important contributions to addressing climate change issues and promoting green transformation, with the new developmental plans China aspired to transform and upgrade traditional industries, cultivate and strengthen emerging industries, and lay out the construction of future-oriented industries.

Pakistan to be among world's top 10 economies by 2047: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms, Ahsan Iqbal Thursday said that by 2047, Pakistan would be included amongst top 10 economies in the world.

"By working hard, we can bring Pakistan to the top 10 economies of the world by 2047 and for this we have to silence negative voices," he said.

Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal's address at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Conference was held in the Ministry of Planning regarding the national development agenda.

The minister said that development is possible only through implementation of SDGs.

"It is also to be taken into consideration that Pakistan's budget would be compatible with the SDGs," he said.

Ahsan said that natural resources were misused in industrial revolution. He said that "We want to retain a better country for future generations".

The minister said that sustainable development goals are included in

Pakistan's 2025 agenda. He said that Pakistan is among top ten countries affected by climate change.

The minister said that parliamentarians have a very important role regarding sustainable development goals and the work of distribution of resources is done by the Parliament.

He said the private sector has an important role to play in achieving the SDGs and media should help spread awareness of SDGs to the public.

The Sustainable Development Goals, when

formulated, were intended to develop and it is our responsibility to establish safe and sustainable development for future generations, he said.

He said that "We want to retain a better country for future generations".

The minister said that sustainable development goals are included in Pakistan's 2025 agenda.

Today, all the stakeholders, civil society and private sector can also play a role in achieving sustainable development goals, he stressed.

Chinese Finance Minister reaffirms continued support for Pak financial stability

BEIJING (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday met with Chinese Minister of Finance Lan Fo'an and underlined the Government of Pakistan's reform agenda with a focus on governance, revenue, and ease of doing business to attract Foreign Direct Investment.

The deputy prime minister, who is on a four-day visit to China, also emphasized Pakistan's high priority to investments from China, and shared an overview of the priority sectors identified for this purpose, including agriculture, IT, mines and minerals and renewable energy.

Deputy Prime Minister

ter Dar and Minister Lan expressed profound appreciation for Pakistan-China financial and banking cooperation calling it a manifestation of the 'All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership' between the two countries.

They discussed ideas to further enhance financial cooperation, especially in view of growing business-to-business (B2B) linkages between Pakistan and China.

Taking note of the positive trajectory of Pakistan's economy, the Chinese finance minister commended Pakistan's economic agenda and reiterated China's continued support to Pakistan in the efforts to strengthen financial stability.

National Assembly told Pakistan witnessed 1,514 terror incidents in 2023

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan witnessed 1,514 terror incidents in 2023, the interior ministry told National Assembly (NA) on Thursday. According to details, the interior ministry submitted a written in the National Assembly regarding law and order situation of Pakistan.

The report stated that 572 security personnel were martyred and 1292 were injured in the terror

incidents in 2023, while 358 citizens lost their lives and 700 sustained wounds. The report highlighted the worsening law and order situation in the country specially in KP, where 858 terror attacks were reported that claimed lives of 402 security personnel and 178 civilians. As many as 148 security personnel were martyred and 198 were injured in 626 terror attacks in Balochistan during the past year.



BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets with the Minister of Finance of the People's Republic of China Lan Fo'an.

War against terrorism vital for survival of next generations: Decisions of political & military leadership guarantees prosperity of Pakistan, Speaker BA

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai has stated that today's decisions of the political and military leadership are guarantor of the prosperity of Pakistan.

He said that the war of Pak Army against recent terrorism and extremism is vital for survival of our future generations.

He said that it is because of the Pak Army that nation is united and the trust of world is increasing on Pakistan because of the patriotism and sacrifices of our jawans.

In a statement issued here on Thursday, the Speaker said that the war that was started against Pakistan after 9/11 is still

continued.

The world knows that Pak Army defeated all such elements who had attacked the sovereignty of the country.

He said that Pakistan should be our priority whether these are the decisions about legislation making or judgments of the higher judiciary. This is because of the establishment otherwise the political and constitutional institutions had brought the country at this juncture from where the

return was impossible towards success.

He condemned the criticism being made against the Pak Army under the garb of following the constitution.

He said that it is not only condemnable but also hateful.

This process should be stopped, adding he stressed.

The Speaker said that we have to make right decisions for our country and take care.

Pakistan accepts IMF's condition to abolish subsidy to energy sector

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has accepted to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) condition to abolish subsidy on the energy sector on Thursday.

Quoting its sources, the channel reported that the IMF had also set the condition of timely issuance of the notification of annual tariff adjustment.

Sources disclosed that both sides also agreed on speeding up the collection of electricity bills.

Besides that, they revealed, Pakistan and the Fund had agreed on presenting a plan for abolishing the subsidy the government had offered on tube wells.

The international money lending organization, they elaborated, had also demanded the government to eliminate circular debt in the gas sector.

Sources further said that the IMF had also de-

manded the issuance of a notification for an increase in gas prices on June 1 besides stopping gas supply to captive power plants at cheaper rates during the ongoing year.

The Fund, they elaborated, had not only urged the government to supply gas to all fertilizer plants in the country at the same rate but also to other industries across the country.

The negotiations between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the 24th 'longer and larger' bailout programme had kicked off on Monday.

Pakistani side, led by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, comprised Governor State Bank of Pakistan Jameel Ahmed, Federal Board of Revenue Chair-man Amjed Zubair Tiwana and their respective teams.



QUETTA: Former MPAs Akhtar Hussain Lango and Ahmed Nawaz Baloch meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Pakistan, UK vow to enhance coordination on multilateral fora

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the United Kingdom have expressed their commitment to further enhance coordination on multilateral fora on matters relating to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The commitment was expressed during the 6th Round of Pakistan-UK Dialogue on Arms Control & Non-Proliferation here on Wednesday, a Foreign Office press release said on Thursday.

Additional Foreign Secretary (Arms Control & Disarmament) Ambassador Mohammad Kamran Akhtar, and Director Defence and International Security at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom, Ambassador Stephen Lillie, led their respective delegations.

A broad spectrum of topics relating to arms con-

trol, disarmament and non-proliferation came under discussion during the dialogue.

Both sides also shared their perspectives on issues concerning global and regional security, new and emerging technologies, including the military use of artificial intelligence and the peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

The discussions encompassed matters pertaining to the agenda of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). While reiterating the need to ensure continuity in the conduct of the dialogue, the two sides agreed to hold the 7th Round of Consultations next year in London.



QUETTA: A representative delegation of Balochistan Veterinary Doctors Association meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti. Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan are also present

Salik expresses satisfaction over arrangements for Pakistani Hujjaj

MADINAH al-MUNAWWARAH (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Thursday expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made for extending maximum facilities to Pakistani Hajj pilgrims by the country's Hajj Mission and supporting team.

"All the team present is working with full dedication. So far, by the grace of Allah Almighty, there is not even a single complaint which the ministry had been receiving in the past," he said.

The minister was talking to media after visiting different sections of the Pakistan Hajj Mission's Main Control Office (MCO), working round-the-clock for facilitation of the guests of Allah Almighty, and getting a briefing from Director Hajj Madina Zia-ur-Rehman.

He said providing accommodation to 100% Pakistani Hujjaj in the Markazia, from where Masjid Nabvi and Roaza-

15 injured in Lasbela coach accident

LASBELLA (APP): At least fifteen people sustained injuries when a passenger coach traveling from Karachi to Awaran met with a fatal accident near Lasbela district of Balochistan on Thursday.

According to the details, the ill-fated passenger coach was heading towards Awaran when it turned turtle due to over-speeding near the Land pull area of Lasbela, injuring 15 persons, a privater news channel reported.

Soon after the incident, rescue teams reached the spot after getting information and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital.

New political party APP will be announced today

ISLAMABAD (Online): New political party under former Prime Minister (PM) Shahid Khaqan Abbasi will be announced today (Friday). Name of new party has been proposed as "Awam Pakistan Party" (APP). Application for its registration will be filed in Election Commission (EC). Logo, anthem and membership forms have been prepared of this party.

The central leaders of party are Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Miftah Ismail, Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, Sardar Mehtab Abbasi, Javed Abbasi and others.

Sources said Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Miftah Ismail along with other members will announce name of new party and its future strategy today in



QUETTA: Members of Pakistan Citizen Liberation Forum are holding protest demonstration against price hike of essential commodities and inflation, at Quetta press club.