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ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb presenting a copy of Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-2024 to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif prior to its official launch.

Deputy PM Dar calls for an embargo on military supplies to Israel, deployment of impartial int'l force

Dar urges UN chief to resolve Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday called upon for an embargo on all the military supplies and sales to Israel, besides proposing to consider the deployment of an impartial international force for the protection of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank.

In a statement at the High-Level Conference on Urgent Humanitarian Response for Gaza, in Amman, Jordan, the deputy prime minister urged that they must ensure the immediate withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from Gaza in accordance with resolution 2735.

At this critical jun-

ture, he said they must undertake concrete steps to effectively redress the situation.

Spelling out the need of urgent steps, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that they must ensure the ceasefire called for by the UN Security Council was complete, durable and unconditional.

It must also halt the violence in the West Bank; he said, adding that it should step up the provision of humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered Palestinians in Gaza and meet their needs for food, medicines, energy and other essential supplies.

The deputy prime minister stressed to enlarge their support for the

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and respond to the flash appeal issued by the UN in April.

"The demonization of UNRWA and the UN must be halted. All donors who have suspended support to UNRWA must reverse their decisions, and all others should enhance their assistance," a press release quoted him as saying.

Deputy Prime Minister said Pakistan proposed that a comprehensive plan for the reconstruction of Gaza should be prepared following the UN Resolution 2735 and they would be happy to partner in the reconstruction of the educational institutions in Gaza.

Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-24

Significant progress made in achieving macroeconomic stability: Finance Minister

Country's Per capita income increase by US\$129 to US\$1680 in FY 2024; Investment to GDP ratio stands at 13.14 percent in FY2024; Agriculture sector posts 6.25% growth in FY 2023-24; Economic Survey; NHA portfolio comprises 123 projects with Rs 156.50 bln allocation; Economic Survey; Manufacturing, Mining sectors contribute 13.6 % to GDP in FY 2024; Pakistan, CoD narrowing down to US \$ 0.5 billion during July-March FY 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said that despite challenges, the country had made significant progress in achieving macroeconomic stability, with a remarkable 30 percent growth in revenue collection, a reduced current account deficit, reduction in inflation and a stable currency.

Addressing a press conference at the launching ceremony of Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-

24, the minister said, this situation indicated a remarkable turnaround from a precarious economic situation, characterized by a 0.2% GDP contraction, 29% rupee depreciation, and a shrinking foreign exchange reserves, which had declined to just two weeks' worth of import cover.

He said, despite challenges in the large-scale manufacturing (LSM) sector due to interest rates and energy issues, the country's GDP growth had found a silver-

lining in the agriculture sector, which had been boosted by bumper crops.

He said, the agriculture and the dairy and livestock sector were expected to remain a key driver of growth in the years to come.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said the economic journey of Pakistan in the current fiscal year commenced under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif before caretaker administration, who took the bold step of approaching the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund (IMF) and signing of 9-month Standby Agreement, which was very important part of the progress the country had been witnessing today.

He said that it had not been signed, the situation would have been very different and there would have been discussions on economic figures in a very different context. He said the decision of going to IMF had proven fruitful for the country's economy.

He was of the view that successful conclusion

of the IMF's Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) had also restored the confidence in Pakistan's economy. Talking about future programme with the Fund, the minister said Pakistan and IMF have had a productive and constructive dialogue during the fund's recent visit. He said, the successful conclusion of the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) has demonstrated Pakistan's commitment to discipline, which had been acknowledged by the IMF.

President, PM discuss public relief in upcoming annual budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday met with President Asif Ali Zardari where they discussed the country's overall economic situation with a particular focus on extending relief to the people in the upcoming annual budget 2024-25.

Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal also attended the meeting, according to a President House press release.

President Zardari emphasised that the interests of the low-income and middle class should be protected in the annual budget. He also assured the prime minister of his support for the national development and achievement of fiscal targets.

Prime Minister Shehbaz and President Zardari also deliberated on the development projects to be proposed in the next budget. The prime minister apprised the president of his recent five-day visit to China.

Budget for fiscal year 2024-25 to be presented today

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal government budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 will be presented in National Assembly (NA) today on Wednesday.

NA session will take place under Speaker NA Ayyaz Sadiq at 4 p.m.

Finance minister Aurangzeb will present federal budget.

As per government sources federal budget of volume of about Rs 18000 billion will be presented today.

The salaries of government employees are likely to be increased by 10 to 15 percent. Its approval in principal will be given in special meeting of federal cabinet today.

Govt approves three days holiday on Eid ul Adha

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government has approved a three-day holiday on the occasion of Eid ul Adha from June 17 to 19.

Sources said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved the summary forwarded by the Cabinet Division.

The development comes as Pakistan will celebrate Eid ul Adha on June 17 after the Zil Hajj moon was sighted on June 7 last week.



ISLAMABAD: MP Amir Sadiq Sanjrani meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti

China visit successful as high powered Chinese delegation to visit Pakistan soon: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that his recent five-day visit to China from June 4-8 remained successful as a high-powered Chinese delegation would visit Pakistan soon.

The prime minister, chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet, told the members that the collective efforts by his team including the federal ministers and federal secretaries came to fruition and that the visit was a great opportunity to strengthen the Pakistan-China bilateral relations.

He said that despite the security issue highlighted during the engagements with the Chinese leadership and business community, the visit concluded with a "positive note."

"I can say unequivocally that the visit ended with a positive note. During the conversation with the Chinese ambassador at the banquet hosted by the Communist Party Secretary during my visit to Shanxi province, I got a deep feeling that the visit reminded very successful," Prime Minister Shehbaz remarked while addressing the cabinet members of his visit.

The prime minister thanked all of his cabinet members particularly Ishaq Dar, Ahsan Iqbal, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Dr Musaddik Malik and Shaza Fatima Khawaja, and relevant federal secretaries for their collective efforts which led to the success of the visit.

He expressed confidence that the collective efforts would lead to the swift and successful execution of the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

With completion of several important federal projects New era of development & prosperity to begin in Balochistan: CM

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that new era of development and prosperity would begin in the province with completion of several important projects included in the federal public sector development programme (PSDP).

The important projects included in the federal PSDP are included Kachhi canal and Karachi-Quetta dual highway.

The Chief Minister said that there would also be improvement in the transportation and communication contacts with completion of the timely completion of Karachi-Quetta highway.

He said that the provincial government wants com-

plete implementation on the federal government projects in the province so that the people may benefit from these projects.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal after meeting of the National Economic Council in Islamabad on Tuesday. The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif.

Also present on the occasion was the Provincial Minister for planning and development, Mir Zahoor Buledi.

During the meeting, the matters about expediting pace of development projects in Balochistan were discussed besides implementation of them.

Imran Khan gives green signal for talks with govt: Gohar

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar said Tuesday party's founder Imran Khan has given a green signal for talks with the government.

"We told the PTI founder that dialogue is necessary, as the distance is widening. He agreed with us [on this]," said Gohar, when speaking with journalists outside the Adiala jail.

According to Gohar, Khan wants the avenues of dialogue to be opened. He told journalists that Khan is ready to forgive what has happened to him for reconciliation.

"PTI founder has said many times that 'I am ready to forgive what happened to me'," said the PTI chairman.

When asked if the negotiations will take place at the behest of the Supreme Court's advice, Barrister Gohar said: "The option given by the SC is also under consideration."

However, he emphasised that it is PTI's "own decision" to negotiate. "PTI founder did not write any letter to the SC for negotiation. PTI will also respond to its negotiation option."

Two killed in explosion

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): At least two people were killed in an explosion at a scrap shop here, a rescuer said.

A victim identified as Arshad, 40, son of Muhammad Aslam succumbed to injuries on the spot.

The other injured named Muhammad Latif, 30, son of Allah Diwaya was shifted to a nearby hospital where he breathed his last. Both of the dead bodies were shifted to a hospital.

Further investigation was underway to figure out the cause of the incident, it was said.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari welcoming the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

11 terrorists killed in Lakki Marwat operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces on Tuesday killed 11 terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Lakki Marwat District to bring the perpetrators of IED blast to justice.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the operation was carried out to bring the perpetrators of the recent improvised explosive device (IED) explosion that claimed the lives of seven brave soldiers in-

cluding Captain Muhammad Faraz Ilyas and Subedar Major Muhammad Nazir, to justice.

"The security forces, on the night between June 10 and 11, 2024, launched the intelligence based operation in the Lakki Marwat District, and effectively engaged the terrorists' location. As a result, 11 terrorists were successfully neutralized & sent to hell while multiple terrorist hideouts were also busted," the ISPR said.

Provincial Selection Board meets; recommends promotion of officers

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Selection Board met with Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan in the chair here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Selection Board recommended promotion of officers of different departments.

The Secretary Finance, Babar Khan, Secretary Services and General Admin-

istration Department, Syed Faisal Ahmed and other members of the board participated in the meeting.

The officers of different departments including Agriculture, Excise, Public Relations, S&GAD, Livestock, Social Welfare, Schools, Public Health Engineering and other departments were recommended to promote from Grade 19 to 20, Grade 18 to 19 and Grade 17 to 18.



QUETTA: Secretary Youth and Sports Tariq Qamar Baloch presenting shield to Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani during a Youth Career Development seminar organized by Youth Affairs Department at UoB



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail presiding over a meeting regarding performance of Federal departments in the province

Governor Balochistan exhorts heads of federal govt. institutions to play role for establishing good governance

Process of gas overbilling & unannounced load shedding of electricity must be ended in province, directs Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has exhorted provincial heads of the federal government institutions to play their wholehearted role for establishing good governance in their respective institutions besides keeping them free of irregularities.

He directed to the concerned heads of SSGC and QESCO to end the process of sui gas overbilling and unannounced load shedding of electricity in the province.

The Governor was speaking to the heads of federal government depart-

ments deputed in Balochistan here at the Governor House on Tuesday.

It may be mentioned here that it was the maiden meeting of the Governor with the heads of federal government departments after his assuming office of the Governor Balochistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Balochistan stressed that performance of each and every federal department should be seen on ground but the its fruits should also be reached to the common men.

He said that it is also responsibility of resolving

the issues being faced by federal government institutions besides reviewing the system of removing the complaints.

He said that the performance of departments can be bettered further by improving the mutual coordination among them.

Meanwhile, the heads of federal government departments briefed the Governor about overall functioning of their respective departments.

Besides, certain important decisions were made following the proposals and recommendations made by the heads of federal government departments.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa meeting with Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Sadiq Umrani regarding Hairden Drainage

Present government made several achievements on foreign policy front: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that the present government after coming to power had taken initiatives which resulted in many achievements on foreign policy front.

Delivering his speech on the occasion of launching ceremony of the report on national security and foreign policy, he said that foreign policy was top priority of the present dispensation.

"We are a responsible nuclear country and our

importance in the world cannot be denied," he said, adding Pakistan believed in peace not war.

The minister said Pakistan was recently elected a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council with 182 votes which was a demonstration of its successful foreign policy.

"We have trade relations with Iran, and the late Iranian President's visit to Pakistan was also successful," he maintained.

He said earlier a high-level Saudi delegation also visited Pakistan tapping investment potential.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Interest rate cut

Citing a better-than-anticipated decline in May's inflation figures, the State Bank ceded to rate cut demands on Monday, by slashing its policy rate by 150bps to 20.5pc, after having held it steady at a record 22pc for nearly a year.

The bank also mentioned the uptick in economic activity, and improvements in the external sector outlook and international reserves, resulting from a lower current account deficit, as factors leading to its decision. The bank had been resisting mounting pressure to start reversing monetary tightening ever since inflation began slowing in January.

Critics of the bank's restrictive policy stance insisted that higher rates could not go on forever without damaging the economy. Even the finance minister repeatedly expressed hopes for rate cuts in "line with inflation". The big drop in May's inflation to 11.8pc, however, was widely seen as evidence justifying the bank's shift to a slightly less restrictive stance, amid the growing clamour for respite from crushingly high lending rates.

Recent market expectations regarding the size of the rate cut have swung between 100bps and 200bps, but the majority of market polls showed that most analysts did not anticipate a reduction of more than 100bps. That the SBP decision comes just ahead of the announcement of the budget, and in the midst of negotiations between the government and the IMF for another bailout package, it underscores the bank's confidence that economic stability is gaining traction and that concluding a new agreement with the Fund is just a matter of time. The monetary policy decision is based on the bank's understanding that inflation out-turns last month were better than expected, and that underlying inflation pressures are receding amid appropriate fiscal and monetary policies.

However, the bank also mentioned that the upcoming budget and uncertainty regarding future energy price adjustments pose an upside risk to the near-term inflation outlook. But it is hopeful that the impact of the earlier monetary tightening will keep new inflationary pressures in check. Regarding the outlook, the bank is clear that room for further interest rate cuts will depend on budget assessments and IMF measures.

For now, the bank is said to have modelled the budget and IMF measures according to known factors. However, the actual measures may cause a deviation in the inflation outlook.

Although the rate cut signifies the taming of inflation for the moment, it is mostly symbolic since borrowing costs are likely to remain high as the SBP chases its medium-term target of 5-7pc inflation by September 2025. The rate cut will substantially accrue debt payment savings to the government, bring down financial costs of businesses and perhaps provide a boost to the stock market and real estate. However, it is unlikely to unlock investments in the real sectors.

No child's play

Ali Khayam

In March this year, the UN General Assembly declared that the International Day of Play would be observed annually on June 11. This announcement has come after a long advocacy campaign led by Unicef, global civil society, and organisations such as Right To Play.

So, today the world is celebrating its inaugural Day of Play with the object of encouraging more conscious efforts to ensure that children across the world can exercise their right to play. For some, it may seem frivolous for the international body to declare a day dedicated to celebrating play. However, as natural and accessible as it may seem, children, globally, are finding it difficult to have access to a healthy, joyful playtime.

Data from global research across 36 countries by the Lego Group reveals that 73 per cent of children believe that adults don't take play, and its importance to learning, seriously. Research conducted by the Child and Youth Advisory Board, an international platform, indicates that over 20pc of children in Asia are of the view that they are not allowed to play; the figure is less than 10pc for Europe and America. Additionally, 38pc of children in regions impacted by natural disasters express concerns about the lack of safe play spaces.

Play is a biological and cognitive necessity and is absolutely essential for children's holistic development. Play is instinctive; it comes naturally to every child, and adult. It is vital to build 21st-century skills among children, such as problem-solving, creative thinking, collaboration and resilience.

Play is also a great

equaliser, if only access to it is made equitable. This, unfortunately, seems like a distant dream at present. Children and other young people, particularly those with special needs, face many barriers to play. One in three children and young people do not have time to play; one in five lack safe spaces to play; and one in five have no one to play with. Global conflicts, such as in Gaza and Ukraine, and frequent natural disasters, such as Pakistan's floods in recent years, have left millions of children at risk and without any opportunities to learn and play. Which is why it is more important than ever before for more organised and robust calls for global and local action to ensure that children get a conducive environment to play in and learn, regardless of their race, social class, etc.

It is important to stress that for our governments and policymakers, ensuring equal access to play opportunities for all children, is no child's play. It should be considered serious business and must not be taken for granted as it has been in our country. Pakistan's National Curriculum Framework and National Education Policy do not take into account the foundational significance of play. Pakistani children and youth spend the least amount of time playing during the school day when compared to other countries in South Asia.

According to education statistics by the Academy of Educational Planning and Management, only a limited number of schools in Pakistan provide adequate play-ground facilities. Many schools, particularly in the urban areas, lack

the space or resources to offer recreational activities to students.

A survey conducted by the Children's Global Network Pakistan highlights that in many public schools, playtime is often neglected due to the overemphasis on academic performance. Our policymakers focusing on education must understand the importance of play in overcoming learning losses. It is time to call upon parents, teachers, school managements, local and national governments, the UN and civil society, as well as businesses, to take action in their respective domains so that children's right to play can be ensured at every level.

The issue of access becomes more horrifying when we talk about girls' right to play and sports. Misplaced ideas regarding menstruation and puberty, along with several other cultural barriers, limit their participation in play even within the confines of their homes. This has resulted in the drastically low participation of girls in play and sport; millions of girls reach adulthood without experiencing the simple joy of playing and understanding the full potential of their minds and bodies.

There is a dire need for religious leaders and scholars to break these barriers by influencing and educating society to open up space for millions of girls to participate in play activities.

As a society, we need to bring back board games in family gatherings to help revive the culture of play in our lives. This will strengthen social connections, and improve the physical and mental health and well-being of children as well as adults. — Courtesy Dawn

Global reversal

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Thirty years of history since Francis Fukuyama pronounced the end of history, given the apparent triumph of Western democracy, show democracy in retreat even in the West. The Economist's Democracy Index score has fallen since 2000, globally, including in the West. It now even calls the US, the oldest one, a flawed democracy. It is not just autocracy, but also populism and religious extremism that undermine liberal tenets. The 15 largest states by population, each numbering over 100 million people and together accounting for nearly two-thirds of the global population, show a sharp reversal towards autocracy after some democratic gains.

India has seen autocracy rising, especially against the minorities, under Narendra Modi since 2014. It's too early to see his recent electoral setback as a permanent reversal. China's one-party autocracy has become a personalised populist one under Xi Jinping since 2013. Xi has nixed the term limit for presidents and cemented his philosophy into the constitution, while cracking down against minorities. The US, too, fell prey to a xenophobic populist autocracy under Donald Trump who may yet win a second term, in which he promises to be more autocratic. Staunch US support for Israel's brutal genocide have undercut its democratic claims.

We next have five states in post-army transitions. After Suharto's fall in 1997, Indonesia has had regular elections and steady democratisation. But the 2024 elections were won by Prabowo Subianto, an ex-army man accused of

serious past abuses, thus raising fears he will rule autocratically. Pakistan moved towards democracy with two free elections in 2008 and 2013 after a decade of Western army rule, but since then has had two controversial polls and autocracy under hybrid regimes led by the populist Imran Khan and then PML-N.

Nigeria has had regular elections since 1999, but many of them, including the 2023 one, were seriously flawed. The Economist calls Nigeria a hybrid regime with illiberal governance. Brazil, too, has broken from its military past to hold regular elections but saw five years of rule by the xenophobic Jair Bolsonaro who ruled autocratically. He lost to Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva last year. But it is too early to write off populist autocracy. Bangladesh has become a one-party autocracy with its third rigged polls after it ended its neutral caretaker system.

Russia has become a personal fiefdom for the populist Vladimir Putin who may rule for another decade. Mexico bucks the trend in at least not showing a sharp autocratic shift though it is still a hybrid state for the Economist. Five years of relatively successful rule by the leftist (seen by some as a bit populist) Andrés Manuel López Obrador and the recent win of the feminist Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo augur well for Mexico. Ethiopia made promising democratic moves under Abiy Ahmed, which won him a Nobel Prize. But since then, it has seen autocracy with the brutal war in Tigray.

Japan has kept its bearings and escaped even populism. The Philippines has held regular elections since the fall of Ferdinand Marcos but had a populist autocracy under Rodrigo

Duterte, who has now been replaced by Marcos's son as president and his own daughter as vice president. Egypt is back to a military-backed autocracy after a brief period of elections won by the Muslim Brotherhood. Finally, Congo, after Mobutu Sese Seko's fall, saw one to two free elections but has since seen a series of rigged elections and autocratic rule.

Thus, 13 of the 15 states have seen de-mocratic reversals, about half have seen the rise of populist politics, and about a quarter the rise of religious extremism. The trend affects developed as well as underdeveloped states, Western and non-Western ones, states of multiple faiths, and the three largest regions — Asia, Africa and the Americas. The widespread scope suggests that global factors, too, are feeding the trend beyond national ones.

A key factor has been the failure to democratise capitalism and the increasing inequality it has given. After triumphing against communism, capitalism vanquished the gains of even welfare democratic states for the lower classes. A second factor has been the failure to institutionalise democracy globally as the internally democratic West maintains brutal autocracy outside its borders. Thirdly, increased uncertainty spawned by globalisation and new technology has also made it easier for autocrats to stoke fear and consolidate power.

Against all this is the absence of a new global progressive ideology to address current global challenges. Only such an ideology can reverse the global reversal of democracy and attract the masses. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Govt to review entire power sector completely in next 2-3 years: Senate told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Tuesday informed the Senate that the government would revive the entire power sector completely in next two to three years.

Responding to a Calling Attention notice raised by Saifullah Abro about expected installation of three power plants (2100 MW), the minister said that the power sector was very complicated and it had been divided into three sub-sectors including generation, transmission

and distribution. Every sub-sector has its own problems, he added.

He said despite availability of electricity in the system, it could not be despatched due to transmission issue. No investment was made in Matiari to Rehim Yar Khan transmission project in last 10 years, he added. Regarding the three power plants (2100 MW), the minister said that the projects were part of CPEC-2015 Framework. The said projects could not be initiated due to some technical issues like

feasibility, insurance, tariff determination and financial closure, he said. He said if these projects achieved financial closures now, it would take 6-7 years to start power generation. All these three projects were justified and would help provide relief in term of foreign exchange component, he added. Regarding GENCO-I, GENCO-II and Lakhra Power Plant, the minister said these power plants were not in operation and their employees were drawing over Rs7.5 billion under heads of salary and other perks and privileges.

Gold rates increase by Rs.1,900

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,900 and was sold at Rs.241,300 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs.239,400 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increase by Rs 1,629 to Rs.206,876 from Rs.205,247 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.189,639 from Rs.188,143, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

Per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs.2,750 and Rs.2,357.68 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$15 to \$2,307 from \$2,292, the Association reported.

RCB offers a 10% discount on tax deposit in June

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Cantonment Board announced a 10% tax rebate. Tax bills including property and other taxes have been distributed among the payers by the RCB officials. According to the details, the 10% discount on the payment of T-tax and other taxes can be availed by depositing the taxes by 30th June 2024.



ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Committee to assess and facilitate the reconstitution of Board of Korangi Fisheries Harbour Authority (KoFHA) held under the Chairmanship of Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh. Federal Minister for Industries & Production Rana Tanveer Hussain also present as member of the committee.

FWCCI to establish women export display center in collaboration with FPCCI

Independent Report
LAHORE: Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FWCCI) will establish a Women Export Display Centre in collaboration with the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) at Faisalabad to facilitate 'Access to Market' for women products. These products particularly handmade articles have very well in demand in traditional and non-traditional markets abroad.

FWCCI President and Chairperson of FPCCI Standing Committee on Think Tank, Mrs. Rubina Amjad stated this while addressing participants in a symposium on 'Digital Transformation of Women Businesses in Pakistan', organized by Think Tank Committee in collaboration with FPCCI here on Tuesday.

She said that Pakistan export volume can go further high if we are able to facilitate and fetch best price for women particularly hand made products in international markets.

Agri minister says: Farmers to be provided tractors on subsidy under green tractor scheme

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Agriculture Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani on Tuesday chaired a review meeting regarding the green tractor scheme by the chief minister of Punjab, at Agriculture House.

The minister said a green tractor scheme was being launched for farmers on the directives of the chief minister Punjab. Under the scheme, small, medium and large tractors would be provided to the farmers on

SBP injects over Rs 329b into market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Tuesday injected Rs 329.7 billion in the market through Reverse Repo Purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO).

The SBP conducted Open Market Operation through Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) for a 3-day tenor and received 13 quotes amounting to Rs 239.7 billion offered at the rate of return ranging between 20.55 to 20.62 percent. The SBP accepted all the 13 quotes at 20.55 % rate of return.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where six ships, Xpress Antila, Lotus-A, MSC Lisbon, Block Island, Asia Liberty and Al-Jassasiya carrying Container, Steel Coil, Palm oil and LNG, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal-1, Liquid Terminal and Elengy Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile two more ships, MSC Positano and DA Xin with Container and Wind Power also arrived at Outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

PSM to be revived by Sindh govt after federal govt's consensus: Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday apprised the Upper House that Sindh government was going to take over the Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) for reviving the state-owned enterprise after consensus with the federal government.

The minister was responding to the query of Senator Mohsin Aziz of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) pertaining to losses of PSM at present and the number of individuals employed.

Rana Tanveer said that caretaker government had formed a committee under Minister for Investment

with Chief Minister Sindh for working out a plan to revive the PSM.

He said that Sindh government was demanding 200 acres of more land than the 550 acres of covered area of the existing plant of PSM.

Moreover, he said the federal government had also approved 700 acres of the total 19,000 acres land of the PSM to use it for industrial purposes and Sindh Cabinet had also approved its rules for using the land. The Minister said that PSM had around 5,000 employees whereas the Mill was closed that remained dysfunctional during the previous governments.



FAISALABAD: President Chamber of Commerce in PHA Faisalabad Dr. Khurram Tariq is holding the press conference.

Oil demand declines in nine months of FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The demand for oil declined to 12.3 million tonnes during July-March Financial Year 2023-24, down from 13.3 million tonnes during the same period last year.

According to the Economic Survey 2023-24 unveiled by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, the declining trend may be attributed to a decrease in demand for High-Speed Diesel (HSD), Motor Spirit (MS), and Furnace Oil (FO), which together

comprise more than 95 percent of the total demand.

The total demand for petroleum products remained at 17.5 million tonnes during FY 2023.

Furthermore, the transport and power sectors are major petroleum consumers, accounting for 77.3 percent and 10.7 percent of total demand, respectively.

Overall, the total demand for petroleum products decreased by 7.23 percent during July-March FY 2024 compared to the same period last year.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Leslie Scanlon, High Commissioner of Canada to Pakistan, calls on the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema.

Saudi Electricity Company unveils details of its major investments, projects for Hajj

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Saudi Electricity Company (SEC) has issued a press release informing of its important projects and investments in Makkah, Madinah, and other holy sites for the 1445 AH Hajj season, which aim to improve the electricity network and provide a stable and reliable power supply for pilgrims and residents, boost the quality of service and ensure the comfort of pilgrims during Hajj.

One of the main projects is automating the distribution networks at

the holy sites by linking smart stations to the fiber-optic network.

This project costs SAR200 million and involves extensive groundwork and concrete closures, covering distances of 335 km and 312 km, respectively.

Over 2,400 stations have been connected to the fiber-optic network, boosting the efficiency and sustainability of the electrical network in densely populated areas, and reducing emergency response times to fractions of a second.

Governor regrets prolong delay in Arbab Niaz Stadium reconstruction

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday said Arbab Niaz Stadium has a sentimental value for us as late Benazir Bhutto addressed her last public gathering at this stadium. Talking with media at the under-construction stadium here, the Governor added that Arbab Niaz Stadium also has a historical value for having the status of oldest cricket stadium of Peshawar.

Most of the cricket players in the national team were from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said, adding that sadly there was no cricket academy or international level cricket ground in the province. The Governor regretted that despite passage of around eight years the construction work at historical Arbab Niaz Stadium was yet to be completed. For the last 10 years, he said PTI held the reins

of the province and pretended to be a sport promoting government but contrary to this there was nothing on the ground to prove their tall claims. The construction work at Arbab Niaz Stadium started in 2017 but despite passage of around eight years there were no signs of its completion in near future. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Governor added that there was no activity of First Class Cricket.



GILGIT: Deputy Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Sadia Danish called on Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan at CM Secretariat.

Governor Punjab honors Dubai-based Pak journalist Syed Mudassar Khushnood

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan presented the Best Journalist Award to Syed Mudassar Khushnood, a prominent Pakistani journalist based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), at a prestigious ceremony organized by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Gulf and the Middle East in Dubai.

On this occasion, PPP Gulf and Middle East President Mian Munir Hans praised Syed Mudassar Khushnood, emphasizing that he is recognized as the number one journalist in the United Arab Emirates, particularly in Dubai. His extraordinary services have

brought immense pride to Pakistani journalists in the UAE. The award, presented personally by the Governor of Punjab, recognizes Syed Mudassar Khushnood's role as an important bridge between the UAE and Pakistan.

Syed Mudassar Khushnood has been honored with numerous awards in the past, cementing his reputation as the best journalist in the UAE, including the region.

Syed Mudassar Khushnood is the first Pakistani journalist in the UAE to receive a 10-year golden visa and the highest immigration award from the UAE government.

Khokhar calls on CM, discuss development initiatives

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with Member National Assembly (MNA) Malik Afzal Khokhar here on Tuesday.

Important issues related to the Lahore Development Plan and social welfare were discussed during the meeting.

The CM said public welfare required joint efforts at local level, adding that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was a public party and believed in resolving public problems in a democratic manner.

The CM said the Lahore Development Plan included construction of water supply and drainage system, connecting roads and paved streets, installation of street lights and maintenance of parks.

She highlighted the need to complete this project at the earliest besides undertaking new projects to ensure welfare of citizens. PML-N MNA Malik Afzal Khokhar appreciated the special interest and vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz.



PESHAWAR: Governor KP Faisal Karim Kundi giving shield to Assistant Professor SBBWUP Dr. Hamida Bibi during a conference on Enhancing Regional Connectivity for the Betterment of the Shared Future of Mankind at SBBWU.

Sub-Cabinet committee reviews law & order, Eid security measures

LAHORE (APP): The seventh session of the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Law and Order was held in the Department of Interior under the chairmanship of Provincial Health Minister and Chairman of the Committee Khawaja Salman Rafique here, on Tuesday.

Provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain and Provincial Minister of Transport Bilal Akbar Khan participated as committee members.

Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman

DG RDA briefs officers of 37th PSMG course

RAWALPINDI (APP): The participants of the 37th Public Sector Management Governance (PSMG) course for the promotion of the officers from BPS-17 to BPS-18 here on Tuesday visited Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA).

According to RDA spokesperson, the Director General (DG) RDA, Kinza Murtaza, along with Additional DG, Awais Munzoor Tarar, briefed the course officers on the administrative affairs of the RDA. The briefing was arranged aimed to equip the officers with insights that would be beneficial in their professional development.

During the visit, Additional DG RDA provided an overview of RDA's inception and ongoing projects, including the Ring Road Project, Nullah Lai Expressway project, and initiatives such as the Business Facilitation Center, Estate Management Information System, Regional Development Plan of Rawalpindi, and the E-Filing & Office Automation System (E-FOAS).

Kinza Murtaza on the occasion emphasized the value of such courses for the government officials.

Deputy Commissioner directs to remove illegal cattle market

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad Zain-ul-Abideen Memon took notice of a report circulating on social media regarding the establishment of an illegal cattle market near the Comprehensive School in Latifabad Unit No. 10.

He directed the concerned assistant commissioner to restore the traffic flow by removing the said

cattle market, upon which assistant commissioner Latifabad Saud Baloch took action and immediately cleared the said unauthorized cattle market.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed all assistant commissioners of the district to ensure that no illegal cattle markets are established in their respective areas and to strive to prevent any inconvenience to the public.

Ch. Shujaat, Ch. Shafay visit Iranian Consulate

LAHORE (APP): Former Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain visited the Iranian Consulate, here on Tuesday.

They offered condolences to Iranian Consul General Mehran Movahedfar for the tragic helicopter accident that claimed lives of the Iranian President and his companions, and also offered prayers for the departed souls.

Iranian Consul General Mehran Movahedfar expressed gratitude, stating, "You have come to your own home. We deeply appreciate your sympathy. The love and support shown by the people of

Pakistan during this difficult time will never be forgotten."

He mentioned that both nations are committed to enhancing bilateral relations. During the Iranian President's visit to Pakistan, new chapters were opened in relationship between two countries, with a decision to increase trade volume to US \$ 10 billion.

Consul General Movahedfar noted that meat imports from Pakistan to Iran are increasing. He thanked Chaudhry Shafay Hussain for his personal interest in resolving the PAMCO issue and hoped that he would continue to assist until the payment matters are fully settled.



LAHORE: Rana Sikandar Hayat, Provincial Minister for School Education Department addressing a seminar.

Minister for expanding e-learning 'POHA' program

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Education Faisal Khan Tarakai has lauded the Elementary and Secondary Education Foundation's e-learning programme - "POHA", directing the officials concerned to expand it to all districts of the province.

He said that Participatory Online and Home Learning Alternative (POHA) programme had been made in line with requirements of the modern age and yielding concrete results.

Chairing the review meeting of the Elementary and Secondary Education Foundation, the minister directed the Foundation's officials to expand this program to all districts and introduce further reforms in the system to provide more facilities to students.

He said that program had fully digitized the attendance of students and teachers, online classes, and the entire teaching process, successfully meeting the requirements of the modern age.

International News

UNSC adopts US-drafted resolution on Gaza ceasefire

Monitoring Desk UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Security Council on Monday adopted a US-drafted resolution supporting a ceasefire plan in Gaza, as Washington leads an intense diplomatic campaign to push Hamas to accept the proposal.

The text — passed with 14 votes in favour and Russia abstaining — "welcomes" the truce and hostage release proposal announced on May 31 by President Joe Biden, and urges "parties to fully implement its terms without delay and without condition." The resolution says Israel has accepted the truce plan, and "calls upon Hamas to also accept it."

Hamas in a statement, referring to its demands that include a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territory said it "welcomes the

Security Council resolution ... (and) would like to reaffirm its readiness to cooperate with the brother mediators to enter into indirect negotiations regarding the implementation of these principles."

The United States, a staunch ally of Israel, has been widely criticised for having blocked several previous UN draft resolutions calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. But Biden late last month launched a new US effort to secure a truce and hostage release.

"Today, we voted for peace," US ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said after the UN session. The first phase of the truce would see an "immediate, full and complete ceasefire, the prisoners exchange, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the populated areas in Gaza". This would also allow the "safe and effective distribution of humanitarian assistance at

scale throughout the Gaza Strip to all Palestinian civilians who need it."

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken earlier held talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on Monday.

His visit comes after US President Joe Biden on May 31 outlined a three-phase ceasefire proposal from Israel that envisions a permanent end to hostilities, the release of Israeli and Palestinian prisoners, and the reconstruction of Gaza. US officials have considered negotiating a unilateral deal with Hamas to release five American prisoners held in Gaza if ceasefire talks involving Israel fail, NBC News reported on Monday.

It was not clear what the United States might offer Hamas in exchange, according to the report, which cited two current and two former US officials.



US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield votes during a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East at UN headquarters in New York.

Gaza's hospitals overwhelmed by injured from Israel's military aggression

Monitoring Desk DEIR BALAH: Hazem Farjallah wails as he lies in the Gaza hospital corridor, his head bandaged and his aunt by his side, days after he was injured by Israeli bombardment and with little prospect of adequate medical care.

Hazem, 10, has not spoken since he was injured in Thursday's strike on a UN school being used as a shelter and the shrapnel wounds are visible on his back, chest and head.

"He's been lying on the ground for days. He's supposed to be in the intensive care unit. There are

no mattresses," said his aunt, Umm Nasser in a video obtained by Reuters. Hazem is now in a bed but had to manage on the floor until Monday.

His plight shows the dire condition of Gaza's damaged, understaffed hospitals eight months into Israel's military campaign. The collapse in Gaza's health system in the face of massive Israeli bombardment has complicated a host of other unfolding disasters, from the hunger crisis to spreading disease. It has left those with chronic conditions unable to access basic care. But

UN denounces politicisation of migration in EU polls

Monitoring Desk GENEVA: The United Nations' refugees chief on Monday denounced the politicisation of migration in European elections. He warned that demonising refugees, will only make the issue more difficult, to deal with.

Filippo Grandi told reporters that his "main concern after the weekend's European Parliament elections, was that "the refugee-migration theme has become so politicised in these elections". The European elections handed significant gains to "far-right parties", across much of the continent.

BJP keeps foreign affairs, home, finance, defence

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday retained Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nirmala Sitharaman and S. Jaishankar in charge of the four high-profile ministries — Home, Defence, Finance and External Affairs — respectively in his new government. The four ministers in charge of these portfolios make up the crucial Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the prime minister.

South Korea resumes loudspeaker broadcasts after North's balloons

Monitoring Desk SEOUL: South Korea resumed loudspeaker broadcasts directed at North Korea on Sunday, its military said, following through on a warning demanding Pyongyang stop sending balloons carrying trash into the South.

The decision to resume the broadcasts, as a form of psychological warfare, was made after North Korea began launching on Saturday about 330 balloons with trash attached, with about 80 of them dropping over the border, South Korea's military said.

"The measures we will take may be unbearable for the North Korean regime but they will send a mes-

sage of hope and light to the North's troops and its people," South Korea's National Security Council said. S. Korea had warned the North it would take retaliatory measures which could include propaganda broadcasts from huge loudspeakers set up at the border.

The broadcasts were made on Sunday afternoon and whether more will follow depends on how North Korea responds, South Korea's military said. The South Korean military said that more balloons had been launched by the North and could fly into the South, warning residents to not touch any objects they find attached to balloons. It gave no other details.

Japan's economy is shrinking, although slightly less than previously thought

Monitoring Desk TOKYO: The Japanese economy shrank at an annual rate of 1.8% in the first quarter of this year, slightly better than the initial estimate at a 2.0% contraction, according to revised government data Monday.

The revision was due to private sector investments, at minus 0.4%, up from the previous minus 0.5%. Seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product, or GDP, a measure of the value of a nation's products and services, remained in negative territory, as exports and consumption declined from the previous quarter. Quarter-to-quarter, the economy slipped 0.5% in the January-March period, according to the Cabinet Office, unchanged from last month's results.

The annual rate measures what would have happened if the quarterly rate lasted a year. Wage growth has been slow, and prices on imports have risen amid a decline in the Japanese yen against the U.S. dollar. The dollar is trading at nearly 157 yen lately, up from about 140 yen a year ago.

The weak yen has tourism booming. But it makes imports more expensive, a sore point for a nation that imports almost all its energy. Sluggish consumer spending has also been a drag on the economy. Private consumption accounts for half of Japanese economic activity.

Another negative is the ongoing scandal involving improper vehicle model tests at several major automakers, including Toyota Motor Corp., which form the pillars of Japan's brand power. Production was halted on some models. Government officials raided the Tokyo headquarters of Honda Motor Co. Monday. Japanese media reports said a raid was coming soon on Mazda Motor Corp. Toyota and Suzuki Motor Corp. have already been raided.

Last week, Toyota Chairman Akio Toyoda apologized for the wide-ranging fraudulent testing involving the use of inadequate or outdated data in collision tests, incorrect testing of airbag inflation, rear-seat damage in crashes and engine power.

Armed conflicts in 2023 highest since end of WWII: study

Monitoring Desk OSLO: More armed conflicts took place worldwide in 2023 than any other year since the end of the Second World War, according to a Norwegian study published on Monday.

Last year saw 59 conflicts of which 28 were in Africa, the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) showed. But the number of countries which experienced conflicts declined from 39 in 2022 to 34.

The number of deaths in combat also halved to around 122,000 over the previous year, according to data collected by Sweden's Uppsala University from NGOs and international organisations.

That number remained nonetheless the third highest since 1989, against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine and the conflict

between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas movement. "Violence in the world is at an all-time high since the end of the Cold War," said Siri Aas Rustad, PRIO researcher and the main author of the report covering trends during the period 1946-2023.

"The figures suggest that the conflict landscape has become increasingly complex, with more conflict actors operating within the same country," she explained. According to PRIO, the increase in the number of conflicts can be partially attributed to the militant Islamic State group spreading across Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and the involvement of a growing number of non-state actors such as the Al Qaeda-affiliated Group to Support Islam and Muslims (JNIM).

Gunmen ambush Manipur CM's security team

Monitoring Desk GUWAHATI: Armed men ambushed a convoy carrying the security team of the chief minister of India's troubled northeastern state of Manipur on Monday, wounding two people, but the leader was not with them at the time, officials said.

Fighting between Manipur's majority Meitei and minority Kuki communities over sharing economic benefits and quotas given to the latter has killed at least 220 people and displaced 60,000 in the last year, with sporadic clashes continuing.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh was due to visit the state's Jiribam region on Tuesday, after violence flared there following the discovery of the body of a 59-year-old Meitei man last week. The security team attacked on Monday was going to make "arrangements and checks" for his visit, officials said.

Experts blame air pollution for 135m premature deaths

Monitoring Desk SINGAPORE: Pollution from man-made emissions and other sources like wildfires have been linked to around 135 million premature deaths worldwide between 1980 and 2020, a Singapore university said on Monday.

Weather phenomena like El Nino and the Indian Ocean Dipole worsened the effects of these pollutants by intensifying their concentration in

the air, Singapore's Nanyang Technological University (NTU) said, unveiling the results of a study led by its researchers.

The tiny particles called particulate matter 2.5, or "PM 2.5", are harmful to human health when inhaled because they are small enough to enter the bloodstream. They come from vehicle and industrial emissions as well as natural sources like fires and dust storms.

Every challenge can be countered with unity: Interior Minister

CHARSADDA (APP): Federal Interior Minister, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi on Tuesday said that Pakistan had been created after a lot of sacrifices and we all are ready to give any sacrifice for the protection and defense of our motherland. He said Frontier Constabulary (FC) was an important force of Pakistan that was placed in all provinces including Islamabad for security and maintenance of law and order besides protection of VIPs, important projects and government installations. The Interior Minister was addressing as chief guest at FC Shuhada Parade 2024 held at FC Training Centre Shabqadar here. The passed out recruits presented salute to the Interior Minister. The Minister also inspected the parade. The FC band also ex-

hibited an impressive performance, which was applauded by the minister and the participants. The Interior Minister highly commended the quick response of FC troops for support of law enforcement agencies for maintenance of law and order and security whenever it was called for help across the country. He said that every war and battle can be won through unity. "We all are Pakistani and ready to give every sacrifice for its defence and protection" he said. He said that FC would continue to work for the stability, progress and prosperity of Pakistan. Mohsin Naqvi paid glowing tributes to all martyrs of Frontier Constabulary and announced to increase FC martyrs package from Rs three million to Rs10 million.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms. Jane Marriot calling on Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani at Parliament House.

Long-standing issues of mine owners to be resolved, says Governor

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that all the long-standing issues of mine owners would be resolved by giving mining sector the status of industry at the federal level. In this regard, it is very necessary to provide all necessary facilities and opportunities to all mine owners of the province so as to end poverty and unemployment in the province. The Governor also said that our province is rich in natural resources and minerals, therefore, it is important to exploit the available minerals and other resources for the best interest of the province and country. These and similar other views were expressed by the Governor while speaking to a delegation of mine owners who called on him under leadership of Behroz Hussain Reki here at the Governor's House on Tuesday. During the course of meeting, different matters pertaining to law and order situation in the province as well as protection of life and property of the mine owners and provision of necessary facilities and loans from the government were discussed. The Governor maintained that protection of life and property of the masses is responsibility of the government. Besides, the living standard of the people would be raised but new opportunities of livelihood would also be made available with creation of new opportunities for traders, industrialists and mine owners and provision of access to the trade markets of neighbouring countries.

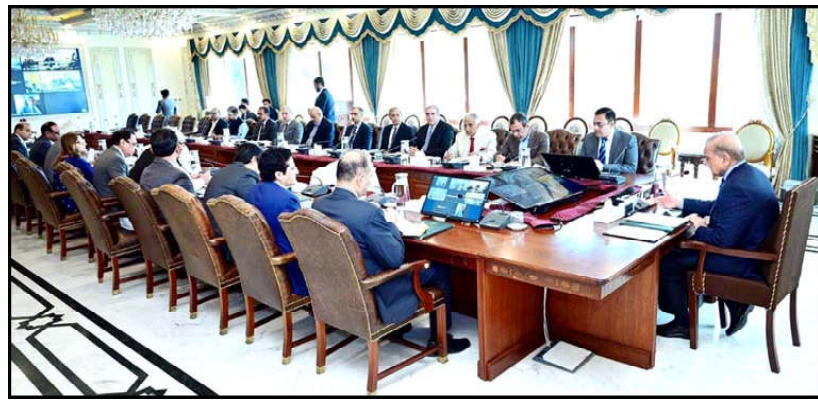


QUETTA: DG NADRA Balochistan Kashif Iqbal meeting with Provincial Advisor for Women Development Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi

With cooperation of NADRA Data bank of all depts. & sectors to be established in Balochistan: Rubaba

Independent Report QUETTA: The Advisor to the Chief Minister on Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has announced that a data bank will be established in Balochistan with the cooperation of NADRA. This data bank will contain verified data of all departments and sectors in Balochistan, which will be used for future planning and development. Dr. Buledi expressed these views during a meeting with Director General NADRA Balochistan, Kashif Aqbal here on Tuesday. She emphasized the importance of accurate data for effective planning and development. The Advisor also appreciated NADRA's

initiatives, including the decision to waive fees for the first-time issuance of identity cards and the establishment of special registration desks for women, transgender persons, minorities, and persons with disabilities. Dr. Buledi noted that a significant number of women in Balochistan do not possess identity cards, which excludes them from government benefits, including the Benazir Income Support Program. She expressed satisfaction with NADRA's cooperation in establishing special registration centers for women in Balochistan and allocating two days exclusively for women at general registration centers. The establishment of



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding load shedding, the anti-power theft campaign and reforms in the power sector.

CPEC Phase 2 fueling Pakistan's economic boom: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, said on Tuesday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to China was a significant step in bolstering Pakistan and China's long-standing friendship and strategic alliance. Talking to a private news channel, he said that major agreements were reached to expedite the second phase of CPEC, with a focus on job creation, innovation, green energy, and inclusive regional development. "CPEC was now in its second phase, focusing on industrialization and the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) like the Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Faisalabad," he said. Ahsan Iqbal said that the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was pivotal for Pakistan's economic development. In this phase, five new corridors were announced, including the Corridor of Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green Corridor, and a Regional Cooperation Open Corridor to work on, he added. The 5Es framework will be implemented, including Export, Energy, Equity, E-Pakistan, and environment, aiming at growth, livelihood, innovation, green development, and regional cooperation, he said. He said that creating safe investment environments and a dependable energy supply was important to draw in foreign investors and set Pakistan up for an industrial revolution with China's help. He highlighted the significant benefits of the CPEC and said that one of the most notable achievements is the installation of 8000 megawatts of electricity, which has helped alleviate the load-shedding issue in Pakistan. Moreover, CPEC has contributed to the creation of over 230 thousand jobs and has facilitated significant progress in infrastructure, connectivity, and socio-economic projects across Pakistan. He emphasized China's cooperation with Pakistan across various sectors, including mining, IT, energy, and others. He further said that the government was strongly emphasizing investments on a business-to-business basis to foster closer collaboration between Pakistani and Chinese enterprises. He further said that to enhance bilateral trade and investment opportunities, more than 150 leading businessmen from Pakistan toured with us and participated in one-on-one meetings with over 250 business companies in China. Furthermore, in the agricultural sector, efforts were underway to leverage Chinese technology to boost productivity and efficiency in Pakistan's agriculture industry, he added. Regarding security concerns for Chinese nationals at work on projects here, the minister assured that it remains a top priority for both countries' leadership.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over meeting of Provincial Selection Board

Gillani, Jane discuss issues of mutual interest

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani and British High Commissioner Jane Marriot on Tuesday discussed issues of mutual interest, including bilateral relations, trade, investment, and parliamentary cooperation. The Senate chairman, during the meeting, said Pakistan and the United Kingdom had been enjoying longstanding cordial relations, and expressed gratitude for Britain's support during challenging times and its various welfare initiatives, according to a news release. He highlighted the importance of increasing PAK-UK partnership in the fields of health, education, and technology.

Above 90% target achieved; anti-polio campaign continues in six districts of Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: Above 90 percent target of the special polio immunization campaign has been achieved in all 20 districts of Balochistan province. According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for Polio Eradication, the anti-polio campaign has been completed in 14 districts of the province. However, the campaign is still continued in six other districts where it was postponed due to the heatwave there last week. The districts where the anti-polio campaign in progress are included: Dera Bugti, Sibi, Usta Muhammad, Jaffarabad, Sohatpur and Naseerabad. Earlier, the campaign was run in Quetta, Killa Abdullah, Chaman, Pishin, Killa Saifullah and other districts of the province. Needless to mention here is that it was decided to run the anti-polio campaign in two phases. In 14 districts, the campaign was started on June 3 while in other remaining six districts, it was kicked off on June 8. The EOC sources informed that it was targeted to vaccinate more than 1.8 million children below five years of age in 20 out of total 36 districts of the province. For immunization, more than 10,000 teams had been formed in these 20 districts, the EOC sources added.



KHUZDAR: Commissioner Kalat Division Naem Khan Bazai and DG Levies Naseebullah Kakar inspecting passing out parade of 18th batch of Levies force

Minister Salik urges Pak Hajj Mission to ensure top-notch facilities for pilgrims in Mina

MAKKAH AL-MUKARRAMAH (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Tuesday directed the Pakistani Hajj Mission (PHM) to ensure the provision of top-notch facilities for Pakistani pilgrims during the Hajj days especially in Mina, where they would stay in tents and spend most of their time. During his visit to various sections of the PHM, followed by a consultative meeting with senior officials, the minister emphasized the importance of providing facilities to pilgrims in Mina and Arafat, as stipulated in the agreement. He stressed the need for more effective coordination among all departments to ensure the well-being of pilgrims, warning that "a lack of teamwork can undermine even the best efforts." Wahab Soomro, Director Facilitation and Coordination Nadeem Ahmed Khan, Joint Secretary (Hajj) Sajjad Haider Yaldram, Director Makkah Faheem Khan Afridi, Director Medina Zia-ur-Rehman, Director Food/Accommodation and Transport Asghar Yusufzai, Director Hajj Medical Mission Brigadier Jamil Ahmed Lakhair and Director General Syed Mushahid Hussain. The minister commended the low complaint rate in Madinah this year, citing it as a promising development. He stressed the need for more effective coordination among all departments to ensure the well-being of pilgrims, warning that "a lack of teamwork can undermine even the best efforts."

PM for reduction in load-shedding amid soaring summer temperatures

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed for reduction of power load-shedding in the country in view of the rising temperatures during the summer season. He also directed for functioning of an effective and active system in the power distribution companies for the facilitation of consumers, regarding registration of timely complaints in case of no supply of power. The prime minister chaired a meeting regarding load-shedding, the anti-power theft campaign and reforms in the power sector. The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister for Energy Awaiz Leghari, Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik, PM's Coordinator Rana Ahsan Afzal and senior officials of the relevant ministries, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister advised that purchase of new transformers should be in line with the international standards, besides seeking benefits from the latest adopted present-day system at the global level for bringing reforms in the energy sector. He also directed the provincial governments to fully support the anti-power theft drive and ensure exemplary punishment to those involved in power theft. The prime minister also strictly directed to end overbilling in the country. During the meeting, the prime minister was apprised that till May 30, 134 cases had been registered and a total of 90 employees were arrested. A briefing over the re-organization of National Transmission and Dispatch Company and the progress achieved so far in that regard was given. Under the reforms in energy sector, a project related to metering of a total of 124,611 transformers was included in the upcoming development budget, whereas with the cooperation of Asian Development Bank one third of the power consumers of IESCO were being shifted to smart meters which would be enhanced to other areas of the country later on. The meeting was given a briefing over the demand and supply of power and the causes of load-shedding. The better recovery areas were load-shedding free whereas it was carried out in the defaulted departments and power thievery areas. The prime minister was apprised of the progress on anti-power theft campaign which was successfully underway with the support of provincial governments.



GOLCUK: Officials of Turkish Naval Forces being briefed onboard PNS BABUR at Golcuk Naval Base, Turkey.

CDWP approved umbrella PC-1 under PM Initiative for women

ISLAMABAD (APP): The CDWP has approved an umbrella PC-1 worth Rs. 5777 million to execute woman's empowerment under the Prime Minister's Initiative for Women Empowerment programme. According to the Economic Survey 2023-24 launched by Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, the project focuses on Child Protection Institute for girls and women's empowerment through many initiatives by the multiple executing agencies such as to establish the Day Care Centers for Working Women in Tertiary, Hospitals and Universities in Public Sector. The transfer of assets, interest-free loans, and training and grant in aid to Widows of Shuhada's Families and provide Fund for Training of Women Directors Programme would also be launched.

IHC allows electronic media to report court proceedings as per SC guidelines

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday allowed the electronic media to report court proceedings in line with the guidelines of Supreme Court. IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq Malik heard the petitions of Islamabad High Court Journalists Association, Press Association of Supreme Court and PFJJ against the notification issued by PEMRA imposing a ban on court reporting. High Court Bar President Ali Azad and Adil Aziz Qazi appeared before the court on behalf of the petitioners. Urging the court to adjourn hearing without proceedings, the counsel of PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) said that the senior lawyer of the case was busy in the Supreme Court. The court, however, observed that the electronic media could report proceedings as per the SC guidelines. Subsequently, the court accepted the plea of PEMRA and adjourned the hearing till the first week of July.



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

Eliminating child labour key to ensure bright future of children: NA speaker

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday said that eliminating child labour is a key to ensure the bright future of children. "Children are the future of this country and no one can be allowed to deprive them of their potential, dignity and rights. Parliament of Pakistan is committed to eradicate child labour 'the speaker said in a message on 'World Day Against Child Labour'". The Speaker said that child labour is a serious social challenge and it is hurting the physical, mental and emotional growth of millions of children globally, who are unfortunately involved in the child labour. He further emphasized the need for enhanced investment in education, social protection programs, and child protective services said a news release. He also stressed the importance of raising awareness about the issue and engaging civil society, parents, children, and the larger public to eliminate child labour along with all its forms once and for all. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq commended the efforts of all stakeholders working tirelessly to combat child labour and to promote children's rights. He urged all stakeholders to continue their efforts and work in consensus to eradicate child labour.

Mir Gul says: Resource to utilize for provision of clean environment on Eid

QUETTA (APP): Chief Officer of Metropolitan Corporation (MC) Dhadher Mir Gul Munir Magi said that on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, all resources would be utilized to provide a clean environment to the people and also to collect and dispose of the garbage in time. This he said while talking to media persons, saying that two collection points have been made in Rind Ali and Dhadher city to collect disposal of animal offals from Dhadher city on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, Qaiser Khan of Rind Ali, Yousuf Khan of Dhadher would be in charge. He said that while for the emergency operation, all the machinery would be on alert under the supervision of Mohammad Ayub and the supervisor could be Abdul Salam Barozai while it was also directed to ensure chalk powder arrangements. In this regard, along with continuing the operation of the luxuries for three days of Eid, the usual garbage will also be collected without interruption, he said. He said that Dhadher MC was trying to provide relief to the public on Eid-ul-Azha and in this regard, Dhadher MC would increase its capacity.



QUETTA: Members of Balochistan Employees and Workers Grand Alliance are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands