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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif interacting with JUI Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and leaders of SIC Asad Qaiser & Umar Ayub during National Assembly session.

PM invites opposition to hold dialogue for country's betterment

Says let us sit together to take the country ahead. Let us talk for the betterment of the country. There is no other way forward; Dialogue with govt possible only after release of PTI founder: Omar Ayub

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday invited the opposition political parties to join heads for a dialogue to discuss the ways for taking the country ahead.

"Let us sit together to take the country ahead. Let us talk for the betterment of the country. There is no other way forward," the prime minister said addressing the National Assembly, while responding to a point of order by Sunni Ittehad Council Ali Muhammad Khan.

He recalled that in the past too, he had invited the political parties to evolve a consensus on a Charter of Economy but that idea was ridiculed just for political point-scoring.

He said the way the sloganeering was done on the offer, was the darkest chapter in the country's history.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the House should also fix the responsibility on those who contributed to such a bitterness in the society.

The prime minister also recounted his ordeal of facing victimization and that he was in jail when his mother passed away. Despite request to the jail superintendent, he was not given exemption from court appearance, he added.

He said that despite being a cancer survivor and with a backbone ailment, he used to be driven to courts on the ordinary prison van just to exacerbate the condition, but he never complained.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that other PML-N leaders like Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Rana Sanaulah also faced humiliating treatment despite being the under-trial prisoners.

Security forces bust terrorist network in Balochistan, arrests TTP's commanders

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs Mir Ziaullah Langau on Wednesday revealed that the security forces had busted an important network of terrorists in the province, arrested the head of the banned TTP's defense council, Nasrullah alias Maulvi Mansoor and commander, Idris.

He felicitated the security forces for foiling the plan to create a base for operating terrorist activities in Balochistan and the arrest of two commanders of terrorist organization.

The minister, who was flanked by spokesperson of Balochistan government, Shahid Rind, DIG Police Quetta, Aitzaz Goraya, said, "These terrorists have

nothing to do with the rights of Balochistan. It is rather a nefarious attempt to spread terrorism on foreign agenda in the province."

Mir Ziaullah said that there should be cleared that the people of Balochistan to recognize such elements and their nefarious designs.

He added that innocent people were being misled and taken to the mountains and being engaged in terrorist activities. The minister said that "my message to the people of Balochistan is that the youth who have gone to the mountains have been misled and misguided by anti-state elements."

He said that Pakistan was our homeland and we should support the security forces to maintain law and order in the country.

telligence agencies have conducted a complicated operation and the main terrorist commanders Nasrullah and Idris were arrested in the operation.

Mir Ziaullah urged the people of Balochistan to recognize such elements and their nefarious designs.

He added that innocent people were being misled and taken to the mountains and being engaged in terrorist activities. The minister said that "my message to the people of Balochistan is that the youth who have gone to the mountains have been misled and misguided by anti-state elements."

He said that Pakistan was our homeland and we should support the security forces to maintain law and order in the country.

Addresses seminar on Environment Day: We have to take concrete measures for environmental protection and biodiversity for next generations

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that protection of nature is actually our own protection, and as such we have to take concrete measures for environmental protection and biodiversity at the individual and collective level in the province and country.

The Governor was addressing the seminar in connection with the World Environment Day on theme: "Our land, our future" organized under the auspices of Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund and CPD here at the local hotel on Wednesday.

Those who participated in the event were included the environmental researchers as well as the representatives of PPAF, CPD, vice chancellors and people from different shades of life.

The Governor pointed out that the depleting underground water table and lack of rains are causing harm to the greenery as well as to the livestock and birds besides human life.

He said that he deems it necessary to tell the participants of seminar about the excellent performance of the Governor House about environmental protection.

Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Labour, Director General B-TEVTA and other concerned high ups were in attendance.

During the briefing, the progress on implementation on the Youth Skills Development Programme was reviewed.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister directed to expedite implementation on the youth skills development programme.

He on the occasion assured that the provision of jobs would also ensure after skills training to the youth.

He directed to the concerned authorities to make

the driving school in Kuchlak functional immediately.

He also directed to B-TEVTA to complete training of 100 heavy drivers in the first phase so as to send them Oman.

During the course of briefing, it was also informed that registration of 200 children of labourers has been completed for admission in higher educational institutions after their identification.

Besides, 200 more children are being registered, it was informed adding that 400 children would be sent for admission in different educational institutions by July 15.

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti presiding over a review meeting of Department of Labour and Manpower

Briefing on Youth Skills Development Programme: First batch of skilled youth to be sent abroad from Balochistan in March 2025, CM told

Mir Sarfraz Bugti directs to expedite implementation on youth skills development Programme; assures to ensure provision of jobs after skills training to youth; directs to collect actual data of labourers in province after special inspection and survey

QUETTA: The first batch of skilled youth would be sent abroad from Balochistan for employment in March next year. In addition to this, the unskilled persons would also be sent in foreign countries from the province from December 2025.

This information was shared during briefing on the development of the Youth Skills Development Programme to the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti here on Wednesday.

The Advisor to Chief Minister for Labour and Manpower, Sardar Ghulam Rasool Umrani,

Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Labour, Director General B-TEVTA and other concerned high ups were in attendance.

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Pak condemns US resolution, cites misunderstanding of political landscape

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Wednesday said that the resolution 901 passed by the US House of Representatives was neither constructive nor objective for showing a lack of understanding of its political situation and electoral process.

In response to media queries regarding the passage of the resolution on Tuesday, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that Pakistan had taken note of it.

"We believe that the timing and context of this particular resolution does not align well with the positive dynamics of our bilateral ties, and stems from an incomplete understanding of the political situation and electoral process in Pakistan," she remarked.

The spokesperson said that Pakistan, as the world's second-largest parliamentary democracy and fifth-largest democracy overall, was committed to the values of constitutionalism, human rights and rule of law in pursuance of its own national interest.

The spokesperson said that Pakistan believed in constructive dialogue and engagement based on mutual respect and understanding. Such resolutions are therefore neither constructive nor objective. We hope that the U.S. Congress will play a supportive role in strengthening Pakistan-U.S. ties and focus on avenues of mutual collaboration that benefit both our peoples and countries," she added.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa and Mir Sadiq Umrani meeting with Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran

AGP prays SC to dismiss SIC's appeal for reserved seats

ISLAMABAD (APP): Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan on Wednesday submitted written arguments to the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the case of Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) regarding reserved seats.

The AGP requested the top court to dismiss the SIC's appeal and uphold the verdict of Peshawar High Court (PHC) in the matter.

He said, "A political party that participates in elections and wins at least one seat can get reserved seats. According to the law, a list has to be provided for certain seats to the ECP (Election Commission of Pakistan)." The SIC neither participated in the elections nor submitted the list for the specific seats, "which are only reserved for minorities and women", he added.

Special anti-polio campaign to be launched in sixteen districts of Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The special anti-polio campaign is scheduled to be launched in 16 districts of the Balochistan province from July 1, 2024.

The Health department sources informed that it has been decided to launch anti-polio campaign in 16 districts of the province after new case of polio was reported from Killa Abdullah district of the province and presence of virus in the environmental samples in dif-

ferent parts of the province including Quetta.

The anti-polio campaign would be run in Loralai, Killa Saifullah, Killa Abdullah, Chaman, Musakhail, Usta Muhammad, Duki, Lasbela, Barkhan, Kalat, Shirani, Naserabad, Zhub, Sibi, Mastung and Sanjavi Tehsil of Ziarat. The necessary arrangements are being made for the special anti-polio campaign to be launched in the specific districts of the province.

Governors of Balochistan, Sindh discuss overall situation of country

QUETTA: (APP): Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandokhail and Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori discussed the overall situation of the country and other matters of vital importance.

The Balochistan Governor contacted his counterpart in Sindh through telephone.

The Governor of Balochistan also invited the Sindh Governor to visit Balochistan.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers and MPAs expressing their views on budget 2024-25 during Balochistan Assembly session

Fazal decries burden of taxes in budget 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that the burden of taxes has been imposed on salaried persons as well as businessmen in the budget.

Speaking on the National Assembly floor during the budget debate, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that the government demands taxes from the citizens but is not ready to give their rights.

He said that everything would be fine when the 'interference' in politics ends. Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that the country is currently being ruled by a minority as the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz

(PML-N) led federal governments 'lacks' a majority in the parliament.

"Pakistan People's Party (PPP) is not part of the coalition government hence the PML-N lacks the majority," the JUI-F chief added.

Speaking on the vision Azm-e-Istehkam, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that it will further destabilise the country. "Azm-e-Istehkam will not bring stability rather instability," he added.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that the people were asked to vacate the area for the operation and the tribal women who migrated back to their areas were sent to the deserts.

Heat wave kills 10 in Karachi

KARACHI (APP): The Commissioner Karachi Syed Hasan Naqvi, on Wednesday confirmed that ten persons lost their lives in two days due to severe heat wave conditions in Karachi division.

The commissioner, while briefing the media persons here at his office, refuted the reports regarding number of reported deaths due to severe heat in the metropolis and said that data collected

from different sources confirmed demise of ten individuals due to heat wave conditions.

He said that administration collected data regarding deaths occurred in Karachi division from different sources which included patient information from hospitals, data of graveyard burials from Karachi Municipal Corporation and information from mortuaries.



PESHAWAR: Pashunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) Chairman, Mahmud Khan Achakzai addresses during Tribal Aman Jirga arranged by Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Peshawar.

Achakzai threatens to take issue to International Court of Justice

Monitoring Desk

PESHAWAR: Mahmood Khan Achakzai, leader of the Pashunkhwa Milli Awami Party and the opposition alliance Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Aain Pakistan, has issued a stark warning against being compelled to take their grievances against Operation Azm-e-Istehkam to the International Court of Justice.

Speaking at a jirga organised by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Peshawar on Wednesday, Achakzai emphasised the necessity for the decisions in the country to reflect the clear majority of the people's will, which is currently not the case.

Achakzai recalled that when the constitutional amendment to merge FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) was presented in Parliament, it was not included in the official agenda.

He argued that with

peace, the region could attract tourists from around the world, noting that K-P is a significant center for Buddhism. He stated that the people of K-P are hospitable, which would further boost tourism.

He pointed out the exploitation since Pakistan's formation, mentioning the thousands of miles of railway lines consumed, marble from Mohmand, and the gold-filled lands of Waziristan. He urged President Zardari to ensure that the natural resources benefits go to the local people.

He further asserted that if given the authority, they could settle the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans. He expressed readiness to negotiate with Afghanistan for electricity and gas supplies, stating that achieving self-sufficiency in electricity and gas would help clear the IMF debt.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Extremist threat

As the state continues to explain to the nation what exactly the Azm-i-Istehkam campaign will entail, particularly in the realm of counterterrorism measures, there is also a need to discuss steps to counter violent extremism in the country.

While the military and civil law-enforcement agencies battle militants in the field, a similar campaign should be waged to deradicalise society, as both terrorism and extremism are joined at the hip, and feed off each other. Just over the past few months, we have witnessed lynchings based on doubtful allegations of blasphemy, as well as the persecution of minority communities for practising their faith even within the privacy of their homes.

Thus, while the state takes on what it calls the 'remnants' of terrorist outfits, it should not ignore the extremism threat. There may be some realisation of this at the top, as a recent statement from the PM Office, while discussing Azm-i-Istehkam, specifically mentions the need to implement the revised National Action Plan.

Indeed, a blueprint for the deradicalisation of society exists in the shape of the updated NAP. But until NAP's goals are implemented to the letter, deradicalisation will simply remain a theory, as extremists continue to further their toxic narratives in society. Point number three of the updated NAP mentions "taking effective measures against religious/sectarian persecution & terrorism".

As noted, there has been no shortage of incidents of religious and sectarian persecution in Pakistan. The question is: do those who control the levers of state intend to confront the extremist elements that are fanning the flames of hatred in society? Will those who encourage lynch mobs and the persecution of religious minorities be brought to justice?

Unless these bold steps are taken, it is difficult to see Azm-i-Istehkam succeed, and a few years down the line we may witness the launch of a new CT operation.

The key to successfully implementing a CT plan, along with kinetic measures, lies in a practical scheme to counter violent extremism. NAP contains most of these elements, and experts in the field can be consulted to fine-tune the plan. But perhaps the single biggest step that needs to be taken to counter extremism is to bring to heel the groups that are promoting murderous vigilantism in society. Moreover, some political parties have said 70 'banned' organisations have resurfaced with new names. While there could be a difference of opinion over the actual figure, there is little argument with the fact that 'banned' groups are back in business not long after their supposed proscription. This cat-and-mouse game has been continuing since the Musharraf era. Proscription of violent groups must mean that they are unable to access funds or organise at any level. Anything less would be inadequate.

Assange is free

Mahir Ali

Julian Assange was already on a flight to Australia by the time the news broke early yesterday of a plea deal with the US, whereby he would plead guilty on a single count of violating the Espionage Act in exchange for being liberated.

This isn't an ideal outcome — he ought never have to be incarcerated in the first place, and cannot conceivably be compensated for the seven years he spent holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy in London, let alone the nearly five years he endured in a tiny cell in Britain's high-security Belmarsh prison.

Nonetheless, it's a delightful alternative to what might have unfolded: extradition to the US; facing a court that may well have concluded that punishing those who expose crimes was more in keeping with the ideals of 'the land of the free' than pursuing the actual criminals; and a prison term effectively tantamount to a death sentence. What hopefully turns out to be the final scene in the last act of a sordid drama should be over by the time you read this. It was scheduled to unfold this morning in a courtroom on Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands, an American Pacific territory closer to Australia than to the continental US. A federal judge is expected to sign off on the deal, whereafter Assange will return home as a free man. No one can guarantee that nothing will go wrong, but the chances are small.

In recent years, there has been a bipartisan Australian push to secure Assange's freedom — combined with a bipartisan consensus on geo-strategically subordinating Australia to the very same empire whose depredations WikiLeaks

helped to lay bare — which may have played a role in influencing the Biden administration's decision-making. The primary consideration, though, is likely to have been that pursuing Assange's prosecution could compromise what had already been achieved by persecuting him: to deter anyone contemplating the idea of following in WikiLeaks' footsteps.

Throughout its existence, the American empire's primal urge has been driven by the fear of any individual or nation setting an anti-imperial example that others might seek to emulate: from Iran and Guatemala in the 1950s, to Cuba, Vietnam, Chile and innumerable others. Among whistleblowers, Daniel Ellsberg — who exposed the deep state's actual thinking on Vietnam — stands out as a worthy exemplar who escaped extended incarceration only because the Nixon administration slipped up.

WikiLeaks' key collaborator, Chelsea Manning, a soldier during the US deployment in Iraq, was sentenced to 35 years in prison after a court martial. She served seven years before being reprieved by Barack Obama in one of his few acts of decency shortly before he handed over to Donald Trump. The Obama administration also decided against pursuing Assange on the sensible grounds that the logical consequence of targeting him would entail similar proceedings against The New York Times and other outlets that had republished selections from WikiLeaks' trove of documents.

It would be difficult to argue that the 'Iraq War Logs', the 'Afghan War Diary' and the more than two million diplomatic cables (which helped to trigger the short-lived Arab Spring)

did not serve the public interest. The main US argument has been that the unredacted names of operatives and collaborators exposed them to retaliation, but there has never been any corroborating evidence of dire consequences. The main consequence for the empire was embarrassment, as its routine war crimes and frequently indefensible diplomatic machinations were publicised.

The US Democratic National Com-mittee leaks on the eve of the 2016 polls particularly incensed the losing party, but suggestions that he should be assassinated had been made even before that. When Assange faced extradition to Sweden over allegations of sexual misdemeanours, he claimed it was part of a ploy to extradite him to the US. Many of us were sceptical, but subsequent events bore out his suspicion.

His refuge at the Ecuadorian embassy became more uncomfortable after a change of government in Quito, and he was spied upon and maligned before the UK authorities were invited in to cart him away to Belmarsh. Whatever his flaws as a human being, the WikiLeaks founder and editor has done the world a great service by ripping off the empire's last shreds of self-ordained respectability. Amid the American war-mongering in Europe and the Middle East — with Biden's ill-disguised backing for the genocidal Zionist project — the world needs more revelations and clarifications of the WikiLeaks variety, and far greater freedom for journalists from Palestine to Pakistan, India and far beyond. Fresh revelations are unlikely to come from Assange — and Julian undoubtedly deserves to be left in peace. But, hopefully, the seeds he has sowed will bear fruit time and again. -- Courtesy Dawn

Eradicating torture

Rabiya Javeri Agha

It is often said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. This statement was starkly illustrated in October 2022, when the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) conducted an inquiry based on a complaint of custodial torture in Adiala Jail Rawalpindi, filed before the Islamabad High Court.

The NCHR report uncovered numerous complaints of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment suffered at the hands of jail authorities. Out of 35 inmates who recorded their statements, 26 prisoners (74 per cent) alleged various forms of torture and inhumane treatment. Every single inmate (100pc) spoke about financial extortion for accessing genuine facilities available at the jail. There was little to no oversight by the then Oversight Committee, and over the past five years, only one prison official had been dismissed for violating human rights — a mere dispenser at the jail. At that point, Pakistan had no substantive law criminalising torture.

Today, in compliance with its domestic and international commitments, and due to strong lobbying by civil society and NCHR, Pakistan has a stand-alone law on torture: the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022.

Torture is an act of physical or psychological violence committed by, or at the behest of, a public official for the purpose of coercion, confession, or any other specific objective. These elements must exist for an act of torture to be proven, and the penalty must be commensurate with the gravity of the crime. As

such, the passage of the Act in November 2022 was an important step towards justice and accountability that specifically defined and criminalised torture. Sadly, however, nearly two years have passed, and the law remains non-operational.

For the government and relevant actors to commit effectively to the eradication of torture in Pakistan, two crucial components must be implemented. The first is the passage of operational rules under the Act, which clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. These rules are necessary to establish a procedural framework for complaint redressal, investigation, prosecution, and compensation under the law. To date, no one has yet been convicted under the new law. While the Federal Investigation Agency holds exclusive jurisdiction to investigate complaints against public officials, the nature of this supervision is unclear. No functional wing dedicated to investigating custodial torture has been established at the FIA, and there is no complaint mechanism for such cases on the FIA's official website, unlike for all other federal offences falling under its ambit.

Delay in the passage of such rules and procedures with regard to complaints of torture has prevented the citizens of Pakistan from utilising this vital legislation for their protection and the realisation of their rights. It is imperative that these rules be passed immediately. The second, and perhaps more complex, aspect of this issue is the matter of resources. The country faces numerous pressing challenges, each demanding its own focus and funding. The eradication of

torture and the realisation of human rights are, however, matters of absolute urgency. Robust legal resources, including a dedicated team of legal advisers, are crucial to ensuring compliance with international standards on investigating and documenting torture, particularly the Istanbul Protocol. Financial resources are critical for supporting investigative procedures, including independent forensic examinations and medical assessments. Equally crucial are technological resources, such as secure databases for case management and digital tools for evidence collection and analysis.

Additionally, public awareness and education campaigns are necessary to inform citizens of their rights, particularly those deprived of their liberty and at most risk of torture or ill-treatment, and encourage the reporting of torture. Partnerships with civil society organisations and international human rights bodies can also provide support and advocacy, and contribute to an effective system of checks and balances. Finally, all personnel involved in the arrest, interrogation and detention of persons should receive training on human rights and, in particular, on the absolute prohibition of torture. The people of Pakistan deserve freedom from torture and cruel treatment. There is a trust deficit in our system that must be bridged to restore confidence in the state's ability to protect its citizens. Today, on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the NCHR stands ready to champion accountability, justice, and human rights in Pakistan. However, the government must also take a proactive and swift role in this crucial endeavour. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM calls for a special focus on promotion of alternative energy

Says promotion of investment Gov't top priority

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday called for a special focus on the promotion of alternative energy, particularly solar energy, besides directing the authorities concerned to formulate a strategy for Thar coal gasification.

He, chairing a meeting to discuss the matters related to the Petroleum Division, said Thar coal

was significant to cope with Pakistan's energy needs and instructed taking measures to transport Thar coal to other parts of the country through rail network.

During the briefing, it was highlighted that despite minimal carbon footprints, Pakistan was among the top five vulnerable countries and that measures were being

taken to mitigate the climate change impacts by promoting products based on alternative energy.

It was told that a strategy would be formulated to enhance production of tight gas and smart meters would be installed to curb gas and oil theft.

The meeting was told that a policy was being formulated to promote

electric bikes and vehicles, and domestic electric appliances. Moreover, the proposals for deregulating the petroleum sector would be worked out besides digitizing the petrol and gas exploration.

The Petroleum Division authorities said that steps were being taken to enhance competitiveness in the petroleum sector, promotion of bio-fuels.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on matters related to Petroleum Division.



Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani addressing the all Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conference "Performing Pakistan's Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development" organized by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Islamabad.

Engineers must be part of campaign for 'Made in Pak' products: PEC chairman

FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) Chairman Engr. Muhammad Najeeb Haroon said on Wednesday that engineers must be included in the decision-making process at the highest level for establishment of the import substitution industry and promotion of 'Made in Pakistan' products.

Addressing the business and industrial community during a meeting in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he stressed the need to enhance quality and employability of the registered engineers and said that in this connection

the PEC had launched a six-month internship course for the young engineers.

He urged the industrialists to avail from this project as PEC would pay the stipend while their placement in industries would help engineers to understand the engineering related intricacies and present their workable and cost effective solutions.

He said that PEC was also funding innovative projects. "Last year, it had undertaken 250 research projects while this year it was funding 600 tasks," he said and added that next year approximately 1,000 projects would be launched in collaboration with the registered engineers to promote research culture.

WB team reviews progress on KP tourism project

PESHAWAR (APP): A high-level delegation from the World Bank's Implementation Support Mission visited the Planning and Development Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to review the progress of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development Project (KITE).

The meeting, chaired by Secretary Planning and Development Department, Shahidullah Khan, discussed the project's milestones and timelines.

The Secretary emphasized the need for expediting project activities to ensure timely completion and optimal impact. The KITE project aims to enhance tourism infrastructure.

Governor reaffirms to encourage women entrepreneurs of KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi here Wednesday reaffirmed his strong commitment to encourage educated and vocationally trained women entrepreneurs of the province to achieve heights of economic prosperity.

Talking with a representative delegation of Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) here at Governor House, the KP Governor underlined the need of providing business opportunities to educated

and vocationally skillful women of KP imperative for their financial autonomy and economic empowerment. Appreciating the role of Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry in bringing women folk forward in business, trade and vocational entrepreneurship in KP, the Governor said that advancement of women of the province in business and trade sectors besides proving their mettle in different fields including entrepreneurship was highly encouraging and positive advancement.

PSX turns bullish, gains 335 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend, on Wednesday, gaining 335.07 points, a positive change of 0.43 percent, closing at 78,275.65 points against 77,940.58 points on the last working day.

A total of 469,756,007 shares were traded during the day as compared to 292,186,284 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 19,777 billion against Rs 11,414 billion on the last trading day.

Around 454

Gilani calls for united effort to improve economy

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani Wednesday called for a united effort to improve the economy, stimulate business activities, and attract investment.

Addressing the concluding session of a conference organised by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce titled "Improvement of Pakistan's Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development", he highlighted the significance of such events in ad-

ressing contemporary economic challenges, stating, "Our economy stands on cross roads and the decisions we make now will have long-lasting implications." He expressed his gratitude to the President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, the organizers, and the distinguished guests, acknowledging their pivotal roles in making this significant event possible.

Chairman Senate identified several key factors contributing to the current economic difficulties.

He referred to inflation adversely affecting the welfare of low income groups. He said, the decade-long economic stagnation that has impeded national progress. However, he recognized the recent positive trend in the stock market's performance and expressed optimism that this will continue and stabilize.

Regarding energy crisis, particularly the surge in electricity and gas prices, Chairman Senate called for an effective strategy to manage these issues.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, Atlantic Ibis, Maersk Kinloss and Serenity carrying Containers and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile another LPG carrier 'Bateleur' also arrived at outer anchorage of the port on Wednesday morning. Eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Atlantic Ibis, Gaslog Geneva, Sinar Mendawai and Baustella left the port on Wednesday morning and three more ships, Chemtranslonian, Serenity and Maersk Kinloss are expected to sail on today afternoon.

SBP to observe UN MSMEs Day today

KARACHI (APP): The United Nations' Day on Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (The UN MSMEs Day) will be observed on Thursday, to highlight their valuable contributions towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The United Nations General Assembly, recognizing the important role of MSMEs in SDGs particularly in promotion of innovation, creativity and decent work for all, designated 27 June as "Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day" by a resolution on April 06, 2017.

On the occasion of the UN MSMEs Day, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will

organize an MSMEs seminar. The seminar to be held under the theme "MSME Finance: Catalyst for Inclusive Growth" is aimed to acknowledge the vital role of MSMEs in inclusive economic growth, employment generation and poverty reduction. During the ceremony, the SBP and the financial institutions will reiterate their commitment to support and catalyze the MSMEs' growth through sustained increase in MSMEs financing, a SBP spokesperson informed adding that special events will be organized across the country in 16 field offices of SBP-Banking Services Corporation to provide a platform to prominent MSMEs, banks.

Political stability vital for boosting economy of the country: Governor

Independent Report
LAHORE: Senior leader of Pakistan People's Party, Qamar Zaman Kaira, met Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, issues of mutual interest and the overall situation of the country was discussed in detail.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that stability in the country is related to democracy. He said that political stability is vital for boosting the economy of the country. Governor Punjab further said that promotion of higher education in remote areas of the country is his priority.

Senior leader of PPP Qamar Zaman Kaira congratulated the Punjab Governor on assuming the office. He said that Pakistan People's Party has strived for the stability and development of country and welfare of the people. He said that every one should play positive role for political stability in the larger interest of the country. Meanwhile, Director SOS Children Village Lahore, Almas Butt and Assistant Director Munazza Sheikh called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. Governor Punjab gave a check of 01 million rupees to the resident children of

SOS Children's Village Lahore. It is pertinent to mention here that the Governor Punjab had announced a donation of one million rupees during his visit to SOS Children's Village Lahore on the day of Eid-ul-Azha.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that it is our national duty to serve the destitute and orphan children. Governor Punjab said that Islam also teaches us to treat helpless children with compassion and love. He said that we should collectively contribute to make such children responsible citizens of the society.



LAHORE: Senior leader of Pakistan People's Party, Qamar Zaman Kaira, called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Punjab health ministers laud improvements in govt hospitals OPDs

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir highlighted the improving conditions of Outpatient Departments (OPDs) in government hospitals during a joint meeting on Wednesday.

The meeting, held at the Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education, focused on the performance of these hospitals.

Salman Rafique, minister for Specialised

Healthcare and Medical Education, emphasised the commitment to maintaining the honor of vice chancellors, principals, and medical superintendents (MSs).

He stressed that patients should not face difficulties in government hospitals and announced measures against staff absenteeism starting Thursday. Reflecting on recent efforts, he noted significant improvements in hospital conditions over the past three months.

One killed, three injured in firing incident

SARGODHA (APP): A man was killed while three others sustained bullet injuries in a firing incident in Salum area, in the jurisdiction of Phularwan police station on Wednesday.

Police said that Sarfraz (50), Azz (44), Ali (40) and Afzal (39) were going to Sargodha by a vehicle when their rivals opened fire at them in Salum area. Resultantly, Muhammad Sarfraz died on the spot while three others sustained bullet injuries.

Hearing of May 9 cases against PTI leaders others adjourned

LAHORE (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore has adjourned till July 5 hearing of May 9 cases against PTI leaders Dr Yasmin Rashid, Umar Sarfraz Cheema and others.

Judge Arshid Javed of ATC Lahore heard 6 cases including torching PML-N office, containers in Kalma chowk.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi addressing a representative delegation of Bajaur District at Governor House.

Meeting discusses progress on targets assigned to TEVTA

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: A meeting to review progress on targets assigned to the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) for bringing improvement in its performance was held in the Committee Room of the Department of Industries with Special Assistant to KP Chief Minister on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordhir in the chair here on Wednesday.

Besides, the Additional Secretary

Industries Shama Nimat, Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Basit Khalil and Directors TEVTA Munir Gul, Khalid Usman, Haider Ali and Syed Sajjad Ali Shah, others also attended the meeting.

The CM aide was briefed about progress on the achievement of the targets of digitization, sustainability, human resource, financial affairs, procurement, technical and vocational training, business and education and training, business production and other issues.

Protection of minorities' rights top priority of PML-N: Azma Bukhari

LAHORE (APP): Minister for Information and Culture Punjab Azma Bukhari said on Wednesday that religious minorities' had always been very important for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

While talking to the media persons at DGPR, she said Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz considered religious minorities as her priority, adding Pakistan was being praised all over the world for this act. She said that many important decisions had been taken in the

yesterday provincial cabinet meeting added that 400 billion rupees of Kisan card had also been approved.

She said the CM was working on projects that were not even promised in the election campaign adding 100,000 houses would be built in all the districts of Punjab and the CM would inaugurate this project on August 14.

The information minister said that the previous government had taken billions of rupees in loan but did not build a single house.

Governor KP emphasizes commitment to get rights of merged districts

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday emphasized his commitment to representing the interests of merged districts and acting as an advocate to get their rights.

He said this while addressing a Bajaur Jirga, led by central leader of PPP Akhunzada Chatan. Former Provincial President PPP Engineer Humayun Khan, Secretary Coordination Farzand Ali Khan, and Peoples Party Bajaur President Haji Sher Bahadur, among others participated.

Governor Faisal Kundi stressed the importance of maintaining

peace for the province's development. He criticized the provincial government for worsening conditions in education and healthcare, noting that even university vice chancellors remain unappointed.

He expressed disappointment that despite a significant Pashtun presence in Pakistan's cricket team, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has not hosted a first-class match in the past 15 years.

Regarding development funds allocated after the 18th Amendment, Governor Kundi highlighted that special provisions were made for tribal areas, but these were mismanaged, exacerbating local issues.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Information Azma Bukhari and Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora addressing a Press conference at DGPR office.

LHC announces Sweeping reforms to enhance public service delivery, judicial efficiency

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) has unveiled a comprehensive package of reforms aimed at revolutionising public service delivery, enhancing judicial efficiency, and implementing IT-based initiatives.

The reforms, announced on June 26, 2024, during a meeting, chaired by the Acting LHC Chief Justice, Justice Shujaat Ali Khan, says an LHC press release issued here. The

meeting was attended by all the District & Sessions Judges of Punjab via video link, while Registrar LHC, Ch. Abdul Rashid Abid, Director General District Judiciary Abhar Gul Khan, Sessions Judge Human Resource Sajid Ali Awan, Director General Judicial & Case Management Tanvir Akbar, District & Sessions Judge Lahore Syed Ali Imran, District & Sessions Judge Bahawalnagar Shazib Saeed, and others.

International News

US warns Israel over Lebanon as UN sounds alarm on Gaza

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States warned Israel on Tuesday that a conflict with Hezbollah could spark a regional war, as UN agencies said 10 children a day are losing one or both legs and half a million Palestinians suffer "catastrophic" hunger in Gaza.

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin met his Israeli counterpart Yoav Gallant at the Pentagon, saying diplomacy is the best option as fears of a major war against Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon have grown after months of cross-border fire.

"Another war between Israel and Hezbollah could easily become a regional war, with terrible consequences for the Middle East," Austin said. "Diplomacy is by far the best way to prevent more escalation."

Gallant, speaking at the opening of the meeting with Austin, said: "we are working closely together to

achieve an agreement but we must also discuss readiness on every possible scenario."

Israel's military said last week that plans for an offensive in Lebanon were "approved and validated" amid escalating cross-border clashes, but Washington is seeking to lower the temperature and head off another major Middle East conflict. In Beirut, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock warned that "miscalculation" could trigger an all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah, and urged "extreme restraint."

Canada's Foreign Minister Melanie Joly urged her Israeli counterparts to leave "while they can." Philippe Lazzarini, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, warned of the war's dire impact on children in Gaza in a briefing in Geneva. "Basically we have every day 10 children who are losing one leg or two legs on average," Lazzarini told reporters.

Citing figures from UN children's agency Unicef, he said that figure "does not even include the arms and the hands, and we have many more" of these. "Ten per day, that means around 2,000 children after the more than 260 days of this brutal war," Lazzarini said.

He said amputation often takes place "in quite horrible conditions", sometimes without anaesthesia. The UN's Rome-based World Food Programme, meanwhile, said a new report "paints a stark picture of ongoing hunger."

The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) partnership said its March warning of imminent famine in north Gaza had not materialised. "However, the situation in Gaza remains catastrophic and there is a high and sustained risk of famine across the whole Gaza Strip," the report said, warning against complacency.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz delivers a government declaration in parliament on the upcoming EU and NATO summits in Berlin, Germany.

Israeli airstrikes kill at least 24 in Gaza City, health officials say

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli forces killed at least 24 Palestinians in three separate airstrikes on Gaza City early on Tuesday and the death included a sister of Ismail Haniyeh, the chief of militant Islamist group Hamas, Gaza health officials and medics said.

Israeli tanks also pressed deeper overnight into western areas of Rafah in the enclave's south, blowing up homes, residents said.

Two of the Israeli airstrikes hit two schools in Gaza City, killing at least 14 people, medics said.

Another strike on a house in the Shati (Beach) camp, one of the Gaza Strip's eight historic refugee camps, killed 10 others.

The house in Shati belonged to the extended family of Hamas political chief Haniyeh, who is based in Qatar. One of his sisters was killed along with other relatives, family members and medics said.

Hassan Kaskin, a neighbour, said the Haniyeh family house was hit without advance warning before dawn on Tuesday. Footage obtained by Reuters showed the multi-floor building reduced to rubble.

Gaza Project exposes Israel's systemic killing of journalists

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: In what has become the deadliest period for journalists since records began in 1992, the UN and independent observers are reporting a "systemic pattern" of targeting journalists and media workers in the Israeli-occupied territories. A major global cross-newsroom collaboration produced a series of reports this week on the systematic targeting of journalists by Israel. The reports also highlight how journalists in Gaza are defying death threats to perform their duty. According to the reports, surviving Gaza journalists have long known that their "press vests do not protect them. Worse, the protective gear might further expose them". Local reporters know, too, that "they are on their own, with the Israeli authorities banning foreign journalists from entering the Gaza Strip", the report adds.

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia said on Wednesday that it had ordered the Moscow correspondent for Austrian state broadcaster ORF to leave the country after Vienna revoked the accreditation of TASS's chief correspondent in Austria. Russia's foreign ministry said it had summoned ORF's chief Moscow correspondent, Carola Schneider.

A Palestinian was shot, beaten and tied to an Israeli army jeep

Monitoring Desk
JENIN: When Mujahid Abadi stepped outside to see if Israeli forces had entered his uncle's neighborhood, he was shot in the arm and the foot. That was only the start of his ordeal. Hours later, beaten and bloodied, he found himself strapped to the searing hood of an Israeli military jeep driving down a road.

The army initially said Abadi was a suspected militant, but later acknowledged he had not posed a threat to Israeli forces and was caught in crossfire with militants. Video showing the 24-year-old strapped to the jeep circulated on social media.

Russia orders Austrian ORF journalist to leave

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia said on Wednesday that it had ordered the Moscow correspondent for Austrian state broadcaster ORF to leave the country after Vienna revoked the accreditation of TASS's chief correspondent in Austria. Russia's foreign ministry said it had summoned ORF's chief Moscow correspondent, Carola Schneider.

US, Russia defense chiefs speak as tensions rise over Crimea attack

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US and Russian defense chiefs spoke by telephone on Tuesday in rare communication between the two powers and with tensions rising after Moscow blamed Washington for a deadly Ukraine attack over the weekend on the Russian-annexed Crimea.

The two sides gave widely divergent accounts of the conversation – the first one between US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Russia's new Defense Minister Andrei Belousov, who replaced Sergei Shoigu in May. The Pentagon said Austin and Belousov discussed the importance of open lines of communication.

Austin initiated the conversation and it was the first such call since March 2023, Pentagon spokesperson Air Force Major General Patrick Ryder told reporters. Russia's Defense Ministry, however, said

that Belousov warned Austin of the dangers of continued US arms supplies to Ukraine in the 28-month-old war. "A.R. Belousov pointed to the danger of further escalating the situation through continued supplies of American weapons to the Ukrainian armed forces," the ministry statement said on the Telegram messaging app after the call. Relations between Moscow and Washington have plunged to their lowest level since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Diplomatic contacts between President Vladimir Putin's government and President Joe Biden's administration are now at "an absolute minimum," Moscow said last week.

Over the weekend, Russia said the United States was directly responsible for a Ukrainian attack on the Crimean peninsula with five US-supplied missiles that killed four people.

North Korea fires ballistic missile into sea: South Korean military

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea fired a ballistic missile toward the sea on Wednesday (Jun 26), the South Korean military said, according to the Yonhap news agency.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected the launch but gave no details, saying an analysis is underway.

The office of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida confirmed on social media platform X that North Korea launched a suspected ballistic missile.

"The suspected ballistic missile from North Korea is not expected to reach Japan," it said of the projectile filed toward the East Sea, also known as the Sea of Japan.

This launch comes amid increased cross-border tension as the reclusive communist state has been

sending balloons carrying garbage into South Korea.

North Korea's last missile launch prior to this one came on May 30, when Seoul accused Pyongyang of firing a volley of around 10 short-range ballistic missiles.

One day later, North Korean state media released images of leader Kim Jong Un supervising tests of a multiple rocket launcher system.

Analysts have suggested the nuclear-armed North could be testing and ramping up production of artillery and cruise missiles before sending them to Russia for use in Ukraine.

In a report last month, the Pentagon said it had confirmed this behaviour. North Korea has sent more trash-filled balloons southward this week, Seoul's military said on Tuesday.

South Korean authorities order battery maker to halt operations over deadly blaze

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: South Korean authorities on Wednesday ordered a lithium battery maker to halt factory operations indefinitely after a fire killed 23 people and said three company officials were under investigation on suspicion of having violated industrial safety laws.

The fire at unlisted battery maker Aricell on Monday was one of the deadliest industrial accidents in recent years. Each year dozens of workers in South Korea lose their lives on the job despite tougher laws and other efforts to improve safety. The company, located in Hwaseong, an industrial hub southwest of Seoul, was ordered to shut

down its only factory for inspections, labour ministry official Min Gil-soo told a briefing. The names and titles of the Aricell officials under investigation were not disclosed. Violations of the 2022 industrial safety code can result in jail terms for fatal accidents.

Aricell Chief Executive Park Soon-kwan apologised on Tuesday for the fire but said the company had complied with all safety regulations and training requirements. The factory which had 35,000 lithium batteries stored at the time of the fire was quickly engulfed and the spread of toxic smoke likely left workers unconscious within seconds, fire officials have said.

Gun violence a 'public health crisis': US surgeon

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US surgeon general on Tuesday issued a landmark advisory declaring gun violence a "public health crisis" and calling for wide-ranging firearm controls that have historically met stiff political opposition. The advisory by Vivek Murthy, who was nominated by President Joe Biden, is the first such major report on gun violence from a surgeon general, whose office has limited authority but plays a significant role in public health issues.

A similar report on tobacco in the 1960s is viewed as a key first step to altering the perception of the substance's danger, ultimately leading to new regulations and a steep decline in consumption.

Ahsan Iqbals says: Govt presented balanced budget aimed at steering economy towards development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, said on Wednesday that under the prevailing circumstances, the government has presented a balanced budget aimed at steering the economy towards development and social prosperity.

Addressing the concluding session of the All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conference, organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the minister emphasized

that overcoming the prevailing economic challenges hinges on effective resource mobilization, budget balancing, and reducing non-developmental expenditures.

Ahsan Iqbal noted that Pakistan faces external challenges, highlighting a historical failure to cultivate export-led industries, resulting in increased imports and pressure on foreign exchange reserves over the past 75 years.

The minister underscored the necessity of fostering export-led industrial

growth to compress imports and alleviate strain on foreign exchange reserves, thereby fostering sustainable economic growth and equitable development.

He elaborated on the government's 5Es framework designed to navigate the country out of its current crisis, stressing the imperative of concerted efforts by all stakeholders to implement the framework and propel the economy towards development and prosperity.

Ahsan Iqbal also stressed the importance of

ensuring political stability and policy continuity for at least five years to achieve economic growth and progress.

He emphasized that political stability and consistent economic policies are prerequisites for sustainable economic growth, development, and for attracting both foreign and local investment.

Reflecting on past challenges, the minister highlighted the steep costs incurred due to political and policy instability over the past 75 years.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti being briefed by MD BTEVTA Tariq Javed Mengal employment in foreign countries



QUETTA: Participants are holding awareness walk against Drugs and demand to make the city drug free in connection of International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking organized by Anti-Narcotics Force Balochistan in Quetta.

Developing nations hosting most refugees as principle of burden-sharing absent: Pakistan

UNITED NATIONS (APP): A senior Pakistani diplomat has brought into the sharp focus of the world community the absence of the principle of burden-sharing as developing countries have been hosting the majority of refugees and displaced persons, with over a million Afghan refugees still in Pakistan.

"Pakistan has hosted over 5 million Afghan refugees over 40 years," Ambassador Munir Akram told a session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on humanitarian affairs on Tuesday.

"Even today, we have over 1.4 million registered refugees, another 1 million unregistered and thousands who are entirely undocumented, the Pakistani envoy said.

At the same time, he

made it clear that Pakistan will apply its laws regarding all aliens who are illegally in the country.

"We also hope that now that conflict has ended in Afghanistan, the 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees will be repatriated soon under a fully-funded UN Plan, as promised years ago," Ambassador Akram added.

The world's humanitarian crisis, he said, is caused by the growing impacts of climate change, proliferating conflicts, and the accompanying violations of international humanitarian law. In this regard, he underlined the importance of early warning systems to mitigate the impact of climate disasters.

"Following the 2022 floods, Pakistan has developed capabilities to predict disasters up to 10 months

in advance, with projections across all domains.

"We have launched a specific National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) app for public guidance and are prepared to share our low-cost models for global application," he said.

The Pakistan envoy called for increased humanitarian and climate finance, citing the Loss and Damage Fund, for which \$800 million were initially pledged, but which he said requires significantly more funding.

He also emphasized the importance of the Charter on Finance for Managing Risks, launched at Cop28, and the need for policy coherence between climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and humanitarian response frameworks.

Governor Balochistan concerned about increase usage of narcotics in society

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has expressed deep concern over the increasing usage of narcotics in the society. The increased use of narcotics is putting the future of country at stake besides affecting the creative capabilities of youth.

This was stated by the Governor in a message issued on the International Day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking observed on Wednesday.

The Governor said that the basic objective behind observance of the International Day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking is to promote the

collective awareness and sense about the ill effects and harms of the use of drugs.

He stressed the need to adopt comprehensive strategy to control the curse of narcotics in the society.

He also emphasized upon paying wholehearted attention on promotion of mutual cooperation for stopping demand and supply of the narcotics.

He believed that the cooperation of educational institutions and media is very important for making the anti-narcotics policy effective and result-oriented, which has been formulated at the national level.

Dr Rubaba stresses need to address negative impacts of climate change

QUETTA (APP): Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan on Women Development, has stressed the need to address the negative impacts of climate change by adopting a comprehensive strategy and measures. Speaking at a conference on climate change organized by PPAF, BRSP, and CPD, she said that Pakistan is among the 40 countries that have prepared a National Adaptation Plan under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Dr Buledi noted that Balochistan and Pakistan are facing severe challenges

due to climate change, despite contributing minimally to greenhouse gas emissions. She cited a report stating that over 10,000 people have lost their lives and the country has suffered economic losses of approximately \$380 million in the past two decades due to environmental disasters. The advisor emphasized the crucial role of non-governmental organizations in raising awareness and mitigating the effects of climate change.

She assured that the Balochistan government will fully support organizations working on strategies to combat climate change.

Minister Naqvi urges national unity to eradicate drug menace

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday stated that the fight against drug abuse and trafficking cannot be fruitful unless we all as a nation put our combined efforts behind this noble cause to make Pakistan a healthy society free of drugs.

"I must acknowledge that the fight against drug abuse and trafficking cannot be fruitful unless we all as a nation put our combined efforts behind this noble cause to make Pakistan a healthy society, free of drugs," he said.

Naqvi expressed these words in his message issued on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking day being observed.

Given the devastating effects of drug abuse on our

society, it is imperative to make this fight against drugs a national priority, he said.

This year's theme for the day is "The Evidence is Clear: Invest in Prevention."

Narcotics Minister said, "I urge all citizens to join hands with us in this critical mission. Prevention lies at the heart of our strategy, and we must prioritize preventive education, community engagement, and robust law enforcement to stem the tide of drug abuse."

Mohsin Naqvi said "Let us reaffirm our resolve to build a healthier, drug-free Pakistan. Together, we can make significant strides in safeguarding the well-being of our nation and future generations."

As we observe the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Traf-

ficking today, it is a staunch reminder of the persistent danger posed by substance abuse within our society adding he said Pakistan has long been exposed to its wide-ranging negative consequences on the overall fabric of the society and the associated array of problems including crime, violence, health deterioration, and productivity loss.

Recognizing the magnitude of this challenge, he said the Government of Pakistan was undertaking comprehensive measures against drug abuse and illicit trafficking in alignment with its National Anti-Narcotics Policy of 2019.

This policy encompasses a holistic approach, incorporating Drug Demand Reduction, Drug Supply Reduction, and International Cooperation, he added.

Balochistan to launch intensive Anti-Polio campaign from July 1

QUETTA (INP): In response to a recent polio case and environmental detection of the virus, a special anti-polio campaign will commence on July 1 in 16 districts of Balochistan.

The provincial health department announced the campaign following the discovery of a new polio case. The targeted districts include Loralai, Qila Saifullah, Daki, Awsta Muhammad, Mastung, Sibi, Nasirabad, Kalat, Zhob, Sherani, Chaman, Qila Abdullah, Musa Khel, Lasbela, Barkhan, and Ziarat Tehsil Sanjawi.



QUETTA: Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Muhammad Hashim Kakar offering Fatcha on sad demise of Abdul Hakeem Marani, father of Haji Muhammad Ayub Marani

Zafar Bukhari says: Govt striving to save youth from drugs

QUETTA (APP): Secretary Excise and Taxation Syed Zafar Bukhari on Wednesday said that Balochistan Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti was ensuring measures on war footing to protect the young generation from drug abuse.

He expressed these views while addressing an awareness walk organized by Excise and Taxation Department on the occasion of World Anti-Drug Day.

A large number of civil society representatives, students, business community and people from different walks of life participated in the awareness

walk.

Syed Zafar Bukhari said that it was the mission of the Excise and Taxation Department to protect the people of the province from the ravages of drugs. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bakti was committed to rehabilitation of drug addicts and rooting out the menace of drug abuse, he said.

He said that the CM announced to establish separate rehabilitation and training centers for male and female drug addicts saying that to keep the young generation away from the scourge of drugs, measures for the promotion of social activities were the need of the hour.

Crackdown continues against power pilfering & defaulters of utility bills & arrears

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) continued its campaign against the power pilfering and defaulters of the electricity utility bills and arrears all over the Balochistan province.

According to the spokesman of QESCO, the crackdown was done against the electricity pilferers and defaulters in the Quetta, Pishin, Loralai, Sibi, Khuzdar and Makran operation circles.

He said that the applications were submitted against nine persons accused in the power pilfer-

age in different police stations of the province.

In all 86 domestic and commercial consumers were charged fine on doing their meters shunt and slow in different operation circles of the province during last 24 hours. Around Rs. 1.7 million were collected on account of fine from the power pilferers on account of the detection and fine.

Besides, Rs. 13.6 million were also collected from some 697 defaulting consumers during last 24 hours, the QESCO spokesman mentioned adding that the campaign would remain continued in future as well.



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor for Women Development Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi expressing his views during a seminar regarding World Environmental Day.

Iran urges global cooperation in fight against narcotics

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Iranian Embassy in Pakistan on Wednesday said Iran, a nation perpetually grappling with drug production and trafficking, had stood at the forefront against drug abuse and made relentless efforts to curb drug trafficking. The embassy, in a message on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, highlighted the country's unwavering commitment to combating narcotics at both regional and global levels.

"Iran has paid a high price, with nearly 4,000 martyrs and 12,000 veterans who had been physically injured in this enduring battle," it added.

The embassy said the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) had consistently recognized Iran's efforts. The UNODC, in its reports, noted that Iran seized the largest amount of narcotics worldwide each year, demonstrating the nation's unparalleled success in intercepting illicit drugs.

Walk organized to mark Intl. drugs Day Noorzai calls for starting jihad to save coming generations from curse of narcotics

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Parliamentary Secretary for Social Welfare Department, Wali Muhammad Noorzai has underlined the need to start jihad to save the coming generations from curse of narcotics in the society.

He stressed that curse of narcotics is poisonous for the whole society, and as such we have to make collective efforts for saving our youth from the devastations caused due to narcotics.

He said that the provincial government is taking steps on an emergent basis for prevention of narcotics under leadership of the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti.

He said that the separate drug rehabilitation centers would be established for treatment and rehabilitation of the drug addicts in the province.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Social Welfare

Department was addressing the walk organized to mark the International Day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking here in the metropolis on Wednesday.

The Director General Anti Narcotics Force, other high ups of the ANF and Social Welfare Department as well as the representatives of civil society participated in the awareness walk.

The Parliamentary Secretary, Director General ANF and other participants stressed the need to make collective efforts for wiping out the curse of narcotics from the society.

Meanwhile, an awareness rally was also taken out by the Excise and Taxation department in the metropolis.

The Secretary Excise and Taxation, Syed Zafar Bokhari as well as other high ups and civil society representatives participated in the rally.

Mazari's arrest by ACE Punjab declared illegal

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court has declared the arrest of Former Human Rights minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shireen Mazari as illegal.

As per details, Justice Mohsin Akhtar of the Islamabad High Court announced the reserved verdict and annulled the report of the commission that had ordered her arrest.

He said that the CM announced to establish separate rehabilitation and training centers for male and female drug addicts saying that to keep the young generation away from the scourge of drugs, measures for the promotion of social activities were the need of the hour.



QUETTA: Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Balochistan Imran Zarkoon giving away appreciation certificate on best performance to Project Director Balochistan Human Capital Investment Sabiq Kakar from Chief Minister Balochistan

RDMC's new community Health, MCH center starts serving in Nokkundi

QUETTA (APP): Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC) welcomed a new era in healthcare with the inauguration of the Community Health and MCH (Mother & Child Health) Center at Nokkundi area of District Chagai, with the Indus Health and Hospitals Network (IHHN).

According to press release, this state-of-the-art facility is set to transform healthcare delivery for the residents of Nokkundi and its surrounding areas.

The facility includes

three consultation clinics, four wards with a total of 13 beds, a general triage area, an OPD, a 24/7 emergency room, a gynecology section, a pharmacy, a laboratory, a patients' waiting area, an ultrasound and X-ray room, a community health worker room and a meeting room.

With a core focus on maternal and child health, the health center will provide maternal, neonatal, and child health (MNCH) services, including antenatal care, postnatal care, lactational management.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafaqat briefed representative of Bill Gates Foundation Christopher J Elias and Rehan Hafeez regarding overall situation of polio in Quetta block

IHC orders to remove name of Zartaj from ECL

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has ordered to remove name of Zartaj Gul, parliamentary leader of Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) from ECL.

The court remarked these are false allegations. All are bailable and they put the name in ECL. Now name is being removed. We will next summon those also who accord approval.

These remarks were given by the court during the hearing of the petition seeking removal of name of SIC parliamentary leader Zartaj Gul from ECL. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard the case Wednesday. Assistant Attorney General (AAG) appeared in the court. The record of FIR was presented. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri remarked in report name of Zartaj Gul is recorded in 2 FIRs. You don't put the name of terrorists.

Those leading PTI don't want Imran Khan comes out of jail: Fawad

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has said those who are leading PTI don't want Imran Khan comes out of jail because the day he comes out then their protocol and interference in party will end.

"The present leadership fears that lest Asad Umar, Fawad Chaudhry, Ali Zaidi and Imran Ismail should return to party, he said this in an interview with foreign news agency here Wednesday.

He held the present leadership did not bother to even ask what happened with Shireen Mazari, Musarrat Jamsheed Cheema, Usman Dar and Malaika Bokhari.

He added "he was subjected to worst torture during his detention. Islamabad Police handed over him to another institution. The personnel of

this institution made videos of the violence and sent these videos to the higher authorities. I was subjected to electric shocks.

He went on to say it was the biggest mistake of Imran Khan to sever connections with army. This led to increase misconceptions which prevailed between government and establishment.

Had central leadership of PTI and Imran Khan remained in contact with army then the misconceptions perhaps would not have reached this stage.

There was some one who was telling Imran Khan they will kill you and on the other hand he was telling military leadership Imran Khan would not spare them.

When contact remained no more and leaders like us became disconnected then the misperceptions rose.