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Will visit China from June 4-8 PM for plans on B2B meetings, attracting Chinese industry during his China visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday chaired a meeting to review the preparations for his upcoming visit to China, wherein he directed the formulation of comprehensive plans to hold result-oriented business-to-business meetings between the two countries.

He instructed the relevant authorities to devise strategies for attracting Chinese industries to set up their units in Pakistan, assuring his government's all-out facilitation to the industrialists and investors.

During the briefing to the prime minister on the preparations for his China visit, it was told that a delegation of industrialists, investors, and businessmen would accompany him to China's Shenzhen city.

The delegation would hold meetings with the Chinese business community to promote business-to-business linkages between the two countries.

The prime minister directed Pakistan's Ambassador to China to extend all-out facilitation to the Pakistani business delegation during his visit there.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will undertake a five-day official visit to China from June 4-8, 2024, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang.

During the three-segment trip, the prime minister will visit the cities of Xi'an and Shenzhen, besides Beijing, the Foreign Office spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Baloch announced at her weekly press briefing.

She said that Shehbaz Sharif would meet President Xi Jinping and hold delegation-level talks with Premier Li Qiang in Beijing. He will also hold meetings with Chairman of Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Zhao Leji and heads of key government departments.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on preparation of his upcoming visit to China.

Two culprits involved in killing of labourers in Gwadar arrested, says Home Minister

Mir Ziaullah Langove asserts those attacking stability and sovereignty of Pakistan to be given befitting response; says talks about fencing in border false & baseless

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has disclosed that two culprits involved in the assassination of seven labourers in Gwadar have been apprehended.



He said that the arrested culprits have confessed their crime in their statement recorded. According to their statement, they were given the task of murdering the "Punjabi labourers" who come in Gwadar, stated the Minister Home while addressing a hurriedly called press conference at the Sikandar Jamali Auditorium, Civil Secretariat on Friday afternoon.

The Deputy Inspector General of Police, Aitezaz Goraya was also present on the occasion.

The Provincial Minister Home referred the gory incident of killing of seven labourers in Sur Bandar area of Gwadar earlier this month and said that the endeavours were being made for arrest of the killers involved in the killing.

Mir Ziaullah Langove termed the arrest of culprits involved in the killing of seven labourers in Gwadar.

He asserted that terrorists who are involved in killing of innocent people have nothing to do with the rights of people of Balochistan.

He said that the terrorists are not fighting for the rights of people of province, rather it is their fight for their vested interests and nothing else.

He said that we would move two steps ahead to talk to those who would speak about rights of the province.

He said that we are standing with our security forces in the war against terrorism.

To a query, the Minister Home clarified that the talks about fencing in

Gwadar is mere propaganda and as such there's no truth in it. He said that some elements are defaming the state through false propaganda in this regard.

About the violation of border by Iranian forces, Mir Ziaullah Langove said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is talking to the Iranian authorities on the violation of border in Maskhal.

As the matter comes in the domain of Federal government, so it (federal government) can give better stance in this regard, he added.

To another question about bid on life of the president of BAP and MNA, Nawabzada Khalid Khan Magasi, the Minister Home condemned the incident and said that four personnel have been suspended on negligence in the matter.

As the matter comes in the domain of Federal government, so it (federal government) can give better stance in this regard, he added.

He said that we are standing with our security forces in the war against terrorism.

To a query, the Minister Home clarified that the talks about fencing in

PM Shahbaz announces major fuel price cut

Premier directs finance ministry to reduce petrol price by Rs15.4 per litre and HSD by Rs7.9 per litre

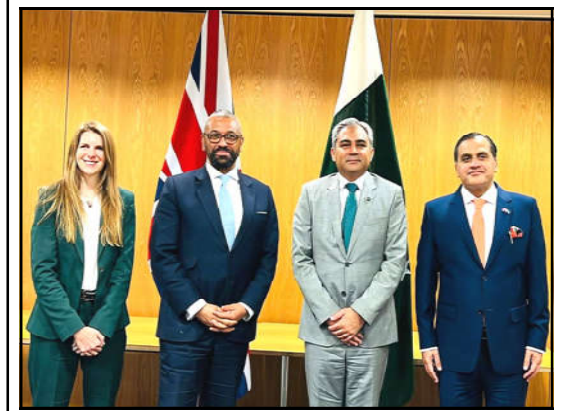
ISLAMABAD (APP): In a major decision on Friday, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the Ministry of Finance to cut the price of petrol by Rs 15.4 per liter and that of diesel by Rs 7.9 per liter.

The government's pro-people policies have led to a notable decline in inflation and a stabilization of the economy, the prime minister said in a statement released by the PM Office.

He stated that these policies have resulted in a noticeable reduction in inflation and have contributed to economic stability.

This move is expected to bring significant relief to the public, who have been grappling with high fuel prices in recent months.

On May 15, the government had announced a welcome reduction in petrol and HSD prices for a fortnight by Rs15.39 per litre and Rs7.88 per litre, respectively.



LONDON: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a group photo with Home Secretary of UK James Cleverly.

Pak, UK sign LOI for coop. on illegal immigration, criminal justice issues

LONDON (APP): Pakistan and the United Kingdom on Friday signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to promote bilateral collaboration on law enforcement and criminal justice issues.

It specifically addresses the issues to tackle illegal migration and organised immigration crime, and to exploring future opportunities that benefit both countries. It will also facilitate liaison between the UK and Pakistan law enforcement agencies, in support of joint efforts to tackle transnational crime, including narcotics control, investigations of serious criminality and organised immigration crime.

Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and Home Secretary of UK James Cleverly witnessed the signing of the LOI held at the UK Home Office.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to UK Dr Muhammad Faisal signed the LOI on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, according to a press release.

The LOI is aimed at collaboration between Pakistan and the UK to work together on law enforcement cooperation and criminal justice issues.

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Health officials, others vow to eradicate polio virus from Balochistan province

Quetta and other high ups administered anti-polio drops to the children at the ceremony.

The Secretary Health and others referred to the anti-polio campaign scheduled to begin in 20 districts of the province this month.

According to the revised schedule, the anti-polio campaign is being launched in 20 districts of the province in two phases.

In 14 districts, the immunization campaign is scheduled to commence from June 3 while in remaining 6 districts, the campaign would start from June 8, the Health department officials informed.

Meanwhile, the Secretary Health and other concerned high ups vowed to play wholehearted part for eradication of the polio virus from the province.

They urged all segments of the society to cooperate with the health workers for making the anti-polio campaign success.



RAWALPINDI: The Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, Jeyhun Bayramov, called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at the General Headquarters (GHQ).

COAS, Azerbaijan's FM discuss regional stability

RAWALPINDI (Online): The Foreign Minister (FM) of Azerbaijan, Jeyhun Bayramov, called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at the General Headquarters (GHQ).

During their meeting, they engaged in in-depth discussions on matters of mutual interest, including regional peace and stability.

The COAS emphasized Pakistan's longstanding fraternal ties with Azerbaijan and reiterated the country's unwavering

commitment to providing comprehensive assistance and cooperation in the spheres of defense and security.

Furthermore, the COAS praised the Azerbaijani Armed Forces for their exemplary professionalism and valor.

The visiting dignitary expressed his sincere appreciation for Pakistan's steadfast support to Azerbaijan and acknowledged the country's pivotal role in maintaining regional stability.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Imran refuses to join FIA probe in controversial social media posts

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder refused to join the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) probe against posting controversial social media posts from his official X (Twitter) account.

FIA team reached Adiala Jail to meet the PTI founder. "PTI founder also refused to answer any question of FIA team," jail sources said. "I will answer any question in the presence of lawyers, PTI founder's answer to FIA".

Sources claimed the FIA team has obtained the stance of the founder of PTI in writing. Earlier, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cybercrime Cell penned down a letter to the authorities

seeking access to incarcerated PTI founder to inquire about 'controversial' post from his social media X handle.

The text of the letter stated that anti-state propaganda was disseminated through the official social media account of the PTI founder, targeting institutions, particularly the Pakistan Army.

The video posted on May 26 aimed to distort facts, prompt rebellion among officers and soldiers, and create unrest within various state institutions. The FIA Cybercrime Cell noted that this video is a clear violation of the PICA Act 2016 and seeking access to the PTI founder in jail for further investigation.

No shortfall of electricity in Balochistan: CEO QESCO

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Executive Officer, Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), Shafiqat Ali has stated that there is no shortfall of electricity in Balochistan province.

While speaking to media persons in his office on Friday, the Chief Executive Officer of QESCO said that the province is getting 735 megawatt electricity from the national grid system.

Therefore, there's no shortfall of electricity in the province.

He said that it has been decided to decrease the load shedding duration due to heatstroke in the province.

He mentioned that the feeders of province have been divided in eight categories regarding load shedding.

The duration of load shedding has been made different in each category, the QESCO Chief maintained.

Referring the cost of electricity supplied to the agricultural feeders, Shafiqat Ali said that the utility bill of electricity for one hour on daily basis costs Rs. 1 billion and 50 million.

He urged the zamindars of province to pay their utility bills otherwise the electricity supply would be suspended to their feeders.

Governor Balochistan says Youth are not only builders of our bright future but they are also partners of our present

Assures resources being mobilized for resolving the issues related to late selection on the quota allocated for male and female students of Balochistan in the medical colleges of the country especially of Punjab

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that all available resources are being mobilized for resolving the issues related to late selection on the quota allocated for male and female students of Balochistan.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the Governor said that it is our priority to provide necessary facilities and opportunities to students of the province.

He said that youth are not only builders of our bright future but they are also partners of our present. Therefore, it is our responsibility to provide all necessary facilities to the youngsters and make their future safer, Governor added.

In this regard, we are in constant contact with Governor Punjab and heads of the concerned institutions. He hoped that the sustainable solution would be found out to the issues being faced by students of Balochistan.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the Governor said that it is our priority to provide necessary facilities and opportunities to students of the province.

He said that youth are not only builders of our bright future but they are also partners of our present. Therefore, it is our responsibility to provide all necessary facilities to the youngsters and make their future safer, Governor added.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Health Saleh Baloch inaugurating polio campaign. Coordinator Emergency Operation Center Balochistan Syed Zahid Shah and Deputy Commissioner Quetta are also present

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Uncertain budget plans

With the Shehbaz Sharif-led government still fine-tuning the next budget, it might be too early to speculate upon the contents of the document. We will have to wait for a few more days before the budget proposals are firmed up and their contents finalised.

But what is certain is that in trying to achieve a balance between its political compulsions — providing succour to households no longer able to hold up against backbreaking inflation — and the necessity of plugging a deep fiscal hole in the economy, the government is faced with one of its most difficult challenges.

The confusion in the minds of the party leadership on how to deal with this paradox became even more evident on Wednesday when a PML-N meeting chaired by party leader Nawaz Sharif and attended by the prime minister decided to prepare a 'people-friendly' budget while adhering to IMF dictates. Not surprisingly, there was no official word either from the PML-N or the federal government on the outcome of the discussions. However, it is abundantly clear that the prime minister, caught between public expectations and harsh IMF demands, is in a fix.

The confusion in the PML-N over what shape the budget should take is reflective of the country's volatile political situation. On the one hand, the ruling party is not ready to lose more political capital by taking harsh measures, and on the other, it must swallow the bitter pill of stern IMF demands, if it wants to access international funding, which is crucial for reviving the economy.

At the same time, PML-N president Nawaz Sharif, who resumed his position some days ago after a long hiatus of six years following his disqualification, needs something tangible on the economic front to not just defeat the narrative of his popular arch-rival Imran Khan in Punjab but also maintain his existing public support. His party has already suffered in the February elections due to the extremely poor economic performance of the previous Shehbaz Sharif administration, which saw monthly inflation skyrocket to 38pc and interest rates jump to a record high of 22pc, besides industrial closures and job losses.

It is, therefore, safe to assume that the PML-N will do its best to meet the IMF's macroeconomic targets at the federal level, whilst taking populist measures in the Punjab budget to revive its party network in the province.

The PTI government in KP, which announced its next budget last week — much before the federal budget in a break from convention — has already shown other provinces how they can use their respective budget resources to execute the party programmes to keep their electorate happy without diverging from the IMF's conditions. There is little likelihood of other parties not giving in to this temptation.

Youth and longevity

Zubeida Mustafa

Muna Khan's interesting column titled 'Forego the FOGO' (fear of getting old) published recently on these pages was food for thought. She is spot on, especially in her observation that FOGO is driven by the global beauty industry. Muna also writes about seniors in the newsroom today not being valued for their experience. This is probably the consequence of glorifying youth to create FOGO.

When I was young, this phenomenon was called the 'generation gap'. It existed in every profession and also in family life. But unlike what happens today, the gap was managed in a very civilised manner. When I reached the age of seniority, younger colleagues like Muna and most others of her generation gave me great respect and cooperation, for which I still feel grateful. Obviously, they didn't suffer from FOGO and so acted their age and observed the courtesies they had learnt. This gap must be accepted in a positive manner if mankind has to progress, otherwise we would still be hunter-gatherers.

My concern today, however, focuses more on the many challenges 'senior citizens' face. These issues must be discussed, more so because people are reluctant to talk about them.

One issue pertains to longevity and mortality. In 1950, after the country had somewhat stabilised in the wake of the social upheaval caused by the massive transfer of population during Partition, average life expectancy at birth in Pakistan was estimated at 36.2 years for males and 33.4 for females, according to Wikipedia. Then began the multinational phar-

maceutical giants' global race in quest of alchemy.

Rooted in earlier global discoveries, research and studies, the manufacture of wonder drugs and medical technologies took off, revolutionising healthcare the world over. Vaccinations dramatically lowered childhood, infant and maternal mortality rates and life expectancy at birth shot up. For instance, in 2023, Pakistan's life expectancy at birth was estimated to be 65 years for males and 69.7 for females (Worldmetre.info).

The increase in lifespan has been a universal phenomenon. Hong Kong's life expectancy in 2023 stood at 83 years for males and 88.6 for females. However, in Pakistan, the higher life expectancy has hardly been noticed. Combined with a high birth rate of 2.5 per cent, the increasing lifespan has called for greater focus on issues with a demographic dimension. This has given rise to economic and social problems for the country. No heed has been paid to the advice of a German doctor: "We must add life to years and not years to life." As has been our wont, the emphasis has been on curative medicine, with little effort to adopt preventive health measures.

Efforts by activists over the decades have failed to secure even basic financial support for seniors. As a result, we have a huge sandwich generation that is doubly burdened. It takes care of its parents as well as offspring with no social security to fall back on. The youth bulge that was supposed to be an asset to the nation is now a liability. The government has failed to give the bulk of the youth a decent education or provide them with a livelihood. It is seething with discon-

tent.

As for seniors, they mainly need support to sustain themselves and for healthcare. Some activities to engage them are also important to create conditions that facilitate mental well-being. Those fortunate to receive a pension have to make do with what is now a pittance at a time when the country's economy is on the brink.

Not that the government is not aware of these problems. In 2014, the Sindh Assembly adopted the Senior Citizens Social Welfare Act that came into force in 2016. But it never produced any change as the chairman of the council that was set up passed away and the law remained only on paper. In 2019, the Legal Aid Society went to court and some hearings were held, but the issue seems to have been put on the backburner as normally happens in such circumstances.

Thus the twilight years of many in our society raise questions that call for a discourse to change expectations and produce doable suggestions. A discourse would provide relief from the stresses and strains that come with loneliness. It has been observed that when changes have come after a discourse, the situation has become more manageable.

Some of the sensitive issues pertaining to life and death include: palliative medicine, the question of a 'living will', which involves medical options, medical treatment, etc.

I hope this article will not give a boost to FOGO among the young. I must remind them that Botox is not the answer to their fears. It is one's approach to life, rather than one's looks, that matters. -- Courtesy Dawn

Tragedy of the commons?

Umer Farooq

In 2012, Northern Ireland launched an environmental initiative that escalated into the notorious Cash for Ash scandal. Originally designed to tackle energy issues, the plan ironically made the problem worse. The scandal unfolded around the Renewable Heat Incentive; a programme aimed at encouraging businesses to switch to green energy. However, this 20-year scheme backfired. Subsidies for using renewable energy were higher than the energy's actual cost. This glitch led businesses to increase their energy consumption to make profits, going as far as heating empty buildings. Pakistan's rooftop solar net metering is now a classic example of the same flawed policy design, making it a tragedy of the commons. Worse still is the government's mishandling of the situation.

The Pakistan government has decided to reduce the incentivised tariff for net metering on new solar installations. This policy gives the impression that the government is turning against solar energy, even if that's not the case. As new solar installations emerged, the government started to panic about consumers relying less on the traditional power grid. Should they have panicked? No.

A Lums electricity outlook report projects that in the coming years, the difference between peak load demand with and without distributed solar generation will be negligible; hence, there will be negligible impact on the capacity infrastructure of the grid. This also leaves little room for the argument that only 0.3 per cent of households, presumably wealthy, benefit

from net metering with solar rooftops. If net metering for 0.3pc of households is causing difficulties with capacity payments, then the problem lies elsewhere, not with net metering. The real issues are the expensive take-or-pay guarantee model and a lack of demand for excess generation capacity.

Rolling back the incentivised net metering policy highlights the government's poor preparation. The government launched the Fast Track Solar Initiatives which aimed to replace costly imported fossil fuels with solar energy, generate solar power on 11 kV feeders, and solarise public buildings. This project pulled the interest of investors in renewable energy production like none other. However, the government's current policy against net metering contradicts this initiative. Net metering was supposed to add only 500 MWp per year for the next few years, according to the latest Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan. More than 5,000 MW of existing thermal power projects are set to be retired from the NTDC system at the same time. Solar could have replaced them. It is a no-brainer.

The government has declared the grid sacred. This enthusiasm emerges from the agreements with independent power producers (IPPs) that require us to complete the capacity payments, whether we use the national grid or not. This situation makes it tricky for the government to ensure consumers stay connected to the grid. Grid reliance, tied intrinsically to capacity payments, will perpetually stand in opposition to the adoption of any renewable technologies in the future —

which, of course, is not the way to go. Owing to the capacity payments, we are about to enter an era of grid nationalism.

At this stage, the government's main concern should not be regulating solar net metering. Instead, it should focus on navigating the committed capacity factor and the IPP agreements for which the capacity component is anticipated to rise significantly. Curtailing net metering will hardly solve the problem. As a wise man once said, "The reason most ma--jor goals are not achieved is that we spend our time doing second things first."

With a new generation surplus on the horizon, the weighted average cost of generation will burden poor consumers, which it should not. We must avoid repeating western Australia's mid-2000s mistake, where a projected surplus never materialised under the capacity electricity agreement, forcing them to pay \$85 per MWh compared to \$35 per MWh in eastern Australia. We are in a dire situation where the economic outlook does not support increased electricity demand. Our dollar exchange rate projections were incorrect, worsening the problem. To resolve this, the government must expand the base load by introducing commercial and industrial energy demand. Designing a sensible gross metering concept could also benefit domestic consumers significantly. The situation also makes a case for electric vehicles that can not only reduce the need for imported fuel but also use the surplus capacity. Studies show that half a million EVs can be fully charged with 1,000 MW — an excellent solution. There are alternatives. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM urges auto industry to start local manufacturing, implement deletion policy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday urged the automobile industry to start local manufacturing of vehicles and export a considerable ratio of their products to contribute to national development. The prime minister, talking to a delegation of automobile and auto parts manufacturers, asked the industry to implement the Auto Sector Deletion Policy and become a part

of the global value chain. He told the delegation that the incumbent government

was taking measures to boost the country's exports. The delegation

which consisted of Chief Executive Officer of Toyota Pakistan Ali Jamal.

Sharif chairs meeting to review progress of Pakistan Single Window Company

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday chaired a meeting to discuss the expansion of the Pakistan Single Window Company, aimed at facilitating trade and commerce in the country. The prime minister expressed his satisfaction with the company's current operations and directed that its scope be expanded to facilitate the public in obtaining municipal services. He emphasized the need to replicate the company's successful model, inspired by China's Single Window system, which had been a guiding light for Pakistan. Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan Single Window Company Syed Aftab Haider,



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on Pakistan Single Window Company.



ISLAMABAD: ISDB Organizes Country Procurement, Financial Management and Integrity Workshop in Islamabad.

Pak food companies showcase diverse range of products at exhibition in Shanghai

BEIJING (APP): Nine leading Pakistani companies, specializing in logistics, rice mills, frozen meals, and a wide array of fruits, juices, pink salt products, candies, snacks, and dried fruits, had made a strong presence at the imported grocery section of the 2024 Salon International De L'Alimentation (SIAL) in Shanghai.

The exhibition, running from May 28 to 30, attracted over 5,000 exhibitors from 75 countries and regions, showcasing more than 350,000 products, representing the latest, innovative and unique food and beverage products from around the world, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. SIAL Shanghai has become a pivotal platform for Pakistani food exporters to showcase their products to a global audience. The Pakistani contingent's participation highlighted the country's rich agricultural heritage and growing capabilities in food processing and logistics. With a focus on quality and variety, the Pakistani exhibitors aimed to capture the attention of buyers from China and other participating

countries. One of the standout companies was the National Logistics Corporation represented by Director Plans Muhammad Yousof. He emphasized the company's capabilities in handling international shipments, especially in the food and beverage industry. "We are here to introduce our logistics services to potential customers and partners, he said. "With our robust network, we can ensure efficient and timely delivery of products from Pakistan to China and beyond."

Off take from Wind Power Projects to Grid Cheap electricity at Rs. 14.5/ unit should be Utilized: Atif Ikram

Independent Report KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has urged to prioritize immediate and complete off take of power from existing, operational and cheapest 12 wind power projects; wherein these wind power plants are producing electricity at a cost of 14.5 rupees per unit. This aligns with both the Renewable Energy Policy 2006 — pursuant to which local and foreign investment had taken place — and the existing energy purchase agreements (PPAs). Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI,

maintained that recently K-Electric has showcased its efforts to achieve a 30 percent share of renewable energy generation in its mix by 2030. Authorities should take some steps to dispatch electricity from these cheapest 12 wind power projects to KE network since transmission infrastructure is available between NTDC's Jhimpir-II grid station to KE's KDA transmission infrastructure; which will prevent the wastage of cheap electricity and utilization of such cheap electricity will give a sigh of relief to common public.

Weekly inflation up by 0.11 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.11 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on May 30, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 308.52 points as compared to 308.19 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 21.40 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

Over Rs 16 billion disbursed among beneficiaries under Benazir Kafaalat scheme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has disbursed over Rs.16 billion among over 15,00,000 beneficiaries from across the country so far under the Benazir Kafaalat quarterly payments (April-June). "Till May 30, over Rs. 16 billion has been disbursed among over 15,00,000 beneficiaries which makes 46 percent of the total beneficiaries", said an official source.

Kafaalat cash assistance to the beneficiaries is continued across the country in two phases to disburse Rs. 10,500 per household among over nine million registered beneficiary families. In the first phase, the payments are being issued among the beneficiaries in all districts of Islamabad, Balochistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan. The payments are also being disbursed in Peshawar, Mardan and all districts of Malakand and

Hazara Division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, all districts of Karachi Division and District Hyderabad in Sindh province and Gujranwala, Sahiwal, Rawalpindi and all districts of Sargodha Division and District Vehari in Punjab. While payments to the beneficiaries in the remaining districts are being issued in the second phase.

The beneficiaries can receive their payment through the nearest centers after receiving message from 8171.

PSX stays bullish, gains 1,000 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Friday, gaining 1,000.35 points, a positive change of 1.34 per cent, closing at 75,878.48 points against 74,878.12 points the previous day. A total of 523,299,973 shares valuing Rs 20,574 billion were traded during the day as compared to 410,575,241 shares valuing Rs 14,922 billion the previous day.

IMF representative calls on Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD (APP): Resident Representative of International Monetary Fund (IMF) to Pakistan Ms. Esther Perez Ruiz called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja here on Friday. Detailed views were exchanged on digitalization process in Pakistan and IT and Telecommunication sector said a news release.

While talking to the IMF Representative, Shaza Fatima said that steps are on for digital transformation in the country. Connectivity, fiberization and availability of digital devices are the foundation of digitalization, she said. Minister of State for IT said that government was committed to transform Pakistan into digital economy under the National Digitalization Plan. Digitalization of health, education and agriculture sectors is pivotal for the uplift of the country.

Governor stresses unity among political parties to achieve national progress

Independent Report
LAHORE: The delegation of Pakistan Peoples Party Lahore Division called on Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House Lahore. The delegation comprised presidents of four districts and party workers of Pakistan Peoples' Party Lahore. The delegation congratulated Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on becoming the Punjab Governor.

Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider said that the coalition government should be strengthened for the development and

stability of the country. He said that all political parties should be on one page and should play positive role in the development of country. Governor Punjab said that public service is the basis of the manifesto of People's Party. He said that the doors of Governor House Lahore are open for the people of Punjab. Governor Punjab said that he would try his best to fulfill his constitutional role in a good way and contribute to the improvement of the province.

The residents of four districts of Lahore, Zahid Zulfiqar, Asif Nagra, Atif Chaudhry and Amjad Jat

also addressed the ceremony. The delegation comprised senior PPP leaders; Shahida Jabeen, Altaf Qureshi, Arif Khan, Hafiz Ghulam Mohiuddin and Haji Azizur Rahman Chan. Ahsan Rizvi performed the duty of moderator on this occasion. Earlier, Chancellor/Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan held introductory meetings with Vice Chancellors of various universities of Punjab. Among the vice chancellors who met the Punjab Governor were Vice Chancellor of Government College Lahore, Prof. Shazia Bashir, Prof. Dr. Ahsan Waheed Rathore of University of Health Sciences.



Sri Lanka Minister for Buddhist Affairs, Religious and Cultural Affairs Vidura Wikramanayaka calls on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House Peshawar.

CM directs concerned quarters to evolve mechanism for proper utilization of social security funds

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has directed the quarters concerned to devise a sustainable model to ensure utilization of social security funds in a proper manner.

The CM has decided to arrange a collective marriage programme of 4000 deserving females hailing from the province and directed the concerned authorities to complete homework in this regard.

Under the program, a grant of Rs 0.2 million per female would be provided from the dowry fund, he said.

The CM issued the instructions during the meeting held here at Chief Minister's House on Friday.

MNA Dr Amjad Ali Khan, Secretary Social Welfare Nazir Hussain Shah, Special Secretaries to Chief Minister Waqar Ali Khan, Masood Younis and other relevant officials also attended the meeting.

The CM has directed the concerned authorities to collect the actual data of deserving girls from all the districts and to provide quota in proportion to the population of each district, so that the decision regarding mass marriage program would be implemented in a transparent manner.

"We need to have an efficient scrutiny mechanism in order to ensure that only deserving girls would be selected for that programme," he said.



LAHORE: A delegation of Pakistan Peoples Party Lahore Division called on Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

ATC extends interim bail of PTI founder in 3 cases

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday extended the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder in three cases related to May-7 violence until June 7.

The court directed the jail authorities to ensure the attendance of the PTI founder through video-link at the next hearing, besides seeking arguments from parties.

ATC Judge Khalid Arshad conducted the proceedings on the bail petitions of the PTI founder in cases of attacks on Jinnah House, Askari Tower, and torching of Shadman Police Station.

On August 11, 2023, an ATC dismissed the pre-arrest bails of the PTI founder in seven cases over his non-appearance, as he was jailed after conviction in the Toshakhana case.

However, the Lahore High Court (LHC).

Delegation of Buddhist monks called on Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation representing Buddhist monks of Sri Lanka called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi here Friday and discussed matters of mutual interests including promotion of tourism between two countries.

The delegation that was led by Sri Lankan Minister for Religious and Culture also visited various sections of historic Governor House. Kundi also informed

the delegation about history of KP and preservation of Buddha era relics that are situated in the province.

He told that each year followers of Buddhism visit northern areas of Pakistan for meditation and to witness relics and artifacts of Buddha era that are safety protected and preserved in KP. Governor said that relics of Buddha era are well preserved in northern areas in form of Gandhara art.

CJ PHC administers oath to cabinet of Abbottabad District Bar

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Justice (CJ) Peshawar High Court (PHC), Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim has said that we would not deviate from oath to uphold constitution and law adding that cooperation of lawyers is essential to restore confidence of people.

He expressed these views while addressing the oath taking ceremony of newly elected officials at Abbottabad District Bar.

Health minister emphasises importance of patient care in govt hospitals

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Raffique has reiterated the government's commitment to providing quality healthcare in government hospitals, emphasising that patient care was top priority for the health department.

During a meeting held at the Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education on Friday, he stressed the importance of performance evaluations and clinical audits in the government teaching hospitals.

"Ensuring the best possible treatment for patients in government hospitals is our primary focus," he said. "We will conduct clinical audits to improve our services and

will not tolerate any form of corruption."

The minister highlighted that the Health Department supported dedicated health professionals and distances itself from any elements that disrupt hospital operations. He also noted that under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, efforts were being made to address hospital issues and prioritise the revamping project in public hospitals.

Punjab Secretary Health Ali Jan Khan said that the administration was on high alert to manage the measles outbreak across the province and to prepare for Congo virus and heatwave threats. "All types of medicines are



LAHORE: French Ambassador to Pakistan Nicolas Galey looking at a photograph during France Olympic Games photograph exhibition at Al-Hamra hall, in the Provincial Capital.

LHC issues notice, seeks reply Petition against not allowing PTI to hold public meetings

LAHORE (Online): During the hearing of petition against not allowing PTI to hold public meetings in Punjab, Lahore High Court (LHC) has issued notice to government and sought reply.

The hearing of the case was adjourned for indefinite period.

Petition filed by Umar Ayub came up for hearing before Justice Abid Aziz

Sheikh Friday.

The counsel for PTI while giving arguments said holding public meetings in Punjab is our basic right.

Whenever our any worker comes outside with flag then criminal case is registered against him. 52 cases have been registered against Hammad Azhar.

The court questioned why you have made LDA party.

International News

Blinken says Washington approved use of US weapons by Ukraine inside Russia

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden approved Ukraine using US weapons to strike targets inside Russia that were attacking the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, after Kyiv sought authorisation from Washington in recent weeks, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirmed on Friday.

Speaking at a news conference in Prague after an informal meeting of Nato foreign ministers, Blinken did not specifically say whether Biden's authorisation could expand to include other Russian cities and targets deeper inside Russia. Outgunned and out-manned on the battlefield, Kyiv has been increasing pressure on its Western allies to be able to launch offensive strikes at military targets inside Russia to better repel Russian advances.

Blinken said Washington's move, a marked change in policy by Biden, who steadfastly refused to allow Ukraine to use American weaponry inside Russia, was a result of the US adjusting and adapting to the battlefield. Now, he said, the US is responding to what it

has seen in and around the Kharkiv region.

"Over the past few weeks, Ukraine came to us and asked for the authorisation to use weapons that we're providing to defend against this aggression, including against Russian forces that are massing on the Russian side of the border and then attacking into Ukraine," Blinken said.

"And that went right to the president, and as you've heard, he's approved [the] use of our weapons for that purpose. Going forward, we'll continue to do what we've been doing, which is as necessary adapt and adjust," Blinken said.

Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, is 30 kilometres from the border with Russia.

It is the second time this year that Biden has quietly relaxed his policy on weapons supplies for Ukraine. Earlier this year, he bent to calls to send long-range missiles known as ATACMS to Kyiv.

US officials said on Thursday that US policy would continue to prohibit the Ukrainian military from using ATACMS, which have a range of up to

300km, and other long-range US weapons for deep strikes inside Russia.

The US is the biggest supplier of weapons to Ukraine in its battle against the full-scale invasion launched by Russian President Vladimir Putin in February 2022.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Friday that Ukraine using any Western weapon to strike Russian territory is "a question of time".

"I think that using any weapon, Western kind of weapon, on the territory of Russia is a question of time. Otherwise, it is not about just peace," Zelensky told reporters on a visit to Stockholm.

Ukraine has stressed the urgency for the use of Western-supplied arms to conduct strikes inside Russia as it defends against Russian advances in the northeastern Kharkiv region.

This spring, Ukraine found itself on the back foot in the 27-month-old full-scale invasion as it faces delays in military aid from the US, increased attacks on its energy infrastructure and Russia's push to expand the frontline.



A woman carries belongings on her head, as Palestinians inspect the damage after Israeli forces withdrew from Jabalia refugee camp, following a raid, in the northern Gaza Strip.

NATO ministers meet in Prague as allies ease restrictions on Ukraine's use of their weapons

Monitoring Desk
PRAGUE: NATO foreign ministers were meeting in the Czech capital Friday to prepare for this summer's leaders' summit as the alliance boosts support for Ukraine and countries one-by-one remove restrictions on how Kyiv can use western-supplied weaponry to combat Russia's invasion.

A day after U.S. President Joe Biden gave Ukraine the go-ahead to use American munitions to strike inside Russia for the limited purpose of defending Kharkiv, numerous minis-

ters, including those from the Netherlands, Finland, Poland and Germany, expressed approval of the decision, saying that Ukraine has the absolute right to defend itself from attacks originating on Russian soil.

The chorus of allied voices backing greater leeway for Ukraine to use their weapons grew louder in recent weeks after Russia launched artillery strikes on Kharkiv from its territory, prompting appeals for help from Kyiv. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken had hinted strongly this week.

US imposes visa restrictions on Chinese, Hong Kong officials

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States is imposing new visa restrictions on Chinese and Hong Kong officials over guilty verdicts in the National Security Law trial of pro-democracy organizers in Hong Kong, the State Department said on Friday.

Fourteen Hong Kong pro-democracy activists were found guilty and two were acquitted on Thursday in a landmark subversion trial that critics say could deal another blow to the city's rule of law and its reputation as a global financial hub.

Beijing wants to work with Arab states to resolve thorny issues: President Xi

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China wants to work with Arab nations to resolve hot spot issues in ways conducive to upholding fairness, justice and achieving long-term peace and stability, President Xi Jinping said in a speech on Thursday that also highlighted the Gaza crisis.

China is seeking to strengthen its relations with Arab states as a model for maintaining world peace and stability, Xi was quoted as saying by state media at the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in Beijing.

In remarks about the war in Gaza, the Chinese leader said war cannot continue indefinitely, justice cannot be permanently absent and a "two-state solution" should be firmly upheld.

"In the face of a turbulent world, mutual respect is the way to live in harmony, and fairness and justice are the foundation of lasting security," Xi was quoted as saying by Xinhua news.

He was addressing the heads of state of Bahrain, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Tunisia as well as foreign ministers from other Arab League nations. Beijing has repeatedly called for a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli crisis as well as an immediate ceasefire and Palestinian membership in the United Nations — positions which align closely with those of Arab nations.

China is increasingly flexing its diplomatic influence in the region, recently hosting the first talks on Chinese soil between the long-feuding Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah in April. Last year, China also brokered a landmark reconciliation deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia after years of hostilities between the two arch-rivals.

The Gaza crisis has threatened to push the region into a wider conflict, especially after recent tit-for-tat attacks by Israel and Iran.



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg chairs a meeting of NATO foreign ministers, as British Foreign Secretary David Cameron, United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken, NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoana, and Czech Republic's Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky attend, at the Czernin Palace, in Prague, Czech Republic.

At least 15 dead in India's Bihar, Odisha over 24 hours as temperatures soar

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: At least 15 people have died of suspected heatstroke in India's eastern states of Bihar and Odisha on Thursday, authorities said, with the region gripped in a debilitating heatwave expected to continue until Saturday.

India has been experiencing a blisteringly hot summer and a part of capital Delhi recorded the country's highest ever temperature at 52.9 degrees Celsius this week,

though that may be revised with the weather department checking the sensors of the weather station that registered the reading. While temperatures in northwestern and central India are expected to fall in the coming days, the prevailing heatwave over east India is likely to continue for two days, said the India Meteorological Department (IMD), which declares a heatwave when the temperature is 4.5°C to 6.4°C higher than normal.

Generative AI deception held in check: Meta

Monitoring Desk
SAN FRANCISCO: Social media giant Meta says its bid to thwart coordinated disinformation campaigns created through ever-improving generative AI is working, despite widespread concerns. Meta's latest study on "coordinated inauthentic behaviour" on its platforms comes as fears mount that generative AI will be used to trick or confuse people in upcoming elections worldwide, notably in the United States.

Sudan at 'imminent risk of famine', UN aid chiefs warn

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The people of Sudan are at "imminent risk of famine", United Nations agencies said on Friday, more than a year into a war between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

Around 18 million people are already acutely hungry, including 3.6 million children who are acutely malnourished, according to a joint statement by UN chiefs including Volker Turk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Time is running out for millions of people in Sudan who are at imminent risk of famine, displaced from their lands, living under bombardments, and cut off from humanitarian assistance," the statement added. Fighting broke out in the capital Khartoum

in April 2023 and quickly spread across the country, reigniting ethnic bloodshed in the western Darfur region and forcing millions to flee in the world's largest displacement crisis.

"Without an immediate and major step change, we will face a nightmare scenario: A famine will take hold in large parts of the country," read the statement also signed by UN aid chief Martin Griffiths.

The war broke out as long-simmering tensions over integrating the RSF with the army came to a head. The UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide said last week there was a risk of genocide in parts of Darfur. A UN-backed report said in March that immediate action was needed to "prevent widespread death and total collapse of livelihoods."



XICHANG: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal with Pakistani scientists and engineers at Mission Control Centre in Xichang city on the launch day of PAKSAT-MM1 satellite.

PAKSAT-MM1 launch marks new era of Pak-China space technology cooperation: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal has said that the successful launch of PAKSAT-MM1 satellite initiated a new era of space technology cooperation between Pakistan and China.

"The relationship between Pakistan and China has always been strong, but with this satellite project, we are taking it to new heights, literally touching space," the minister shared with Lin Yiming, Vice-President of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), ahead of the launch of satellite in Xichang, China.

The minister also met Ambassador Wang Fu Kang from the Asia Department of the Chinese Foreign Office and exchanged ideas on future space technology and deepened collaboration between Pakistan and China.

The minister was accompanied by Pakistan's Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi and SUPARCO Chairman Muhammad Yousuf Khan.

The minister, commending the hard work of scientists and engineers at the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) and all those involved in this mission. Earlier, the minister also met Pakistani scientists, engineers and the SUPARCO team. It is pertinent to mention here that Ahsan Iqbal was on a two-day tour in Xichang to meet the key officials involved in the satellite launch.

He termed the launch of PAKSAT-MM1 a new feather in the cap of CPEC, saying now cooperation in the space technology had formally entered the framework of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

According to a press release issued by the Planning Commission here, the minister said the satellite,

equipped with the cutting-edge technology, would revolutionize communication and connectivity across Pakistan, bridging the digital divide and empowering millions of Pakistanis.

The statement added that the satellite was equipped with SBAS (Pakistan Space Based Augmentation System), which makes Pakistan the 11th country in the world to have its own SBAS after India, the United States, Russia, China, Japan, Europe, South Korea, Australia, Nigeria and Algeria.

He also commended the dedicated efforts of CASC and China Great Wall Industrial Corporation in their joint endeavour to produce a satellite that will benefit millions of Pakistanis living in remote areas.

The satellite, a testament to the strong partnership between the two nations, will provide crucial connectivity, access to digital education, healthcare services, and e-commerce opportunities to underserved communities across Pakistan.

India must stop campaign to suppress political activists, intimidate Kashmiris: FO spox

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Friday reiterated its call for India to stop its ongoing campaign to suppress political activists and intimidate the Kashmiri public in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

"The headquarters of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference in Srinagar also remains sealed. India must stop its ongoing campaign to suppress political activists and intimidate the Kashmiri public. The people of Jammu and Kashmir should be able to freely exercise their right to self-determination as enshrined in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions," the Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said at her weekly press briefing here.

Highlighting the unabated Indian authorities' campaign to crush dissent in IIOJK and the confiscation of properties, she told the media that earlier this week, the properties including lands and a shop of two more Kashmiri youth were sealed in Shopian District. The Indian authorities had so far seized hundreds of properties across the occupied territory to punish Kashmiri activists, she added.

The spokesperson reiterated Pakistan's resolve to continue extending political, diplomatic, and moral support to Kashmiris for the just and peaceful settlement of the dispute as per the UN Security Council resolutions.

She told the media that during his visit from May 29-30, Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Act-

ing President Yousuf Raza Gilani, besides holding in-depth talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar.

The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral strategic relations and broaden the scope of cooperation in all areas of mutual interests and agreed to enhance parliamentary exchanges, strengthen cultural cooperation, and promote people-to-people exchanges.

The spokesperson mentioned a symposium held by the foreign ministry in connection with Vesak Day that brought together foreign delegates, including at the ministerial level, prominent Buddhist monks, and scholars on Buddhism and interfaith understanding.



QUETTA: People from different walk of life meeting with Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa at his office

Govt sets Rs. 12,900bn tax target to meet IMF conditions

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's federal government is expected to unveil an ambitious tax target of Rs. 12,900 billion for the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in the forthcoming fiscal year's budget, scheduled for presentation on June 10th.

The sources familiar with the budget reveal that this target represents a significant leap in tax revenue collection, necessitated by the IMF's requirements for financial assistance. The proposed measures to achieve this target are diverse and far-reaching, potentially affecting a wide range of businesses and consumers.

and impact consumer spending.

Additionally, the government plans to eliminate sales tax exemptions on certain food items, a move likely to strain household budgets.

Other significant measures include the expansion of withholding tax applications and the removal of existing sales tax exemptions on unspecified products.

Furthermore, higher customs duty rates are on the table, which could particularly affect industries reliant on imported raw materials and components.

The elimination of sales tax exemptions on food items and other products is expected to generate substantial revenue, although it may also lead to increased costs for consumers.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta and Administrator Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat preside over a meeting, at Metropolitan Corporation Office in Quetta.

IHC rejects the plea for wrapping up the petition for recovery of poet Farhad

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while rejecting the plea by Additional Attorney General (AAG) for wrapping up the petition regarding recovery of poet Ahmad Farhad adjourned the hearing till June 07.

AAG Munawar Iqbal Dogal took the plea cases are registered against Ahmad Farhad in the jurisdiction of Azad Kashmir. He is on physical remand till June 02.

AAG requested meeting between Ahmad Farhad and his family has taken place. The habeas corpus petition be disposed of.

The counsel Iman Mazari said we had not only sought return but we had also sought that action be taken against those responsible for enforced disappearance.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar remarked this case will come to end when he appears in the court.

Six die, seven injured in Malam Jabba road mishap

PESHAWAR (APP): At least six people were killed and seven others injured when a Hiace van carrying employees of PC Hotel Malam Jabba fell into a gorge on Malam Jabba Road in Swat district late night the other day.

According to local police, the Hiace van was carrying employees of PC Malam Jabba to Sarena Hotel Swat to arrange a dinner party. The van driver lost control of the vehicle on twisty Malam Jabba Road and it fell into a deep gorge.

On receiving information, the officials of Rescue 1122 reached the site of the mishap and retrieved six dead bodies and seven injured from the wreckage of the vehicle.

IHC fixes cipher case for hearing on Monday

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has fixed for hearing cipher case pertaining to Imran Khan on Monday next week.

Earlier the hearing was adjourned due to holiday in connection with Youm-e-Takbeer.

Call up notices have been issued to the respondents.

A two members bench of IHC comprising Chief Justice (CJ) Aamir Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb will hear the case.

The court will hear the appeal pleas in respect of PTI founder and Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

The hearing is most likely to be completed and decision to be announced.

The cipher case could not be heard on May 28 being public holiday.

PNS ASLAT visits Oman during Regional Maritime Security Patrol

RAWALPINDI (Online): Pak Navy ship PNS ASLAT visited Oman during Regional Maritime Security Patrol.

The Pakistan Navy ship was given a warm welcome by the host naval authorities on its arrival at the port of Salalah in Oman.

The ship's commanding officer discussed issues of mutual interest during meetings with Omani military officials. At the end of the visit, the forces of both countries participated in a joint naval exercise.

Amir assures provision of funds to AJK for timely completion of development projects

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan and States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Engr Amir Muqam on Friday had reiterated that Pakistan was committed with the cause of the Kashmiri people till they get the right to self-determination in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Addressing a press conference at local hotel after a briefing by AJK top government officials about progress on federal Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) projects and AJK's Annual development program (ADP) besides meeting delegations, the

minister said that the issue of Kashmir and its people was of prime importance to Pakistan which was consistently advocated at international level in the United Nations and different other international forums.

Engr Amir Muqam said that this support to the Kashmir cause is because Pakistan considers Kashmir its jugular vein and will continue to strive to provide support to the freedom of the Kashmiri people in all forms at all costs. The minister said that present regime has taken various measures to support the smooth functioning of the present government in AJK. Engr Amir Muqam said the federal government has transferred the funds,



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail giving away appreciation certificates to Hayatullah Khan Durrani, Muhammad Shehryar Aftab, Zahir Shah and SHO Naveed Ahmed Kakar for their performance in provision of flood water to Hanna Lake

Empowering women economically a matter of social justice: Rubaba

Independent Report QUETTA: The Adviser to the Chief Minister Balochistan for Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has reiterated to support women entrepreneurs to create a more inclusive business environment in Balochistan.

Dr. Buledi expressed these views while convening a meeting with Ms. Deedar Mengal from DOCH Private Limited. The meeting focused on initiatives aimed at empowering women economically and fostering women-led startups in Balochistan.

"Empowering women economically is not just a matter of social justice; it is a strategic investment in our future. By supporting women-led startups, we are fostering innovation, creating jobs, and promoting sustainable economic growth. Our aim is to ensure that women in Balochistan have equal access to opportunities and the tools they need to succeed," said Dr. Rubaba Buledi.

Pakistan Army boosts girls' education in NW

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant effort to promote girls' education, the Pakistan Army has taken comprehensive measures to ensure access to quality education for girls in North Waziristan. The army has established girls' schools in close proximity to local communities, making education more accessible and convenient for girls, according to a PTV report on Friday.

Numerous schools have been made functional in the region, providing a conducive learning environment for girls. Moreover, mobile infotainment and education schools are reaching out to remote areas, ensuring that no girl is left behind. To equip women with modern skills, computer labs have been set up at Women's Degree College Miran Shah and Women's Vocational Training Center. This initiative aims to empower women with technological knowledge, enabling them to contribute to the region's development.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister P&D Mir Zahoore Ahmed Buledi meeting with Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Logo.

Pak-Kuwait to sign a loan agreement US\$ 25 million in post JMC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan and Kuwait signed a loan agreement worth US\$ 25 million in the 5th session of the Pakistan-Kuwait Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) convened in Kuwait.

The key outcomes of the session included the agreement to sign a loan agreement for US\$ 25 million on June 3, for the Mohmand Dam, with assurances of support from the Kuwait Fund for engaging the Arab Coordination Group in financing the Diyar Bhasha Dam, according to a press release issued here on Friday.

The 5th Session of the Pakistan-Kuwait Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) convened from May 28th to May 30th, 2024, in Kuwait, marking a significant stride in strengthening the ties between the two nations. Chaired by Mr. Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for Privatization, and Omar Saud Al-Omar, Minister for Commerce and Industry of the State of Kuwait, the

session underscored a shared commitment to enhance collaboration across various sectors.

A high-level delegation from Pakistan, representing key ministries including Economic Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Commerce, overseas Pakistanis and HRD, Interior, Board of Investment, Petroleum Division, and SIFC, engaged in fruitful discussions aimed at fostering mutual prosperity. Ziad Abdullah Al-Najem, undersecretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, extended a warm welcome to Pakistan's delegation, highlighting the pivotal role of the session in advancing bilateral relations. Additionally, the Fund expressed its willingness to consider the financing request from the Government of Pakistan for the Kachhi Canal project.

During the JMC proceedings, significant strides were made with the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and agreements in fields such as industrial cooperation.

Foreign ministry spox China awaits Sharif's upcoming visit as an 'opportunity for greater development'

BEIJING (APP): The Chinese foreign ministry on Friday said China looks forward to the visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, taking it as an "opportunity to promote greater joint development." Spokesperson Mao Ning at her regular briefing said the official visit would boost the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic partnership and build a closer community of destiny in the new era. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will pay an official visit of China from June 4 to 8 on the invitation of Chinese Premier Li Qiang. This is his first visit to China after the establishment of the new government this year.

Sharing details of the visit, the foreign ministry spokesperson said Chinese President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) Zhao Leji will hold meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. In Beijing, she said, the leadership of two countries would have an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations and issues of common concern, and jointly plan the blueprint for the future development of China-Pakistan relations.

PM Shehbaz Sharif will also visit Guangdong and Shaanxi provinces. Mao Ning pointed out that China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners and "iron-clad" friends. China-Pakistan friendship has been tested by the winds and clouds of the times, and is as solid as a rock and as stable as Mount Taishan, she added.



ISLAMABAD: Leadership of Tehreek Tahafuz Aine-Pakistan meeting with President National Party Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch

Nasimur Rehman says Global warming affecting Balochistan severely; we have to change our living style

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Nasimur Rehman has expressed deep concern over the issue of global warming saying that it is severely affecting the province.

He said that if we didn't mend our way and change the life style then we may also suffer from the food shortage besides facing serious issue of water scarcity.

He stressed the need to pay utmost attention and importance to this sector so as to make policies based on the innovation and prevent the complications occurring due to the climate change.

He said that he desires to make the policies of the department compatible with the modern day requirements and take every possible steps for provision of resources.



QUETTA: Chief Executive Officer QESCO Engr. Shafiqat Ali briefing mediamen