

PM gives green light for Asaan Karobar Act enactment

Directs federal ministries, deptt heads to utilize Task Management System

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday approved the initiation of legislation for Asaan Karobar Act saying that promotion of the business and investment friendly environment was the government's top priority.

Chairing a meeting on ease of doing business, the prime minister directed the relevant authorities to establish a one-window operation to simplify documentary procedures for the businesses and traders.

He also directed to seek assistance from the Chinese experts to establish an experimental facility service center modeled after the Shenzhen One-Stop Shop.

As regards ease of doing business and other various initiatives, it was informed that an electronic registry would be established for business registration, licenses, certificates and other documents.

It was further told that an online one-window Pakistan Business Portal system would be introduced through which services of all the relevant departments could be accessed.

It was apprised that a strategy was being evolved for the establishment of Islamabad Business Facilitation Center.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday instructed federal secretaries and heads of departments to personally utilize the Task Management System.

He issued these instructions while chairing a meeting to assess the implementation progress of directives requiring federal ministries and departments to use the Task Management System.

The Task Management System is a modern software of international standards used to monitor instructions issued by the prime minister to federal ministries, and progress in this regard.

The prime minister also decided to conduct daily review for implementing the task management system.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on ease of doing business.

PM's aide Romina Khurshid urges collective action for climate-resilient Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, MNA Romina Khurshid Alam, on Thursday said that while Pakistan is struggling to cope with exacerbating impacts of climate change particularly heatwaves and floods, the present government is taking all-out policy measures to overcome the impacts, which have already caused irreparable economic losses worth billions of rupees.

While addressing a national seminar 'Disaster-Resilient Pakistan held here at the National University of Technology and organised by the National Disaster Management Authority, PM's aide noted that frequent disruptions in normal weather patterns overall last one decade has severely impacted the country's agricultural productivity, posing risk to national food water, energy securities, livelihoods of millions, deepening hunger and malnutrition woes.

The country's geographical location, coupled with its heightened socio-economic vulnerabilities, intensifies the risks posed by the climate crisis, she highlighted.

Evidence from the various reports international financial institutions including World Bank and Asian Development Bank suggest the country would continue to experience more adverse effects of climate change in future, including more erratic weather patterns, heightened glacial melting, paced sea-level rise and unleashing of more intense weather events such as floods and droughts. These impacts not only threaten human lives and infrastructure but also exacerbate existing socio-economic disparities, the reports highlight.

Quoting from a World Bank study 'Pakistan: Country Climate and Development Report', the PPPM's aide Romina Khurshid said that between 1992 and 2021 climate- and weather-related disasters in Pakistan causes economic losses to the tune of US \$29.3 billion from damage to property, crops, and livestock, equivalent to 11.1% of the 2020 GDP.

The devastating riverine floods in 2022 alone resulted in more than \$30 billion in economic losses and damages, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive action, she added.

Apprising the event participants of the present PM Shehbaz Sharif-led government's climate risk mitigation measures, Romina Khurshid Alam said, "The present PM Shehbaz Sharif-led government is taking all-out policy initiatives and implementing various adaptations and mitigation coping measures to address the country's worsening climate-vulnerability."

UN Resident Coordinator calls on Planning Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Newly designated United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan Mohamed Yahya on Thursday called on Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal and discussed matters relating to mutual interest. Emphasizing the strong and enduring relationship between Pakistan and the United Nations, the minister said Pakistan has a robust bond with UN agencies and the United Nations has always stood by us during challenging times, such as climate disasters.

He also appreciated the UN's significant efforts in assisting Pakistan during the 2022 floods and highlighted that, in response, the Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with policymakers, developed the 4RF framework to enhance the country's resilience against any catastrophic situations.

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the significance of the newly established Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Secretariat, which will become operational from 1st of July 2024. "Our focus now needs to be on engaging policymakers to achieve our SDG targets and involving media professionals to spotlight critical issues related to the SDGs," he stated.

Reflecting on Pakistan's commitment to the SDGs, he maintained that Pakistan was among the first few countries to have adopted SDGs agenda in National Assembly in 2016 as our national agenda.



ISLAMABAD: Mohamed Yahya the United Nations Resident newly designated Coordinator in Pakistan paid a courtesy call on Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal in his office.

Speakers discuss Gender-based violence, legislation in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The speakers on Thursday said that the level of discrimination and marginalisation prevalent in the society was more owing to the adverse impact of culture, and the medieval mores of patriarchy that spike up gender-based violence in the contexts of sexual, psychological and physical realms with no legislation and good governance that can control it.

A Roundtable Conference on "Gender-Based Violence and it Legislation in Pakistan," was conducted by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) in Collaboration with Chief Commissioner Office Islamabad, on Wednesday, and was participated by Additional Commissioner and Director Women Development Islamabad Administration, Nishaa Ishtiaq; Valeria Khan of ASF; DIG Operations Islamabad (MCI) and other senior officials, said a press release.

CDA chief said a groundbreaking step is being taken in Islamabad with the introduction of 3-D advertising, heralding a new era in the city's development and advertising strategies.

While chairing a meeting on digital advertising project in the federal capital, he said the implementation of various tools for digital advertising is planned, including digital screens, signage, billboards and LED screens.

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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan in a meeting with Eunji Tei Programme officer at United Nations Tourism.

Irfan urges opposition to give constructive suggestions for federal budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Parliamentary Leader Senator Irfan Siddiqui on Thursday urged opposition parties to refrain from criticism and instead suggests constructive recommendations for the federal budget 2024-25.

Participating in the budget debate in the Senate, Siddiqui said, "The opposition should give positive suggestions and recommendations for the budget 2024-25, as political statements will not benefit the people of the country." He recalled that when PML-N left the government in 2018, inflation was at 3 percent and GDP growth exceeded 6 percent. In contrast, he said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government left the country with 39 percent inflation.

He highlighted that overseas Pakistanis have sent \$34 billion in remittances, reflecting confidence in the current government.

Mashood says: Govt succeeds in bringing down inflation rate to 11pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Thursday said that the Pakistan Muslim League (N) led coalition government had presented a balanced budget for 2024-25.

Talking to the media, Mashhood said that the completion of the stand-by agreement with the IMF was the achievement of the government and we have reduced the inflation rate from 38 to 11 percent.

He added that the country was on the verge of default when Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif came into power.

The reduction in the interest rate of State Bank of Pakistan, increase in exports and shrinkage in imports reflected the best economic policies of the government.

He added that the country's economy was moving towards right direction under the dynamic leadership of PM Shehbaz Sharif and he would succeed in overcoming the financial problems.

APNEC lauds restoration of health insurance scheme for journalists

ISLAMABAD (INP): All Pakistan Newspapers and Electronic Media Employees Confederation (APNEC) has welcomed the restoration of health insurance scheme for journalists, as announced by the government in the budget year 2024-25.

APNEC Chairman Muhammad Siddique Anzar in a statement expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, saying the step would benefit thousands of journalists and media workers.

Anzar said the decision would establish a cordial relationship between journalists and the government and would help discourage the perpetrators of carrying out malicious propaganda against the country and the nation.

Islamabad Police effective strategies keep crime at bay; says IGP Nasir Rizvi

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi issued a video message about the performance of the Islamabad Police over the last 50 days. In his video message, he mentioned that the Islamabad Police have reorganized many systems through hard work around the clock over the past 50 days.

With the help of Islamabad citizens, crimes have been controlled. Utilizing the information and calls from Pucar-15, crimes were significantly controlled, and criminal elements were arrested and detained.

This effort and courage are due to the public's trust, and we will show you the eradication of crime.

He further mentioned that motorcycle and vehicle patrolling by the police has been greatly enhanced. The Dolphin Force was reorganized, crime hotspots were identified, new crime prediction software was introduced, the scope and utility of Safe City Islamabad were enhanced, and a new innovation named "Cyber Security Digital Sophistication" was initiated.

This involved the vertical and horizontal sophistication of Safe City Islamabad, with the arrest of criminal elements using cameras, digital surveillance, and AI features.

Iranian Ambassador, Islamia College VC discuss strengthening academic



By M.Ilyas PESHAWAR - The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Raza Amiri, and the Vice Chancellor of Islamia College Peshawar, Professor Dr. Ali Muhammad Yousafzai, met to explore avenues for enhancing literary and academic cooperation between Iran and Pakistan. During the meeting, Ambassador Amiri, who has extensive experience in scientific, educational, and technical fields, expressed Iran's readiness to elevate collaboration between the educational institutions of both countries. He emphasized Iran's commitment to sharing its advancements in these fields with Pakistani universities.

Vice Chancellor Dr. Yousafzai stressed the importance of expanding cooperation in the education sector, highlighting the potential of leveraging the deep-rooted cultural, religious, and social ties between Iran and Pakistan to foster stronger academic relations. Discussions included a range of mutual interests, such as teacher and student exchange programs, joint cultural and sports initiatives, and the establishment of an "Iranian Corner" at Islamia College to promote the Persian language.

In a gesture symbolizing the growing friendship, Ambassador Amiri planted a sapling on the college grounds, expressing his delight at the lush greenery of the campus. This meeting marks a significant step towards strengthening academic and cultural ties between Iran and Pakistan, with both nations committed to future collaboration and mutual development in the education sector.

Egyptian Ambassador, China Energy International Group officials meets IG Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: IG Islamabad discussed security matters with the Ambassador of Egypt and officials from China Energy International Group to ensure the protection of ambassadors and their properties. Islamabad Police will utilize all resources to guarantee their safety.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi met with the appointed Ambassador of Egypt and senior officials from China Energy International Group at the Central Police Office Islamabad.

IG Islamabad exchanged views on security matters with the Egyptian Ambassador and expressed mutual interest in enhancing both countries' police forces through collaborative training. IG Islamabad presented a memento to the Egyptian Ambassador.

Moreover, he also met with the senior official from China Energy International Group Company Limited. During the meeting, the delegation thanked the Islamabad Police for ensuring security to the Chinese company.

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UNDP aims to overcome climate vulnerabilities in GB & KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implemented project "The Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), in partnership with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination and supported by the Green Climate Fund aims to overcome the climate vulnerabilities of the valleys of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Pakistan is home to over 13,032 glaciers spanning the Karakoram, the Hindu Kush and the Himalayan Mountain ranges, making its northern region the largest reservoir of glaciers outside of the polar regions. However, with striking changes in the climate, these glaciers and the habitats surrounding them are deeply troubled, with 10,000 glaciers reported to be receding. The project aims to protect communities from the impacts of GLOFs resulting from significant glacial melts.

In collaboration with Cirrus Pakistan, the project is rolling out awareness sessions at various universities and colleges in GB and KP, leading up to a climate-centric hackathon to incubate ideas and solutions based on local knowledge to propel climate adaptation mechanisms and programming. Applicants were asked to submit their concepts for advancing climate-conscious solutions through livelihood interventions and innovative disaster risk reduction practices, among other focus areas.

Dr. Allah Ditta, Associate Professor/Chairman, Department of Environmental Sciences of the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Sheringal, Dir said, "Collective efforts in engaging our youth through such initiatives will pave the way for innovative solutions to combat the severe impacts of climate change in our region." Sumaira Gul, a student of Karakoram International University, (Chilas) Diamer Campus, discussed the need to invest in climate-centric solutions to overcome the impacts of global warming during the awareness session.

AIOU ranked 1st in quality education among Pak universities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has been ranked first among 89 Pakistani universities and 7th among 2175 international universities in the recent Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024 for quality education (SDG-4).

Additionally, AIOU has secured the first position among Pakistani universities for SDG 8 (Decent Employment and Economic Growth) and ranked third for SDG 10 (Reduction of Inequality) and SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Dr. Nasir Mahmood congratulated the entire faculty and staff on this proud moment and stated that Allama Iqbal Open University is in no way inferior to the best universities in the world. "Our curriculum, laboratories, and teachers adhere to international standards, and we make every effort to achieve the benchmarks of quality education."

Pakistan Army, Rescue 1122 extinguish forest fires in Murree

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a concerted effort to combat the raging infernos engulfing the lush forests of Murree, Pakistan Army and Rescue 1122 joint forces, deploying over ten teams to extinguish the blaze at various locations.

"We are pleased to announce that the combined efforts of armed forces and emergency responders have brought the fire under control in eighty percent of the affected area, "a rescue spokesperson told PTV.

With the remaining twenty percent of the area still under scrutiny, the firefighting teams remain vigilant, ensuring that every ember is extinguished and every corner of the forest is secured, he maintained.

He said the relentless efforts not only subdued the flames but also shielded the neighboring communities from the encroaching threat.



Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Marri, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Special Initiatives presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House Islamabad.