

Independent

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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 its visit there.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, federal ministers including Jam Kamal Khan, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Attallah Tarar, Dr Musaddik Malik, and Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister of State Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi, PM's Coordinator Rana Ehsan Afzal, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jahanzeb Khan and senior government officials.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal and Pakistan's Ambassador in Beijing joined the meeting via video link.

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.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah meets with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) delegation led by its Country Director Mr Geir Tonsto here at CM House.

Sindh govt develops unified labour code by consolidating existing labour law: CM

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday said that his government has decided to develop a unified labour law by consolidating, simplifying, and rationalizing the existing labour laws in consultation with the social partners including ILO. This he said while talking to a six-member International Labour Organisation (ILO) delegation led by its Country Director Mr Geir Tonsto here at CM House.

The other delegation members include Guillermo Montt, Elena Gerasimova, Ivo Spauwen, Sadia Hameed and Sean Cooney. Provincial ministers, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Shahid Thahim, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary Labour Hafiz Abbasi, Secretary Law Ali Ahamd Baloch and others also attended the meeting.

Murad Shah thanked the ILO for providing technical assistance in drafting the Labour Code of Sindh. "The draft Labour Code consolidates, simplifies and rationalizes the 21 laws regulating matters such as occupational safety and health, industrial relations and working conditions," he said. The draft Labour Code addresses the comments of the ILO supervisory bodies provided to Pakistan on ratified Conventions, related to legislative amendments, including those raised in the observations and direct requests of the Committee of Experts on Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR).

The LLR committee and the national and international experts agreed that a proper codification would not simply be a "cut and paste" of existing laws, stringing them together. That would lead to no meaningful improvements in modernization, efficiency and fairness. Rather, a codification involved reorganizing the provisions of existing laws in a coherent, up-to-date manner by rewriting and redrafting the provisions, keeping in view the aims of simplification, internal consistency and rationalization.

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.

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.

It specifically addresses the issues to tackle illegal migration and organised immigration crime, and to explore 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 crime, investigations of serious criminality and organised immigration crime.

Under the implementation mechanism, the co-operation will be overseen by a joint steering committee, chaired by the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and comprising representatives of Interior Ministry, National Police Bureau, British High Commission (supported by the UK Home Office), the programme team and other relevant agencies.

This agreement will help establish cooperation in the ability to share international criminal conviction data and analytics to prepare pre-emptive plans for crime prevention. Improving joint collaboration to tackle illicit finance threats, detecting criminality at air and sea borders, improving ability to facilitate extradition requests from the UK to Pakistan and Pakistan to the UK are also part of the LOI.



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

172 public sector buildings will be provided with 47MW electricity through solarization in three different phases: Nasir Shah

Independent Report KARACHI: Sindh Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has said that 172 public sector buildings will initially be provided with 47 MW of electricity through solarization in three different phases.

were also present on the occasion. Minister Energy gave more details and said that in the first phase of solarization, 21.7 MW of electricity is being provided through the solar panels of 34 public sector buildings,



He expressed these views today at the Energy Department during a meeting with a delegation of the World Bank's technical mission. The World Bank mission was led by Senior Energy Specialist/Task Team Leader Dmytro Glazkov while Project Director Sindh Solar Energy Mahfooz Qazi and others

Guilty:

Trump becomes first US president convicted of a crime

NEW YORK (INP): Donald Trump became the first U.S. president to be convicted of a crime on Thursday when a New York jury found him guilty of falsifying documents to cover up a payment to silence a porn star ahead of the 2016 election.

After two days of deliberation, the 12-member jury pronounced Trump guilty on all 34 felony counts he faced.

Trump watched the jurors dispassionately as they were polled to confirm the unanimous verdict.

Justice Juan Merchan set sentencing for July 11, just days before the Republican Party is scheduled to formally nominate Trump for president ahead of the Nov. 5 election.

The crime of falsifying business documents carries a maximum sentence of four years in prison, though those convicted often receive shorter sentences, fines or probation. Incarceration would not legally prevent him from campaigning, or taking office if he were to win.

He will not be jailed ahead of sentencing.

The verdict plunges the United States into unexplored territory ahead of the November vote, when Trump will try to win back the White House from Democratic President Joe Biden.

Trump, 77, has denied wrongdoing and an attorney representing him said they would appeal as quickly as possible.

PM Shehbaz announces major fuel price cut

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.

Imran Khan 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.

Army Chief, 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 long-standing 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.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori talking with mediators during a ceremony regarding arrival of world's largest cargo ship, MSC Anna at Karachi Port Trust (KPT)

Minister asks officials to promote modern farming practices

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Agriculture Minister Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Khan Mehhar Friday emphasized the need for modernization in the agriculture sector in order to address the challenges posed by climate change.

Speaking at the oath-taking ceremony of the Agriculture Association at the Directorate of Agriculture Research Institute in Tando Jam Mehhar urged the agriculture officials to guide farmers on best contemporary practices and

emerging issues in the sector.

He highlighted the crucial role of agriculture officers in driving progress in the field.

He encouraged them to work closely with the farmers to develop innovative solutions and enhance crop production.

The minister identified key challenges facing agriculture, including the judicious use of chemical pesticides, development of new crop varieties and seeds, disease control, and boosting crop yields.

Rs.1b released for Karachi Safe City Project: Sindh Home Minister

Independent Report KARACHI: Sindh Home Minister, Zia ul Hassan Lanjar, Friday said that Sindh government had released Rs 1 billion for the first phase of Karachi Safe City Project aimed at making the metropolis a peace-

ful and crime free city.



While chairing a meeting held here at DIG CTD office to discuss the first phase of the Karachi Safe City Project, the home minister emphasized the need of swift completion of the project within 12 months.

He mentioned that Sindh government had transferred Rs 3 billion to the project account for expediting the necessary works for launch of the project. The objectives of the safe city project are to eliminate crime and apprehend criminal elements and the government wants to expand it to other cities of the province.

President congratulates newly elected CPNE office bearers

KARACHI (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday congratulated the newly elected office bearers of Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors (CPNE) in the annual election.

The president, in a message, extended his felicitation to Irshad Ahmed Arif on his election as President and Ejaz ul Haq as Secretary General of CPNE.

He also expressed best wishes for other newly elected officials of CPNE. The president expressed the hope that the newly elected officials of CPNE would play their role in promoting responsible journalism in the country besides working towards development of newspapers and journalism sector.

Bilawal grieves over loss of lives in gas cylinder explosion in Hyderabad

KARACHI (APP): The PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed his grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in gas cylinder explosion in Hyderabad.

He said, "I am saddened to hear the news of the loss of precious lives including children in the accident."

Bilawal said, "I am sure that no effort will be spared for the better treatment of the injured."

He said that the concerned authorities should investigate the matter, if the incident indicated any criminal negligence then those responsible should be brought to justice.

Hyderabad blast death toll rises to four with over 60 injured

HYDERABAD (INP): The death toll from a blast at a liquid petroleum gas cylinder filling shop in Hyderabad's Preetabad area rose to four.

The blast took place in the LPG cylinder filling shop located on the ground floor of Zacha Bacha Hospital area along Mir Nabi Bux Town Road in UC-8 of Neerunkot town. The children who succumbed to their injuries were identified as Bilal, 15, Raheem, 5, Hasnain and Ayan, 1122 officials said. At least 60 people, mostly children, received serious burn injuries and had to be shifted to Karachi after being provided emergency treatment at the Liaquat University Hospital (LUH).



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).

Sharjeel for stepping up anti-narcotics operation against drug peddlers

Independent Report KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon Friday directed the officers of Excise, and Narcotics Control Wing to expedite anti-narcotics operations and ensure the eradication of drugs throughout the province.

He said that the government was implementing reforms in the Excise Department and important steps had already been taken in that regard.

He further said that actions against drug peddlers should be expedited.



He stated this while chairing an important meeting held in the office of Director General of Excise and Taxation in Karachi.

DG Excise and Narcotics Control, Usman Ghani Siddiqui and other

Commissioner holds meeting with DCs to discuss public service delivery matters

KARACHI (APP): The Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi on Friday convened a meeting of all Deputy Commissioners (DCs), of seven districts of Karachi division along with their respective Assistant Commissioners (ACs) and Mukhtarkars to discuss public service delivery matters.

The meeting witnessed threadbare discussion regarding public service delivery, development schemes, issues of cooperation and compliance from other agencies as well as holistic public service reforms through the legal framework to strengthen street-level bureaucracy.

The meeting was held at the Commissioner Karachi Club inside DC South office at Garden.

The meeting was attended by DC South Altaf Sario, DC Central Fawad Ghaffar Soomro, DC West Ahmed Ali Siddiqui, DC East Shahzad Fazzal Abbasi, DC Korangi Jawad Ahmed, DC Malir Irfan Salar Meerwani, DC Keamari Junaid Khan and the Assistant Commissioners and Mukhtarkars posted in different areas of Karachi.

Most of them echoed of non-cooperative attitude of different institutions, however, they vowed to deliver the best public service during duty.

The field officers, ACs and Mukhtarkars, voiced their concerns over pathetic cooperation from other relevant departments, which hindered effective public service delivery.

They stressed the need for a legal framework with stronger power to ACs to get compliance from other agencies on matters of public grievances.

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.

The disbursement of the quarterly tranche (April-June) of Benazir

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 centres 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 Zulfikar, 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.



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

Health Minister inaugurates polio vaccination campaign in selected districts of KP

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: KP Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah inaugurated the polio vaccine campaign in selected districts of the province here on Friday at Police Services Hospital Peshawar. This five-days Sub-National Immunization Days (SNIDs) campaign is being launched from June 3rd in selected districts of the province. Special Secretary Health and Coordinator Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abdul

Basit, Deputy Coordinator EOC Muhammad Zeeshan Khan, Director General Health Services Dr Muhammad Saleem and officials of UNICEF and WHO as well as other relevant officials were also present on this occasion.

Minister health Syed Qasim Ali Shah while talking to media reiterated the provincial government's strong commitment and unwavering resolve to eradicate polio virus from the province.

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-9 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).



Sri Lanka Minister for Buddhadasana, 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.

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 mediation 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 he 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 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): 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 Hamd Azhar.

The court questioned why you have made LDA party.

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

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 battleground. 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 US President Joe Biden gave Ukraine the go-ahead to use American munitions to strike inside Russia for the limited purpose of defending Kharkiv, numerous ministers, 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. US 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."

JPMC to AI system used at Johns Hopkins Hospital: CM Murad

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah Friday said that the world-renowned firm PAXERA had been engaged to install PACS and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies at JPMC, which were currently being used at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Harvard Medical School's Mass General Hospital in the USA.

This, he said while speaking at the 2nd Postgraduate Research Conference organised by JPMC at its Auditorium. The Chairman HEC Sindh Prof. Tariq Raif, Vice Chancellors - Prof Nusrat Shah, Amjad Siraj, Gulshan Memon, CEO AKUH Dr Farhat Abbas, and Executive Director JPMC Prof Shahid Rasool also spoke on the occasion.

The chief minister said this was not the JPMC inherited from the federal government.

"At the time of the devolution of Jinnah Post-

graduate Medical Center (JPMC), National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) and National Institute of Child Health (NICH) in 2011, their bed capacity was 2092 with a budget of Rs 1.9 billion," he added.

He said currently, we had increased their bed capacity to 4041 and the budget to Rs 25.75 billion and added that within the next three years, he aimed to further improve the bed capacity to 5000, which would make them the largest healthcare facility in Asia.

Murad Shah said that in 2011 the JPMC had 1185 beds, NICH 443 and NICVD 464, adding that his government enhanced the bed capacity from 2000 to 4000 in just 12 years.

"And In-sha-Allah within the next three to four years, we will raise it to 5000 beds which will make this the largest health care facility in Asia," he vowed.

The chief minister said that his government

was fully committed to health care.

"At the time of devolution, the Annual budget of these three institutes, JPMC, NICVD and NICH was Rs 1.9 billion and today it is Rs 25.75 billion."

Giving the breakdown of the budgets, Murad Shah said that in the year 2011, the JPMC had Rs 1300 million, NICH had Rs 218,416 million and NICVD- Rs 242,126 million budget and the total of the three facilities budget Rs.1,915 million.

The chief minister said that in 2023-24 the JPMC had a budget of Rs 11000 million, NICH Rs 2066 million and NICVD Rs 15,674 million—a total of Rs 25,740 million.

"We introduced cutting-edge technologies like Cyberknife Tomotherapy and many others which are offered free of cost," he said, adding that patients from 167 cities in Pakistan and 15 countries had availed these free facilities.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah speaks at the 2nd Postgraduate Research Conference organised by JPMC at its Auditorium.

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.

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 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 Khalid Hashmi and SUPARCO Chairman Muhammad Yousuf Khan.

Quoting SUPARCO, 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.

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.



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.

SHC decision regarding MUCT collection is historic: Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Friday said that the decision of the Sindh High Court regarding the collection of Municipal Utility Charges and Tax (MUCT) through K-Electric bills is historic, as a result of which the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) will receive over Rs 4.4 billion under this head during the next financial year.

While addressing a press conference at the Mayor's Office in Karachi, he said that the agreement for MUCT collection will be presented for approval in the meeting of the city council on June 10 and expressed hope that all parliamentary parties will cooperate in the best interest of the city.



SUKKUR: Children suffering from gastroenteritis and heat stroke are being treated in hospital, in Sukkur.

Hyderabad division on high alert after positive polio samples, Intensive campaign planned

HYDERABAD (APP): Environmental samples have tested positive for polio in three districts of the Hyderabad Division including Hyderabad, Jamshoro and Badin.

These districts have been identified as high-risk areas, therefore a campaign should be conducted vigorously in these districts in the month of June.

This was announced by the Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad, Ahsan Ali Qureshi, during a divisional task force meeting to review preparations for the upcoming campaign.

Commissioner Qureshi highlighted the extreme heatwave in the province and stressed the importance of taking care of frontline workers by providing them with ambulances, cold water, hats, and lemon water.

During the meeting, Focal Person of the divisional task force for polio Jamshed Khanzada briefed attendees that all targets were met during the SNID

Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman to visit Pakistan soon

RIYADH (INP): Pakistani Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ahmad Farooq announced that Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman is set to visit Pakistan soon, a move that may significantly enhance Pak-Saudi trade and investment activities.

During a briefing to journalists in Riyadh, Ambassador Farooq highlighted a new vigour in Pakistan-Saudi bilateral relations over the past year.

SSP visits hospital inquire health of Journalist

SUKKUR (APP): Senior Superintendent of Police, Sukkur, Amjad Shaikh on Friday visited a private hospital and inquired health of a local journalist Ghulam Hyder Mastoi, who was wounded in an attack by unknown armed men.

He assured the injured Journalist of every possible help.

He said that steps are being taken for the protection of Media persons.

He said that it is the responsibility of the police department to take care of citizens and take care of their needs.

More flights called off at Karachi Airport

KARACHI (INP): The flights operation at the Karachi's Jinnah International Airport was in ruins on Friday again as a number of flights were cancelled.

Serene Air flights ER-502 and ER-504 from Karachi to Islamabad were cancelled while Fly Baghdad flight IF-334 from Karachi to Nepal was also called off.

Serene Air flights ER-522 and ER-524 have also been called off. PIA flight PK-336 from Karachi to Sukkur was also cancelled.

Very hot weather forecast for Sindh

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department on Friday predicted very hot weather in most parts of the Sindh province during the next 24 hours.

Moreover, hot and humid weather is forecast in coastal areas and gusty winds/windstorm are likely in upper districts during the period.

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 Diamer 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.



HYDERABAD: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Haleem Adil Shaikh addresses to media persons during press conference, at Ghuman House in Hyderabad.

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 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 continuously strive to provide support to for 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, staff and assets relating to the Kashmir Council in Islamabad to AJK Government. He said that funds amounting to approximately Rs.7.5 Billion have been transferred from Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to the Government of AJK.

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The DC took briefing on the anti-polio campaign, which would launch from June 3 to 9 in the district.

He was also given a detailed briefing about various matters relating to efforts for polio eradication and other issues.

He informed that all possible arrangements are being ensured to achieve the targets.

The Deputy Commissioner urged for taking measures for the success of the campaign. He also urged for rectifying the previous shortcomings.

The goals and targets of the anti-polio campaign were also reviewed in the meeting.

48 illegal LPG filling points sealed in the district

HYDERABAD (APP): Following the tragic incident of gas cylinder explosion in Pretabad area of Hyderabad, a series of actions against illegal LPG filling points started on the special instructions of the Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad Zainul Abedeen Memon. Under which a crackdown was carried out in all four talukas of the district led by the Assistant Commissioner (AC) Latifabad Saud Ahmed Baloch, AC Qasimabad Abdul Wahid Chana, AC rural Anees Ahmed Abbasi and AC city Babar Saleh Rahpoto.

A total of 48 illegal LPG cylinders filling points have been sealed during the operation. According to the details, 15 filling points in Qasimabad, 3 in Latifabad, 10 in the rural area and 25 in the city area were sealed, while 3 individuals have been arrested in Latifabad. On the other hand, the Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad has also instructed the concerned authorities to continue operations till all the illegal LPG filling points.

All resources to utilize to eradicate polio: DC Sukkur

SUKKUR (APP): A meeting of the District Polio Eradication Committee was held under the chaired by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sukkur, Dr Raja MB Dharejo on Friday.

He informed that all possible arrangements are being ensured to achieve the targets.

The Deputy Commissioner urged for taking measures for the success of the campaign. He also urged for rectifying the previous shortcomings.

The goals and targets of the anti-polio campaign were also reviewed in the meeting.

DC Sukkur emphasized that polio eradication was a need of the time, adding all resources would be utilized to completely eradicate the polio from the Sukkur district.

Two children drown in Indus River

HYDERABAD (APP): Two children drowned while swimming in the Indus River near Kohsar, Latifabad, here on Friday.

According to Rescue 1122, the search for the drowned children continued till the sunset.

The drowned children namely Ayaz Khaskheli and Masoom Khaskheli, came with their families were said to be 8 to 10 years old. The families live in Katcha Qila area.

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 Murtaz 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 Jehyun Bayramov met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Acting President Yousef Raza Gilani, besides holding in-depth talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar.



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

SC full court constituted to hear matter of SIC reserved seats

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has constituted 13-member full court to hear the matter of allocation of reserved seats to Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC). The bench will be headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faiz Isa.

The SIC petition will be heard on June 03.

Sources said Justice Musarrat Hilali is not included in the bench due to health problem.

It may be recalled that

a 3-member bench led by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah had suspended Peshawar High Court (PHC) decision. Under practice and procedure law, the matter was sent to judges committee for constitution of larger bench and interpretation of constitutional point.

Earlier Speaker KP assembly had filed appeals against PHC decision. While Election Commission had given decision for not allocating the reserved seats to SIC. PHC had upheld it.

LHC seeks response on admissibility of plea over PM's black sheep remarks

LAHORE1 (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought a response from the federation regarding the admissibility of a petition seeking initiation of contempt proceedings against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif over his 'derogatory' remarks about judges.

Taking up the plea on Friday, LHC's Justice Muhammad Waheed Khan asked Additional Attorney General Munawar Iqbal Duggal to tell the court whether or not the

petition brought against the premier was admissible.

At this, the additional attorney general said the Supreme Court had raised the same question yesterday [during Thursday's hearing on the National

accountability Bureau (NAB) Ordinance 1999 amendment case].

"Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan had made it clear to the apex court that the prime minister's remarks were not directed at the

state lawyer added. At this, the court inquired of the AAG if he was in possession of a written order from the Supreme Court.

He said the written order had not yet been received from the apex court. Subsequently, the court, while issuing a notice, sought a response from the federal government regarding the admissibility of the contempt petition against the prime minister.



KARACHI: Supporters of Tanzeem-e-Islami are hold placards during protest against Israeli airstrikes on Rafah, to show solidarity with Palestinian people, in the Provincial Capital.

SALU marks World No Tobacco Day

SUKKUR (APP): Marking the World No Tobacco Day, an awareness seminar and rally organized by MilKar Pakistan in collaboration with the Students' Societies Center of the Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur on Friday.

The event aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and encourage a tobacco-free lifestyle among students and the community.

In-charge of the Students' Societies Center, Dr Ali Raza Lashari emphasized the importance of such initiatives in fostering a healthy and drug-free environment.

Inspector of the Anti-Narcotics Force, Munir Abid stressed the need for vigilance among young

people to prevent drug and narcotics use and urged parents to stay engaged with their children, particularly those residing in hostels, by maintaining regular communication with hostel wardens and guards.

Inspector Nazeer Ahmed engaged directly with students, answering their questions and providing valuable insights into the issues related to drug abuse. Aqeel Ahmed commended the university administration and student societies for organizing such an informative and impactful program.

The event concluded with a visit from the ANF team to the heat stroke camp, where they expressed their appreciation for the volunteers from the Students' Societies Center.