

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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70 pc work on target about preparations of budget done:

We have decided in principle to end bad governance in Balochistan: CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that 70 percent work on the targets about preparation of the next financial year budget of the province has been completed. He said that the education and health is the first priority of the provincial government.

He categorically asserted that we have decided in principle to end bad governance from the province.

He said that the beginning of analyzing the performance of government would be from approval of the budget for next financial year and implementation on it.

The Chief Minister was chairing a review meeting on preparations of the provincial budget for the next financial year 2024-25 here at the CM's secretariat on Friday.

The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Minister for Planning and Development, Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, other ministers, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Development, besides other administrative secretaries and concerned high ups were in attendance at meeting.

The meeting was briefed about the salient features of the budget of province for next financial year besides the development plan.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister appreciated the Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan and his whole team for the preparations of budget.

He said that it remained our endeavour that mistakes of the past may not be repeated in formulation of the budget.

He announced that education and health are top priorities of the provincial government in budget.

He said that we have decided to put an end to the bad governance in the province. He said that the beginning of analysing performance of the government would be from the approval of budget and speed of implementation on it. He announced that the tendering process would be started from July 1, 2024.

He said that implementation on the development projects from July 1 would actually be the test of provincial government.

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a meeting to review preparation of provincial budget for next financial year 2024-25



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of an International Consultancy Firm called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Home Minister directs to ensure foolproof security on Eidul Azha in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has directed to the concerned authorities to ensure foolproof security on eve of Eidul Azha in Quetta and other parts of the province.

According to an official hand out issued here on Friday, the Minister Home said that it is responsibility of the government to protect life and property of the masses.

He directed to the concerned authorities to take special arrangements of security at the congregations

of Eidul Azha including the jamia masjid and imambargahs.

He also directed to the police and other law enforcement agencies to remain vigilant particularly on 9th Zil Hajj and Eid. The additional deployment of police and other agencies should be made in the shopping centers, markets and bazaars to avert any untoward incident, the Minister Home directed further.

He directed to the senior police officers to remain in field for reviewing the security arrangements on Eid.

Jamal Raisani discusses Balochistan politics with Bilawal Bhutto

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Young member national assembly of the Pakistan People's Party, Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani, met with Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday to discuss Balochistan's political situation and strategies for strengthening the party.

MNA Jamal Khan Raisani highlighted the issues of his Saryab constituency and proposed solutions.

He also briefed on the youth policy and the challenges being faced by young people of Balochistan region. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari assured his full cooperation to address the problems facing the youth of the province.

He expressed confidence in the abilities of Jamal Khan Raisani and emphasized that the party needs the young leaders.

No point negotiating with powerless gov: Imran

Monitoring Desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Friday stated that there is no point in negotiating with a government that lacks authority.

During an informal conversation with the media during the hearing of the £190 million reference at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, he accused the administration of pressuring judges who rule in favour of PTI and criticised the recent budget for burdening salaried individuals.

Khan alleged that a judge from Sargodha informed the Lahore High Court about pressure exerted by intelligence agencies. He claimed that the judge's household gas supply was cut off and that judges sympathetic to PTI face immense pressure. "Journalists speaking in favour of PTI are being targeted; Raouf Hassan was attacked, and Ali Zaman was tortured," Khan asserted, implicating intelligence agencies in these actions. Khan urged the Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa to uphold the rule of law amidst these interferences.

Govt reduces petrol, diesel prices to ease inflation pressure

Petrol price reduced by Rs10.20 per litre while HSD will see a reduction of Rs2.33 per litre

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The government announced on Friday a significant reduction in petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) prices for the upcoming fortnight, providing relief to consumers grappling with inflation.

Effective from June 15, petrol prices will decrease by Rs10.20 per litre, bringing the new price to Rs258.16 per litre. HSD will see a reduction of Rs2.33 per litre, with the new rate set at Rs267.89 per litre, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

Kerosene oil will remain priced at Rs171.61 per litre, and light diesel oil (LDO) will stay at Rs157.32 per litre in the open market.

Petrol is primarily used for cars and motorcycles, while HSD powers heavy vehicles such as trucks and buses, as well as industrial machinery.

It is noteworthy that on June 1, the government reduced the price of petrol by Rs4.74 per litre and diesel by Rs3.86 per litre. So far, a total relief of Rs35 per litre has been provided to the public for petrol.

Political parties must prioritise country's progress: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi called on President Asif Ali Zardari at the Aiwan-e-Sadr here Friday.

During the meeting issues of mutual interest and country's overall situation were discussed in detail.

President Asif Ali Zardari emphasized we need to take Pakistan forward and everyone has to play their role in this regard. He stressed that political parties must prioritize the country's progress and prosperity by fulfilling their democratic and constitutional responsibility. He added we must only think about Pakistan and put aside personal differences.

PM assures to extend facilities to private sector for revival of economy

Okays massive electricity tariff reduction for industrial sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday instructed the relevant authorities to hold consultation with the globally reputed consultancy firms to realize the investment agreements with the friendly countries.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of an international consultancy firm headed by former State Bank Governor Raza Baqir, also directed for consultation with

the reputed firms to reduce the volume of government infrastructure and enhance effectiveness of the governance system.

He told the delegation that there existed a huge potential for investment in minerals and energy sectors.

Appreciating the key role of the private sector in national economic development, the prime minister assured of all-out facilitation

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Maximum steps being taken for welfare of media community: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that the government was taking all possible steps for welfare of the media community.

Addressing a ceremony regarding launch of the health insurance scheme for the journalists, the minister said the government had been playing its due role for the welfare of journalists community and he had personally requested the prime minister to take more initiatives in that regard.

The minister requested the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) to

give due rights of the media workers and journalists. He had spoken to the owners of media organizations in that regard, and it was his desire cheques pertaining to outstanding dues should be distributed among the journalists directly instead of through the Implementation Tribunal for Newspaper Employees (ITNE) platform. He said after assuming charge as information minister, he ensured clearance of the outstanding dues of media organizations on priority. He said former information minister Marriyum Aurangzeb had taken the initiative of health insurance scheme, and he was carrying forward it.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari

KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari briefed by Sarfraz Bugti, Balochistan Chief Minister on his government performance, future plans and other measures regarding solving public problems in the province through video link, in Karachi.

Exclusion of Balochistan's projects from federal PSDP: BHC issues show cause notices to ACS, Principal Secretary to CM, Deputy Chairman PC

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court (BHC) has issued notices to the Additional Chief Secretary (Development) Balochistan, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister and Deputy Chairman Planning Commission of Pakistan to show cause, as to why a contempt of court proceedings shall not be initiated against them for a willful defiance of the court's orders.

The BHC also directed all the concerned officials to appear in personal capacity for filing a reply to the show cause notice.

The Court observed: "we are dismayed to further observe here that despite sending the copies of orders to all the concerned officials at provincial and

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CJP Qazi Faez Isa says Court reporting is a challenging task

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa said on Friday the culture of mudslinging could not be completely eradicated but it could certainly be reduced.

Speaking at the swearing-in ceremony of the Supreme Court Press Association, CJ Isa said judicial reporting was a very challenging task.

The chief justice administered the oath to the new members, Justices Athar Minallah, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, and Naem Akhtar Afghan also participated in the ceremony.

The chief justice said he and his mother, Saecda

Pakistan gets permanent membership of Washington Accord

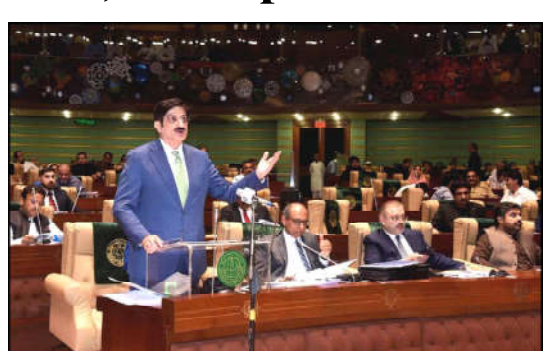
ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has made history, becoming permanent member of Washington Accord for six years.

International Engineering Alliance (IEA) approved the extension in Pakistan's membership during its 2-day session at New Delhi.

The IEA unanimously approved the Pakistan's membership in Washington Accord.

However, a delegation of Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) couldn't attend the IEA session as India rejected the visas and NOC to Pakistani delegation.

Govt employees get up to 30pc raise in salaries Sindh Govt presents Rs 3.056.27trn dev., social protection-oriented budget



KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday presented a Rs. 3.056.27 trillion development and social protection-oriented budget of the province for the next fiscal year 2024-25 on the floor of Provincial Assembly of Sindh.

The next fiscal year's budget marks 34 percent

increase over budget estimates of Rs. 2,282.58 billion in current year 2023-24.

The chief minister, who also holds the portfolio of the Sindh Finance Minister in his budget speech, proposed a hike of 22 to 30 percent in salaries and a significantly higher development expense of Rs

959 billion, which accounts for 31 percent of the outlay.

While terming as the balanced budget, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the budget mainly centred around the rehabilitation of flood-affected people and social protection for the poor.

The total projected revenue for the province is Rs. 3 trillion. The majority of this comes from federal transfers 62 percent, followed by provincial receipts 22 percent. The remaining receipts are through current capital receipts of Rs. 22 billion, foreign project assistance of Rs. 334 billion, other federal grants in the form of PSDP of Rs. 77 billion, for-

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QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Ali Madad Jattak and Sardar Sarfraz Domki meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

T20 World Cup 2024: Pakistan eliminated as rain abandons USA, Ireland match

Sports Desk

NEW YORK: Pakistan suffered early exit from the T20 World Cup 2024 after USA bagged one point to qualify for the Super Eights following the abandoning of their match against Ireland due to rain.

Pakistan's hopes of qualification to the Super Eight Stage in West Indies might remain alive if USA lost against Ireland in today (June 14) match. However, rain played spoilsport and

both the co-hosts and Ireland bagged one point each.

The one point has consolidated the USA second spot in the Group A as Pakistan stand at third place. From this group, India has already qualified for the Super Eights.

The Team Green will face Ireland in the dead rubber on Sunday (June 16).

Babar Azam-led side have played three match so far, losing two to the USA and India and winning one against Canada.

Achakzai to hold talks with PML-N, PPP

ISLAMABAD (INP) - Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai expressed his willingness to hold talks with PML-N President Nawaz Sharif and PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari.

Earlier, PTI chose Achakzai to spearhead negotiations through the opposition alliance's platform, Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Ayeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP). "Pakistan needs a strong army," Achakzai stated clarifying that his movement is not against the military. "We have raised the banner for the supremacy of democracy and the Constitution."

Romina Khurshid says: Coordination among federal, provincial departments vital to mitigate heatwaves, floods' impacts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Friday urged all the federal and provincial departments to take all-out measures to protect lives, livelihoods of the people from ongoing heatwave spell and possible monsoon floods. She also directed all the provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) to ensure the maintenance of sufficient stocks of disaster relief items pre-monsoon onset to ensure in time preparedness against above-normal rainfall.

The PM's Coordinator was chairing the meeting of the 2nd Task Force on Global Warming and Heatwaves here whereas representatives of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Science and Technology, Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC), Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of National Health, Services, Regulations and Coordination, Pakistan Meteorological Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and officials from the provincial governments joined through video link.

She urged all Federal and Provincial departments concerned to enhance their preparedness with regard to threat of flooding due to upcoming monsoon spell, stock maintenance and heat wave effects.

PM's Coordinator emphasized on timely execution by all stakeholders on NDMA's National Action Plan regarding flood threats in Southern Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces. She also stressed upon inclusion of Lady Health Workers, Midwives in the medical relief camps to be established by concerned Federating Units during the emergency situations.

Chairing a high-level meeting, the PM's aide highlighted that the country's vulnerability to climate change-caused disasters would continue to deepen as the disasters, particularly heatwaves and floods are becoming more intense and frequent as the world continues to heat up because of untamed heat-trapping carbon emissions.

"The adverse socio-economic impacts of the disasters are unlikely to be overcome as long as the well-coordinated disaster risk mitigation or prevention measures are not taken jointly by all federal and provincial departments," Romina Khurshid Alam warned. She assured of her Ministry's unwavering support at all levels so as the country's disaster vulnerability is lessened through effective collaboration among the federal and provincial departments.



ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam chairing second meeting of Task Force on Global warming & Heat Wave.

Our commitment to protect the lives and upholding law 24/7; IG says

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a high-level crime meeting was chaired by Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi at the Central Police Office. The meeting was attended by DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, zonal SPs, SDPOs, and all SHOs.

During the meeting, IG Islamabad reviewed the performance of all officers and issued directions to intensify the ongoing "Nasha Ab Nahe" movement against drugs peddlers.

IG Islamabad said that all police officers should ensure the prompt arrest of criminals, those involved in serious crimes, murders, abductions, and other offenses, as well as wanted persons, judicial fugitives, TOs, and drug dealers.

Officers should utilize the assistance of Safe City for crime eradication, expedite the pace of work, prepare challan of under-investigation cases, and send them to the relevant courts.

He further said that, a zero-tolerance policy will be adopted against corruption and negligence in duties will not be tolerated. IG

Islamabad emphasized that law and order should not affect crime eradication.

Social and moral crimes will not be tolerated in the federal capital, drugs and gambling will not be allowed in Islamabad, and a strict policy will be in place for robbery incidents.

IG Islamabad directed the officer to take personal interest in crime eradication and under investigation cases, and continue the crackdown against drugs and professional beggars, and make the performance of night patrolling officers more effective. He said that, all vehicles should be deployed on patrolling duties from 7 PM to 2 AM. Enhance the effectiveness of the Dolphin Squad and patrolling duty. He further directed that the issues of citizens visiting every police station in Islamabad should be resolved 100% on merit, and only those officers who work will remain in positions. The top priority of Islamabad Police is the protection of citizens' lives, property, and honor. Officers who are negligent in protecting citizens' lives and property will face strict departmental action.



ISLAMABAD: A view of electric busses on their way at a road sector G-7 during test testing service in the Federal Capital.

PHMH thanks Saudia counterpart for arrangements of pilgrimage train this year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Head of Pakistan Hajj Medical Mission Brigadier Jamil Ahmed Lakhair Friday thanked Saudi counterpart for arranging up to the mark transport arrangements for hajj this year where high-speed train facilities were being provided to all pilgrims from Mina to Arafat.

Talking to PTV news channel, he said Pakistan government has better coordination with the Saudi authorities to serve Hajj and this year's Hajj will be more comfortable than the previous one.

"We are happy with the special attention of the Saudi Hajj minister for the convenience of Pakistani pilgrims, he said, adding, due to these smooth train operations our pilgrims expressed their heartfelt grati-

tude to the Saudi authorities". He also praised the Saudi government's security and safety measures and other services for pilgrims, adding, pilgrim who performed Hajj for the first time are also impressed by huge facilities and services of Hajj mission in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom's air ambulance service is also remarkable step to reach patients in various locations quickly, provide specialized emergency medical services, and transport patients to specialized health facilities within a short period of time, he added.

A specialized supervisory medical team monitors and evaluates the health status of the transferred pilgrims throughout the journey is also being ensured their safety and well-being of hajj, he mentioned.

Pirzada discusses plan for winding up PWD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Friday convened a meeting for a transition plan for winding up the Pakistan Public Works Department (PWD) on the directives of the prime minister.

Dr. Shahzad Khan Bangash, Secretary of Housing, senior officers of the Establishment division, and Pak PWD also attended the meeting.

The committee deliberated on developing a comprehensive transition plan for the PWD to ensure the efficient utilization of resources and the unified continuation of public sector development projects. Furthermore, discussions were held regarding the maintenance of assets currently under charge of the PWD.

Plans to deal with HR issues and for continued oversight of ongoing projects during and after the transition period were also considered.

IRSA releases 295,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 295,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 257,000 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1445.06 feet and was 47.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 101,300 cusecs and 120,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1183.20 feet, which was 133.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 45,400 cusecs and 65,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 169,200, 153,600, 104,000 and 53,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 74,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 9,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Qurat Ul Ain Marri, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee On Planning, Development And Special Initiatives presiding over a meeting (evening session) of the committee at Parliament House.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing and Works, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada chairs a meeting for transition plan for winding-up Pakistan Public Works Department (PWD)

Nikah during iddat case: I will give decision on appeal plea within 10 days if I remain alive: Judge local court

ISLAMABAD (Online): Local court of Islamabad has issued notice to the respondents on appeal pleas of PFI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi against their conviction in Nikah during iddat case.

Additional and Sessions Judge Afzal Majoka remarked "if I remain alive I will decide the appeals within 10 days.

District and Sessions judge Afzal Majoka took up for hearing petitions filed by Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi seeking early hearing

of their appeal pleas against their sentence and suspension of their conviction Friday. Usman Riaz Gul counsel for Bushra Bibi appeared in the court.

He presented written decision of Islamabad High Court (IHC) requesting direction has come therefore, the case be for fixed for hearing tomorrow.

Judge Afzal Majoka remarked "I remain alive I will give decision within 10 days. Tomorrow it is not possible because several bail pleas are fixed for hearing.

If the other party does not appear even then I will give my decision.

Usman Riaz Gul advocate said "fix them for hearing tomorrow then notice will become part of record.

Judge Afzal Majoka remarked "I am writing order in respect of today's hearing. There will be too much more than notice in it.

The court while issuing notice to the respondents adjourned hearing till June 21.

PRCS celebrates World Blood Donor Day to raise awareness about regular blood donations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) celebrated World Blood Donor Day on Friday, aimed to raise awareness about the significance of regular blood donations and express gratitude to voluntary donors for their life-saving contributions to those in need.

Under the theme "20 years of celebrating giving: Thank You Blood Donors" a ceremony was held at the PRCS National Headquarters. The event was attended by officials of the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC), PRCS, Red Crescent Movement Partners, staff, volunteers,

blood donor coordinators, and regular blood donors.

In his message, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari stressed the dire need for regular and voluntary blood and plasma donations to ensure the availability of safe and life-saving products for those in need.

He underlined that by donating a part of ourselves, "we have the power to share the gift of life and positively impact countless individuals."

He also appreciated the PRCS' efforts in managing and supplying blood to deserving patients, emergencies, and accidents.



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chairing a high level meeting

NHMP cracks down on overloading, overcharging during Eid-ul-Azha

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to ensure the safety and security of passengers during the busy Eid-ul-Azha holidays, the National Highways and Motorways Police (NHMP) has announced strict legal action against public service vehicles (PSVs) involved in overloading and overcharging.

Inspector General of NHMP, Salman Chaudhary, emphasized that heavy fines will be imposed under the National Highways Safety Ordinance 2000 (NHSO-2000) for any violations.

Talking to APP IG Salman Chaudhary said that safety of passengers is top priority during this festive period. "On the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, our utmost priority is the safety and security of passengers. We are implementing special measures to ensure a safer journey for commuters," said Chaudhary.

To achieve this, NHMP Regional Commanders have been instructed to utilize all available resources for the timely assistance and guidance of commuters on motorways and highways. This includes the deployment of

additional patrolling vehicles and officers to enhance patrolling efficiency.

Chaudhary urged commuters to report any instances of reckless driving by PSVs to the NHMP through the toll-free helpline (130) or via social media.

He assured that immediate legal action would be taken against the owners and drivers of offending vehicles. "Reckless driving should be reported immediately. NHMP will take swift action to ensure compliance and safety," he stated.

In addition to addressing overloading, the IG emphasized the importance of adhering to traffic rules. "Drivers should avoid overloading, overcharging, and reckless driving. Unfit vehicles should not be operated on the National Highways. Commuters are advised to use seat belts, observe lane discipline, and drive safely."

These measures are part of NHMP's ongoing efforts to maintain safety and order on Pakistan's roadways, particularly during high-traffic periods such as Eid-ul-Azha.

Education ministry to start advance learner course for ICT colleges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has announced to start advanced learner course for Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 students to ensure a smooth transition and a strong foundation for new students of Islamabad Colleges.

According to the Education Ministry, this program will run for the whole month of July.

Sharing the key highlights of the programme, the ministry said that the best teachers have been identified for English, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology.

Additional salary for teaching faculty has also been finalized for this purpose. "Our commitment is to provide the best academic ecosystem for our students. We are leaving no stone unturned to ensure our students receive the best possible support and resources to excel in their academic journey", the ministry said.

The ministry is also inviting students from private schools to join this exciting initiative.

PEMRA asks BOL TV to submit complainants' details

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Council of Complaints of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) on Friday directed the BOL TV management to submit all the details of the complainants filed by different complainants against them.

The council also asked the complainants to submit their personal and legal documents relevant to their complaints, said a news release.

The directives passed by the Council which met here with Syed Muhammad Ali in the chair.

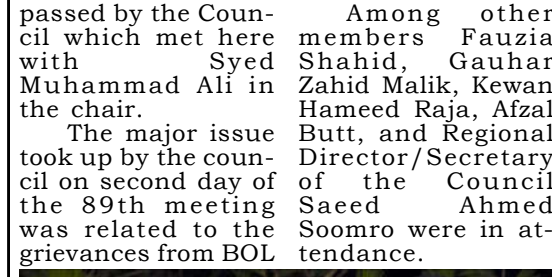
The major issue took up by the council on second day of the 89th meeting was related to the grievances from BOL

TV journalists regarding their unpaid salaries and wrongful terminations.

The PEMRA has so far received approximately 200 complaints in that regard, including one from prominent journalist Sami Ibrahim.

During the proceedings, the Council instructed BOL TV to provide detailed information about all complainants to PEMRA by the next session, scheduled for June 25.

Among other members Fauzia Shahid, Gauhar Zahid Malik, Kewan Hameed Raja, Afzal Butt, and Regional Director/Secretary of the Council of the Council of Saeed Ahmed Soomro were in attendance.



ISLAMABAD: Governor of Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, giving souvenir to PPP vice president of social Gulf and Middle East Syed Matloob Hussain Shah during a Mehfil-e-Sama ceremony



Seminar held to promote awareness on nuclear safety

ISLAMABAD (APP): A one day seminar on "Knowledge Sharing with women in Nuclear Safety and Nuclear Security" was arranged here to promote awareness on nuclear safety and security.

The event was organized by Women in Nuclear Pakistan Chapter (WiN-Pakistan), Pakistan Nuclear Society (PNS), and Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority. The event was aimed at providing a common forum of information exchange, sharing awareness on nuclear safety and nuclear security, and knowledge transfer for the young females perusing career in this field.

The event was inaugurated by Former Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), Dr. Ansar Parvez (HI) and attended by around hundred female officers.

President Win-Pakistan Chapter, Dr. Shazia Fatima highlighted the activities of chapter carried out nationally and internationally. She appreciated the support of Pakistan Nuclear Society, Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority and Pakistan Science Foundation in that regard. The event was comprised over two main sessions including Plenary session and technical session.

In plenary session, senior female officers who have served on leading positions or currently serving on leading positions in different capacities related to nuclear safety.

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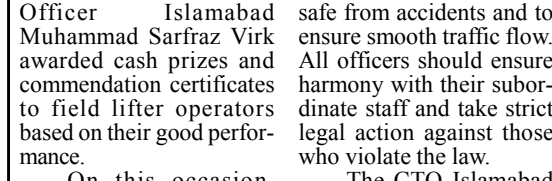
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Good performance will be rewarded, negligence will not be tolerated; CTO says

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Following the orders of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Chief Traffic

officers showing poor and unsatisfactory performance. He further said that special measures are being taken to keep Islamabad



Officer Islamabad Muhammad Sarfraz Virk awarded cash prizes and commendation certificates to field lifter operators based on their good performance.

More than 77000 Pilgrims benefit from health services during the last five weeks

ISLAMABAD (APP): In continuation of the efforts made by the Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health (MoH) to provide integrated care to the guests of God during the Hajj season 1445 H, more than 77000 pilgrims benefited from the various health services provided by health care centers over the last five weeks.

In a statistical report, the MoH said that the health services provided to the pilgrims from the first day of the month of Dhu al-Qi'dah until the sixth

day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah 1445H covered medical and specialized clinics, pharmaceuticals, dialysis centers, intensive care units, and isolation units, SPA reported.

As many as 16 open heart surgeries, 200 cardiac catheterizations, and 584 dialysis surgeries were performed, the report said, adding that 1,745 pilgrims entered hospitals and medical centers to receive the necessary health care.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Saturday June 15, 2024

Budget and politics

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday expressed his 'resolve' to increase Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio to 13pc in the next three years. Addressing a post-budget media briefing, he said: "Our basic principle while framing this budget was to expand the tax base."

Given this statement and his earlier declaration at the launch of the Economic Survey that "countries cannot be run on charity but taxes", it was expected that the new budget would have significant measures to broaden the tax base. The reality of the taxation measures announced by him in the budget, however, does not match his rhetoric.

Before we delve into the reasons for this gap, it should be acknowledged that the budget does propose the revocation of certain tax exemptions being enjoyed by certain privileged sectors of the economy. That, though, has been done to raise the annual tax collection to Rs12b.97tr, a sine qua non to qualify for the three-year Extended Fund Facility being sought from the IMF.

One does not have to be a financial wizard to see that the budget still follows the same tried, tested, flopped and, therefore, oft-rejected trope of milking those already in the tax net even more. A large part of the additional revenue measures being proposed target the same two segments — the salaried classes and documented businesses — which already pay the bulk of personal and direct taxes.

At best, the government can only hope that its proposal to levy higher taxes on non-filers trying to buy or sell property will force them to join the tax net voluntarily. At worst, it will force more people to engage in cash transactions and, thus, increase tax evasion.

The next budget, in fact, reflects the ruling PML-N's political concerns more than its economic reform agenda. For one, it has left its traditional support — traders — virtually untouched. Nothing except such political imperatives explain why the finance minister did not levy any direct taxes on retail trade even when the government has talked a lot about it of late.

Similarly, while there is a proposal to levy federal excise duty on property, real estate developers and agents have been shielded from any additional tax burden. This, too, stems from political expediency: the PML-N cannot afford to anger the middle class other than those sections that have already turned against it. The budget, therefore, lacks both imagination and courage. It shows that the finance team did not envision any structural changes to broaden the tax-to-GDP ratio and, instead, chose to stick to old formulae. It also shows that the ruling party is scared of taking bold steps lest it loses whatever little public support and legitimacy it has. Consequently, the budget it has presented signifies nothing but a lost opportunity to fix the system.

Tariq Parvez

Noor Wali Mehsud, ameer of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, stated recently that their 'jihad' against Pakistan had entered a "decisive phase". He expressed the determination to "liberate their lands and enforce the divine laws therein".

Mehsud's newfound confidence is due to the provision of a sanctuary in Afghanistan by the Afghan Taliban government, as well as the commitment of the Afghanistan-based Al Qaeda, to mentor the TTP in carrying out its terrorist campaign in Pakistan. Pakistan must immediately review its strategy of tackling this security challenge from the lethal troika, which is more experienced, committed and battle-hardened today than ever before.

To prepare for war, Sun Tzu states "of supreme importance... is to attack the enemy's strategy". It follows that Pakistan's main goal in defeating the TTP should be to proactively neutralise its anticipated terrorism strategy. This is best achieved by basing our national response on four pillars: creating an environment in Pa-

kistan conducive to an effective national counterterrorism (CT) effort; an external dimension in targeting the use of Afghanistan as a sanctuary by the TTP/Al Qaeda; sustained and coordinated kinetic measures; and a holistic plan for comprehensive, well-resourced, non-kinetic measures.

It might be a cliché to state that a poor and divided nation is likely to find it difficult to counter a serious challenge to its security. But sadly, that is what Pakistan looks like today. The political polarisation is unprecedented, economic conditions are dire and getting worse, and social cohesiveness is at its lowest. All this saps resolve and the capability to fight terrorism.

Therefore, the essential starting point for Pakistan in its war against the lethal troika is to set its own house in order by resolving its political polarisation, alleviating the common man's economic woes, and moving towards building a more cohesive society through a government trusted by its citizens, and by improving the rule of law, adherence to funda-

mental rights, and accountability.

The second pillar — the external dimension — is crucial because the centre of gravity of the revived TTP and Al Qaeda is their sanctuary in Afghanistan. To make this sanctuary restrictive for the terrorist groups, we need to engage with the Afghan government at three levels — bilateral, regional and global.

Bilaterally, a nuanced approach should be adopted to make it more beneficial for the Taliban to restrict the activities of the two terrorist groups on their soil. Regionally, it should be stressed that the groups' revival in Afghanistan poses a threat to regional security. We can use the forum of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, which has a CT mandate implemented through the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure. Globally, Pakistan can use different fora like the UN to keep the world updated about the implications of TTP/Al Qaeda sanctuaries in Afghanistan for global security.

It is pertinent to point out that while sanctuary in Afghanistan is an asset for

the TTP/Al Qaeda, it is also a constraining factor, because in the 2020 Doha accord, the Taliban had committed to not allowing their territory to be used for terrorism against any other country. It follows that a primary goal of the two groups would be to capture some territory in Pakistan and proclaim that they were not based in Afghanistan. To defeat this strategy, we should give the highest priority to preventing the TTP from capturing territory in Pakistan, particularly along the Afghan border.

As regards the third pillar, kinetic measures are an essential part of the CT toolkit. But we need to analyse why the military operations in ex-Fata and Swat, which successfully subdued the TTP from 2014 to 2020, could not prevent the group's revival from 2021 onwards. One factor was the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. The other was our inability to realise that military operations, to be effective in the long term, have to go hand in hand with capacity building of local police and other civilian departments, so that in due course, when

the military withdraws or takes a back seat, the civilian departments are capable of taking over.

Coming to the fourth pillar, if the capacity-building of state institutions for combating terrorism is important, no less crucial is the building up of the resilience of society to counter the terrorist threat. We witnessed how the people of Swat forced the TTP to withdraw again to Afghanistan in 2022. This resilience of the people against violent extremism must be expanded and strengthened. It can best be done by non-kinetic measures.

While there is a wide array of non-kinetic measures recommended by the UN for countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, four areas deserve more attention in Pakistan — increasing socio-economic opportunities, reducing political marginalisation, improving governance and neutralising social networks that propagate violent extremism. Being the front-line province, KP deserves the highest priority in terms of allocation of resources, both for CT and PVE. In this regard, Pakistan can learn from in-

ternational initiatives like the EU's Radicalisation Awareness Network.

The above-mentioned measures have been suggested earlier also, but are rarely implemented. This can be broadly attributed to 1) lack of political ownership of the national CT/PVE effort, 2) the perception that national security is the military's domain, with nominal input from civilians, and last but not the least, 3) non-allocation of required resources to civilian institutions. To address these, an essential step is to civilise the concept of national security, with the military playing a supportive role. Else, this vicious cycle of terrorism, military operations, dislocation of terrorists, peace accords and then terrorists' revival shall continue. It is time we realised that in CT, which Rupert Smith defines as a "war amongst people", the military's utility is critical but limited and is likely to be short-lived, unless the political, economic and governance dimensions are simultaneously addressed. For that, we need civilian supremacy in CT/PVE decision-making. -- Courtesy Dawn

Tackling the lethal troika

Education emergency: a social X-ray

Al Karim Datto

The prime minister recently declared an education emergency, a much-needed and welcome call to action.

Our education system is in critical condition and experts must now step forward to revive it. International donors and NGOs must be watching keenly to see what happens this time. Academics may be expecting invitations, polishing their PowerPoint presentations, inserting the new slogan 'Education Emergency' in large fonts, saving files on colourful USBs, and securing them in shiny leather bags. Here come the reforms.

This time, the focus is on the social margins — out-of-school children — an area that falls under the United Nation's SDG-4. We need a dual-lens microscope to address this issue: one lens to focus on the complex challenge of educational access for the out-of-school children, and the other to critically examine society and the systems that have allowed this issue to swell to such an extent. The existence of 26.2 million children who have stopped going to or never

have seen the inside of a classroom cannot be an overnight development, nor one that took shape over the course of a decade. It requires sustained neglect, apathy, and deep indifference to reach such a sorry state of affairs.

As a sociologist of education, I shall explore how sociology can help us better understand this intricate issue and inform our response. The task of sociology and anthropology is to make the familiar strange, so it can be viewed in a new light. As self-help author and motivational speaker Wayne Dyer said, "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." So, let us examine the challenge of educational access and continuity for the OOSC through the lens of sociology.

First, consider the social ecology of these children. The issue is not solely educational but fundamentally a socio-historical and political production. It is the result of long-term exclusion and marginalisation, forming the social context within which the issue has grown. Over the years, numerous policies and initiatives have attempted to ad-

dress this, yet they often fail to tackle the root causes. These initiatives often lack a comprehensive understanding of the deep-seated issues that perpetuate educational inequality.

It is a case of the slow death of development, an invisible social virus more dangerous than Covid-19, visible only through its symptoms: multi-generational poverty, social injustice, health inequalities, oppression, human rights violations, violence, corruption, child abuse, intolerance, and hypocrisy.

These factors have nurtured the root causes of educational inequality, of which the out-of-school children are a symptom. Exclusion of these children has been an incremental process through history, where society eats itself up, driven by self-destructive forces, like an autoimmune disease. The powerful centres reproduce peripheries, which in turn produce social margins whose existence becomes almost invisible. Their condition is reminiscent of the insect in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, ambivalent and alienated. Education as a social institution alone cannot resolve this problem

caused by multiple societal failures. It needs support and protection through values of social justice, human rights, and freedoms. The issue of out-of-school children should be seen in its social ecology, a symptom of broader system failures.

We must recognise that the challenges of educational inequalities cannot be addressed in isolation; interventions should be supported and sustained through global and national commitments to social justice and civic responsibility. A composite response to the challenges of out-of-school children requires multisectoral, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary inputs. Therefore, achieving SDG-4 needs to be supplemented with other SDGs, especially SDGs-1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 16, and 17.

Second, consider the variability within out-of-school children. This group is not homogeneous but diverse in demographic character, physical location, degree of mobility, and range of visibility. This category includes street children, rag pickers, child beggars, nomads, children of seasonal migrants, child inmates, and child labourers.

Each subgroup faces unique challenges and barriers to education, necessitating tailored approaches and interventions. Education for all means all these children have a fundamental right to not just education, but health, and freedoms. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all solution is inadequate. Different strategies are needed for different groups.

Third, we must diversify the curriculum and pedagogy. Inclusion means attending to differences, and the diverse needs of this group require corresponding diversified pedagogical methods. Traditional schooling is not a panacea. School shortages and distances are major obstacles to educational access. We need to provide flexible, situationally relevant learning opportunities tailored to the material and social realities of marginalised children.

Both educational content and pedagogical methods need innovation. We should focus on learning instead of schooling. Schools are place-dependent institutions, while learning can be spatially mobile, online, media-based, hybrid, or distance-based. The concept of learn-

ing opens up multiple possibilities independent of physical schooling. It is also less costly. However, the learning model needs proper understanding of non-formal educational approaches, which are currently underexplored in our context.

Additionally, Unicef's Temporary Learning Centres, which proved viable during the 2022 floods, can be multiplied. A comparative educational analysis, such as innovations for out-of-school children in Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Kerala (India), offers valuable lessons. In these regions, adaptable and community-centred educational models have shown significant success, demonstrating the importance of context-specific solutions.

These thoughts aim to inform the response to the prime minister's call for educational revival. We need fresh thinking and action, not rhetoric. As Einstein reminds us, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

May our education system heal quickly, so no child is left behind. -- Courtesy Dawn

A helping hand

Zubeida Mustafa

In a country without institutionalised social security, how do people of limited means survive in an emergency? A wage earner might lose his job unexpectedly, a young woman with small children may be widowed, or a serious illness might strike. The well-to-do have their savings and insurance to help them tide over the emergency. But for the indigent, the options are limited. At best, they can beg, borrow or steal.

It is in this context that the social network system has assumed great significance. Many large communities existed even before Pakistan, such as the Ismailis, Memons, etc. Several biradaris are relatively new, having been formalised after 1947 when populations were uprooted and needed support. The fact is that communities have stepped in to fill the vacuum created by the failure of the state to provide economic and social security to its citizens. A well-known community is the Saudagran-i-Delhi.

These communities are structured diversely and perform complex functions. I learnt more about them from Seema Liaquat of the Anjuman-i-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen, Partabgarh [Awadh]. Seema's father died in 1974. She is grateful to the AIMPG as it came to her mother's rescue when she was left with four young children. The community assigned her a stipend, which arrived, without fail, every month at her doorstep until her eldest son began to work and support the family. "When my mother requested for the stipend to be discontinued, a committee member was dispatched to check if all was well," Seema recalls.

The AIMPG is an urban community through its founding members traced their origins to various vil-

lages of Partabgarh, a district of Awadh. It was not based exclusively on common paternal descent but included the fraternity of households of the area.

Following partition, 100-odd Part-ab-gar-hians migrated to Karachi to test the greener pastures promised by the Muslim League. Then followed the migration of families. Meanwhile, the sight of a woman from Partabgarh begging on a Karachi street upset the pioneers so much that they decided to set up a welfare society in 1955 so that no one would have to beg. The idea was also to connect members with relatives with whom they had lost touch. There was no looking back after that.

The community's membership has risen to 6,000, comprising a number of highly educated and socially and economically well-placed individuals. It has started as a group of illiterate men, mostly unskilled workers such as gardeners, peons, drivers and chowkidars. The Anjuman now boasts a 99 per cent literacy rate and has PhD doctors, a veterinarian, an MPhil (to be), an MNA, two MPAs and lawyers in its ranks. For many, it has been a story of rags to riches.

I was impressed by the AIMPG's self-help spirit. Its focus has been on humanitarian service, the Shoba-i-Khidmat-i-Khalq being its most important department. When I asked the organisation's president Khalil Qureshi what he took most pride in, he replied: "We have delivered stipends or assistance to those on our list on the first of the month for the last 69 years without fail. Today, 82 families between them receive Rs1,000,000 every month."

Mr Qureshi, who is commercial manager at Port Qasim, also speaks proudly of the 60-bedded Awadh General Hospital,

a healthcare centre and the Awadh Public School that provides education to 400 children — 100 of them receiving fee subsidy.

The Anjuman raises its own funds. The membership fee is a token one rupee, which was fixed in 1955. But members and non-member beneficiaries are generous with their zakat, fitra and other donations.

The administration is democratically elected. It is divided into 19 wards in the city (Karachi) with a representative to monitor the well-being of the members under his jurisdiction. Above the wardens is a three-member council consisting of a president, general secretary and finance secretary assisted by an auditor. Elections are held every two years.

Events held periodically are well-attended and help the members bond. Membership is entirely voluntary and those who choose to join demonstrate a strong sense of brotherhood, which means a lot in a country that has failed to give its people a sense of ownership. The AIMPG has been progressive in its outlook and had managed generational change effectively. No wonder all children are attending schools, and the emancipation and empowerment of women in an extremely patriarchal community has proceeded smoothly. How does the government feel about such communities? Obviously, it welcomes them because they are apolitical and do not challenge the state's power.

The wealthier communities contribute a lot to the national economy. But with membership hardly amounting to anything in a country of 241 million, the communities make no impact on the social security situation in the country. -- Courtesy Dawn

Protecting the coast

Umar Farooq

Pakistan's coastal and marine ecosystems, such as the Indus delta, Karachi's mangroves, and the Makran coast, are not merely scenic beauties but foundational to the country's environmental and economic stability. The Indus delta mangroves alone encompass about 130,000 hectares (321,237 acres) serving as vital carbon sinks that store approximately 14.4 million tonnes of carbon annually. Yet, these ecosystems face critical threats — industrial pollution, rampant overfishing, and the overarching impacts of climate change compromise their ability to perform essential functions.

In Karachi, the unchecked discharge of industrial pollutants has severe consequences on its marine ecosystems. Notably, the city's release of about 90 per cent of its untreated wastewater into the Arabian Sea introduces pollutants such as heavy metals and hydrocarbons, with the tanning industry releasing toxins that have been shown to damage sensitive mangrove roots and reduce the water quality, affecting the health of fish and other marine life. The recent controversial construction of the expressway along the route of the Malir river, poses a direct threat to these ecosystems resulting in increased sedimentation that might suffocate the mangrove forests, which are crucial nurseries for many species of fish.

One solution to these problems is the establishment of a national marine data repository. This centralised data system would enable better management and monitoring of marine en-

vironments by providing accurate and timely information on pollution levels, biodiversity health, and the effectiveness of conservation efforts. The data on pollution levels, including concentrations of heavy metals and chemicals from industrial discharges, will help identify pollution hotspots and guide regulatory enforcement. Biodiversity data, tracking species populations and health, monitoring the health of the mangroves and coral reefs through satellite imagery, and field surveys and data on water quality indicators such as pH, dissolved oxygen, and nutrient levels would help in tracking the broader environmental health of the blue ecosystems.

Strengthening regulatory frameworks is essential to addressing the threats faced by Pakistan's marine ecosystems. One specific policy would be the introduction of a 'marine pollution control act' which would mandate industrial facilities to install and maintain wastewater treatment plants to remove harmful pollutants before discharge. The act should be reinforced with the setting and offsetting of toxin release. Additionally, a permit system for factories along the coast, mandating the treatment of wastewater before the release and investment in catchment restoration, should be introduced. This would be in the form of 'marine credits' for funding coral reef restoration or seagrass meadow rehabilitation, which could then be used to offset their pollution footprints. These permits would be linked to regular inspections and hefty fines for non-compliance, ensuring a deterrent effect that

would encourage industries to adopt cleaner practices.

Community involvement is equally critical for sustainable outcomes. Local and indigenous communities, which have depended on Pakistan's coastal and marine ecosystems for generations, are often overlooked in policymaking processes. These communities are key stakeholders, possessing invaluable traditional knowledge and a deep connection to the environment. Yet, policymakers from urban centres frequently impose regulations without consulting them, leading to ineffective and unsustainable outcomes. True progress can only be made by genuinely engaging these communities, earning their trust, and implementing tailored awareness campaigns where needed. Without their involvement, no policy will be effective or enforceable.

Looking at international examples, community-led initiatives were one of the key components in the success of Marine Protected Areas, which helped to revitalise coral reefs. Ensuring justice means recognising these communities' rights, incorporating their insights, and creating inclusive conservation strategies that honour their roles as stewards of the environment. In the words of a local fisherman, "We protect what we love, and we love what we understand." Just as the tides sustain the shores, so, too, we must sustain our efforts to protect these vital ecosystems. For the future of our oceans, and the communities that depend on them, is a shared responsibility we cannot afford to ignore. -- Courtesy Dawn

Punjab Governor says: Sundus Foundation doing great work for thalassemia patients

Independent Report
LAHORE: The Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan today visited Sundus Foundation on World Blood Donor Day. He met children suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia. Governor Punjab also donated blood on this occasion.

which are serving humanity should be encouraged. He said that blood donation is a hope of new life for people suffering from life-threatening diseases including children suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia. Sardar Saleem Haider said that millions of patients get new lives every year through blood donation while it is harmless for the persons who donate blood. Speaking to the media, the Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that Sundus Foundation has a good reputation as a reliable organization which is serving the persons suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia. He said that the people have faith

in Sundus Foundation that their donated blood would reach the rightful persons. Governor Punjab said that Sundus Foundation has state of the art system for blood screening and tests which is on a par with the international standards. He said that Sundus Foundation has also test facility to prevent diseases like thalassemia. The Governor of Punjab said that he appeals to the public, especially the youth, through the media, to donate blood for the noble cause. He said that as the chancellor he would also issue special instructions to set up blood banks in the universities to motivate students to donate blood.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif questioning from patient that why he had brought on wooden cot during her visit to OPD of Orthopedic at Sahiwal Teaching Hospital.

Khalid Maqbool urges spreading NCA's message in world

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has said that the National College of Arts (NCA) has rich traditions in visual art and literature and there was need to spread this message beyond its walls. During a visit to the National College of Arts (NCA) here on Friday, he said the NCA's luminaries were masters in their respective areas and there was need to take message of this great art institution to the other parts of the country. Principal/Vice Chancellor NCA Dr. Murtaza Jafri briefed the federal minister about the historic NCA and its future projects. "I had heard a lot

about this great institution since my boyhood and have come here in person to experience the magic of this fairy-tale institution," he responded. Dr. Khalid Maqbool also visited the Zahoor-ul-Ikhlaiq Gallery and evinced keen interest in the artworks put on display. All the works on display were creations of the NCA alumni and the faculty including Sadqain, Anna Molka Ahmed, Murtaza Jafri, Anwar Jalal Shemza, Mehboob Ali, Abbasi Abidi, Khalid Iqbal and Joan Fabian, etc. To a query, the minister said Pakistan produces 25,000 IT graduates every year out of which only 5,000 get jobs in the country.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister of Punjab for Finance Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman addressing during pre-budget press conference in the Provincial Capital.

PTI founder enjoying lavish lifestyle in jail: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari said on Friday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder was enjoying a lavish in jail, as six jail cells had been vacated for him. In the last eight months, the PTI founder met 288 people in jail, she added. His family and his lawyers meet him three a week, the minister said

while rebutting Barrister Saif's statement. She said Imran Khan had been provided with TV, room-cooler, study table, chair, exercise bike, stretching belt, bookshelves, books and a separate space for walking twice a day, along with a separate kitchen. She recalled that Mian Nawaz Sharif was allowed to meet his people only once a week on Thursday.



KARACHI: Activists of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest demonstration for release of PTI Founder Imran Khan, at Karachi press club.



KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a pre-budget cabinet meeting at CM House.

Punjab health ministers stress collective responsibility in dengue control

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir have emphasized that combating dengue is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders, not just one department. They made these remarks while chairing a crucial meeting on dengue, infectious diseases, and disaster management at the Civil Secretariat, on Friday. Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique stressed the need for commissioners and deputy commissioners to actively monitor anti-dengue operations. He urged religious scholars to raise public awareness about dengue during

Jumma prayers and called for increased dengue surveillance in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, and Multan. "All departments must be mobilized at the district level to tackle the dengue threat effectively. The health department is implementing a comprehensive plan to prevent dengue and other diseases, with the timely revamping of major hospitals being a top priority," he stated. To date, Punjab has reported 170 confirmed dengue cases this year. He also mentioned the availability of ample dengue medicines in government hospitals. Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary

Healthcare Khawaja Imran Nazir highlighted that future efforts would utilize existing resources instead of recruiting additional dengue workers. He called on citizens to actively eliminate dengue larvae breeding sites in their homes, stressing, "How long will teams continue to clean air coolers in people's houses? Accountability for homes with detected larvae is essential." He proposed the development of new strategies alongside traditional methods to combat dengue and instructed commissioners to oversee political leaders at the Union Council level in anti-dengue activities.

Qasim visits RBC, attends ceremony to mark World Blood Donor Day

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Provincial Health Minister, Syed Qasim Ali Shah on Friday visited Regional Blood Center (RBC) Peshawar and participated in a cake cutting ceremony to mark World Blood Donor Day. He also announced plans to link Blood Transfusion Authority with HIV, Hepatitis program and with Healthcare Commission to enhance its effectiveness.

other RBCs of Swat, Abbottabad and DI Khan were also present in the ceremony. Health minister emphasized the crucial role of RBC and urged youth to donate blood generously and save precious lives. He also announced plans to link Blood Transfusion Authority with HIV, Hepatitis program and with Healthcare Commission to enhance its effectiveness.

Two killed, 2 injured in Layyah firing incident

LAYYAH: (APP): Two people were killed and two others sustained injuries in a firing incident between two rival groups in the suburbs of Layyah district, private news channel and the police reported on Friday. According to the details, the firing incident was reported as an old enmity. Police and rescue team reached the accident site immediately after the incident reported.



RAWALPINDI: People arriving with their luggage to board a passenger van at Pirwahai bus station as they travel to their hometowns to celebrate the Muslim festival Eid al-Adha.

Punjab govt to ensure tight security on Eid days

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister and Chairman of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Law and Order Khawaja Salman Rafique promised comprehensive security measures, from cattle markets to Eid prayers, during a meeting on Friday. A Cabinet Committee on Law and Order meeting was called to finalise Eidul Azha security plan. The minister emphasised that banned organisations would face stringent legal action if they attempted to collect hives or violate the law. "The Home Department's

control room will oversee reports from across Punjab throughout the Eid holidays," he noted. Instructions have been given to the police and district administration to enforce government orders strictly. The meeting reviewed the province's overall law and order situation and specific Eidul-Azha security arrangements. Provincial Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rahman and Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan, along with senior officials, including Home Secretary Punjab Noorul Amin Mengal.

Man kills wife, mother-in-law and father-in-law in Nizampur

PESHAWAR (APP): An infuriated man who failed to convince his wife to return to his house, shot dead his mother-in-law, father-in-law and wife in Nizampur area of district Nowshera, police informed on Friday. According to police, the incident occurred in Enziri village of Nizampur where a man shot dead his wife, mother-in-law and father-in-law after failing to take back his wife to home. Those who were killed in the firing included Mir Akbar Khan (43), his wife (38) and daughter.

KP Governor lauds performance of national health services academy

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday visited Health Services Academy Islamabad where he lauded its performance. Upon arrival, the Governor was received by Vice Chancellor of the Academy, Dr Shahzad Ali Khan, says a statement of Governor house. He was accompanied by Member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Ahmad Kundi. The Governor visited different departments of the National Health Services Academy working under an aegis of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination. He was briefed on its over all performance and its future projects. While appreciating performance of the national services academy Islamabad, the Governor said that the academy can play an effective role in elimination of unemployment and

provision of better healthcare facilities to the remote and far flung areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Governor directed the academy to prepare proposals for provision of facilities and training centers at various departments of the allied health sciences working under supervision of this great institution in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Faisal Kundi assured that Governor House Peshawar would provide all out cooperation in this regard. Following provision of training in different technologies, he said that residents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would get better healthcare services at their doorsteps besides eradication of unemployment. He said that employment opportunities were existed in allied health sciences not only in Pakistan but also abroad if organizations like National Health Services registered with Higher Education Commission.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan donating blood for children suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia during his visit to Sundus Foundation on World Blood Donor Day.

Jimmy's work attract art lovers: Rana Mashhood

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Friday said that Jimmy Engineer's work has always attracted art lovers from Pakistan and abroad, highlighting the country's soft image. He said this while visiting the Painting Exhibition of world-renowned artist and social worker Jimmy Engineer at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). "Jimmy is a great artist and his paintings have gained acknowledgment worldwide", he said and

added that Jimmy's efforts to kindle the name of Pakistan at the international level were commendable. Jimmy's painting exhibitions have been organized in several countries including Italy, France, Denmark, Switzerland, Russia, China, Germany, and the United States while his paintings were available in more than seventy countries. A show of Jimmy's "100 prints" prepared by Dr Rahat Naveed and Anna Pataudi was exhibited at the National Art Gallery on June 5 to delight the audience.

LHC orders to impound smoke emitting vehicles

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has ordered to impound smoke emitting vehicles. Justice Shahid Karim of LHC took up for hearing petitions filed by citizen Haroon Farooq and others seeking remedy of environmental problem and eradication of smog here Friday. The court remarked during the hearing of the case "stern action be taken against smoke emitting vehicle. Such vehicles be impounded. These vehicles

should not be allowed to come on road unless they are rectified. Service roads be painted with tyre color. Member judicial council informed the court sale of dead chicken market in Tollinton market is the biggest problem. Food authority has seized 47000 kilogram dead chicken. But the vehicles which carried these dead chicken remained untraceable. Now safe city has been entrusted the duty of tracking these vehicles.



LAHORE: Provincial Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazer addressing a Press Conference at DG Health Office.

Punjab presented tax-free budget with largest ADP: ministers

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Punjab government has presented a tax-free and surplus budget of Rs 5,446 billion, having the largest ADP (Annual Development Programme) for fiscal year 2024-25, mainly focusing on social sector, infrastructure development, production sectors, services sectors, and special initiatives for people's welfare and poverty alleviation. This budget is not an exaggeration of figures but a consolidated document that has full cash cover and it is the outcome of the effective and well-thought-out policies of the incumbent government. The full cash cover due to surplus revenue receipts,

particularly the provincial own revenue receipts, will ensure complete utilisation of the ADP, thus ensuring maximum relief to the common man. Provincial Senior Minister for Planning and Development (P&D) Murriz Aurangzeb and Provincial Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman stated this while addressing the post-budget conference, here on Friday. The senior minister said that now the elected government was in place and "we have shun politics for the sake of politics and blame game, and we will have to make joint efforts for people's well-being". The opposition has the constitutional right of criticism and the

government would welcome its objections which deemed better for the people and the country, she added. She said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, the Punjab government was putting in order comprehensive measures such as promotion of information technology, skill development among youth, women, transgender community and the minorities. The priority sectors of the government are Education, Health, IT, Agriculture, infrastructure, and law and order. She elaborated that the government has allocated more funds for the above sectors, stating that Health Sector has been allocated a total of Rs 539 billion with

ADP of Rs 129 billion; Education sector was allocated Rs 670 billion with Rs 66 billion ADP; Local Governments to get Rs 321 billion with Rs 62 billion ADP; Agriculture budget is Rs 117 billion with Rs 65 ADP; Rs 375 billion would be spent on infrastructure; and Rs 220 billion on Law and Order. During the next financial year, she said, the government will also give subsidy in various sectors including Agriculture Rs 26.6 billion; Transport Rs 24.3 billion; and Rs 100 billion for the special initiatives. Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba said that Rs 842 billion ADP was 28 per cent higher than the outgoing FY 2023-24 containing Rs 655 billion on this count. Out

of the development budget, he elaborated, 33 per cent would be spent on Social Sector, 29 per cent on Infrastructure, 13 per cent on Production Sector, and 5 per cent on Services Sector, while 20 per cent would go to Special Programmes/Initiatives. The finance minister said that total revenue collection was estimated at Rs 4643.40 billion; Rs 3,683.10 billion will be received from federal divisible pool; provincial receipts (Own Resource Revenue) are estimated at Rs 960.30 billion (54 per cent higher than the current fiscal year) for financial year 2024-25, while Non-Tax Revenues are estimated at Rs 488.40 billion (111 per cent higher than the current FY).

Masood Khan urges greater US investment in Pakistan, trade to boost bilateral ties

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, has called for greater American investment in Pakistan and more trade between the two countries in an effort to further strengthen their relations.

Speaking at the World Affairs Council in Philadelphia, he urged US businesses to increase their investment portfolios, especially in tech-startups, renewable energy, agriculture and extractive industries.

"Pakistan is a big market for American manufacturers," the ambassador told a gathering of scholars, policy-makers, legislators, entrepreneurs, business leaders and professionals. "If you manufacture state-of-the-art products, you have 240 million consumers in Pakistan," he said.

Ambassador Masood Khan dealt with Pak-US relations, war on terror, recalibration of their bilateral ties in the post-withdrawal period, Pakistan-India relations and the issues of regional stability. In this regard, he focused on the existing investment and trade opportunities between the two countries that provided new sinews to the relationship.

Tracing the roots of Pak-US relations, especially the US support during the initial days of Pakistan and the robust partnership of the two countries both in times of war and peace, the Ambassador presented a holistic view of the ties spanning over seven decades, saying the two countries are now investing in people-centric diplomacy.

"We have a big human capital and it is growing.

Pakistan is digitally connected with the rest of the world and it is tech savvy, with hundreds of institutions which are investing in future technologies," he said.

On counter-terrorism cooperation, Masood Khan said, "We collaborated and together we broke the back of terrorist organizations. Al-Qaeda is not where it was in 2001-02. There is awareness all around the world about the asymmetric threat of terrorism to international civilization and how to tackle it," he said.

In late 2021 and early 2022, he said, the leadership of Pakistan and the United States reset their relationship, deciding that "while we will continue our cooperation in countering terrorism, promoting regional stability.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja exchanging views with Julian Gorman, GSMA's Head of Asia Pacific during meeting held in Islamabad.

Envoy Tirmizi, UAE minister discuss insurance, facilitation of Pakistani workers

DUBAI (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Friday met with the UAE's Minister of Human Resources and Emiratization Dr. Abdulmannan Al Awar wherein they discussed the issues of mutual interests especially those pertaining to Pakistani diaspora working in the multiple sectors.

Ambassador Tirmizi conveyed regards and gratitude on behalf of Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain to Dr. Abdulmannan Al Awar. He lauded and

thanked the leadership of the UAE for reposing great trust in Pakistan as a brotherly and friendly country. He appreciated the government and people of the UAE for hosting about 1.7 million Pakistanis who were supporting their families and country by sending remittances back home.

Both sides underlined the significant role played by Pakistanis in the UAE's development, and the tremendous potential and opportunities for further enhancing bilateral cooperation in various fields. The meeting focused on enhancing mutual collaboration aiming at the efficiency in visa processing, screening, attestation of documents, and others, with a view to

facilitating Pakistanis seeking jobs in the UAE.

The UAE minister offered all possible assistance in streamlining the visa-aligned services, especially sharing the best technological practices minimizing human interactions, and ensuring transparency.

He said that Pakistanis would continue to play their role in the progress of the UAE and both sides would work together to mitigate the challenges, if any.

Ambassador Tirmizi also discussed health insurance for Pakistani workers. Both sides agreed to work closely to address related issues and encourage workers to opt for health insurance schemes.

Govt committed for transforming Pak into digital economy: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja here on Friday said that the government is committed for digitalization and transform Pakistan into Digital economy.

During the meeting with GSMA's Head of Asia Pacific Julian Gorman matters related to digital transformation, and upcoming GSMA Digital Nation Summit were discussed said a news release.

Country Lead Digital Transformation,

Pakistan, GSMA, Saira Faisal was also present in the meeting.

She said Ministry of IT will play pivotal role in GSMA Digital Nation Summit. Ministry of IT & Telecom will extend full support and facilitation regarding GSMA Digital Nation Summit to be held on August 7.

Julian Gorman expressed his gratitude to MoITT for their support of the GSMA Digital Nation Summit in August and assured full support to the government in their digitization journey.



ISLAMABAD: President of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Shaikh addressing a press conference at his office in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan Food Festival Inaugurated at Shangri-La Hotel, Chengdu

BEIJING (APP): The Pakistan Food Festival was inaugurated on Friday at the prestigious Shangri-La Hotel in Chengdu, celebrating the rich culinary heritage and diverse flavors of Pakistan.

The festival with signature Muslim cuisine is jointly being presented by Shangri-La Chengdu and Pakistan Consulate General in Chengdu.

The event saw the participation of several distinguished guests and officials, including Director General Zhang Tao of the Sichuan Foreign Affairs Office, Director General Jiang Bin of the Chengdu Foreign Affairs Office, Vice President Tang Jian of the 'Sichuan People's Association of Friendship with Foreign Countries, Vice President Wang Guangjun of the China Council for Promotion of Investment and Trade - Sichuan Branch, Song

Junwu, Deputy Director General of the Sichuan Provincial People's Department of Culture and Tourism, He Di, Director of the Office of International and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the Sichuan Provincial People's Congress, and Thomas Gou, Assistant General Manager of Shangri-La Hotel.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of Pakistan Khalil Hashmi highlighted the importance of culinary diplomacy in fostering cultural exchanges and deepening the bonds between Pakistan and China.

He shared that the inspiration for the festival came during his first visit to Sichuan in January, where he was deeply moved by the warmth and hospitality of the people and their profound appreciation for cultural exchanges.



QUETTA: A man selecting and purchasing waste coat during eid shopping.

Agriculture minister inaugurates lumpy skin disease vaccine

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani on Friday inaugurated the lumpy skin disease vaccine at the Veterinary Research Institute Lahore (VRIL).

Secretary Livestock Punjab Masood Anwar, Director General (Research) Dr Sajjad Hussain and DG Livestock (Extension) Asif Salman Sahi were also present.

Ashiq Kirmani, while addressing the meeting, appreciated the efforts made by the team of Livestock Department and Veterinary Research Institute for development of vaccine.

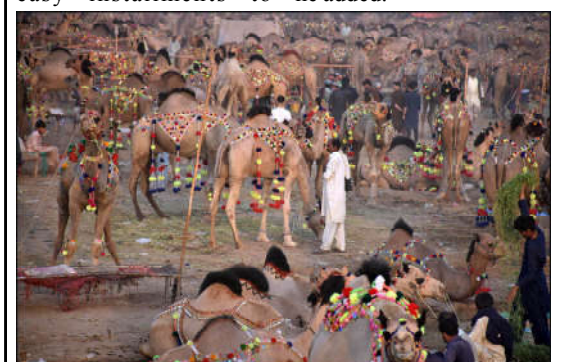
He said that livestock sector had the significant importance in country's economy. The government would provide loans on easy installments to

40,000 farmers in rural areas of Punjab for dairy farming through the issuance of livestock cards, he added.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif had approved disease control and traceability programmes under the programmes, 12 lakh animals and 1.5 lakh livestock farmers would benefit, the minister added.

The provincial minister maintained that the government wanted to increase production of milk and meat to increase the exports of the livestock sector.

Secretary Livestock Punjab Masood Anwar said that developing a vaccine was not an easy task. "We have created our own internal surveillance and counter-check system for disease surveillance," he added.



LAHORE: Livestock vendors displaying the sacrificial camels while waiting the customers at temporary cattle market at Shahpur Kanjra ahead of Eidul Azha.



Ambassador of Pakistan to China, H.E. Khalil Hashmi inaugurating Pakistan Food Festival at Shangri-La Hotel, Chengdu, China.

Indonesia embassy, ACI hosts 'ASEAN Movie Night'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee in Islamabad (ACI) has hosted a ASEAN Movie Night event featuring the award-winning Indonesian film "Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap", directed by the Indonesian Producer Bene Dion Rajagukguk.

The event was a delightful fusion of cinema and cuisine, celebrating the rich cultural ties and immense similarities between Indonesia and Pakistan.

On this occasion, the Indonesia Chargé d' Affaires (CDA) Rahmat Hindiarta in his welcoming remarks apprised the distinguished guests from

the diplomatic and Pakistani community that the ASEAN Movie Night reflects the spirit of continuously bolstering friendship among ASEAN family members. "Moreover, I also wish to transfer the spirit of friendship among us to our brothers and sisters in Pakistan and beyond," he said.

The Indonesian CDA also called Pakistani filmmakers to 'Look East' to further explore the potential of the creative economy in Indonesia and ASEAN region.

Elaborating the huge economic potential of the Indonesian creative industry he said, "The film industry is currently the fastest-growing sub-sector of Indonesia's creative economy.



HYDERABAD: Family busy in selecting and purchasing sandal on a roadside stall in connection with Eid-ul-Azha at Resham Bazaar.

Govt projected to enhance area under major crop production

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has set a target to cultivate the wheat crop over 9.712 million acres for producing about 36.310 million metric tons of grains during the next season (2024-25) to fulfill the local requirements as well as to maintain the strategic food reserves in the country.

Meanwhile, the rice cultivation targets were fixed at 3.062 million acres to produce about 8.731 million metric tons of the crop during next season falling 2024-25, according to the Annual Plan 2024-25. Meanwhile, the maize crop is to be grown over

1.512 million acres to produce 9.254 million tons for the commodity during the period under review, whereas sugarcane 1.241 million acres for producing about 7.667 million tons of the crop.

According to the Annual Plan 2024-25, the cotton second major crop the country to be grown over 3.118 million acres, whereas the output of cotton output was set at 10.873 million bales during the crop season 2024-25.

For minor crops, the area and production for gram for 2024-25 have been projected at 865.0 thousand hectares.

Gold rates up by Rs.800 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.800 and was sold at Rs.241,500 on Friday against its sale at Rs.240,700 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 686 to Rs.207,047 from Rs.206,361 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.189,973 from Rs.189,165, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

Per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs.2,750 and Rs.2,357.68 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$8 to \$2,323 from \$2,315, the Association reported.

IMF board approves Argentina payout of almost \$800mn

WASHINGTON (AFP/APP): The IMF executive board voted Thursday to approve a payout of almost \$800 million for Argentina as it continues a program of drastic economic reforms under its libertarian president, Javier Milei. A self-declared "anarcho-capitalist," Milei has vowed to halt Argentina's economic decline and reduce the budget deficit to zero, and has embarked on a program to slash public spending and bring down inflation, which remains at an annual rate of more than 275 percent. "The Executive Board assessed the program to be firmly on track, with all quantitative performance criteria through end-March 2024 met with margins," the International Monetary Fund said in a statement.

The decision by the IMF executive board to approve the eighth review of its loan program with the Latin American nation will allow for the disbursement of just over \$795 million, bringing the total disbursements under the existing program to more than \$41 billion. "The Board emphasized that sustaining the strong progress requires improving the quality.

Textile exports up by 1.41% to 15.241 billion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The exports of textile group witnessed an increase of 1.41 percent during the eleven months of the financial year 2023-24, as against the exports of the corresponding months of last year.

The textile products exports from the country were recorded at US \$15,241,477 million during July-May (2023-24) against the exports of US \$15,029,794 million during July-May (2022-23), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

The textile commodities that witnessed positive trade growth included raw cotton, the exports of which grew by 317.77 percent, from \$13.425 million last year to \$56.086 million this year.

Likewise, the exports of cotton yarn increased by 23.47 percent, from \$737.185 million last year to \$910.193 million this year and bed wear by 4.77 percent, from \$2,451.263 million to \$2,568.186 million.

The export of towels also surged by 6.09 percent from \$912.362 million to \$967.936 million whereas the export of ready-made garments up by 2.09 percent to \$3,238.812 million from \$3,172.385 million.

RDA inflows rise to \$8.055 bn in May 24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) has risen to US \$8.055 billion by the end of May 2024 as compared to US \$7.831 billion by April (2024) end, according to the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The data showed that the inflows of remittances during April were recorded at US\$ 224 million as compared to US\$ 171 million in March and US\$ 182 million in February 2024. These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis

(NRPs), including Non-Resident Pakistan Origin Card (POC) holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment, and investment activities in Pakistan.

The number of accounts registered under the programme also rose by 12,960 to 702,610 in May 2024 from 689,650 accounts in April 2024.

By the end of May, overseas Pakistanis have invested US \$338 million in Naya Pakistan Certificates, US \$582 in Naya Pakistan Islamic Certificates, and US \$37 million in Roshan Equity Investment.

FCCI says

Minister has promised to help solve business community problems

FAISALABAD (APP): President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Dr Khurram Tariq has said that Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has promised that the government will make its best efforts to solve genuine problems being confronted by the business community.

In a statement issued here on Friday, he said that a joint delegation of the FCCI and Sialkot chamber met the minister and apprised him of the budget related issues in addition to

other problems. He said that he represented the business community of Faisalabad and requested the minister that fundamental economic issues must be resolved to streamline the economy on a solid and sustained basis.

The FCCI chief said that the delegation handed over his budget related reservations in writing to the federal minister and the minister promised that the government would solve their problems on top priority basis. The minister said that economic revival was a joint objective of the government and business.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Saleem Mandviwalla Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue presiding over a meeting (Morning Session) of the committee at Parliament House.

Putin demands more Ukrainian land to end war; Kyiv rejects 'ultimatum'

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said on Friday Russia would end the war in Ukraine only if Kyiv agreed to drop its NATO ambitions and hand over the entirety of four provinces claimed by Moscow, demands Kyiv swiftly rejected as tantamount to surrender.

On the eve of a conference in Switzerland to which Russia has not been invited, Putin set out maximalist conditions wholly at odds with the terms demanded by Ukraine, apparently reflecting Moscow's growing confidence that its forces have the upper hand in the war. He restated his demand for Ukraine's demilitarisation, unchanged from the day he sent in his troops on Feb. 24, 2022, and said an end to Western

sanctions must also be part of a peace deal.

He also repeated his call for Ukraine's "denazification", based on what Kyiv calls an unfounded slur against its leadership. Ukraine said the conditions were "absurd".

"He is offering for Ukraine to admit defeat. He is offering for Ukraine to legally give up its territories to Russia."

He is offering for Ukraine to sign away its geopolitical sovereignty," Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak told Reuters.

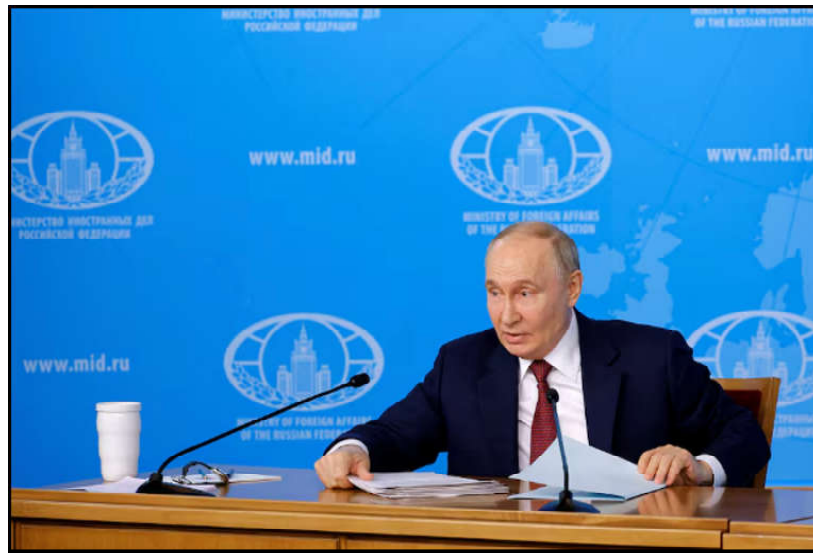
President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told Italy's SkyTG24 news channel: "These are ultimatum messages that are no different from messages from the past."

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told re-

porters at NATO headquarters in Brussels: "He (Putin) is not in any position to dictate to Ukraine what they must do to bring about peace." The timing of Putin's speech was clearly intended to preempt the Swiss summit, billed as a "peace conference" despite Russia's exclusion, where Zelenskyy seeks a show of international support for Kyiv's terms to end the war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is meeting world leaders for a summit this weekend.

"The conditions are very simple," Putin said, listing them as the full withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the entire territory of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions in eastern and southern Ukraine.



Russia's President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with the leadership of the Russian foreign ministry in Moscow, Russia.

Huthi missile attack severely injures sailor on cargo ship: US military

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Two cruise missiles launched by Yemen's Huthi rebels struck a bulk cargo carrier in the Gulf of Aden on Thursday, severely injuring a sailor who was evacuated by American forces, the US military said.

The Huthis have been targeting vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since November 2023 in attacks they say are in solidarity with Palestinians during the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Although this has caused major disruption to international shipping,

casualties have been rare.

The M/V Verbenia—a Palauan-flagged, Ukrainian-owned, Polish-operated ship—"reported damage and subsequent fires on board. The crew continues to fight the fire. One civilian mariner was severely injured during the attack," the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement.

"Aircraft from USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) medically evacuated the injured mariner to a partner force ship nearby for medical attention," CENTCOM said.

Over half of cropland in Gaza has been damaged, says UN

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: More than half of Gaza's agricultural land, crucial for feeding the war-ravaged territory's hungry population, has been degraded by conflict, satellite images analysed by the United Nations show.

The data reveals a rise in the destruction of orchards, field crops and vegetables in the Palestinian enclave, where hunger is widespread after eight months of Israeli bombardment. The World Health Organisation warned on Wednesday that many people in Gaza were facing "catastrophic hunger and

famine-like conditions".

Using satellite imagery taken between May 2017 and 2024, United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) found that 57 per cent of Gaza's permanent crop fields and arable lands essential for food security had shown a significant decline in density and health. "In May 2024, crop health and density across the Gaza Strip showed a marked decline compared to the average of the previous seven seasons," UNOSAT said on Thursday.

Palestinians say Israeli West Bank raid kills 3

Monitoring Desk
QABATIYAH: Palestinian officials said Israeli troops killed three Palestinians in a raid in a town in the occupied West Bank Thursday, as Israel's military reported it had "eliminated two wanted suspects".

The raid took place in the town of Qabatiyah near the city of Jenin, said Jenin governor Kamal Abu al-Rub who confirmed the "deaths of two martyrs".

The Palestinian Red Crescent said a third Palestinian was also killed in the raid.

The Ramallah-based health ministry identified him as 21-year-old Qais Muhammad Zakarneh.

Hamas' armed wing says Israeli airstrike killed two hostages in Rafah

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Hamas' armed wing al-Qassam Brigades said on Friday that two Israeli hostages held in Gaza were killed in an Israeli airstrike on Rafah a few days ago.

The group, in a video posted on its Telegram channel, did not release the names of those said to have been killed or provide any evidence.

The Israeli government "does not want your hostages to return, except in coffins," the al-Qassam Brigades statement said.

Pope Francis tells G7 that humans must not lose control of AI

Monitoring Desk
BORGO EGNAZIA: Pope Francis became the first pontiff to address a Group of Seven summit on Friday, warning world leaders that Artificial Intelligence must never be allowed to get the upper hand over humanity.

An array of global chiefs warmly embraced the 87-year-old pope as he made his way around their huge oval table, pushed in a wheelchair as age and infirmity limit his mobility.

The pope said AI represented an "epochal transformation" for mankind, but stressed the need for close oversight of the ever-developing technology to preserve human life and dignity.

"No machine should ever choose to take the life of a human being," he said,

adding that people should not let superpowerful algorithms decide their destiny.

"We would condemn humanity to a future without hope if we took away people's ability to make decisions about themselves and their lives, by dooming them to depend on the choices of machines," he warned.

The G7 draws together the leaders of the United States, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Canada and Japan.

In addition, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, the summit host, invited 10 other nations to join the talks on Friday, including the prime minister of India and presidents of Turkey and Kenya.

Putin is in no position to make demands of Ukraine for peace, US defense secretary says

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: Russian President Vladimir Putin is in no position to make demands on Ukraine to end the war, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Friday, as he touted Kyiv's military successes confronting Moscow's full-scale invasion.

Putin said earlier on Friday that Russia would end the war in Ukraine only if Kyiv agreed to drop its NATO ambitions, hand over the entirety of four provinces claimed by Moscow, and carry out a demilitarization. "He is not in any position to dictate to Ukraine what they must do to bring about peace," Austin told reporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Russia controls nearly a fifth of Ukrainian territory in the third year of the war, Ukraine says peace can only be based on the full withdrawal of Russian

forces and the restoration of its territorial integrity.

"He's had some hundreds of thousands of troops wounded and killed in this unjust and unprovoked invasion. He could end this today if he chose to do that. And we call upon him to do that and to leave Ukrainian sovereignty territory," Austin said.

In his address, Putin said "the future existence of Ukraine" depended on it withdrawing its forces, on it adopting a neutral status, and on beginning talks with Russia, and said Kyiv's military situation would worsen if it rejected the offer. The timing of Putin's speech was clearly intended to preempt Ukraine's Swiss summit, billed as a "peace conference" despite Russia's exclusion, where Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy seeks a show of international support for Kyiv's terms to end the war.

Heavy rain, landslides kill 6 in India's Sikkim, 2,000 tourists stranded

Monitoring Desk
GUWAHATI: At least six people have been killed this week and around 2,000 tourists stranded in India's Himalayan state of Sikkim in landslides and floods after incessant rainfall, officials said on Friday.

Another four people have been killed in Nepal's Taplejung district, which borders Sikkim, after a landslide following rains swept away the house in which they were sleeping, officials there said.

Heavy rains triggered landslides at several locations in Mangan district, which covers north Sikkim and lies about 100 km (60 miles) north of the state capital Gangtok, the local government of the north-eastern Indian state said.

"It's been raining continuously for 36 hours. The road to north Sikkim has been damaged in multiple locations, snapping connection to the district," said Hem Kumar Chettri, the district magistrate of Mangan.

"The stranded tourists are all safe but we have

not been able to evacuate them because of the damage," he said, adding that 11 of them were foreign nationals.

The small Buddhist state of 650,000 people, wedged between Bhutan, China and Nepal, is a popular tourist destination but also faces natural disasters caused by extreme weather events in the Himalayas.

At least 179 people died last year in Sikkim when a Himalayan glacial lake outburst triggered floods.

Personnel and machinery have been deployed to fix the road, Chettri said, adding that the damage was "extensive" and repair will take some time. About 50 houses have been partly or fully damaged by the rains and people have been taken to a relief camp.

While eastern parts of Nepal have been lashed by heavy rains, the Himalayan country's western areas are facing one of the hottest seasons, weather officials said.

Indian relatives grieve as bodies of 45 Kuwait fire victims return

Monitoring Desk
KOCHI: Grieving families kept a solemn vigil in the terminal of an Indian airport on Friday as the bodies of dozens of migrant workers killed in a Kuwait building fire returned home.

Wednesday's dawn blaze quickly engulfed a housing block home to foreign labourers servicing the oil-rich gulf state's economy.

Fifty people died in the resulting inferno, 45 of them Indians, with dozens more hospitalised and anguished relatives back home frantically chasing news of whether their loved ones had perished.

"We held on to hope till the last minute that maybe he got out, maybe he's in the hospital," Anu Aby, the neighbour of 31-year-old victim Cibin Abraham, told AFP.

Aby said Abraham had been due to return to his home in Kerala state in August for his child's first birthday.

Abraham had been on the phone to his wife just an hour before the fire broke, he said.

Others sat in a waiting area at Kochi airport in India's south, wiping away tears as the Indian Air Force plane carrying the remains of their relatives touched down.

"It is an unending loss for the families of the deceased," Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan told reporters at the airport.

"Measures need to be taken to prevent a recurrence of such an incident and it is hoped that the Kuwaiti government will take the requisite action."

Most of Kuwait's population of more than four million is made up of foreigners.

Many of them are from South and Southeast Asia working in construction and service industries and live in overcrowded housing blocks such as the one that went up in flames on Wednesday.

Rights groups say that migrant workers in Kuwait are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation because of the "kafala" sponsorship system, which ties their visas to their employers.



Pope Francis and French President Emmanuel Macron attend a session on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Energy, Africa and Mediterranean on the second day of the G7 summit in Borgo Egnazia, Italy.

US attack sub, Canada navy patrol ship arrive in Cuba on heels of Russian warships

Monitoring Desk
HAVANA: A Canadian navy patrol ship sailed into Havana early on Friday, just hours after the United States announced a fast-attack submarine had docked at its Guantanamo naval base on Cuba, both vessels on the heels of Russian warships that arrived on the island earlier this week.

The confluence of Russian, Canadian and U.S. vessels in Cuba - a Communist-ruled island nation just 160 km (100 miles) from Florida - served up a reminder of old Cold War tensions and of current freight ties between Russia and Western nations over the Ukraine war.

However, both the U.S. and Cuba have said the Russian warships pose no threat to the region. Russia has also characterized the arrival of its warships in

allied Cuba as routine.

The Admiral Gorchkov frigate and the nuclear-powered submarine Kazan, half-submerged with its crew on deck, sailed into Havana harbor on Wednesday after conducting "high-precision missile weapons" training in the Atlantic Ocean.

Canada's Margaret Brooke patrol vessel began maneuvers early on Friday to enter Havana harbor, part of what the Canadian Joint Operations Command called "a port visit...in recognition of the long-standing bilateral relationship between Canada and Cuba." A Canadian diplomat characterized the Margaret Brooke's arrival as "routine and part of long-standing cooperation between our two countries", adding it was "unrelated to the presence of the Russian ships."

Finland will host a NATO land command and troops

Monitoring Desk
HELSINKI: Finland will host a new land command unit of the NATO military alliance, Minister of Defence Antti Hakkanen told reporters on Friday following a meeting of the alliance in Brussels.

After decades of military non-alignment, Finland joined NATO last year in response to neighbouring Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

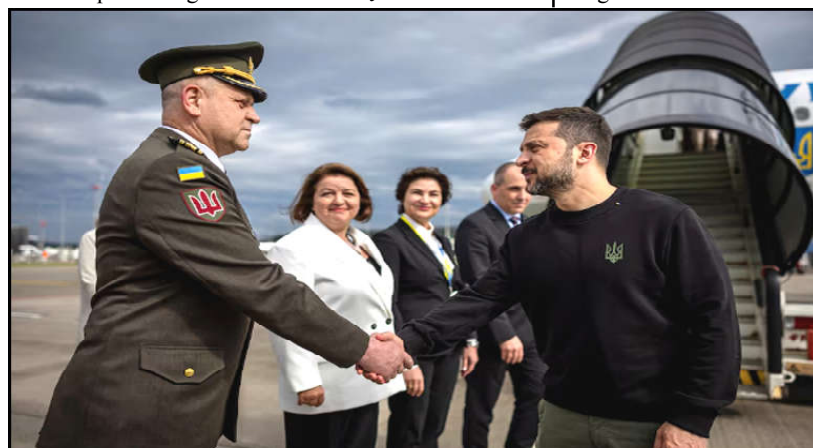
"I'm pleased to state that today all NATO member states have given their political consent to Finland's key goals in its NATO integration," Hakkanen said.

"Finland will host a NATO command and there will be land force presence in Finland," he added. Hakkanen said the Finnish NATO command will have as a task to direct land warfare operations in northern Europe and in Scandinavia.

Greece closes ancient tourist sites as heatwave persists

Monitoring Desk
ATHENS: Greece shut more ancient tourist sites in Athens on Thursday and elderly people took refuge at designated air-conditioned spots as the first heatwave of the summer persisted for a third day.

The famous Acropolis, set on a rocky hill overlooking the capital, and other nearby tourist attractions were closed on Thursday afternoon as winds from North Africa pushed temperatures towards 43 degrees Celsius (109 degrees Fahrenheit). Many primary schools and nurseries across the country were closed to protect students from the heat, which was expected to recede on Saturday.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is welcomed by a Ukrainian military official, Deputy Head of Swiss Protocol Manuel Irman, and Ukrainian Ambassador to Switzerland Iryna Venediktova, as he arrives at Zurich airport, Switzerland.

Afghans remain largest refugee population globally

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: Afghans continue to make up the largest population of refugees worldwide, with the majority seeking refuge in Iran and Pakistan, maintaining a trend observed in previous years, according to a UNHCR report released on Thursday.

The UN refugee agency's 2024 Global Trends Report includes estimates of internally displaced persons, pointing out that the years 2023 and 2024 saw historically high levels of forced displacement worldwide.

The report also features an assessment by the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), which

estimates that about 75 per cent of the population in the Gaza Strip — approximately 1.7 million people — have been displaced.

Syria, however, holds the record for the highest number of people forcibly displaced, with 13.8 million displaced both within and outside its borders.

"Behind these stark and rising numbers lie countless human tragedies. That suffering must galvanise the international community to act urgently to tackle the root causes of forced displacement," said Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, while commenting on the report.

Russia to try US reporter over alleged CIA work

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian prosecutors said on Thursday they had sent the case of detained US reporter Evan Gershkovich to court after concluding he had been collecting information for the US Central Intelligence Agency about a Russian tank factory.

Gershkovich, 32, was arrested on March 29, 2023, in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg on charges of espionage that carry up to 20 years in prison after the FSB, the main successor agency to the KGB, said it had caught him "red-handed" trying to obtain military secrets.

X makes 'likes' private 'to protect users'

Monitoring Desk
SAN FRANCISCO: Former Twitter platform X on Thursday said "likes" on the platform will now be private in an effort to protect users and drive up engagement.

With the change, which includes the removal of the "Likes" tab on a profile page, users will no longer be able to track the likes of other users to figure out their interests or political leanings.

The change comes as the platform has become a home for right-wing content since the takeover by Elon Musk in late 2022.

Sea swamps Bangladesh at one of world's fastest rates

Monitoring Desk
PATUAKHALI: After cyclone gales tore down his home in 2007, Bangladesh fisherman Abdul Aziz packed up what was left of his belongings and moved about half a kilometre inland, further away from storm surge waves.

A year later, the sea swallowed the area where his old home had been.

Now, 75-year-old Aziz fishes above his submerged former home and lives on the other side of a

low earth and concrete embankment, against which roaring waves crash. "The fish are swimming there in the water on my land", he told AFP, pointing towards his vanished village. "It is part of the advancing ocean."

Government scientists say rising seas driven by climate change are drowning Bangladesh's densely populated coast at one of the fastest global rates, and at least a million people on the coast will be forced to relocate within a generation.



People watch Canadian navy patrol boat HMCS Margaret Brooke passing by Russian nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine Kazan as it enters Havana's bay, Cuba.

Upper House witnesses mix reaction over budget 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate on Friday witnessed mix reaction on the budget as the treasury benches termed it pro-people and relief orientated while the opposition called for reviewing increase in tax on salaried class besides giving more relief to the masses.

Resuming debate on the budget, Senator Raja Nasir Abbas of MWMP said that no relief was given to the poor masses in the budget.

He said that sufficient fund was also not allocated for education and health sectors. The budget lacked future economic plan, he claimed.

He said problems of industries should be addressed on priority basis as it played key role in country's exports.

Increase in petroleum levy would further cause inflation in the country, he added.

Maulana Atta ur Rehman of JUI-F said that the government should make the budget people-friendly oriented.

Sarmad Ali of PPP said that the country was facing severe economic crisis and we have limited resources and fiscal space. Our over 50 per cent revenue collection spent on debt servicing, he added. He said proposed tax on papers would have negative impact on education and newspaper industry.

Sadia Abbasi of PML-N said the government should review proposed increase in tax on salaried class and provide maximum relief to the common people in the budget.

She said the government's policy should be pro-people, pro-business and pro-agriculture. She also suggested that the government should control its expenditure.

Dr Zarqa Suhawardy

Taimur of PTI termed the budget pro-elite rather than pro-people.

She said tax has increased on the salaried class particularly on grade 1-16 employees.

She claimed that exemption was given to the elite class in the budget.

No tax was imposed on IPPs, members of Parliament and elite class, she said.

She said that government has to curtail its own expenditure and she should start from its own door.

She welcomed an increase in minimum wages of the labourer but the government should reduce tax ratio.

Nasir Butt of PML-N while taking part in the debate said that the government presented people friendly budget and announced sizable increase in salaries and pensions of the employees despite economic crisis.



KARACHI: A large number of people gather for boarding on special Eid train as they are going to their native areas for celebrate upcoming festival Eid-ul-Azha with their family members, at Cantt Railway Station in Karachi.

Interference of establishment in judiciary will soon come to end: CJ LHC

RAWALPINDI (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Lahore High Court (LHC) Malik Shehzad Ahmad Khan has said establishment interference in judiciary will soon come to end.

"Different institutions are involved in the affairs of judiciary. The interference started from Moulvi Tameez ud Din case. Establishment interference in the matters of judiciary will soon come to end, he said this while addressing a ceremony here Friday.

He went on to say we together will have to get rid of interference in judiciary. Our judiciary is performing its obligations without fear or inducement.

He held "during telephonic talk with a judge he

to me all what happened with him. Judge said he does not fear. He will perform his duty honestly.

He remarked complaints have come regarding pressure on judges. Those who fear Allah don't fear any blackmailing.

"I had come out from my home alone for the sake of justice system in 2007, he added.

There is general complaint that judges don't sit in courts on time. We have brought biometric system in Punjab for the attendance of judges. Action will be taken against the judges who don't reach courts on time.

He underlined there are black sheep every where. Some judges get do

their work by readers and go home after sipping tea. CCTVs have been installed in court rooms to see the presence of judges.

The chief justice's comments came after six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges wrote a letter Supreme Court on March 25, accusing spy agencies of meddling in judicial affairs.

The IHC judges had demanded Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa to convene the judicial convention to consider the matter of alleged interference of intelligence operatives in the judicial functions or "intimidation" of judges in a manner that undermined the independence of the judiciary.

Dr. Khalid Maqbool stresses future-ready education

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has said, "We must provide our youth with an education that will be essential in future."

Talking to the media at the Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design (PIFD) here on Friday, he mentioned that a significant portion of our population consisted of youth, and they were our future. He stated that the government is aware of its responsibilities and has declared an education emergency to educate the youth, adding that we should provide an education that will be relevant in ten years.

In response to a question about the 18th Amendment, he said that some

provinces benefited from the amendment while others did not. He mentioned that the 18th Amendment was introduced for devolution of powers, but it proved otherwise in the past 15-20 years. He noted that the federal government has very limited fiscal space after debt repayments and defence expenditure. He suggested that tax should not be based on areas, industry and agriculture, rather, it should be on income, adding that whoever earns should pay tax.

Replying to a question about differences between the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the government, he said that the PPP was present in the house during the budget session, and their protest was merely symbolic.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with JUI(F) Chief Maulana Fazlur-Rehman.

Court discharges Imran Riaz from case

LAHORE (Online): Local court of Lahore has ordered to discharge and release Anchorperson Imran Riaz from the case of interference in state affairs.

Police presented Imran Riaz in the court for physical remand.

Police took the plea the accused was arrested a day before being nominated in FIR. The other accused have to be arrested on indication of the accused, there-

fore, 10 days physical remand in respect of Imran Riaz be granted.

The counsel for Imran Riaz while opposing the physical remand said the case registered against Imran Riaz is false and baseless. Judicial magistrate reserved judgment regarding plea in connection with physical remand of Imran Riaz. Later announcing the decision court discharged Imran Riaz.

MoEF, WAPDA sign agreement for Mohmand Dam Hydropower Project

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Economic Affairs (MoEA) and Water

nancing comes as a result of the Kuwait Fund's commitment to extend a total

and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) on Friday signed a Subsidiary Loan Agreement (SLA) amounting to US\$ 25 million for the Mohmand Dam Hydropower Project.

The Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Dr. Kazim Niaz, signed on behalf of the Ministry, while Chairman WAPDA, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Sajjad Ghani, represented WAPDA, said a news release. Ambassador of Kuwait in Pakistan Nassar Abdulrahman Jasser Al-Mutairi graced the ceremony with his presence.

This significant fi-

Providing health facilities to people one of our responsibilities: Dr. Ayaz

QUETTA (APP): District Health Officer (DHO) Kachhi Dr. Ayaz Qureshi on Friday said that providing health facilities to people was one of our main responsibilities.

Talking to media he said on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha in district Kutchhi, the health department has imposed emergency duty for the staff in THQ Machh, Bhag and RCD, BHUs of the district including DHQ Dhadar.

He said that it would not be allow any interruption in providing the best facilities to the intensive care patients in the hospi-

tals across the district including Machh, Bhag Dhadar. All our efforts will be continued so that people do not face any kind of problems regarding health, if any citizen of any area, village has any kind of complaint, they can contact me in time 24 hours, he said.

He said that his complaint would be redressed immediately and departmental action to be initiated against the negligent official. Due to the large number of problems, the responsibility will be carried out efficiently without wasting time in solving them, he said.



PHILADELPHIA: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States Masood Khan addressing at World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, U.S.A.



QUETTA: A delegation of Youth Wing Balochistan led by Sardar Naqeeb Tareen meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Forms committee for resolvable matters CM Bugti issues orders to resolve issues of govt. employees

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has issued orders for resolving the issues of government employees.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the representative delegation of Balochistan Employees and Workers Grand Alliance, who called on him here on Friday.

The Chief Minister formed a committee headed

by the senior officer of Balochistan government for the resolvable matters.

On the development, the Balochistan Employees and Workers Grand Alliance called off the protest call.

The delegation of Employees grand alliance was comprised Habibur Rehman Mardanzai, Professor Tariq Baloch, Abdul Salam Zehri, Muhammad Yaqoob Kakar and Arbab Nasrullah.

SC fixes EC appeal against constitution of ETs

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has fixed for hearing appeal plea filed by Election Commission (EC) against formation of Election Tribunals (ETs)

A two members bench of SC comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and justice Naem Afghanistan will hear the case on June 20.

It is pertinent to mention here that EC filed appeal against LHC decision taking the plea that it is mandate of EC to constitute election tribunal. High Court cannot exercise powers of EC.

The EC has prayed the SC to suspend Lahore High Court decision.



QUETTA: Inspector General of Police Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh presenting souvenir to Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti during a ceremony of 100th Passing Out Parade of Balochistan Police

KP governor thanks PM for allocating Rs 19 bln for Chashma Lift Canal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday extended his gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for allocating Rs 19 billion for the completion of the Chashma Lift Canal project that would help boost the wheat crop yield in the province.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, Governor Kundi said after the project's completion the province would be able to chip in the country's wheat export along with meeting its local needs.

The Chashma Lift Canal would be inaugurated during the current year, he added.

The governor regretted that the promises made to federally and provincially administered tribal areas (FATA & PATA respectively) had not been fulfilled whereas the issues pertaining to the new taxes for the newly merged districts needed to be resolved.

"Everyone knows about the security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the KP chief minister must call an emergency meeting of the apex committee," Kundi said.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was bragging about its education reforms whereas 26 universities in the province did not have a vice chancellor, he added.



QUETTA: A view of traffic jam due to rush on bazaar during eid shopping.

BSDSB executing comprehensive heat wave response project: Razaq

QUETTA (APP): Project Manager of Bright Star Development Society Balochistan (BSDSB) Abdul Razaq Baloch said that with the substantial support of the START Network, Ready Pakistan was successfully executing a comprehensive Heat Wave Response Project.

In a statement issued here Friday, he said Sibi, the hottest spot in Asia, now has a dynamic plan to support its community through these severe conditions. This aspiring intervention, conducted in a strong coordination with the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), district administration, municipal corporation and others stakeholders of district Sibi, includes several critical initiatives, he said.

He said that the establishment of five cooling centers

had been a central step of BSDSB in providing immediate relief to the community of Sibi in Balochistan. These centers offer cold drinking water and much-needed shade to the residents, allowing them to cope with the oppressive heat more effectively. The cooling centers were established in most populated areas including cattle market, Allahabad Bus Stop, Quetta Jacobabad Bus stop, Talli Bus Stop and BISP Center, he said.

He said that this initiative has been particularly beneficial for the most vulnerable members of the community. To further relieve the adversities faced by the daily wagers/workers class, BSDSB has set up two shade structures, he maintained.

He said that these structures provide a reser-

Chairman PTA meets with head of APAC, GSMA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Major General @ Hafeez Ur Rehman, met with Mr. Julian Gorman, Head of APAC GSMA, at the PTA HQs on Friday.

This meeting is part of PTA's ongoing efforts to strengthen collaboration with GSMA and to discuss key initiatives shaping the future of Pakistan's telecommunications industry.

During the meeting, both sides engaged in substantive discussions about PTA's current and future initiatives, regulatory frameworks, and technological advancements in the telecommunications industry.

CJ MHC approves bail of incarcerated poet Ahmad Farhad

MUZAFFARABAD (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Muzaffarabad High Court (MHC) has approved bail of incarcerated poet Ahmad Farhad against surety bond of valuing Rs 2 lacs. KDA Khan counsel for Ahmad Farhad appeared in high court. The court granted bail against surety bonds in the sum of Rs 2 lacs.

CJ MHC Sadaqat Hussain Raja remarked Ahmad Faraz had to serve sentence due to poor Azad Kashmir judicial system. At present judges too see the media like politicians that today their news has run in media. Azad Kashmir judicial system is ridiculous. Azad Kashmir is a small state and we have our own judicial system. CJ MHC warned family of Ahmad Farhad she should persuade her husband that he should express his sentiments through his poetry.



ZIARAT: Provincial Ombudsman Nazar Muhammad Baloch Advocate visiting District Headquarter Hospital

Google team to visit Pak soon for cooperation in education, tech field

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has announced that a high-level team from Google will visit Pakistan soon to explore possible cooperation in the fields of education and technology.

According to the Ministry of Education, the purpose of the Google

team's visit to Pakistan is to improve educational outcomes and increase access to quality education, especially for out-of-school children.

The visit follows a request from the Ministry of Federal Education to Google to support Pakistan's efforts to create a digitally enabled education system.

Pervaiz Elahi could not be indicted in illegal appointments case

LAHORE (Online): Former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi could not be indicted in illegal appointments in Punjab Assembly (PA) case.

illegal appointments case came up for hearing before Anti Corruption Court (ACC) Lahore Friday.

Judge Arshid Hussain Bhutta of ACC heard the case.

PTI leader Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi could not appear in the court being sick.

The counsels of Pervaiz Elahi filed petition for exemption from attendance. They also filed medical certificate of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi wherein it was stated that doctors have stopped Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi from travelling. Rib fracture of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has also been not healed.

The petition said Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi is suffering from heart pain, therefore, his plea for exemption from attendance be accepted.

Mohsin Naqvi calls on Fazal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Interior Affairs and Narcotics Control Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi called on Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence in Islamabad on Friday. According to media reports, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi inquired about Maulana Fazlur Rehman's health during the meeting.

During the visit, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed his best wishes for Maulana Fazlur Rehman and said, "I am praying for your health and safety." Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi mentioned that he has a long-standing relationship of 25 years with Maulana Fazlur Rehman, based on respect and honour.



QUETTA: Tribals from Hanna Lake and Urak are block road and burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against race and one-wheeling by youths, at Hanna road.