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dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

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Armed men kidnap 10 Punjab residents from Quetta

QUETTA (INP): Unidentified armed men kidnaped 10 people hailing from Punjab from Shuban picnic point in Zarghon Ghar, Quetta. According to details, armed men took 16 people hostage who were enjoying at Shuban picnic point in Zarghon Ghar. The DG Levies said the armed men released six hostages after checking their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs). The ten people who have been abducted include a Customs Officer and others, who are residents of Punjab province.

PM urges political parties to work together for development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has urged all the political parties to work together for the development and prosperity of the country and public welfare. He was talking to a delegation of Pakistan People's Party headed by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari that called on him in Islamabad today. The delegation included Chairman Senate Yusuf Raza Gilani, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Syed Khurshid Shah, Syed Naveed Qamar and Sherry Rehman. Prime Minister Muhammad

Shehbaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held discussions national political issues. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said further consultation was held with Pakistan Peoples Party regarding the budget 2024-2025. He said economy is showing positive indicators while stock market has witnessed historic boom. The Prime Minister said steps have been taken to provide relief to the common man in the budget of the new financial year. He said more consul-

tation will continue through committees. A dinner was given by the Prime Minister in honour of the Pakistan Peoples Party delegation. Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar were also present in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistan People's Party headed by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif



GWADAR: President Asif Ali Zardari chairing a meeting on the security and law and order situation of Balochistan.

President for enhanced capacity of LEAs to counter terror in Balochistan

Says prosecution system needed to be improved so that the terrorist elements could not escape justice

Independent Report

GWADAR: President Asif Ali Zardari has called for enhancing the capacity of the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs), posting competent officers in Balochistan, and improving the prosecution mechanism to effectively counter terrorist elements in Balochistan. The President expressed these views while chairing a meeting on the security/law and order situation in Balochistan, in Gwadar, on Thursday. Minister for Interior, Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, MNA Malik Shah Gorgaji,

Home Minister, Mir Ziaullah Langov, MPA Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman, senior civil and military officials attended the meeting. The President was briefed about the overall security situation of the province as well as the role of LEAs in successfully countering terrorist attacks in various districts of Balochistan. It was informed that the provincial government had adopted a targeted approach to improve the security and law-and-order situation in Balochistan. It was further apprised that the initiatives taken by the LEAs had resulted in improving the security situa-

tion in the province. The President was informed that the provincial government was taking steps to provide fool-proof security to Chinese and foreign nationals. The President appreciated the efforts of the provincial government as well as the sacrifices of the LEAs in combatting terrorism. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that the prosecution system needed to be improved so that the terrorist elements could not escape justice. He said that compensation for the families of martyrs of LEAs in Balochistan should be enhanced bringing it at par with the rest of the provinces.

Promulgating presidential ordinance is insult of parliament: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has sent appeals from Election Commission (EC) against Lahore High Court (LHC) decision regarding constitution of election tribunals to judges committee. Committee will constitute larger bench next week in respect of these appeals. SC has issued notice to Attorney General (AG) besides seeking details about constitution of tribunals in other provinces from EC. The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has remarked the matter be placed before the committee as soon as possible. Promulgating presidential ordinance is insult of the parliament. If ordinance has to be brought then shut the parliament. How can the change be made through presidential ordinance. On one side parlia-

ment has enacted law. How can the ordinance be brought after enactment of law by parliament. What was reason for bringing ordinance? Was there any emergency. The ordinance came from where after the enactment of law by parliament. This is too interference in election. Election act was desire of parliament. This ordinance was of whose desire. Either value of parliament is more or value of cabinet. The decision of high court was negated through this ordinance. The constitution is very clear. The powers of constitution of election tribunals rest with EC. Section C of article 219 has made it amply clear. We have taken oath under law and constitution and not on

courts decisions. Whenever SC made constitutional interpretations, complications came into being, the CJP gave these remarks on Thursday. The CJP directed Suleman Akram Raja not to come in uniform being respondent in the case. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan remarked we want to see as to why the problem of constitution of tribunals was not created in other provinces. The proceedings of tribunals is near to completion in Balochistan. When I was chief justice of Balochistan high court I had said in clear terms the powers to constitute tribunals rest with EC. A two members bench of SC presided over by CJP Qazi Faez Isa took up for hearing appeal plea filed by

EC against constitution of election tribunals. Sikandar Bashir counsel for EC and Suleman Akram Raja counsel for PTI appeared in the court. Sikandar Bashir counsel for EC opened the arguments. He told the court there is matter of interpretation of article 219 © in the case. The CJP inquired tell us some facts of the case. The counsel for EC said EC wrote letters to all high courts for constitution of tribunals on February 14. The constitution of tribunals is mandate of EC. Through the letters the lists of name of judges were sought from all high courts. The panels of judges name were sought from high courts. Lahore High Court gave name of two judges on February 20 Both the

judges were notified for election tribunals. More two judges were notified as election tribunals on April 26. CJP stopped the counsel for saying the word respectable for high court. The CJP Qazi Faez Isa remarked you are saying respectable to high courts. This is said for judges. He inquired English language is of England. Is the word respectable used for parliament there. He remarked here the parliamentarians don't give respect to each other. They exchange abuses with each other. We want there should be respect. Why EC is not called respectable. Is EC not respectable. Counsel for EC said no dispute arose to the extent of establishment of 4 election tribunals.

35 Pakistani pilgrims fall a victim to scorching heat during Hajj, say authorities

RIYADH (INP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs has confirmed deaths of 35 Pakistani pilgrims. According to Hajj Mission DG Abdul Wahab Soomro, nine Pakistanis died in Mashair, four in Mina, three in Arafat and two in Muzdalifah. The Hajj DG says 20 Pakistani pilgrims lost their lives in Makkah and six in Medina. The DG said the deaths were caused by intense temperature of 50 degrees Celsius. He said the allega-

tion that the pilgrims were not taken care of was unfounded. He said the dead bodies were notified by the Saudi government and arrangements of burials were made in accordance with wishes of the families of the deceased. Arrangements of bringing the bodies to Pakistan had also been made, Soomro said. The Saudi government, he said, had always cooperated with the Pakistan government in such matters.



LAHORE: Director Hajj Punjab Muhammad Rizwan Sharif, Deputy Director Hajj Lahore Mujeeb Shah and others welcoming Hajaj Ikram and garranding them with flowers.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), Liu Jianchao received at the Islamabad International Airport by Additional Foreign Secretary.

Chinese Minister arrives Islamabad on three-day visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) Liu Jianchao arrived here Thursday on a three-day visit. He was received at the Islamabad International Airport by Additional Foreign Secretary

(Asia & Pacific) Ambassador Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, a Foreign Office press release said. Minister Liu Jianchao will call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and hold extensive bilateral talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

Pakistan, Turkiye agree to further deepen bilateral cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday held a telephone conversation on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha to exchange Eid greetings with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkiye Hakan Fidan. The two ministers reviewed the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Turkiye, a Foreign Office press release said. During the conversation, they expressed satisfaction on the robust strategic partnership between the two countries and agreed to further deepen bilateral cooperation and engagement across multiple domains.

Federal budget an insult to aspirations of masses, thunders Omar Ayub

ISLAMABAD (INP): Leader of the opposition in National Assembly Omar Ayub termed the budget documents as illegal. As per the parliamentary traditions, the opposition leader opened the general debate on budget on Thursday with his fiery speech in National Assembly. "We couldn't run our election campaigns due to the crackdown of police," said the opposition leader and added that the cases under the sections of terrorism are being registered against the PTI workers even today. We are the real heroes of Form-45 as people gave us the mandate, he added. According to opposition leader, the economy of the country was destabilised in result of the no-trust motion that was

moved to oust the government of Imran Khan. Speaking on floor of the house, the opposition leader said that the government has dug a grave for itself through this budget. "This budget was prepared by economic hitmen who wanted to shake the foundations of the country," said Omar Ayub. The opposition leader was of the view that the PTI founder is still in illegal detention. Omar Ayub said that the budget is against the people of Pakistan. "M u h a m m a d Aurangzeb was made finance minister but he was then stabbed in the back as he was removed from the chairmanship of Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec)," he said.

Tarar regrets 'smear campaign' against Pak-China friendship by a political party on Eid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaulah Tarar on Thursday took exception to a "smear campaign" launched by a specific political party against the Pakistan-China friendship on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. Addressing a news conference, the minister brushed aside the propaganda against Pakistan-China friendship particularly surrounding the upgradation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). "Undoubtedly, the lobbies against the Pakistan-China Dosti are active, and are completely perturbed by the CPEC's upgradation, but such botch attempts are destined to fail," he added. The minister said the government fully under-

stood that some powers which were stunned by the Pakistan-China friendship, were resorting to undue and unfounded criticism towards the CPEC, but nothing could harm the enduring bond between the two nations. "The people normally celebrate Eid-ul-Azha by slaughtering sacrificial animals and sharing sweets with their loved ones but there was one political party that exerted all its energies for conspiring against Pak-China Dosti," he regretted. The minister lashed out at the political party, which, he said, was bent upon running a "smear campaign" against Pakistan-China friendship instead of reflecting on the possibilities to resolve the issues to forge unity in accordance with the spirit of Eid which

taught nothing but sacrifice and altruism. The whole nation should celebrate the enduring bond of a friendship between Pakistan and China that had stood the test of time and was growing with each passing day, he added. Tarar said a high-level Chinese delegation led by Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee (IDCPC) Liu Jianchao would arrive in Pakistan today on a three-day visit till June 22. He said the IDCPC minister had not only been in close coordination with the political parties of various countries but also had a critical role in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) related projects.

Salik hails Saudi Govt for exemplary Hajj arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain has applauded the Saudi Government for its exemplary arrangements for pilgrims even amidst intense heat. During a consultation meeting at the Pakistan Hajj Mission in Makkah, Chaudhry Salik Hussain highlighted that the Saudi authorities had implemented various measures to alleviate the adverse impact of heat, including in-

stalling water sprinklers and organizing a system to distribute cold water and beverages. He also mentioned that mobile health units and dispensaries had been set up at key locations to safeguard the pilgrims' health. According to a press release, he said hundreds of volunteers and Saudi forces were deployed at multiple sites to facilitate over 2 million pilgrims to smoothly perform the Hajj.



ISLAMABAD: A high level delegation led by Kevin Kells, Managing Director, Google for Education, call upon the Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui.

Govt aims to transform entire education system of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Thursday said we aim to transform the entire education system of Pakistan. He pointed out the high number of out of school children and the adverse impact it is having on the society. He was talking to a high level delegation led by Kevin Kells, Managing Director, Google for Education, which called on him. The delegation included Farhan Qureshi, Country Director Pakistan Google, Aron Saether Jackson, CEO Allied, Umar Farooq, CEO Tech Valley amongst other senior officials of Google. The meeting was also attended by senior officials of the education ministry led by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani. Dr. Khalid welcomed the diverse Google delegation that comprised of officials from seven different countries including USA, UK, Australia etc. He said under his leadership, the ministry was working tirelessly to bring this number down. He said that this crisis has been given the highest priority.

Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui says

Govt aims to transform entire education system of Pakistan

Visits revamped NEOC NDMA to become a safety wall for Pakistan: PM

Shahbaz Sharif lauds revamping NEOC; appreciates cutting-edge technology

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday, lauding the revamped National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) equipped with multiple satellite feeds and artificial intelligence tools, expressed the hope that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) would prove to be a safety wall for Pakistan against the impacts of the climate change.

"Due to climate change, Pakistan is in the red zone and among the top ten vulnerable countries. We should not lose our morale rather work hard. After this achievement, I have no doubt that the NDMA, in coordination with provincial PDMA's, will become a safety wall for Pakistan," the prime minister said during his visit to the NEOC here along with the federal ministers and secretaries.

This was the maiden visit of the prime minister since the revamped NEOC was inaugurated in October last year.

He highly appreciated NDMA Chairman Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik for realising his dream of focusing on the capacity building and human resource development of the Authority instead of an earlier planned project of building an office tower.

Referring to his previous meetings following the floods of 2022, the prime minister said he had suggested the NDMA chief to prioritise the capacity building of the organisation by equipping it with the latest technology, input from the provinces and recruitment of permanent human resources, besides establishing a digital hub.

"Today, the way that dream has been realised deserves applause. I don't think any province has achieved such capacity with the world-class systems. I am happy that instead of a highrise building, you invested in this digital hub," the prime minister remarked.

He said the 2022 floods had inflicted a \$30 billion loss to the country which would take years to

overcome as the Federal Government alone had spent Rs 100 billion for the rehabilitation of affected population, besides the funding from provinces as well as aid from the friendly countries.

He said consequent to the efforts by that time Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhatto Zardari and other federal and provincial organisations, the country was able to rehabilitate millions of people.

Prime Minister Shehbaz appreciated the merit-based induction of quality human resource and establishing a third-party validation mechanism at the NDMA, and assured of the government's support and funding for the staffers' training and procurement of equipment.

"This is not normal. This is not usual. This is far above normal and usual," he said and asked the federal ministers and secretaries to follow the role model to make Pakistan a great nation.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the National Emergencies Operation Centre.

Romina Khurshid lauds UNDP, Pakistan's financial, technical support for tackling climate risks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Resident Representative for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan, Van Nguyen called on Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change MNA Romina Khurshid Alam here on Thursday whereas the Coordinator lauded the Programme's financial and technical support to the country for tackling climate risks.

Climate Risks initiative to provide and facilitate more and better pre-arranged protection against climate and disaster related risks for vulnerable people in the highly climate risk-prone countries.

"Basically, the Global Shield against Climate Risks initiative is more and better pre-arranged and trigger-based financial resource, which is immediately-available fund in response to disasters, in the most efficient, effective and fastest way for the economy, businesses, and communities in the most climate-vulnerable countries," UNDP-Pakistan's Van Nguyen elaborated during the meeting with Romina Khurshid Alam.

"More importantly, providing countries with comprehensive support in further understanding the climate risks and impacts and the innovative solutions and support to plug the protection gap and effectively address losses and damages caused and exacerbated by climate change is an over-arching purpose of the initiative," the UNDP-Pakistan's senior official informed the PM's aide.

"Another key objective of the initiative is provision of grant-based financial and technical assistance to climate-vulnerable countries like Pakistan so as to develop and implement solutions for financial protection of the vulnerable communities linked with climate change and adaptation efforts," she added.

Meanwhile, the UNDP-Pakistan official also assured the PM's aide Romina Khurshid Alam of her organisation's all-out support to access the financial and technical support provided by the initiative to build the country's climate resilience.

Pakistan reaffirms commitment to peaceful space exploration

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chairman of the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), Muhammad Yousuf Khan has termed the outer space as a common heritage of humanity and said Pakistan is strongly committed to peaceful use of outer space.

The Chairman Suparco said this while addressing the inaugural session of the 67th session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). The session is held in Vienna and will continue till June 28.

Chairman SUPARCO proudly shared Pakistan's recent advancements, including the successful launches of the iCUBE-Qamar satellite and the Pakistan Multi-Mission Communication Satellite, PakSat-MM1, this May.

He also revealed future plans for a rover mission to the lunar south pole in collaboration with China's Chang'E-8 Mission. Earlier, the Chairman attended the Lunar Conference organized by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) on June 18, where he discussed Pakistan's commitment to lunar exploration and international cooperation in space research.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkmenistan Attajan Mulamov meets Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain.

ICT admin disposes of over 0.2 mln offals, 1750 tonnes waste during Eid days

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration efficiently managed cleanup efforts, disposing of about 0.2 million offals and over 1,750 tons of waste during Eid ul Azha.

prompting immediate response teams to address the issues. He said that on the first day of Eid, over 99,000 offals and over 1,750 tons of waste were disposed of, while more than 100 citizen complaints were received via the 1334 helpline.

Similarly, on the second day of Eid, the district administration resumed the cleanup operations and disposed of over 99,000 offals while receiving more than 50 citizen complaints via the 1334 helpline.

Last year, about 94,000 offals were disposed of in the Federal Capital on Eid. This year, the administration worked tirelessly to ensure that offals and waste were collected from every household, said the spokesman for the ICT administration.

Sharing the details, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, said that more than 150 citizen complaints were received via the 1334 helpline, prompting immediate response teams to address the issues.

The DC congratulated all Assistant Commissioners and the district administration teams for their dedication to restoring the city's cleanliness.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Resident Representative of United Nations Development Programme in Pakistan, Van Nguyen calls on coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam at her office.

PM grieved over martyrdom of Hujjaj in Makkah

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the tragic incident in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, which resulted in the loss of precious lives of Hujjaj, including some from Pakistan.

The prime minister, in a statement, directed the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pakistan's Embassy in Saudi Arabia to ensure provision of best possible medical care to the Pakistani Hajj pilgrims who were admitted in hospitals.

He talked to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhary Salik Hussain and Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ahmed Farooq in Makkah and directed them to make arrangements for shifting of the bodies of martyred Hajj pilgrims to Pakistan.

Chairman praises officials for 'good performance' in Eid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Saqib Rafiq Thursday praised officials for their good performance and said that RWMC had implemented a comprehensive strategy to effectively collect and dispose of more than 9,000 tons of animal waste during the three days of Eid-ul-Azha while resolving public complaints.

Talking to the PTV news channel, he said that almost 43 transfer stations were being set up at the Union Council level.

IRSA releases 303,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 303,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 369,800 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1,454.75 feet and was 56.75 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 175,000 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively.

IG Islamabad visits Faizabad checkpoint

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi visited the Faizabad checkpoint on the third day of Eid and met with the police officers stationed at the checkpoint.

During the visit, IG Islamabad announced commendation certificates and cash rewards for all officers for performing their duties effectively and efficiently.

On the occasion, he said these are the officers who are sacrificing their own family celebrations to ensure the

safety of the citizens. Police officers are my family and close to my heart.

The police officers on duty during Eid will be given leave in stages. Because of these officers, the citizens of Islamabad celebrated Eid peacefully, he added. He directed the police officers to perform their duties effectively, to treat citizens courteously during the checking process, and to conduct effective checks of suspicious vehicles.

He further said that, the protection of the lives and property of citizens is the top priority of Islamabad Police.

Effective Traffic Management ensured during Eid holidays

ISLAMABAD: Following the special orders of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Muhammad Sarfaraz Virk supervised the Islamabad Traffic Police to implement an effective plan to main-

ets and impounding dozens of motorcycles in various police stations.

CTO Islamabad said that the impounded motorcycles included those without number plates, with incorrect numbers, altered motorcycles, and without licenses.

Due to the effective



arrangements by the traffic police, no incidents of one-wheeling, racing, or motorcycle accidents occurred in the federal capital.

He further said that the efforts and duties performed by Islamabad Police during Eid-ul-Adha were appreciated by all segments of society and citizens on various forums.

Secretary Info, PIO grieved over demise of father of NPC President Jatoi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid and Principal Information Officer (PIO) Mobashir Hassan on Thursday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of the father of National Press Club (NPC) President Azhar Jatoi. In their condolence messages, the Secretary Information and PIO expressed heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the bereaved family.

They prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

CDA decides to establish Wildlife Safari Park

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to establish Wildlife Safari Park in the federal capital.

It was decided in a meeting chaired by Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

The park will be developed on a jungle theme and will include tree houses, facilities for close observation of animals and a rehabilitation center for animals. For this purpose, a technical team has been formed to evaluate the technical and financial aspects of establishing the Wildlife Safari Park.

Muhammad Ali said that the experiences of safari parks established at both national and international levels would be utilized.

The meeting also decided to launch Pakistan Street, which will feature outlets offering cuisines from around the world. He said that the work on both projects will commence in the next fiscal year following detailed planning.

UNHCR stresses countries to resolve conflicts, share responsibility for refugees

ISLAMABAD (APP): UNHCR Pakistan Spokesperson, Qaiser Khan Afridi Thursday on 'World Refugee Day' said that over 75 percent of refugees were being hosted by middle-income countries where we urged nations to resolve political conflicts and share the responsibilities of displace refugees.

Speaking to the PTV news channel, he said, "These refugee nations are facing rising challenges such as political conflicts, climatic factors, disasters, and growing external debt, hindering their ability to address specific national needs and achieve sustainable development goals and development aspirations." "World Refugee Day is a time to recognize the generosity of host countries that have kept their borders and hearts open to people in need of protection, he added.



PRINT OR PERISH

The 10% GST Threatens Free Press

- The newspaper industry is facing an existential crisis due to the 10% GST proposed on newsprint in the recent budget.
- In an environment full of fake news and disinformation, newspapers are a vital source for credible and authentic news. They play an important role in promoting democratic values and shaping informed public opinions. The imposition of this GST will push many newspapers, particularly small and regional newspapers, towards closure.
- Newspapers organisations are already subsidising the cost of their publications for their readers as they are not passing on the cost burden to the readers. Taxing the newspapers will further weaken the economies of the print media and impact the citizens' right to know.
- This tax threatens the survival of an already struggling newspaper industry. While reducing the quality and quantity of news coverage, the tax will increase production costs, endanger jobs, restrict the ability for the industry to pay competitive and timely salaries and will make it impossible for print media organisations to implement the government mandated Wage Board for newspaper employees.

We urge the government to reconsider and withdraw this tax to ensure the survival and continued contribution of newspapers to an enlightened society.

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