

# Independent

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## PM wants expansion of bilateral trade between Pakistan, Tajikistan through enhanced connectivity

PM Shahbaz, President Emomali vow to further strengthen Pakistan-Tajikistan ties

DUSHANBE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday stressed upon expansion of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Tajikistan as the current volume did not reflect the current level of brotherly relationship between the two countries.

Addressing a presser along with President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, the prime minister said that today, they had signed a number of MoUs which would be very helpful in furthering their bilateral ties.

The prime minister especially mentioned the

agreement over strategic partnership.

"These agreements will go a long way in furthering our brotherly ties and of course, expanding our scope of cooperation in the coming days," he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also assured Tajik president that he would work closely with him to further cement the brotherly ties not only in fields of agriculture, education, health and promotion of investment but also in expansion of bilateral trade.

He underlined that the both countries required to work closely and fix targets as how to increase their bi-

lateral trade and investment, citing transportation of goods from port of Karachi to Tajikistan via Afghanistan and then from Dushanbe to Karachi port via Afghanistan through a rail-road connectivity project. The prime minister termed this existing opportunity as 'an area of huge economic importance for both countries'.

The prime minister apprised that he had very fruitful and productive one-on-one meeting with the Tajik president, besides holding delegation level meetings in which they discussed to explore trade and investment opportunities.

He said Pakistan would be keen to be a part of China, Tajikistan and Afghanistan trade corridor project, adding it would be another opportunity to broaden the multilateral trade in the region.

He also expressed the confidence that the CASA 1000, would be completed soon, bringing prosperity in this region.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also referred to another MoU pertaining to relaxation of visas requirements and said that it would be very helpful for both countries in further achieving their goals.

The prime minister

said the two brotherly countries had been the victims of terrorism; Pakistan faced this menace for years and paid a huge price in terms of human lives and of course, suffered from colossal economic losses to the tune of billions of dollars. Thousands of people from all walks of life laid down their lives to defeat the menace of terrorism, he said, adding the armed forces of Pakistan had been fighting this menace and its officers and jawans gave huge sacrifices in the line of duty, besides police and other law enforcement agencies personnel also rendered huge sacrifices.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the media in a press conference in Qasr-e-Millat, Dushanbe.



ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister and senior leader of the Awami National Party, Mr Ghulam Ahmed Bilour, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## All political parties need to join hands for economic, political stability: President

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari has said that all political parties will have to work together for economic, political stability and addressing the problems being faced by the country.

He stated this while talking to former federal minister and senior leader of Awami National Party (ANP) Ghulam Ahmed Bilour who called on him in Islamabad on Tuesday.

During the meeting, overall political, security and law and order situation of the country came under

discussion.

President Asif Ali Zardari emphasized that all political parties need to work together for economic and political stability and addressing the country's problems.

Consultation and consensus with all political parties on important national issues is inevitable, he added.

ANP leader Ghulam Ahmad Bilour congratulated Asif Zardari on assuming the office of President for the second time.

## Law and justice have to be relied upon for sake of justice: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has remarked constitution and law have to be relied upon for the sake of justice.

"We have to rely on law and constitution for sake of justice. Supreme Court (SC) decisions are based on justice. In every decision the constitution was followed. Some judges will be wise. I am not so much wise. Let Pakistan tread on the path of constitution once, CJP gave these remarks during the hearing of case related to reserved seats of Sunni Itehad Council (SIC) Tuesday.

see the entire picture then what we have to do with the powers of full justice. We all know that so many independent candidates succeeded in polls by showing their affiliation with PTL. Justice Munib Akhtar remarked parliamentary system is based on political parties. The question is this the independent candidates in such large number came from where. Did the people elect them as independent on their own. Did the Election Commission (EC) not declare these people independent. If it has been done so then should the court not correct this mistake. Should that legal option be not adopted which corrects this mistake. On one side it is

being said EC is constitutional institution which can do every thing. EC has official correspondence with assembly secretariat. EC is accepting members of SIC. How can EC change its stance on the matter of reserved seats.

Justice Athar Minallah remarked Attorney General it is not simple appeal. It is case of rights of people. You want to declare the misinterpretation of EC correct. This has misinterpreted court's decision. You want to revive doctrine of necessity.

Justice Ayesha Malik remarked as to why EC is not accepting SIC as political party after accepting it as parliamentary party.

## PM directs to Power Division to finalize agreement about solarization of agri. tube wells in Balochistan

CM insists we want prompt solution to issue of zamindars; says billions of rupees to be saved on account of subsidy after conversion of legal connections of agricultural tube wells on solar energy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed to the Federal Secretary Power Division to finalize agreement about solarization of the agricultural tube wells in Balochistan as per the points already reached in the previous meetings. He also directed to the Power Division's team to reach Balochistan and finalize the matters in this regard.

The Prime Minister was chairing a video link meeting on the issue of conversion of agricultural tube wells on solar energy in Balochistan, in Islamabad on Tuesday morning.

The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and other high ups participated in the

meeting from Quetta through video link.

He was flanked by the Provincial Minister Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Minister Food, Mir Ali Madad Jatak and other concerned high ups. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister apprised the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and other participants of the meeting about the issues of zamindars of province.

He also highlighted the stance of the provincial government and steps taken by it in this regard.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the provincial government has allocated Rs. 10 billion in the provincial budget for solarization of agricultural tube wells in the

province.

In addition to this, provincial government has already given subsidy of billions of rupees on electricity during last few years, adding he mentioned.

The Chief Minister said that we want prompt solution to the issues of zamindars, and they would suffer a lot in case of delay in this important matter.

He anticipated that billions of rupees would be saved on account of subsidy after conversion of agricultural tube wells on solar energy.

Therefore, it is endeavour of the provincial government that federal government may give final shape to the matters in this regard, adding the Chief Minister insisted.



QUETTA: A delegation led by minority leader of PML(N) Sana Intizar meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## PTI founder's arrest an internal matter of Pak: Law minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday said that the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) founder and pending cases against him were an internal matter of Pakistan.

He said Pakistan was a sovereign state and its court enforced its Constitution and laws, and took decisions accordingly.

Responding to the report of the United Nations Working Group, the minister said the PTI founder was in the jail as a convicted prisoner. He had all rights as per the Constitution of Pakistan and laws, and international norms.

The relief given to the PTI founder by the courts in many cases manifested a transparent and fair trial of his cases by the judiciary.

It was biased and unfair to make demands beyond the ambit of Constitution, law and international norms, he added.

## Politicians have to play role to come out of present crisis & disappointment, insists Sheikh Jaffar Mandokhail

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that the politics is a difficult and complex process and there is a need to learn from our mistakes and maintain relationships with the masses to play role in it (politics).

The Governor said that democracy is the name of rule of people in which public service, harmony, respect to difference of opinion and acceptability are essential elements.

This is matter of satisfaction that there is democratic system and democratic institutions in the country, however, still there is a need to do a lot for learning from experiences of each other and making the democratic system fruitful.

The Governor was speaking to a delegation

who called on him under leadership of the organizing General Secretary of Balochistan Awami Party, here on Tuesday.

The Governor stressed that our political workers and leaders have to make them compatible with the requirements of ever changing world.

He said that the public representatives and political leaders are held in high esteem in every civilized society just because they play leading role to set new course for the bright future of society, increase in the rights and powers of the people and ensure provision of justice.

The Governor expressed sorrow over that we are indulged in meaningless and unnecessary hatred as a result we have lost major objectives and human values.

He stressed the need to promote understanding and harmony in the society.

## President summons Senate to meet on July 4

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday summoned the Senate to meet on July 4.

The Senate will meet at the Parliament House on Thursday at 1700 hours, according to a President House press release.

The president summoned the session in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Article 54 (1) of the Constitution.

## PM Shehbaz lays wreath at Ismail Somoni monument

DUSHANBE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday laid a wreath at the monument of Tajikistan's national hero Ismail Somoni, short after his arrival for a two-day visit here.

Ismail Somoni is regarded as the historic figure of Central Asia and a hero of Tajikistan, who ruled Tajikistan and Khorasan region in 9th and 10th century, and brought about

immense development to the Tajik nation.

Earlier, as the prime minister arrived at the Dushanbe airport, he was received by Tajik Prime Minister Kokhir Rasulzoda, Energy Minister Daler Juma, Deputy Foreign Minister Farrukh Sharifzoda, Tajik Ambassador in Islamabad Yousuf Sharifzoda and Pakistan's Ambassador in Dushanbe Saeed Sarwar and senior diplomatic officers.



DUSHANBE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Prime Minister of Tajikistan H.E. Qahir Rasulzoda at the airport in Tajikistan.

## Imran Khan alleges intelligence agency's interference in jail matters

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan has criticised the alleged interference of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in civilian matters.

In an informal media talk inside Adiala Jail today, the incarcerated former prime minister said, "We have filed a petition in court questioning the presence of ISI Majors and Colonels in Adiala Jail."

"The ISI has no authority in civil matters or judiciary interference. The prison superintendent is following ISI orders, leading to the transfer of two officers to ensure no leniency is shown to me."

Talking about the results of the February general elections, the PTI founder expressed confusion stating, "Five months

have passed since the elections, and I still do not know who won or lost."

He also spoke about the recent resolution by the US Congress on alleged election irregularities in Pakistan highlighting that it had passed with 85% support. "Even the most powerful Israeli lobby has never managed such a resolution. The US conducted thorough research before approving this resolution"

He cited reports from PILDAT and FAFEN confirming electoral fraud, alleging that the chief election commissioner was appointed to cover up these irregularities. The entire country says it was a fraudulent election," Imran stated. "The world is echoing what the commissioner of Rawalpindi and former Prime Minister Kakar told Hanif Abbasi."

## ATC issues non-bailable arrest warrant for CM Gandapur

ISLAMABAD (INP): Anti-terrorism court (ATC) of Islamabad on Tuesday issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

In October 2022, a case was registered against Ali Amin Gandapur in connection with an FIR at the L-9 police station for protesting against the decision of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Gandapur has pleaded

the court for exemption of attendance which was rejected by the court.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra has held the hearing for tomorrow (Wednesday).

The court said Gandapur had never appeared before the court after April 2024.

It should be noted that the case was lodged for vandalism during the protest against disqualification of Imran Khan.

## Justice Ejaz Swati takes oath as Acting Chief Justice

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan High Court's judge Justice Muhammad Ejaz Swati took oath as Acting Chief Justice on Tuesday.

Justice Muhammad Khan Mulakhail administered the oath ceremony of the Acting Chief Justice.

Judges of Balochistan High Court, lawyers' community and others were also present in the ceremony.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, MNA Pullain Baloch, MPA Rehmat Saleh Baloch, Secretary Population Abdullah Jan and other expressing their views during a consultative meeting on the topic of Menstrual Health and Hygiene Tax Reforms jointly organized by MHM Working Group Balochistan, UNICEF and Hands

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**'Cruel jest'**

Another year and another missed opportunity to set things right. But what is it for those who, by all appearances, consider themselves unaccountable to the public and unfussed by their miseries?

Precisely three weeks ago, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb had solemnly declared that there were "no sacred cows" in his eyes and that "everyone would have to contribute to the economy". The pronouncement had come a day before the federal budget for the new fiscal year was unveiled, and it had momentarily ignited some hope that Pakistan, at long last, was serious about setting itself on a path of equitable taxation and sustainable spending under a 'technocrat' finance minister. Between then and this weekend, however, the nation has realised that the finance minister's 'assurances' had been little more than a cruel jest. Speaking at a news conference on Sunday, Mr Aurangzeb could only express his condolences to the salaried class on the higher taxes he had imposed on them.

It is now widely accepted that the coalition government's 'crisis budget' will achieve little more than strangulating those already paying their dues while allowing sacred cows to fatten themselves even further. Actual economic course correction has once again been put off for another time.

The term 'deepening the tax net' is being used widely in a bid to rationalise what was clearly another half-hearted attempt at fixing the state's perennial revenue woes. It is little more than a euphemism, a fig leaf for our decision-makers' continuing unwillingness or inability to meaningfully expand the tax base.

To add insult to injury, the government has not felt compelled to cut its own expenditures in any meaningful way: those paying will just be forced to pay even more to fund its profligacy. Meanwhile, the trader class, whose activities remain largely undocumented, have been let off once again, presumably because of political expediencies.

Likewise, while a big show has been made of increased taxes on real estate, these will apply mainly to ordinary citizens and not to those who belong to the armed forces or the federal or provincial bureaucracies. Our lawmakers have also managed to have their travel allowances increased from Rs10 per kilometre to Rs25, increased the number of travel vouchers they receive annually from 25 to 30, and also introduced a measure which would see unused air tickets from one year carry over to the next instead of being cancelled.

The audacity of such measures should be illustrative enough to show how the ruling classes continue to privilege themselves while throwing the rest of the nation under the bus. That this is happening while the authorities clamour for an umpteenth IMF bailout explains why this country remains unable to break its shackles and find a more prosperous future for its teeming millions.

**Economic butchery**

**Ammar Ather Saeed**

Pakistan is teetering on the edge of economic collapse due to its persistent struggle to increase the tax-to-GDP ratio, a crucial measure of its fiscal health.

Despite numerous efforts, many potential taxpayers remain outside the formal tax net. Recent policies have unfairly targeted existing taxpayers, driving talent and capital away and pushing the nation towards disaster. The recent passage of the Finance Act exemplifies this flawed strategy, threatening long-term economic stability.

For the past decade, Pakistan has relied heavily on taxing non-filers and compliant taxpayers to boost its revenues. Originally, the aim of collecting taxes from non-filers was twofold: generate immediate revenue and use the gathered data to bring the non-filers into the tax net. Sadly, the state failed to achieve the latter. Instead of leveraging this data, it has merely increased taxes for non-filers, using it as a short-term revenue tool rather than a long-term strategy for fiscal health.

The Finance Act exacerbates this issue, further increasing the rate of tax on non-filers and imposing tax rates as high as about 60 per cent on existing filers' income.

This approach is flawed. Unlike Scandinavian countries, where high tax rates are balanced by extensive social services and a robust public infrastructure, taxpayers here see little or no return on their contributions. The disparity creates a significant trust deficit, with taxpayers feeling alienated. High taxes on compliant taxpayers have stifled economic activity, reduced investment, and encouraged tax evasion.

When individuals and businesses perceive

the tax system as punitive and unbalanced, they are more likely to engage in tax evasion and operate within the informal economy, undermining efforts to formalise the economy and broaden the tax base.

This approach of persistently targeting compliant taxpayers has already driven away skilled professionals and entrepreneurs. With the ever-increasing tax burden becoming unbearable, talented individuals have started seeking favourable environments abroad, reducing the domestic talent pool and stifling potential economic growth and innovation.

This exodus of human and financial capital severely hampers Pakistan's long-term economic prospects.

The state's strategy extends to imposing indirect taxes on essential goods such as milk, baby products, and petrol. This decision is nothing short of economic butchery.

By taxing these basic necessities, the state is placing an unbearable burden on the shoulders of ordinary citizens, particularly those from lower-income households. The cost of living will skyrocket, pushing millions deeper into poverty and triggering widespread discontent.

Imagine a family struggling to buy milk for their children because it has been taxed to the point of unaffordability. Picture parents grappling with the soaring costs of baby products while trying to provide the best care for their newborns. Envision the devastating impact of rising petrol prices on transportation costs, leading to increased prices for all goods and services. This is not a mere policy error; it is a catastrophe in the making, an unparalleled disaster that threatens to unravel the social fabric.

Furthermore, the

gains of selected elites from properties have been preserved from taxation. Allowances of the armed forces and judiciary remain untaxed, perpetuating a system of inequality. No concrete measures have been taken to bring agricultural income within the federal tax fold, nor have there been clear directives to provincial governments to collect more taxes on agriculture and eliminate tax leakages. This selective taxation preserves the status quo for the elite, while burdening the average citizen.

To address these issues, it is essential that Pakistan learns from the successful strategies of other countries. Pakistan should focus on bringing informal sectors into the formal economy through targeted policies and robust enforcement.

Leveraging technology to streamline tax compliances and employing data analytics of data collected from non-filers to track economic activities and ensure tax compliance, the tax-to-GDP ratio in Pakistan can grow organically.

Moving forward, the focus needs to shift from overburdening existing taxpayers to broadening the tax base. The state should immediately implement comprehensive reforms to make the tax system more inclusive and transparent to bring the informal economy into the tax net through incentives and effectively using non-filer data to identify with the help of technology and data analytics to bring them into the tax net. Without immediate and decisive reforms, Pakistan will remain on a collision course with catastrophe; it faces a doomsday scenario where our inaction today becomes the tragedy of tomorrow. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Engaging parents**

**Fahad Zafar**

Pakistan's education system faces significant challenges on two fronts. Firstly, there is a staggering number of out-of-school children, estimated at 26.2 million. This means that a sizeable portion of the children is not accessing any formal education. Economic factors, cultural barriers, and inadequate infrastructure are the primary reasons.

For instance, in some areas, cultural norms may prioritise work or domestic responsibilities over schooling, especially for girls. Additionally, many remote areas lack adequate school facilities, making access to education physically challenging. These children are denied the opportunity to develop essential skills and knowledge, that perpetuates cycles of poverty and limits their prospects. This lack of education not only affects their personal growth and future opportunities but also hinders national development.

Secondly, the quality of education for the 43m children in school in Pakistan is another major concern, as most experience poor learning outcomes due to factors like overcrowded classrooms, lack of qualified teachers, outdated teaching methods, poor governance, insufficient resources, etc.

Overcrowded classrooms make it difficult for teachers to give individual attention to students, hindering effective learning. Many teachers lack proper training and qualifications, which impacts their ability to deliver quality education. Traditional teaching methods, often focused on rote learning, do not foster critical thinking or problem-solving skills. Additionally, schools frequently

lack basic resources such as textbooks, teaching materials, and adequate facilities, further compromising the learning environment. Despite school attendance, children are not acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Shockingly, only 23pc of students at age 10 can read and understand age-appropriate text. This indicates a significant gap in foundational literacy, which is crucial for future learning and academic success.

Despite the significant educational challenges facing Pakistan, parents overwhelmingly express satisfaction with the schooling system. Data from the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement surveys of 2014-15 and 2019-20 reveal that over 94pc of parents reported satisfaction with schooling in the country.

Similarly, in the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study assessment, 76pc of parents expressed satisfaction, and in the more recent National Achievement Test in 2023, 75pc of parents indicated complete satisfaction with schooling. This apparent paradox between parental satisfaction and the reality of poor educational outcomes suggests a disconnect between parents' perceptions and the actual quality of education their children receive. Bridging this gap between parental perception and educational reality is crucial for improving learning outcomes. Parental engagement plays a vital role in a child's learning journey. Research shows that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, children are more likely to perform better academically, have higher

attendance rates, and demonstrate improved behaviour. Active engagement includes activities like helping with homework, attending parent-teacher meetings, and encouraging a positive attitude towards learning.

The 2022 Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel report recommended several low-cost parental involvement approaches that included direct communication from schools to parents, engaging children in educational activities, reading books to a child (if the parent is literate), and sharing simple exercises with parents via text or phone call.

Direct communication from schools, such as regular updates and progress reports, helps keep parents informed and engaged in their children's education. Encouraging parents to read to their children and engage in educational activities at home promotes early literacy and cognitive development. Sharing simple exercises and learning activities via text or phone can provide parents with practical tools to support their children's learning at home. Supporting the role of parents should be a component of public policy in the medium term, as it can have a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

At the same time, it is critical to generate a broader understanding of Pakistan's foundational learning challenges. While some challenges persist throughout the country, Pakistan's education landscape is heterogeneous, and delivery is devolved to the provinces. Each province has its unique set of challenges and priorities, which must be addressed through tailored solutions. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Pakistan, Azerbaijan Commit to enhance bilateral trade, economic cooperation**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan, Azerbaijan on Tuesday agreed for enhancing bilateral economic and trade relations to increase the trade and investment cooperation between two countries.

Both sides determined on the necessity of a long-term and practical mechanism to enhance monitor bilateral trade and cooperation to suggest ways forward to achieve the desired aim.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, Mr. Samir Sharifov, called on Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan at his office, said a press release issued here.

The high-profile meeting was attended by Mr. Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Federal Secretary for

Commerce Ahsan Ali Mangi, and other senior officials.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted the Pakistani government's dedication to forging robust economic relations with other nations.

He emphasized that, over the past three months, the government has made significant strides in enhancing diplomatic and economic ties, achieving notable developments.

"Pakistan attaches great importance to its relationship with Azerbaijan. We must continue to advance our cooperation in various sectors including tourism, transport, energy security, and defense, though this requires additional efforts," said Minister Jam. He also urged the need for an early conclusion of

Preferential Trade Agreement and Bilateral Transit Trade Agreement.

Deputy Minister Sharifov conveyed Azerbaijan's readiness for closer cooperation with Pakistan across all fields of mutual interest.

He apprised that the President of Azerbaijan plans to visit Pakistan soon, during which several MoUs are expected to be signed. Minister Jam also proposed to hold B2B meetings which may either in Pakistan or in Azerbaijan.

On the occasion, Azerbaijan minister Deputy Minister, Sharifov highlighted the ease of travel between the two countries, noting that Azerbaijan received 55,000 Pakistani visitors last year due to its favourable visa policy.



Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a group photo following visiting booths of different tech companies on the occasion of Global Digital Economy Conference 2024 in Beijing.

**Pakistan, Belarus agree to enhance cooperation in diverse fields**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Belarus on Tuesday while expressing satisfaction at the trajectory of bilateral relations agreed to enhance cooperation in all issues of mutual interest.

The sixth round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Belarus was held here. Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Shafiqat Ali Khan led the

Pakistani side while the Belarusian side was headed by the First Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Lukashевич. Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

The two sides reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations covering political relations, high-level engagement and dialogue, trade and investment, military and security cooperation, education, and people-to-

people contacts. The two sides also agreed to continue cooperation at multilateral forums, including at the United Nations, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Ambassador Sergei Lukashевич also called on Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi. Bilateral areas of cooperation and important regional and global developments were discussed.

**Russian Ambassadors meets Aleem Khan**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Communications, Board of Investment and Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan Tuesday met with Russian Ambassador Albert P. Khorev and discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation in multiple fields.

In this meeting, detailed discussions were held on road connectivity between Russia and Pakistan which could greatly increase trade and cargo activities between both countries, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that Pakistan was keen to connect Russia through Central Asian countries and back to Karachi Port

for the promotion of bilateral trade which would also help other countries to boost their commerce activities.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan attached importance to trade relations with Russia due to its great significance in the region. The Central Asian countries and South Asia were also equally important for trade activities for which Pakistan was ready to invite investment from these countries, he added.

He also informed about his recent visit to Central Asia. In the meeting, they also discussed in detail the promotion of bilateral trade and creating an effective mechanism for investment matters on both sides.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Pakistan, Albert P. Khorev called on Federal Minister for Communications, Board of Investment and Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan.

**Property tax problem would be taken up at relevant forum: MD**

PESHAWAR (APP): Managing Director (MD) Small Industries Development Board (SIDB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Habibullah Arif has said that the problem of the property tax of industrialists would be taken up at the concerned forum. He was talking to a delegation of industrialists which called on him in his office on Tuesday.

President, Small Industries Estate, Peshawar Waheed Arif was leading the delegation, Deputy Managing Director (DMD) SIDB, Nauman Fayyaz was also present on the occasion. The delegation

congratulated him on his appointment as Managing Director SIDB and expressed good wishes for them.

Speaking on the occasion, the Managing Director SIDB said that his doors are opened for the industrialists as they are doing commendable job of providing employment to hundreds of the people to earn livelihood for their families. He said that first commercial plaza has been constructed for the industrialists and invited them to come and display their products in it. He said that beside closure of all illegal shops, cleanliness system at the estate would also be improved.

**Fatima Fertilizer and JazzCash sign MOU to pioneer digitalization of Agri-Sector Payment Ecosystem**

**Independent Report**

ISLAMABAD: Fatima Fertilizer, a leading name in Pakistan's agriculture sector, and JazzCash, Pakistan's largest digital wallet, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to revolutionize the agri-sector

payments. The partnership between Fatima Fertilizer and JazzCash will facilitate secure, fast, and reliable transactions, making financial processes more efficient for farmers. It will also enable our Sarsabz Pakistan Farmer App for



digital payments. Furthermore, by leveraging Fatima Fertilizer's extensive dealer network, this initiative will provide farmers, who are predominantly unbanked, enabling them to actively participate in the formal economy.

During his visit to Local Council Board Hayatabad, he inspected various sections of the board.

Chairing a meeting of Mardan and Peshawar Division Town Municipal Officers, he directed to reduce fuel expenses and said that the expense of smaller municipal administrations was one million rupees.

**TMA's directed to reduce expenditure on fuel**

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Minister for Local Government (LG), Arshad Ayub Khan on Tuesday directed Town Municipal Administrations (TMAs) to reduce their fuel expenses and said that timely measures were needed to avoid financial constraints.

During his visit to Local Council Board Hayatabad, he inspected various sections of the board.

He directed to reduce the patrol bill and said that "we cannot avoid financial crunch if corrective measure were not taken."

**OGDCL collaborates with NCSW for women empowerment**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has partnered with the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) to empower women and foster their growth within the company.

Ahmed Hayat Lak, MD/CEO of OGDCL, and Nilofar Bakhtiar, Chairperson of NCSW, on Tuesday, signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to formalize this collaboration. The signing ceremony was held here at the OGDCL Head Office. This strategic partnership underscores OGDCL's commitment to recognizing and honouring the invaluable contributions of women within its operations. Earlier this year, OGDCL unveiled its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy to foster a more inclusive workplace culture. The collaboration between OGDCL and NCSW is poised to set a new standard for gender inclusivity and empowerment in Pakistan's corporate landscape. OGDCL is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring a workplace where every individual.

**7th Final Year Engineering Projects Expo begins**

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher on Tuesday inaugurated the 7th Final Year Engineering Design Projects Expo 2024 of Engineering Universities.

The exhibition has been organized in collaboration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) here at Hayatabad. Models of various engineering projects prepared by the students of engineering universities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been showcased in the event.

## CM GB chairs meeting on security arrangements for Muharram

GILGIT (APP): Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan chaired a high level meeting regarding security arrangements during Muharram Ul Haram. The meeting discussed measures to ensure peace and security during the month of Muharram. The Chief Minister emphasized the importance of maintaining law and order, promoting

brotherhood, and preventing hate speech and violence. He directed officials to ensure strict implementation of the law, hold daily meetings with district commissioners and police officials, enhance security arrangements in sensitive areas, monitor social media and take action against hate speech, install CCTV cameras and use drones for surveillance,

provide necessary facilities for processions and majalis, establish a special committee to ensure peace and security. The meeting was attended by high-ranking officials, including the Home Secretary, Secretary of Health, and Inspector General of Police Gilgit-Baltistan. District commissioners and other officials joined the meeting via video link.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan presiding over the meeting regarding the security arrangements in the coming month of Muharram ul Haram.



LAHORE: Controller General of Accounts Maqbool Ahmed Gondal inaugurated the newly renovated building of DGPR.

## Minister reviews monsoon preparations

LAHORE (APP): On the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq chaired a meeting at the Civil Secretariat on Tuesday to review the monsoon preparations in detail. The meeting was attended by Secretary Local Government Shaheel Ahmad Mian, Special Secretary Asiya Gull, and Secretary LG Board Rizwan Nazir. Deputy Commissioners and Municipal Chief Officers from across Punjab participated via video link. The minister stated that CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has ordered effective measures across the province during the monsoon season, emphasizing the need to maintain the same enthusiasm for cleanliness

exhibited during Eid-ul-Adha. The minister praised the cleanliness efforts during Eid-ul-Adha, calling them commendable. He mentioned that the CM is personally visiting districts at the onset of the rainy season and that he will also be conducting visits to review the arrangements. He directed that lessons learned from initial rains should be used to make improvements. Zeeshan Rafiq emphasized the importance of continuous coordination between chief officers and line departments in districts. He directed that all available resources be utilized for drainage. If any drains have not been de-silted, immediate cleaning should be ensured, he added and warned that action would be taken if government directives are not promptly followed.

## 19 children injured, three critically in Matta school collapse

PESHAWAR (APP): At least 19 school children were injured, three of them critically, when roof of a private school caved in Matta tehsil of Swat district on Tuesday. According to Rescue 1122 the incident occurred in Tangar area of Matta where the roof of a dilapidated private school caved in, injuring 19 children, three of them critically. All the children were recovered from the debris and after first-aid shifted to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Matta.

## Training on Presentation of hospital acquired infection held

MULTAN (APP): A training session on "Prevention of Hospital-Acquired Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance" was held at Children's Hospital here on Tuesday. The purpose of the training was to raise awareness about the prevention of hospital-acquired infections and antimicrobial resistance. It is aimed to inform doctors about modern methods and precautions to ensure patient safety.

## BISP to introduce skill training initiative to make beneficiaries out of poverty

LAHORE (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Tuesday said that a new skill training initiative is being launched to help members of deserving families start their own businesses and rise out of poverty. She was speaking during a visit to the BISP Campsite at Government High School Iqbal Town in Lahore. The visit aimed to review the basic facilities

provided to deserving women who come to receive the Kafalaat quarterly stipend. During her visit, Senator Rubina Khalid engaged with the women beneficiaries, listened to their concerns, and assured them of BISP's commitment to addressing their issues. She instructed the BISP staff to conduct surveys at tehsil offices to prevent overcrowding at payment centers. The BISP staff briefed the Chairperson on

the current payment system. She emphasized the importance of disbursing payments to all deserving women in a fair and transparent manner. Earlier, Senator Rubina Khalid also addressed media representatives at BISP Central Zonal Office in Lahore, highlighting the impact of the programme. She shared that 9.5 million deserving families benefit from BISP and the program's scope is being further expanded.

## Police chiefs assure safety of traders

RAWALPINDI (APP): Regional Police Officer (RPO) Babar Sarfaraz, City Police Officer (CPO) Khalid Hamdani and Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimur Khan paid a visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) here on Tuesday. President RCCI Saqib Rafiq and Group Leader RCCI Sohail Altaf and office bearers welcomed the RPO and his team. President Saqib Rafiq said that this is the first time that the three chiefs of Rawalpindi Police have visited the Chamber of

Commerce to meet the business community, which shows their seriousness to strengthen the interaction and communication with stakeholders to solve their problems. RPO Babar Sarfaraz in his remarks said that the business community is the backbone of country's economy and added that the RCCI was playing an important role in promoting community policing in society. He said the Safe City project in Rawalpindi will be fully operational by the end of this month, which will help in more effective measures against criminal elements.

## Police starts search, strike operation in DIKhan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police of DIKhan on Tuesday started search and strike operations in the district against anti-state and criminal elements to ensure security in the district. According to the police spokesman, on the direction of District Police Officer Dera Nasir Mahmood, Parowa Circle and City Circle Police conducting search and strike operation and snap checking within their respective circles for which they urged masses to extend cooperation.

## Federal Ombudsman's intervention ensures payment of dues to retired employee

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi's intervention on Tuesday has facilitated the payment of outstanding dues to a retired Army employee. According to the details, Ali Khan, a resident of Mansehra and a former employee of the F.F., had lodged a complaint at the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat's regional office in Abbottabad against CMA Lahore, citing long-pending arrears amounting to Rs. 133,235. Upon receiving the complaint, Regional In-Charge Abdul Ghafoor Baig issued notices to CMA Lahore. Following a thorough

investigation, CMA Lahore issued a cheque for Rs. 133,235 to Ali Khan. Expressing his gratitude, Ali Khan thanked Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi and Regional In-Charge Abdul Ghafoor Baig for resolving his longstanding issue. Abdul Ghafoor Baig highlighted that the Federal Ombudsman's institution serves as a public court, providing prompt and inexpensive justice. He reiterated that the Federal Ombudsman is regarded as the court of the poor, ensuring equal, immediate, and affordable justice as a guardian of human rights.



LAHORE: Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly, Malik Ahmed Khan Bhachar along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Lahore press club.

## Senior minister announces commencement of second phase of anti-smog campaign

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday announced the commencement of second phase of the anti-smog campaign. In a statement issued here, she stated that Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has mandated the strict enforcement of laws and regulations under the Smog-Free Punjab vision. She noted that the first phase, which spanned three months, focused on providing facilities, technical assistance, equipment, and technology across all sectors. Over the

next three months, environmental protection laws and regulations will be rigorously enforced in industries, agriculture, traffic, and other sectors, she said, and warned that violations of environmental laws will result in fines, penalties, and arrests. Furthermore, the senior minister affirmed the commitment to achieving a complete ban on plastic, with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif personally overseeing its implementation. Strict actions will be taken against the burning of crop residues.

## International News

## Israel orders Palestinians to flee Khan Younis, signaling likely new assault on southern Gaza city

**Monitoring Desk**  
KHAN YOUNIS: The Israeli army ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians from much of Khan Younis on Monday, a sign that troops are likely to launch a new ground assault in the Gaza Strip's second largest city. The order suggested Khan Younis will be the target in the latest of Israel's repeated raids into parts of Gaza it had previously invaded during the past nearly nine months, pursuing Hamas militants as they regroup. Much of Khan Younis was already destroyed in a long assault earlier this year, but large numbers of Palestinians have since moved back in to escape another Israeli offensive in Gaza's southern-most city, Rafah. The order came as Israel released the director of Gaza's main hospital after

holding him for seven months without charge or trial over allegations the facility had been used as a Hamas command center. He said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured. AP correspondent Charles de Ledesma reports dozens of detained Palestinians have been set free by Israel. The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selma raised questions over Israel's claims surrounding Shifa Hospital, which Israeli forces have raided twice since the start of the nearly nine-month war with Hamas. Abu Selma and other Palestinian health officials have denied the accusations. His release triggered an uproar across Israel's political spectrum. Government ministers and op-

position leaders expressed outrage and insisted Abu Salmia played a role in Hamas' alleged use of the hospital — though Israeli security services rarely unilaterally free prisoners if they have a suspicion of militant links. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office called the release "a grave mistake." Monday's evacuation call covered the entire eastern half of Khan Younis and a large swath of the Gaza Strip's southeast corner. Earlier in the day, the army said a barrage of rockets out of Gaza was fired from Khan Younis. The order suggested a new assault into the city was imminent. Israeli forces fought for weeks in Khan Younis earlier this year and withdrew, claiming to have destroyed Hamas battalions in the city.



Dutch King Willem-Alexander and Prime Minister Dick Schoof pose with the new members of the Dutch Government at Palace Huis ten Bosch in The Hague, Netherlands.

## Trump says he can end the Russia-Ukraine war in one day

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: Donald Trump has said repeatedly he could settle the war between Russia and Ukraine in one day if he's elected president again. Russia's United Nations ambassador says he can't. When asked to respond to the claim from the presumptive Republican nominee, Vassily Nebenzia told reporters Monday that "the Ukrainian crisis cannot be solved in one day." At a CNN town hall in May 2023, Trump said: "They're dying, Russians

and Ukrainians. I want them to stop dying. And I'll have that done — I'll have that done in 24 hours." He said that would happen after he met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin. And he keeps repeating the claim on the campaign trail. During last week's debate with President Joe Biden, Trump claimed, "If we had a real president, a president that knew — that was respected by Putin ... he would have never invaded Ukraine."

## British PM Sunak hunts for votes among the robots at dawn

**Monitoring Desk**  
LUTON: Badly lagging in the race to win Britain's election, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak went hunting for votes among robots and staff in a retail distribution centre on Tuesday, kicking off his first campaign stop of the day before 5 a.m. (0400 GMT). Sunak, who has often looked exhausted as he crossed the country during a six-week campaign, started the penultimate day of campaigning before Thursday's vote in a vast Ocado warehouse in Luton.

## Ukraine releases thousands of prisoners so they can join fight against Russia

**Monitoring Desk**  
DNIPROPETROVSK REGION: At a rural penal colony in southeast Ukraine, several convicts stand assembled under barbed wire to hear an army recruiter offer them a shot at parole. In return, they must join the grueling fight against Russia. "You can put an end to this and start a new life," said the recruiter, a member of a volunteer assault battalion. "The main thing is your will, because you are going to defend the motherland. You won't succeed at 50%, you have to give 100% of

yourself, even 150%." Ukraine is expanding the draft to cope with acute battlefield shortages more than two years into fighting against Russia's full-scale invasion. And its recruiting efforts have turned, for the first time, to the country's prison population. Although Ukraine does not announce any details of troop deployment numbers or casualties, frontline commanders openly acknowledge that they are facing serious manpower problems as Russian continues to build up forces in eastern Ukraine.

## Nine killed in Seoul after car hits pedestrians

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: At least nine people were killed and four others were injured when a car struck pedestrians near Seoul city hall on Monday, police said. There were six fatalities at the scene, while three others were pronounced dead after being rushed to hospital, firefighter Kim Chun-soo said. South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported that a 68-year-old driver crashed into people who were waiting at a traffic signal. He was driving in the wrong direction and hit two other vehicles before ploughing into the pedestrians.

## 107 killed in stampede at religious event in India's Uttar Pradesh

**Monitoring Desk**  
UTTAR PRADESH: Nearly 107 people were crushed to death at a Hindu religious gathering in northern India on Tuesday, with many others injured, a senior government official said. A large crowd had gathered near the city of Hathras for a sermon by a popular preacher but a fierce dust storm sparked panic as people were leaving. Many were crushed or trampled, falling on top of each other, with some collapsing into a roadside drain in the chaos. "The attendees were exiting the venue when a dust storm blinded their vision, leading to a melee and the subsequent tragic incident," Chaitra V, divisional commissioner of Aligarh city in Uttar Pradesh state, told AFP. "We ... are focusing on providing relief and medical aid for the victims," she added. Hours after the trag-

edy, she told reporters the toll had surged past a hundred. "Initial information ... is that 107 people have died," she told reporters. Most of the dead were women, according to state chief medical officer Umesh Kumar Tripathi, who told reporters "many injured" have been hospitalised. Lines of ambulances carried the injured to hospitals. Waiting women and crying men gathered outside one mortuary in the town of Etah, where many of the dead were taken, seeking news of their relatives. Deadly incidents are common at places of worship during major religious festivals in India, the biggest of which prompt millions of devotees to make pilgrimages to holy sites. "When the sermon finished, everyone started running out," Shakuntala, a woman who gave only one name, told the Press Trust of India news agency.

## North Korea brags of new missile with 'super-large warhead.'

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: North Korea said Tuesday it had test-fired a new tactical ballistic missile capable of carrying "a super-large warhead," a claim quickly disputed by South Korean officials and experts who speculate the North likely fabricated a successful test to conceal a botched launch. It's the second time that South Korea has questioned North Korea's claim on the development of new weapons in recent days, as the rivals are locked in heightened animosities over the North's testing activities. The North's official Korean Central News Agency said that Monday's test involved the Hwasongpho-11 Da-4.5 missile, which can carry a 4.5-ton-class warhead. It said the test was meant to verify the weapon's flight

stability and hit accuracy at the maximum range of 500 kilometers (310 miles) and the minimum range of 90 kilometers (55 miles). The test apparently refers to the two ballistic missile launches that South Korea said North Korea performed Monday. Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung Joon said at a briefing later Tuesday that the second North Korean missile was found to have fallen on an uninhabited area near Pyongyang, the North's capital. He said he could find few previous test-launches by North Korea that have aimed at ground target sites. The South Korean military has said the second North Korean missile possibly traveled abnormally during the initial stage of its flight.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the Navruz Palace in Dushanbe.

## Pakistan, Afghan Taliban hold face-to-face talks on TTP

Zabihullah Mujahid terms interaction 'good', hopes relations between two neighbours would improve

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban held crucial talks, first in several months, in the Qatari capital as part of the latest push to iron out their differences on the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The talks were held at the residence of Pakistan's Ambassador to Qatar, between Pakistan's special envoy on Afghanistan Ambassador Asif Durrani and Chief Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid. Durrani and Mujahid were leading their countries' respective delegations at

the third meeting of the Doha process on Afghanistan. On the sidelines, Pakistan's Ambassador to Qatar invited Zabihullah Mujahid over a dinner where they held formal talks with Ambassador Asif Durrani. Mujahid termed his interaction with Pakistan as "good" and expressed the hope that relations between the two neighbours would improve. Durrani, meanwhile, said he discussed the Doha meeting and regional issues with the Taliban delegation.

The meeting took place against the backdrop of simmering tensions between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban government. Tensions deepened further after Pakistan indicated it might resort to cross border strikes to target the terrorist hideouts of TTP. Sources said the meeting was part of renewed efforts by Pakistan to convince the Afghan Taliban to get rid of the TTP and its affiliates. The latest push came after Pakistan decided to use all possible diplomatic options to resolve the issue of TTP.



DUSHANBE: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif lays a floral wreath at the monument of Ismail Samani in Dushanbe.

## PM given guard of honor on arrival for a two-day Tajikistan visit

DUSHANBE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday was given a guard of honor as he arrived here on a two-day visit at the invitation of President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon. As the prime minister arrived at the Qasr-e-Millat, he was warmly received by President Rehmon. The national anthems of both the countries were played as the prime minister stood at the salute dias. Later, the smartly turned out contingents of Tajik armed forces presented guard of honor to the prime minister which he reviewed. Later, both Prime Minister Shehbaz and President Emomali Rahmon introduced their respective delegations to each other. The prime minister's delegation comprised Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Information and Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar and Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi. Earlier, as the prime minister landed at Dushanbe airport, he was received by Tajik Prime Minister Kokhir Rasulzoda, Energy Minister Daler Juma, Deputy Foreign Minister Farrukh Sgarifzoda, Tajik Ambassador in Islamabad Yousaf Sharifzoda, Pakistan Ambassador in Dushanbe Saeed Sarwar and senior diplomatic officers.



QUETTA: Jamal-e-Islami (JI) Provincial Chief, Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

## Action against absentee health officials on CM directives: Deputy MS, 3 Chief MOs & 4 Lady doctors among 23 Health officials suspended on absence from duties

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Deputy Medical Superintendent as well as three Chief Medical Officers and four Lady Medical Officers were among 23 medical staff suspended on charges of absence from their duties in the Mufti Mehmood Memorial Hospital Kuchlak and Basic Health Unit (BHU) Barozai Aghbar. According to the spokesman of provincial government, Shahid Rind, action has been taken against the absentee doctors and medical staff of the Mufti Mehmood Memorial Hospital Kuchlak and BHC Barozai Aghbar who were found absent

from their duties during visit of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti the other day. The spokesman of provincial government said that 23 persons including doctors and medical staff have been suspended on absence from their duties. The suspended medical staff are included: Deputy Medical Superintendent of Mufti Mehmood Hospital, Dr. Imran Khan, Chief Medical Officers Dr. Sanaulah, Dr. Fahemullah and Dr. Abdul Waheed. The four lady doctors, whose services have been placed under suspension are included: Radiologist, Dr. Javeria Zia and Lady Medical Officers Dr. Abida, Dr. Aqlamina and

Dr. Rubina Shah. Besides them, in all 13 officials of the health department deputed at BHC Barozai Aghbar have also been suspended on absence of their duties. Needless to mention here that Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti had issued standing orders to take action against the doctors and other medical staff who were absent from their duties during his visit to the Mufti Mehmood Memorial Hospital Kuchlak and BHU Barozai Aghbar on Monday last. The Chief Minister had expressed his displeasure over absence of medical staff from their duties and poor cleanliness situation in the Hospital.

## Public-Private Partnership Board meets: Incumbent Govt. mobilizing all available resources to provide relief to masses: Nausherwani

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoab Nausherwani has stated that the incumbent government is mobilizing all available resources to provide relief to the people. He said that there would be far reaching impacts on the life of people under Public-Private Partnership Project. He said that concrete steps are being taken to operationalize the Circular road parking plaza under Public-Private Partnership in order to resolve the issues of traffic in Quetta city. A modern building would be built in place of mutton market. With this, not only the people would get livelihood but it would also resolve the long-standing issue of traffic to great extent, stated the Minister Finance while chairing meeting of the Public Private Partnership Board here on Tuesday.

The Provincial Minister for Planning and Development and co-Chairman of the Public-Private Partnership Programme, Mir Zahoor Buledi was also in the chair with Finance Minister. Also attended the meeting was by the Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Secretary Finance, Bahr Khan, Secretary Industries, Noor Ahmed Pirani and Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shaqqaat. The Provincial Minister Finance maintained that the provincial government is making utmost efforts to execute different projects under the Public Private Partnership. Under the PPP mode, the local poor people would have opportunities of livelihood through Chaman Master Plan, he added.

## Every possible steps being taken to improve performance of PHE in limited resources: Khetran

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has stated that every possible measures are being taken to improve overall functional of the PHE in province. In an official statement issued here on Tuesday, the Provincial Minister PHE said that drinking water is basic need and right of the people, however, it is also duty of every citizen to pay utility bill of water monthly on regular basis as well as not to have illegal water connection and save the water from wastage. He warned that legal action would be taken against those having illegal water connections. He stressed the need to save the potable water from wastage and misuse. He said that the department would benefit from increase in the self income. However, we are also finding new means of revenue for the department.



UZBEKISTAN: Focal Person to PMYP for Green Youth Movement & International Linkages, Syeda Anna Batool receiving a souvenir from Minister of the Youth Affairs of Uzbekistan, Alisher Sa'dullayev at OIC Youth Forum.

## Step afoot to address block identity cards issues in Jhal Magsi: DC

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Jhal Magsi Syed Rehmatullah Shah on Tuesday said that Balochistan government was utilizing all resources to address block identity cards issues in consultation with the concerned authorities. He expressed these views while chairing at a meeting which was held on the light of the instructions of the Home Secretary. The meeting was attended by Assistant Director NADRA Nasir Hussain, DSP Soomar Khan Jamali, In-charge Special Branch Gandawa Gulam Farid Tareen and other officers. In the meeting, the cases of block identity cards were reviewed and complaints of people was also heard. Syed Rehmatullah Shah said that measures would be taken to address the issue. He said that the identity cards of 89 people in Jhal Magsi district have been blocked, out of which only two people attended the meeting. He said that earlier in 2017, their case have been sent to the concerned institution, in this regard, the relevant institutions should submit their reports in a timely manner.



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor University of Balochistan Prof. Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Bazai and Provincial Program Manager of Social Organization Act International Syed Tahir Hussain Naqvi signing a MoU

# 99.99 percent reporting is correct: Chief Justice IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) Amir Farooq has remarked reporters reporting court's proceedings are absolutely correct and those who announce decision while sitting in evening programs is problem. The reporters reporting court's proceedings are reporting correctly. Those who announce decision by sitting in programs in the evening is problem. First criminal trial was telecast in US on TV in 1975. I am protector of rights of people. I cannot deprive entire world of this right, CJ IHC remarked during the hearing of the petition seeking nullification of PEMRA notification regarding ban on court reporting here Tuesday. Chief Justice of Pakistan inquired was anything reported wrongly. Upon it PEMRA issued notification. I don't think that such thing was done by high court or registrar sent any report. The court remarked that if I have not said anything and it is reported then PEMRA can penalize this media house on complaint. CJ IHC remarked let the people know what is hap-

pening. How many actions were taken by PEMRA on wrong reporting during the last one year. He remarked I say 99.99 percent reporting is correct. Point one percent can be human error. I believe this may have been done in SC too. If some one does anything wrong then PEMRA should take action against it. When court issues signed decision then it becomes public property. Decision of judge should be criticized not judge. We should encourage debates on court's decisions. Court's decisions should be highlighted that law was like this. But in decision there is this mistake. PEMRA has imposed complete ban on court's reporting. CJ IHC remarked there was time when 20 to 25 people sitting in the court could hear the court's proceedings. Now this is age of media. Man sitting in US can hear observation given by me here. We are now moving to the direction that all should see us and world should come to know. Now it is age of transparency. Either it is mistake of bench or of bar, it should be reported. CJ IHC remarked what such disinformation had come to PEMRA that on the basis of which this happened.



QUETTA: Members of Pashtunkhwa Students Organization are holding protest demonstration against killing of student Ali and demanding justice for him, at Quetta press club.

## PTI to protest against expensive electricity, taxes: Asad Qaisar

**PESHAWAR (INP):** Former speaker National Assembly Asad Qaisar has called the hike in electricity tariff and taxes as unacceptable. Asad Qaisar, a central leader of the PTI announced the party's protest meetings against expensive electricity and new taxes. He announced public meetings of the PTI on July 5 at Mansehra and July 6 in Islamabad against new taxes and hike in power tariffs. "We are with the people over the matter," he said. "The government has to take back illegal taxes being imposed over the people," he said. Asad Qaisar also demanded a mechanism to ensure free and fair elections in the country.

## Fact finding inquiry committee constituted to investigate BUTEMS bus mishap

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Colleges, Higher and Technical Education Department, Government of Balochistan has constituted a fact-finding inquiry committee to investigate the recent incident involving a coaster bus of Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTEMS) transport where students slipped from running bus, resulting in one fatality and one injury. This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Colleges, Higher and Technical Education Department on Tuesday. According to the notification, the fact-finding inquiry committee has been constituted with the prior approval of the Minister for

## UN body demands immediate release of PTI founder

**GENEVA (INP):** A United Nations (UN) human rights working group demanded the immediate release of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister Imran Khan, maintaining that he was detained in "violation of international law". Speaking at private TV channel program, former minister said asserted that he is still a member of the PTI. "Had I left the party, I would have been minister today on basis of the Forms 47," Fawad Chaudhry added. He said that few people have taken control of the PTI and newcomers like Raouf Hassan became seniors in the party "without any justification". The UN body also



QUETTA: Social Activist, Rozina Khilji along with students of Buitems University addressing a press conference, at Quetta press club.

## No talks with PTI without condemning May 09 violence: IIP Leader

ISLAMABAD (APP): Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Central leader Aun Chaudhry on Tuesday said that no talks would be held with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership without condemnation of the May 09 violence. Addressing a news conference here at the National Press Club (NPC), he said that some reprehensible elements were hatching conspiracies against the democracy and national institutions to defame the country through their negative agenda but they would not succeed in their motives. Aun Chaudhry said that the coalition government was trying its best to put the country on track of development by ensuring economic stability, adding that it was launching mega projects during ongoing regime not only to boost national economy but also steer out the country from economic crunch. He said, "I pledge to expose those elements involved in May 09 incidents and negotiations with them are only possible after they tender apology to the victims of their violence and face legal action." PTI leadership had always perpetrated chaos and anarchy in the country's institutions, he added.