

Independent

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Gwadar

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Information Minister says

Govt decides to ban PTI, initiate treason case against Imran, Alvi, Suri

Attaullah Tarar says government will file a review petition against Supreme Court's reserved seats verdict; Cites May 9 riots, foreign funding for case against PTI; Blasts PTI for creating false narrative around cipher controversy.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Monday announced four major decisions of the federal government of banning Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, filing of review petition in reserved seats case, references against PTI founder and others for subverting the Constitution and strict legal action against handful of overseas Pakistanis for anti-state activities.

He announced the decision at a press conference which mainly highlighted the activities of the PTI and

its leadership to weaken sovereignty of the country and harm its integrity at the international level.

The press conference also featured audio and video clips that allegedly showed involvement of the PTI and its leadership in the 'anti-state' activities.

The minister said: "This is a fact and on the record that the PTI has been involved in the anti-state activities and to this end, the government and its allies have decided to initiate legal proceedings to ban the PTI under Article 17 of the Constitution which empowers the federal government to ban any such a party."

Tarar justified the action of the government against the PTI which, he alleged, obtained foreign funding to attack the state institutions on May 9, default the economy by sabotaging Pakistan's negotiation with the International Monetary Fund, resettle the terrorists in the country and hire lobbying firms to get a resolution passed against the country in a foreign country's Parliament.

All these activities of the PTI were established, he said, adding "in view of the foreign funding case,

opportunities as well as modern professional training to compete with the world.

The prime minister reiterated the government's resolve to send 300,000 youth for vocational training in the field of information technology and 1000 for modern agriculture to China. In this context, he said the government was prioritizing the women and the youth belonging to remote and backward areas of the country.

The prime minister said training programs in the field of information technology were also continued at the national level.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar addressing a press conference.

May 9 riots, and the cipher episode as well as the resolution passed in the US, we believe that there is very credible evidence present to have the PTI banned."

He said a series of events that set off in a form of chain, gave a clear understanding of the anti-state agenda of the PTI which first brought terrorist back into the country and then attacked on the state institution to undermine its sovereignty.

On the one hand, they were giving shelter and safe heavens to the terrorists and on the other hand they resorted to attack the army

installations including the Corps Commander House in Lahore, he said asking the PTI's founder who gave him the authority to bring back disgruntled elements in settled areas. The minister said the party used the prohibited funding to hire lobbying firms that worked to damage the integrity of the country. The minister said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had given a verdict that the PTI had received prohibited funding, recalling how delaying tactics were used to prevent further proceeding in the case during the tenure of the PTI government.

Muharram mourning processions & gatherings: Negligence & incompetency not to be tolerated in safety measures, asserts Governor Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has categorically stated that any negligence and incompetency would not be tolerated with regard to the safety arrangements made and being made for the mourning processions and gatherings in the province including Quetta.

In an official statement issued here on Monday, the Governor stressed that there is a dire need to make effective and strong coordination among all the law enforcement agencies for the

sake of complete protection of life and property of the masses during the Muharram Haram as it is responsibility of the government to do so. He directed to the concerned quarters to make strict arrangements for security of all the places especially the sensitive ones and worship places in view of the present sensitivity.

In addition to this, there is also need to make effective coordination with organizers of the mourning processions and gatherings.

The Governor also urged the government and general public to keep strict

vigil on the suspected persons around the processions and gatherings besides the religious places, and thus play their effective role to ensure peaceful situation in the province.

Similarly, it is duty of every conscious people to extend wholehearted cooperation to the government and concerned institutions.

The Governor believed that the Ashura Muharram would end peacefully because of the foolproof security arrangements made by the local administration and other security institutions.

Gov't committed to invest in modern skills, professional education for youth: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the government was committed to investing in modern skills and professional education for the youth.

In his message in connection with the World Youth Skills Day, the prime minister said the greatest strength of Pakistan was its talented youth and equipping them with modern skills was the need of the hour to secure the future of the country.

He highlighted that the government was equipping its youth with modern education, equal development

opportunities as well as modern professional training to compete with the world.

The prime minister reiterated the government's resolve to send 300,000 youth for vocational training in the field of information technology and 1000 for modern agriculture to China. In this context, he said the government was prioritizing the women and the youth belonging to remote and backward areas of the country.

The prime minister said training programs in the field of information technology were also continued at the national level.

ATC indicts Qureshi in May-9 case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday indicted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi in a case of torching Shadman Police Station during the May 9 riots.

ATC Judge Khalid Arshad conducted the trial proceedings at Kot Lakhpat Jail, where PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi was produced after being brought from Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi.

During the proceedings, the court indicted PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi, who pleaded not guilty and expressed his intent to contest the charges.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador-designate of Tajikistan, Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir presenting his diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Political parties unite against PTI ban, calling it an attack on democracy

JUI, BNP, APP, QWP and JI condemn government's decision

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: The federal government's recent decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has ignited backlash from other political parties, who view the move as a serious affront to democracy. It should be noted that the federal government has decided to file a review appeal against the decision of the Supreme Court on reserved seats and ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar announced plans to file a review appeal with the Supreme Court concerning the ban on PTI and certain electoral seats. Maulana Fazlur Rahman, chief of Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI), has asserted that to address the ongoing political crisis, the establishment must distance itself from politics. He emphasized that using force against political entities will only exacerbate the existing turmoil.

Fazlur Rahman noted

that if all institutions adhere to their constitutional boundaries, the country can begin to heal. He urged authorities to recognize that the current hybrid system has failed, insisting that the key to resolving the nation's issues lies in holding transparent elections.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal, chief of the Balochistan National Party (BNP), has expressed strong opposition to the government's decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). He noted that banning political parties is not a new phenomenon, recalling that the National Awami Party was similarly banned in 1973. Mengal emphasized that such measures do not solve the underlying problems.

He criticized the government's apparent confusion following the Supreme Court's decision and argued that if there is to be a crackdown, it should apply to all political parties equally.

Pak, China friendship to move forward with greater integration in world, regional markets: Ahsan

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal, stated that as China finalizes its roadmap for the future, the friendship between Pakistan and China will certainly advance.

He said that it will involve greater integration of Pakistan and China in the world and regional markets.

On what the world can learn from China's development experience, the minister, who is currently in Beijing for an official visit, told CGTN, "I think China's experience of development gives us four very valuable lessons."

There are four prerequisites that any country needs for development:

peace, political stability, continuity of economic policies, and continuous commitment to reform.

The minister said that China has shown all four principles to practice, and that is the reason that China has developed so fast, adding, that China has shown a great success story to the whole world by pulling 800 million people out of poverty in the shortest possible time.

Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that China has shared its development, and has shared its experience of development with other countries through the Belt and Road Initiative and Global Development Initiative. Pakistan and China enjoy a unique relationship.

Shafqat Anwar Shahwani posted as DG GDA

Independent Report
QUETTA: The senior officer of Balochistan Civil Service, Shafqat Anwar Shahwani has been appointed as the Director General of Gwadar Development Authority (GDA).

Meanwhile, Mr. Shahwani assumed the charge of DG GDA on Monday.

On charge assumption, the Chief Engineer GDA, Syed Muhammad briefed the newly appointed DG GDA about the ongoing development projects of the Authority, Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan and other sectors.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Secretary Colleges & Higher Technical Education Hafiz Tahir and other officers attending meeting of sub committee of Provincial Cabinet

Triage Unit established in Trauma Center of SPHHQ: Steps being taken to provide medical machinery, medicines in hospitals: Sardarzada Faisal Jamali

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Health Minister, Sardarzada Faisal Jamali inaugurated the Triage Unit established in the Trauma Center of the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital here on Monday.

Also present on the occasion were the Managing Director Trauma Center, Dr. Arbab Muhammad Kamran, Director General Health Services, Dr. Farooq Hoth, Medical Superintendent of Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital, Dr. Ishaq Panezai, Medical Superintendent of Bolan Medical Complex Hospital,

Dr. Amin Mandokhail, Dean Postgraduate Medical Institute (PGMI), Dr. Naseebullah Zarkoon, Chief Surgeon Trauma Center, Iqbal Jaffar, Deputy Director Trauma Center, Dr. Humaira, besides other concerned.

The MD Trauma Center briefed the Provincial Minister Health about the newly established Triage Unit saying it is consisted of eight beds.

He informed that the immediate medical assistance would be provided to the critically injured persons during traffic accidents and other emergency patients in the Triage Unit.

He said that with establishment of the new Unit in Trauma Center, the waiting time would be reduced in the emergency department to great extent. The Minister Health went round of different sections of the Triage Unit and Trauma Center. He also met the patients being treated there and inquired about their health.

The Minister also appreciated overall functioning of the Trauma Center and said that services being extended at the center to the emergency patients are appreciable.

the police, the PTI founder will be investigated under sections related to inciting against the state.

The police stated that PTI founder Imran Khan has been arrested in 12 cases related to May 9 riots, including the Jinnah House attack. The police requested the Rawalpindi court to transfer the suspect to Lahore, but the court denied the transfer due to security concerns.

The police announced that the PTI founder would appear via video link before the Lahore Anti-Terrorism Court on Monday (today), where a request for his remand will be made for further investigation regarding the Jinnah House attack.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding shifting of agriculture tubewells on solar energy

Commissioner Quetta Division maintains: Over 5,000 personnels of police, Levies, FC to be deployed on 9th, 10th Muharram in Quetta

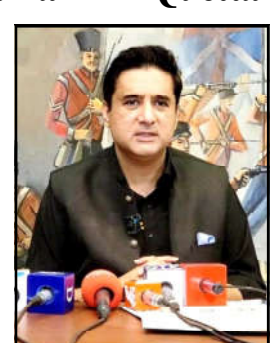
Independent Report
QUETTA: The Commissioner and Administrator Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat has stated that exceptional arrangements have been made to ensure security on 9th and 10th Muharram Haram in Quetta.

He said that over 5,000 personnels of police, Levies and Frontier Corps (FC) would be deployed on 9th Muharram and Ashura (today and tomorrow) in Quetta.

He said that Pak Army would remain stand-by on Ashura-e-Muharram while the aerial surveillance of the procession would also be made.

In addition to this, the monitoring of the Ashura procession would also be done through 1,000 CCTV cameras installed in different parts of the city.

The Commissioner and Administrator Quetta was



speaking to the media persons about the arrangements made for 9th and 10th Muharram in the metropolis on Monday afternoon.

He informed that 20 suspects have been taken into custody. They are being interrogated at the moment, he added. Regarding cleanliness, Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat said that around 300,000 tons of garbage have been lifted from different localities of Quetta as part of the special cleanliness drive.

Court orders to quash FIR against PkMAP chairman

Independent Report
QUETTA (APP): Balochistan High Court on Monday issued directives for quashing First Information Report (FIR) registered against Pashatunkhwa Mili Awami Party Chairman and MNA Mehmood Khan Achakzai.

A division bench of Balochistan High Court comprising Justice Mohammad Ejaz Swati and Justice Amir Nawaz Rana announced the verdict.

Advocate Kamran Mulakhail and Habibullah Nasar appeared on behalf of PkMAP chairman.

After hearing both the parties, the court on ground of insufficient evidences against PkMAP chairman directed the administration to quash the FIR. It may be recalled that an FIR was lodged in March 2024, against MNA Mehmood Khan Achakzai for occupying government land illegally.

PTI founder arrested in Jinnah House attack case

LAHORE (INP): The Investigation police have formally arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister Imran Khan, in connection with the Jinnah House attack case on May 9.

The police reached Adiala Jail to execute the formal arrest. According to

the police, the PTI founder will be investigated under sections related to inciting against the state.

The police stated that PTI founder Imran Khan has been arrested in 12 cases related to May 9 riots, including the Jinnah House attack. The police requested the Rawalpindi court to transfer the suspect to Lahore, but the court denied the transfer due to security concerns.

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QUETTA: Former Provincial Minister Mir Abdul Karim Nausherwani meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

President Zardari determined to industrial development of Balochistan: Ali Hassan Zehri

Independent Report
QUETTA: The leader of Pakistan Peoples Party and Advisor to Chief Minister for Commerce and Industries, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri has stated that the President Asif Ali Zardari is determined to the industrial development of the province and raise standard of living of the people.

He said that 80 hospitals of the province including Jam Gulam Qadir Hospital Hub are being handed to the Indus Hospital.

He mentioned that 100-bedded Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Hospital being established in Hub.

He said that development projects of Rs. 15 billion

have been approved. The Advisor to Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the briefing about different development projects under PSDP in LIEDA conference hall, Hub on Monday.

The Deputy Commissioner Hub, Ms. Rohana Gul Kakar, ADC, Ali Raza Khosa, Assistant Commissioner, Muhammad Ali Durrani and others were present on the occasion.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the funds of Rs. 3 billion have been released for establishing a jetty in Gaddani.

He said that the development schemes of Rs. 11 billion have been included in the PSDP in Gaddani.



HUB: Advisor to Chief Minister Balochistan for Commerce and Industries, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri speaking on occasion of the briefing about different development projects under PSDP in LIEDA conference hall

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Afghan challenge

The recently released UN monitoring team's report on Afghanistan captures the dilemma confronting the international community where dealing with the country's Taliban rulers is concerned. On the one hand, the Taliban have managed to stabilise Afghanistan after decades of conflict. But on the other, under the hard-line movement's rule, terrorist groups are flourishing on Afghan soil. A third scenario should also be of concern to foreign states, particularly Afghanistan's neighbours: IS-K — which is opposed to the Taliban — is believed to have between 2,000 to 6,000 fighters, and is using Afghanistan as a base for its external operations. Moreover, the terrorist outfit is also looking to poach fighters from other militant groups.

Though the Taliban regime is by no means a progressive pro-people entity, it has managed to bring a semblance of stability to Afghanistan after over four decades of war. The UN report says that as the Taliban "transition from insurgency to governing authority", they have brought down petty corruption and reduced poppy cultivation, while managing to keep the precarious economy afloat.

Perhaps it is because of these limited gains that there has been no mass opposition to the Taliban's obscurantist rule. Afghans are tired of forever wars, while the Western-backed Karzai and Ghani administrations were notorious for their corruption and bad governance. Yet if the Taliban seek full recognition from the international community, they need to do much more, particularly in the areas of women's rights and by creating a more inclusive governance structure, which guarantees fundamental freedoms for all.

With regard to militancy, as the UN report highlights, the global community must keep its eyes and ears open. For example, the report says that the banned TTP has become the largest terrorist group in Afghanistan, and has developed a working relationship with Al Qaeda. Moreover, endorsing what Pakistan has been saying for a while, the report points out that the Taliban rulers are "unable or unwilling" to tackle the TTP threat.

As per the UN, the TTP conducted over 1,200 attacks against Pakistan last year. But it is not anti-Pakistan militants alone that are using Afghanistan as a base. The anti-China ETIM group, Al Qaeda, as well as IS-K, which threatens Iran, the Central Asian states and Pakistan, are all using Afghanistan as a "permissive haven". This requires a coordinated response from the international community, particularly Afghanistan's neighbours, as they are most at risk from terrorist groups.

The Taliban should be told that they need to take action against 'good' militants who support them (TTP, Al Qaeda), as well as 'bad' militants who oppose them (IS-K). On this, there can be no compromise, and foreign states must emphasise that diplomatic recognition and trade relations all depend on greater counterterrorism efforts.

Supreme injustice

Rida Hosain

In a way, some dissenting judgements reflect what could have been, and what can one day still be achieved. To quote Benjamin N. Cardozo, the dissenter speaks to the future. Recently, by a majority of 2-1, our Supreme Court converted a conviction of rape into 'fornication'. In a powerful dissent, Justice Ayesha A. Malik used her pen for a better tomorrow.

Before the court, a woman had accused her brother's friend of rape. The trial court and the high court ruled in the woman's favour. At the Supreme Court, Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail found that the woman was a consenting party.

Judges can have genuine disagreements on whether evidentiary standards have been met — particularly in a criminal case where the liberty of an individual is involved. There can be different views on whether the evidence before the court is enough to uphold the conviction. But instead of limiting themselves to the evidence, the majority went on to determine how a rape victim should have reacted.

Since the man was unarmed, the majority held, "a female who is not a consenting party would offer very strong resistance in a case of attempt to commit rape with her" and "no mark of violence whatsoever was noted on the entire body". The court effectively found that an 'actual' rape victim would have offered strong resistance, and there would be resistance marks on her body to establish this. This reasoning shifts the onus onto the victim, ie, she should have done more, she should have resisted, she should have fought

back.

In sharp contrast, the dissent identifies studies by expert psychiatrists, which show that in cases of sexual violence, victims may have various different types of response — fight, flight or freeze. There is no fixed response in rape cases. To say that a woman must 'fight' looks at rape from a masculine lens, and undermines a woman's lived experience. Per Justice Malik, "the offence of rape is made on the body of the victim and her response to this offensive act cannot be standardised".

The New York Times magazine did a story, speaking to rape victims about the 'freezing' response. Some victims said they wanted to yell and push and resist, but their body simply would not respond. Others blanked out or were too shocked to react, and went into a state of involuntary paralysis. The majority assumes one type of response, the only type they are able to imagine.

Moreover, for fornication to be proved, it must be shown that sexual intercourse was consensual. The majority has imputed consent on behalf of the victim, whereas the dissent found that consent must be an unequivocal voluntary agreement. Consent must not be assumed.

The majority judgement then holds that there was a two-day delay in filing an FIR. This finding ignores precedent which clearly states that in cases of sexual assault, a lenient view should be taken on delayed reporting. In line with established precedent, Justice Malik writes: "With reference to delay, this Court has held that delay is of no consequence as such cases involve the victim and her family's reputa-

tion and honour, hence, some delay in reporting a crime of sexual offence is immaterial."

The reasoning of the majority has a striking similarity with the Mukhtaran Mai case. In both cases, the court completely disregards the extreme trauma associated with rape, and how this may result in slower reporting. In Mukhtaran Mai's memoir, she expresses how she felt suicidal after the incident: "I have made up my mind. I want to kill myself... I'm already dead in the eyes of others." It takes time and strength to undertake a legal battle, to use this against a victim is an in-justice that ignores the cultural and social stigmas associated with rape.

The majority seem to have come up with a rulebook on how victims should react in order to get justice. The 'right' victim fights, the 'right' victim has marks of resistance, the 'right' victim reports immediately.

A few weeks ago, Justice Malik was speaking at a symposium on inclusive justice organised by the Federal Judicial Academy and UN Women. She explained that her reasoning may differ from her male colleagues: "my understanding may be very different because it's based on a different premise, because it's based on my life experience, it's based on my perspective which is the gender perspective."

The tragic reality in Pakistan is, since men dominate the judiciary, our jurisprudence is dictated by the male lived experience. There is little to no gender sensitisation training in the judicial system, and gender stereotypes remain deeply embedded. The voice, perspective, and lived experience of nearly half the population continues to be overlooked. -- Courtesy Dawn

Employment paths

Neda Mulji

Last month, the federal government reversed its decision to slash the HEC's budget but it seems to have been a case of 'too little, too late'. Federally administered universities can hope to cover the main component of their expenditure, which is salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff, but the urgency to improve standards will go unaddressed yet again.

Many of our higher education institutions churn out large numbers of graduates each year, but there are no systems in place to absorb them into the economic infrastructure, neither are there programmes that upskill the graduates for job requirements. Most find themselves navigating an extremely competitive market where they cannot match up to the skills needed to be hired.

With 58 per cent of our population under the age of 24, our higher education system has to step up to deliver the outcomes necessary for economic growth. Over two million Pakistanis are currently in higher education and only 60,000 get the opportunity to study in institutes abroad. Our 3,000 degree colleges have the massive responsibility to produce job-ready graduates, which requires investment in infrastructure, technology, industry ties and skills that can serve key economic sectors.

Any hope for building the economy must come from creating employment pathways for our young graduates, which implies that outdated curricula and traditional teaching cannot contribute to the change we need. We cannot expect to churn the same wheel and expect different results, and we can no longer afford to keep our young population out of jobs.

In most developed societies, the vision for growth has come from humanities education — philosophy, literature and culture. Sadly, we've deprioritised humanities. We have also failed to retain our doctors and scientists, and we haven't upgraded our math, engineering and technology teaching. What we are looking at is an economy teetering on the brink of decline and we need quick solutions for uplift.

Pakistan Vision 2025 by the planning ministry highlights some key areas demanding urgent focus. Among these is the need to create jobs. Unfortunately, while it highlights the pillars for improvement and change, it doesn't lay out the strategy that will address the urgent need for employment.

Employment pathways such as establishing recruitment programmes that are backed by agencies serving particular geographical communities may provide quick and easy access to match graduates with available jobs in their area. Tax breaks for companies that hire a set quota of fresh graduates may create the impetus to hire and train for the skills needed for the jobs. Employed people spend more, pay taxes and boost the economy through generating money. Smaller companies can benefit from hiring graduates who have lower salary expectations and can be trained quickly.

Very few universities offer placement centres to help graduates find jobs, and fewer still have experimented with incubation centres to set up entrepreneurship opportunities for their students. This is mainly due to the costs attached. However, the long-term benefits outweigh the costs. Supporting entrepreneurship by funding

small and promising ventures may enable universities to create economic opportunities for their graduates, whilst earning themselves a sound reputation that will help attract and retain students, creating new revenue streams for the institution.

There is much to learn from developed societies. One study of the US economy from 1980 to 2005 found that the annual net employment growth in the US would have been negative without small businesses. The cumulative effect of small businesses on job creation is massive, especially given that they tend to keep costs low by hiring fresh graduates on relatively low salaries.

It also creates a pathway for development as the small businesses become training grounds for the young population who can then transition to the larger companies in due course. In fact, this isn't new to us. After independence, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah initiated a policy of funding small businesses and giving concessions to spur economic growth in key sectors. Jinnah made it clear that industrial power was Pakistan's hope to reduce dependence on external help for life's necessities.

Traditionally, developed societies have also created programmes that match small entrepreneurs with the more successful and established ones to create networking synergies within communities. Nowhere is it possible to create jobs without enablement programmes and if we don't empower our growing population, we would be running after a train that is headed towards disaster. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

OGRA takes action against mixing of CO2 with LPG

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has taken serious note of the issue of mixing carbon dioxide (CO2) with liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by illegal decanters. In response, OGRA conducted a high-profile meeting chaired by Mr. Masroor Khan, Chairman OGRA, along with authority members, enforcement, legal, and LPG teams. The meeting addressed the potential life risks associated with this dangerous practice and urged provincial Chief Secretaries, the Attorney General, and provincial Advocate Generals to take appropriate action against the illegal decanters.

OGRA is determined to utilize all legal options under its rules and regulations to eliminate such illegal activities,

aiming to safeguard precious lives and the properties of the general public. It is pertinent to mention that CO2 mixing with LPG has been reported in various locations of Sindh province, especially at Pano Aqil near Sukkur.

The Assistant Commissioner of Pano Aqil has raided four sites, discovered illegal decanting activities, sealed all the sites immediately, and lodged FIRs against the concerned individuals.

LPG is highly flammable, and the mixing of CO2 poses fatal risks, including adverse environmental impacts. CO2 has higher pressure than LPG which can cause serious safety concerns as equipment calibrated for LPG may not function properly.

OGRA's enforcement

team visited the LPG sites in Pano Aqil and observed that all the sites were being operated illegally and in unsafe conditions. LPG bowsers were being used for storage instead of proper LPG tanks, and substandard equipment was found.

In response to these findings, OGRA has decided to exhaust all legal options to eliminate this illegal activity. The authority has advised its legal counsel in Pano Aqil to pursue the case and represent OGRA's point of view for the safety of the general public.

OGRA has also written letters to the Commissioner of Sukkur and the Custom Collectorate, urging them to ensure safety at the local level by curtailing the illegal sale of LPG in the area.

Zong celebrates Digital Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G Pakistan's leading mobile network operator, celebrated Digital Day 2024 in grand style.

The event served as more than just a celebration; it was a resounding endorsement of CEO Zong 4G's vision of positioning Zong 4G as an exemplary information service and technology innovation company.

While welcoming employees to the Digital Day celebrations CEO Zong 4G HuoJunli said "This day was yet another positive step taken towards building Zong as an information services provider and the displays are a testament to that. Today, we align ourselves to our vision of an excellent Information Services and Technology Innovation company in Pakistan. From legacy network expansion, setting up state-of-the-art Data Centers as a backbone of cloud services, to building network-neutral product portfolio" said a

news release.

"We had to adapt to the changing landscape of technology and the dynamic consumer demands. As we entered a new age of Zong, we also embodied our values of Integrity, Openness, Responsibility, and Excellence. In doing so, we were able to drive growth within and beyond the organization — growth that was crucial to the Sci-Tech transformation we wished to see in Zong" he added.

He further said, "I am delighted to see the product displays today, we have an attractive portfolio of digital products such as Zong Engage, Zong Road Assistance, and Banking as a Service (BaS).

These innovations, available through the Zong App, are designed to simplify our customers' lives." MedIQ, a health services provider, offers convenient access to on-demand healthcare, both in-person and via a digital platform.

Training session on e-procurement held

LAHORE (APP): As per the direction of the Commissioner Punjab Social Security Nadia Saqib, a one-day training session was organized in collaboration with the Punjab Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) here on Monday.

The session took place in the auditorium of Punjab Social Security Hospital on Multan Road, Lahore. Sixty-five social security officers from hospitals and offices across Punjab participated in the training session. Director Admin Khawaja Waqar Ahmed and other officers attended, while PPRA officers, led by MD PPRA Khawaja Waqar Ahmad, provided the training.

The participants were briefed on procurement cycles and received step-by-step hands-on training to familiarize themselves with the e-procurement system.



KARACHI: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi meets Managing Director Pakistan State Oil (PSO) Syed Muhammad Taha at PSO Head Office.

World youth skills day:

Investing in youth vital for sustainable economic development

PESHAWAR (APP): Like other parts of the country, world youth skills day was also observed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where public and private institutions and youth bodies organized functions and seminars highlighting significance of investment in technical education for sustainable economic development and prosperous future of the country. The civil society and youth organizations also staged a rally in front of the press club in connection with the day,

stressing the significance of youth's role in peace, development and economic progress of Pakistan.

Every year, the day is marked on July 15 aimed at promoting empowerment of young people worldwide by focusing on their education and skills development besides employment.

Designated by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2014, the day emphasized the significance of equipping youth with necessary skills to tackle

unemployment and poverty besides achieving sustainable development goals.

The theme of the day was 'Youth skills for peace and development' which highlighted the role of youth in peace building and resolution of conflicts.

"In an era of rapid technological advancements and evolving economic landscapes, the traditional approach of education is undergoing a profound transformation owing to mushroom growth of digitalization.

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 1,211 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 1,211.51 points, a positive change of 1.52 percent, closing at 81,155.61 points against 79,944.10 points on the last working day.

A total of 441,338,958 shares were traded during the day as compared to 437,315,657 shares the previous day,

whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 27,228 billion against Rs 23,484 billion on the last trading day.

Around 457 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 265 of them recorded gains and 141 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 51 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were PIA Holding Company with

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships namely, MSC Positano, APL Mexico City, Eco Alice, and Onco carrying Containers, LPG and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Pakistan Gasport Terminal respectively on Monday, 14th July-2024.

PSO must find new sites for further expansion in KP: Faisal Karim Kundi

KARACHI (APP): The Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday visited Pakistan State Oil (PSO) head office and discussed foreign investment in oil refinery and other issues with Managing Director of PSO Syed Mohammed Taha.

They also discussed the transportation of oil, foreign investment in oil refinery, problems in this regard and their solutions.

Kundi said that the

demand for petroleum products will increase after the completion of CPEC and plans should be chalked out to this effect.

He said that a large number of people associated with the transport business belonged to KP.

He further said that PSO should find new sites for further expansion in KP.

The MD PSO said that PSO had a big market and they were also working on new sites in KP.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor arranging and displaying clay pottery on handcart to attract the customers at his roadside setup in the Federal Capital.

Drive on Railway safety, prohibited items in full swing

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways awareness campaign was in full swing in order to raise public knowledge of the dangers of trespassing, crossing railroad tracks, and carrying forbidden objects like gas cylinders, guns without a license, cartridges, drugs, and daggers.

"The campaign was launched on the directives of Secretary Syed Mazhar Ali Shah which will help the department to control accidents but also win the confidence of the passengers of the rail" an official told APP.

The official said, "Pakistan Railways will use all the social media platforms including print, electronic media, twitter, Facebook, poster and pamphlets to create an

awareness among the citizens about a safe train journey."

He said the department has also asked all the divisional superintendents to ensure checking of luggage of passengers at entry points with scanners, metal detectors and walkthrough gates. The official said Pakistan Railways had always given importance to the safety of citizens and its passengers.

"It has been directed to discourage and stop those passengers who are carrying prohibited products. It is suggested to install emergency doors and auto-lock doors in coaches in case of any emergency," he added.

Strict action will be taken on sharing hate material on social media: Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Information Azma Bukhari said that Ashura would be observed under complete harmony and strict action would be taken on sharing hate material on social media.

Presiding over a meeting at DC Office here on Monday, she took a briefing about Muharram arrangements and said that the government was committed to facilitating the masses during Ashura days. In this connection, Sharbat Sabeel would be arranged on the routes of mourning processions in addition to ensuring tight security arrangements for processions and

participants in majalis, she added.

She said that CCTV cameras would be used for monitoring security arrangements. "Muharram is a sacred month for Muslims and the government would try its optimum best to observe Ashura in a most befitting manner under tight security arrangements," she added.

She said that activities of social media would also be monitored strictly especially during Ashura days and no one would be allowed to share hate material or promote sectarianism in the country.

He also directed police officers to verify

each information before taking any steps. In this connection, hot spots should be monitored strictly in addition to keeping a close liaison with religious scholars of all schools of thoughts and members of peace committees, she added.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Abdullah Nayar Sheikh briefed the minister about administrative and security arrangements in Faisalabad and said that 387 CCTV cameras were made functional across the district to monitor Muharram security in addition to keeping vigil eye on the movement of suspects.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health and Chairman Cabinet Committee for Law and Order Khawaja Salman Rafique being briefed about security arrangements during Muharram ul Haram at Control Room of Home Ministry.

Minister directs early financial assistance to rain affectees

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering, Puthunyar Khan on Monday directed for providing in time financial assistance to the people affected by the recent heavy rains. Following the directives, Secretary Relief KP, assured the minister that financial relief assistance will be provided to the affected people within the next few days. Former tehsil member, Masoom Wazir was also present on the

occasion.

Provincial Minister Pukhtunyar Khan said the provincial government stands with the rain-affected people at this critical juncture.

The KP government will do its best to compensate for the losses of people incurred by the natural disasters.

He said no effort will be spared in reaching out to the affected people and the financial assistance will be provided to every affected family without any discrimination.

PDWP approves development schemes worth Rs5.56b

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Development and Working Party Punjab (PDWP) in its 6th meeting of the current financial year, approved two development schemes of SH&ME and Environment sectors at a cost of Rs 56.560 billion.

Preside over by P&D Board Chairman Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan here Monday, the meeting approved the following schemes:

Establishment of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and

Centre at the cost of Rs 56 billion. Investigation of sources of particulate matter for informed decision making in Punjab at the cost of Rs 560 million. P&D Board Secretary Dr Asif Tufail, Secretary Environment Raja Jahangir Anwar, Secretary Health Ali Jan Khan, Chief Economist Dr Nasir Iqbal Malik, P&D Board members, heads and other senior representatives of the relevant provincial departments attended the meeting.

Azma visits Allied Hospital-I, inspects facilities

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bukhari Monday paid a surprise visit to Allied Hospital-I.

She inspected medical facilities available for patients in emergency and other wards, presence of doctors and paramedics.

She inquired after the patients in different wards. She also inquired from attendants about treatment, availability of medicines and other facilities.

She also checked the functioning of air-conditioners in wards and medicine stock in the hospital's store.

Health minister visits field hospital, inspects facilities

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Provincial Health Minister Khwaja Salman Rafique Monday paid a surprise visit to the field hospital, established in Union Council-143, Fatehgarh.

The minister inquired about the medical facilities provided to people in the hospital. He also inquired from the attendants about treatment, availability of medicines and other facilities. Khwaja Salman Rafique said that the field hospital project was the flagship programme of the

Punjab government. Thousands of people had been provided with best medical facilities at their doorstep across the province, he added. He said providing best medical facilities to people was the first priority, adding that facilities of lady doctor, free examination and medicine were also being provided in field hospitals.

Hafiz Mohammad Aleem, Chudhry Sarwar, Mehar Mudassar, Mian Rashid and Malik Saif ur Rahman were present.



SIALKOT: DSPCIA crime organizer Rana Mahmood ul Hasan is handing over the money recovered from the accused of robbery Rs. 18 lakh to owner Haji Imran at SCCL.

Departments lauded for Muharram arrangements

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan Afridi has lauded the relevant departments for making effective arrangements for Muharram. He said that Capital Metropolitan, District Administration, Rescue 1122, Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP), and other relevant departments had made elaborate arrangements and that their efforts will play a crucial role in maintaining peace and order during Muharram.

He expressed these views while visiting various Imambargahs, command posts, and the

Supreme Command Post in Peshawar.

On this occasion, the Director General of Capital Metropolitan, Waheed Rehman, ADC Peshawar, AC Peshawar, AACs, WSSP, and other officials also accompanied him.

The provincial minister inspected various Imambargahs in the Qissa Khwani area and reviewed the facilities provided by the government. He met with the heads of the Imambargahs and was briefed on their issues.

He also visited the command post at Khan Raziq Khwani station in Qissa Khwani and the Supreme Command Post in Kohati.



PESHAWAR: Journalists are holding protest to condemn the killing of senior journalist Malik Hassan Zaib, who was shot dead by two unknown assailants in the Akbar Pura village Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), at Peshawar press club.

PPC, KHUJ stage strong protest against killing of senior journalist

PESHAWAR (APP): The members of Khyber Union of Journalists (KHUJ) and Peshawar Press Club (PPC) on Monday staged a strong protest against the killing of senior journalist and reporter of Aaj News, Malik Hassan Zeb. The protest demonstration, attended by a large number of journalists with placards in their hands, chanted slogans in front of the Peshawar Press Club, opposite Railways Station

here and demanded arrest of the killers. Senior Vice President Imran Yousafzai in his speech demanded of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to take notice of the incident and direct early arrest of the killers for an exemplary punishment. He said despite CCTV footage of the incident which showed clear faces of the killers of the journalist, police have so far failed to make any progress in the case.

2 workers die while cleaning sewerage

FAISALABAD (APP): Two workers, including an employee of the municipal corporation, died when they were cleaning sewerage in Chak Jhumra police limits.

A Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Monday that 40-year-old Shakeel Masih, an employee of Municipal Corporation Chak Jhumra, entered into a sewerage at Chiniot Road but he became unconscious due to some toxic gas. Later, his coworker, Sohail Masih, 35, entered the sewerage to save him but he also fainted.

ANF recovers over 86 kg drugs in 5 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations managed to recover over 86 kg drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that 810 grams ice was recovered from a parcel booked for Bahrain at Karachi Airport.

International News

Gaza civil defence says 15 killed in Israel strike on Gaza school

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: The civil defence agency in Hamas-run Gaza said Sunday that 15 people were killed in a strike on a school sheltering war displaced where the Israeli military said it had targeted "terrorists".

The strike on the UN-run Abu Araban site in central Gaza's Nuseirat camp was the fifth on a school-turned-shelter in eight days.

The Abu Araban school was housing "thousands of displaced people," civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP, adding that most of the dead were women and children.

Schools in Nuseirat were the target for two of the earlier school strikes as Israel keeps up its offensive against Hamas Palestinian militants who triggered the war with their October 7 attack on Israel.

The Israeli military said its air force "struck a number of terrorists who were operating in the area of UNRWA's Abu Araban school building in Nuseirat".

It said the building had "served as a hideout" and base for "attacks" on Israeli troops.

AFP TV images showed the three-storey complex standing, with clothes and bedding airing out over its railings. A wall bearing the UN logo had been blown out, and rooms inside were damaged.

On July 6, Israeli aircraft hit Al-Jawni school, also run by the United Nations relief agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), in Nuseirat. UNRWA said about 2,000 people were sheltering there at the time.

The following day, four people died in a strike

on the church-run Holy Family school in Gaza City, in the territory's north, according to the Civil Defence agency.

On Monday, Israel hit another Nuseirat school, again saying it was targeting "terrorists".

The next day, a hospital source said at least 29 people died in a strike at the entrance to Al-Awda school in the Khan Yunis area, southern Gaza.

Israel says Hamas uses schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure for military purposes. Hamas denies the accusation. France and Germany on Wednesday called for an investigation into the school strikes.

After the Al-Jawni strike, UNRWA spokesperson Juliette Touma told AFP that when the war began "we closed the schools and they became shelters."



US President Joe Biden delivers a statement a day after Republican challenger Donald Trump was shot at a campaign rally, during brief remarks at the White House in Washington, US.

China, Russia start joint naval drills, days after NATO allies called Beijing a Ukraine war enabler

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China and Russia's naval forces on Sunday kicked off a joint exercise at a military port in southern China on Sunday, official news agency Xinhua reported, days after NATO allies called Beijing a "decisive enabler" of the war in Ukraine.

The Chinese defense ministry said in a brief statement that the exercise, sea strikes and air defense. Xinhua News Agency reported the Chinese and Russian naval forces carried out on-map military simulation and tactical coordination exercises.

Dubai crown prince appointed UAE defence minister

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: The crown prince of Dubai has been appointed as minister of defence for the United Arab Emirates as part of a broader cabinet shuffle. Dubai ruler and UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum posted on X.

The 41-year-old Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, who has served as Dubai's crown prince since 2008, was also named as one of the UAE's deputy prime ministers.

After assassination attempt, Trump and Biden seek calm, unity

Monitoring Desk
MILWAUKEE: Donald Trump arrived on Sunday in Milwaukee, where he will be formally nominated as the Republican presidential candidate later this week after surviving an assassination attempt that has aggravated an already bitter US political divide.

President Joe Biden, a Democrat, ordered a review of how a 20-year-old man with an AR-15-style rifle got close enough to shoot at Trump from a rooftop on Saturday. Trump, as a former president, has lifetime protection by the US Secret Service.

Trump, 78, was holding a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania — a key state in the Nov. 5 election — when shots rang out, hitting his right ear and leaving his face streaked with blood. His campaign said he was doing well.

"That reality is just setting in," Trump told the Washington Examiner on Sunday. "I rarely look away from the crowd. Had I not done that in that moment, well, we would not be talking today, would we?"

One person in the crowd was killed and two others wounded before Secret Service agents fatally shot the suspect.

Both Trump and Biden on Sunday sought calm and unity.

Trump is due to accept his party's formal nomination at the Republican National Convention with a speech on Thursday. He pumped his fist in the air several times as he descended the stairs from his plane after arriving in Milwaukee. "This is a chance to bring the whole country, even the whole world, together. The speech will be a lot different, a lot different than it would've been two days ago," Trump told the Washington Examiner. Biden delivered a televised address from the Oval Office in the White House on Sunday.

Syrians vote for their next parliament, which may pave the way for Assad to extend his rule

Monitoring Desk
DAMASCUS: Syrians were voting for members of a new parliament in an election Monday that was expected to hold few surprises but could pave the way for a constitutional amendment to extend the term of President Bashar Assad.

The vote is the fourth in Syria since mass anti-government protests in 2011 and a brutal crackdown by security forces spiraled into an ongoing civil war and comes as an economic crisis grips the country, fueling demonstrations in the south.

Syria's 2024 parliamentary election excludes rebel-held northwest Syria and the country's northeast under U.S.-backed, Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. The number of eligible voters hasn't been announced either, and

unlike presidential elections, the millions of diaspora Syrians — whose numbers have ballooned since the civil war — are not qualified to vote for the legislators.

Western countries and Assad's critics say the polling in government-held areas in Syria is neither free nor fair.

This year, 1,516 government-approved candidates are running for the 250-seat People's Assembly. Some 8,151 polling stations were set up in 15 voting districts in government-held areas, with results expected to be announced Monday night or the following day. In the last round of elections in 2020, the outcome was delayed for days due to technical issues, according to officials. Assad's Baath Party won 166 seats, in addition to 17 others from allied parties.

Judge dismisses Donald Trump's classified documents case

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A Florida judge appointed by Donald Trump has dismissed the criminal case against the former president on charges of mishandling top secret documents, ruling that Special Counsel Jack Smith was unlawfully appointed.

The decision is a major victory for Republican presidential candidate Trump, who had been accused of endangering national security after leaving the White House.

The decision comes days after an assassin's bullets flew by him during a campaign rally, streaking the Republican presidential candidate's blood across his face and prompting his security agents to swarm him, before he emerged and pumped his fist in the air, mouthing the

words "Fight! Fight! Fight!"

Hours after the incident, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said it had identified the shooter in the assassination attempt as 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks of Pennsylvania, US media reported early on Sunday.

Federal Judge Aileen Cannon made her ruling after lawyers for the 78-year-old argued for a partial stay of proceedings to allow for an assessment of a Supreme Court ruling that a former president has broad immunity from prosecution.

"Former president Trump's motion to dismiss indictment based on the unlawful appointment and funding of Special Counsel Jack Smith is granted," Aileen wrote in her order.

King Charles III to visit Australia and Samoa as he recovers from cancer

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: King Charles III is preparing to visit Australia and Samoa in October, an itinerary that will span 12 time zones and test the monarch's stamina as he recovers from cancer treatment.

The trip, announced on Sunday by Buckingham Palace, marks a watershed moment for the 75-year-old king, who has been slowly returning to public duties after taking a break following his cancer diagnosis in early February. The decision to undertake such a long journey will be seen as a sign of Charles' recovery, even though the program in Australia will be "limited."

Italian tax police free 33 Indian workers from 'slave-like' conditions on farms

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy's tax police said Saturday they had freed 33 Indian farm workers from "slave-like working conditions" in the northern province of Verona, while seizing almost half a million euros from the two alleged gangmasters. Police said the two alleged abusers, also Indian, persuaded their fellow nationals to come to Italy, paying €17,000 each to obtain seasonal working permits. The men were then obliged to work in farms for seven days a week and up to 10-12 hours a day, paid only 4 euros per hour, in conditions that the Italian police described as "slavery."

Some of the migrants were also asked to continue working for free to pay an additional 13,000 euros for a permanent work permit, which in reality they would have never obtained, the police added.

Seven students drown on summer holidays in Mexico

Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY (INP): Seven students drowned in eastern Mexico after their vehicle was dragged into a fast-flowing river as they tried to retrieve a boat from its waters, local government sources said Sunday.

The victims, all between 21 and 23 years old, on Saturday were celebrating the end of the school year and summer holidays at a private residence on the banks of the river in the city of Coatzacoalcos.



QUETTA: Palwasha Jalalzai briefed Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani about UNICEF Education Sector Plan. Chief Field Officer Maryam Darvesh and others are also present

IMF loan accord lifts Pakistan Stock Exchange to new high

ISLAMABAD (INP): The latest loan agreement agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) triggered brisk buying at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday, lifting the index to new heights.

The benchmark KSE-100 index soared by 1,230.05 or 1.52 percent to 81,174.14, compared to the previous close of 79,944.10 points.

The stocks had Friday witnessed a volatile session after the decision of the Supreme Court on reserved seats, decreasing by 48.26 points or 0.06% to close at 79,944.10 points.

Pakistan Stock Exchange remained under pressure during the outgoing week ended on July 12, 2024 as the investors opted to book profit on available margins. The benchmark KSE-100 index declined by 268.69 points on week-on-week basis and closed at 79,944.10 points.

Trading activities remained dull as average daily volumes on ready counter decreased by 0.3 percent to 438.83 million shares during this week as compared to previous week's average of 440.31 million shares while average daily traded value on the ready counter increased by 13.7 percent to Rs 20.77 billion during this week against previous week's Rs 18.28 billion.

The foreign investors remained net buyers of shares worth \$3.959 billion during this week. Total market capitalization increased by Rs36 billion during this week to Rs10.630 trillion.

Sector-wise, auto assemblers, automobile parts & accessories, and woollen were amongst the top performers, up 7.0 percent/5.2 percent/5.0 percent WoW, respectively. On the other hand, miscellaneous, vanaspati & allied industries, and RIET were amongst the worst performers with a decline of 13.8 percent/3.7 percent/3.5 percent WoW.

Flow wise, major net selling was recorded by Individuals and Mutual Funds with a net sell of \$2.58 million and \$2.48 million, respectively. On the other hand, Foreigners absorbed most of the selling with a net buy of \$3.96 million. Company-wise, top performers during the week were NBP (up 13.6 percent), FFBL (up 12.0 percent), UNITY (up 10.6 percent), ABL (up 10.3 percent) and PKGP (up 10.1 percent), while top laggards were SCBPL (down 8.1 percent), TRG (down 7.7 percent), THALL (down 6.2 percent).

Ahsan holds productive meeting with Vice Chairman, NDRC

BELING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal, held a very productive meeting with Zhao Chenxin, Vice Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of China, at NDRC headquarters here on Monday to discuss ongoing and future cooperation between the two countries.

The minister was accompanied by Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalid Hashmi. The meeting underscored the mutual commitment of Pakistan and China to further strengthen their All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which continues to be a cornerstone of bilateral relations. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress of the CPEC with an emphasis on ensuring the timely completion of projects and launching an upgraded version of the CPEC as per the agreement reached at the leadership level. Both the sides highlighted significance of CPEC projects in enhancing connectivity, trade, and socio-economic development in the region. It was agreed to fast-track the work on the ML-1 project, KKH realignment, for which both sides signed the framework agreement last month, and, the Sukkur- Hyderabad motorway.

Envoys of seven nations present diplomatic credentials to President

ISLAMABAD (APP): The envoys of seven countries including Zimbabwe, Tajikistan, Rwanda, Argentina, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Botswana presented their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari during a ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday.

The President received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Zimbabwe, Titus Mehliswa Jonathan Abubasutu; the Ambassador-designate of Tajikistan, Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir; the High Commissioner-designate of Rwanda, Ms. Harerimana Fatou; the Ambassador-designate of Argentina, Sebastian Sayus; the Ambassador-designate of Myanmar, Wunna Han; the Ambassador-designate of Cambodia, Sok Chea; and the Ambassador-designate of Botswana, Dr. Batlang Comma Serema.

Later, the envoys also held separate meetings with the President.

Talking to the envoys, the President said that Pakistan had great investment opportunities and foreign countries should benefit from its investment-friendly environment. He highlighted that foreign investors should explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's agriculture, livestock, Information Technology, energy and mining sectors.

The President stated that Pakistan wanted to broaden cooperation with all friendly countries in diverse fields, especially trade, investment, and culture.

He remarked that Pakistan attached great importance to expanding economic cooperation and further maximising trade volume with friendly countries to its fullest potential. He also called for increasing contacts among the business communities to boost economic and trade relations.

President Asif Ali Zardari congratulated the envoys on their appointment as ambassadors to Pakistan and expressed the hope that they would play their role in further improving mutually beneficial cooperation. Earlier, the envoys were presented guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Armed Forces upon their arrival at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



QUETTA: Regional Head Federal Ombudsman Quetta Ghulam Sarwar Barohi addressing representatives of federal departments regarding payment of electricity bills. CEO QESCO Shafiq Ali and Deputy Registrar Federal Ombudsman Quetta Amir Muhammad Rind are also present

PTI has done nothing but politics of hate and division: Barrister Danyal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leader Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Barrister Danyal Chaudhary on Monday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has done nothing for the country but only promoted the politics of hatred and division.

Addressing a press conference here, he said that a specific political party was given that relief which was not demanded, adding, that some people think that they can achieve their goals by blackmailing.

He said the coalition parties decided to file a review appeal on the current decision of the Supreme Court regarding reserved seats.

"Sometimes they (PTI) waved ciphers and sometimes hired lobbying firms, the country was abused and burned, besieged, these people attacked the institutions of their own country. May 9 was an example of PTI's anti-state policies," he lamented.

The leader of the PML-N said that sometimes there were talks of burning and sometimes closing Pakistan, seeds of hatred were sown in the country, adding that today we say no more, we got this country in a destabilizing condition, and the economy was derailed during PTI's four-year tenure.

He further said that if PTI's agenda was political, then they would not have dissolved their assemblies. He said that when we were negotiating with the IMF, they (PTI) were raising slogans against Pakistan.

Danyal Chaudhary said that important decisions will be taken by taking all the parties on board, PTI founders Imran Khan, Arif Alvi, and Qasim Suri have weakened Pakistan, and action will be taken against those who sit abroad and talk about breaking Pakistan.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary for Excise and Taxation Haji Khan Lehari meeting with Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran.

Aleem Khan praises Army's action against terrorists in Bannu

ISLAMABAD (APP): The President of the Istekham-e-Pakistan Party and Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment, and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday paid glowing tributes to soldiers who sacrificed their lives and families for the future of Pakistan's children.

He called these soldiers the true heroes of the nation. In a tweet about the recent security operation near Bannu, he expressed gratitude, saying that soldiers are always ready and alert to counter anti-state elements.

Aleem Khan emphasized that the security of Pakistan is their first duty. He praised the Pakistan armed forces for timely action in Bannu, noting that their excellent performance thwarted the enemy's plans.

Shehbaz felicitates KP Sharma Oli for taking oath as Nepalese PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday congratulated KP Sharma Oli for taking oath as the Prime Minister of Nepal for the fourth time. "Congratulations to H.E. KP Sharma Oli on taking oath as the Prime Minister of Nepal for the fourth time," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline. The prime minister wished him every success and said that he looked forward to working with him to further strengthen bilateral ties and promote regional cooperation.

35 MNAs submit affidavits to ECP expressing their allegiance to PTI

ISLAMABAD (INP): Following the Supreme Court's (SC) decision to allot reserved seats to the PTI, as many as 35 party members of the National Assembly (MNAs) have so far submitted to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) their affidavits of allegiance to the party.

Sources told that the party's nine members of the provincial assembly (MPAs) from Sindh and over 100 MPAs from Punjab too had submitted their affidavits.

They further disclosed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Omar Ayub Khan and Ali Asghar were yet to submit their affidavits.

On the other hand, 92 PTI MPAs in the KP Assembly have so far signed their affidavits.

The PTI will get 21 seats reserved for women and three seats for men. The JUI-F and the PML-N had already been allotted one seat each in the assembly, while the PTI-P, PPP and ANP were not entitled to these seats, they added.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Livestock & Dairy Development Bakhsh Muhammad Kakar listening problems of people at his office

May-9 cases: ATC grants bail to Yasmin, 2 other PTI leaders

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday granted bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Dr. Yasmin Rashid, Omar Sarfraz Cheema, and Senator Ijaz Chaudhry in separate cases related to the May 9 riots.

Dr. Yasmin Rashid was granted post-arrest bail in connection with the torching of the PML-N office in Model Town. Similarly, Omar Sarfraz Cheema and Ijaz Chaudhry were granted post-arrest bail in a case involving the torching of a container in Gulberg. The court required each of the accused to furnish surety bonds of Rs 200,000 to secure their bail.

ATC Judge Khalid Arshad announced the verdict on the post-arrest bail petitions of the PTI leaders after the completion of arguments from both parties. The Gulberg and Model Town police had registered cases regarding the torching of a container and the PML-N office during the May 9 riots.

Our's utmost endeavour to ensure provision of best services to people: Khetran

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has stated that as a minister it is his utmost endeavour to ensure provision of best services to the people.

The Minister PHE was speaking to the Parliamentary Secretary for Excise and Taxation, Mir Muhammad Khan Lehari and different other delegations who called on him here on Monday.

During the course of meetings, matters of mutual interest were discussed.

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran said that the federal and provincial governments are delivering despite tough economic situation so as to improve the life of common men.

The Minister PHE also said that we would not leave any stone unturned in providing relief to the people.

Abbasi warns govt against dividing country

ISLAMABAD (INP): Awam Pakistan Party Chairman Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said on Monday that by banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the rulers instead of uniting the country wanted to divide it.

The former PM asked, "do you want a clash between institutions." He said that with this decision (a reference to reserved seats), the Supreme Court had washed away its wrongs.

Abbasi said that perhaps the ministers do not realise that the government cannot ban any party. "They are very fond of imposing Article 6. They don't realise that Article 6 will apply on many people. You have to sit on the table, he asserted.

Former PM Abbasi said unfortunately parliament in the country had become a platform for backbiting.

He questioned the direction of the rulers. He advised the government not to create confusion in the country. "It has been more than one year since the events of May 9. You could not prosecute even one person."

He further said the system in the country should only be in accordance with the constitution.

20th CPC Central Committee starts third plenary session

BELING (INP): The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) started its third plenary session in Beijing on Monday morning.

President Xi Jinping, who is also the general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, delivered a work report on behalf of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and expounded on a draft decision of the CPC Central Committee on further deepening reforms and advancing Chinese modernization, Chinese State media reported.

The document centers on "further comprehensively deepening reform and advancing Chinese-style modernization."

The four-day meeting is important because the Central Committee will issue an authoritative "decision" that will guide policymaking for years to come.

British MP pledges unwavering support to Palestinian cause

LONDON (INP): Newly elected Pro-Palestine independent MP from Perry Barr, Birmingham constituency, Ayoub Khan has reiterated his unwavering commitment to championing the Palestinian cause, dedicating his victory to the resilient people of Gaza. He lambasted the global community's hypocritical stance on the issue, vowing to persistently raise awareness in the British Parliament.

This was stated by him during an exclusive session in London with prominent Pakistani business leader, former ICCI President and Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari. Ayoub Khan also drew parallels with the occupied Kashmir region, highlighting the similarities in the struggles faced by both populations. He acknowledged the critical role of social media in amplifying the Palestinian narrative, leveraging graphics to convey the severity of the situation. In contrast, Khan noted the technological limitations hindering the Kashmiri people's ability to share their stories, resulting in relatively less global attention.

The British MP reassured the Kashmiri community that they have a strong advocate in the British Parliament, pledging to vocally support their cause and echo their concerns.

6 dead, 4 injured in traffic accident on M-9 motorway

ISLAMABAD (APP): Six people died while four injured in a tragic traffic accident on Monday near the Loni Kot interchange on the Karachi-Hyderabad Motorway (M-9) in District Jamshoro, Sindh.

According to a private news channel, police said that a Mazda carrying fruits collided with a trawler while heading towards Karachi. The collision resulted in the deaths of six individuals, including two brothers. The victims were identified as 28-year-old Nanji, 30-year-old Imdad Hussain, 28-year-old Amerji, 35-year-old Ramesh, Jitan, and another Ramesh. The Mazda was traveling from Hyderabad to Karachi when the accident occurred. Four other individuals were critically injured and have been transported to the District Headquarters Hospital in Kotri for medical treatment.



LORALAI: Investigation Office Federal Ombudsman Ahmed Waqas Kashi visiting BISP Zonal Office

Hang me, but save the country, Rashid appeals rulers

RAWALPINDI (INP) - Former federal minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Monday urged the rulers to save the country even at the cost of his life.

Talking to media outside Adiala Jail on Monday, the head of Awami Muslim League drew the attention of the rulers towards the political and economic turmoil in the country. He said the country is going to be that of Kenya.

"Watch the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. People are cursing the government. For God's sake, save the country. Hang us by cranes; punish us, but save the country," he made a fervent appeal to the rulers.

He once again sought general amnesty from the establishment in the country.

He said as a minister he pardoned people [during his five-year term]. There are 686 cases registered against him; if hearing in one case take a week, it would take more than 10 years to end cases, he added.

The disgruntled leader said it would have been better if he was sentenced to two-year term.

Commenting on the arrest of PPTI's Sanam Javed immediately after her release on Sunday, Rashid said she was taken into custody from the lawyer's chamber.

Imran distances himself from May 9 violence

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan said he never urged anyone for violence during his political career of 28 years, saying independent inquiry should be held in May 9 incidents.

The former prime minister stated this during his video-link hearing at an Lahore's anti-terrorism court in 12 cases related to May 9 violence.

During the hearing, Khan sought permission to say something and it was granted by Judge Khalid Arshad. He said, "I have never provoked anyone for violent protest in 28 years. An independent inquiry was not conducted into May 9 incidents."

The PTI founder added that he had also filed a petition with the Supreme Court, seeking a fair probe into the May 9 violence.

"I was attacked in Gujranwala and wanted to get the FIR registered against Major General Faisal Naseer but it didn't happen."



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Advisor to Chief Minister Balochistan for Commerce and Industries Mir Ali Hassan Zehri

AC reviews arrangement at Imam Bargah

Independent Report

GWADAR: Assistant Commissioner Mir Javed Ahmed Zehri visited the Imam Bargah in Gwadar to review the preparations for the religious rituals of the Shia community during the holy month of Muharram.

On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Hamoodur Rehman, the Assistant Commissioner met with the administrators of the Imam Bargah, Syed Aun, and renowned religious scholar Allama from Karachi. He thoroughly reviewed the arrangements in the Imam Bargah and had a detailed discussion about security arrangements during Muharram.

The Assistant Commissioner assured the administrators that the district administration would provide all possible cooperation and security to ensure that the Shia community could observe their religious festival with peace and better arrangements.

He said that the security of Imam Bargahs is the top priority of the district administration during Muharram, and all renowned religious scholar would be utilized to provide the best security.

The purpose of this step is to ensure that the religious rituals of the Shia community are performed without fear and danger.

PR to run special train for pilgrims

SUKKUR (APP): A special train from Kotri-via Tando Adam to Rohri on the 9th and 10th of Muharram will run to facilitate travelers. President Majlis-e-Wihadat-ul-Muslimeen (MWM), Sindh, Allama Maqsood Domki on Monday hailed the decision of the Government of Pakistan and thanked the Railway Authorities allowing pilgrims to attend religious observances and ceremonies.

As per the special train's schedule, Allama Domki informed the pilgrims that will depart from Kotri at 2 PM.



QUETTA: Commandant Balochistan Constabulary Agha Muhammad Yousaf presiding over Annual budget meeting 2024-2025