

Independent

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, Provincial Ministers and officials participating in a meeting through video link chaired by Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal about Kachhi canal

Bugti participates in PC's meeting about Kachhi canal project: Rehabilitation of Kachhi canal necessary before formulation of strategy to cope with flood situation in future: Chief Minister

Federal Minister Planning assures water supply would be restored in Kachhi canal immediately before long term project of rehabilitation

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has noted with concern that the agriculturalists are facing hardships due to non availability of water in Kachhi canal as such there is a need to restore water supply in the canal after desalting. The Chief Minister insisted that there is a need to rehabilitate the Kachhi canal before formulation of the strategy to cope with the flood situation in future. He said that the planning for prevention of flood is a long process, as long as it is done, the supply of water should be started. The Chief Minister also stressed that the long term planning is necessary but immediate restoration of water is unavoidable.

Ex Lt-Col Akbar Hussain court martialled for incitement to revolt

ISPR says Hussain's rank of officer has been forfeited and he has been awarded 14 years of "rigorous imprisonment".

RAWALPINDI (INP): Lt-Col (ret) Akbar Hussain was court martialled on Tuesday for inciting military personnel to revolt and handed down 14 years in prison. According to the ISPR, the public relations department of Pakistan Army, Lt-Col Akbar was sentenced under the Field General Court Martial. The Inter-Services Public Relations statement added that the former lieutenant colonel was tried by a court of competent jurisdiction. His rank has also been confiscated. Earlier, Major Adil Farooq Raja and Captain Haider Raza Mehdi were also convicted and sentenced through Field General Court Martial (FGCM) under Pakistan Army Act, 1952 for the charges of inciting sedition among army personnel from discharge of duties and violation of the provisions of Official Secrets Act, 1923 related to espionage and acts prejudicial to the safety and interest of the State. The court of competent jurisdiction had convicted and adjudged both Adil Farooq Raja and Haider Raza Mehdi on the date of 7th and 9th October 2023, through due judicial process, with the punishments awarded as 14 and 12 years of rigorous imprisonment respectively and forfeiture of rank of both individuals with effect from 21 November 2023.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Senator Musadik Malik addressing a press conference.

Economic policies show results, inflation drops sharply: Musadik Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik on Tuesday announced that the government's economic policies were yielding positive results under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. He highlighted a significant reduction in food inflation from 48% to 2%, with ongoing efforts to further control price hikes and provide relief to the public. During a press conference, Dr. Malik reported that overall inflation in the country has decreased from 38% to 12% due to the government's interventions. The inflation, he said, was gradually falling and that economic indicators

Bill prohibiting independent candidates from joining parties tabled in NA

Independents will not be considered political party members at a later stage if they didn't already submit declaration showing affiliation; The proposed amendment aims to alter Sections 66 and 104 of the Elections Act 2017

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The National Assembly has introduced the Second Amendment Bill to the Elections Act 2024, prohibiting independent candidates from joining another political party after a specified period. The session, chaired by Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, saw PML-N member Bilal Kayani present the bill. The proposed amendment aims to alter Sections 66 and 104 of the Elections Act 2017, restricting independent candidates from joining political parties after a constitutionally and legally defined period. The bill suggests that independent candidates should not be allowed to join any political party within the stipulated timeframe. It also states that parties failing to submit a list of reserved seats within the specified period will not be eligible for those seats.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Chairman Al-Hijra Trust Abdul Karim Saqib meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

BISP to impart technical training to women, youth in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) will impart technical training to youth and vulnerable women in Balochistan province for empowering them. This was discussed during a meeting between Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Rubina Khalid and Minister for Education and Technical Training, Balochistan, Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani. The meeting was held to discuss this collaborative initiative aimed at empowering youth and vulnerable women through technical training. The program aims at uplifting the lives of BISP beneficiaries through equipping them with the latest skills. The meeting focused on leveraging the expertise of both departments to provide market-driven skills training, enhancing employability and economic opportunities for marginalized groups. The partnership seeks to bridge the skills gap, foster inclusivity, and promote socio-economic growth in Balochistan.

Masoud Pezeshkian sworn in as Iran's ninth president

Deputy PM and FM Ishaq Dar among other dignitaries attends ceremony at Iran's parliament

TEHRAN (INP): Iranian reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian was sworn before parliament on Tuesday as the Islamic republic's ninth president at a ceremony attended by foreign dignitaries. Pezeshkian won a run-off race against ultraconservative Saeed Jalili on July 5 to replace president Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash in May. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar visited Tehran on Tuesday to attend the investiture ceremony of the President-elect of Iran, Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian. On behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, the DPM conveyed a message of felicitations and best wishes for President Pezeshkian on his assumption of office. He congratulated the Iranian nation on the successful and smooth transitioning of power to the new political administration.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over meeting Executive Committee of Balochistan Civil Service Academy

Imran Khan ready to hold talks with military

Army should nominate representative for negotiations: ex-PM; Says he would never hold talks with interior minister.

Monitoring Desk
RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) imprisoned founder Imran Khan said Tuesday that his party was ready to hold talks with the military. The PTI founder, who appeared in a court established in Adiala jail for a hearing, said: "We are ready to hold talks with the military. The army should nominate their representative [for negotiations]." Khan, who has been imprisoned for nearly a

year, said that his party had never levelled allegations against the army, but had only criticised the armed forces. He further said that if any PTI worker was found guilty in the May 9, 2023, riots then the authorities should penalise the individual. Khan reiterated that the incumbent government wanted to destroy his party by creating a wedge between PTI party and the armed forces. When asked why was he seeking talks when he was criticising the army and why wasn't the seeking talks with political parties, he said: "What is the SIFC? Who is Mohsin Naqvi? There is an undeclared martial law." Khan said that Interior Minister Naqvi was "their" representative and that he had reached "this place due to them". He then alleged that he would never hold talks with Naqvi as he along with the Punjab Inspector General (IG) "oppressed" his party. In his statement, the PTI founder also termed Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz "fascist" while pointing towards back-to-back arrests of the party leadership across the province. The deposed prime minister, referring to his arrest last year, alleged that he was "abducted from judicial complex" and "it was declared legal by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq".



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari meeting a delegation of Commonwealth, led by the Secretary-General of Commonwealth, Ms Patricia Scotland, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President for stronger cooperation with CW

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has emphasised the need for stronger cooperation with the Commonwealth in areas of climate change, education, parliamentary exchanges and disaster preparedness. He called for enhanced interactions among parliamentary bodies, particularly young parliamentarians and students, to further strengthen and promote the bonds of friendship with Commonwealth member states. The president expressed these views while talking to a delegation led by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Patricia Scotland, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday.

Attaulah Tarar says PTI founder's call for talks with institution, another conspiracy against state

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaulah Tarar Tuesday said the call made by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder for negotiation with the institution was nothing but another conspiracy against the country. This is another attempt of the PTI founder to drag the state institutions in his "dirty politics", said the minister in a media talk outside the Parliament. He said further investigation into the operation of the social media cell would expose their alleged relations and connection with the state's enemies who were involved in formulating anti-state policies. He wondered how the PTI founder quickly changed his own stance on the concept of the neutrality of the institutions. "It is not acceptable for him that the state institutions are neutral and now for his own political benefits, he wants them to be involved in the politics which is regrettable," he added. The minister believed that the call for negotiation was made as the PTI founder pre-empted stern action against himself and his party after a raid on their social media cell which was operating in connivance with the enemies of the state. He said further investigation into the operation of the social media cell would expose their alleged relations and connection with the state's enemies who were involved in formulating anti-state policies.

Four killed, seven injured in road accident

CHAGHI (APP): Four persons on Tuesday were killed while seven others sustained injuries as a car overturned near checkpoint, Padak. The levies forces shifted the bodies and injured to Basic Health Unit (BHU), Padak, the official source said. Serious injured were referred to DHQ, Nushki, he added. The source said the dead persons included a woman and three children. The bodies were handed over to families after completing legal formalities.

4.2 magnitude earthquake tremors felt in Zhab

QUETTA (APP): Earthquake tremors were felt on Tuesday in the Zhab area of Balochistan. According to the seismological center, the earthquake had a magnitude of 4.2 and a depth of 15 kilometers, reported a private news channel. The epicenter was located 50 km north-east of Zhab. No loss of life or property was reported as a result of the earthquake.



QUETTA: Member Balochistan National Commission Shaina Khan and Member Sindh National Commission Bholal Sitani meeting with Deputy Commissioner Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola

GM PIA Balochistan meets Governor: Quetta-Saudi Arabia direct Umra flights to start from August 6

Governor Balochistan says PIA's flight operation to be ensured from Quetta on daily basis; facilities of ATM, first medical aid and foreign currency exchange to be provided at airport

Independent Report
QUETTA: All is set to operate the direct Umrah flights from Quetta to Saudi Arabia from August 6, 2024. The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail is scheduled to inaugurate the Quetta-Saudi Arabia direct flights. In this regard, the General Manager PIA Balochistan, Abdul Ghaffar Miankhalil met the Governor, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail along with the PIA team here at the Governor House on Tuesday. During the course of meeting, details of the direct flights from Quetta to Saudi Arabia were shared by the GM PIA with the Governor Balochistan. Speaking on the occasion, Governor said that provision of facility of travelling to Saudi Arabia from Quetta is welcoming initiative. He particularly thanked the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for ensuring air travelling facilities to the people of Balochistan. He said that the flight operation of PIA would be ensured from Quetta on the daily basis. Besides, the facilities of ATM, first medical aid and foreign currency exchange would also be ensured for the passengers at Quetta airport. The Governor stressed the need to provide necessary facilities to the patient and injured passengers travelling from the Quetta airport.

Punjab Governor says: Christian community is playing a positive role in development of country

LAHORE (Online): A delegation led by Bishop of Lahore Nadeem Kamran called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House Lahore. Talking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that the Christian community is playing a positive role in the development of the country. He said that religious harmony and tolerance is very important for peace in society. Punjab Governor said that People's Party has always given respect to the minorities. He said that the doors of the Governor's House are open to the people including minorities, students and



LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with delegation led by Bishop of Lahore Nadeem Kamran at Governor House.

Azma Bokhari likens PTI founder to Hitler

LAHORE (APP): Information Minister Punjab Azma Bokhari said that Imran Khan is Hitler-2 and he should be ashamed of accusing Maryam Nawaz of being a fascist. In a statement, she said, "Imran had Maryam Nawaz arrested in front of her father. The fascist leader who demanded Article 6 cases against political opponents and installed cameras in jails to inflict torture was Fitna Khan." Azma Bokhari said that Maryam Nawaz did not have Bushra Bibi or any of his four sisters arrested. "You were the one who fled in fear from a

wheelchair. Maryam Nawaz did not make you stand. You were the fascist and personally vindictive ruler who, as Prime Minister, had more than a hundred League leaders arrested in political cases. Despite daily arrests, not a single leader abandoned Mian Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz," she added. The provincial information minister said that the "revolutionaries" of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) held press conferences in lines after spending just one night in jail.



PESHAWAR: A representative minority delegation led by Kishor Kumar calls on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

Faisal Kundi highlights role of minorities in Pak independence

PESHAWAR (APP): Note: Corrected with Divisional Superintendent instead of Deputy Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday emphasized the significant role of minority communities in Pakistan's independence and pledged to work diligently for their rights. He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation from the minority community, led by Kishwar Kumar, a

former MPA, and General Secretary of the Minority Wing KP. During the meeting, discussions also focused on August 11, Minority Day. The governor said that the day is celebrated with great enthusiasm across Pakistan to convey the message to the world that minorities face no issues and are living happily in the country. Governor Faisal Kundi assured that no effort would be spared in

Toxic milk trade: A deadly menace in Punjab

KASHMIRE: Punjab's dairy industry has been rocked by a sinister secret: thousands of liters of chemically produced milk are being churned out daily, posing a significant threat to human health. This toxic milk, laced with harmful chemicals, is linked to an increased risk of cancer, heart diseases, and digestive issues. The administration in Kashmir and Kandhkot districts is accused of colluding with these illegal milk producers, accepting bribes to turn a blind eye to their activities. This not only endangers public health but also raises ethical concerns.

KP to equip 2000 women with digital technological skills

PESHAWAR: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the assistance of TVET Sector Support Programme would equip 2000 women with digital technological skills in the fourth-phase of a phase-wise training programme. In this connection, a consultative workshop of all stakeholders was held at the Institute of Management Sciences (IM-Sciences) with Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul

KP govt, ICRC join hands to promote application of humanitarian law

Independent Report PESHAWAR: The Directorate General of Law and Human Rights, in collaboration with the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), conducted a two-day training workshop for District Attorneys and human rights professionals. The workshop was inaugurated by Law Minister Aftab Alam Afridi, which emphasized the importance of human rights education for a just society. The ICRC representative highlighted the need for continued education and training in humanitarian law. Ghulam Ali, Director General Law & Human Rights, highlighted the role of humanitarian law in protecting human dignity, while ICRC representative Edith Joseph stressed the need for continued education in humanitarian principles.



MULTAN: Deputy Chief of Mission U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Mr. Andrew James Schofer, talking to media persons during his visit to the Shrine of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed. U.S. Consul General in Lahore Ms. Kristin K. Hawkins also with her.

Ignite signs agreement with LMKR led consortium to operate NIC Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): Ignite National Technology Fund, a company incorporated under the Ministry of IT & Telecom here Tuesday signed an agreement with a consortium led by LMKR to operate the National Incubation Center (NIC) in Peshawar. This consortium includes prominent partners like Orbit Startups, an international investment accelerator and the most active VC in Pakistan. According to a press release, the other key partners include LMKT, Accelerate Prosperity, Sybrid (a Lakson Group Company) and Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar. The new chapter of NIC Peshawar is strategically supported by over 80 ecosystem partners, significantly enhancing the opportunities and resources available to NIC Peshawar startups. NIC Peshawar aims to expand horizons, embrace cutting-edge technologies and foster a global perspective.

International News

93 killed after landslides strike India tea estates

Monitoring Desk WAYANAD: Landslides in India triggered by pounding monsoon rains struck tea plantations and killed at least 93 people on Tuesday, with at least 250 others rescued from mud and debris, officials said. The southern coastal state of Kerala has been battered by torrential downpours, with blocked roads into the disaster area in Wayanad district complicating relief efforts. "93 dead bodies have been found so far," Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan told reporters. "This is one of the worst natural calamities that our state has seen." Another 128 people had been hospitalised for treatment after their rescue, he said. "My thoughts are with all those who have lost their loved ones and prayers with those injured," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a post on social media platform X. Wayanad is famed

for the tea estates that criss-cross its hilly countryside and which rely on a large pool of casual labourers for planting and harvest. Several estates in the district were hit by two successive landslides before dawn when most of their inhabitants were asleep. Images published by the National Disaster Response Force showed rescue crews trudging through mud to search for survivors and carry bodies on stretchers out of the area. Homes were caked with brown sludge as the force of the landslide scattered cars, corrugated iron and other debris around the disaster site. India's army said it had deployed more than 200 soldiers to the area to assist state security forces and fire crews in search-and-rescue efforts. Kerala state excise minister MB Rajesh said more than 250 people had been rescued so far. The Hindu newspaper reported. Modi's office said



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida greets US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Tokyo. Also seen are Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar (left) and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa.

Netanyahu vows retaliation against Hezbollah after weekend strike as US warns against escalation

Monitoring Desk MAJDAL SHAMS: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday vowed heavy retaliation against Hezbollah amid furious diplomatic efforts to prevent a spiral into regional war following a weekend rocket strike that killed 12 children in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights. Israel has blamed Hezbollah for Saturday evening's rocket from Lebanon that slammed into a soccer field where the children were playing in the mainly Druze town of Majdal Shams. In an unusual move, Hezbollah denied any role in the strike. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Israeli President Isaac Herzog on Monday, emphasizing the "importance of preventing escalation" and discussing efforts to reach a diplomatic solution to months of conflict. Israel and the Iranian-backed Lebanese Hezbollah have exchanged fire almost daily over the border since the war in Gaza erupted in October. Each side has seemed intent on avoiding an escalation that would bring their full firepower against each other.

Zelensky visits Ukraine front as Moscow claims fresh gains

Monitoring Desk KYIV: Russia said on Monday its forces had captured the village of Vovche in eastern Ukraine, the latest in a string of frontline advances Moscow has claimed in recent weeks. The announcement came as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky visited special forces in the border region of Kharkiv, where Moscow's forces launched a surprise ground offensive in May but failed to make any breakthrough.

US accuses Venezuela of electoral manipulation, repression

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden's administration on Monday accused Venezuela of electoral manipulation and repression and said Caracas' announcement that President Nicolas Maduro had won a third term in office had been stripped of "any credibility." Biden administration officials, briefing reporters about the vote on condition of anonymity, did not announce any new punitive measures but left open the door to additional sanctions, saying it would assess its sanctions policy.

Russian navy starts major drills involving most of its fleet

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: Russia's navy began planned exercises involving most of its fleet in the Arctic and Pacific oceans as well as the Baltic and Caspian seas, the defence ministry said on Tuesday. Russia is considered by most military analysts to have the world's third most powerful navy after those of the United States and China, and Russia has a significant ballistic-missile nuclear submarine fleet. The Russian drills, which include 20,000 personnel and 300 ships, will test the readiness and capabilities of the navy at all levels, the ministry said. The drills will include over 300 combat exercises including practicing the use of anti-aircraft missiles, artillery, anti-submarine weapons and "passive in-

Maduro on top in 'disputed' Ven-ezuella polls

Monitoring Desk CARACAS: Streets were largely empty in towns and cities across Ven-ezuella and opposition supporters were subdued on Monday after President Nicolas Maduro and opposition rival Edmundo Gonzalez both claim-victory in a tense weekend election. Few businesses were open and public transport was scarce, as governments in Washington and elsewhere cast doubt on official results that kept the incumbent Maduro in power and called for a full tabulation of votes. The national electoral authority said just after midnight that Maduro had won a third term with 51 per cent of the vote — a result that would extend a quarter-century of socialist rule.

Lebanon on alert as Israel warns of 'severe' response to strike in Golan Heights

Monitoring Desk MAJDAL SHAMS: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday vowed a "severe" response to a strike that killed youths in the annexed Golan Heights, as diplomats raced to contain escalation between Israel and Hezbollah. On a rocket strike which killed 12 children in the town of Majdal Shams, Netanyahu said: "The state of Israel will not, and can-

US boosts alliance with the Philippines with \$500 million funding and pact amid concern over China

Monitoring Desk MANILA: Washington's top diplomat and defense chief announced \$500 million in new military funding Tuesday to boost the Philippines' external defense and progress on a proposed military intelligence-sharing pact as both allies renewed their concerns over China's continuing aggressive actions in the region. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who has fortified Manila's decades-old treaty alliance with Washington as hostilities between Philippine and Chinese forces flared since last year in the disputed South China Sea. Marcos hailed "very open" communication lines between Washington and Manila, adding that the two countries' treaty alliance and key issues in the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific region "are continuously examined and reexamined so we are agile in terms of our responses." Marcos has underscored the need for a U.S. military presence for Asian stability and peace. After meeting their Philippine counterparts later, Blinken and Austin announced the \$500 million military funding to help modernize the Philippine military and coast guard and boost security collaboration amid shared concerns over China's assertive actions. "Both of us share concerns and many other countries in the region share concerns, as well, about some of the actions that the People's Republic of China has taken, escalating actions in the South China Sea, the East China Sea and elsewhere," including "coercive methods," Blinken said in a joint news conference.

Ukraine says it struck an oil depot in Russia, as Moscow claims new gains in Donetsk region

Monitoring Desk KYIV: Ukraine on Sunday said it struck an oil depot in southern Russia that supplies the Kremlin's troops as Russian strikes in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, where Moscow claimed further gains, left five civilians dead and 15 others wounded. Ukraine's General Staff said in a statement Kyiv's security services were responsible for a drone strike in Russia's southern Kursk region that morning on an oil depot used to meet the needs of the Russian military, and contains 11 tanks with a total volume of 7,000 cubic meters (about 247,202 cubic feet), adding the attack prompted "powerful explosions and a fire... probably involving containers with oil products." "The defense forces continue to take all measures to undermine the military and economic potential of the Russian occupi-

