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dailyindish@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on increase in investment and capacity of federal government Ministries.

Collective wisdom required to address collective issues: Governor stresses need to maintain balance between formation of family & available resources

Sheikh Jaffar Mandokhail says big challenge for government is to provide basic facilities to scattered population in vast area; says viable strategy needed to control high birth



Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has underlined the need to maintain balance between formation of family and available resources describing it important need of the hour. The Governor said that the thoughtful statements and research about the family planning and birth control must not be restricted merely to the stage or pa-

Govt to reverse policy decision of suspending passport issuance to asylum seekers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday chaired a high-level meeting to discuss the matters related to the welfare of overseas Pakistanis wherein it was decided to reverse the policy decision of suspending the issuance of passports to Pakistani nationals seeking asylum abroad. "The meeting discussed in detail the recent policy decision that was taken vide circular dated 5 June 2024 for not issuing passport to any individual who had sought asylum or already living on asylum abroad. It was decided to reverse the policy decision with immediate effect and to withdraw the circular of 5 June 2024," according to a press release. The meeting was attended by the foreign secretary, interior secretary, Director General of Immigration and Passports (IMPASS) and senior officers of the foreign ministry. The meeting also discussed the issues relating to delays in the issuance of passports to Pakistanis living abroad. The interior secretary and Director General of IMPASS briefed the deputy prime minister about the ongoing efforts to streamline the process. It was decided that the Ministry of Interior and IMPASS will take immediate necessary steps to upgrade the infrastructure and equipment within the next 45 days and to accelerate the clearance of the entire backlog relating to the issuance of passports to overseas Pakistanis.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, chairs high level meeting on the welfare of overseas Pakistanis.

Imran admits giving call for protest outside GHQ before arrest

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan admitted that he had asked the party workers to stage a peaceful protest outside GHQ before his arrest. In an informal conversation with journalists in Adiala Jail where he has been detained for months in multiple cases, the former prime minister said he would ask his party's lawmakers in Centre and provinces to observe hunger strike. He alleged that approvers were being found against him in the

representatives of the civil society and people belonging to different shades of life participated in the seminar. The Governor said that we acknowledge the efforts made by the government to cope with the challenges of increased population and ensure implementation on the family planning. However, still there are certain challenges before us to address them. He noted with concern that Pakistan is the fifth most populous country of the world, and said that such a huge population puts pressure on our resources, infrastructure and environment of the developing country like Pakistan. He said that according to estimates of the United Nations, the world's population has crossed the figure of eight billion.

Brazilian Chief of Staff visits NHQ

ISLAMABAD (APP): Brazilian Chief of Staff Admiral, Andre Luiz Silva Lima De Santana Mendes visited Naval Headquarters (NHQ) and called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf here on Monday. Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the visiting dignitary was received by Chief of the Naval Staff. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Navy also presented Guard of Honour. Brazilian Chief of Staff laid wreath at Shuhada Monument and afterwards was introduced to Principal Staff Officers of Naval Headquarters, a news release said. Later, Admiral Andre Luiz Silva Lima De Santana Mendes called on Chief of the Naval Staff in his office.

3 terrorists killed during infiltration attempt at Pak-Afghan border in Dir

RAWALPINDI (INP): Three terrorists were killed by security forces during an infiltration attempt at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dir district, the military's media wing said on Monday. A statement from the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the movement of three terrorists was detected by security forces in the district on the night between Sunday and Monday. "The infiltrators were surrounded, effectively engaged and after an intense fire exchange, all three terrorists were sent to hell," the ISPR said. It said Pakistan was consistently asking the interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on its side of the border, adding that the neighbour was expected to fulfil its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for perpetrating acts of terrorism against the country.

Despite challenges, Balochistan youth excelled in all fields: Rana Mashood

QUETTA (APP): Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan on Monday said that Pakistan could integrate 1 to 1.5 million youth into the global market. "Despite challenges, the youth in Balochistan have excelled in various fields, serving as role models. The government, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is striving hard to equip youth of Balochistan with latest technology and skills." He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony held at BUTEMS on "Accessible Social Entrepreneurship for Balochistani youth, organized with the support of PPAF, NIC, BUTEMS and other institutions. Kashif Irshad from the National Heritage and Culture Division and CEO of Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) Nadir Gul Bareeh, were prominent among others who attended the event. The Chairman Prime Minister Youth Program said the government has decided to establish a National Youth Council to address the issues faced by the youth, involving them in decision-making process. He noted that the federal government was providing interest-free loans through the Prime Minister's Youth Program, benefiting millions of families to initiate small and medium business. He highlighted the importance of unity and the role of youth in facing conspiracies against Pakistan as saying by engaging youth in healthy and educational activities, the propaganda against the country could be shun effectively. The IT industry's current volume is PKR 2.5 billion and government aims to expand it to PKR 25 billion to meet the global demand and provide streams to the unemployed and skilled youth of the country, he said.

Pakistan Army is sole target of digital terrorists

A massive, illegal political mafia trying to sabotage Azm-i-Istehkam operation: DG ISPR

Lt Gen Chaudhry says Azm-i-Istehkam to target anti-state mafias for ensuring peaceful environment; It is not military operation, but comprehensive, integrated campaign against terrorism; There has been increase in anti-army propaganda, lies, misinformation through organized campaign; It's time for nation to 'stand up against militants, digital terrorists; Any leverage to May 9 perpetrators will further foment chaos; Army had conducted over 22,000 intelligence-based operations in the ongoing year to eliminate terrorism in the country; A total of 398 terrorists have been killed while 137 officials were martyred; DG shows videos of attack on Bannu Cantt

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General, Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif on Monday brushed aside misconceptions over Azm-i-Istehkam Operation and stressed that it was a comprehensive counter-terrorism drive that had been launched after national consensus. He said it was not just a military operation as portrayed by some disgruntled elements, rather a comprehensive drive to flush out anti-state individuals and mafias, hell bent upon to disrupt peaceful environment in the country. In a press conference at

the General Headquarters, the ISPR DG specifically highlighted major aspects of the operation in the wake of an organized campaign against state institutions, based on fake and baseless news. Lieutenant General Sharif gave the breakup of counter-terrorism drive during the current year as some 22,409 intelligence-based operations (IBOs) were conducted that resulted in elimination of 398 terrorists. On average 112 IBOs were done on daily basis by the army, police and law enforcement agencies (LEAs) that helped in elimination of 31



high value targets (most wanted terrorists), he added. During these counter-terrorism activities, 137 officers and soldiers embraced martyrdom in 2024 whereas the armed forces paid tribute to the families

of these martyrs. "Amid growing propaganda and lies, it is imperative to hold regular media briefings to debunk false news," he added. He pointed out that a massive, illegal political mafia was trying to sabotage the state's Azm-i-Istehkam (Resolve for Stability) operation.

Replying to a query regarding the displacement, he said crucial issues were being targeted just for political gains, adding that Azm-i-Istehkam was one such example. Last month, the federal government approved the operation to counter due to terrorist attacks across the country, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, after the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) ended its ceasefire with the government in November 2022.

Global firm hired to invest and improve the efficiency of government institutions

ISLAMABAD (Online): The services of a global firm have been acquired to increase investment in Pakistan and improve the efficiency of government institutions. An important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif regarding increasing investment and improving the efficiency of government institutions, in which a briefing was given by the Public Private Partnership Authority that increasing the efficiency of federal ministries and improving investment. Consultancy firm Kearney has been hired to hire experts.

In the briefing, it was mentioned that Kearney is an internationally renowned firm with operations all over the world, especially in the Middle East. Addressing the participants of the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that increasing investment in the country is the first priority of the government. The government is taking all possible steps to provide a business friendly environment to traders and investors. He directed to take immediate effective measures for investment and government efficiency improvement projects that are likely to yield results soon.

PM condemns Israeli attack on Khan Younis, calls it inhumane act

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday vehemently condemned the Israeli forces' violent attack on Khan Younis in Gaza, describing it as an inhumane act, particularly following the evacuation of refugees. The prime minister, in a statement issued by PM Office, described the aggressive attack on the Khan Younis area of Gaza shortly after the instructions to the unarmed Palestinian refugees to evacuate as a mockery of humanity according to.



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Ombudsman, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, presented the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAAH)'s Annual Report for the year 2022-23 to the President Asif Ali Zardari during a call on at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Five doctors of DHQ Ziarat suspended because of absence from duty

Independent Report

QUETTA: Five doctors of District Headquarter Hospital Ziarat were suspended owing to absence from their duties for long. According to an official hand out issued here on Monday, the services of five doctors were placed under suspension due to their continuous absence from duty in the DHQ Ziarat. Actually, the Provincial Minister for Food, Noor Muhammad Durrani had complained to the Chief Minister Balochistan about absence of the doctors from their duties during visit to the DHQ Ziarat. During the surprise visit, the Provincial Minister checked the attendance register of the doctors and medical staff and found these doctors absent from duty. It was informed by the Medical Superintendent of DHQ Ziarat that doctors have been absent from duties for long. On this, the Minister Food contacted the Chief Minister and complained him about absence of the doctors from duty. Later, on directives of the Chief Minister, the absentee doctors were suspended. Meanwhile, while speaking on occasion of the visit to DHQ Ziarat, the Provincial Minister Food said that the government would not make any compromise on absence of the doctors and other officials from their duties at all. He said that government is taking steps for provision of healthcare facilities to the people at their doorstep.

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Barrister Gohar, Rauf Hasan arrested

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad Police arrested Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) leader Barrister Gohar and Information Secretary Rauf Hasan. A heavy contingent of police headed by SSP Hasan Jahangir Wattoo raided the secretariat of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in Islamabad. Police arrested PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and Information Secretary Rauf Hassan and took them to unknown place. Important documents and laptops were also taken away from the office of the party secretariat, but it is not known on what charges the police arrested the two PTI leaders.

Governor to visit Zhab today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail is scheduled to visit Zhab today (Tuesday). According to an official handout issued here on Monday, the Governor's visit is aimed at getting acquainted about the situation of remote districts and hardships of the people. During the visit, Governor would also formally inaugurate Zhab to Wana road. Besides, he would also be meeting the political leaders, workers as well as Ulemas and tribal elders.



QUETTA: GM National Highway Authority (NHA) Agha Inayatullah meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai

Joint resolution to be tabled on 1st sitting: Orders of the day issued as BA session due to be held from today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The session of Balochistan Assembly is scheduled to be held at 03:00 PM today (Tuesday). It may be mentioned here that Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail had summoned the session of provincial assembly last week. The agenda of session (Orders of the day) has been issued by the provincial assembly's secretariat for the today's session. As per the agenda, the joint resolution would be tabled regarding formation of Balochistan Women Par-

liamentary Caucus in the assembly. The resolution would be tabled by the Deputy Speaker, Ms. Ghazala Gola, Advisor to Chief Minister, Dr. Rubaba Buledi, parliamentary secretaries, Ms. Hadia Nawaz and Ms. Mina Baloch and members of provincial assembly Ms. Shahida Rauf and Ms. Umme Kalsoom. Similarly, different audit reports would also be tabled by the Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani in the session. There would also be question hour during the session.



QUETTA: Chairman PM Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan addressing a ceremony of cheque distribution of interest free loan among students of Madaris in collaboration with PPAF and BRSP

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Population calamity

Pakistan's population bomb is not ticking anymore; it has already exploded. The detailed results of the 2023 digital census published by the government after a year's delay reveal that the population increased from 207.68m in 2017 to 241.49m in 2023, at one of the world's highest growth rates of 2.55pc. There have been reservations expressed by some political parties as well as the Sindh government on the way the census was conducted. Many suspect that the 2023 census understates the total population.

If allowed to increase unchecked at the present rate — over thrice as fast as the global average growth rate of 0.8pc — Pakistan's population might double by 2050. Some conservative estimates, such as the one by the UN, forecast that the numbers will surge to 403m. This will have far-reaching implications for the economy and society, putting an enormous strain on food security, socioeconomic infrastructure and public services. Hence, the urgent need for steps to reduce population growth.

There are two contrasting opinions about the country's burgeoning population: one views it as a case of rampant poverty and a growing strain on the state's capacity for public service delivery, while the other touts the increasing numbers as a demographic dividend that can be harnessed to drive faster economic growth, since 67pc of the population is below the age of 30, and 80pc below 40.

The reality is that it is proving to be more of a bane than a boon, as it is a big strain on our already stretched resources, and has made eradication of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy a lot more difficult than it should have been. This fact is brought home by Pakistan's poor ranking on the UNDP's Human Development Index. With extreme weather events, including destructive floods and droughts, which turn large areas of land uncultivable and uninhabitable and force communities to migrate, disregarding population control is no longer an option.

Pakistan's exponential population growth may be attributed to several factors: religio-cultural beliefs, social taboos, poverty, female illiteracy, lack of access to birth control and family planning services, etc. However, many other countries facing similar impediments have successfully overcome their high population growth problem. For example, Bangladesh, which faced a high fertility rate and a rapidly growing population in the 1970s, has brought down its fertility rate to less than two births per woman, and the population growth rate to just above 1pc.

Likewise, India's growth rate has dropped to 0.8pc. Countries such as Türkiye and Iran have also reduced their fertility rates to 2.1pc and 2.3pc, compared to Pakistan's 3.2pc.

Their success shows that Pakistan can also control its growth rate by following the examples of its peers and implementing functional family planning programmes and campaigns.

Restricting women

Huma Yusuf

A woman following the news these days can be forgiven for wondering what century she is in. Sexist policies are proliferating globally, and the political discourse in many countries is defined by increasingly regressive messaging about women. This trend should not be dismissed as a niche women's rights issue. Instead, it must be understood as a warning sign of democratic erosion.

Anti-women narratives are appearing in various guises: growing calls for state control over reproductive rights; laws with weak or poorly enforced punishments for sexual harassment and violence; policies that stymie women's ability to work or vote; and the promotion of women's traditional roles within families, particularly as mothers, reframed as a strategic response to demographic crises facing some developed countries.

Those following the US election know that even after former US president Donald Trump's failed assassination attempt, the fight over reproductive rights arguably remains the key electoral issue.

On the other side of the world, China's Third Plenum last week highlighted the country's gender inequality challenges, largely through the absence of women in the Communist Party's leadership. The failure to mention the role that women's economic participation can play in boosting GDP was notable. China under Xi Jinping has suppressed women's rights, both through crackdowns against feminist movements and softer messaging encouraging women to stay home and procreate.

The return of women's issues to the political centre stage is not surprising. Women's bodies have long been political battlegrounds, their rights an easy frame through which to consider

contentious politics. In the context of intense political polarisation, a position on gender matters becomes shorthand for a broader political narrative or value system signalling, which can help populist candidates win the allegiance of disparate constituencies that may disagree on material issues but are united in patriarchy.

Women's bodies become politicised because women themselves continue to be excluded from the political space, including in supposedly evolved democracies such as the US, where the poorest women and those from marginalised backgrounds face rampant disenfranchisement.

But anti-women political narratives are not only about gender exclusion, they are also a litmus test for democratic resilience. Research conducted by Erica Chenoweth and Zoe Marks in 2022 identified a correlation between increasingly authoritarian regimes (Xi in China, Putin in Russia, Trump in the US) and an uptick in patriarchal oppression.

Chenoweth and Marks argued that as pro-democratic social movements (often with high female participation) arose to push back against authoritarian figures, a "patriarchal backlash" became a key way to prevent mass movements from mobilising. Marks explained that "they seek to minimise women's equal rights as citizens and frame it as niche 'opposition' or identity politics; and they centre masculinity and male breadwinners' status as the key indicator of the nation". In sum, where women's issues are politicised, authoritarianism likely lurks.

More prosaically, the more you hear about women, the less you hear about other issues that matter: cost-of-living crisis, public service delivery, eco-

nomie growth, social welfare, climate resilience, etc. Politicians talk about women's bodies because they have little to offer on the substantive issues. This creates a credibility gap that itself breeds more distrust in the democratic system.

Toxic anti-women narratives also breed a vicious cycle that will further weaken democracies, possibly irreparably. Here's why: women's participation in the democratic process (through voting or participation) is known to strengthen democracies. This is not only because women's participation is fundamentally inclusive.

It is also because when women vote, they tend to prioritise issues, such as education, healthcare and social welfare. As Hina Shaikh put it in a blog on Pakistan's 2024 elections for the International Growth Centre, "when more women vote, it can lead to growth in welfare and redistribution expenditures by the government. Women's participation ... is fundamental to the functioning and legitimacy of democracy".

Sadly, anti-women political narratives will ultimately suppress women's political participation, and so undermine democratic functioning as a whole. It's therefore time to move away from emotive political discourse about women's issues, particularly without their participation in the debate. The emphasis, instead, should remain on women's emancipation, whether through grassroots activism or political participation. That's the only way to end up with democratic, inclusive societies in which everyone wins. -- Courtesy Dawn

Education crisis

Nazir A. Jomezai

Finally, the Balochistan government has taken a much-needed decision: it has increased the budget for higher education institutions (HEIs). This is likely to resolve many long-standing issues which had hindered the progress of these facilities, such as providing relief to employees who have endured months of delayed salaries. In addition, the announcement about granting full scholarships under the Benazir Bhutto Scholarship Programme for PhD students from Balochistan to study in 200 leading universities worldwide, will also go a long way in supporting the youth to find fulfillment.

Sadly, for decades, the governance and management of HEIs in Balochistan has faced a crisis, with the recent financial collapse revealing the ineptitude of the relevant authorities. Besides, the HEIs were always far too reliant on aid and grants. While much was spent on new construction and salaries, not a penny went towards profit-making endeavours, human development, research and advancement. The latter would have kept the HEIs safe from such a dismal monetary state, making them self-reliant and able to contribute to broader social well-being, resulting in research-based and informed decision-making.

The rapid academic and structural disintegration of the HEIs was eclipsed by the protests and uproar against employees' financial predicaments. The responsibility for this collapse rests with all stakeholders—from lawmakers and policy engineers to administrations and university associations.

Moreover, the shortsighted, unimaginative mindset of our

legislators is in complete conflict with internationally established criteria in higher education. They prefer quantity and cosmetic changes — new buildings and recruits — over quality, leading to grave liabilities, including non-disbursement of salaries to staff.

The increasing inclination for hiring contractual staff, reducing remunerations, raising student fees, and limiting scholarships and internships, alongside compromised university functions, spell disaster for higher education in the province. Every arbitrary move demoralises the teaching faculty, which is unable to tend to its daily needs and professional obligations.

After the Covid-19 pandemic, HEIs worldwide merged departments to foment efficiency and lower costs. Pakistan, on the other hand, continues to follow an outdated policy — expand departments into divisions and inaugurate more universities and satellite campuses. One must ponder over the questions of whether we need all those enrolled in HEIs, especially when there are no jobs for graduates, as well as whether every district has a university. Higher education has become more of a symbol than a forum for the contributions of scientists, entrepreneurs, philosophers, and historians.

The crisis is deep; it needs astute leadership to set a direction, empower others and create synergy. It is also time that HEIs' leadership took responsibility and devised a strategy to repair the damage. Moreover, rational resource utilisation and academic management have to become a priority, with a focus on profit generation and curtailed expansion schemes in far-flung ar-

cas. All academic associations must become more proactive in promoting quality education in their manifestos.

Salvation also lies in multiple interventions — integrating departments, closing satellite campuses, collaboration with post-graduate colleges, and capacity building. A shift towards inclusive disciplinary methods — subjects which enable communal engagement and are relevant to Balochistan's socioeconomic landscape — and an equitable tuition fee structure, whereby the wealthy pay a higher fee and the poor get a subsidy, are a necessity.

The Higher Education Commission has played a disappointing role, especially in the context of the 18th Amendment. It still takes key decisions — from determining the norms for recruitment, to programmes of study, to other administrative affairs.

Financial support and academic freedom in HEIs should be a provincial obligation. While it must be acknowledged that the HEC has guided higher education institutes in Balochistan, the dynamics have changed. It ought to give up its powers so that the institutions assume responsibility for managerial excellence as well as debates.

The establishment of a functional provincial HEC should be a priority, with the province operating its HEIs within its budget and in line with the needs of the people. More importantly, utilising Balochistan's human capital, as opposed to recruiting expensive foreign scholars, will make the provincial HEC more sustainable, relevant, and effective. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Pak, Kuwait agree for further promoting bilateral trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Kuwait on Monday agreed for further promoting friendly and bilateral trade relations between the two countries by moving forward in a more integrated manner, besides enhancing business to business and government cooperation.

The consensus to this regard was evolved in a meeting between Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan and Ambassador of Kuwait to Pakistan, Abdul Rehman Jay. Al-Mutiari, said a press release.

The meeting discussed various proposals regarding the promotion of trade activities from Kuwait and expressed his willingness to cooperate for various projects on the basis of "Business to Business" and "Government to Government".

Abdul Aleem Khan said that he wanted progress for investment

from Kuwait to Pakistan for which substantial results could be obtained, especially from the private sector.

Ambassador of Kuwait to Pakistan, Abdul Rehman Jay. Al-Mutiari assured the minister that his government would provide all possible support in the strengthening of Pakistan's economy and projects of mutual cooperation.

He further said that the Kuwait was keen to further strengthen the

brotherly relations with Pakistan and the contracts signed in the recent past by Kuwaiti institutions would be finalized within the given time frame.

The Ambassador of Kuwait, while appreciating Abdul Aleem Khan's recent visit to Kuwait, said that his presence in Kuwait helped more development of bilateral relations between Kuwait and Pakistan and promotion of mutual trade which would continue in the coming days as well.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a virtual meeting with the Representatives from Fitch Ratings.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kuwait to Pakistan, Abdul Rehman Jay. Al-Mutiari called on Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan.

Contracts with IPPs, should be revise and made public: Atif Ikram

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that it is necessary to review the agreements with IPPs. The government should bring the agreements with IPPs to the public. Expensive contracts are the cause of electricity crisis today, people and business circles have suffered severe problems due to expensive electricity bills, he expressed these views

while talking to a delegation of the business community. Federation President Atif Ikram said that the reason for the high electricity bills is the agreements made with the IPPs. The power plants of the PPPs are running at less than 10% capacity and the government is paying the full amount. On one hand, the circulating debt is increasing, on other hand, the public is being burdened.

Govt to encourage private seed companies: Minister

PESHAWAR (APP):

The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and private seed company Akora Seed Company here on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to ensure supply of quality seeds. Chief Executive Officer of Akora Seed Company Muhammad Siddiq and Javed Marwat, Secretary Agriculture, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. Provincial Minister Major

Retired Sajjad Barkwal participated in the ceremony as the chief guest. On this occasion, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Industries Abdul Karim Tordhir and senior officials of the Agriculture Department were also present. Talking to the representatives, the provincial minister assured them that the government would provide all the facilities to the seed companies in the supply of quality seeds.

NA Committee on Privatization expresses concerns over delay in PIACL privatization process

ISLAMABAD (APP):

National Assembly Standing Committee on Privatization on Monday expressed concern over the delay in the process of privatization of Pakistan International Airlines Company Limited (PIACL) and directed to provide a detailed working paper on the entities privatized during the last

10 years. The committee, which met here under the chairmanship of Farooq Sattar noted that the delay in the privatization process of PIACL resulted in an increase in its losses, and liabilities from Rs 200 billion in 2015 to Rs 800 billion in 2024 and recommended transparently expediting

the process. The committee also urged to protect the rights of the employees during the process which was assured by the Minister for Privatization, said a press release. The Secretary Ministry of Privatization gave a briefing on the overall working and performance of the Ministry.

Internship program revolutionize agriculture sector: DG

FAISALABAD (APP):

Director General (DG) Agriculture (Extension), Chaudhary Abdul Hameed has said that the one-year internship program announced by the CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif will revolutionize the agriculture sector in Punjab province. According to a spokesperson, DG agriculture said that the last date to receive the applications is August 5, 2024 (Monday). Under the agriculture transformation plan, 1000 agriculture graduates would be provided internships.

Commerce minister holds preparatory meeting for FoodAg Expo

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Monday conducted a zoom meeting to review preparations for the second International Food and Agriculture Exhibition (FoodAg 2024) to be held in Karachi from August 9 to 11. The minister emphasized the importance of top-notch arrangements and foolproof security for the international delegates expected to attend, said a press release issued here. During the meeting, Jam Kamal directed that significant efforts be made towards the branding and

promotion of the event to ensure its success. The exhibition will feature several key components including a Trade and Investment Conference, an Exhibition Display, a Cuisine Show and an Inauguration Dinner at Mohatta Palace.

Additionally, various sideline activities such as B2B seminars, chef table talks, and city tours organized by the Provincial Tourism Department and PTDC are planned to engage participants. Over 1,000 buyers have been recommended to attend, with 484 confirmed by missions from 74 countries.

Governor KP stresses on upholding law, ethics for national progress

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi here on Monday emphasized the critical role of law and ethics in national advancement and asserted that it was the collective responsibility to bolster faith in the justice system. Addressing the convocation ceremony as the chief guest at a private college, the Governor highlighted the escalating challenges posed by the disregard for legal and ethical standards, attributing them to increasing immorality. He lamented the consequences

of eroding confidence in the judiciary, asserting that it is the collective responsibility to bolster faith in the justice system. The Governor underscored the significance of the day for students and the institution alike. Faisal Karim Kundi urged the graduating students to embrace heightened responsibilities, stressing that safeguarding the supremacy of law and constitution is paramount for national progress and prosperity. He emphasized that democracy hinges on the enforcement of law,

cautioning that nations forsaking legal integrity risk losing their identity. He called upon Pakistanis to champion the cause of legal supremacy, urging a spirit of sacrifice for the nation's welfare. Acknowledging the post-pandemic surge in online activities, he highlighted the growing importance of the digital sector. The convocation was attended by Vice-Chancellor Hazara University Professor Dr. Mohsin Nawaz and Vice-Chancellor Abbottabad University of Science and Technology Professor Dr. Majid.

Three cases of May 9 dismissed related to PTI founder's interim bail

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) dismissed all three applications related to interim bails in 3 cases of former Prime Minister Imran Khan on the basis of withdrawal. During the hearing, Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh inquired that while we are hearing this case, is Imran Khan in custody? The PTI lawyer told yes, he is currently in custody. The lawyer further said that on July 9 our bails were rejected by the Anti-Terrorism Court, we filed an application in the Lahore High Court on July 13. On this, Justice Anwar

ul-Haq remarked that we have to see from the official record when the applications were filed, Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh said that it is not proved from the record that application was filed on July 13. On this PTI Lawyer said that we want to withdraw these applications. Later, the Lahore High Court dismissed the petitions on the basis of withdrawal. It should be remembered that Imran Khan had challenged the Anti-Terrorism Court's decision to reject the bails in the Jinnah House, Shadman Police Station and Askari Tower attack cases.

Police seize 3,000 liters of smuggled fuel

RAJANPUR (APP): Rajanpur Police claimed to have successfully foiled an attempt to smuggle fuel and seized 3,000 liters of oil here Monday. Following the instructions from District Police Officer (DPO) Dost Muhammad, a crackdown against smuggling is in progress across the district. SHO Sadar Police Station Asad Abbas, along with his team, conducted the operation which resulted in the seizure of a tanker filled with smuggled diesel. One suspect involved in the smuggling was arrested along with the vehicle. DPO Captain (Retd.) Dost Muhammad has issued directives to all SHOs in the district.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique chairs meeting to review projects under Marri Development Plan.



ABBOTABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi addressing media persons during his visit to Abbotabad Press Club.

Punjab govt facilitating religious minorities: Arora

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, visited Multan and attended a reception held at the local Poyam Church in Razaabad. The provincial minister highlighted practical steps taken by the Punjab government to realize Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's vision of a "Minority-Friendly Punjab." He stated that for the first time, the Punjab government has increased minority funds by 200% in the recent budget, which will provide more resources

for the welfare of minorities. He mentioned that the government had allocated a 5% job quota and a 2% quota in universities for minorities to provide employment and educational opportunities to the minority community. Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora said that a significant amount has been allocated in the development fund for minorities in South Punjab, and the Punjab government is issuing special grants on occasions like Christmas, Easter, Holi, and Diwali.

Minister reviews progress in 27 schemes for Murree

LAHORE (APP): Progress in 27 schemes under the Murree Development Plan was reviewed in a meeting held at the Civil Secretariat, which was presided over by Punjab Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq on Monday. Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmed Mian, Special Secretary Asia Gul, Additional Secretary Maria Tariq and others participated. The Deputy Commissioner Murree briefed the meeting on the development plan

through video link. The minister said that on the direction of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, it has been decided to start projects including upgrading of the water network in Murree. "Drainage and streetlight services will also be upgraded in the main tourist hub of Punjab", he said. He elaborated that the water schemes for Murree would be completed in three phases and short-term scheme would be started first.

CM meets PA Speaker, discusses assembly affairs

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif met Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan to discuss affairs of Punjab Assembly and overall political situation in the country. She also had a detailed discussion on various development projects of the government in the province. The CM said the Punjab government was focused on providing maximum relief to the poor people. She added, "We want to bottle up inflation and bury it forever." Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan appreciated the steps taken by the Punjab government to rid people of artificial inflation.

Heatwave hits Jacobabad, dozens hospitalized

JACOBABAD (APP): Dozens of people were admitted to the hospital after fainting and humidity due to extreme heat and humidity in Jacobabad on Monday. According to rescue sources, many people became unconscious and had to be admitted to the hospital due to the severe heat and humidity.

All stakeholders should work together to promote inter-faith harmony in the country

LAHORE (Online): Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly, Anthony Naveed and Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Zaheer Iqbal called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore today. Pastor Daniyal Saleem also accompanied Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly Anthony Naveed. Both the Deputy Speakers congratulated Sardar Saleem Haider Khan

on assuming the office of Governor of Punjab and expressed best wishes to him. In the meeting, ways to promote inter-provincial relations was discussed. Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that all stakeholders should work together to promote inter-faith harmony in the country. He said that everyone has to play a positive role in the development of country.



LAHORE: Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly, Anthony Naveed called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Tarakai directs EMA to focus on facilities provision in schools

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education, Faisal Khan Tarakai has directed the authorities of the Education Monitoring Authority (EMA) to focus on the provision of facilities, including the attendance of teachers, students and ongoing academic activities in schools.

He said that according to the data of the authority, policy level decisions are made for schools and students and the achievement of all important goals has been ensured due to the excellent performance of the monitoring authority. The minister said that the monitoring of double shift schools programmes and complete details of the girls' community schools and monthly visits to schools have also been entrusted to the authority. He said that all the employees of the authority have worked very diligently in provision of furniture free textbooks to schools, details of enrolment campaign and vacancies, which is appreciable.

International News

Israel sends tanks back into Khan Younis area, 49 killed after new evacuation order

Monitoring Desk CAIRO: Israel sent tanks back into the greater Khan Younis area and at least 49 Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire, Gaza medics said on Monday, after ordering evacuations of some districts it said had been used for renewed attacks by militants. The Palestinians were killed by tank salvos in the town of Bani Suhaila and other towns fringing the eastern side of Khan Younis, with the area also bombed by air, they said. Residents of the densely built-up area of southern Gaza said the tanks advanced for more than two kilometres into Bani Suhaila, forcing residents to flee under fire. "It is like doomsday," one resident, who only identified himself as Abu Khaled, told Reuters via chat app. "People are flee-

ing under fire, many are dead and wounded on the roads." The Gaza health ministry said the dead included several women and children and that at least 186 other people had been injured by Israeli fire. The Gaza ministry does not distinguish between militants and civilians in its death tallies. Around 400,000 people are living in the targeted areas and dozens of families have begun to leave their houses, Palestinian officials said, adding they were not given time to get out of harm's way before the Israeli strikes began. Some families fled on donkey carts, others on foot, carrying mattresses and other belongings. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said two of its clinics located in eastern Khan Younis had been knocked out of operation because of

the new Israeli offensive. At Khan Younis Nasser Hospital, some people stood outside the morgue to bid farewell to dead relatives. "We are tired, we are tired in Gaza, every day our children are martyred, every day, every moment," said Ahmed Sammour, who lost several relatives in bombings of eastern Khan Younis. "No one told us to evacuate. They brought four floors crashing down on civilians... and the bodies they could reach, they brought to the refrigerator (morgue)," Sammour added. There was no immediate Israeli comment on the strikes on the eastern side of Khan Younis, whose population initially fled their homes when Israeli tanks stormed in several months ago, before returning after they withdrew to rebuild their lives.



A Palestinian woman sits on a wheelchair as she and others flee the eastern part of Khan Younis after they were ordered by Israeli army to evacuate their neighborhoods, amid Israel-Hamas conflict, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

Russian troops mount pressure on Ukrainian logistics hub of Pokrovsk

Monitoring Desk KYIV: Ukraine's top commander said on Monday that Russian forces were staging relentless assaults to try to advance towards the town of Pokrovsk, a logistics hub in the east and that there was active fighting taking place along the entire front. Nearly 29 months after the full-scale invasion, Ukraine has stepped up its mobilisation effort to address its manpower shortages and been reinforced by supplies of Western artillery shells, but Russian troops have continued to

inch forward. "The enemy pays no attention to their fairly high level of losses and continues to push through towards Pokrovsk," Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi said in a statement from the eastern front. Pokrovsk is less than 25 km (15 miles) from Russian-occupied land, according to open-source intelligence battlefield maps, and lies at an intersection of roads and a railway that makes it an important logistics point for the military and for civilians in the east.

UK's Rwanda asylum scheme has cost 700 million pounds

Monitoring Desk LONDON: Britain's now-scrapped plan to deport migrants who arrive illegally on British shores to Rwanda has cost taxpayers 700 million pounds (\$904 million), new interior minister Yvette Cooper said on Monday.

Harris calls Biden's record 'unmatched' as she launches her presidential campaign

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris lauded President Joe Biden for his service to the country in her first public appearance on Monday since he abruptly abandoned his reelection bid and endorsed her as his successor. "Joe Biden's legacy over the last three years is unmatched in modern history," Harris said at a White House event to honor college athletes. "Every day, our president, Joe Biden, fights for the American people and we are deeply, deeply grateful for his service to our nation." Harris did not specifically refer to her new status as the leading Democratic candidate for president, after Biden stepped aside on Sunday under growing pressure from fellow Democrats. Campaign officials and allies have already made hundreds of calls on Harris' behalf, urging delegates to next month's Democratic Party convention to join in nominating her for president in the Nov. 5 election against Republican Donald Trump. Biden's departure was the latest shock to a White House race that included the near-assassination of former President Trump by a gunman during a campaign stop and the nomination of Trump's fellow hardliner, U.S. Senator J.D. Vance, as his running mate. Harris said in a post on X that she would visit what had been the Biden campaign headquarters in Delaware - now the Harris campaign headquarters - on Monday afternoon. She said Biden, who tested positive for COVID-19 last week, was feeling better. Virtually all of the prominent Democrats who had been seen as potential challengers to Harris have lined up behind her, including Governors Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan.

half, urging delegates to next month's Democratic Party convention to join in nominating her for president in the Nov. 5 election against Republican Donald Trump. Biden's departure was the latest shock to a White House race that included the near-assassination of former President Trump by a gunman during a campaign stop and the nomination of Trump's fellow hardliner, U.S. Senator J.D. Vance, as his running mate. Harris said in a post on X that she would visit what had been the Biden campaign headquarters in Delaware - now the Harris campaign headquarters - on Monday afternoon. She said Biden, who tested positive for COVID-19 last week, was feeling better. Virtually all of the prominent Democrats who had been seen as potential challengers to Harris have lined up behind her, including Governors Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan.

China and Philippines reach deal to avoid clashes at disputed reef

Monitoring Desk MANILA: China and the Philippines have struck a deal aimed at stopping the two countries from clashing over the fiercely disputed Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea, the Philippine government said Sunday. In the past year, the territorial standoff at the reef has flared and came to a head in mid-June when Chinese forces seized and damaged two Philippine navy boats with machetes and improvised spears. Several Filipino navy personnel were injured in the incident. China and the Philippines reached a deal they hope will end confrontations at the most fiercely disputed shoal in the South China Sea, the Philippine government said Sunday. The Philippines occupies Second Thomas Shoal but China also claims it, and increasingly hostile clashes at sea have sparked fears of

larger conflicts that could involve the United States. The crucial deal was reached on Sunday, after a series of meetings between Philippine and Chinese diplomats in Manila and exchanges of diplomatic notes that aimed to establish a mutually acceptable arrangement at the shoal without conceding either side's territorial claims. Two Philippine officials, who have knowledge of the negotiations, confirmed the deal to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity and the government later issued a brief statement announcing the deal without providing details. "Both sides continue to recognize the need to deescalate the situation in the South China Sea and manage differences through dialogue and consultation and agree that the agreement will not prejudice each other's positions in the South China Sea."

Australia warns of malicious websites after cyber outage

Monitoring Desk SYDNEY: Australia's cyber intelligence agency said on Saturday that "malicious websites and unofficial code" were being released online claiming to aid recovery from Friday's global digital outage, which hit media, retailers, banks and airlines. Australia was one of many countries affected by the outage that caused havoc worldwide after a botched software update from CrowdStrike. On Saturday, the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) - the country's cyber intelligence agency - said: "A number of malicious websites and unofficial code are being released claiming to help entities recover from the widespread outages caused by the CrowdStrike technical incident". On its website, the agency said its cyber security centre "strongly encourages all consumers to source their technical information and updates from official.

Bangladesh student group suspends protests over death toll

Monitoring Desk DHAKA: The Bangladeshi student group leading demonstrations that have spiralled into deadly violence suspended protests on Monday for 48 hours, with its leader saying they had not wanted reform "at the expense of so much blood". What began as demonstrations against politicised admission quotas for sought-after government jobs snowballed into some of the worst unrest of Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina's tenure. A curfew has been imposed and soldiers are patrolling cities across the South Asian country, while a nationwide internet blackout since Thursday has drastically restricted the flow of information to the outside world. "We are suspending the shutdown protests for 48 hours," Nahid Islam, the top leader of the main protest organiser Students Against Discrimination.

Netanyahu to face US Congress amid Gaza tensions

Monitoring Desk JERUSALEM: Facing intense pressure to quickly cut a ceasefire deal with Hamas in Gaza, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is to deliver a landmark speech to the US Congress on Wednesday. While Netanyahu will become the first foreign leader to address a joint meeting of the two chambers four times, pulling ahead of Britain's Winston Churchill on three, an expected meeting between Netanyahu and US President Joe Biden is still not confirmed.

Hezbollah says fires rockets, drones at Israel

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Lebanon's Hezbollah said it fired Katyusha rockets and drones at Israel on Sunday after strikes which the Israeli army said targeted Hezbollah weapons storage facilities. Hezbollah has traded near-daily cross-border fire with Israeli forces in support of Hamas since the Palestinian militant group's October 7 attack on southern Israel triggered war in the Gaza Strip. Six people were wounded in the overnight Israeli strike, according to the official Lebanese National News Agency. In retaliation, Iran-backed Hezbollah, an ally of Hamas, said in separate statements that on Sunday it targeted two Israeli military positions in northern Israel with Katyusha rockets and drones. An earlier statement by the group had said its fighters also struck the Dafna area with Katyusha

rockets "in response to the Israeli enemy's attacks that targeted civilians in the town of Adloun, injuring several of them". Israel's military had said its air force "struck two Hezbollah weapons storage facilities in southern Lebanon, containing rockets and additional weaponry" overnight Saturday to Sunday. Hezbollah on Sunday also said that three of its fighters had been killed in southern Lebanon. The Lebanese army also reported that two of its soldiers were wounded "moderately" on Sunday when Israeli fire hit a watchtower in the south of the country. The violence since October has killed at least 518 people in Lebanon, according to an AFP tally. Most of the dead have been fighters, but they have included at least 104 civilians. On the Israeli side, 18 soldiers and 13 civilians have been killed, according to Israeli authorities.

Finance Minister chairs meeting of CCoSOEs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Commerce was further directed to explore Public Private Partnership model for the Pak Expo Company, whereas the committee also considered the summary presented by the Ministry of Science and Technology and approved to rename and restructure STEDEC into Indigenous Research and Development Agency (Pvt) Limited (IRADA). It was further directed to constitute its board and operationalize the entity by December 2024. The CCoSOEs also approved the proposals of Aviation Division and Ministry of Communications for the appointment of candidates as Independent Directors on the Boards of PIA Holding Company Board, Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (PPSMB) and Postal Life Insurance Company Limited (PLICL).



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises (CCoSOEs).



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Govt providing opportunities, platform for progress to Balochistan's youth: Rana

QUETTA (APP): Chairman Prime Minister Youth Program Rana Mashhood Ahmad on Monday said that the government was providing platforms, opportunities to the youth to exhibit their abilities and play their pivotal part for the prosperity of the country.

Addressing a ceremony organized by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) for awarding certificates through Chamalang Education Project to the students of Loralai and Kohlu districts at Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management (BUITEMS), he said that the condition of Balochistan would improve as the province is lucky to have such lot of talented and motivated youth.

He urged the youth to continue efforts for making prosperous and stable Pakistan besides working with diligence to create scope in the society. Rana hailed the

students that "you are not just making your future but that would be the success of your family, region, province and the country at large."

He also lauded the Chamalang Education Project that providing free education to the poor students of Loralai and Kohlu districts.

Mashhood Ahmad Khan said that the then Chief Minister Punjab, Shehbaz Sharif has initiated the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund to provide scholarships to talented students in the province which would be expanded across the country and it renamed as Pakistan Educational Endowment Fund.

He said the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has the vision to empower the youth in order to make them a productive citizens. The government has established Danish School Authority and in this connection four Danish schools in Balochistan would be set up for which funds have been allocated in the recent budget.

He hailed the efforts of Pakistan Army for providing education in remote areas of Balochistan.

Balochistan Minister for Education, Raheela Hamid Khan Durrani on the occasion said that she feels happy when seeing the students of Balochistan, competing the students of other provinces.

She said that PML-N President Nawaz Sharif has always launched youth programmes to empower them. He allocated seats for the students of Balochistan in the educational institute of Punjab.

Raheela Durrani said that PML-N has always been supporting Balochistan, adding that the visit of Chairman of Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan is the evident of federal government's thriving support to the province.

President for comprehensive plan to prevent urban flooding in Karachi

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday directed the Sindh government to prioritize a comprehensive plan to prevent urban flooding in Karachi by adopting a sustainable, long-term strategy based on international best practices for managing sewage and stormwater.

The President expressed these views while chairing a meeting on saving Karachi from urban flooding and environmental degradation and promoting sustainable water resource development, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The President was given a comprehensive presentation by international water and sewage management experts and proposed various solutions to address the challenges of urban flooding and sewage in Karachi on the pattern of the tunnel sewer systems

of Washington DC, the London Super Sewer Project, and the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System of Singapore.

Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, Adjutant General Lt General Muhammad Asim Malik, Minister for Local Government Department of Sindh, Saeed Ghani, Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, Syed Salahuddin, Country Head Herrenknecht Pakistan, Col @Danyal Naveed Ahmed, senior government officials, and local and international water management experts attended the meeting.

During the briefing, it was proposed that a network of small and large sewer tunnels under existing roads in high-flood

zones of Karachi may be developed. It was highlighted that underground tunnelling using modern techniques would not disturb the public, city traffic and land ownership.

The experts informed that Karachi generated almost 450 million gallons per day (MGD) of sewage. They added that sewage and stormwater were collected in small and large open drains which fell into the Lyari and Malir rivers and were released untreated into the sea, polluting the marine ecosystem.

It was further informed that the existing network of drains had limited capacity and absorbed around 50% of the rainwater under normal circumstances. The meeting was told that excess water was not absorbed by the system, causing urban flooding.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Atta Tarar planting sapling in connection with tree plantation campaign ceremony at trail 5 in the Federal Capital.

DPM Dar, Omani FM Badr emphasize upon concerted efforts to combat terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of the Sultanate of Oman, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi on Monday discussed the recent terrorist attack on Imam Bargah Ali bin Abu Talib in Wadi Kabir in Muscat and emphasized upon the importance of concerted action to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The DPM, foreign minister held a telephone conversation with his Omani counterpart. The deputy prime minister extended Pakistan's full support to Oman in its efforts to combat terrorism.

He also appreciated Oman's support in repatriation of dead bodies to Pakistan and taking care of wounded/injured Pakistani nationals in Omani hospitals, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

The two leaders reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, ranging from political, economic and defense cooperation to people-people exchanges.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dar welcomed the forthcoming visit of a delegation of Omani investors to Pakistan later this week, geared towards exploring areas of mutually beneficial economic cooperation.

Cabinet meeting with PTI ban on agenda postponed

ISLAMABAD (INP): A meeting of the federal cabinet to give approval for ban on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was postponed on Monday, sources said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was scheduled to chair the meeting on Tuesday, July 23, when the cabinet members were likely to nod the ban on the political party. The cabinet was also expected to give approval for pursuing cases.



QUETTA: Former Deputy Speaker Sardar Babar Khan Musakhail meeting with Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran. Deputy Commissioner Kalat Bilal Shabbir is also present

Testing and commissioning of Gwadar Int'l Airport get completed

GWADAR (INP): The testing and commissioning of the New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) have been completed with precision.

This phase marks the culmination of a detailed three-month process, begun on April 15, that optimized the airport's compliance with design requirements, operational efficiency, and minimized future operational risks while adhering to maintenance standards and legislative regulations.

The comprehensive testing and commissioning involved the airport's entire infrastructure, including the runway, taxiway, apron, electrical systems, telecommunications networks, security features, water supply system, and grid station, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

A Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Pakistan official explained to Gwadar Pro, "Testing and commissioning encompass a series of engineering techniques and procedures designed to check, inspect, and test every operational component of a project, from individual functions to complex systems."

The main objective is to ensure that all elements, including construction, processing, and installation, function according to capacity, usage, and requirements."

Last July, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif inaugurated the airbase infrastructure of the China-funded NGIA, which includes 32 components such as civil, technical, electrical, and communication facilities, alongside modern allied services.

The next phase will see the construction of a cargo complex designed to handle diverse cargo types. Upon completion, NGIA will be the largest airport in Pakistan.

BISP reflects Benazir Bhutto's vision for welfare of poor: Rubina

KOHIKISTAN (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid on Monday said that the BISP reflects the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto for the welfare of poor women in Pakistan.

Mohtarma laid the foundation of this program during her exile in Dubai and it was later implemented by President Asif Ali Zardari in 2008.

Speaking at public gatherings in Tehsil Batera, Pattan, and Palas, Senator Rubina Khalid reiterated the commitment of BISP to uphold the dignity of deserving women by ensuring full disbursement of funds without deductions.

Govt. working on improvement of services and solution to other public issues: Sardar Khetran

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has stated that the incumbent government is working on improvement of services and solution to the issues of people.

He said that special attention is being given on projects of restoration of infrastructure and provision of livelihood to the people.

The Minister PHE was speaking to former Deputy Speaker of Balochistan Assembly, Sardar Babar Musakhail who called on him here on Monday.

During the course of meeting, different matters were discussed about the ongoing development projects in Musakhail.

The Deputy Commissioner Bilal Shabbir and other concerned high ups were also present in the meeting.

The former Deputy Speaker thanked the Provincial Minister for the public welfare activities in Musakhail.

Sardar Babar Musakhail appreciated the government's initiatives saying that the development works are important for improving socio-economic condition of the public.

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran said that the provincial government has started the steps for implementation on development projects on priority basis.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Finance Mir Shoaib Nausherwani listening problems of a delegation who called on him

Govt. decides to increase number of green buses in Quetta: Secretary Transport

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to increase number of green buses in Quetta.

According to the Secretary Transport Department, Hayat Kakar, 10 more green buses are being brought costing Rs. 980 million.

Similarly, summary is also being prepared to bring 20 more buses on directives of the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, the Secretary Transport informed.

The new buses to be purchased are also included the pink buses for women, Hayat Kakar maintained.

It may be mentioned here that eight green buses are plying in the provincial metropolis. The green buses ply on the route of Balesi (BUITEMS) to Sariab road (Balochistan University).

The Secretary Transport informed that an average 9,000 people travel on the green buses in Quetta.

NAB gets more seven day custody of Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Accountability Court (AC) on Monday granted the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) a further seven-day physical remand of PTI founder Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in new toshakhana case.

The two accused were produced before the Accountability Court at Adiala Jail after their eight day remand was ended.

During the hearing, the NAB prayed the court to grant further 14 days physical remand of the accused for more investigation from them in the said case. The NAB also presented the progress report regarding investigation to the court.

4.7 magnitude earthquake strikes Swat, no damage reported

ISLAMABAD (APP): An earthquake with a magnitude of 4.7 struck District Swat and surrounding areas on Monday, causing no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

According to a private news channel, people came out of houses and shops in fear and panic after the earthquake, reciting Kalma Tayyaba.

According to the seismological centre, the magnitude of the earthquake was 4.7 on the Richter scale, the depth of the earthquake was 205 km, and the epicenter was the Hindu Kush mountain range.

Electricity connections of 581 defaulters disconnected in QESCO's different circles

Independent Report

QUETTA: The electricity connections of at least 581 more defaulters were disconnected by the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) in its different operation circles.

The spokesman of QESCO informed that the Company's campaign is continued against the pilferers of electricity and defaulters in Quetta, Pishin, Loralai, Sibi, Khuzdar and Makran operation circles.

During the crackdown, connections of some 581 defaulters were suspended on non-payment of dues. They are included the domestic, commercial and agricultural consumers during last 24 hours.

The spokesman said that over Rs. 6.19 million were also recovered from 465 defaulters.

Besides, over Rs. 1.232 million were also recovered on account of the detection and fine charged to those involved in the power pilferage.

Meanwhile, fine was also charged to 73 domestic, commercial and agricultural consumers on doing their meters shunt or slow.

The applications have also been submitted against 12 electricity pilferers in different police stations of the province for legal action, added the QESCO spokesman.

Registration dates for Inter academic sessions 2025-26 announced

QUETTA (APP): Controller of Balochistan Board Abida Kakar said that the Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) Quetta announced registration dates for Regular Students of Pre-Engineering Medical Arts Commerce and Science General Groups for Intermediate Academic Sessions 2025-2026 through Higher Secondary Schools.

She said this in an official notification issued here on Monday. She said that per student could pay signal fee Rs1500 for registration till date of September 10, 2024. She said that per student would also submit double fee Rs, 3000 till October 2, 2024 after completing last date while three folds with Rs 4500, October 15 could be submitted by per student for getting forms.

Omar questions smuggling of POL products into Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders questioned that who was lodging FIRs against them, saying that "They are not digesting the Supreme Court's verdict."

"The civilian government should have addressed the press conference instead of the DG ISPR today," said Opposition Leader Omar Ayub while addressing a press conference here on Monday. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan and other PTI leaders were present there.

While talking about the DG ISPR's term of "digital terrorism", Omar Ayub said that he was giving examples of Syria, Iran and Libya. "These countries fell down just because of dictatorship," said the PTI leaders.

Balochistan lagging behind in all sectors including health and education: Shahina Kakar

Independent Report

QUETTA: The central joint secretary of Awami National Party and former Member Provincial Assembly, Ms. Shahina Kakar has regretfully pointed out that Balochistan is the most backward and oppressed province of the country, which is lagging behind in all sector right from education and health to the basic infrastructure. While speaking to different delegations who called on her here the other day, Ms. Shahina Kakar said that the people of Balochistan are deprived of the basic amenities of life despite being important part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

She said that as the livelihood, shelter and clothes are basic needs of the people, so are the health and education facilities.

But, the public healthcare has never been priority of the rulers, she mentioned adding that the state is considered to be the mother, but it seems imprisoned in the critical issues of poverty, ignorance and illness. In view of the critical situation, the government needs to pay attention on improving the healthcare system particularly in the Pashtoon areas of the province, adding Ms. Shahina Kakar stressed. She also stressed the need to take immediate steps for improving healthcare facilities in Kuchlak, Harnai, Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Chaman, Muslim Bagh, Killa Saifullah, Zhoib, Duki, Ziarat, Shirani, Musakhail and other areas.

Tarar for planting maximum trees to combat future climate challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, on Monday emphasized to address the looming challenge of climate change highlighting the critical need to plant a significant number of trees for the sake of future generations. During a ceremony held by the Capital Development Authority at Margalla Hills, in his address, Tarar highlighted the commitment of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Pakistani government to maintain Islamabad's environment by promoting extensive tree plantation. He praised Islamabad as one of the nation's most beautiful cities, with Margalla National Park serving as a prized asset.

Tarar underscored that Islamabad enjoys superior air quality compared to other cities, asserting that planting more trees would further enhance the environment. He lamented that while Pakistan contributes only 2% of global carbon emissions, it bears 90% of the adverse effects of climate change. Calling for international cooperation, Tarar urged countries with high carbon emissions to collaborate with Pakistan in combating climate change impacts.



USTA MUHAMMAD: Director General PDMA Jahanzeb Khan and Assistant Commissioner inspecting Kerthar canal