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97th Anniversary of PLA hosted at GHQ Pakistan, China ties exceptional, based on unwavering belief in each other: COAS

Says both militaries continue to engage in bilateral cooperation; No force can destroy brotherhood between two militaries: Chinese Ambassador

RAWALPINDI (Agencies): Revitalising bilateral ties between Pakistan and China, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir has said that they "are exceptional and have always weathered the vicissitudes of the strategic environment with mutual trust and unwavering belief in each other's support".

The army chief made the remarks on the occasion of the 97th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China hosted at

the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday.

According to the military's media wing, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong was the chief guest on the occasion. Defence Attaché Major General Wang Zhong, Chinese Embassy officers and officials from the tri-services of Pakistan attended the event.

General Munir, while welcoming the Chinese guests, congratulated the

PLA and praised its contribution to Chinese defence, security and the nation's development.

During his speech, the army chief termed the Pak-China bilateral ties "exceptional" and based on "unwavering belief in each other's support".

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Zaidong thanked COAS Munir for hosting the event for the 97th anniversary of the founding of the PLA.

"Pakistani military has always been at the forefront of countering terror-

ism and has made great sacrifices for the peace and stability of Pakistan and the region," the diplomat said.

"We stand ready to work with our brethren to combat terrorism and firmly believe that no force can destroy the iron-clad friendship between China and Pakistan and the brotherhood between the two militaries", he concluded.

Prior to this prestigious event, Chinese Minister of the International Department of the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) Liu Jianchao paid a three-day visit to Pakistan last month to co-chair the third meeting of the Pakistan-China Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM) for the political parties on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In his meeting with COAS Munir, he had lauded the Pakistan Army's support in providing security to Chinese nationals and projects in the country, according to the ISPR.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong Maj Gen Wang Zhong, Defence Attaché, Chinese Embassy officials and officers from tri-services of Pakistan cutting cake at the 97th anniversary of the founding of Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) of China, hosted at the GHQ.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the reforms and digitisation of the Federal Board of Revenue.

Issue of Article 6 against PTI leaders can be brought in Parliament: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said that ad hoc judges should be appointed as the constitution permits for this. He said that the matter of imposing Article 6 on PTI leaders could be brought to the Parliament for debate.

In a statement, the minister denied the news about the extension of the tenure

President, PM wish COVID-hit Joe Biden a speedy recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday expressed good wishes for the early recovery of President Joseph R. Biden of the United States of America, who has tested positive for COVID-19.

President Zardari conveyed his sincere hopes for President Biden's good health and well being, according to a President House statement.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has extended good wishes to US President Joe Biden for his "swift and complete" recovery after he tested positive for Covid-19 after which he went into isolation, which will take him off the election campaign trail for days.

PM Shehbaz directs increase of Appellate Tribunals to 100 for accelerated tax case handling

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday instructed that the number of Appellate Tribunals be increased to 100 to expedite the resolution of tax cases.

Chairing a review meeting on reforms and digitization in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the prime minister also directed an increase in the number of Appellate Tribunals for Customs cases and the creation of a dashboard to evaluate the performance of Tax Appellate Tribunals.

The prime minister stated that tax refund fraud amounting to Rs 800 billion was uncovered in the past

four months, and emphasized further improvements to the tax refund system.

The prime minister expressed that increasing revenue was achievable through reforms in the FBR. He lamented the unfortunate and unnecessary delays in many of the FBR's reform projects.

The prime minister emphasized zero tolerance for delays in sales tax refund payments and instructed the immediate formulation of a strategy to recover unlawfully issued refunds.

The prime minister directed the complete digitization of the Fraud Detection and Investigation Department of the FBR and

the development of a strategy to centralize all ongoing reform projects within the FBR.

The prime minister instructed the relevant authorities to employ the latest technology and the best personnel for the digitization of the FBR.

Shehbaz Sharif instructed the implementation of a unified sales tax system for all taxpayers by October 2024.

The prime minister was briefed that a unified sales tax return system, successfully implemented by the telecom sector, was being introduced for taxpayer convenience. FBR aimed to integrate with revenue authorities across the

country through a unified sales tax platform.

The prime minister assured timely funding for upgrading the customs system and directed the FBR to devise a strategy for designing and implementing the new software system.

The prime minister was informed about the reforms in Inland Revenue and Customs, along with the progress achieved in digitizing the FBR in the last eight weeks.

The prime minister was informed that McKinsey, a globally recognized consultant, was overseeing the digitization process of the FBR, and positive outcomes from this

initiative have begun to surface.

The PM was informed that there were 83,579 tax-related cases amounting to Rs 3.2 trillion pending in various courts and tribunals.

It was conveyed in the forum that during the current government's tenure, several initiatives have been undertaken to handle tax cases. In the past four months alone, courts have settled 63 cases amounting to approximately Rs 44 billion.

The prime minister was briefed that modern technology has identified 4.9 million individuals capable of paying taxes.

Balochistan Police launches Online complain website in Central Police Office

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Police launched the Online Complain Website here on Thursday. The Provincial Ministers Mir Shoaib Nausherwan and Ms. Rahila Hameed Durrani formally inaugu-



rated the Police Online complain Website along with the Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh at the Central Police Office.

Also present on the occasion were the Additional Inspector General of Police, Muhammad Saeed Khan,

Commandant Balochistan Constabulary, Agha Muhammad Yousaf, DIG Police Quetta, Aitezaz Ahmed Goraya, Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Lt. (Retd) Saad bin Asad and other senior police officers.

While briefing the participants, the DIG Police informed that the Online Website has been prepared to facilitate the masses.

Any citizen can register online complain through the website. The driving licenses can also be verified from the police through website.

GoB decides to present stance of province at federal level in wholehearted manner

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to present stance of the province at federal level and that in the upcoming meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI) in wholehearted manner.

The decision to this effect was made in a meeting chaired by the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti here on Thursday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included the parliamentary secretary for Inter-provincial Coordination, Ms. Meena Majeed Baloch, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary, Inter-Provincial Coordination, Syed Sikandar Shah, Secretary Irrigation, Hafiz Abdul Majid, Secretary Irrigation, Bashir Ahmed Bazai besides other concerned high ups.

The meeting reviewed the matters about upcoming meeting of the Council of Common Interests (CCI).

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister said that the interests of province would be given preference in the next meeting of CCI at every cost, and all the decisions would be made keeping in view the public interest.

He said that it is the endeavour of provincial government to present the case of province at federal level in wholehearted manner and take practical steps for overall development and prosperity of the province resolving the issues of province with the federal government.

Moreover, the Chief Minister also reiterated the government's resolve to make utmost efforts to ensure acquisition of the receipts out of the province's resources from the federal government.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for Council of Common Interest (CCI)

Governor thanks PM, his whole team for initiative: Quetta-Jeddah direct Umrah flights to start from August 6 thanks to Governor Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has decided to launch direct Umrah flights from Jeddah from Quetta on August 6.

The direct flights between Quetta-Jeddah would be operated twice in week, stated the General Manager PIA Balochistan, Abdul Ghaffar Miankhalil in an official hand out issued here on Thursday.

The flights from Quetta to Jeddah would be operated on every Tuesday and Friday, for the reservation of seats have also been started, stated the General Manager PIA.

It may be mentioned here that the Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail had made sincere endeavours for

launch of the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah for those wanting to perform Umrah in Saudi Arabia.

In this regard, the Governor Balochistan had taken up the matter, actually the longstanding demand of people of the province with the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif during his one-on-one meeting with him (PM) during his recent visit to Quetta.

According to the official hand out, the Prime Minister had assured to the Governor that he would be hearing the good news about start of the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah.

Afterwards, the Governor Balochistan had also asked the Chairman and Gen-

eral Manager PIA Balochistan to take steps for operating the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah.

With this, the endeavours made by Governor bear fruits finally, and now all is set to launch the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah from August.

The Governor thanked the Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif and his whole team for full filling the long-standing demand of people of the province.

He said that the people of province would be saved from the hardships and inconvenience of travelling to Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, etc. in future with start of direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah to perform Umrah.

He said that the people of province would be saved from the hardships and inconvenience of travelling to Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, etc. in future with start of direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah to perform Umrah.

CM, Commander 12 Corps review security arrangements for Ashura in CPO Quetta

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti visited the Central Police Office Quetta to review the security arrangements made for Ashura-e-Muharram procession in the province including Quetta on Wednesday.

During the visit, the Commander 12 Corps, Lt. General Rahat Naseem, Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove, Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Inspector General of Police, Inspector General of Frontier Corps, and other

Pakistan launches national drug survey to combat narcotics menace

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has initiated a nationwide survey to gather data on drug users, marking a significant step towards creating effective anti-narcotics strategies. This embarked on a critical mission to combat drug abuse by conducting a national drug survey, the first in 11 years.

The survey, approved by the Federal Minister of Interior and Anti-Narcot-

ics Mohsin Naqvi, aims to collect comprehensive data on drug users from across the country, including homes, educational institutions, and slums, providing valuable insights for anti-narcotics efforts.

The National Drug Survey will be a comprehensive and authoritative exercise, covering homes, educational institutions, slums, and other areas. The

data collected will enable policymakers to make informed decisions in the fight against narcotics.

Naqvi emphasized the importance of accurate survey data, stating that it will be crucial in shaping effective anti-narcotics strategies.

He directed the relevant authorities to finalize the survey methodology and timeline within 15 days.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting of Committee regarding National Drug Survey.

New case of Toshakhana: Imran, Bushra challenge their arrest in IHC

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi have challenged in Islamabad High Court (IHC) their arrest in new case of Toshakhana.

PTI founder and Bushra Bibi have filed petition in IHC Thursday seeking court's orders for declaring their arrest illegal besides releasing them.

The petition said PTI founder and Bushra Bibi were arrested in other fake

case without any justification after their acquittal in Nikah during iddat case for the sake of political victimization. The political opponents, federal and Punjab governments want to keep Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi under detention for long period. Both were arrested during the period when their petitions against their call up notices were pending hearing in IHC.

Arresting both of them

when their petition was pending hearing is based on ill intent. Political opponents are using NAB for persistent political victimization. The superior courts have stressed in their decisions that arrest cannot be made merely on registration of case.

The arrest of PTI founder and Bushra Bibi in any case in future be linked to permission from IHC.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

A way forward

In the midst of the storm triggered by the government's ill-advised announcement about banning the PTI, there is a ray of hope. Aide to the prime minister Rana Sanaulah clarified that the decision had yet to be okayed by the cabinet. He reportedly told a local publication late Monday that while the government has not finalised its decision, it saw only two choices before it: talks, or all-out war. Mr Sanaulah regretted the fact that PTI founder Imran Khan had not been amenable to talks.

A day later, Deputy PM Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif indicated that the matter would be taken forward in consultation with the government's allies and parliament. While the government's stance reflects a paucity of ideas, it is important to note that negotiations and consultation are seemingly not off the table. Before political leaders inflict more damage, they must give talks a chance.

If direct negotiations are not possible, one option the government must consider is to form a parliamentary Committee of the Whole comprising all current lawmakers. The entire gamut of major challenges should be put up for debate before this committee, including security, economic issues and the prevailing socio-political instability. Doing so will help take the attention away from the daily ugliness that defines politics today. It may even provide an opportunity to reset the political narrative: it is unconscionable that all politics is being dominated by the travails and intrigues of a handful of individuals while the masses suffer. Leaders from both sides of the aisle may take the debate as an opportunity to demonstrate to their voters that they are not single-issue politicians; that they are cognisant of the challenges before them and have the capacity and will to work them out.

During this time, the political environment should be improved for there to be constructive engagement between the rival factions. It is the responsibility of the parties in government, as wielders of state power, to create the conditions necessary for constructive talks. It is extremely counterproductive for ministers to come on TV and endorse the ongoing victimisation of political opponents, as there is a very real risk that the short-sighted policies being adopted by various state institutions, which are being celebrated uncritically by the government, may end up sabotaging all hopes for greater 'istehkam'. Stability can only return when the cycle of violence stops. The government would do well to heed these words.

Meanwhile, the PTI must provide a realistic framework for at least the first few rounds of engagements, which preferably does not involve impossible preconditions. A rigid approach will only extend the party's needless suffering till the government breaks, while a give-and-take approach may yield better results. Politics should not be reduced to a zero-sum game.

After the fall

Mahir Ali

It's emblematic of the current moment in American politics that the incumbent president's physical and mental health remains a bigger cause for concern than that of his challenger even after the latter survived an assassination attempt.

After informing his Praetorian guard that he was keen to be reunited with his shoes, Donald Trump, a couple of streaks of blood running down his face from where a sniper's bullet had grazed his ear, told his Secret Service protectors to wait while he pumped his fist and encouraged his audience to 'Fight, fight, fight!' before he was led offstage. The clenched fist went up once again as he entered a black van.

Images from the incident will no doubt enhance Trump's chances of re-election four years after a defeat that many of his supporters believe was unfairly engineered. His biggest advantage, though, remains his doddering opponent in the race who is barely able to walk, let alone convincingly run.

The Democratic Party ought to have recognised long before the presidential debate debacle of June 27 that relying on Joe Biden to defeat Trump a second time was a mug's game. It has been fairly obvious for what in political terms is an eternity that a physically and intellectually enfeebled president isn't up to the task.

Biden's apparent personal conviction that only he can stave off the serious risk of Trump's return to the White House does not stand up to scrutiny. No one can claim with any certainty that Kamala Harris or another alternative would be an adequate bulwark against the Republican candidate, but their chances of making any kind of impression on the

electorate diminish with each passing day.

This week's choreographed coronation of Trump at the Republican national convention in Milwaukee would have been reminiscent of a Nuremberg rally even without the supplementary advantage of the revanchist führer's injured ear. His running mate is Ohio senator J.D. Vance, who described Trump eight years ago as a putative 'American Hitler'. He later had a MAGA epiphany, and now blames the Democratic campaign for Saturday's violence, even though the motives of the shooter, a 20-year-old registered Republican, are yet to be determined.

It will be both surprising and unfortunate if Biden does not step aside before the Democratic Party's equivalent event in Chicago next month. This year, coincidentally, is being compared to 1968, when a Democratic convention in the same city attracted radical protests and shocking police violence. The likeliest Democratic nominee, Robert F. Kennedy, had been shot dead less than three months earlier, about two months after he shared with a crowd the horrifying news of Martin Luther King Jr's assassination.

The rebels of 1968 were particularly infuriated — like King and, to a lesser degree, Kennedy — by the horrors their nation was perpetrating in Vietnam. Precisely a year before he was cut down, King excoriated his nation's government as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today".

He was right then, and he would be right today — but that does not penetrate the consciousness of the American political class, which has vociferously been decrying political violence lately while insouciantly ignoring the extent to which

the repressive apparatus of the state strives to sustain an appalling status quo at home, while taking various organs help to implement it abroad. Foreign policy is supposedly Biden's strong suit. As far as anyone can see, it entails endless conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and the destruction of Palestine.

Biden's record as a borderline segregationist senator beholden to corporate America and the national security state, then as vice president and eventually president, does not add up to much. It's accurate but insufficient to claim that Trump would be much worse. The Clinton and Obama Democratic presidencies paved the way for George W. Bush and Trump. Biden could still bow out to give his possible successor a fighting chance. Divine intervention might be required, given his claim that only the Almighty could persuade him to do the decent thing. But family, friends, allies and donors could help to end what has aptly been described as elder abuse.

The gerontocracy that stretches from the White House to the divided Senate and the rabidly conservative supreme court isn't America's only problem. Chances are that both its global hegemony (Biden claims to 'rule the world') and the viability of the republic founded in 1776 will diminish in November, for better (in the case of the hegemony) or worse. This verse from an ostensibly apolitical song Paul Simon wrote circa 1968 sadly continues to resonate: 'Sitting on a sofa on a Sunday afternoon/ Going to the candidates' debate/ Laugh about it, shout about it/ When you've got to choose/ Every way you look at it you lose.' -- Courtesy Dawn

Karbala glimpses

Qasim A. Moini

Communities across the Muslim world, particularly in South Asia and the Middle East, are familiar with the heartrending epic of Karbala, as the event is firmly embedded in the cultural consciousness, crossing sectarian and, in some cases, even religious lines.

Mention the word Karbala in these societies, and images of thirst, suffering and, most of all, the valiant stand of Imam Husain and his committed followers against a numerically superior Syrian/Kufi force immediately emerge. For centuries, depictions of this fateful battle have been heard from the pulpit and sorrowful verses recounted in noha and marsiya, as well as details mentioned in historical written accounts (maqatil).

Whoever hears and reads these accounts is struck by the barbarity unleashed upon the children and kinsmen of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) by the Umayyad forces. Yet, glimpses of that barbarity can be seen today, in a land only a few hundred kilometres from the burning desert of Karbala. That land is Gaza, and Israeli forces have, since Oct 7, 2023, unleashed atrocities on Palestine's defenceless people not too different from the cruelty that was the hallmark of Yazid's troops in Karbala.

Fourteen centuries ago, concepts such as protection of non-combatants and prevention of war crimes were nowhere near as well-defined as they are today. Yet, in this supposedly civilised era, those in sharp suits sitting in Tel Aviv have displayed the same disregard for human life and dignity that the Kufi and Syrian legions did on the day of Ashura in 61AH. Yazid may have perished, but the Yazidi

ideology clearly survives.

The similarities between seventh-century Karbala and 21st-century Gaza are uncanny. When Imam Husain's small force, including women and children, arrived at Karbala on the second of Muharram, the Umayyad forces prevented them from getting water from nearby channels. By the time the day of Ashura arrived, the minor children were crying out due to unbearable thirst, yet the Umayyad generals refused the Imam access to water.

Similarly, Gaza has been under an almost airtight Israeli blockade since 2007, described as an open-air prison. After the Oct 7 events, the Israelis have tightened the blockade, using starvation as a weapon, bringing Gaza to the brink of famine. Seeing images of emaciated Palestinian children is unbearable for anyone with a soul. Clearly, the 'only democracy in the Middle East', as some describe Israel, is fine with using cruel seventh-century tactics to starve civilians into submission. Moreover, women and children are supposed to be spared during combat. But in Karbala, the granddaughters and other female relatives of the Holy Prophet were meted out unspeakable treatment. In Nafsal Mahmum, one of the more authentic maqatil compiled by the venerable scholar Shaikh Abbas Qomi, it is written that: "...the ladies were drawn out of the tents and the tents were set on fire. The women of the Prophet's family were bareheaded, bare-foot and marauded similar to the ones in captivity."

The women of Gaza have had to endure similar treatment by the 'world's most moral army'. For example, even The New York Times has said that "nearly 60,000 pregnant women" are

suffering from malnutrition, dehydration and other healthcare complications. During the event of Karbala, the Umayyad forces showed no mercy, not even to children. For example, Hazrat Qasim, the son of Imam Hasan, who was barely in his teens, was martyred in a particularly barbaric fashion by the Umayyad hordes. Moreover, when Imam Husain was left alone in the field, another of Imam Hasan's children, an infant named Abdullah, rushed to his beloved uncle's defence, but was martyred in merciless fashion. And who can forget the youngest martyr of Karbala, Abdullah bin Husain, known as Ali Asghar. The suckling was attacked by a powerful arrow piercing his tiny neck while in the Imam's arms.

In Gaza, thousands of children have been slaughtered by the Israelis, while thousands more have been left orphaned. Heartbreaking images of mothers wailing over their murdered children are enough to move even the most stone-hearted to tears.

Just as 14 centuries ago, the world watched as the grandson of the Holy Prophet and his family members were surrounded and martyred without mercy, similarly today, the global community silently watches the genocidal spectacle playing out in Gaza. But despite their trials and seemingly unending grief, the people of Gaza can take solace from the example of Husain, who lived with dignity, and preferred to die than bow before oppressors. In one of his most famous sermons, Imam Husain emphatically declared "far be it that we accept humiliation". Karbala teaches us that those who bravely resist oppression will live forever, while the oppressors will very soon meet an unedifying fate. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Finance minister reaffirms commitment to export-led growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to foster export-led growth and providing a conducive environment to local manufacturers.

The minister was talking to the delegation of Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturers Association (PMPMA) that called on him here, said a press release issued by the finance ministry.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining policy continuity and

increasing the focus on the policy framework for exports. The minister acknowledged the valuable feedback and underscored the government's commitment for expanding the entire digital ecosystem in the country.

Earlier, the PMPMA delegation thanked the minister and highlighted the necessity for a stable and supportive policy environment that encourages local manufacturers.

They advocated for measures to ensure that international brands support the domestic industry and consequently,

the national economy. The delegation also presented proposals aimed at promoting the growth of the local industry and increasing the exports of the mobile phone manufacturing industry.

According to the statement, the meeting concluded with a mutual agreement on the need for a strategic and supportive policy framework aimed at fostering local manufacturing and enhancing export potential, thereby contributing to the broader goals of national economic growth and digital transformation.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, X-press Antaila, Zhong Gu Bo Hai, Maya Gas-1, Horizon-1 and Fair Star carrying container, LPG and Gas oil, berthed at QICT Terminal, Engro Terminal, Sui Southern Gas Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Wednesday. Meanwhile four more ships, Lucky Chem, Silver Heba, Naeba Galaxy and Milaha Qatar are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on during last 24 hours.

Eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them six ships, X-Press Antaila, Zhong Gu Bo Hai, Ardmore Cherokee, Maya Gas-1, Sea Destiny and Horizon-1 are expected to sail on Thursday. Cargo volume of 59,341 tonnes, comprising 51,351 tonnes imports cargo and 7,990 tonnes export cargo carried in 1,119 Containers (649 TEUs Imports and 470 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the delegation of Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturers Association (PMPMA).

FESCO striving to provide quality services to consumers

FAISALABAD (APP): Convener Customer Services Committee FESCO Board of Directors Mian Farrukh Iqbal said Faislabad Electric Supply Company is striving to provide quality service to its consumers and in this connection, help is also being taken from social media and the latest technology for redressing electricity related complaints on top priority basis.

Addressing the 17th meeting of Customer Services Committee at FESCO Headquarters here on Thursday, he said that

FESCO had precious asset of 5.3 million active consumers out of which 80 per cent consumers belong to domestic category. He said that FESCO complaint numbers remained active round the clock and the people could contact the company through 118 and 8118 for getting their electricity related complaints lodged at any time. New features are also being added in these numbers to facilitate the electricity consumers at maximum extent in addition to providing them the facility to track updated status of their complaints.

SECP management discusses development of capital market

ISLAMABAD (APP): The top management of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) met with the Board of Directors of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) to discuss the strategy for the development of the capital market.

The participants from SECP included Akif Saeed (Chairman), Abdul Rehman Warratich (Commissioner—Securities Market Division) and other senior members of the management, said press release issued here on Thursday. The participants discussed the challenges faced in the capital market and deliberated ways to address them. The meeting was focused on areas such as enhanced governance, operational compliance, increasing the stock market investor base, and striving for continuous digitalization in the capital market. The need for coordination among various stakeholders for development of the market, as well as creating awareness among potential investors, was keenly emphasized during the meeting.

Cotton calendar 2024-25 issued for south Punjab farmers after consultations with experts, WWF

MULTAN (APP): Cotton Calendar 2024-25, dubbed as a roadmap to better cotton crop with cost-effective pest control mechanism prescribed under the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) model, was released here Thursday on the orders of Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ali Atee after it was finalized following brainstorming by the agriculture department, experts and World Wild Life Fund (WWF). The initiative was a replication of the year 2021 when the first cotton calendar was issued and

farmers had then amassed sizable crop with efficient and cost-effective pest control under the IPM program, said an official release issued here.

The calendar will serve as a comprehensive advisory for farmers who believe the IPM program should continue to be practised on the south Punjab's vast cotton landscape to get higher production.

Farooq Safdar, a cotton farmer from Mauza 5-Kassi Kabirwala, said, it was the IPM program that helped him get 65 Maunds per acre with only two

pesticides spray. Botanical spray proved better against white fly, he added.

A Sadiqabad-based farmer, Muhammad Ishaq said his crop remained safe against white flies and he was able to get 40 Maunds per acre production of cotton.

Muhammad Amin from Chak 109 Yamzan, Bahawalpur, said, low chemical sprays under the IPM plan helped friendly pests remain alive while yellow sticky cards and botanical sprays helped tackle the white fly problem and cotton fiber did suffer blackening.

Shaza chairs PSEB board meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja Thursday chaired the 60th Board of Directors meeting of the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB). Secretary IT Captain (Retd) Muhammad Mahmood was also present, said a news release. Chairman of the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), Muhammad Zohaib Khan, attended the meeting via video link. The meeting discussed the mandate and functions of the Pakistan Software Export Board.

NA body on Petroleum Division briefed on ongoing, new initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Standing Committee on Energy (Petroleum Division) was briefed on Thursday about several ongoing and new initiatives by the Petroleum Division to improve services for people across the country. The Secretary of the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) provided a comprehensive overview of the ministry's functions and its attached departments.

The meeting was chaired by Syed Mustafa Mehmood, MNA, and was also attended by the Federal Minister for Energy (Petroleum Division). The entire performance of the ministry was examined during the introductory discussion, with an emphasis on the main problems and possible solutions. The meeting was attended by Members Syed Naveed Qamar, Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Shahid Ahmed, Anwar-ul-Haq Chaudhary, Rai Haider Ali Khan, Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharal, Gul Asghar Khan, Salahuddin Junejo.



HUNZA: Business women of local community displaying cherry for selling purpose for tourists.

Romanian embassy, PRBC sign MoU to boost trade between Romania, Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of Romania to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Pakistan Romania Business Council (PRBC) to strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation between Romania and Pakistan.

The MoU signed by Eduard-Robert PREDĂ, Charge D'Affaires, Embassy of Romania to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Chairman of PRBC, Sohail Shamim FIRPO,

and recognized the outstanding services rendered by PRBC since 2011 in promoting bilateral trade between the two countries.

The agreement establishes a framework for cooperation between the Embassy of Romania and PRBC, with the Embassy extending full support to PRBC's endeavours to promote and strengthen bilateral trade.

Additionally, the protocol acknowledges the recent expansion of PRBC through the formation of its North Chapter.

All resources will be utilized to solve public issues: Sardar Saleem

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that solving the problems of the people is the main responsibility of the administration. He said that the doors of the Governor's House are open for the people. He issued instructions on the spot to convey the problems of the people to the concerned officials for redressal.

He expressed these views while talking on the occasion of holding an open court for solving public problems in Punjab House Rawalpindi. According to the details, an open court was held by Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider in Punjab House Rawalpindi to resolve public issues.

A large number of people were present in the open court. Speaking on the occasion, Governor

Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that solving the problems of the people is the main responsibility of the administration. He said that the doors of the Governor's House are open for the people. He issued instructions on the spot to convey the problems of the people to the concerned officials for redressal.

Meanwhile, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, visited the routes of Ashura processions in Raja Bazar, Rawalpindi in connection with 10th Muharram. On this occasion, the Punjab Governor reviewed the security arrangements. Earlier, a briefing was given to him regarding the security

of Ashura processions in the Commissioner's Office Rawalpindi. Later, Governor Punjab also visited Safe City Control Room and Control Room established in TMA office. During the visit, the Punjab Governor reviewed the process of monitoring the routes of the processions. He lauded the administration for making fool proof security arrangements and expressed satisfaction over the security arrangements.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Aamer Khattak, RPO Rawalpindi Babar Sarfraz Alpa, DC Rawalpindi, Hasan Waqar Cheema and other administrative officers were also present on this occasion.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider listening the problems of the people during open court for solving public problems in Punjab House Rawalpindi.

Govt's Langar, Sabeels to continue till Chehlum of Imam Hussain: Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that special arrangements for 'Langar' [free food] and 'Sabeels' [cold water points] were arranged on the directions of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz across the province, and the arrangements would continue till 'Chehlum' of Imam Hussain (AS).

Along with members of the cabinet committee on law and order, she visited Karbala Gamay Shah, Lahore's main imambargah, and the mourning procession's culmination

point, here on Wednesday. She said the entire cabinet had actively worked in the field and oversaw the law and order and other arrangements. Health Minister/Chairman Cabinet Committee Khawaja Salman Rafique, Food Minister Bilal Yasin, Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman and Home Secretary Noor-ul-Amin Mengal accompanied the senior minister.

The home secretary gave a briefing on the Muharram main processions across Punjab, including Lahore.

KP CM appoints chairmen DDACs

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur Thursday appointed Chairmen of District Development Advisory Committees (DDACs) for four Districts of Kohat Division including Kohat, Orakzai, Hangu and Karak districts. According to the letter addressed to Secretary Local Government, MPAs including Shafiqullah Jan, Aurangzeb Khan, Shah Abu Turab Khan Bangash, and Khurshid Khattak have been appointed Chairmen District Development Advisory Committees for Kohat, Orakzai, Hangu and Karak districts respectively.

PPP Sindh MPA calls on Governor KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Asif Khan, Member of Provincial Assembly Sindh, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Thursday called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House and discussed various problems of the province. During the meeting, Asif Khan, commended the role of Governor Faisal Kundi, acknowledging him as a sincere and dedicated person to represent the province. He praised the Governor's efforts in addressing provincial issues effectively.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi highlighted the historical and cultural

significance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, emphasizing its rich natural resources. He expressed his commitment to alleviating poverty in the province through sustainable development initiatives harnessing its natural wealth.

The Governor said that efforts related to youth engagement, women empowerment, education, and healthcare were also underway.

He said that plans for establishing a task force to address educational and healthcare challenges in the province were included in priorities.



LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Allama Tahir Ashrafi addressing a press conference at Press Club.

Court seeks arguments on damage claim of Rs 10blns by Shehbaz against Imran

LAHORE (Online): Sessions court has sought arguments on Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif damage claim of Rs 10 billion in defamation case against PTI founder. Additional Sessions judge Muhammad Farhan Nabi of Sessions court Lahore issued written order regarding hearing of miscellaneous petition of Shehbaz Sharif. It has been

said in the court's order that Saad Sibghat Ullah Sultan counsel for Shehbaz Sharif appeared in the court during the hearing of the case. Mian Muhammad Hussain new counsel for Imran Khan presented his power of attorney in the court. It was said in the written order of court that regarding order for PTI founder said he was appointed counsel now in this case.

Mother allegedly slaughters her three minor children in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): In a shocking and tragic incident, Hajira Bibi, wife of Wajid a resident of Mohalla Musa Zai, Nawan Shehar Abbottabad on Thursday, allegedly slaughtered her three minor children. The children, aged 3 years, 5 years, and 8 months, were immediately shifted to Ayub Medical Complex for treatment.

7 injured in accident

NOWSHERA (APP): At least seven persons were injured in a police mobile van accident that occurred near Col. Shaikh Khan Interchange of Nowshera district, tv channels quoting police reported on Thursday.

According to details, a police mobile van was crossing the Col. Shaheed Shaikh Khan Interchange when it turned turtle due to tyre burst.

KP govt to take action against illegal housing societies

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government Arshad Ayub Khan Thursday said that heavy fines will be imposed on illegal housing societies and notices will be issued to them, if they still do not register themselves, then such societies will be sealed.

He expressed these views while presiding over

the meeting, Secretary Local Government Dawood Khan was also present. Speaking on the occasion, the provincial minister directed for framing a comprehensive policy for the regularization of illegal housing societies, NOC and other legal requirements should be fulfilled, otherwise such housing societies should be sealed.

Service delivery being improved at govt hospitals: DC

KHANEWAL (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Muhammad Ali Bukhari said that all possible efforts were being made to improve service delivery at government hospitals to provide the best health facilities to the masses as per directives of the provincial government.

During a surprise visit to Basic Health Units (BHUs) at Village 136/10-R and 140/10-R on Thursday.

LHC orders for demolition of brick kilns causing smog without any notice

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) while ordering to demolish the brick kilns causing smog without notice has remarked deputy commissioners of Punjab will be responsible if court orders are violated at brick kilns.

Justice Shahid Karim of LHC issued written orders on hearing of the petitions filed with reference to eradication of smog.

Justice Shahid Karim issued 7-page written order on the petitions including petition of citizen Haroon Farooqui.

The court while ordering to demolish the

brick kilns causing smoke has remarked the black smoke emitting from brick kilns constructed on old technology be demolished without issuing any notice.

The court orders are being violated openly on brick kilns. Environment department is responsible for violation of court's orders.

It was written in the court's orders that we are giving last warning to deputy commissioner Sheikhupura and deputy director environment for implementation of court's orders. If court's orders are violated on brick kilns then deputy commissioners of Punjab will be responsible.

International News

Israel bombards central Gaza as tanks advance deeper in Rafah

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli forces bombarded the Gaza Strip's historic refugee camps in the centre of the enclave and struck Gaza City in the north on Thursday, killing at least 21 people, and tanks pushed deeper into Rafah in the south, health officials and residents said.

A barrage of Israeli airstrikes killed 16 in Zawayda town, Bureij and Nuseirat camps and the overcrowded city of Deir-El-Balah, the last major urban centre in Gaza not to be invaded by Israeli forces, health officials said. In Gaza City in the north, medics said five Palestinians were killed in two separate strikes.

The Israeli military said in a statement its forces killed two senior Islamic Jihad commanders in two airstrikes in Gaza City, in-

cluding one whom it said had taken part in the Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel that triggered the Gaza war.

In Rafah, residents said Israeli tanks advanced deeper in the western side of the city and took position on a hilltop there. The Israeli military said forces located several tunnels and killed several gunmen.

At Al-Amal Hospital, run by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, Palestinian health officials exhumed at least 12 bodies buried inside the medical facility to bury them at another location.

Reuters footage showed medical workers digging up bodies from graves inside the facility, wrapping them in white shrouds before placing them inside vehicles for transfer to a new burial site

as some relatives watched, some in tears.

Areej Hamouda, a mother of one of the dead, clutched some of the sandy earth from the grave of her son and kissed it before medics exhumed the body.

"They (Israel) shot him and he had a loaf of bread with him, which he had to beg for to get for his daughter, they shot him in the eye and the head - it rained on him, he was washed with blood," Hamouda said, weeping. "He was (lying) there all day long, they weren't able to move him, (then) they pulled him with a rope when they brought him to be buried here." The fighting has pushed the 60-bed Red Cross field hospital in Rafah to the brink of capacity, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said in a statement on Thursday.



The collapsed minaret of Abdullah Azzam mosque leans against a house after the mosque was hit by an Israeli strike, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip.

Philippines, China to set up new channels to handle South China Sea rows

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: The Philippines and China have agreed to set up new lines of communication to improve their handling of maritime disputes, according to a document and a Philippine diplomatic source, as ties sour over clashes about territory in the South China Sea.

The two countries have traded barbs repeatedly over jurisdiction in the contested South China Sea as the Philippines, emboldened by support of defence ally the United States, challenges China's permanent presence around strategic features in-

side Manila's exclusive economic zone. Three communication channels would be established specifically for maritime issues, according to the source, who provided a document with highlights of an "Arrangement on Improving Philippines-China Maritime Communication Mechanisms", which was signed on July 2. "China has always been committed to working with the Philippines to properly address maritime issues through dialogue and consultation." Foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a briefing when asked about the agreement.

Biden tests positive for Covid, will self-isolate in Delaware

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden, under pressure from fellow Democrats to drop his reelection campaign, tested positive for Covid-19 while visiting Las Vegas on Wednesday and is self-isolating after experiencing mild symptoms, the White House said. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre announced the positive test for the 81-year-old Democrat after Biden cancelled a speech due to the diagnosis.

US military pier for carrying aid to Gaza will be dismantled

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US military-built pier to carry humanitarian aid to Gaza will be dismantled and brought home, ending a mission that has been fraught with repeated weather and security problems that limited how much food and other supplies could get to starving Palestinians.

Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, deputy commander at US Central Command, told reporters in a Pentagon briefing on Wednesday that the pier achieved its intended effect in what he called an "unprecedented operation."

As the US military steps away from the sea route for humanitarian aid, questions swirl about Israel's new plan to use the port at Ashdod as a substitute. There are few details on how it will work and lingering concerns about

whether aid groups will have enough viable land crossings to get assistance into the territory besieged by war between Israel and Hamas.

Cooper said the Ashdod corridor will be more sustainable and it has already been used to get more than a million pounds of aid into Gaza.

"Having now delivered the largest volume of humanitarian assistance ever into the Middle East, we're now mission complete and transitioning to a new phase," said Cooper. "In the coming weeks, we expect that millions of pounds of aid will enter into Gaza via this new pathway."

He said there is currently 5 million pounds of aid in Cyprus, awaiting transit to Ashdod, and they expect delivery to start "in the coming days."

UK's Starmer calls for deeper cooperation on Ukraine and Europe's problems

Monitoring Desk
BLENHEIM PALACE: Britain's new prime minister, Keir Starmer, called on Thursday for closer cooperation in Europe to advance support for Ukraine and tackle the continent's most pressing problems: illegal migration, climate change and energy security.

Opening a meeting of the European Political Community (EPC) of more than 40 nations at Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Winston Churchill, Starmer made his bid for a reset in post-Brexit ties with the European Union.

He distanced himself from the previous Conservative government which had threatened to withdraw from an international treaty on human rights, offering other European leaders a clean slate.

"Under my leadership, Britain will be a

friend and a partner, ready to work with you, not part of the European Union, but very much part of Europe," Starmer said in his remarks, referring to Britain's exit from the EU after a 2016 referendum.

"United by our determination to defend them (shared values), and certain about what we can achieve together," he told other leaders at the EPC, a grouping distinct from the EU and created after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The one-day meeting provides Britain's new leader with another opportunity to push for closer defence cooperation especially before the possible election of Donald Trump, who alongside his new pick for running mate, J.D. Vance, suggests that Europe must do more to protect its own security.

Chinese, Canadian foreign ministers to meet in Beijing

Monitoring Desk
OTTAWA: Canada's Foreign Minister Melanie Joly will meet with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Beijing on Friday for talks on bilateral relations and security issues, Ottawa said on Thursday.

Joly is making the trip to China, her first as foreign minister, at the invitation of Wang, the Canadian foreign ministry said in a statement. The top diplomats will discuss global and regional security issues as well as "possible avenues for collaboration on common challenges," the ministry said.

"As the world faces increasingly complex and intersecting global issues, Canada is committed to engaging pragmatically with a wide range of countries to advance our national interests and uphold our values," Joly said in the statement.

Police, students clash in Bangladesh as protests over job quotas kill 6 more people

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Thousands of students armed with sticks and rocks clashed with police in Dhaka on Thursday as the Bangladesh authorities cut some mobile internet services to quell anti-quota protests that have killed at least 12 people this week.

The nationwide protests are the biggest since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was re-elected to a fourth term in office, and are fuelled by high unem-

ployment among the youth, with nearly a fifth of the 170 million population out of work or education.

Six people died in clashes with police in Dhaka on Thursday, including a bus driver whose body was brought to a hospital with a bullet wound to his chest, and a student, officials told Reuters. Hundreds more were injured, they said. Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government was willing to talk to the protesters.

Saudi crown prince congratulates new Iranian president

Monitoring Desk
RIYAD: Saudi Arabia's crown prince on Wednesday called Iranian president-elect Masoud Pezeshkian to congratulate him on winning the election, Saudi state media reported.

Mohammed bin Salman and Pezeshkian "praised the development of relations between the two countries at various levels, stressing the importance of continuing to enhance cooperation in various fields."

French lawmakers vote on parliament president in post-election move

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: France's deeply fragmented parliament met on Thursday for the first time since this month's inconclusive election to vote on the assembly's president, in a ballot that could be key to who calls the shots in the country's politics for years to come.

A grouping of leftist parties unexpectedly came first in the election, ahead of President Emmanuel Macron's centrists and Marine Le Pen's far-right, but no one group won a majority.

Electing the lower house of parliament's president, equivalent to a speaker who organises the chamber's agenda and runs debates, is usually a formality. The process has taken on more importance this time, with Macron weakened and a lot of uncertainty over who will form the next government

and how effective it could be in a divided parliament.

The vote could also offer clues as to whether a coalition government that commands a working majority can be formed and what its political colours could be. The New Popular Front (NFP) left-wing alliance, hastily assembled before the snap election, wants to run the government but has been fighting bitterly since the July 7 second round of voting over who to put forward as prime minister.

It hopes its candidate for parliament chief, veteran Communist lawmaker Andre Chassaigne, who is well-liked across party lines, could be elected.

This could be a boost to its chances of forming a government, by showing the alliance can command a majority in the assembly.



QUETTA: Shiite Muslims mourners to Imam Hussain (R.A) are participating religious procession to show their devotion and respect for cradle as they remember the martyrs of Karbala, during Ashura mourning procession in connection of 10th Muharram-ul-Haram, in Quetta.

Delegation of PPP divisional leaders meet Chief Minister: Sarfraz Bugti vows to strengthen party at divisional level further, resolve all matters thru mutual understanding

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) believes in the manifesto of public service and vowed to strengthen the party further at divisional and district level.

He also pledged to resolve all the matters through mutual understanding at the party's level and expand the activities of public interest fully all over the province. In addition to this, the sports and cultural activities would be pro-

moted in all districts of the province. The Chief Minister was speaking to a delegation of divisional Presidents and General Secretaries of PPP who called on him under leadership of senior leader of the party, Senator Sardar Umar Goraj, here on Thursday.

Also present in the meeting was provincial Secretary Information of PPP, Sardar Sarbuland Khan Jozgai.

During the course of meeting, the matters were discussed about reorganization of the party at provin-

cial level besides other related ones.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that party's office bearers and workers are our asset, and as such their issues would be resolved at district level on directives of the Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

He said that another sitting would be held with all office bearers of the party on its matters next week. The divisional office bearers of party appreciated vision of the Chief Minister regarding public service.

IHC declares Sanam detention illegal

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while declaring detention of PTI worker Sanam Javed has disposed of the petition on the statement of Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP).

AGP has assured the court Sanam Javed will not be arrested in any case further. Sanam Javed is now free and she can go to her province.

Counsel for Sanam Javed assured the court Sanam Javed will not use improper language further in future.

The petition seeking court's order for declaring Sanam Javed arrest illegal

and for her release came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb Thursday.

AGP gave statement in the court that Sanam Javed will not be arrested in any other case now. He said Sanam Javed is now free and she can go to her province.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked I saw on internet Sanam Javed uses highly inappropriate language.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb inquired from the counsel do you give guarantee Sanam Javed will not use inappropriate language now.

Rs 5 bln allocated for PMYSDP

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government has allocated a substantial Rs 5 billion to boost the Prime Minister Youth Skill Development Program (PMYSDP) in the budget 2024-25.

According to the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) office, the establishment of PMYSDP aimed to equip young individuals with practical and high-tech skills, ensuring their readiness and competitiveness with their counterparts in other nations.

With the help of this program, more than 450,000 people would avail the training in different skill development programmes.

Ahsan Iqbal launches 'Key Findings Report' on first-ever digital census-2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday unveiled the "First Ever Digital Census Key Findings Report," compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

The report, which marks a significant milestone for Pakistan, provides comprehensive data crucial for the development of urban and rural areas and effective disaster response.

Addressing a ceremony, the minister highlighted Pakistan's achievement as the first country in South Asia to conduct a digital census. "The data collected through this census will be instrumental in guiding our development efforts and enhancing our ability to respond to natural calamities," he stated.

The census, mandated by the constitution to be conducted every ten years, faced scrutiny in 2017 when the Sindh government expressed concerns over the results, he said.

So, the new census

had to be conducted before 2027, he said, adding "Work on this new census began after April 2022."

In a short period, the minister said, over 120,000 individuals were trained to carry out the digital census, following the PBS

and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) developed the necessary software under significant time constraints and pressure.

"The results of the census have opened our eyes and reflect a concerted effort," he remarked.

Ahsan Iqbal acknowledged the support of the armed forces and police, which was critical to the census's success. Despite initial slow progress due to complications in the fieldwork, the minister said the process was expedited with provincial support.

The census of all stakeholders was achieved, and the work was completed with the aid of satellite geo-tagging and imagery provided by the Pakistan Space & Upper Atmo-

sphere Research Commission (SUPARCO). The 7th Digital Census was unanimously approved by the Council of Common Interests (CCI). Addressing the broader implications, Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the economic challenges faced by Pakistan, adding "Due to economic instability, we are suffering from a lack of resources and have fallen behind globally."

He lamented that Pakistan, once an aid provider to South Korea, now lagged significantly behind in development.

Similarly, he pointed out that while Malaysians used to send their children to Pakistan for higher education, Malaysia has since advanced in education, economy and other fields.

He also acknowledged that India and Bangladesh have outperformed Pakistan in all sectors.

"We are not behind them in intelligence and ability," he asserted. "But if we do not open our eyes, we will not be even counted in the global competition."



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Provincial Ministers and MPAs offering Fateha on sad demise of Aslam Jan Sanjrani, uncle of MPA Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani

Bugti expresses resentment on result delay of teaching test in SBKWU, directs probe

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister (CM) Mir Sarfraz Bugti expressed his resentment on the delay of the result of teaching test under Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBKWU) and directed CMIT to conduct an inquiry setback of the result.

The views were expressed on Thursday by the Spokesperson of the Balochistan government in a statement regarding the delay in the results of the teaching test under SBKWU. He said that the CM expressed his anger when the education department did not receive the results of the teaching test.

Shahid Rind said that Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has sought an explanation for not receiving the results so far despite court orders and writing letters to SBK four times, the results have not been provided to the Education Department. He said that the SBK has been found guilty of violating the

agreement with the education department in several cases.

According to the agreement, the teaching test was to be conducted by SBK, but these tests were carried out by a third party, as per the memorandum of understanding (MoU), the grievances of the complainants were to be redressed and the results announced within seven days, he said.

Shahid Rind said that according to the memorandum of understanding, SBK was supposed to give the results in May 2023 while the matter went to court in June 2023. He said that the CM also directed to issue a legal notice to SBK University in this regard.

The CM has ordered the Chief Minister Inspection Team (CMIT) to investigate the delay in the matter, he said adding that the government's position on the issue of the SBKWU test was clear and the court orders would be followed in this context.

Balochistan govt committed to ensure all facilities, resolve issues: Shoaib Noshervani

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Minister for Finance Mir Shoaib Noshervani on Thursday said that the incumbent government is trying to utilize all available resources for the welfare of public and provision of all facilities to resolve the problems.

The Balochistan government under the leadership of Chief Minister (CM) Mir Sarfraz Bugti is committed to provide relief to the people and improve governance in the province.

In a meeting with various delegations in his office, the minister said that the promotion of education, provision of health facilities and ensuring of clean drinking water to the people of the province are

among the top priorities of the government.

Noshervani said that the government is trying to bring positive change in every sphere of life to remove the backwardness in the province so that the problems can be solved at their doorsteps. He reaffirmed his commitment that he will always be present for the service and prosperity of the people of the province and his constituency.

Later, a delegation of lawyers from Kharan met the provincial finance minister Mir Shoaib Noshervani and informed him about their problems.

The provincial minister gave full assurance to the lawyers to resolve their problems.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Population Hadia Baloch meeting with Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani

Sarfraz Bugti pays homage to Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto on 39th death anniversary

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has paid homage to Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto on his 39th death anniversary.

In a statement issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister recalled the personality, ideology and democratic approach of Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto in golden words and said that he always played key role for promotion of the democracy and democratic behaviors.

The Chief Minister said that Shahaeed

Shahnawaz Bhutto's death anniversary reminds us of the great sacrifices which have been rendered by the Bhutto family for democracy in the country.

He said PPP would continue its struggle for establishing democracy, equality and progressive society.

The Chief Minister said that the dream of martyr leaders of the party was establishment of a democratic, prosperous and equitable society.

He said that PPP is determined to turn this dream into reality.

KP Govt distances itself from PTI ban issue

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has opted out of involvement in the PTI ban issue, placing full responsibility on the party's central leadership.

Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam clarified that decisions regarding the federal government's stance on the issue would be handled centrally. He emphasized consultations with the provincial leadership while criticizing the federal government's legal grounds as weak.

Alleging misuse of Ar-

icle 6, Alam accused the federal government of undermining the law and betraying the nation through regime changes. He questioned the legitimacy of government transitions based solely on letters, hinting at potential treason charges against those involved.

Furthermore, Alam criticized the federal government's inability to substantiate any FIRs to date, highlighting what he described as a state of confusion within the administration.



QUETTA: A 3-members delegation of AEOs meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan is also present

Creating hindrances in jail meetings of Imran IHC gives indication for initiating contempt of court proceedings against Adiala jail authorities

ISLAMABAD (Online): Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan of Islamabad High Court (IHC) has indicated to initiate contempt of court proceedings against Adiala Jail authorities for creating hindrances in jail meetings of PTI founder Imran Khan.

Justice Ejaz Ishaq Khan has remarked "it is not acceptable at all. He cannot be stopped from seeing any document. If it is done so in future then contempt of court notice will be issued. This is tantamount to block justice process. There are more than 200 cases against Imran Khan. All cases are of political consequences.

The petition in connection with meetings of Imran Khan with his lawyers came up for hearing in the court Thursday.

Superintendent Adiala Jail filed the list in connection with meetings of PTI founder in Adiala jail.

Advocate Shoaib

Shaheen counsel for said to the court during the hearing let us see this list. Let it should contain jail hearings in meetings. Our leaders in-

cluding both of the opposition leaders were kept standing and were not allowed to meet Imran Khan despite the fact court had ordered to work out SOP for two meetings in a week.

Advocate General (AG) said the lawyers who represent PTI founder don't come. The lawyers who are active politically come to meet Imran Khan. Those who had gone to Adiala jail demanded that the meeting of all should be arranged simultaneously.

Advocate Shoaib Shaheen said our vehicles are stopped at a distance of one and half kilometer from jail.

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Govt may invoke Article 17 to ban PTI: Rana Sanaullah

LAHORE (INP): PML-N leader and former federal minister Rana Sanaullah has stated that the government has the authority to issue a declaration to ban any political party under Article 17 of the Constitution.

Speaking on a private TV program, Rana Sanaullah explained that if the cabinet approves the declaration, it will be submitted to the Supreme Court within 15 days. If the

Supreme Court concurs with the declaration, the party in question will be banned.

Sanaullah emphasized that the government has the same rights as the PTI, and it is within their constitutional rights to present their case and strive for success. He added that there is no harm in the government attempting to secure its position if it can constitutionally acquire seats.

AJK PM hails 'Accession to Pak Day'

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has hailed Pakistan as the beacon of hope for Kashmiris, as the region prepares to celebrate 'Accession to Pakistan Day' on July 19.

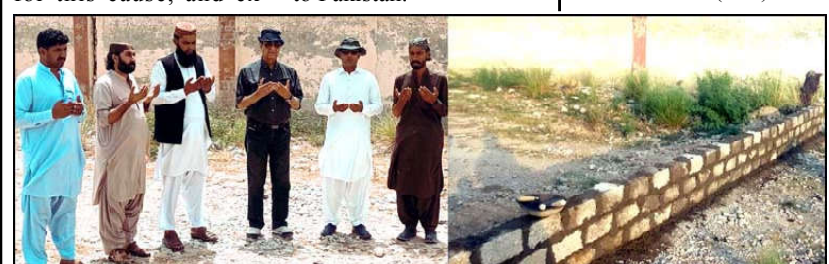
This historic day marks the 1947 decision by Kashmiri leadership to align with Pakistan, a move that has become a cornerstone of their freedom struggle.

Haq praised the unwavering love and faith of Kashmiris in Pakistan, saying it has been the driving force behind their sacrifices. He honored the heroes who have laid down their lives for this cause, and ex-

pressed optimism that their struggle will soon bear fruit.

The AJK Prime Minister also highlighted the immense sacrifices made by the people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir, who have faced brutal tactics, including the Jammu massacre that killed 250,000 Kashmiri Muslims. Despite this, their love for Pakistan remains unshakable.

As Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control celebrate 'Accession to Pakistan Day', Haq reiterated that their bond with Pakistan is unbreakable, and that they will continue to strive for their forefathers' dream of accession to Pakistan.



QUETTA: President HELP Balochistan, former Health Minister Dr. Ameer Muhammad Jozgai and Col. Javed offering Dua after laying foundation stone of MNCH in Harnai in collaboration with FC Balochistan

Pakistan Bar Council demands formation of Constitutional Court

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Bar Council has called for the formation of Constitutional Court in the country through a constitutional amendment.

As per details, the bar council said that the proposed court would exclusively hear political and constitutional cases, providing timely justice to the people.

The Pakistan Bar Council believes that the establishment of a consti-

tutional court would save valuable time and provide swift justice to the common man.

The council has also expressed support for the appointment of ad hoc judges to help expedite the decision-making process in cases.

Currently, a significant amount of the Supreme Court's time is spent hearing political cases, and the establishment of a constitutional court would help alleviate this burden.

No official practices tax related activity outside office premises: FBR

QUETTA (APP): Federal Board of Revenue Regional Tax Office Quetta on Thursday said no official practices tax-related activity outside the office premises.

As per statement issued by the Federal Board of Revenue Regional Tax Office, no official from the tax office prepares any tax challan or practices any tax-related activity outside the office premises.

District-level monsoon contingency plans discussed: DG PDMA visits vulnerable districts to address urgent issues during monsoon

Jahanzeb Khan visits landslide affected area in Sherani and earthquake affected area Dargai Eshpalo in Loralai; distributes relief goods among affectees

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and Relief Commissioner, Balochistan, Jahanzeb Khan conducted a comprehensive visit to several districts, including Killa Saifullah, Zhob, Sherani, and Loralai.

Accompanied by Commissioner of Zhob Division Tariq ur Rehman, the RC/DG PDMA's visit focused on assessing the most vulnerable communities within these districts.

The Deputy Commissioners guided the RC/DG through the critical areas,

briefing him on the local challenges and the conditions of the sites.

A key part of the visit involved discussions on the district-level monsoon contingency plans. The Relief Commissioner/DG PDMA directed to the Deputy Commissioners to ensure preparedness and effective response to potential monsoon-related disasters.

He also visited the landslide-affected area on the N-50 National Highway in Danasar, District Sherani.

The DG PDMA, along with the Deputy Commissioner, evaluated

the ongoing efforts of the Levies force and National Highway Authority (NHA) teams. He commended their prompt response to the landslide incident.

Additionally, the DG PDMA also visited the earthquake-affected area of Dargai Eshpalo in Tehsil Makhter, District Loralai.

He inspected the damaged infrastructure and properties, and distributed relief goods among the affected residents. Immediate directives were issued to the Deputy Commissioner of Loralai to ensure the swift provision of additional relief goods to those in need.