

# Independent

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## Federal cabinet defers decision on PTI ban, Article 6 on Imran PTI's new tactics to malign armed forces won't be tolerated, vows PM

Malicious campaign run against COAS Gen Asim Muneer from official website of the PTI; TTP's Afghan-based terror attacks unacceptable; Federal cabinet renews support for Palestinians, calls for war crimes proceedings against Israel; Visa-free entry approved for investors, entrepreneurs, residents from 126 countries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday denounced the terror attacks in Pakistan involving Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) using Afghan soil saying that was "unacceptable" as Pakistan was fully prepared to protect its citizens but desired to resolve the matter peacefully.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

The prime minister, in his remarks at the meeting of the federal cabinet chaired by him, pointed out the surge in terror incidents, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan causing the killing of the personnel of the army, police and civil armed forces.

He called the terrorism wave a machination against Pakistan as it was taking place at a time when the coalition government was making efforts for the country's development as it reached a Staff Level Agreement with IMF despite challenges and announced a three-month relief package for 96% of domestic power consumers.

Highlighting the role of Afghanistan in the surge of terrorism, the prime minister said the government was in interaction with them as Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif also visited there.

their people here without any complaint? We treated them like our brothers and never considered them as a burden. But we were rewarded in the form of TTP attacks on our citizens to mar the country's peace and business. This is not acceptable," he remarked.

He said Pakistan was ready to face any kind of situation as its valiant armed forces had sacrificed their lives to safeguard the country and its people.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also highlighted that the perpetrators of the May 9 riots, who had also attacked parliament, PTV

and besieged the PM House in the past, had resorted to new tactics to malign the country and its armed forces as a malicious campaign was run against Army Chief General Asim Muneer from the official website of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

"We will not tolerate any such steps against the country, its innocent people, and armed forces," he said and called for national unity to protect the national interest.

The prime minister apprised the members of a decision to abolish the visa fees for 126 countries as a "quantum jump" to bring

ease of doing business and attract businessmen, tourists and travelers to Pakistan.

The decision, made after a threadbare discussion, would be tabled before the cabinet for its consideration, he added.

He said the deficiency of the visa fees would be made up by foreign exchange earned through investment and tourism, including religious tourism of which Pakistan has immense potential.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the visitors would get visas within 24 hours through the electronic travel authorization

form. Besides, the E-gates would be established at Gwadar Port and nine airports - initially in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi airports.

The prime minister strongly condemned the unprecedented human rights abuses of Israel against Palestinians as around 40,000 Palestinians had been killed including thousands of children and women.

He said despite the resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council and UN General Assembly and the decision by the International Court of Justice, Israel was

unbuded from its oppression which was highly condemnable.

The prime minister drew attention to the attacks on Pakistan's missions in Germany and London. He said the Foreign Office had timely taken up the matter and that the envoys of the countries concerned should be given demarches to seek the protection of Pakistan's missions.

Meanwhile the federal cabinet in a meeting with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the chair, on Wednesday, adopted a resolution reiterating support for the Palestinians, condemning Israel acts of barbarity and called for initiation of war crimes proceedings.

Addressing the meeting, the prime minister said Israel's continuing barbaric acts in Palestine had been unprecedented in the human history as it was targeting the innocent citizens including children and women in Gaza and rest of other Palestinian areas.

The prime minister said that during Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and SCO plus summits in Astana, he had raised a strong voice for the rights of the oppressed people of Palestine.

## President Biden requests \$101 m in aid for Pakistan aims to support democracy

WASHINGTON (INP): US President Joe Biden has requested \$101 million in aid for Pakistan.

According to the report, the announcement was made by Donald Lu, the US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, during a briefing to the House of Representatives Committee on Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Donald Lu emphasised that the aid request aims to support democracy and human rights in Pakistan.

He said the proposed assistance will also aid Pa-

kistan in its fight against terrorism, economic reforms, and debt relief, helping to stabilise the country's economy.

In the same briefing, Donald Lu expressed concern over the situation in Afghanistan, particularly regarding the rights of women and minority groups.

He stated that normalising relations with the Taliban government is contingent on their respect for these rights and the release of all American citizens.

## CM Gandapur accepts demands of Bannu jirga leaders

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has agreed to all the demands put forward by the Bannu Aman Jirga, as reported by Geo News.

The agreement was reached in a meeting held earlier this week, sources revealed on Wednesday.

Sources familiar with the discussions indicated that the jirga called for dismantling armed groups in the province, empowering the police with enhanced night patrols, allowing the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) to conduct

search operations, and ensuring that missing persons are presented before courts.

During a meeting held late Monday, CM Gandapur addressed the concerns of the Bannu jirga members. He clarified the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) position on Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, describing it as a strategic approach rather than a conventional military operation.

"The ISPR has clarified that Azm-e-Istehkam is a strategy to combat terrorism and extremism," Gandapur informed the jirga members.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani meeting with Chairman PM Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan

## Imran Khan refutes claims of inciting GHQ protests

Monitoring Desk

RAWALPINDI: Imran Khan, the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), on Wednesday stated that a narrative has been created with an agenda to accuse him of inciting the public to protest at the General Headquarters (GHQ) during the May 9 riots.

In a statement released on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter), he clarified that in the nearly three-decade history of PTI, there has never been an instance of violent protests. "Over the past two and a half years, the worst tactics were used against PTI to incite violence," he added.

said that there was an assassination attempt on him, and even his request for an FIR of his choice was denied.

The former prime minister further revealed that his residence was attacked twice by military personnel. On one occasion, during his court appearance, there was a deliberate plan to assassinate him by deploying plainclothes individuals, he added.

On May 9, he explained that the masses were incited by the humiliating abduction of a former prime minister and the leader of Pakistan's largest and most popular political party, which could have led to a major incident.

## Commonwealth SG to visit Pakistan from July 28

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC, Commonwealth Secretary-General, will undertake her first official visit to Pakistan from July 28 to August 2, 2024, following an invitation from the Government of Pakistan.

During her five-day visit, Secretary-General Scotland will meet with Pakistan's leadership, Cabinet members, youth leaders, civil society representatives, and other key stakeholders.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, who has been a staunch advocate for supporting Pakistan in meeting the adverse impacts of climate change, will reaffirm her solidarity with Pakistan, as it marks the second anniversary of the catastrophic 2022 floods that submerged a third of the country and caused more than \$30 billion in damage. She is also likely to tour some of the areas that were affected by the floods.

## Hold meeting with Zhob divisional & district administration: Governor exhorts LEAs to protect life & property of people, asserts no negligence to be tolerated

Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail asserts no negligence to be tolerated on security arrangements and especially on protection of life and property of masses; directs LEAs to remain vigilant round the clock ensuring coordination

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has appreciated the performance of all law enforcement agencies for ensuring law and order situation and making security arrangements in

negligence would be tolerated on security arrangements and especially on protection of life and property of the masses.

The Governor was in meeting with the district and divisional administrative officers in Zhob on

Wednesday. The Governor on the occasion appreciated performance of the LEAs about the border security and other security arrangements made for protection of life and property of the people in Zhob division.



He asserted that no

ters Mir Asim Kurd and Noor Muhammad Durrani as well as Deputy Commissioner Zhob, Mehboob Ahmed Achakzai, acting DPO, Akhtar Achakzai and other concerned high ups were also in attendance.

The Provincial Minister

## Balochistan welcomes PM's educational reforms: Secretary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani on Wednesday said that Balochistan with its difficult geographical terrain has welcomed the educational reforms of the prime minister.

This he said in a briefing to Ms. Rahila Hameed Durrani Minister of Education, Balochistan on the educational reforms interventions in ICT, AJK and GB, said a press release.

The educational reforms, Wani said, responds to need of education reforms in the Balochistan through most interventions like curriculum change, human resource development, digitization, artificial intelligence, coding, mind games and others.

The Secretary also shared the good news that educational grant money of Rs 1.2 billion under AS-

PIRE Program of World Bank has been transferred to the province to be utilized as per need.

He announced that Balochistan's schools would be solarized and insured from earth quakes and flooding alongside that free meals to students would also be initiated.

He also informed the minister that more than 26 million children in Pakistan are out of school.

Ms. Durrani discussed her side of challenges faced at the ground level of Balochistan and asked the Federal Secretary help in terms of human resource as well as knowledge expertise to which he agreed to full facilitation.

The Secretary Education promised not only the lagging district but also key cities like Quetta would be extended support.

Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani ensured the minister

of full support and promised to guide her in execution by extending as much support as possible.

He instructed the SDU to develop a real time dashboard for the schools in Balochistan.

Rahila Hameed Durrani was introduced to the facilities available in ICG F-6/2.

She expressed her gratitude and expressed the directive to utilize this opportunity in order to adapt fast track distance learning pathways and digital initiatives through teacher training, knowledge enhancement and recruitment including induction of tech fellows other initiatives of the federal ministry of education.

She also thanked the education ministry for the unwavering support in order to make educational situation better in Balochistan.

## Ziaullah Langove visits Pakistani consulate in Istanbul

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove visited the Consulate General of Pakistan in Istanbul, Turkey on Wednesday.

Minister Home and Tribal Affairs met the Pakistan Consul General, Noman Aslam and discussed with him different matters regarding bilateral relations of Pakistan with brotherly country, trade prospects and others.

During the visit, the



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker of Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola along with MPA's addressing a press conference.

## PTI-led opposition alliance announces country-wide protest

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led opposition alliance announced a country-wide protest on Friday for the release of 'innocent' prisoners including party chairman Imran Khan.

Speaking to media persons after a meeting of the Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ayen—an opposition alliance led by the PTI—former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser said that they would be holding 'peaceful' protest demonstrations across the country on Friday.

He said that they are protesting for the three prime demands including the end of sky-rocketed inflation, the establishment of peace, and the release of the PTI founder and all other political prisoners who have been

behind the bars in 'fabricated' cases.

"The incumbent federal government enjoys a fake mandate," Asad Qaiser added.

Speaking on the occasion, Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) Chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai claimed that Imran Khan is the 'most popular' leader in Pakistan at present.

The PKMAP chief vowed to struggle for the release of all political prisoners, including the PTI founder.

"The entire nation is requested to participate in the protests for the great cause," Mahmood Khan Achakzai added. The PKMAP chief said that they are ready to take every step to take Pakistan out of crises.



ISTABUL: Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango meeting with Consul General of Pakistan Noman Aslam

## Record-breaking heat and loadshedding cripple life in Balochistan

QUETTA (INP):

Balochistan is grappling with severe electricity loadshedding, making life unbearable for residents and disrupting businesses across the province. Both announced and unannounced power outages have compounded the impact of record-breaking heat, severely affecting daily life in the provincial capital Quetta and beyond.

Residents in both urban and remote areas are experiencing power cuts ranging from 6 to 14 hours daily, exacerbating the already intense heat. This widespread loadshedding has intensified the discomfort and hardships faced by the citizens.

Local businessmen report significant setbacks due to the power outages, which have slowed down work and increased operational costs.



## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Reforming militants

A major question confronting the state concerns those militants who have laid down their arms — euphemistically referred to as the 'good' Taliban. Ask the people of areas badly hit by militancy, and they want nothing to do with these individuals.

For example, at the recently concluded Bannu Amn Jirga, participants wanted the 'good' Taliban out of their area, while calling for an end to pickets set up and patrols by such fighters. This is a dilemma for the state: what to do with those who are willing to forgo violence? The matter is complicated, and a solution should be found by consulting the people's representatives, security experts and academics.

By all means those terrorist ideologues and facilitators responsible for the killing of thousands of Pakistani civilians and security men over the years cannot be welcomed with open arms, and must face the courts. Similarly, militants — good or bad — cannot be allowed to roam around freely and create a parallel structure, even if they have surrendered to the state: only the government has the authority to maintain law and order across the country.

But the question of the thousands of foot soldiers, particularly child fighters groomed by terrorist groups and juveniles, is more complex. Pakistan is not alone in facing this dilemma; for example, around 40,000 wives and children of IS fighters are currently being held in a Syrian camp run by Kurdish armed groups, as in most cases their countries of origin refuse to take them back.

Instead of giving militants — who surrender to the state and promise to renounce violence — complete liberty, they can be put through deradicalisation programmes.

Such initiatives have been tried before, in Swat for instance, at centres run by the military as well as NGOs. Initially, hard-core militants should be separated from low-level cadres not involved in gratuitous violent activity, with the former punished as per the law.

The deradicalisation process should involve psychological help as well as education and vocational training, so that the reformed militants can contribute to society. Even after completion of the programme, security forces need to keep an eye on the erstwhile militants so that they do not 'relapse' and return to the path of terrorism.

Of course, this is not easy, and will require funds and consistent effort. Moreover, the successes and failures of previous deradicalisation programmes need to be scientifically analysed so that the same mistakes are not repeated.

Deradicalisation should be seen as one component of countering violent extremism, which is part of the revised National Action Plan. Along with religiously inspired militants, it can also be extended to Baloch fighters who wish to renounce violence, and reintegrate into society.

### Mental health rights

Ali Burhan Mustafa

Some years ago, in a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court issued a transformative decision in the Safia Bano case, significantly advancing the integration of mental health considerations into the country's criminal justice system.

Led by a five-member bench, with renowned psychiatrist professor Dr Mowad Hussain Rana serving as amicus curiae, the court declared that carrying out the death sentence in the case of a mentally ill prisoner incapable of comprehending their punishment violated the principles of justice.

The ruling mandated the formation of medical boards for comprehensive evaluations, resulting in the commutation of some death penalties to life imprisonment.

It also directed legislative amendments and prison rule revisions to ensure fair treatment and proper care for mentally ill inmates. This included establishing specialised forensic mental health facilities and training programmes for judicial personnel.

By setting a precedent for considering severe mental illness as a mitigating factor in capital cases, the decision aligned Pakistan's legal framework more closely with international human rights standards, emphasising a just and humane approach to mentally ill individuals within the criminal justice system.

In cases involving Imdad Ali, Kaneezan Bibi, and Ghulam Abbas, Pakistan's judiciary grappled with complex issues of mental health and criminal responsibility. Imdad Ali, initially facing death for a murder in Burewala, had his sen-

tence commuted to life imprisonment due to schizophrenia. Kaneezan Bibi, convicted of multiple homicides in Toba Tek Singh, also had her death penalty changed to life imprisonment because of schizophrenia. Ghulam Abbas, convicted of murder in Rawalpindi, saw his execution halted after a medical board identified cognitive impairments and psychotic symptoms.

These cases underscored the need for clear protocols in handling mental incapacity claims during trials and highlighted the crucial role of psychiatric assessments in ensuring fair judicial decisions, reflecting a growing awareness of mental health in Pakistan's legal system.

In 2016, a three-member Supreme Court of Pakistan bench, presided over by chief justice Anwar Zaheer Jamali, issued a verdict imposing capital punishment on Imdad Ali. The judgement, which posited that schizophrenia did not qualify as a mental disorder, elicited substantial controversy and juridical discourse. This ruling underscored the ambiguities and shifting perspectives within Pakistan's judicial framework concerning mental health issues. The judgement was later reversed.

Before Partition, Pakistan's mental health laws were rooted in colonial-era statutes like the Lunacy Act of 1912 and provisions from the Indian Penal Code of 1860, maintaining outdated views through Chapter XXXIV of the Criminal Procedure Code. Despite the supersession of the Evidence Act of 1872 by the Qanun-i-Shahadat Order in 1984, terms like 'lunatics', 'unsound mind' persisted, impacting mental health practices

post-independence. It wasn't until 2001, under Gen Musharraf's administration, that the first mental health ordinance emerged, later affected by the 18th Amendment. Provincial legislation in Sindh (2013), Punjab (2014), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2017), and Balochistan (2019) aimed to modernise mental health laws.

Since 2021, despite clear directives from the Supreme Court in the Safia Bano case, critical aspects of mental health and forensic psychiatry in Pakistan have languished. The establishment of specialised forensic psychiatric expertise, crucial for medical board evaluations, remains unrealised due to a lack of initiative from the state, the Higher Education Commission, and academic institutions.

Furthermore, no efforts have been made to reform prison rules uniformly across Pakistan or to create specialised forensic settings for mental health offenders. Capacity-building initiatives for judicial officers, law professionals, security personnel, and others engaged in mental health cases have also been conspicuous by their absence.

This stagnation is alarming given the Supreme Court's explicit recommendations. The failure of both the legislative and executive branches to implement necessary reforms reflects a concerning disregard for mental health within Pakistani society. The disconnect between judicial directives and practical implementation underscores a pressing need for immediate action to address these systemic shortcomings and uphold the rights and well-being of individuals affected by mental health issues in the criminal justice system. -- Courtesy Dawn

### No joy in Dhaka

Mahir Ali

There is a sense of irony in watching tanks and armoured personnel carriers on the streets of Dhaka, defending a government that traces its lineage to the forces that resisted the Pakistani army's ultimately futile effort to abort the birth of Bangladesh in 1971.

This month's unrest in the nation once known as East Pakistan was spurred by the re-imposition of laws that reserved around 30 per cent of government jobs for the descendants of those who fought in the Bangladesh war of liberation. The quota was uncontroversial when it was introduced by the present prime minister's father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in 1972. Hardly anyone could have objected to special consideration for the stalwarts of the resistance to Islamabad's hegemony, or their families.

Half a century later, such a law is harder to defend — particularly when unemployment among graduates is substantially higher than the national average. The quota was effectively rescinded in 2018, until revived by a high court last month. After dozens of deaths and hundreds of arrests, it is likely to take much more than a supreme court decision sharply reducing the quota to diminish the rage that led to the unrest, which has lately been subdued following curfew and shoot-on-sight orders.

Unfortunately, Sheikh Hasina Wajed's reign across four consecutive prime ministerships since 2009 — plus a previous stint as Bangladesh's second woman prime minister after Khaleda Zia — has been accompanied by an apparent determination to turn Bangladesh into a one-party state. That's precisely what her father had disastrously

plunged for in the months before he and most of his family were murdered by Bangladeshi army officers in 1975.

Bangladesh had a Gen Zia in charge two years before Pakistan did, but he was killed by the military in 1981, paving the way for a fellow general more in line with the Pakistani Zia's religious predilections. A joint effort by Hasina and Khaleda Zia managed to topple Ershad, and Zia became prime minister for a second term. It appeared a better outcome than achieved by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan, but yet another military intervention led to the imprisonment of both the 'begums'. However, by 2009 Hasina was back at the helm.

She has been there ever since, come hell or high water, based substantially on condemning the opposition to prison, or worse. There have been deaths in jail and disappearances under her watch, and her aim is seen as a one-party state of the kind her father sought to institute months before he was assassinated. Despite all his missteps, nothing of that sort was on the agenda of Mujib's Pakistani equivalent, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Courtesy of Dr Kamal Hossain, Bangladesh managed to establish a constitution in 1972, before Pakistan managed to do so almost a year later. Unlike Pakistan's, it was undeniably secular and potentially socialist. Hossain, who served as first law minister and then foreign minister under Mujib, was caught unawares when the leader alongside whom he had been imprisoned in Haripur in 1971 proclaimed a one-party state in February 1975. He was murdered alongside family members in August that year, and the military coup spawned the equally short-lived Zia rule, fol-

lowed by the Ershad interregnum that in many ways imitated the fundamentalist trajectory of Pakistan's Zia.

The return of democracy has not been smooth, with subsequent military interventions vying for attention with political squabbling that always seemed to have more to do with egos than ideology.

Bangladesh's economic growth rate since 2009 has been impressive, based to a large extent on garment exports — which have relied primarily on sweat-shops with occasionally deadly locati-ons. It's an industry that mostly employs vulnerable women, and in which demands for safer working conditions and higher wages have been crushed by the state.

The achievements of Sheikh Hasina's government stretch from relatively impressive economic figures to state capture stretching from the military to the judiciary. No civilian government in Pakistan can claim to have been equally successful, notwithstanding the obvious parallels related to punishing political opponents.

The question for Hasina's government now is whether backtracking on quotas that are assumed to have benefited the ruling party will suffice to calm popular anger that extends beyond that particular point to unequal growth, and suspected corruption where the current culprits can more readily be pinpointed under effective one-party rule.

Notwithstanding Bangladesh's successes, its failures cannot be ignored. Far less repression and a lot more democracy could set it on a more productive path — and the same essentially goes for Pakistan. But embarking on it with Hasina's Awami League still at helm could be seen as an impossible dream. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Finance Mir Shoaib Noshervani presides over the 7th meeting of Local Councils Finance Commission.

### Korea, Japan, Pak collaborating on groundbreaking agriculture initiatives: Chairman PARC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali Wednesday shared a vision for a transformed agricultural sector in which Pakistan will join forces with Korea and Japan to leverage cutting-edge technologies and expertise to enhance Pakistan's capacity for producing quality-based disease-resistant seeds.

Talking to PTV news, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, unveiled a game-changing trilateral partnership with Korea and Japan, poised to drive

innovation, boost crop yields, and ensure food security in Pakistan. This historic collaboration marks a new era in agricultural cooperation between our nations, he added.

"By pooling our resources and expertise, we can address pressing challenges, ensure food security, and propel Pakistan's agriculture sector into a new era of growth and prosperity," he mentioned.

To produce local seeds in Pakistan, he said that Korea's expertise in seed technology and Japan's knowledge in plant

breeding will be combined to enhance Pakistan's capacity for producing high-quality, disease-resistant seeds.

This will reduce reliance on imported seeds, ensuring self-sufficiency and improved crop yields, he added.

He further explained that Research and Korea's renowned research institutions will collaborate with PARC to establish state-of-the-art research facilities, focusing on developing climate-resilient crop varieties, improving soil health, and exploring novel agricultural practices.

### Finance minister vows to protect consumers' rights on priority, empower vulnerable

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance Ali Pervaiz Malik Wednesday reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to consumer protection, assuring that it will remain a top priority where Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was taking aggressive measures to not only end power outages but also uplift the most vulnerable segments of society. Talking to a private news channel, he while elaborating on the government's strategy

explained that efforts are underway to create a conducive business environment for the power sector to flourish. "We are not just focusing on privatization, but also on building a robust framework that encourages investment, innovation, and competition," he said.

This multi-pronged approach, he added, will not only enhance the efficiency and reliability of power supply but also attract private sector participation, driving economic growth and job creation, he mentioned.

### Rupee sheds 10 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 10 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.50 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.40.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279 and Rs 280.75 respectively.

The price of Euro came down by Rs 1.24 paise to close at Rs 301.55 against the last day's closing of Rs 302.79, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

### WAPDA supplied 34.436b units to national grid during FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has supplied around 34.436 billion clean and low-cost units from its various hydel stations to the national grid system during the last fiscal year 2023-24.

As per official data, 22 hydel power stations of WAPDA cumulatively provided 34.436 billion units of electricity in 2023-24, which is 3.266 billion units more than that of fiscal year 2022-23.

Tarbela Hydel Power Station generated 13.424 billion units, Tarbela 4th Extension 4.672 billion units, Ghazi Barotha 6.556 billion units, Mangla 5.276

billion units, and Neelum-Jhelum Hydel Power Station generated 762 million units. While, rest of the generation i.e. 3.747 billion units - was contributed by other hydel power stations of WAPDA.

This increase in hydel generation by WAPDA to the tune of 3.266 billion units helped save national exchequer an amount of Rs. 143.7 billion, if the same quantum of electricity had to be generated through imported furnace oil. WAPDA achieved this additional hydel power generation because of the improved hydrology and effective operation and maintenance of its Hydel Power Stations.

### PSX gains 409.92 points to close at 79,397.01

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 409.92 points, a positive change of 0.52 percent, closing at 79,397.01 points against 78,987.09 points on the last working day.

A total of 386,980,823 shares were traded during the day as compared to 316,245,462 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 14,899 billion against Rs 17,074 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 430 companies transacted their

shares in the stock market, 228 of them recorded gains and 155 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 47 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were SILK Bank Limited with 36,867,747 shares at Rs 1.10 per share, HASCOL Petrol with 25,777,994 shares at Rs 6.69 per share and PIA Holding Company with 17,163,702 shares at Rs 16.31 per share.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 70.00 per share price, closing at Rs 7,020.00.

### Aleem invites Chinese companies to invest in different sectors of economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister of Investment Board, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Wednesday said that Pakistan is extending business visa facility to investors from 124 countries including China and invited more Chinese companies to invest in different sector of national economy.

Abdul Aleem Khan along with Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal and Special Assistant to Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi briefed the Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong on the investment opportunities existing in different sector of the

economy, said a press release.

In this session, the details of the establishment of industries from China to Pakistan under matchmaking industry were presented. During the briefing, seven major sectors were finalized, which include medical equipment, plastic industry, textile, leather, edible meat, fruit & vegetables and waste.

While giving briefing to Ambassador of China Jiang Zaidong and the Chinese delegation, Abdul Aleem Khan said that there are opportunities in Pakistan to invest in infrastructure, housing and other important sectors. He invited more

Chinese companies to come to Pakistan and invest here. He assured that the Chinese brothers are our guests and their fool proof security would be assured at all costs and welcomed the participation of Chinese Ambassador in the briefing session.

Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong assured all possible support for investment in Pakistan and said that business organizations from China will fully participate in the promotion of trade here. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi said that with China Friendship, brotherly relations, investment is always the top priority for Pakistan.

### New LESCO BoD formed, Amir to head

LAHORE (APP): New Board of Director (BoD) of Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has been constituted, with Amir Zia as its chairman.

He said that a meeting of the new BoD was held on Zoom here at LESCO Headquarter in which the new Chairman Amir Zia, General Secretary Asad Sahafi, and members Rana Obaid, Zubair Liaquat, Zafar Mehmood and Tahir Basharat Cheema participated.

### Governor KP calls for promoting industrial sector of KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday called upon the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to explore measures for enhancing sustainable industrial development in different regions of the province on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi said this while in a meeting with the Chairman FBR, Malik

Amjed Zubair Tiwana and discussed different aspects of ensuring revenue and development of the trade and industrial sector of the province to attain sustainable economic growth and social prosperity in the country.

The senior officials of FBR and other concerned officers also attended the meeting, which also deliberated on measures to promote industrial growth in the province.



QUETTA: A delegation of Poultry Farms Association meeting with Provincial Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development Bakht Muhammad Kakar.



## Governor KP advocates for sustainable development in oil, gas exploration areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in a strategic meeting held with Ahmed Hayat Lak, Managing Director of the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), on Wednesday emphasized the critical need for enhancing community welfare and sustainable development in regions impacted by oil and gas exploration activities.

The discussions focused on three key initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life for residents in these areas. Member Provincial Assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ahmed Kundi was also present in the meeting.

Governor Faisal Kundi underscored the importance of facilitating health and education services in areas where OGDCL has successfully

explored oil. Recognizing the significant contributions of these regions to the province's and the country's energy resources, he advocated for investments that will ensure residents benefit directly from these natural resource discoveries.

This initiative aims to bridge the gap in healthcare and educational infrastructure, providing long-term benefits to the local population.

Addressing the energy needs of less privileged communities living around the oil and gas exploration sites, the Governor called for the deployment of solar energy systems funded by OGDCL. Many of these communities struggle with the high cost of electricity bills, making it difficult for them to afford consistent power supply.

He said by utilizing OGDCL's Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) funds to provide solar systems, these communities can gain access to sustainable and cost-effective energy solutions. This move is expected to promote sustainable energy practices, reduce dependency on conventional power sources, and alleviate financial burdens on underprivileged families, while also supporting environmental conservation efforts in the region, he added.

Special attention was directed towards the communities in Karak, a district noted for its significant natural gas extraction activities.

The Governor emphasized that Karak, being a major contributor to the province's natural gas output, should see targeted development initiatives.



LAHORE: The students of various universities called on Chancellor/Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here at Governor House.

## Minister Yousafzai vows strict action against illegal cutting of trees

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Forests and Environment Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai has said that strict legal action will be taken against those involved in cutting of the forests and no one would be spared in this regard.

He expressed these views while talking to delegations from various areas here in office on Wednesday. Taking action against the people involved in forest cutting and officials of the forest department in violation of ban on cutting, he said that 3 officials will be suspended and an FIR will be registered against those involved to send them to jail.

The provincial minister said that forests and tourism are inseparable and for this purpose a record plantation will be carried out in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai said the provincial government had taken notice of a video regarding cutting of trees in Alai Sub-Division of Battagram and an 8-member committee was formed under the chairmanship of Syed Zubair Shah Range Forest Officer with directives to furnish a report within 48 hours.

## Ban imposed on transportation of timber in KPK

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, taking notice of news in a section of media about logging, on Wednesday imposed complete ban on transportation and procurement of wood.

The government has also constituted seven teams to check transportation of timber and to investigate issue of logging.

Meanwhile, anti-corruption department has also started probe into illegal cutting of forest reiterating that stern action would be taken against officials that were found involved in logging.

## PPP criticizes KP govt over deforestation

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Secretary Information, Amjad Khan Afridi, has strongly criticized the provincial government for its failure to prevent deforestation.

In a statement, he claimed that the government's slogan of protecting forests is merely a paper exercise, with no real action taken on the ground. He said that forest officials have failed to protect our forests, alleging that trucks loaded with timber are operating day and night under government patronage.

He highlighted the helplessness of the public against the powerful timber mafia, which he accused of operating with impunity.

## Mariyum demands Punishment after confession of Imran about May-9 events

LAHORE (APP): Senior Punjab Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb has said that the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has confessed to his role in instigating the events of May 9, and now he should be punished for his crimes. Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday she described the PTI founder's statement as a moment of guilt, witnessed by the entire nation. She alleged that the PTI founder had repeatedly attacked the state institutions since 2014, including an assault on the PTV. She called for accountability, asserting that

the PTI leader manipulated the RTS system to rig the 2018 elections, thereby imposing his leadership on the country. She also accused him of engaging in digital terrorism, damaging the nation's reputation through foreign conspiracies, and advising the IMF against providing financial assistance to Pakistan in 2022, pushing the country towards economic hardship. The minister labeled May 9 as a dark day in the country's history, accusing the PTI of inciting violence and targeting government properties.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi visiting the Saint Jan Cathedral Church at Cantt area.

## PML-N-led govt to complete five years' term: Sher Gorchani

RAJANPUR (APP): Provincial Minister for Mines and Minerals, Sher Ali Gorchani said Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led government would complete its five-year constitutional term.

Talking to media persons here Wednesday, he said there are few elements who want to derail democracy, economic development, prosperity and thus seeking to sabotage law and order situation of the country.

They wanted to meet the nefarious task by disseminating disinformation about the government, he said.

He said Pakistan entered into avenue of

prosperity under leadership of Mohammed Nawaz Sharif which was unprecedented in comparison to past.

He termed Punjab gained exemplary status among the four provinces through guidance of first-ever woman chief minister, Mariam Nawaz.

"Development and prosperity of South Punjab was mission of incumbent government to which it would never back down, he added. He said they are determined to bring subdivisions of Rajanpur like Jampur Fazilpur and eastern mozas at par with upper Punjab with regard to development and prosperity.

## Most important purpose of education is to develop tolerance in oneself: Saleem

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: The students of various universities called on Chancellor/Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here at Governor House Lahore today. The students informed the Governor Punjab about various issues including girls' hostels, transport and increase in fees.

Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that the youth are the future of the country.

He further said that in addition to imparting education to them, the aspect of their moral training is also very important. He said that the most important purpose of education is to develop tolerance in oneself. Governor Punjab further said that it is the

## Protests erupt in Shikarpur against rising crime rate

**Independent Report**  
SHIKARPUR: Hundreds of protesters, led by taxi drivers, blocked the Shikarpur-Larkana Indus Highway at the Kerthar Canal Bridge, demanding action against the rising crime rate in the district. The protesters chanted slogans against the administration, claiming that law and order had deteriorated, and citizens felt insecure.

According to details, the protesters gathered at the Gharhi Yaseen police station and marched towards the highway, blocking both sides of the road. The protesters claimed that the police had failed to control crime, and incidents of car theft were on the rise.

The protesters demanded that the authorities take immediate action to improve law and order in the district and ensure the safety of citizens.

## 308 raids conducted on drug-traffickers hideouts in single day

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said on Wednesday that in one day, 308 raids were conducted on drug-traffickers' hideouts across the province, including Lahore. As a result, 153 suspects were arrested, and 150 cases were registered. The operations led to seizure of 110 kilograms of charas, three kilograms of heroin, and 1,327 litres of liquor from suspects' possession.

The IGP said that since the special campaign began on February 26, police teams had conducted 37,550 raids on

drug-dealers' hideouts across Punjab. As a result, 17,933 accused involved in drug trafficking were arrested, and 17,431 cases were registered. Seized from the suspects' possession were 10,518 kilograms of charas, 56 kilograms of Ice, 190 kilograms of heroin, 276 kilograms of opium, and 1.7 million liters of alcohol.

He directed to further intensify the intelligence-based operations against drug dealers and smugglers. He Punjab said that RPOs, DPOs should personally monitor the anti-narcotics operations.

## International News

## Kamala Harris leads Donald Trump 44pc to 42pc in US presidential race, poll finds

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Vice President Kamala Harris opened up a marginal two-percentage-point lead over Republican Donald Trump after President Joe Biden ended his re-election campaign and passed the torch to her, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found.

That compares with a marginal two-point deficit Biden faced against Trump in last week's poll before his Sunday exit from the race.

The new poll, conducted on Monday and Tuesday, followed both the Republican National Convention where Trump on Thursday formally accepted the nomination, and Biden's announcement on Sunday he was leaving the race and endorsing Harris.

Harris, whose campaign says she has secured the Democratic nomination, led Trump 44 per cent to 42pc in the national poll,

a difference within the 3-percentage-point margin of error.

Harris and Trump were tied at 44pc in a July 15-16 poll, and Trump led by one percentage point in a July 1-2 poll, both within the same margin of error.

While nationwide surveys give important signals of American support for political candidates, a handful of competitive states typically tilt the balance in the US Electoral College, which ultimately decides who wins a presidential election. A pollster with Trump's campaign played down any polling showing an increase in Harris' support, arguing that she was likely to see a temporary rise in popularity because of widespread media coverage of her new candidacy.

"That bump is likely to start showing itself over the next few days and will last for a while," pollster Tony Fabrizio said in a

memo circulated to reporters by Trump's campaign. Candidates often expect a bump after formally accepting their party's nomination at stage-managed, televised conventions such as the one that Trump had last week. But the poll showed no sign of that.

Bump or not, the most recent Reuters/Ipsos poll underscored the rationale for Biden dropping out of the race and for Harris replacing him on the ticket. Some 56pc of registered voters agreed with a statement that Harris, 59, was "mentally sharp and able to deal with challenges," compared to 49pc who said the same of Trump, 78.

Only 22pc of voters assessed Biden that way. Biden, 81, ended his reelection effort after a debate with Trump in which he often stammered and failed to aggressively challenge attacks by Trump that included falsehoods.



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators gather on the day of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's address to a joint meeting of Congress, on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S.

## Plane crashes in Nepal with 18 dead, pilot sole survivor

**Monitoring Desk**  
KATHMANDU: A passenger plane crashed on takeoff in Kathmandu on Wednesday, with the pilot rescued from the flaming wreckage but all 18 others aboard killed, police in the Nepali capital told AFP.

Nepal has a woeful track record on aviation safety and the Himalayan republic has seen a spate of deadly light plane and helicopter crashes over the decades.

The Saurya Airlines flight was carrying two crew and 17 of the

company's staff members, Nepali police spokesman Dan Bahadur Karki told AFP.

"The pilot has been rescued and is being treated," he added. "Eighteen bodies have been recovered, including one foreigner. We are in the process of taking them for post-mortem."

The flight was being conducted for either technical or maintenance purposes, Gyanendra Bhul of Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority told AFP without giving further details.

## Israeli lawmakers back declaring UN agency 'terrorist'

BEIRUT (Online): The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) may be declared a terrorist organization, its staff stripped of immunity and its activities inside Israel outlawed, under a series of bills that have been proposed in the Knesset.

The UNRWA was established in 1949 to deal with Palestinian refugees and has a mandate to operate in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank

and Gaza. Israel has accused it of aiding and abetting Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups. "We are on the UN's blacklist in any case. All the excessive morality ended on October 7," MK Yulia Malinovsky of Yisrael Beiteinu, who proposed to designate the UNRWA as a terrorist organization, said on Monday. She called the agency "a fifth column" within Israel.

## Blast at Mexico tequila factory kills five

MEXICO CITY (INP): An explosion at a factory producing Jose Cuervo tequila in Mexico killed five people Tuesday, local authorities said. "So far the deaths of five people are confirmed, workers of the company," the civil protection unit in the western state of Jalisco said in a statement. Two others were injured, one seriously, the statement added. It was not yet known what caused the blast in Tequila municipality, with the company saying it happened during maintenance work.

## UN welcomes declaration on ending division, strengthening unity by Palestinian factions

NEW YORK (Online): United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has welcomed the declaration on ending division and strengthening unity signed by 14 Palestinian factions in Beijing. According to the spokesperson for the UN Chief, the Secretary General termed the deal an important step towards furthering Palestinian unity. He said Antonio Guterres has encouraged all factions to overcome their differences through dialogue.

## Growing cooperation between Russia and China in Arctic, Pentagon says

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Russia and China are increasingly cooperating in the Arctic region, which could impact regional stability, the US military said as it released its strategy for the Arctic region on Monday.

Russia has reopened hundreds of Soviet-era military sites in the Arctic, the report said. China, which describes itself as a "near-Arctic" state, also has ambitions there and has said it intended to build a "Polar Silk Road." China has its eye on mineral resources and new shipping routes as ice packs recede with rising temperatures. "Increasingly, the (People's Republic of China) and Russia are collaborating in the Arctic across multiple instruments of national power," the Pentagon's report said.

"While significant areas of disagreement between the PRC and Russia remain, their growing alignment in the region is of concern, and (the Department of Defense) continues to monitor this cooperation," it added.

Arctic sea routes are increasingly being used for connecting major economies across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans as global warming shrinks ice packs and allows for longer ice-free periods at sea.

China and Russia have been working together to develop Arctic shipping routes as Russia seeks to deliver more oil and gas to China amid Western sanctions while China seeks an alternative shipping route to reduce its dependence on the Strait of Malacca.

The Pentagon report added that China was looking to leverage "changing dynamics in the Arctic to pursue greater influence and access, take advantage of Arctic resources.

## Bangladesh govt accepts apex court ruling to cut job quotas

**Monitoring Desk**  
DHAKA: The Bangladesh government said on Tuesday it would heed a Supreme Court ruling that 93 per cent of state jobs be open to competition, meeting a key demand of students after a week of some of the country's deadliest protests in years.

But students raised fresh demands including the scrapping of a curfew, restoration of internet services and a reopening of campuses, leaving unclear whether the government's acceptance of the court decision would completely defuse the unrest.

Relative calm prevailed for a second straight day in Dhaka and most major cities although the army chief said security had still not been entirely restored after he surveyed the capital city by helicopter.

The government announced an easing of the curfew imposed to help contain the unrest, lifting it from Wednesday between 10:00am and 5:00pm to allow people to shop for essentials, with offices reopened between 11:00am and 3:00pm.

Bangladeshi authorities also shut down mobile internet and deployed the army after clashes between protesters and security forces spread across the South Asian country of 170 million.

Almost 150 people have been killed in the violence with more than 1,600 arrested in the two main cities Dhaka and Chittagong. The protests tailed off after the Supreme Court ruled on Sunday in favour of an appeal from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government and directed that 93pc of jobs should be open to candidates on merit.

## Taiwan curtails annual war games as Typhoon Gaemi barrels towards island

**Monitoring Desk**  
HUALIEN: Taiwan curtailed its annual Han Kuang war games on Tuesday as Typhoon Gaemi barreled towards the island and the government issued a land warning given the expected strong winds and torrential rain as it hits the coast.

Gaemi, the first typhoon of the season to affect Taiwan, is expected to make landfall on the northeast coast between sometime on Wednesday night and the early hours of Thursday, according to the island's Central Weather Administration.

Currently categorised as a medium strength typhoon by Taiwan, it is then likely to move across the Taiwan Strait and then hit the southeastern Chinese province of Fujian in the

early hours of Friday.

Taiwan's government issued a land warning for the typhoon, centred on Taiwan's east and northeast, meaning that is where it is most likely to make landfall. Some mountainous central and southern Taiwan counties are expected to see total rainfall of up to 1,800 mm (70 inches) during the typhoon, the weather administration said.

Taiwan's annual Han Kuang military drills taking place this week have been curtailed, including cancelling fighter jet exercises on the east coast, the defence ministry said.

"The impact from the typhoon at present on the east coast is rather obvious," ministry spokesman Sun Li-fang told reporters at the Hualien air base.

## UK government scrapping use of a barge off English coast to house asylum-seekers

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: The British government said Tuesday it will scrap the controversial use of a barge to house asylum-seekers off the south coast of England as part of its immigration system overhaul. The Labour government that took power earlier this month said that ending the contract for the Bibby Stockholm would save 20 million pounds (\$26 million) next year. It's part of a larger plan to save over 7.7 billion pounds (\$9.9 billion) over the next decade by clearing a huge asylum backlog. The boat has been at the center of controversy since it was first towed into Portland harbor in Dorset a year ago to house up to 500 asylum-seekers.





ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal chaired a high-level meeting with provincial planning ministers.

## Chairs meeting of provincial planning ministers Ahsan stresses collective efforts for national development

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to revitalize the spirit of federalism and promote economic and social development, Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting with provincial planning ministers.

This initiative marks a significant revival of the consultative sessions, started by the previous PMLN government in 2013-2018, aimed at harmonizing provincial economic policies with federal goals, said a press release.

The meeting focused on aligning development projects with the Annual National Development Plan, optimizing utilization of allocated funds for higher education, and strategies for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the imperative of federal-provincial collaboration to address pressing challenges, including rapid population growth, healthcare sector deficiencies, and education sector shortcomings.

He stressed the need for collective efforts to achieve national development goals, particularly in the wake of the seventh census results, which predict a doubling of the population within 24-30 years.

The minister expressed concern over Pakistan's lagging position in healthcare and education, citing issues like diabetes, hepatitis, tuberculosis, malnutrition, stunting, and out-of-school children. He directed the Federal Bureau of Statistics to collect data on out-of-school children and emphasized the need

for federal-provincial collaboration in healthcare and education.

Despite fiscal constraints, the minister committed to funding federal universities through the Federal Government and Provincial universities through Provincial Governments. He acknowledged the brain-drain due to lack of incentives for university faculty and called for consultative workshops on the five-year plan, involving provinces, stakeholders, think tanks, and experts.

The minister reiterated the need for collective efforts to achieve national development goals, committing to hold monthly consultative meetings with Provincial Planning Ministers to ensure ongoing collaboration and progress.

## Pakistan, Turkmenistan agree to expedite TAPI pipeline project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Turkmenistan have agreed to expedite the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, affirming their resolve for continuous engagement.

This agreement was reached during a meeting on Wednesday between Pakistan's Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr Musadik Malik, and Turkmenistan's Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rashid Meredov, who is on a two-day visit to Pakistan.

The Turkmen delegation accompanying Rashid Meredov included Ata Haljanov, head of the International Economic Cooperation Division at Turkmenistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Eziz Nazarov, head of the Legal Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Muhammetmyrat Amanov, Chairman of the Board and CEO of TAPI Pipeline Company Ltd; Atadjan

Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan; and Eldar Permanov, Third Secretary of the Embassy of Turkmenistan. Pakistani officials present at the meeting included Additional Secretary Hasan Yousafzai, Joint Secretary Shahbaz Tahir, and MD of Interstate Gas Systems Limited, Nadeem Bajwa.

Dr Musadik Malik welcomed the Turkmen delegation and expressed his gratitude for the hospitality offered by the Turkmen side during his last visit to Turkmenistan.

He said the visit of the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan marks a significant milestone in the strengthening of diplomatic and economic ties between the two nations.

TAPI pipeline project, the minister said, will lower energy costs, which can boost industrial growth, create jobs, and foster economic development. Reliable and affordable energy supplies are vital for industrial sectors and overall economic stability, he added.

This project, he said, aimed at fostering economic integration and energy security, has witnessed substantial progress through collaborative efforts and resolved continuous engagement among both countries.

He further added that Pakistan is fully committed to this project which is significant for regional energy cooperation and infrastructure development.

Rashid Meredov expressed his profound appreciation for the warm welcome extended by the Pakistani side. "Together we will chalk out a roadmap for cooperation between both countries" he added.

Muhammetmyrat Amanov, CEO of TAPI Pipeline Company Limited mentioned that with the special interest of Petroleum Minister and Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) TAPI has seen significant progress and is on the right track.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti

## Tarar launches Awaz App to address HR violations

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar has launched the Awaz App, a groundbreaking mobile application designed to address and report human rights violations effectively.

This initiative marks a significant advancement in the country's efforts to enhance the protection and welfare of individuals.

The Awaz App is a testament to the Ministry of Human Rights' commitment to utilizing technology for social good, ensuring rapid responses to critical human rights issues. The App allows users to report human rights violations, including cases of missing or abducted children, directly through the platform. These reports are immediately forwarded to relevant authorities for redressal.

Upon receiving a report, the app activates an Alert System that triggers a coordinated response involving law enforcement, government departments,

and community organizations. Crucial information about reported incidents is disseminated through various channels, including social media, WhatsApp groups, news outlets, and public announcements.

This approach maximizes public awareness and engagement. Law enforcement agencies are mobilized to initiate search operations and investigations to locate missing or abducted individuals promptly. The app's primary objective is to ensure the safe recovery of victims, with comprehensive support services provided once they are found. These services include legal aid, medical assistance.

While inaugurating, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, highlighted the App's role in fostering a safer and more responsive environment for addressing human rights issues. "The Minister stated, "We are proud to introduce the Awaz app as a pivotal tool in our ongoing efforts to protect and uphold human rights.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador H.E. Jiang Zaidong being briefed by Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, during a high level meeting in Islamabad. Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal and Special Assistant to Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi is also present in the meeting.

## Advisor to CM supports "Meri Pehchan Project": Provision of equal opportunities to women of Balochistan crucial for socio-economic progress: Rubaba

Dr. Rubaba says empowering women with essential skills not only benefits them individually but also strengthens our entire society

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Advisor to the Chief Minister Balochistan for Women Development Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi had meeting with representatives from DOCH (Pvt) Limited on Wednesday.

The discussion centered around several pivotal projects aimed at fostering women's empowerment and economic participation in the province.

During the meeting, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi expressed strong support for "Meri Pehchan Project," which aims to provide women in Balochistan with a distinct

identity and recognition.

"The Meri Pehchan Project is a vital initiative that resonates deeply with our mission to uplift women in Balochistan," said Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi. "Our government is dedicated to supporting such projects that empower women and grant them the recognition they deserve."

Another significant topic of discussion was the activation and establishment of Women Chambers of Commerce at both provincial and district levels. Dr. Buledi emphasized that establishing Women Chambers of Commerce will create robust platforms for

women to engage in business activities, share resources, and support each other's entrepreneurial efforts. The conversation also focused on enhancing training programs for women, particularly in the Naseerabad district. Dr. Buledi stressed the importance of equipping women with essential skills to enable them to make significant contributions to their communities and the broader economy.

"Investing in the training and development of women, especially in districts like Naseerabad, is crucial for our socio-economic progress.



ZHOB: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail listening problems of people

## Seminar marking Population Day: Hadia Nawaz calls for making education & empowerment of women ultimate target

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Parliamentary Secretary for Population Welfare, Ms. Hadia Nawaz has stressed the need to make education and empowerment of women ultimate goal. She said that the education makes the women independent and empowers them as such they must be encouraged to get higher education.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Population Welfare was addressing a seminar on World Population Day organized by the District Population office at Quetta Press club on Wednesday.

The Secretary Population Welfare, Abdullah Khan, Director General Population, Ghulam

Musafa, former Minister, Mrs. Roshan Khursheed Bharucha, Head of the UNFPA Balochistan, Dr. Sarmad Saeed Khan, senior District Population Officer, Ayub Kakar and other concerned officials were among the prominent participants of the seminar.

The seminar focused on the reproductive health, family planning and balance in resources and population.

Ms. Hadia Nawaz stressed that education of women plays important role in controlling population. She also stressed that there is a need to take steps for informing the parents about better education and upbringing of their children.

## Home Minister condoles death of Bahadur Khan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has expressed grief and condolence over death of Bahadur Khan Langove.

In a condolence statement issued here on Wednesday, the Provincial Minister paid rich tributes to late Bahadur Khan for his party and the areas of Kalat and Khaliqabad.

He said that late Bahadur Khan devoted his life for prosperity of the areas besides waging struggle for the party.

Mir Ziaullah Langove expressed sympathy with the bereaved family of the late Bahadur Khan and said that his services are unforgettable and would be remembered in golden words.

He also prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss of his death.



QUETTA: Population Welfare Department Secretary, Abdullah Khan Noorzai talking to media persons during seminar on the occasion of World Population Day, in Quetta.

## Electricity supply from Iran suspended for Makran

MAKRAN (INP): Electricity supply from 132kV Jackie Gore-Mand and 132kV Polan-Jiwani transmission lines from neighbouring Iran has been suspended, reported on Wednesday. In this regard, the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) spokesperson said that due to the suspension of power supply from both 132kV transmission lines from Iran, the power supply to all grid stations of the Makran division has been affected. The affected 132kV grid stations include Mand, Tump, Turbat, Hoshab, Jiwani, Gwadar Door, Gwadar Deep Sea Port, New Gwadar International Airport, Pnsni and Ormara grid stations, the spokesperson said. A spokesperson said QESCO officials are in constant contact with Iranian authorities in connection.



QUETTA: Dr. Mahrang Baloch of Baloch Yakjehti Committee and other addressing a Press conference

## IHC seeks interior secy, police, NAB, FIA reply in Bushra Bibi's case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday issued notices to the secretary interior and senior officials of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the police and sought their replies in the former prime minister Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi case.

Bushra, in her petition, had prayed to the court to order the concerned departments to provide her with details of the cases registered against her as well as not to arrest her in any new case besides allowing her to approach a relevant court for justice.

IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Aamer Farooq heard the former first lady's petition. The court then adjourned the case's hearing until next week.

On the other hand, hinting at the formation of

a larger bench to hear the petition filed by PTI leader Ali Bukhari against the Election Amendment Act, the IHC CJ on Wednesday summoned the attorney general of Pakistan (AGP) to assist the court in deciding the case.

Justice Farooq also issued notices to the Ministry of Law and the Election Commission of Pakistan and sought their replies within 10 days.

Giving arguments on behalf of the petitioner, his counsel Shoaib Shaheen Advocate said that a section had been inserted in the Act so that a retired judge could head the tribunal formed to hear the complaints of losing candidates in the general elections held on February 8, 2024. "Under the section, consulting a high court's chief justice for the appointment of a retired judge is no longer mandatory," he said.

## Terrorists firing attack on Police Post in Regi, one cop injured

PESHAWAR (APP): After a strong retaliatory action by the Police Jawans against terrorists' firing attack on the Police Post in Regi, the attackers ran away here early Wednesday morning, leaving a police constable injured.

According to Police Control Peshawar, the terrorists fired at police post zone three in Regi but the high-alert Police Jawans retaliated the attack with bravery, compelling the attackers to escape.

## Pak army rescues foreign climbers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Army commandos has successfully rescued foreign climbers from Holland, Singapore, and Ecuador on Wednesday who fell ill due to severe weather conditions while attempting to summit K2.

According to a private news channel, the climbers experienced health issues during their expedition.

## DC Dera Bugti holds open court, resolves public issues

**Independent Report**  
DERA BUGTI: On the special instructions of the Chief Minister of Balochistan and the guidance of the Chief Secretary, an open court session was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Dera Bugti, Kaleemullah Kakar. The session was attended by FC 87 Wing Commander Muhammad Hanif Khattak, SP Dera Bugti Asim Shafique, Assistant Commissioner Dera Bugti Zahoor Ahmed Baloch, Assistant Commissioner Loni Biberg Lehri, District Chairman Haji

Khairullah Nasser, and heads of various departments, as well as a large number of people from different walks of life.

The Deputy Commissioner listened to the public's problems in detail and issued orders to the relevant departments to resolve several issues on the spot. Addressing the participants of the open court session, he said that practical steps would be taken to resolve the issues identified today. He added that his priorities include maintaining law and order, provision of water, electricity, health.

## DC chairs district Intelligence Coordination Committee meeting in Jhal Magsi

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Jhal Magsi Syed Rahmatullah Shah on Wednesday chaired a review meeting of district Intelligence Coordination Committee.

The meeting was attended by 151 Wing Commander (Lt. Col.) Sohail

Ahmed, SP Jhal Magsi Subhan Ali Magsi, Tehsildar Gandawa Hadi Bakhsh Pahor, (Major) Abdul Hakeem Abro, and other intelligence agency officers.

Deputy Commissioner Jhal Magsi Syed Rahmatullah said the officials participating in the

## DC chairs district Intelligence Coordination Committee meeting in Jhal Magsi

meeting that the rules issued by the Balochistan government, Home Department and better coordination and immediate information sharing between all institutions were emphasized so that any emergency could be avoided in time.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani meeting with Provincial Minister for Livestock & Dairy Development Bakht Muhammad Kakar

## Fawad Chaudhry says: Zardari, Nawaz on the wrong side of history

LAHORE (INP): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry said on Wednesday that Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif were on the wrong side of the history.

He made these remarks during his appearance in an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in a case registered against him.

He said the cabinet meeting would deliberate on banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, adding that whoever was siding with Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari won't be able to survive in politics in future.

Speaking about PTI founder Imran Khan, he said the 14-month long illegal incarceration of Imran Khan couldn't achieve anything for the government as people had voted for his party without the PTI having a party symbol for the polls.

He warned the government against rampant human rights abuses which may lead to anarchy.

"The world is watching everything happening in Pakistan where even court orders are brushed under the carpet," he cautioned.