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Secretary General ECO calls on him PM reaffirms Pakistan's support to ECO in boosting intra-regional trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed his commitment that Pakistan would continue to lend its full support to Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in enhancing intra-regional trade among ECO countries as well as on the ECO reforms agenda.

He was talking to Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Amb. Khusrav Noziri who called on him at the PM House.

He highlighted the significance of "ECO Vision 2025", signed during the 2017 ECO Summit in Islamabad under then Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, as an important document for the ECO.

The outgoing Secretary General apprised the Prime Minister about ECO's initiatives and activities as well as his reform agenda to re-

talize ECO during his tenure.

The prime minister appreciated the Secretary General's efforts and contributions to promote ECO as a regional platform for co-operation and extended best wishes for his future endeavors.

He noted with pleasure that Amb. Noziri was a graduate of Pakistan's Foreign Service Academy. The prime minister also conveyed his warm wishes for President Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan.

The prime minister also stated that Pakistan was proud that the incoming Secretary General of ECO would be Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. The Secretary General conveyed his gratitude for Pakistan's consistent support to him during his tenure as Secretary General ECO.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Secretary General of ECO H.E. Khusrav Noziri called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

CM indebted to federation on grant for rehabilitation activities in flood affected areas of Balochistan

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QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed thanks to the federal government on the grant for rehabilitation activities in the flood affected areas of the province.

The Chief Minister was participating through video link in the high level meeting held with the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal in the chair in Islamabad on Thursday.

The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Principal Secretary to Chief

Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan and other high ups participated in the meeting through video link.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that the floods of 2010 and 2022 caused heavy devastations in the province. He, however, thanked the federation on the grant for rehabilitation in the flood affected areas of the province.

He said that it is necessary to set up meet of office of the rehabilitation projects in Quetta. He on the occasion suggested to include Chief Secretary and Additional Chief Secretary Development in the committee formed for review of the projects.



QUETTA: Members of Aalmi Majlis Tahafuz-e-Khatam-e-Nabuwat (PBUH) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Quetta press club.

KP Apex Committee vows to not tolerate terrorism, take strict action against terrorists

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur on Thursday chaired the Apex Committee meeting to address the current security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, focusing on recent terrorist incidents and formulating strategies to maintain law and order.

The meeting saw participation from key civil, military, and law enforcement officials, underscoring the need for unified efforts against terrorism.

The committee decided uncompromising action against terrorism and sectarianism. The provincial government will take strict action against individuals and groups involved in terrorism and sectarian hatred. The Chief Minister has directed all departments to

ensure no leniency is shown.

The law enforcement and intelligence agencies will strengthen coordination to effectively monitor and counter terrorist activities through increased surveillance and intelligence-sharing.

Citizens are encouraged to report suspicious activities to law enforcement agencies. The Chief Minister ordered the police to crack down on armed groups and individuals.

The administration will ensure public safety and protect lives and property of the citizens.

The committee also decided to request a judicial inquiry into the Bannu incident, while the government will conduct its own inquiry to determine individual responsibilities.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed participating through video link in the high level meeting held with the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal in the chair in Islamabad

Govt. determined to promote foreign investment; has capability to provide effective security to investors: CM

Mir Sarfraz Bugti says comprehensive plan formulated for security of the foreign projects in Balochistan; recruitments made in Levies

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that his government is determined to promote foreign investment in the province, and we have the capability to provide effective security and protection to the foreign investors.

He said that comprehensive plan has been formulated for security of the foreign projects in Balochistan.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the President and Chief Executive Officer of Barrick Gold Corporation, Mr. Mark Bristow, who called on him here at the CM's secretariat on Thursday.

During the course of meeting, matters about mining and ongoing assistance projects were discussed.

Speaking to Mr. Mark Bristow, the Chief Minister said that bright future of Balochistan and Pakistan are linked with the international and national projects.

He also said that the steps are being taken for promo-

tion of foreign investment in collaboration of the federal and provincial governments.

Referring the measures taken for security of the foreign investors and projects, the Chief Minister said that recruitments have been made in the Levies force for security of the foreign projects.

He on the occasion stressed the need to project and highlight the welfare works being done by the Barrick Gold Corporation.

He directed to the concerned to highlight the welfare projects through effective communication strategy.

He said that the living standard of people would be increased with completion of the welfare projects.

The President and CEO of Barrick Gold Corporation thanked the Chief Minister Balochistan and said that the Corporation would continue the process of public welfare initiatives under joint endeavours with the provincial government.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail presiding over 1st meeting of Senate of University of Panjgur

Terrorist killed, arms, ammunition seized in Hoshab IBO: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (INP): One terrorist was killed and two others injured in intelligence-based operation (IBO) of security forces in Hoshab district of Balochistan, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

The military's media wing said on Thursday that an intense fire exchange took place between the Army troops and the terrorists during the operation.

A terrorist identified as Ali Jan was killed while two others were injured in the operation.

The ISPR said that weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in multiple terrorist activities in the area including kidnapping and target killing of innocent civilians.

LHC sets aside physical remand of PTI founder in 12 cases

LAHORE (APP): A Lahore High Court (LHC) division bench on Thursday set aside the physical remand of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder in 12 cases related to the May-9 riots.

The bench also canceled the notification for the video-link attendance of the PTI founder.

The division bench, comprising Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh and Justice Anwaarul Haq Pannun, announced the reserved verdict on petitions, filed by the PTI founder challenging his 10-day physical remand in 12 cases of the May-9 riots.

Decisions made with collective wisdom happen to be effective & credible every time & every place

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that the democracy is actually political manifestation of the collective wisdom and the decisions made with the collective wisdom happen to be effective and credible every time at every place.

He said that the joint decision making can lead to the effective and sustainable solution keeping in view the advantages and disadvantages even at the level of university.

He said that if the journey of establishment of University of Panjgur ends, then the long journey of achieving the international standards and putting it on path of development is still remaining.

The Governor was chairing first meeting of the Senate of Panjgur University here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor stressed that we have to take serious aspect of collaboration between the academia and industry at the level of public sector universities in accordance with the socio-economic requirements.

Minister Home takes notice of incident of firing at trucks carrying minerals in Mastung

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has taken notice of the incident of firing at trucks carrying minerals in Mastung.

According to an official letter, the Provincial Minister expressed deep concern over the incident occurred in Khad Kocha area of Mastung and directed to the Additional Chief Secre-

tary Home to take action against the district administration of Mastung.

He also directed to take departmental action against Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner Mastung over their failure to prevent the incident.

It was also mentioned that negligence was committed in maintaining law and order by the local administration of Mastung on the national highway.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Mr. Pullain chairing the committee meeting at Parliament House.

ECP notifies 39 MNAs as PTI members following SC order

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday declared 39 lawmakers — who contested the February 8 elections as independent candidates and later joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) — as members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in line with the Supreme Court's July 12 verdict in reserved seats case.

The ECP uploaded the notification on its website to declare 39 NA lawmakers as the former ruling party's members who had shown their affiliation with the PTI in their nomination papers for the February 8 nationwide polls.

The decision was taken in a key session held under the chair of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja today in which they reached a conclusion to upload the notification of 39 lawmakers' affiliation with the Imran-founded party.

In the notification, Shandana Gulzar, Sher Ali Arbab, Asif Khan, Syed Shah Ahad Ali Shah, Shahid Khan, Naseem Ali Shah, Sher Afzal Marwat, Osama Ahmed, Shafiqat Abbas, Ali Afzal Sahi, Rai Hyder Ali Khan and Nisar Ahmed were declared PTI candidates.

Also, Mehboob Shah, Junaid Akbar, Ali Khan Jadoon, Asad Qaiser, Shahram Khan, Mujahid Ali, Anwar Taj, Fazal Mehmood Khan, Arbab Ameer Ayub have been declared as successful candidates of PTI.

Moreover, according to the Election Commission notification, Rana Atif, Changaiz Ahmed Khan, Muhammad Ali Sarfaraz, Khurram Shehzad Virk, Latif Khosa, Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan, Aamir Dogar, Zain Qureshi, Rana Muhammad Faraz Noon, Mumtaz Mustafa, Shabbir Ali Qureshi, Anbar Majeed, Awais Haider and Zartaj Gul have also been declared successful candidates of the PTI.



QUETTA: President and Chief Executive Officer of Barrick Gold Corporation, Mr. Mark Bristow meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti

Rs 1.6 billion dues of media industry paid in transparent manner: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar informed the Information Standing Committee of the National Assembly on Thursday about clearance of Rs 1.6 billion in dues to the media industry by the government in a transparent manner, which would eventually help them to pay every media worker salary in time. The minister disclosed the details about the dues' clearance in the committee meeting which was presided over by Pullain Baloch and briefed about the

functioning of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and its attached departments. Pointing out a halt in advertisements to certain media channels on favoritism basis in the past, Attaullah Tarar confirmed seamless distribution of the ads to the channels on merit and in accordance with the criteria.

He said there were presence of the dummy newspapers which were being printed only for the sake of ads, describing the practice a major challenge for the ministry that has been taking concrete measure to address the issue.

PTA, NADRA ink MoU to streamline identity verification process

ISLAMABAD (APP): A lower court on Thursday issued order for acquittal of former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and other accused in cases pertaining to the incidents of May 9. The court said that Mr Qureshi was accused of provoking the protesters. It said that penal code 109 couldn't be applied on accused until he was found clearly involved in crime.

It said that the crime was not proved to the extent of Shah Mehmood Qureshi. It said that MPO-19 and section 144 was also applied in case against Mr Qureshi. It said that only a relevant officer could file the complaint under these sections. It said that the prosecutions case was weak as district magistrate was not a complainant against the accused. The accused couldn't be given sentence in the case even after recording the evidences. The court accepted the acquittal of Qureshi and 14 other accused in the case.

On the occasion, Chairman NADRA said that NTL will provide biometric verification services through its nationwide network of NADRA e-Sahulat franchisees to verify the identities of concerned officials and staff of telecom service providers and other related entities.

As part of the new process, PTA will create a profile for each applicant, applying for a PTA license. Once the applicant receives their tracking ID, they will visit the nearest e-Sahulat outlet and present the tracking ID for biometric verification. The verification result will then be securely transmitted to PTA.

The collaboration between PTA and NADRA is a significant step towards improving the efficiency and transparency of telecom services licensing process in the country.



ISLAMABAD (APP): To streamline the identity verification process for telecom service providers, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and NADRA Technologies Limited (NTL) signed an agreement on Thursday. The signing ceremony was attended by the Chairman PTA Major General Hafeez Ur Rehman and Chairman NADRA Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar. Member Finance PTA Muhammad Naveed and Member Compliance & Enforcement PTA Dr. Khawar Siddique Khokhar along with senior officials from both PTA and NADRA were also present on the occasion, said a news release.

Chairman PTA in his welcome note termed the partnership as a positive step towards efficient and

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Bad measures

The ongoing tussle between the current regime and PTI will only end up causing lasting harm to Pakistan. This much can be expected when all rules and laws have been set aside, and politics is being dictated by individuals' egos rather than the greater good. After a long campaign of coercion and intimidation, which has yielded nothing of import, the regime is now insisting on dismantling the country's largest political party on arguably frivolous charges.

However, doing so will only provoke the PTI's large support base and further deepen the distrust between it and the state. Meanwhile, in foreign lands, PTI leaders are working single-mindedly on internationalising their party's suffering by approaching different lawmakers to share their grievances. They do not seem to realise that engaging foreign interests in Pakistan's domestic political affairs may weaken their country's standing and make it much more difficult for it to assert its position in its international dealings.

It is most unfortunate that matters have come to this, and both sides deserve equal blame. The state has already taken its intimidatory tactics too far in its campaign of arrests and abductions. There is no reason why it should now also seek to rob millions of Pakistanis of their right to be represented by the PTI.

Its desperate moves are only provoking those at the receiving end to more and more extreme measures as they attempt to reassert themselves. It should realise that it is actively creating the conditions for more civil unrest, instead of finding solutions to the challenge.

Likewise, it defies understanding why, after its long campaign against foreign interference during the cipher saga, the PTI is now inviting international pressure on the Pakistani state. The party may be battling the might of the state, but this fight must be fought in Pakistan, not on foreign soil. It also seems unjustified for the PTI to be taking the fight abroad without exhausting all its options within Pakistan. It cannot get what it most desires without first making sacrifices, yet the party has barely tried to forcefully assert itself. Political victories cannot be achieved without mobilising a party's support base, but the PTI seems least interested in doing this. Just like the regime, it, too, seems to be making the fatal flaw of completely disregarding ordinary citizens. This brings us back to the first point: Pakistan's political crisis has turned into a tug-of-war between a handful of individuals fighting for very narrow objectives. They do not seem to have realised that they have put the country's best interests at risk. Both sides must de-escalate and agree to keep within their lanes. The law and the national interest must be respected. Pakistan cannot afford this domestic cold war any longer.

Crooks together

F.S. Aijazuddin

Either Thomas Crooks — the 20-year-old sniper who shot Donald Trump during the recent election rally in Pennsylvania — was an excellent marksman and nicked only Trump's ear deliberately, or he missed his target's head by accident.

Gradually, more and more details are emerging of that portentous incident which could have changed modern history. Crooks had been meticulous in his preparation. He chose the rooftop location for its uninterrupted view of the podium where Trump would stand. He flew a drone over the rally site hours before the event began. (The police have since recovered the drone.)

Crooks used an AR-15 style high-powered rifle. His first shot "came less than a quarter of an inch from entering [Trump's] head, and struck the top of his right ear". Having mis-sed Trump, Crooks fired multiple shots, killing a firefighter and injuring two spectators.

Lessons learned from J.F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963 came into play. A Secret Service counter sniper reacted swiftly. Although he could see "only Crooks' gun scope and the top of his eye and forehead", he fired and in a "one-in-a-million shot" killed Trump's would-be assassin.

Who was this young not-so-sharp shooter, fresh out of high school? A fellow student in Bethel Park high school described him as smart and friendly, "definitely nerdy for sure", but he "never gave off that he was creepy or like a school shooter". And in a phrase used years ago by Alfred Hitchcock with chilling effect about the villain Norman Bates in his horror movie Psycho, the student added: "He seemed like he wouldn't hurt a

fly."

Conspiracy theories have already begun to swirl about this event. Why did the Secret Service not reconnoitre the venue with more professional thoroughness? How did Crooks aiming from his more advantageous machan fail with repeated firings when the Secret Service man succeeded in a "one-in-a-million shot"?

Did Trump know when to duck? (Many might recall president Ronald Reagan's riposte to his wife Nancy after the assassination attempt on him in 1981: "Honey, I forgot to duck!"). Was Crooks a fall guy like Lee Harvey Oswald, a casualty of murky, murderous US politics?

One wonders whether there will be a second Warren-style Commission to obfuscate the truth.

By not killing Donald Trump, Crooks has gouted Donald Trump's nomination as the Republican presidential candidate.

Interestingly, Trump has recovered faster than the painter Van Gogh did after his ear wound.

The November elections are only a few months away. Harried Democrats have been demanding a change in leadership. Biden has answered their prayers by withdrawing and proposing his obedient Vice President Kamala Harris as his substitute. Biden ought to have heeded the advice of a Republican predecessor — Abraham Lincoln: "Never change horses in midstream."

It is a truism that the US presidential elections have a seismic effect on almost every country in the world. A left-wing Keir Starmer may take over in the UK. An ornamental Ursula von der Leyen may return as a second term president of the European Commission. Emmanuel Macron may continue in a presidency with a built-

in expiry date. None matter except for China and Russia in international geopolitics. The president of America always will.

Ever since 1945, the US has been involved perpetually in a war, somewhere. The Cold War is now a "Warm War". For 20 years, Af-ghanistan was in. Hamid Karzai and his de-signer chogha are now out. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky and his commander T-shirts and false fatigues are in. Peace summits are out.

According to the German Kiel Institute, since 2022, the US and the Euro-pean Union have pledged or provided "more than \$380 billion" in military, fi-nancial and humanitarian aid to Ukra-ine. Even innocuous Azerbaijan has supplied bombs, but via Sudan. Pakistan, not to be left behind, decided to provide Ukraine with Kamikaze drones and Man-portable air-defence systems (MANPADS) surface-to-air missiles. The Afghan war lasted 20 years and cost \$3 trillion. Who can predict how long the Ukrainian war will last? Probably as long as it takes to bleed Russia dry, or America's allies run out of patience, or a re-elected President Trump decides that enough is already too much.

The pattern of EU elections has raised an interesting possibility. When 27 disparate European countries can hold "free and fair elections" to elect a president, isn't there an argument for countries affected directly by the decisions of a US president to be allowed a say in his (or her) appointment? After all, their destinies are involved, their stability affected by the whims of one man chosen by 170m or so insular American voters. It is a frightening thought that Crook's single bullet, not a mass ballot, has already decided the fate of the free world. -- Courtesy Dawn

Urban flooding

Dr Noman Ahmed

Taking precautionary steps to minimise the damage wreaked on life and property seems high on the agenda of the various tiers of government in Karachi. The chief minister has held several meetings with the relevant authorities regarding effective preparations to cope with the expected rains and flooding. The president called on the chief minister, mayor and others to take swift action to prevent flooding in Karachi neighbourhoods.

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation has the mandate to manage the main storm drains that fall under its jurisdiction. But it is unfair to expect a lot from KMC, given its limited financial strength and technical capacity. As Karachi is likely to receive torrential rains in early August, it is time for swift action.

One reason for urban flooding is uncoordinated real estate development, as seen in suburban Karachi. Construction has also been going on in areas strictly recommended for livestock rearing, urban farming, forestation, etc. The so-called anti-encroachment drives, in part to enable water to drain properly, have proved largely ineffective.

Much of Karachi's development took place under the overall framework of plans and schemes carried forward from pre-independence times. The British had brought in a municipal system to plan and develop urban infrastructure. Storm drains were an essential feature. Through land surveys and the use of available means to assess rainfall and the surrounding terrain, Karachi was protected as rainwater was effectively drained. The measures were also meant to enable Karachi to withstand torrential

rains. The sewerage system was planned in conjunction with a drainage plan, though both functioned independently.

Periodic maintenance, repairs and an effective monitoring process made the system dependable. Manuals, SOPs, and projections were diligently prepared. Engineering wisdom and sound urban planning logic enabled the administration to manage Karachi well. The system became distorted when these practices were not institutionalised after independence.

Some quarters are talking about using the sewerage system for rainwater disposal. This must be reconsidered. Karachi has many informal settlements located along the edges of major nullahs. Various settlements in Lyari, Orangi, Malir and the central parts of the city are examples. While life and activities benefit from convenient access for disposing domestic waste water, urban flooding becomes a threat.

Until around three decades ago, Karachi's storm drains, natural and manmade, helped mitigate flooding. Not anymore. The hydrology of the drains is impacted by illegal sand mining that continues relentlessly along natural water courses. Many formal outfits have also encroached upon these nullahs, creating obstacles for the free flow of water.

The parking area of a major judicial office in Karachi has apparently been constructed on a drain. Unrestricted dumping of solid waste and construction debris directly into the nullahs also reduces the carrying capacity of the water flows.

Unsuitable repairs raise the level of main roads, allowing rainwater to gush into the streets. This is found in almost every neighbourhood in

Karachi. A thriving informal sector uses nullahs and rivers as sites of waste recycling enterprises. With the connivance of municipal staff, much of this waste is regularly brought to the nullah sites where recyclable items are separated and organic or worthless waste is made to settle on the river beds. Thus the silt content continues to expand.

Several sites in Lasbela along the Lyari river are linked to recycling. They can be connected to the city waste management system to prevent the random disposal of solid waste in nearby water bodies. When Karachi faced torrential rains a decade ago, locations along the river and nullah were severely flooded as the water could not find a proper path for outward flow. Meanwhile, it is not clear whether mega transportation projects such as the Red Line BRT and Yellow Line BRT are synchronised with the drainage network.

With rains predicted, the local and provincial governments must identify unsafe locations across the city, and urge the public to take precautionary measures. Personnel to assist people in safeguarding life and property must be deployed without delay.

In the meantime, the longer view ought to be kept in mind. Regular cleaning of roadside drainage channels, putting a stop to the dumping of solid waste into drains/ water bodies, strengthening embankments, dredging river and nullah beds, repairing sewerage schemes and separating them from drainage, creating voluntary resettlement options for nullah dwellers and accelerating the natural absorption of water through sound floodwater retention strategies should be expedited. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Stake-holders meeting to address issues faced by KP and other Ports

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level meeting was convened at the Ministry of Maritime Affairs here on Thursday to address the pressing challenges faced by the Karachi Port Trust (KP). The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission from the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Mohammed Jehanzeb Khan.

This crucial gathering included key stakeholders such as the Secretary Maritime Affairs, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Secretary Railways, Secretary Commerce, Secretary Communication, the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, the Chairman of Karachi Port (KP) and Port Qasim Authority

(PQA), the President of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ambassador at Large for Investment, the President of the Stevedore Conference, representatives from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the CEO of the Trade Development Authority (TDA), and the Chairman of the National Shipping Corporation.

The primary objective of the meeting was to align all stakeholders towards resolving the challenges faced by KP, instituting necessary reforms, and upgrading infrastructure to meet international standards. Additionally, the session aimed to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure the full operational

capacity of KP and all other ports thereof.

In this context, the Chairman of KP was directed by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to clearly identify the challenges at KP and present a matrix of possible solutions and key stakeholders for resolution. A detailed presentation was delivered, highlighting the following critical issues: Delay in clearance of cargo; Identifying bottlenecks in the customs clearance process; Uncleared goods; Addressing the backlog of goods that remain uncollected; Cargo transportation; Enhancing the efficiency of cargo movement within and outside the port.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships, EF Amma, Ceylon Breeze, Xin Hai Tong and Bateleur scheduled load/offload Container, Cement, Coal and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose-2 & 4 Terminals and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile two more ships, Gulf Diamond and Epic Sunter scheduled to load/offload Rice and LPG are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on today early morning. A total of seven ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, EF Emma, Hafnia Seine and Al-Thakira left the port on today morning while another ship "Fisher" is expected to sail on today afternoon. Cargo volume of 53,395 tonnes, comprising 42,570 tonnes imports cargo and 10,825 tonnes export cargo carried in 315 Containers (315 TEUs Imports).



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan H.E. Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy.

Pakistan's regional exports increase 20% in FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's exports to the seven regional countries witnessed an increase of 20 per cent during the fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

"The country's exports to the regional countries including Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and the Maldives account for a small amount of \$4334.467 million, which is 13.94 per cent of Pakistan's overall exports of \$31,090.229 million during July-June (2023-24)," State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain presided over a meeting of the Sugar Advisory Board (SAB).

Pakistan's diplomatic missions in EU briefed on ease of registering companies

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) as part of its objective to facilitate foreign investments in Pakistan, conducted an online session for Pakistan's diplomatic missions and consular offices in European Union.

The session, collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) was attended by representatives from 27 of Pakistan's missions/consulates in Europe, including Brussels, Hauge,

Dublin, Athens, Paris, Rome, Madrid, Lisbon, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Prague, Berlin, Vienna, Warsaw, Sofia, Sarajevo, Tunis, Bern, Budapest, London, Minsk, Baku, Oslo, Ankara, Bucharest, Moscow, Kyiv and Belgrade.

Officials from SECP provided an overview of the most recent changes made with the intention to streamline the online incorporation procedures in Pakistan. Moreover, counselors were informed that since all processes are now fully digitalized and

completed online, potential investors can register their companies and easily manage post-incorporation filings from overseas.

Requirements, particularly those pertaining to international investors, such as the attestation of registration documents through embassies or apostilization in accordance with the Hague Convention were explained in detail and recent measures implemented to support entrepreneurs in the country were also highlighted.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia to enhance ties in IT & Telecom sector

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja met with Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy on Thursday.

Matters of mutual interest and enhancing ties in IT and Telecom sector between the two countries were discussed in the meeting.

Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima said Pakistan aspired to boost its relations with Saudi Arabia in the field of IT and Telecommunication.

She said that Saudi Arabia is attractive market for Pakistani tech companies, urging Saudi Arabia to facilitate Pakistani IT companies registered with Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), in getting visa and travelling for Saudi Arabia. Shaza Fatima said that Pakistan also wanted jointly work with Saudi Arabia in the field of cybersecurity. Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy said that Saudi Arabia will fully cooperate with Pakistan in the field of IT and Telecommunication.

Rana Tanveer directs to open fertilizer model centers in every district

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Thursday directed the fertilizer companies to establish model centers in every district to facilitate farmers and ensure the availability of fertilizers at fair prices. This decision was made during a meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee chaired by the minister, which aimed to review the availability and prices of fertilizers in the country. In this regards, he said the farmers would be able to buy fertilizer at the original price at the centers and this initiative would end the manipulation of agencies and dealers.

He said Fuji Fertilizer Company established a few model centers last week whereas the minister directed Engro Fertilizer Company to share proposals for establishment of model centers on a priority basis.

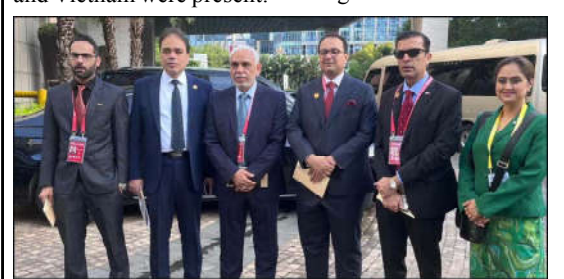
"The government is committed to protecting farmers from exploitation by middlemen and agencies."

8th Kunming Fair in China Pakistan declared theme country: Atif Ikram Sheikh

Independent Report KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has expressed his gratitude that Pakistan has been honored as the Theme Country — where Governor of Yunnan Province, China, was the Chief Guest and either ministers or presidents of national chambers from huge economies like China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam were present.

of global significance — is underway in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China. The expo welcomed over 2,000 local, regional and international exhibitors from 82 countries from all regions of the world.

It is pertinent to note that Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, lead the Pakistani delegation to attend the high-profile 8th China — South Asia Expo in Kunming, China. The delegation includes the



Additionally, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar were also in attendance.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh stressed that the importance and strategic nature of Pakistan — China economic relations manifested in the fact that their bilateral trade has crossed \$20 billion psychological mark.

8th South Asia Expo (CSAE) — a six-day event

likes of Mr. Shabbir Mansha, former VP FPCCI & Chairman of FPCCI's Pak — China Business Council (FPCCI-PCBC); Mr. Karzem Aziz Malik, Chairman Capital Office FPCCI & former VP FPCCI; Mr. Adeel Siddiqui, former VP FPCCI & President of Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI) and Sahibzadi Mahin Khan, President of Korangi Women Chamber.

Murad directs Minorities Affairs dept to utilise Rs 1bn for financial assistance to minorities' families

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Minorities Affairs department to utilise Rs 1 billion meant for financial assistance, medical treatment, scholarship, Jahez/Marriage assistance, natural calamity, and Yatra assistance for deserving and needy people of minorities.

Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto was pressing hard to strengthen minorities by providing financial assistance, scholarships and other facilities to their deserving people. This is why we have started two girls' hostel projects in Karachi to house poor girls coming to pursue their education.

This he said while presiding over a meeting of the Minorities Affairs department here at the CM House. The meeting was attended by Minorities Affairs

MPA Mukesh Chawla, Special Assistants to CM Lal Chand Ukrani, Rajveer Singh, Secretaries Minorities Affairs Anjum Iqbal, XEN Minorities Sanjay Dodani, and others.

The CM said that 4157,880 people or 10,000 households of minorities were economically and socially segregated. Of them, 460,000 are Christian, 3,592,500 Hindus, and 105,380 others. "The minorities affairs department mandate is to safeguard and promote minorities' welfare," he said and directed the department to launch welfare work, including financial assistance and scholarship programs.

To a question, the CM was told that there were 911 religious places, including 734 Mandirs, 141 churches, 23 Gurdwaras, one Pasi place, and others. Murad Shah directed the Minorities

Affairs department to get the decaying buildings repaired and where overhauling or expansion works were in progress, get them expedited. Shah said that he has allocated Rs 366.463 million to install CCTV cameras at 253 sensitive Mandirs and other religious institutions. He directed the department to speed up the project. The CM said that his government has allocated Rs 1 billion for the welfare of the Minorities, but distribution has not been made so far. At this, Mukesh Chawla told the CM that a 17-member Non-Muslim Welfare Committee had been constituted under him.

The Committee would scrutinize the cases for financial assistance. Mukesh Chawla said that Rs 580 million has been allocated for repair & maintenance, Rs150 million.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting of the Minorities Affairs Department held at CM House in Karachi.

Punjab Governor says: Pak and China always enjoyed fraternal relations based on love and trust

Independent Report
LAHORE: Chinese Consul General in Lahore, Zhao Shirin met with Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, ways to further strengthen bilateral relations and ongoing development projects under CPEC were discussed.

Talking on this occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, said that Pakistan and China always enjoyed fraternal relations

based on love and trust. He said that people of both countries were also bound in a close bond. The Governor of Punjab said that the work on China Pakistan Economic Corridor Project was progressing rapidly, however, there was need to further ramp up the speed. He said that the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor project is beneficial for both Pakistan and China. Punjab Governor said that the CPEC Project will bring development and prosperity in Pakistan. He

further said that the reforms and rapid development of the Communist Party of China for the betterment of the country was exemplary.

Chinese Consul General, Zhao Shirin said that work was underway on various development projects in the backward areas of Punjab province with the cooperation of China. The Chinese Consul General appreciated President Asif Ali Zardari's dynamic role in the mega project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Senior minister says: 27 acres of land retrieved in Faisalabad

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Mairiyum Aurangzeb has said in a statement that 27 acres of land in Chak No. 534 GB in Faisalabad has been retrieved from the illegal occupants.

An official nursery has been established on the retrieved five acres of land immediately. She said that in order to find a permanent solution to smog, plantation has been launched on the remaining 22 acres of land.

Senior Provincial Minister said that on the

direction of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Forest department is establishing a forest for the livestock and ecosystem after retrieving government land from the illegal occupants.

She said that growing new forests will help significantly in getting rid of smog and air pollution. She acknowledged that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif is taking important steps for the protection and growth of forests.



LAHORE: Chinese Consul General in Lahore, Zhao Shirin called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Punjab takes major step towards digital healthcare records

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Khawaja Imran Nazir announced a groundbreaking initiative on Thursday to digitalise birth and death records at the primary healthcare level, marking a significant milestone for the department.

The announcement was made during a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony with the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), held at the PSHD committee room here. The MoU aims to integrate digital record-keeping at all Basic Health Units (BHUs) and Rural Health Centres (RHCs) across the province. This

joint initiative between P&SHD and NADRA is set to enhance birth registration processes, making Punjab the only province sharing this data directly with NADRA. This integration allows citizens to obtain birth certificates promptly, streamlining the process and ensuring accuracy.

Khawaja Imran Nazir emphasized the vital role of Lady Health Workers (LHWs) in raising awareness among the public about this new system. He highlighted that the digitization initiative, including the record-sharing with NADRA, will facilitate a transition to a paperless system. He said that this move extends to government hospitals.



LAHORE: Punjab Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman addressing a press conference at Punjab Assembly in the Provincial Capital.

Solid measures stressed for resolving women's problems in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): A prominent advocate for women's rights Haroon Sarab Diyal and Women and Youth Rights Activist Raveen Mehak Diyal have urged the UN Women Pakistan and the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) to take immediate action to address issues faced by minority women especially living in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) merged areas. In a joint press release issued here on Thursday, they said despite efforts to promote women's economic empowerment, minority women in these regions continue to face significant challenges due to limited access.

10 dead, 1,239 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 10 people were killed and 1,239 others injured in 1,152 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 546 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 693 others with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The data analysis showed that 688 drivers, 44 underage drivers, 149 pedestrians, and 412 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. The statistics showed that 241 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 256 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Faisalabad with 79 accidents and 74 victims, and at third Multan with 79 accidents and 85 victims.

Minister holds meeting to discuss Hindu marriage registration process

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora Thursday presided over a consultative meeting regarding registration of the Hindu marriages in the Punjab province.

The purpose of the meeting was to make the process of legal registration of Hindu community marriages easier and more effective. Secretary Human Rights Ali Bahadur Qazi, deputy secretary minorities, President Pakistan Hindu Mandir Management Committee Krishan Sharma, Professor

Minhaj University Sabir Naz and other relevant persons were present.

The provincial minister said, "We understand the problems of Hindu community and will provide full support to facilitate their marriage registration process. The Punjab government believes that there should be no hindrance in the provision of their fundamental rights to all minorities."

In the meeting, the leaders of the Hindu community presented their proposals and discussed the current issues in detail.

ANF seizes 721 kg drugs in 10 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 10 operations across the country managed to recover 721 kg drugs and arrested 10 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday.

He informed that 2.7 kg ice was recovered from two parcels booked for Australia at a courier office in Karachi. 668 grams cocaine was recovered from a passenger coming from Doha at Lahore Airport. 5.5 kg ice was recovered from a parcel booked for New Zealand at a cargo office at Lahore Airport.

International News

Thousands fill Washington's streets to protest Israel's war in Gaza during Netanyahu visit

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Thousands of protesters against the war in Gaza converged on Washington on Wednesday to condemn Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit, chanting "Free, free Palestine" as they marched toward the Capitol before police deployed pepper spray on some in the crowd.

Demonstrators calling for an end to the war that has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians filled several blocks as they weaved through the streets of the nation's capital carrying Palestinian flags and signs with messages such as "arrest Netanyahu" and "end all U.S. aid to Israel." Outside Washington's Union Station, protesters removed American flags and hoisted Palestinian ones in their place to massive cheers in the crowd.

Throngs of demonstrators rallied near the Capitol before starting their

march ahead of Netanyahu's joint address to Congress, but police blocked them from getting close to the building. Police said they used pepper spray after some protesters became "violent" and "failed to obey" orders to move back from the police line.

Before Netanyahu's speech, some protesters tried to block his route to the Capitol but were removed from the street by police. After being turned away by officers near the Capitol, protesters wound through the Capitol Hill neighborhood for several blocks before gathering in front of the nearby rail station.

Nine people were arrested across Washington, including four people on charges of assaulting a police officer outside Union Station.

Outside of Union Station, protesters shouted, "Let them go!" at officers

who formed a circle around several people who were arrested.

One person grabbed at a police officer's riot shield and then raised his fists in a fighting stance. An officer was seen grabbing a Palestinian flag from a woman and tossing it aside. At least one protester appeared to be overcome from the effects of pepper spray.

Cheers rang out as a fire burned what appeared to be a papier-mache likeness of Netanyahu. Protesters spray painted graffiti on a monument to Christopher Columbus, including the words, "Hamas is coming" in large red letters. "Free Gaza" was scrawled in green.

Among the protesters was a group of artists from Baltimore displaying a massive papier-mache sculpture meant to depict President Joe Biden with blood on his hands and devil horns.



Riot police confront pro-Palestinian demonstrators as they protest near the US Capitol as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a joint meeting of Congress.

Harris plans to continue to build presidential momentum in speech to teachers union

Monitoring Desk
HOUSTON: Vice President Kamala Harris is slated to continue her days-old presidential push by speaking Thursday to the American Federation of Teachers, the first labor union to formally endorse her candidacy.

Having emerged as the likely Democratic nominee after President Joe Biden exited the race, Harris plans to travel aggressively to spread her message and rally voters. The outreach occurs as the former and retooled Biden campaign, now under Harris' control, figures out its strategy for generating turnout and maximizing her time in a 100-plus day sprint to the November election against Republican Donald Trump.

But in Trump, Harris is up against the survivor of a recent assassination

attempt with tens of millions of loyalists who are devoted to putting him back in the Oval Office.

Just as Harris is trying to draw a contrast with Trump, he is trying to do the same with her. Trump went on the offensive against Harris at a Wednesday rally in North Carolina, telling his crowd of thousands that she is a "real liberal" who is "much worse" than Biden. The former president said Harris had misled voters about the health of the 81-year old Biden and his ability to run for the presidency.

"For three and a half years, Harris shamelessly lied to the public to cover up Joe Biden's mental unfitness, claiming that 'crooked Joe' was at the absolute top of his game," Trump said.

Volunteers help migrants reverse water trauma in Spain's Canaries

Monitoring Desk
SPAIN: Smiling broadly, perhaps to hide their nervousness, dozens of young African migrants wearing swimming goggles took their first strokes and exhaled into knee-deep water on a Tenerife beach, led by Spanish volunteer instructors. Many are suffering from water trauma after a perilous crossing to the Canary Islands from countries such as Senegal or Mauritania crammed into precarious boats. Some barely survived and others lost family members or friends to the ocean.

"There are people who come with a terrible fear that you see when they get into the water holding your hand as if clinging to life," said Jorge Balcazar.

Israeli raids displace thousands in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli forces carried out new raids in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, hours before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was due to address the US Congress.

The latest Israeli attacks destroyed homes in towns east of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza and thousands of people were forced to head west to seek shelter, residents said.

The Palestinian Civil Emergency Service said it had received distress calls from residents trapped in their homes in Bani Suhaila, east of Khan Yunis, but were unable to reach the

town.

Medics later said two Palestinians had been killed in an airstrike on Bani Suhaila, where Hamas said fighters had detonated a bomb against an Israeli army personnel carrier.

The Israeli military said it had been operating in areas from which fighters had been able to fire rockets into Israel and attack Israeli troops. Gaza health officials said Israeli military strikes in the past 24 hours had killed at least 55 people, the latest casualties in fighting that health authorities in the enclave say has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians.

Death toll from Ethiopia landslides could jump to 500, UN says

Monitoring Desk
ADDIS ABABA: The death toll from landslides in Ethiopia earlier this week has risen to 257 and is expected to almost double, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) said on Thursday. Heavy rains triggered a landslide burying people in the Gofa Zone of southern Ethiopia on Sunday night and a second one on Monday engulfed those engaged in rescue efforts.

Kenya's president Ruto nominates Douglas Kanja to head police service

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: Kenya's President William Ruto has nominated Douglas Kanja to be vetted for the post of inspector general of police, Ruto's office said on Thursday. Kanja had been acting in the same position since mid-July, when the previous holder, Japhet Koome, resigned after intense criticism of officers' conduct during anti-government protests the previous month in which at least 39 people had been killed.

US President Joe Biden says time to pass torch to 'younger voices'

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden told Americans on Wednesday that he quit the 2024 election to unite the country, saying in a historic Oval Office speech that it was time to pass the torch to "younger voices."

"I revere this office. But I love my country more," the 81-year-old said in an elegiac prime-time address to the nation urging his divided country to embrace democracy and shun hatred.

"The defence of democracy, which is at stake, is more important than any title," Biden said. "I have decided the best way forward is to pass the torch to a new generation. That is the best way to unite our nation."

In his first televised address since his stunning decision, Biden also hailed his Vice President Kamala

Harris, 59, who is set to be the new Democratic presidential nominee. "She's experienced. She's tough. She's capable," Biden said in just the fourth address of his presidency from behind the Resolute Desk — and likely his last.

Biden bowed out of the race later than any other president in US history, giving in to weeks of pressure from Democrats after a disastrous debate performance against Donald Trump raised concerns about his age.

Speaking in a hushed voice after a Covid infection, Biden used the powerfully symbolic setting to insist on his achievements — while admitting it was time to move on.

He said there was a "time and a place for new voices, fresh voices — yes, younger voices. And that time and place is now."

Russia, China turn to digital payments as sanctions hamper bilateral trade settlements

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: The increased use of digital assets in cross-border settlements between Russia and China is easing bilateral payment issues, digital platform Qifia told Reuters, as some settlements directly through banks are taking months to clear due to sanctions.

Qifia, founded in 2013 and Chinese-owned, initially focused on importing Chinese consumer goods to Russia. This year, however, it launched bilateral trade, tapping into surging trade between the two countries even as the threat of secondary U.S. sanctions on Chinese banks complicates payment flows with more stringent compliance procedures.

The dwindling pool of banks in China willing to risk possible sanctions retribution has caused payment bottlenecks and increasingly complex steps to avoid delays, including a

workaround using small, regional Chinese banks, that can operate below the radar.

Facing those hurdles, Qifia, which operates out of Beijing and Moscow and will soon list on the Moscow Exchange, has turned to digital asset and cryptocurrency settlements that can happen in a single day.

Qifia founder Sun Tianshu said the company was closely monitoring legislation on both sides of the border and was already facilitating cross-border payments using tether (USDT) — a so-called 'stablecoin' that retains a steady value in dollars. Russia allows settlements using some digital financial assets that can bypass the banking system such as tether. The Russian parliament is also considering a bill that would legalise all cryptocurrencies as a means of payment in foreign trade.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding Prime Minister's Youth Programme.

Comprehensive strategy required for improving governance: Politicians & bureaucrats equally responsible for deterioration of governance in Balochistan: CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that the politicians and bureaucrats are equally responsible for deterioration of governance in the province.

He stressed that formulation of comprehensive strategy is necessary for bringing improvement in governance. We have formed a committee for bringing reforms in the province.

He said that there have always been coalition governments in Balochistan and these (coalition) governments happen to be compromised and the Chief Minister is blackmailed. He said that all of us have played our role in spoiling governance in the province.

Our resources are plundered and the budget allocated for development is subjected to corruption. The Chief Minister

expressed these views while addressing a seminar on "good governance, civil service reforms and public service delivery" organized by the Balochistan Civil Service (Executive Branch) Officers Welfare Association here at the Sikandar Jamali Auditorium, Civil Secretariat on Thursday.

The former Senator and scholar, Senator (Retd) Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, administrative secretaries of the government departments, other senior officers participated in the seminar.

Addressing the seminar, Chief Minister insisted that we have been facing the challenges of law and order, governance and climate change.

He said that he witnessed lack of governance in the province after assuming the office of Chief Minister. He said that we should

China reaffirms support to Pakistan's economic growth

BEIJING (APP): China has reassuring continued support to Pakistan's economic development.

The assurance was given by China's Minister of Finance Lan Fo'an during his meeting with Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Minister for Energy Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Laghari in Beijing.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb underscored the special significance of China-Pakistan financial and banking cooperation in the all-weather and iron-clad strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

He thanked the Chinese side for its invaluable economic and financial support to Pakistan in time tested way.

The Minister informed the Chinese side about the Government's economic reform agenda, including the efforts to strengthen tax revenue generation, energy and SOE reforms and achieve sustainable growth.

The Minister for Energy outlined the ongoing reforms in the energy sector. He emphasized the government's resolve to successfully overcome the operational and organizational challenges.

The Minister of Finance of China appreciated Pakistan's resolve for a strong economic recovery.

He explained the Chinese experience of structural reforms over the last thirty years and suggested that this could be a good example for Pakistan to emulate.

He emphasized that both countries have a longstanding partnership.

Later, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Laghari also held a useful meeting with the President of China Export and Credit Insurance Corp at its Headquarters and discussed the latest reform agenda of the government of Pakistan.

During the meeting, both ministers lauded SINOSURE's role in the development of Pakistan, particularly during the first phase of CPEC.

They showed confidence that SINOSURE will continue its full support for completing ongoing and new projects under the second phase of CPEC especially now led by the private sector.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed addressing a seminar on "good governance, civil service reforms and public service delivery" organized by the Balochistan Civil Service (Executive Branch) Officers Welfare Association here at the Sikandar Jamali Auditorium, Civil Secretariat

PM orders strategy for youth to get equitable job access

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the relevant authorities to prepare a comprehensive strategy with respect to provision of employment opportunities to the youth of the country on equal basis.

Calling the youth as the assets of Pakistan, the prime minister said the country's development is linked with their welfare and progress.

Chairing a meeting regarding Prime Minister's Youth Programme at the PM House, he said, with their immense talent, the youth could change the fate of the country if they were provided with the required resources.

The prime minister was of the view that provision of employment opportunities to the youth was

the government's top priority.

He said all the training programmes at National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NVTTC) should be focused on creating job opportunities for the students. He directed to conduct a detailed survey of job market and then accordingly start the skill training programmes.

During the meeting, it was informed that under PM Laptop Scheme, some 600,000 laptops had so far been delivered to the students. Under this scheme, the government would provide additional 100,000 laptops during current year.

The meeting was informed that 64% students who got training under the Youth Skills Development Programme managed to get respectable jobs during previous three years.



BEIJING: Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue and Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Laghari, Minister for Energy (Power Division) in a bilateral meeting with Chinese Minister of Finance Lan Fo'an.

Jam Kamal hails landmark partnership to combat hepatitis in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday hailed landmark collaboration between two innovative bodies to combat hepatitis in Pakistan by 2030.

This collaboration aligns with the government's vision of eliminating hepatitis by 2030 and heralds a new era of advanced medical technology and innovative healthcare solutions in Pakistan, said a press release issued here.

The minister termed the newly announced partnership between Lab Diagnostic Systems (LDS) and Hangzhou AICHEK Medical Technology Co. Ltd. as a progressive initiative that sets Pakistan on the road to self-sufficiency.

He emphasized that such collaborative efforts will not only strengthen the deep-rooted ties between China and Pakistan but also significantly improve the healthcare system through self-reliance.

This partnership with AICHEK Medical Technology is set to bring groundbreaking innovations in In-Vitro Diagnostics (IVD) and biomedical reagents to Pakistan. AICHEK, renowned for its comprehensive IVD product solutions, will work closely with LDS to enhance the local healthcare infrastructure and ensure the availability of cutting-edge medical technologies.

Zafar Mehmood, Group CEO of LDS, with over 22 years of experience in the healthcare sector.

FM meets Secretary General ECO

ISLAMABAD (Online): Secretary General ECO, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 25 July 2024.

The outgoing Secretary General apprised the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister about ECO's initiatives and activities as well as his reform agenda to revitalize ECO during his tenure.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister appreciated the Secretary General's services for the organization. He reaffirmed Pakistan's full support in enhancing intra-regional trade among ECO member countries and ECO reforms agenda. Noting that former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Dr. Asad Majeed Khan will take up the mantle of ECO Secretary General in August, the Deputy Prime Minister expressed the hope that Dr. Khan would continue the good work done.

Section 144 imposed across Punjab, I'abad ahead of PTI's protest

LAHORE (INP): The Punjab Home Department has imposed Section 144 across the province and Islamabad, banning public gatherings and rallies for three days.

According to the notification, issued on Thursday, section 144 will be in effect from Friday, July 26 to Sunday, July 28.

The ban has been imposed to maintain law and order and to prevent any potential terrorist threats.

The notification stated that the administration will ensure the implementation of the order across Punjab and Islamabad.

The imposition of Section 144 prohibits gatherings of five or more people, and any violation of the order can lead to legal action.

Gilgit Khunjab Motorway game changer for China, Central Asia; Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan has directed the National Highway Authority (NHA) to setup priorities for the construction of highways and identification of new projects. He observed that there would be no compromise on the quality of construction of highways and roads so Chairman NHA should depict honest and competent officers for the projects.

Chairing a high-level meeting of the NHA here Thursday, the federal minister said that the real problem was the funds as just

spending money was not a miracle so the Government departments have to take steps to raise their income. He further said that the officers of the NHA should take advantage of their abilities and expertise to develop a model of working on projects in other countries as well so that the annual income of the Authority could be increased.

Regarding the construction of highways and roads in the northern region, Abdul Aleem Khan said that the construction of the Gilgit-Khunjab Motorway could prove to be a game changer by providing access to China and Central Asian States.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment, Abdul Aleem Khan chaired a high-level meeting of the National Highway Authority.

IPPs getting billions of rupees without producing electricity in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): A debate blaming the exorbitant electricity prices on expensive power purchase agreements with IPPs has been raging for the past couple of weeks.

The worst agreements made with power plants have resulted in Independent Power Producers (IPPs) receiving capacity payments, which are entirely borne by the poor citizens. In this regard, a detailed report was presented in a private TV channel says that there are five most expensive IPPs in Pakistan which are listed below.

Rousch Power Plant: Established in 1999 for a duration of 30 years, it pro-

vides electricity at the rate of 745 PKR per unit.

China Power Hub: The plant is producing electricity at Rs350 per unit.

Port Qasim Electric: Provides electricity at 177 PKR per unit.

Saba Power Plant: Also established in 1999 for 30 years, producing electricity at 117 PKR per unit.

Pakgen Power Plant: Produces electricity at the rate of 95 PKR per unit.

What is a Capacity Payment? Capacity payment refers to the payment made monthly by consumers to the power-producing company to maintain its capacity to generate electricity.

DPM Dar, UNHCR's Filippo forge partnership for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar discussed matters related to Pakistan-UNHCR cooperation with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi in a telephonic conversation on Thursday.

The recent attacks and violent demonstrations (by Afghani diaspora) against Pakistan's Diplomatic Missions in Frankfurt, London and Brussels also came under discussion.



Secretary General ECO, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Islamabad.

Naqvi flays firing at check post in Upper Orakzai

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday condemned the firing at check post in Upper Orakzai and paid rich tribute to Sepoy Ayub who embraced martyrdom in the attack.

Interior Minister expressed deep condolences and sympathies to the bereaved family. Mohsin Naqvi prayed for the speedy recovery of Constables Javed, Rahmat, and Polio Worker Afaq, who were injured in the firing by terrorists in District Swat.

CM expresses satisfaction over successful operation of security forces in Hoshab

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed satisfaction over the successful operation of security forces in Hoshab area.

In an official statement issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister appreciated the key role and great sacrifices of the security institutions for maintaining law and order in Balochistan.

He said that recovery of huge quantity of arms

and ammunition in the successful targeted operation is an important success of the security forces.

The Chief Minister said that the people of Balochistan are always standing by their security institutions.

He vowed that we would continue to raise morale of the security institutions with our national spirit.

Besides, the terrorists would also be chased till the end, the Chief Minister maintained.



QUETTA: Peoples Party (PPP) Balochistan President, Changaiz Khan Jamali along with Rozi Khan Kakar, General Secretary and others addressing a press conference, in Quetta.

Ceremony held in connection with World Population Day in Loralai

QUETTA (APP): A function was held in connection with World Population Day at Municipal Committee Loralai on Thursday.

Addressing at the ceremony, the chief guest Afzal Khan Umankhail said that after stopping the rampant increase in population through family planning, it would be possible to provide education, health and other basic necessities of life by using the limited resources in a better way.

Other participants in-

cluded MS Teaching Hospital Loralai, PPHI Officer MND Officer Akhtar Muhammad Assistant Director Municipal Committee Amanullah Utmanakhail District Population Officer Zakaria, Khan Mandukhail Incharge RHS Dr. Nasreen Gul. Ms. Dr. Nigat of the Health Department expressed their opinions. The speakers said that various economic, social, educational and health problems were being faced due to increasing population.

Balochistan's business leaders to participate in Trade Expo in Indonesia

ISLAMABAD (APP): The business leaders of Balochistan on Thursday decided to participate in the "Trade Exhibition in Jakarta, Indonesia in October this year, to promote bilateral economic ties between Pakistan and Indonesia.

A delegation of the industrialists and business leaders of Balochistan, led by former president Federation Pakistan Chamber

of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Engr. Daroo Khan Achakzai, had a meeting with Charge d'Affaires of the embassy of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusumah.

The delegation include President Chaman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Olu Yar Khan, President Zhub Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Asfandyar and Business

leader, Hajj Jamaluddin.

They invited Charge d'Affaires Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma to visit Balochistan and promote bilateral economic and trade ties between Pakistan and Indonesia. Councilor, economic and trade affairs of the Indonesian Embassy, Axelsyah R. Miraza from the economic section of embassy and economic team was also part of the bilateral dialogue.

Lasbela admin takes action to prevent flooding in river, canals

LASBELA (APP): The Lasbela district administration has swiftly taken action to prevent potential flooding in the Narg River, on Thursday.

According to DC Office, on the instructions from Deputy Commissioner Humira Baloch, immediate measures were implemented to stop the erosion of flood rails in the Narg River that threatened to overflow into the Khedinka Dhora channel.

Under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Bela Ali Shah Abbasi, a bulldozer was deployed to the site to reinforce the flood rails and prevent further erosion.

Rana Sanallah pledges collaboration on sports with commonwealth nations

PARIS (APP): The Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs, Rana Sanallah Khan Thursday stressed Pakistan's dedication to harnessing the power of sports to build a more inclusive and resilient society and looked forward to collaborating with fellow Commonwealth nations to share best practices, drive progress towards shared goals, and inspire a new generation of athletes and leaders. In his remarks at the 11th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Conference in Paris, he expressed pride in sharing Pakistan's full commitment to the theme "Building Inclusive

and Resilient Societies through Sports".

The adviser, with the status of federal minister has stated that the events of 11th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in Paris highlights the power of sports to unite, inspire, and drive positive change in our societies.

He said the government has declared 2025 as the year of sports revival in Pakistan, with a dedication to promoting sports as a catalyst for social change. The Prime Minister's Youth Programme was driving this initiative by ensuring full participation and harnessing the full potential of Pakistan's youth.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for Independence Day celebrations