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PM wants expansion of bilateral trade between Pakistan, Tajikistan through enhanced connectivity

PM Shehbaz, President Emomali vow to further strengthen Pakistan-Tajikistan ties

DUSHANBE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday stressed upon expansion of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Tajikistan as the current volume did not reflect the current level of brotherly relationship between the two countries.

Addressing a presser along with President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, the prime minister said that today, they had signed a number of MoUs which would be very helpful in furthering their bilateral ties.

The prime minister especially mentioned the

agreement over strategic partnership.

"These agreements will go a long way in furthering our brotherly ties and of course, expanding our scope of cooperation in the coming days," he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also assured Tajik president that he would work closely with him to further cement the brotherly ties not only in fields of agriculture, education, health and promotion of investment but also in expansion of bilateral trade.

He underlined that the both countries required to work closely and fix targets as how to increase their bi-

lateral trade and investment, citing transportation of goods from port of Karachi to Tajikistan via Afghanistan and then from Dushanbe to Karachi port via Afghanistan through a rail-road connectivity project. The prime minister termed this existing opportunity as "an area of huge economic importance for both countries".

The prime minister apprised that he had very fruitful and productive one-on-one meeting with the Tajik president, besides holding delegation level meetings in which they discussed to explore trade and investment opportunities.

He said Pakistan would be keen to be a part of China, Tajikistan and Afghanistan trade corridor project, adding it would be another opportunity to broaden the multilateral trade in the region.

He also expressed the confidence that the CASA 1000, would be completed soon, bringing prosperity in this region.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also referred to another MoU pertaining to relaxation of visas requirements and said that it would be very helpful for both countries in further achieving their goals.

The prime minister

said the two brotherly countries had been the victims of terrorism; Pakistan faced this menace for years and paid a huge price in terms of human lives and of course, suffered from colossal economic losses to the tune of billions of dollars. Thousands of people from all walks of life laid down their lives to defeat the menace of terrorism, he said, adding the armed forces of Pakistan had been fighting this menace and its officers and Jawans gave huge sacrifices in the line of duty, besides police and other law enforcement agencies personnel also rendered huge sacrifices.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the media in a press conference in Qasr-e-Millat, Dushanbe.



ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister and senior leader of the Awami National Party, Mr Ghulam Ahmed Bilour, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

All political parties need to join hands for economic, political stability: President

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari has said that all political parties will have to work together for economic, political stability and addressing the problems being faced by the country.

He stated this while talking to former federal minister and senior leader of Awami National Party (ANP) Ghulam Ahmed Bilour who called on him in Islamabad on Tuesday.

During the meeting, overall political, security and law and order situation of the country came under

discussion.

President Asif Ali Zardari emphasized that all political parties need to work together for economic and political stability and addressing the country's problems.

Consultation and consensus with all political parties on important national issues is inevitable, he added.

ANP leader Ghulam Ahmad Bilour congratulated Asif Zardari on assuming the office of President for the second time.

Law and justice have to be relied upon for sake of justice: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has remarked constitution and law have to be relied upon for the sake of justice.

"We have to rely on law and constitution for sake of justice. Supreme Court (SC) decisions are based on justice. In every decision the constitution was followed. Some judges will be wise. I am not so much wise. Let Pakistan tread on the path of constitution once, CJP gave these remarks during the hearing of case related to reserved seats of Sunni Itehad Council (SIC) Tuesday.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked we cannot close the eyes. If we can-

not see the entire picture then what we have to do with the powers of full justice. We all know that so many independent candidates succeeded in polls by showing their affiliation with PTI. Justice Munib Akhtar remarked parliamentary system is based on political parties. The question is this the independent candidates in such large number came from where. Did the people elect them as independent on their own. Did the Election Commission (EC) not declare these people independent. If it has been done so then should the court not correct this mistake. Should that legal option be not adopted which corrects this mistake.

On one side it is being said EC is constitutional institution which can do every thing. EC has official correspondence with assembly secretariat. EC is accepting members of SIC. How can EC change its stance on the matter of reserved seats.

Justice Athar Minallah remarked Attorney General it is not simple appeal. It is case of rights of people. You want we declare the misinterpretation of EC correct. This has been proved EC has misinterpreted court's decision. You want we revive doctrine of necessity.

Justice Ayesha Malik remarked as to why EC is not accepting SIC as political party after accepting it as parliamentary party.

Attaullah Tarar for further strengthening economic ties with Canada

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, emphasized the importance of strengthening economic ties with Canada during a meeting with the Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Leslie Scanlon, on Tuesday.



In their discussion, Minister Tarar highlighted the mutual benefits of enhanced economic relations between the two countries. They also addressed various key issues, including bilateral relations and the government's economic initiatives.

High Commissioner Scanlon congratulated the minister on assuming the additional portfolio of National Heritage and Culture, alongside his responsibilities in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Minister Tarar underscored the significance of the longstanding and multifaceted relationship between Pakistan and Canada, noting that Ottawa is a major development partner for Pakistan.

PTI founder's arrest an internal matter of Pak: Law minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday said that the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) founder and pending cases against him were an internal matter of Pakistan.

He said Pakistan was a sovereign state and its court enforced its Constitution and laws, and took decisions accordingly.

Responding to the report of the United Nations Working Group, the minister said the PTI founder was in the jail as a convicted prisoner. He had all rights as per the Constitution of Pakistan and laws, and international norms.

The relief given to the PTI founder by the courts in many cases manifested a transparent and fair trial of his cases by the judiciary.

It was biased and unfair to make demands beyond the ambit of Constitution, law and international norms, he added.

PM Shehbaz lays wreath at Ismail Somoni monument

DUSHANBE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday laid a wreath at the monument of Tajikistan's national hero Ismail Somoni, short after his arrival for a two-day visit here.

Ismail Somoni is regarded as the historic figure of Central Asia and a hero of Tajikistan, who ruled Tajikistan and Khorasan region in 9th and 10th century, and brought about immense development to the Tajik nation.

Earlier, as the prime minister arrived at the Dushanbe airport, he was received by Tajik Prime Minister Kokhir Rasulzoda, Energy Minister Daler Juma, Deputy Foreign Minister Farrukh Sharifzoda, Tajik Ambassador in Islamabad Yousuf Sharifzoda and Pakistan's Ambassador in Dushanbe Saeed Sarwar and senior diplomatic officers.

The prime minister is accompanied by a delegation comprising Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Information and Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar and Special Assistant to the PM Tariq Fatemi.



DUSHANBE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Prime Minister of Tajikistan H.E. Qahir Rasulzoda at the airport in Tajikistan.

99.99 percent reporting is correct: Chief Justice IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) Amir Farooq has remarked reporters reporting court's proceedings are absolutely correct and those who announce decision while sitting in evening programs is problem.

The reporters reporting court's proceedings are reporting correctly. Those who announce decision by sitting in programs in the evening is problem. First criminal trial was telecast in US on TV in 1975. I am protector of rights of people. I cannot deprive entire world of this right, CJ IHC remarked during the hearing of the petition seeking nullification of PEMRA notification regarding ban on court reporting here Tuesday.

Chief Justice of Pakistan inquired was any thing reported wrongly. Upon it PEMRA issued notification. I don't think that such thing was done by high court or registrar sent any report.

The court remarked that if I have not said any thing and it is reported then



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain addressing a meeting of leading scholars and religious leaders at the Council of Islamic Ideology

Ch. Salik says Ulema's role indispensable for promoting unity, brotherhood, peace in country

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Tuesday emphasized on the indispensable role of Islamic scholars in maintaining unity, brotherhood, and peace in the country, especially during Muharram-ul-Haram 1446 AH and the days ahead.

He said this during an address at a representative meeting of Pakistan's leading scholars and religious leaders, held at the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) under the chairmanship of Dr. Raghib Naemi.

Minister Salik highlighted that the remaining roots of extremism and radicalism in the country were close to being eradicated.

The CII Chairman, Dr Raghib Naemi, presented the consensus declaration of the meeting. He stated that the "Azim-e-Istikhkam" initiative would not only strengthen the National Action Plan but also achieve the desired outcomes for peace. He emphasized the need to disseminate the Code of Conduct of the "Paigham-e-Pakistan" from the pulpit and niche, ensuring it

reaches the very fabric of society.

Additionally, he said promoting a separate code of conduct specifically for Muharram-ul-Haram was crucial, a responsibility that rests with the religious scholars and leaders.

Dr. Raghib said the declaration underscored the importance of upholding the Constitution, respecting the basic rights of every citizen, venerating Islamic sanctities, and taking genuine steps to eradicate hate speech, violence, prejudice, sectarianism, and extremism.

Imran alleges intelligence agency's interference in jail matters

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan has criticised the alleged interference of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in civilian matters.

In an informal media talk inside Adiala Jail today, the incarcerated former prime minister said, "We have filed a petition in court questioning the presence of ISI Majors and Colonels in Adiala Jail."

"The ISI has no authority in civil matters or judiciary interference. The

prison superintendent is following ISI orders, leading to the transfer of two officers to ensure no leniency is shown to me."

Talking about the results of the February general elections, the PTI founder expressed confusion stating, "Five months have passed since the elections, and I still do not know who won or lost." He also spoke about the recent resolution by the US Congress on alleged election irregularities in Pakistan highlighting that it had passed with 85% support.



UZBEKISTAN: Focal Person to PMYP for Green Youth Movement & International Linkages, Syeda Anna Batool receiving a souvenir from Minister of the Youth Affairs of Uzbekistan, Alisher Sa'dullayev at OIC Youth Forum.

ATC issues non-bailable arrest warrant for CM Gandapur

ISLAMABAD (INP): Anti-terrorism court (ATC) of Islamabad on Tuesday issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

In October 2022, a case was registered against Ali Amin Gandapur in connection with an FIR at the I-9 police station for protesting against the decision of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Gandapur has pleaded the court for exemption of attendance which was rejected by the court.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra has held the hearing for tomorrow (Wednesday).

The court said Gandapur had never appeared before the court after April 2024.

It should be noted that the case was lodged for vandalism during the protest against disqualification of Imran Khan.

Naqvi lauds elimination of terrorists in KP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday lauded the army for eliminating terrorists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said the security forces eliminated nine terrorists in Tirah and Lakki Marwat, ridding the areas of the scourge of terrorism. He said fight against terrorism would continue.

The security forces eliminated nine terrorists in two operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday, said ISPR.

In Tirah, an intelligence-based operation led to the neutralisation of seven terrorists including key figures Najeed Abdul Rehman and Ishaq Muavia.

Justice Aalia Neelum nominated as LHC CJ

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) has unanimously nominated Justice Aalia Neelum as the first-ever woman Chief Justice of Lahore High Court (LHC).

The Commission, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, unanimously approved Justice Neelum's name for the coveted position.

She was third in the seniority list of the Lahore High Court after the elevation of former LHC CJ Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan to the Supreme Court.

After Justice Shahzad's elevation, Justice Shujaat Ali Khan was appointed as the acting



Justice Aalia Neelum, a renowned jurist, started her practice as a lawyer in 1996 and was elevated as a judge of the Lahore High Court in 2013. She has a distinguished career spanning over two decades and has been known for her judicious approach and legal acumen.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

'Cruel jest'

Another year and another missed opportunity to set things right. But what is it for those who, by all appearances, consider themselves unaccountable to the public and unfussed by their miseries?

Precisely three weeks ago, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb had solemnly declared that there were "no sacred cows" in his eyes and that "everyone would have to contribute to the economy". The pronouncement had come a day before the federal budget for the new fiscal year was unveiled, and it had momentarily ignited some hope that Pakistan, at long last, was serious about setting itself on a path of equitable taxation and sustainable spending under a 'technocrat' finance minister. Between then and this weekend, however, the nation has realised that the finance minister's 'assurances' had been little more than a cruel jest. Speaking at a news conference on Sunday, Mr Aurangzeb could only express his condolences to the salaried class on the higher taxes he had imposed on them.

It is now widely accepted that the coalition government's 'crisis budget' will achieve little more than strangulating those already paying their dues while allowing sacred cows to fatten themselves even further. Actual economic course correction has once again been put off for another time.

The term 'deepening the tax net' is being used widely in a bid to rationalise what was clearly another half-hearted attempt at fixing the state's perennial revenue woes. It is little more than a euphemism, a fig leaf for our decision-makers' continuing unwillingness or inability to meaningfully expand the tax base.

To add insult to injury, the government has not felt compelled to cut its own expenditures in any meaningful way: those paying will just be forced to pay even more to fund its profligacy. Meanwhile, the trader class, whose activities remain largely undocumented, have been let off once again, presumably because of political expediencies.

Likewise, while a big show has been made of increased taxes on real estate, these will apply mainly to ordinary citizens and not to those who belong to the armed forces or the federal or provincial bureaucracies. Our lawmakers have also managed to have their travel allowances increased from Rs10 per kilometre to Rs25, increased the number of travel vouchers they receive annually from 25 to 30, and also introduced a measure which would see unused air tickets from one year carry over to the next instead of being cancelled.

The audacity of such measures should be illustrative enough to show how the ruling classes continue to privilege themselves while throwing the rest of the nation under the bus. That this is happening while the authorities clamour for an umpteenth IMF bailout explains why this country remains unable to break its shackles and find a more prosperous future for its teeming millions.

Economic butchery

Ammar Ather Saeed

Pakistan is teetering on the edge of economic collapse due to its persistent struggle to increase the tax-to-GDP ratio, a crucial measure of its fiscal health.

Despite numerous efforts, many potential taxpayers remain outside the formal tax net. Recent policies have unfairly targeted existing taxpayers, driving talent and capital away and pushing the nation towards disaster. The recent passage of the Finance Act exemplifies this flawed strategy, threatening long-term economic stability.

For the past decade, Pakistan has relied heavily on taxing non-filers and compliant taxpayers to boost its revenues. Originally, the aim of collecting taxes from non-filers was twofold: generate immediate revenue and use the gathered data to bring the non-filers into the tax net. Sadly, the state failed to achieve the latter. Instead of leveraging this data, it has merely increased taxes for non-filers, using it as a short-term revenue tool rather than a long-term strategy for fiscal health.

The Finance Act exacerbates this issue, further increasing the rate of tax on non-filers and imposing tax rates as high as about 60 per cent on existing filers' income.

This approach is flawed. Unlike Scandinavian countries, where high tax rates are balanced by extensive social services and a robust public infrastructure, taxpayers here see little or no return on their contributions. The disparity creates a significant trust deficit, with taxpayers feeling alienated. High taxes on compliant taxpayers have stifled economic activity, reduced investment, and encouraged tax evasion.

When individuals and businesses perceive

the tax system as punitive and unbalanced, they are more likely to engage in tax evasion and operate within the informal economy, undermining efforts to formalise the economy and broaden the tax base.

This approach of persistently targeting compliant taxpayers has already driven away skilled professionals and entrepreneurs. With the ever-increasing tax burden becoming unbearable, talented individuals have started seeking favourable environments abroad, reducing the domestic talent pool and stifling potential economic growth and innovation. This exodus of human and financial capital severely hampers Pakistan's long-term economic prospects.

The state's strategy extends to imposing indirect taxes on essential goods such as milk, baby products, and petrol. This decision is nothing short of economic butchery.

By taxing these basic necessities, the state is placing an unbearable burden on the shoulders of ordinary citizens, particularly those from lower-income households. The cost of living will skyrocket, pushing millions deeper into poverty and triggering widespread discontent.

Imagine a family struggling to buy milk for their children because it has been taxed to the point of unaffordability. Picture parents grappling with the soaring costs of baby products while trying to provide the best care for their newborns. Envision the devastating impact of rising petrol prices on transportation costs, leading to increased prices for all goods and services. This is not a mere policy error; it is a catastrophe in the making, an unparalleled disaster that threatens to unravel the social fabric.

Furthermore, the

gains of selected elites from properties have been preserved from taxation. Allowances of the armed forces and judiciary remain untaxed, perpetuating a system of inequality. No concrete measures have been taken to bring agricultural income within the federal tax fold, nor have there been clear directives to provincial governments to collect more taxes on agriculture and eliminate tax leakages. This selective taxation preserves the status quo for the elite, while burdening the average citizen.

To address these issues, it is essential that Pakistan learns from the successful strategies of other countries. Pakistan should focus on bringing informal sectors into the formal economy through targeted policies and robust enforcement.

Leveraging technology to streamline tax compliances and employing data analytics of data collected from non-filers to track economic activities and ensure tax compliance, the tax-to-GDP ratio in Pakistan can grow organically.

Moving forward, the focus needs to shift from overburdening existing taxpayers to broadening the tax base. The state should immediately implement comprehensive reforms to make the tax system more inclusive and transparent to bring the informal economy into the tax net through incentives and effectively using non-filer data to identify with the help of technology and data analytics to bring them into the tax net. Without immediate and decisive reforms, Pakistan will remain on a collision course with catastrophe; it faces a doomsday scenario where our inaction today becomes the tragedy of tomorrow. -- Courtesy Dawn

Engaging parents

Fahad Zafar

Pakistan's education system faces significant challenges on two fronts. Firstly, there is a staggering number of out-of-school children, estimated at 26.2 million. This means that a sizeable portion of the children is not accessing any formal education. Economic factors, cultural barriers, and inadequate infrastructure are the primary reasons.

For instance, in some areas, cultural norms may prioritise work or domestic responsibilities over schooling, especially for girls. Additionally, many remote areas lack adequate school facilities, making access to education physically challenging. These children are denied the opportunity to develop essential skills and knowledge, that perpetuates cycles of poverty and limits their prospects. This lack of education not only affects their personal growth and future opportunities but also hinders national development.

Secondly, the quality of education for the 43m children in school in Pakistan is another major concern, as most experience poor learning outcomes due to factors like overcrowded classrooms, lack of qualified teachers, outdated teaching methods, poor governance, insufficient resources, etc.

Overcrowded classrooms make it difficult for teachers to give individual attention to students, hindering effective learning. Many teachers lack proper training and qualifications, which impacts their ability to deliver quality education. Traditional teaching methods, often focused on rote learning, do not foster critical thinking or problem-solving skills. Additionally, schools frequently

lack basic resources such as textbooks, teaching materials, and adequate facilities, further compromising the learning environment. Despite school attendance, children are not acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Shockingly, only 23pc of students at age 10 can read and understand age-appropriate text. This indicates a significant gap in foundational literacy, which is crucial for future learning and academic success.

Despite the significant educational challenges facing Pakistan, parents overwhelmingly express satisfaction with the schooling system. Data from the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement surveys of 2014-15 and 2019-20 reveal that over 94pc of parents reported satisfaction with schooling in the country.

Similarly, in the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study assessment, 76pc of parents expressed satisfaction, and in the more recent National Achievement Test in 2023, 75pc of parents indicated complete satisfaction with schooling. This apparent paradox between parental satisfaction and the reality of poor educational outcomes suggests a disconnect between parents' perceptions and the actual quality of education their children receive. Bridging this gap between parental perception and educational reality is crucial for improving learning outcomes. Parental engagement plays a vital role in a child's learning journey. Research shows that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, children are more likely to perform better academically, have higher

attendance rates, and demonstrate improved behaviour. Active engagement includes activities like helping with homework, attending parent-teacher meetings, and encouraging a positive attitude towards learning.

The 2022 Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel report recommended several low-cost parental involvement approaches that included direct communication from schools to parents, engaging children in educational activities, reading books to a child (if the parent is literate), and sharing simple exercises with parents via text or phone call.

Direct communication from schools, such as regular updates and progress reports, helps keep parents informed and engaged in their children's education. Encouraging parents to read to their children and engage in educational activities at home promotes early literacy and cognitive development. Sharing simple exercises and learning activities via text or phone can provide parents with practical tools to support their children's learning at home. Supporting the role of parents should be a component of public policy in the medium term, as it can have a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

At the same time, it is critical to generate a broader understanding of Pakistan's foundational learning challenges. While some challenges persist throughout the country, Pakistan's education landscape is heterogeneous, and delivery is devolved to the provinces. Each province has its unique set of challenges and priorities, which must be addressed through tailored solutions. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Pakistan, Azerbaijan Commit to enhance bilateral trade, economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan, Azerbaijan on Tuesday agreed for enhancing bilateral economic and trade relations to increase the trade and investment cooperation between two countries.

Both sides determined on the necessity of a long-term and practical mechanism to enhance monitor bilateral trade and cooperation to suggest ways forward to achieve the desired aim.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, Mr. Samir Sharifov, called on Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan at his office, said a press release issued here.

The high-profile meeting was attended by Mr. Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Federal Secretary for

Commerce Ahsan Ali Mangi, and other senior officials.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted the Pakistani government's dedication to forging robust economic relations with other nations.

He emphasized that, over the past three months, the government has made significant strides in enhancing diplomatic and economic ties, achieving notable developments.

"Pakistan attaches great importance to its relationship with Azerbaijan. We must continue to advance our cooperation in various sectors including tourism, transport, energy security, and defense, though this requires additional efforts," said Minister Jam. He also urged the need for an early conclusion of

Preferential Trade Agreement and Bilateral Transit Trade Agreement.

Deputy Minister Sharifov conveyed Azerbaijan's readiness for closer cooperation with Pakistan across all fields of mutual interest.

He apprised that the President of Azerbaijan plans to visit Pakistan soon, during which several MoUs are expected to be signed. Minister Jam also proposed to hold B2B meetings which may either in Pakistan or in Azerbaijan.

On the occasion, Azerbaijan minister Deputy Minister, Sharifov highlighted the ease of travel between the two countries, noting that Azerbaijan received 55,000 Pakistani visitors last year due to its favourable visa policy.



Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a group photo following visiting booths of different tech companies on the occasion of Global Digital Economy Conference 2024 in Beijing.

Pakistan, Belarus agree to enhance cooperation in diverse fields

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Belarus on Tuesday while expressing satisfaction at the trajectory of bilateral relations agreed to enhance cooperation in all issues of mutual interest.

The sixth round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Belarus was held here. Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Shafiqat Ali Khan led the

Pakistani side while the Belarusian side was headed by the First Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Lukashевич. Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

The two sides reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations covering political relations, high-level engagement and dialogue, trade and investment, military and security cooperation, education, and people-to-

people contacts. The two sides also agreed to continue cooperation at multilateral forums, including at the United Nations, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Ambassador Sergei Lukashевич also called on Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi. Bilateral areas of cooperation and important regional and global developments were discussed.

Russian Ambassadors meets Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Communications, Board of Investment and Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan Tuesday met with

Russian Ambassador Albert P. Khorev and discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation in multiple fields.

In this meeting, detailed discussions were held on road connectivity between Russia and Pakistan which could greatly increase trade and cargo activities between both countries, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that Pakistan was keen to connect Russia through Central Asian countries and back to Karachi Port

for the promotion of bilateral trade which would also help other countries to boost their commerce activities.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan attached importance to trade relations with Russia due to its great significance in the region. The Central Asian countries and South Asia were also equally important for trade activities for which Pakistan was ready to invite investment from these countries, he added.

He also informed about his recent visit to Central Asia. In the meeting, they also discussed in detail the promotion of bilateral trade and creating an effective mechanism for investment matters on both sides.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Pakistan, Albert P. Khorev called on Federal Minister for Communications, Board of Investment and Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan.

Fatima Fertilizer and JazzCash sign MOU to pioneer digitalization of Agri-Sector Payment Ecosystem

ISLAMABAD: Fatima Fertilizer, a leading name in Pakistan's agriculture sector, and JazzCash, Pakistan's largest digital wallet, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to revolutionize the agri-sector

payments. The partnership between Fatima Fertilizer and JazzCash will facilitate secure, fast, and reliable transactions, making financial processes more efficient for farmers. It will also enable our Sarsabz Pakistan Farmer App for



digital payments. Furthermore, by leveraging Fatima Fertilizer's extensive dealer network, this initiative will provide farmers, who are predominantly unbanked, enabling them to actively participate in the formal economy.

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TMAS directed to reduce expenditure on fuel

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Minister for Local Government (LG), Arshad Ayub Khan on Tuesday directed Town Municipal Administrations (TMAs) to reduce their fuel expenses and said that timely measures were needed to avoid financial constraints.

During his visit to Local Council Board Hayatabad, he inspected various sections of the board. Chairing a meeting of Mardan and Peshawar Division Town Municipal Officers, he directed to reduce fuel expenses and said that the expense of smaller municipal administrations was one million rupees.

He directed to reduce the patrol bill and said that "we cannot avoid financial crunch if corrective measure were not taken."

OGDCL collaborates with NCSW for women empowerment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has partnered with the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) to empower women and foster their growth within the company. Ahmed Hayat Lak, MD/CEO of OGDCL, and Nilofar Bakhtiar, Chairperson of NCSW, on Tuesday, signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to formalize this collaboration. The signing ceremony was held here at the OGDCL Head Office. This strategic partnership underscores OGDCL's commitment to

recognizing and honouring the invaluable contributions of women within its operations. Earlier this year, OGDCL unveiled its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy to foster a more inclusive workplace culture. The collaboration between OGDCL and NCSW is poised to set a new standard for gender inclusivity and empowerment in Pakistan's corporate landscape. OGDCL is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring a workplace where every individual.

7th Final Year Engineering Projects Expo begins

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher on Tuesday inaugurated the 7th Final Year Engineering Design Projects Expo 2024 of Engineering Universities.

The exhibition has been organized in collaboration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) here at Hayatabad. Models of various engineering projects prepared by the students of engineering universities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been showcased in the event.

Property tax problem would be taken up at relevant forum: MD

PESHAWAR (APP): Managing Director (MD) Small Industries Development Board (SIDB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Habibullah Arif has said that the problem of the property tax of industrialists would be taken up at the concerned forum. He was talking to a delegation of industrialists which called on him in his office on Tuesday.

President, Small Industries Estate, Peshawar Waheed Arif was leading the delegation, Deputy Managing Director (DMD) SIDB, Nauman Fayyaz was also present on the occasion. The delegation congratulated him on his appointment as Managing Director SIDB and expressed good wishes for them. Speaking on the occasion, the Managing Director SIDB said that his doors are opened for the industrialists as they are doing commendable job of providing employment to hundreds of the people to earn livelihood for their families. He said that first commercial plaza has been constructed for the industrialists and invited them to come and display their products in it. He said that beside closure of all illegal shops, cleanliness system at the estate would also be improved.

CM GB chairs meeting on security arrangements for Muharram

GILGIT (APP): Chief Minister of Gilgit Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan chaired a high level meeting regarding security arrangements during Muharram Ul Haram. The meeting discussed measures to ensure peace and security during the month of Muharram. The Chief Minister emphasized the importance of maintaining law and order, promoting

brotherhood, and preventing hate speech and violence. He directed officials to ensure strict implementation of the law, hold daily meetings with district commissioners and police officials, enhance security arrangements in sensitive areas, monitor social media and take action against hate speech, install CCTV cameras and use drones for surveillance,

provide necessary facilities for processions and majalis, establish a special committee to ensure peace and security. The meeting was attended by high-ranking officials, including the Home Secretary, Secretary of Health, and Inspector General of Police Gilgit-Baltistan. District commissioners and other officials joined the meeting via video link.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan presiding over the meeting regarding the security arrangements in the coming month of Muharram ul Haram.



LAHORE: Controller General of Accounts Maqbool Ahmed Gondal inaugurated the newly renovated building of DGPR.

Minister reviews monsoon preparations

LAHORE (APP): On the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq chaired a meeting at the Civil Secretariat on Tuesday to review the monsoon preparations in detail. The meeting was attended by Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmad Mian, Special Secretary Asiya Gull, and Secretary LG Board Rizwan Nazir. Deputy Commissioners and Municipal Chief Officers from across Punjab participated via video link. The minister stated that CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has ordered effective measures across the province during the monsoon season, emphasizing the need to maintain the same enthusiasm for cleanliness

exhibited during Eid-ul-Adha. The minister praised the cleanliness efforts during Eid-ul-Adha, calling them commendable. He mentioned that the CM is personally visiting districts at the onset of the rainy season and that he will also be conducting visits to review the arrangements. He directed that lessons learned from initial rains should be used to make improvements. Zeeshan Rafiq emphasized the importance of continuous coordination between chief officers and line departments in districts. He directed that all available resources be utilized for drainage. If any drains have not been de-silted, immediate cleaning should be ensured, he added and warned that action would be taken if government directives are not promptly followed.

19 children injured, three critically in Matta school collapse

PESHAWAR (APP): At least 19 school children were injured, three of them critically, when roof of a private school caved in Matta tehsil of Swat district on Tuesday. According to Rescue 1122 the incident occurred in Tangar area of Matta where the roof of a dilapidated private school caved in, injuring 19 children, three of them critically. All the children were recovered from the debris and after first-aid shifted to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Matta.

Training on Presentation of hospital acquired infection held

MULTAN (APP): A training session on "Prevention of Hospital-Acquired Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance" was held at Children's Hospital here on Tuesday. The purpose of the training was to raise awareness about the prevention of hospital-acquired infections and antimicrobial resistance. It is aimed to inform doctors about modern methods and precautions to ensure patient safety.

BISP to introduce skill training initiative to make beneficiaries out of poverty

LAHORE (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Tuesday said that a new skill training initiative is being launched to help members of deserving families start their own businesses and rise out of poverty. She was speaking during a visit to the BISP Campsite at Government High School Iqbal Town in Lahore. The visit aimed to review the basic facilities

provided to deserving women who come to receive the Kafalaat quarterly stipend. During her visit, Senator Rubina Khalid engaged with the women beneficiaries, listened to their concerns, and assured them of BISP's commitment to addressing their issues. She instructed the BISP staff to conduct surveys at tehsil offices to prevent overcrowding at payment centers. The BISP staff briefed the Chairperson on

the current payment system. She emphasized the importance of disbursing payments to all deserving women in a fair and transparent manner. Earlier, Senator Rubina Khalid also addressed media representatives at BISP Central Zonal Office in Lahore, highlighting the impact of the programme. She shared that 9.5 million deserving families benefit from BISP and the program's scope is being further expanded.

Police chiefs assure safety of traders

RAWALPINDI (APP): Regional Police Officer (RPO) Babar Sarfaraz, City Police Officer (CPO) Khalid Hamdani and Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimur Khan paid a visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) here on Tuesday. President RCCI Saqib Rafiq and Group Leader RCCI Sohail Altaf and office bearers welcomed the RPO and his team. President Saqib Rafiq said that this is the first time that the three chiefs of Rawalpindi Police have visited the Chamber of

Commerce to meet the business community, which shows their seriousness to strengthen the interaction and communication with stakeholders to solve their problems. RPO Babar Sarfaraz in his remarks said that the business community is the backbone of country's economy and added that the RCCI was playing an important role in promoting community policing in society. He said the Safe City project in Rawalpindi will be fully operational by the end of this month, which will help in more effective measures against criminal elements.

Police starts search, strike operation in DIKhan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police of DIKhan on Tuesday started search and strike operations in the district against anti-state and criminal elements to ensure security in the district. According to the police spokesman, on the direction of District Police Officer Dera Nasir Mahmood, Parowa Circle and City Circle Police conducting search and strike operation and snap checking within their respective circles for which they urged masses to extend cooperation.

Federal Ombudsman's intervention ensures payment of dues to retired employee

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi's intervention on Tuesday has facilitated the payment of outstanding dues to a retired Army employee. According to the details, Ali Khan, a resident of Mansehra and a former employee of the F.F., had lodged a complaint at the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat's regional office in Abbottabad against CMA Lahore, citing long-pending arrears amounting to Rs. 133,235. Upon receiving the complaint, Regional In-Charge Abdul Ghafoor Baig issued notices to CMA Lahore. Following a thorough

investigation, CMA Lahore issued a cheque for Rs. 133,235 to Ali Khan. Expressing his gratitude, Ali Khan thanked Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi and Regional In-Charge Abdul Ghafoor Baig for resolving his longstanding issue. Abdul Ghafoor Baig highlighted that the Federal Ombudsman's institution serves as a public court, providing prompt and inexpensive justice. He reiterated that the Federal Ombudsman is regarded as the court of the poor, ensuring equal, immediate, and affordable justice as a guardian of human rights.



LAHORE: Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly, Malik Ahmed Khan Bhachar along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Lahore press club.

Senior minister announces commencement of second phase of anti-smog campaign

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday announced the commencement of second phase of the anti-smog campaign. In a statement issued here, she stated that Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has mandated the strict enforcement of laws and regulations under the Smog-Free Punjab vision. She noted that the first phase, which spanned three months, focused on providing facilities, technical assistance, equipment, and technology across all sectors. Over the

next three months, environmental protection laws and regulations will be rigorously enforced in industries, agriculture, traffic, and other sectors, she said, and warned that violations of environmental laws will result in fines, penalties, and arrests. Furthermore, the senior minister affirmed the commitment to achieving a complete ban on plastic, with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif personally overseeing its implementation. Strict actions will be taken against the burning of crop residues.

International News

Israel orders Palestinians to flee Khan Younis, signaling likely new assault on southern Gaza city

Monitoring Desk
KHAN YOUNIS: The Israeli army ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians from much of Khan Younis on Monday, a sign that troops are likely to launch a new ground assault in the Gaza Strip's second largest city. The order suggested Khan Younis will be the target in the latest of Israel's repeated raids into parts of Gaza it had previously invaded during the past nearly nine months, pursuing Hamas militants as they regroup. Much of Khan Younis was already destroyed in a long assault earlier this year, but large numbers of Palestinians have since moved back in to escape another Israeli offensive in Gaza's southern-most city, Rafah.

The order came as Israel released the director of Gaza's main hospital after holding him for seven months without charge or trial over allegations the facility had been used as a Hamas command center. He said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured. AP correspondent Charles de Ledesma reports dozens of detained Palestinians have been set free by Israel. The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selma raised questions over Israel's claims surrounding Shifa Hospital, which Israeli forces have raided twice since the start of the nearly nine-month war with Hamas. Abu Selma and other Palestinian health officials have denied the accusations. His release triggered an uproar across Israel's political spectrum. Government ministers and op-

position leaders expressed outrage and insisted Abu Salmia played a role in Hamas' alleged use of the hospital — though Israeli security services rarely unilaterally free prisoners if they have a suspicion of militant links. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office called the release "a grave mistake." Monday's evacuation call covered the entire eastern half of Khan Younis and a large swath of the Gaza Strip's southeast corner. Earlier in the day, the army said a barrage of rockets out of Gaza was fired from Khan Younis. The order suggested a new assault into the city was imminent. Israeli forces fought for weeks in Khan Younis earlier this year and withdrew, claiming to have destroyed Hamas battalions in the city.



Dutch King Willem-Alexander and Prime Minister Dick Schoof pose with the new members of the Dutch Government at Palace Huis ten Bosch in The Hague, Netherlands.

Trump says he can end the Russia-Ukraine war in one day

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: Donald Trump has said repeatedly he could settle the war between Russia and Ukraine in one day if he's elected president again. Russia's United Nations ambassador says he can't. When asked to respond to the claim from the presumptive Republican nominee, Vassily Nebenzia told reporters Monday that "the Ukrainian crisis cannot be solved in one day." At a CNN town hall in May 2023, Trump said: "They're dying, Russians

and Ukrainians. I want them to stop dying. And I'll have that done — I'll have that done in 24 hours." He said that would happen after he met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin. And he keeps repeating the claim on the campaign trail. During last week's debate with President Joe Biden, Trump claimed, "If we had a real president, a president that knew — that was respected by Putin ... he would have never invaded Ukraine."

British PM Sunak hunts for votes among the robots at dawn

Monitoring Desk
LUTON: Badly lagging in the race to win Britain's election, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak went hunting for votes among robots and staff in a retail distribution centre on Tuesday, kicking off his first campaign stop of the day before 5 a.m. (0400 GMT). Sunak, who has often looked exhausted as he crossed the country during a six-week campaign, started the penultimate day of campaigning before Thursday's vote in a vast Ocado warehouse in Luton.

Ukraine releases thousands of prisoners so they can join fight against Russia

Monitoring Desk
DNIPROPETROVSK REGION: At a rural penal colony in southeast Ukraine, several convicts stand assembled under barbed wire to hear an army recruiter offer them a shot at parole. In return, they must join the grueling fight against Russia. "You can put an end to this and start a new life," said the recruiter, a member of a volunteer assault battalion. "The main thing is your will, because you are going to defend the motherland. You won't succeed at 50%, you have to give 100% of

yourself, even 150%." Ukraine is expanding the draft to cope with acute battlefield shortages more than two years into fighting against Russia's full-scale invasion. And its recruiting efforts have turned, for the first time, to the country's prison population. Although Ukraine does not announce any details of troop deployment numbers or casualties, frontline commanders openly acknowledge that they are facing serious manpower problems as Russian continues to build up forces in eastern Ukraine.

Nine killed in Seoul after car hits pedestrians

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: At least nine people were killed and four others were injured when a car struck pedestrians near Seoul city hall on Monday, police said. There were six fatalities at the scene, while three others were pronounced dead after being rushed to hospital, firefighter Kim Chun-soo said. South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported that a 68-year-old driver crashed into people who were waiting at a traffic signal. He was driving in the wrong direction and hit two other vehicles before ploughing into the pedestrians.

107 killed in stampede at religious event in India's Uttar Pradesh

Monitoring Desk
UTTAR PRADESH: Nearly 107 people were crushed to death at a Hindu religious gathering in northern India on Tuesday, with many others injured, a senior government official said. A large crowd had gathered near the city of Hathras for a sermon by a popular preacher but a fierce dust storm sparked panic as people were leaving. Many were crushed or trampled, falling on top of each other, with some collapsing into a roadside drain in the chaos. "The attendees were exiting the venue when a dust storm blinded their vision, leading to a melee and the subsequent tragic incident," Chaitra V, divisional commissioner of Aligarh city in Uttar Pradesh state, told AFP. "We ... are focusing on providing relief and medical aid for the victims," she added. Hours after the trag-

edy, she told reporters the toll had surged past a hundred. "Initial information ... is that 107 people have died," she told reporters. Most of the dead were women, according to state chief medical officer Umesh Kumar Tripathi, who told reporters "many injured" have been hospitalised. Lines of ambulances carried the injured to hospitals. Waiting women and crying men gathered outside one mortuary in the town of Etah, where many of the dead were taken, seeking news of their relatives. Deadly incidents are common at places of worship during major religious festivals in India, the biggest of which prompt millions of devotees to make pilgrimages to holy sites. "When the sermon finished, everyone started running out," Shakuntala, a woman who gave only one name, told the Press Trust of India news agency.

North Korea brags of new missile with 'super-large warhead.'

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea said Tuesday it had test-fired a new tactical ballistic missile capable of carrying "a super-large warhead," a claim quickly disputed by South Korean officials and experts who speculate the North likely fabricated a successful test to conceal a botched launch. It's the second time that South Korea has questioned North Korea's claim on the development of new weapons in recent days, as the rivals are locked in heightened animosities over the North's testing activities. The North's official Korean Central News Agency said that Monday's test involved the Hwasongpho-11 Da-4.5 missile, which can carry a 4.5-ton-class warhead. It said the test was meant to verify the weapon's flight

stability and hit accuracy at the maximum range of 500 kilometers (310 miles) and the minimum range of 90 kilometers (55 miles). The test apparently refers to the two ballistic missile launches that South Korea said North Korea performed Monday. Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung Joon said at a briefing later Tuesday that the second North Korean missile was found to have fallen on an uninhabited area near Pyongyang, the North's capital. He said he could find few previous test-launches by North Korea that have aimed at ground target sites. The South Korean military has said the second North Korean missile possibly traveled abnormally during the initial stage of its flight.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding national preparedness for the monsoon.

PM forms high-level committee for tackling monsoon emergencies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday formed a high-level committee to handle potential emergencies during the upcoming monsoon season.

Chairing a review meeting to address the monsoon forecast and potential emergencies, the prime minister decided to personally supervise the response to any flood situations during the monsoon.

Prime Minister Shehbaz emphasized integrating advanced monsoon information into national broadcasts, stressing the regular dissemination of weather updates to farmers. He assured full support to farmers during emergencies, emphasizing the need for immediate assistance in such situations.

He instructed all relevant institutions to remain on high alert during the monsoon and directed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to support all provincial governments and related agencies.

The prime minister directed that advance information about the monsoon be disseminated to people in areas at risk of any emergency during the season. He

emphasized that farmers and residents located near rivers and canals should be updated daily through the media and other information sources.

During the meeting, the NDMA provided a detailed briefing on the monsoon forecast and the areas at risk. The forum was informed that heavy monsoon rains are expected in the four provinces during the first and second weeks of July. The forum was informed that this year's monsoon rains in Pakistan will move from the southeast to the north. Rainfall is expected in the Potohar region and the eastern part of Punjab during the first week of July. The meeting was informed that in the second week of July, there is a possibility of heavy rains in Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Gujranwala, Lahore, and Faisalabad, with scattered rainfall anticipated in Bahawalpur, Multan, Sahiwal, and Dera Ghazi Khan divisions.

According to the briefing, a flood situation is anticipated in the Sutlej, Chenab, and Ravi rivers during the first two weeks of August. Preparations for relocation and emergency response have been completed in the areas surrounding these rivers.

Empowering trans lives: Islamabad Police, UKCAB's signs MOU for safety and education of transgender youth

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: According to details, on the special interest and directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Islamabad Police has taken a commendable step for the welfare of transgender individuals.

In this regard, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed between Islamabad Police and UK Curriculum and Accreditation Body (UKCAB) to promote the protection and welfare of homeless transgender children aged 5 to 18.

On behalf of Islamabad Police, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Islamabad, Syed Ali Raza, signed the agreement, while Chief Executive Officer of UKCAB, Zaid Bhatti, signed



on behalf of UKCAB.

According to the agreement, UKCAB will establish a formal training institution to enhance the capacity, provide training, and facilitate activists associated with Islamabad Police working for the rights of transgender individuals, including transgender children. UKCAB will play a leading role in training teachers, assessing and preparing the curriculum, and running the

daily activities of the institution. Meanwhile, Islamabad Police will provide land and all necessary facilities for the establishment of primary, secondary, and vocational institutes by UKCAB.

Islamabad Police will also develop SOPs for the efficient functioning of the institution and will be responsible for providing complete security to all institutions.



ISLAMABAD: First Deputy Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Lukashevich meeting with Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi

Islamabad set to launch electric bus service; check all routes

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to launch an electric bus service in Islamabad, with 30 buses set to start operations this week on two city routes.

The inauguration ceremony, expected to take place on July 5, will be attended by either the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif or the Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. The buses will ply on two routes, 'Nust to Pims' and 'Pims to Bari Imam'.

The first route will cover a distance of approximately 13 kilometers, with 13 stops, and a bus will arrive at each stop every 10 minutes.

The second route will pass through several key locations, including G-7, G-6, Melody, Aabpara, Ataturk Road, Serena Hotel, Foreign Office, Radio Pakistan, and the Diplomatic Enclave.

The electric buses, which arrived in Islamabad last month, are part of a larger fleet of 200 buses, with 70 more expected to arrive from Karachi and 60 from China. The CDA has planned to operate these buses on 11 routes, connecting rural and urban areas of Islamabad.

The buses are owned by the National Radio and Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC), a subsidiary of the Ministry of Defence, while the CDA will pay Rs306 to Rs331 per kilometer in fare and provide logistics to the contractor.

PMD, RIMES hold Climate Application Forum

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), in collaboration with the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) arranged a Climate Application Forum on Tuesday.

This event brought together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from various sectors to discuss innovative strategies and applications for climate resilience and disaster risk reduction.

The forum commenced with an insightful keynote address by Dr. Muhammad Afzaal, Chief Meteorologist, PMD, who emphasized the critical need for enhanced climate services

and innovative applications to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Chief Guest Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Nadeem Ahmad, Advisor, RIMES highlighted the collaborative effort needed to tackle climate change and extreme weather events.

Sahibzad Khan, Director General of PMD, said: "This forum marks a significant milestone in our efforts to integrate cutting-edge climate science with practical applications. By partnering with RIMES, we are committed to advancing our capabilities in early warning systems and fostering a culture of preparedness and resilience in the face of climate change."

DC Agha Zaheer Abbas instructed the authorities concerned to complete the development works on their stipulated time to get desirable results and reviewed other recreational facilities including washrooms to be built at Thanda Jangal entertainment venue.



ISLAMABAD: A view of traffic jam on Islamabad Expressway in the Federal Capital.

Chairman HEC says Pak-Iran ties can be strengthened through educational, cultural cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC), Dr Mukhtar Ahmed on Tuesday said that Iran has been the guardian of knowledge, culture, and heritage for centuries, whereas Pakistan and Iran can learn from each other's experiences as neighbouring countries.

He was addressing as chair to the opening session of the two-day Second International Conference on "Iran-Pakistan Academic-Cultural Dialogue" here organized by Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.

Dr. Mukhtar highlighted the importance of Muslim countries setting aside their mutual differences and uniting to address common problems. He also stressed that Iran-Pakistan relations can be further strengthened through educational and cultural cooperation.

Furthermore, he emphasized the use of edu-

cation, science, and knowledge for the betterment of humanity instead of destruction. Lastly, he also offered prayers and condolences for the former president of Iran who recently passed away.

The head of the Iranian delegation, Prof. Dr. Seyed Abolhasan Navvab, addressed the conference, expressing his pleasure in visiting Pakistan and Allama Iqbal Open University. He underscored the shared values between Iran and Pakistan, highlighting the importance of cooperation in education, culture, knowledge, economy and science.

Prof. Dr. Navvab also mentioned the vast opportunities for collaboration between the two countries and expressed gratitude for the support from the Pakistani nation and government. He concluded by expressing his willingness to visit Pakistan frequently to further enhance the relationship, and thanked AIU and HEC for organizing the conference.



ISLAMABAD: A lady health worker administer polio drops to young children during the year's fifth anti-polio campaign in the Federal Capital.

Parliamentary Taskforce striving for sustainable future for all: Bilal Kayani

ISLAMABAD (INP): Convener Parliamentary Taskforce on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Mr. Bilal Azhar Kayani has said that the taskforce is vigorously striving for a sustainable future for all.

He stated this while talking to the UN Pakistan Resident Coordinator Mr. Mohamed Yahya who called on him at the Parliament House Islamabad on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the current status of implementation of SDGs in Pakistan and role of the Parliament in the attainment of these goals. They also deliberated upon international best practices and their socio-economic compatibility in terms of the contemporary challenges faced by Paki-

stan.

It was stressed upon to pro-actively assist the MPs during the legislation phase and to build knowledge around the SDGs framework to support localization & implementation of 2030 Agenda more effectively.

Bilal Azhar Kayani while reaffirming commitment of the Parliament to play a constructive role in accelerating the progress to achieve SDGs stated "Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs is vigorously striving for a sustainable future for all."

The Convener also added, "Parliamentary Taskforce will complement governments effort in ensuring access to quality education, better health facilities and devising strategies to effectively tackle cli-



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz chairing a special meeting to review amendments to the proposed laws and rules for establishment of the Punjab Enforcement Regulatory Authority

IFA destroys mint grown with wastewater in ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) on Tuesday raided at vegetable farms in the G-12 area and destroyed mint of hundreds kilograms, irrigated with wastewater on one kanal land.

Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations (DDO) of IFA, Dr Tahira Siddique said that the IFA accompanied by food safety teams (FSTs) inspected a total of 10 kanal land and found mint irrigated with wastewater on one kanal, which was then destroyed.

Dr. Tahira Siddique stated that these vegetables were meant to sell in the vegetable market. Using wastewater for irrigation violates food safety rules.

Farmers received strict warnings to stop using wastewater for growing vegetables, she added.

Dr. Siddique emphasized that contaminated water could cause diseases and only non-edible crops could be irrigated with such water.

The IFA was conducting strict monitoring to ensure a safe food supply. Food safety teams were always active in the field to provide quality and nutritious food to the public, she added.

SNGPL fulfills long-standing demand of consumers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has added 14 kilometres of 18-inch diameter and 13 kilometres of 10-inch diameter pipelines to the system to address complaints about low gas pressure in Rawalpindi.

According to an SNGPL spokesperson, Shahid Akram with the completion of this project, Rawalpindi consumers will no longer face issues of low gas pressure, especially during the winter season.

This project is a testament to the department's customer-friendly policies and represents a significant milestone in delivering excellent services.

No talks with PTI without condemning May 09 violence: IIP Leader

ISLAMABAD (APP): Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Central leader Aun Chaudhry on Tuesday said that no talks would be held with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership without condemnation of the May 09 violence.

Addressing a news conference here at the National Press Club (NPC), he said that some reprehensible elements were hatching conspiracies against the democracy and national institutions to defame the country through their negative agenda but they would not succeed in their motives.

Aun Chaudhry said that the coalition government was trying its best to

put the country on track of development by ensuring economic stability, adding that it was launching mega projects during ongoing regime not only to boost national economy but also steer out the country from economic crunch.

He said, "I pledge to expose those elements involved in May 09 incidents and negotiations with them are only possible after they tender apology to the victims of their violence and face legal action."

PTI leadership had always perpetrated chaos and anarchy in the country and mocked at the country's institutions, he added.

Judicial complex vandalism case: ATC seeks report from Supdt Adiala jail about production of PTI founder

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has sought report from superintendent Adiala jail about production of PTI founder Imran Khan in Judicial complex vandalism case.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra has remarked chablan in respect of 176 accused including PTI founder and Pervaiz Elahi have come.

We are issuing non-bailable arrest warrants of absented accused. It is last opportunity and if the attendance is not ensured on next hearing then the bail

will be revoked.

He gave these remarks on Tuesday.

Hearing of two cases registered in police stations CTD and Golra against PTI founder, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Umar Ayub, Ali Nawaz Awan and other leaders came up for hearing in the court.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra called report from superintendent Adiala jail with reference to production of PTI founder.

The court adjourned the hearing of the cases till July 29.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being utilized for expansion work of Club Road during development work in Federal Capital.

Dr. Raghیب unveils comprehensive code of conduct for Muharram-ul-Haram

ISLAMABAD (APP): Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Chairman, Dr. Muhammad Raghیب Hussain Naemі on Tuesday introduced a detailed code of conduct for Muharram-ul-Haram, guided by the principles of the Paigham-e-Pakistan initiative.

Addressing a press conference in the presence of prominent scholars and religious leaders, he said this code underscores the necessity for all citizens to uphold the Constitution, respect the state, and consistently demonstrate their allegiance.

Dr. Raghیب emphasized to respect for fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, including equality before the law, social and political rights,

and the freedom of expression, belief, worship, and assembly.

He firmly rejected any duress in the name of implementing Islam, armed action against the state, violence, and chaos, labeling such acts as rebellion against the spirit of Islamic laws. He said no individual has the right to declare anyone, including government and security personnel, as infidels.

Dr. Raghیب urged the scholars, religious leaders, and individuals from all sectors to fully support the state and its institutions, especially law enforcement and armed forces, to eradicate violence from society. He advised the citizens to avoid participating in movements based on linguistic, regional, religious,

or sectarian prejudices against the state.

He condemned the promotion of sectarian hatred, armed sectarian conflict, or the imposition of views on others by force as a violation of Shariah and a cause of disorder. He said educational institutions, whether private, public, or religious, have been barred from promoting militancy, providing training, or fostering hatred, extremism, and violence, with legal action to be taken against those involved in such activities.

Dr. Raghیب said strict administrative and punitive measures are outlined against those promoting extremism, sectarianism, and violence, regardless of their organization or belief. While all schools of

thought in Islam have the right to preach their respective beliefs, he said spreading hatred or making derogatory remarks or baseless accusations against any person, institution, or sect is strictly prohibited.

He said the code prohibits any disrespect towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), all Prophets, the Mothers of the Believers, the Ahl al-Bayt, the Rightly Guided Caliphs, or the Companions. He emphasized that no individual or group should obstruct the investigation or prosecution of blasphemy cases. Only religious scholars are permitted to explain Shariah principles based on religious doctrine, with the decision to declare

someone an infidel falling under the jurisdiction of the court, he added.

Dr. Raghیب said the code also prohibits the promotion of terrorism, the provision of training to terrorists, their recruitment, or engagement in any terrorist activities. He said the curriculum in public, private, and religious educational institutions would include the etiquette of diverging opinions, recognizing educational institutions as the most suitable places for research on jurisprudential and ideological differences.

He said all Muslim citizens and government officials are called to perform their duties in light of Islamic teachings and the Constitution.