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PM welcomes Fitch upgrades Pakistan rating to CCC+ following IMF agreement

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday hailed the upgrading of Pakistan's long-term foreign currency issuer default rating (IDR) from CCC to CCC+ by the Credit Rating Agency Fitch.

Appreciating the efforts of Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and his team, the prime minister said the country and the nation had started receiving the fruits of the government's policy of sacrificing politics for the sake of state in the shape of improvement in the country's economy.

In a statement, he said upgrading of Pakistan's global rating to CCC+ was the international recognition of the government's right economic policies.

The prime minister emphasized that the government was working hard on the economic reforms agenda, the fruits of which would surely reach to the people soon.

The reports of Fitch and other international financial institutions are important for the economic improvement of Pakistan, PM Shehbaz said adding that "we will move forward with more effort and passion on the path of economic improvement of the country". He hoped that the new International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme would further improve the economic activities in the country.

The announcement of another one percent reduction in interest rate by the State Bank of Pakistan was another sign of economic improvement, he added.

He said that recent cut in the interest rate would further reduce inflation and increase the business activities.

Earlier, Fitch Ratings has upgraded Pakistan's Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to 'CCC+' from 'CCC'.

In a statement released on Monday, the Fitch rating agency said "The upgrade reflects greater certainty over continued availability of external funding, in the context of Pakistan's staff-level agreement (SLA) with the IMF on a new 37-month USD7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF)."

It said that strong performance on the previous, more temporary IMF arrangement helped Pakistan narrow fiscal deficits and rebuild foreign exchange (FX) reserves, and further improvements are likely.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC), led by the senior member Akbar Hussain Durrani called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President for enhanced representation of women, minorities in govt jobs

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday called for greater representation of women and minorities in government jobs to enhance their inclusion in the mainstream of society.

The president, talking to a delegation of Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC), led by the senior member Akbar Hussain Durrani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, said that the Commission should find ways and means to further improve the civil service recruitment process to select the right person for the right job, according to a President House press release.

He said that FPSC had an important responsibility of recruiting civil servants to improve service delivery and promote good governance in the country.

He urged the need to make the recruitment process more efficient and transparent by adopting modern technology and new methods, particularly computerized testing, that would help in the selection of qualified and efficient civil servants.

The president said that candidates securing high marks during the written examination should be fairly evaluated.

Akbar Hussain Durrani briefed the president about the role and function of the FPSC in recruiting government servants. He also highlighted certain issues being faced by the Commission.

President Zardari assured the delegation of his support and guidance in the resolution of problems and improving the recruitment system.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar along with Secretary General of the Commonwealth Patricia Scotland addresses a joint press stakeout at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Pakistan committed to CW agenda of connectivity, climate resilience: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday reiterated that Pakistan remained committed to working with the Commonwealth to promote its agenda of connectivity, education, youth and women empowerment, and climate resilience.

The deputy prime minister, addressing a joint press stakeout with Secretary General of the Commonwealth Patricia Scotland after their meeting, said that Pakistan was also resolved to support the initiatives aimed at strengthening and modernizing the Commonwealth to meet the 21st-century challenges, besides continuing to play an active role in building bridges among member states.

He appreciated the secretary-general, who is on a five-day maiden visit here, for serving the organisation with "dedication and grace" across her eight-year term and her role in promoting the Commonwealth's values and mission and modernizing the outlook.

The deputy prime minister lauded her contribution to promoting cooperation in education, youth empowerment, capacity building, and climate action, besides supporting Pakistan after floods, particularly regarding the appointment of a climate finance advisor for Pakistan.

Ishaq Dar urged the Commonwealth's role to resolve outstanding disputes among member states with greater urgency and press for implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. Dar said Pakistan's vision of the regional connectivity agenda matched that of the Commonwealth. He highlighted the vast opportunities for collaboration in realizing goals in education, skills, youth and women empowerment, health, and environment preservation.

He told the visiting dignitary that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was looking forward to attending the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2024 scheduled to take place in Apia, Samoa in October. Dar said on the sidelines of the Commonwealth foreign ministers meeting in September, he would engage with the participating counterparts.

In her remarks, Secretary-General Patricia Scotland lauded Pakistan's continued support of the Commonwealth particularly during her eight-year term.

She told the media that she was visiting Pakistan to see and celebrate the way Pakistan had arisen from the devastating floods of 2022 that had affected more than 33 million Pakistanis with two million of them lost homes and livelihoods.

The secretary-general appreciated Pakistan's commitment to the Commonwealth principles as the organization strived for a digitized and AI-enabled world. She said that 65% of Pakistan's population under age 30 would not just be the leaders of tomorrow but would also help the Commonwealth create a better future.

Govt condemns life threats to CJP, adopt legal course against such tendencies

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government on Monday strongly condemned life threats to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa by a certain group and announced initiating legal proceedings so that no one could dare to challenge the writ of the state.

"The law will take its course against the elements behind the provocative and baseless propaganda campaign against the CJP" said Defence Minister Khawaja Asif while addressing a press conference along with Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal.

He regretted that an attempt was being made to spread bloodshed in the name of religion for vested political interests.

He said that believing in the finality of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is part of our faith. He said that the Supreme Court has already clarified its position on the matter.

The minister pointed out that Qazi Faez Isa is being targeted for many years under various pretexts. He stated there is an ongoing effort to silence a principled and upright voice in the judiciary.

Emphasizing the need for the rule of law, Khawaja Asif stated that the dictation of any individual or group will not be accepted.

Meanwhile speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal strongly condemned a recent announcement by a group, threatening the life of Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, denouncing it as an act of sedition against the country's constitution and religious values.

He said that the government will also take legal action to prevent such incidents in future. Adding that those behind this move belonged to the group established in 2027-28.

"This time, we are all united as Muslims, and our belief in Khatm-e-Nabuwat (the Finality of Prophethood) is the foundation of our faith," he remarked.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Chinese Counsel General Zhao Shiren.

Govt, Ulema agree to curb religious intolerance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ulema, belonging to different schools of thought, and the government have agreed that nobody will be allowed to take law into hands in the name of religion.

Addressing a joint news conference, along with Ulema, in Rawalpindi today, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar strongly condemned the issuance of fatwas against Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa. He said the Supreme Court, in its Urdu press release, has clarified that believing in the finality of Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is part of every Muslim's faith.

The Minister said neither law nor society permits anyone to issue decrees against fellow Muslims' faith. He said a case has been registered against the culprits behind such fatwas, aimed at spreading hatred. He said strict action will be taken in this regard.

He said that the state would respond to the malicious campaign against the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) and no one would be allowed to decree religious notions against anyone.

PM directs measures to protect lives, properties amidst heavy rains

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the authorities concerned to take all possible measures to protect the lives and properties of the citizens amidst heavy rains in different parts of the country.

The prime minister directed the National Disaster Management Authority

Soldier martyred, 16 injured as violent mob assaults security forces' personnel in Gwadar

RAWALPINDI (APP): A violent mob in the garb of so called Baloch Raji Muchi assaulted Security Forces' personnel employed for security duties in Gwadar district that resulted in the martyrdom of a soldier and left an officer and 16 others injured during unprovoked assaults.

The martyred soldier was identified as Sepoy Shabbir Baloch (Age: 30 years; resident of: District Sibi), who embraced shahadat, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

While on the other hand, fake and malicious propaganda is being spread on social media using doctored pictures and videos by the propagandists to gain sympathy and support for the unlawful violent march, it said. "Security forces have displayed extreme restraint to avoid unwarranted civilian casualties despite provocations."

The violent actions of the mob are unacceptable and those responsible will be brought to justice," the ISPR said.

All citizens were urged not to fall prey to the propaganda, remain calm and peaceful, and to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in maintaining public safety and order, it added.

"Security Forces of Pakistan, in step with the Nation, remain determined to thwart attempts of sabotaging peace and stability of Balochistan," the ISPR said.

Moreover, the ISPR said fake and malicious propaganda is being spread on social media using doctored pictures and videos by the propagandists to gain sympathy and support for the unlawful violent march.

"Security forces have displayed extreme restraint to avoid unwarranted civilian casualties despite provocations," it said.

Mohsin Naqvi meets Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren

LAHORE (INP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren in Lahore Monday.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including strengthening of bilateral relations, CPEC projects, security of the Chinese citizens and the ongoing projects were discussed in detail.

On this occasion, the Interior Minister said that CPEC has given a new dimension to the brotherly relationship between two countries and every Pakistani is proud of the enduring friendship with China.

He stated that China has stood by Pakistan in every test of time and Both countries have the similar stance on international issues. He emphasized that all humanly possible measures have been put in place to protect the Chinese citizens. He also appreciated the cooperation of Chinese citizens in the implementation of foolproof security measures.



RAWALPINDI: Pak Army and Rescue-II22 personnel standing high alert on the bridge of flooded Nullah Lai near Gawwalmandi to cope any untoward situation during heavy monsoon rain in the city.

Availability of authentic data, its appropriate use, essential for national development: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal said on Monday that the availability of authentic data and its judicious utilization was essential for any country to achieve its goals of development and prosperity. Today, data is driving a strategic revolution worldwide. It is crucial for any economy to prioritize data availability and utilization among its national objectives," he said while addressing the "Dialogue on Data for Development: Enabling People-Centric Development Planning in Pakistan," organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). The minister recalled that it was the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government which established the National Database Organization in the 1998 plan, at a time when the value of creating a citizen data bank was not widely recognized.

He noted that Pakistan became one of the first countries to establish a citizen data bank, which was now known as NADRA [National Database and Registration Authority]. e mentioned that during its various tenures, the PML-N government established the National Center for Excellence in Big Data and Cloud Computing, National Centers for Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Applied Mathematics, Satellite Technology and Geographic Information System (GIS).

SBP cuts policy rate by 100bps to 19.5% as inflation cools down 'slightly'

SBP Governor says inflation rate eased to 12.60%, while external account continues to improve

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday reduced the interest rate by 1% or 100 basis points (bps) from 20.5% to 19.5%, the second cut in a row, citing a slight cooling in the inflation rate — a move that is mostly in line with the general market consensus.

Addressing a press conference after the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, SBP Governor Jameel Ahmad said, "We have noted that the inflation is on a declining trend."

"The inflation rate has come down to 12.60% from 38% while the external account has continued to improve," the SBP governor said adding, "The reduction in the interest rate reflects our confidence in the current economic trajectory."

Last month, the SBP's MPC trimmed its benchmark interest rate by 150 bps to 20.5% following a record-high 22% that had been maintained for almost a year.

The finance czar further stated that "future projections expect the average inflation rate to stabilise between 23% and 25%, following last year's 23.4%".

The central bank in a statement said the announcement of monetary easing showed positive indicators for the national economy citing a slight drop in inflation, a build-up in SBP's foreign exchange (FX) reserves despite repayments of debt, and a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a 37-month extended fund facility (EFF) programme of about \$7.0 billion.

It added that the committee assessed that the external account has continued to improve, as reflected by the build-up in the central bank's FX reserves despite substantial repayments of debt and other obligations.

The developments — along with significantly positive real interest rates — led to the further reduction in the policy rate in a calibrated manner to support economic activity, while keeping inflationary pressures in check.

Since its last meeting, the committee noted the key developments that the current account deficit narrowed sharply in FY24 and SBP's FX reserves improved significantly from \$4.4 billion at the end of June 2023 to above \$9.0 billion.

The sentiment surveys conducted in July showed a worsening in inflation expectations and confidence of both consumers and businesses, the statement read.

It adds that international oil prices have remained volatile in recent weeks, whereas prices of metals and food items have eased.

Lastly, with the ease in inflationary pressures and labour market conditions, central banks in advanced economies have also started to cut their policy rates.



KARACHI: Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmad announce Monetary Policy during press conference at State Bank of Pakistan.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Constitutional limits

Throughout Pakistan's turbulent history, coup-makers and strongmen have looked to the courts to provide legitimacy to their extra-constitutional forays.

Whenever the courts have obliged, these actions have been justified by the 'doctrine of necessity', that odious principle used to legitimise, for example, Ghulam Mohammad's dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, and later the Iskander Mirza-Ayub Khan military coup.

Today, as extreme political polarisation threatens Pakistan's fragile democracy, and unelected forces tighten their grip, people are wondering whether this doctrine will again be resurrected. In this regard, the remarks made by Supreme Court Justice Athar Minallah at a recent event in the US regarding the judiciary's role in protecting the constitutional order bear repeating.

Justice Minallah urged the courts to remain vigilant where defending the Constitution was concerned. He added that mistakes in this regard had been made by the higher judiciary in the past and that if the SC failed to protect the basic law, then "judges are committing misconduct". These frank admissions and stark warnings should be heeded especially by state institutions. There can be no compromise when it comes to respecting the constitutional order, and their lordships have a duty to protect the document. It seemed that after the epic struggle between Gen Musharraf and justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, the 'doctrine of necessity' had been buried. Yet, as things have developed since, it is clear that this doctrine has multiple lives. What gives one hope is the fact that conversations about protecting the constitutional order are taking place, even in a suffocating atmosphere. Whether it is Justice Minallah's remarks, the Islamabad High Court judges' letter regarding interference by intelligence agencies in judicial affairs, or Justice Mansoor Ali Shah's comment about the need to create a 'firewall' around the judicial system, these hints from within the judiciary point to a will to resist unconstitutional moves.

As some observers have noted, an unambiguous institutional response is required; undemocratic forces cannot be allowed to exploit divisions within the judiciary. From their lordships in the SC to the magistrates and trial judges, the judiciary as an institution must pledge to uphold the constitutional framework, and refuse to entertain 'requests' from any quarter to subvert the democratic system.

As Justice Minallah suggested, those who fail to defend the Constitution must face the consequences of their actions. Pakistan's salvation lies in all institutions staying within their legal bounds, and letting civilian set-ups govern with freedom. Of course, there are still many pieces missing from this puzzle — a transparent electoral process, maturity and tolerance in political parties for each other, etc — but only if the democratic process is allowed to continue unhindered can the system correct itself.

Noble profession or not?

Gaitee Ara Siddiqi

It is always encouraging to see the huge pool of resourceful and talented young people that we have in our educational establishments. Having been associated with the field of education for over a decade and a half, this writer has gained immensely from the experience of teaching a large number of students from nearly all walks of life. One of the biggest advantages of this profession is that those who practise it remain young in mind and heart, simply because they are constantly in touch with the younger generations.

As mentioned, Pakistan boasts a huge reserve of young and talented people with immense potential; unfortunately, the country lacks the resources to allow them to exploit their potential to the fullest. As a result, young, bright and ambitious individuals who manage to secure employment abroad are leaving the country for greener pastures. A massive brain drain is in progress, with hordes of young people shifting abroad in search of better standards of living and a brighter future for their children.

What can educationists do to retain this vast reserve of human resources and help it realise its maximum potential? The first thing is to be honest with the profession, which is becoming increasingly challenging keeping in mind the rapidly changing environment of educational establishments and the increasing commercialisation of academia. However, there are still a large number of educationists that this writer has encountered during her professional journey

who are doing their best to do justice to their profession. That means inculcating a sense of responsibility in their students and nurturing and cultivating them, spotting their potential, and fostering an environment for them in which they can realise their hidden skills and abilities.

While it is widely acknowledged that teachers are overworked, underpaid and have minimal job security, there is still a huge contribution that they can make, even with their authority curtailed by institutions seeking to win over more 'clients'. By and large, it still remains an extremely respectable profession, especially for females, and most women prefer being associated with academia due to its relatively shorter working hours and other perks, such as concessions on school fees.

With a massive increase in population and millions of children out of school, education will remain in demand as the country equips its future generations with the skills and abilities they need to excel and carve out a niche for themselves in the world. With the vast reserves of the young people we have, bright and competent educationists who can use their skills and competencies to groom the generations of tomorrow are direly needed. For that, training needs to be provided and incentives given to encourage more highly educated individuals to join this profession.

Another depressing reality is that individuals from privileged backgrounds do not join this profession. Nearly all of us are here by accident, and very few out of choice. This is especially true for

men associated with this profession, who mostly belong to low-income backgrounds and are teaching because they were unable to pursue a profession in a more promising field. Most of them are making just enough spending their days teaching in schools, and their evenings in tuition centres. With the crippling stagflation, the majority is burning the midnight oil but remains unable to make ends meet. As essentials become more and more dear, the true ethos of education is being compromised, like everything else in this country.

Because teachers shape the future of a nation, the government should make a concerted effort to facilitate them by providing tax exemptions and subsidies on basic expenses. A nation which respects its teachers and aims to make their lives easier prospers, grows and develops. It encourages students to respect and value those who are devoting their lives to enable them to make something of their.

Let's continue to keep the flame burning. Those in the profession should keep fighting for their rights. We can do our bit by practising professional honesty to preserve the sanctity and respectability of this occupation, in the hope that it will have a spill-over effect and, in time, the government will start offering incentives to the unsung heroes and heroines of this country who may not be fighting on the borders, but are still waging important battles daily (sometimes at their own expense) to ensure a bright future for our coming generations. - Courtesy Dawn

Facing homelessness

Arif Hasan

As you drive along Mauripur Road towards Hawkes Bay, a concrete wall appears about two kilometres from the sea and runs along the road on your left-hand side. After it reaches Hawks Bay Drive, it turns left and continues for another kilometre or so. The area enclosed by the wall contains a number of small fishermen's villages. Roads are being laid within the area enclosed by the wall, and the nullah that flows through this area has been blocked; the space where the water fanned out from the nullah to the sea has been blocked as well. Much of the area has extensive mangrove forest.

The villages within this area and around it are Brahvi- or Balochi-speaking. They claim that they had been living here well before the British came. Many of their families own small boats in which they go into shallow waters to fish and then take their fish to the many piers along the bay to sell their catch. Others are boat-hands on larger ships that go out into the deep sea. They are paid on a daily basis, or a percentage of the catch.

The retail and wholesale trade in fish is big business for the villagers, but given the unequal relationship between the fishermen and the aartis, the villagers remain poor financially, and are burdened with a 'culture of poverty'. Most of the villages have no education or health facilities, and those that do, function erratically.

The villagers are terrified. The rumour is that the entire area is part of KDA scheme 42, because of which they will be evicted and their livelihoods will be

taken away from them. As a result, they will not only become homeless but also paupers. Rumours are that the area enclosed by the wall will contain multistoried condominiums, clubs and high-end eating places. They argue that if this is true, new people with different skills will replace them.

Again and again, they mention the fact that the agricultural villages have suffered, in the case of Gadap. The residents of Gadap villages have lost everything, including their community and their culture. Many of them have been killed while resisting eviction from their lands. They have become nomads. They claim that they have no one to turn to since these schemes have government, politicians and big money support.

Apart from the livelihood and community-related concerns of the fishing community, the environment of the area will be devastated. Mangrove marshes will disappear and with them the wildlife that WWF has been trying to protect. The noise and intensive human activity that will be generated will make it impossible for the green turtle to breed, and they too will disappear like the flamingos, pangolins, storks, and ducks at the China Creek and Sandspit backwaters.

The coast now consists of posh villas which are increasingly being used as hotels. Originally, the bye-laws permitted only a single-storey hut with a removable roof. This preserved the physical and social environment of the beach. Reverting to this would mean the demolition of tens of villas, which is not possible.

However, we can still try and salvage the situation and prepare special bye-laws and zoning regulations for KDA scheme 42 that stop it from becoming a concrete jungle and which protects the sanctity of the environment, especially of the flora and fauna, and all that is related to it.

It is important to note that in the Karachi master plan 2020, which was approved by the city council, special interest was taken to protect the sea fronts of the city. It was proposed that the flora and fauna of the area, fishing communities, lower- and lower-middle-income Karachiites who throng to the beaches and the persons who serve them, are the major stakeholders of any beach development. Under the KSDP 2020, no reclamation from the sea, mangrove marshes, or mud flats, which are fish and turtle nurseries, and the land they require for survival is permitted. Also, all beaches should be accessible to the fishing communities and the public. No development between the high water mark and 150 metres beyond it, on the seaward side of the coastal road, is permissible.

While the KSDP was being framed, a citizen's movement for the protection of the beaches was taking place. It has now fizzled out. People are tired for they cannot indefinitely fight the nexus of developers, politicians and bureaucrats. To save the Karachi coastline and its beautiful environment for the citizens of the city, strong institutional arrangements are required that can fight corruption, which has seeped into every aspect of our lives. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Syed Zahid Raza says Pakistan's engagement with Africa has historical roots

Ambassador designate to Mauritius visits Islamabad Chamber

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's engagement with Africa has historical roots and is characterized by mutual respect and cooperation.

By harnessing mutual cooperation, Pakistan and Africa can unlock new economic opportunities and foster sustainable development. This has been stated by Pakistan's Ambassador designate to Mauritius Syed Zahid Raza during his meeting with former President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry here on Monday.

He said that deeper engagements with Africa remains a strategic imperative for Pakistan,

adding that forging a strong and effective partnership for peace, progress and prosperity is an indispensable goal, which should be advanced through a clear vision, consistent policy, and a long-term strategy.

The Ambassador, while appreciating the role of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in advancing trade relations with friendly countries all over the world said that he would do his level best to strengthen the business to business and people to people relations with Mauritius alongside the diplomatic ties.

He said to achieve the objective, he will do his best to organize business delegations' visits to Mauritius especially the ICCI members for

nurturing the bilateral business relations.

Zafar Bakhtawari apprised the visiting guest that the Chamber is already Africa focused and has recently celebrated Africa Day in a befitting manner for bringing Pakistan and the African countries closer to each other and that the Ambassador to Mauritius who is known as the best friend of Pakistan was also among the attendees.

He said that in the changed circumstances, Pakistan's envoys have to work with missionary zeal and devotion for the economic betterment of the country and bringing the countries closer to each other and strengthening business relations especially in the promotion of Pakistan exports and tourism potential.

SECP initiates consultation to revamp Mutual & Pension Fund regimes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) on Monday published a consultation paper, suggesting various alterations to the total expense regime (TER) and distribution paradigm for mutual funds and pension funds.

These suggestions aim to reduce the burden on retail investors, optimize their returns, inculcate better saving habits, and increase retail penetration, said a news release.

The consultation paper is made available on SECP's website to solicit public feedback and comments from stakeholders.

The paper reviews the current regime in three parts including the TER

framework for mutual funds, the TER of pension funds, and a review of distribution models.

While evaluating the current TER frameworks for mutual and pension funds, the paper suggests alterations to reduce the financial burden on investors, enhance their long-term returns, and guarantee equity and transparency in the expenses of fund managers.

The problems that have impeded the growth of the distribution network and affected retail penetration are discussed in the third part of the paper. Further, it recommends a transformative framework to revamp the distribution model and improve its usability and accessibility for average investors.

Zong launches 'Doorstep Delivery'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, the leading telecommunication service provider in Pakistan, on Monday announced the launch of its new 'Online Booking Portal and Home Delivery Service'.

Zong is committed to making digital services accessible to all Pakistanis by offering affordable and convenient solutions.

The company's focus on affordability ensures that everyone can benefit from the power of technology, while its commitment to convenience brings services directly to the doorstep, said a news release.

According to the official spokesperson for Zong 4G, "Keeping the evolving demands of our customers, Zong's new Online Booking Portal and Home Delivery Service innovates the customers experience.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan.

Shares rise as Pakistan Stock Exchange awaits monetary policy decision

KARACHI (INP): The share prices at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) rose by over 700 points on Monday as the buyers kept their eyes on the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) monetary policy announcement due later today.

As the business was set into motion in the first session, the stocks soared by 768.61 points or 0.98 percent, taking the benchmark KSE-100 index to 78,798.11 points as

compared to previous close of 78,029.50.

Experts were of the view that the market was reacting positively to a string of factors including monetary policy decision and support by China.

On the last trading day on Friday, the stock market had failed to protect the psychological level of 80,000 points, closing the week in the red at slightly above 78,000 with a sharp drop of nearly 2,100 points.

The bourse began the last week on a highly bearish note as it nosedived over 1,600 points owing to high political uncertainty following the government's potential move to ban a major opposition party.

Bulls returned to the stock exchange on Tuesday as the KSE-100 climbed over 400 points. On Wednesday, the market extended gains, driven by a rally during the earnings season and hopes of policy rate reduction.

Minister, WB team discuss green tourism

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora held a significant meeting on Monday with a World Bank team at his camp office.

The meeting was attended by Kiran Fazal Butt, representing the World Bank, along with the team from the Tourism for Economic Growth Project while Secretary of Human Rights Ali Bahadur, deputy secretary minorities, PS Syed Sajjad

Imran Haider, and other relevant persons were also present.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the topics of minority religious tourism and green tourism. Furthermore, a five-year strategic plan was also discussed.

Provincial Minister Ramesh Singh Arora said that Pakistan's cultural and religious heritage holds a unique position worldwide and that it should be thoroughly promoted.

Finance Minister lauds PM's Youth Programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Monday appreciated Prime Minister's Youth Programme, recognizing it as a valuable scheme for supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

During a meeting with the Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, the minister expressed support for the initiative, highlighting its role in stimulating entrepreneurial activity and contributing to economic growth.

Earlier Rana Mashhood provided an overview of the

Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme. The scheme promotes entrepreneurship among youth by providing business loans on simple terms and with less markup through Commercial, Islamic and SME banks.

The discussion covered the current structure of the scheme, including its three operational tiers, and explored the potential benefits and logistics of introducing additional tiers. They underscored the government's commitment to enhancing opportunities for the youth and promoting sustainable business development across the country.



KARACHI: Brokers are busy in trading at Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) in Karachi.

FPCCI seeks industry status for packaging sector

LAHORE (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Regional Chairman and Vice President Zaki Aijaz on Monday demanded of the government to grant industry status to the packaging sector and revise the contracts of Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

He said revisiting and renegotiating these capacity payment agreements with the IPPs could solve the problem of high power tariffs, which was a major impediment to economic growth. He expressed these views while addressing the members of All Pakistan Corrugated Cartons

Manufacturers Association (APCCMA) here at FPCCI Regional Office.

Zaki Aijaz emphasized that the packaging sector is the backbone of all industries, and the government should grant it industry status to reap maximum benefits.

Zaki Aijaz stressed that packaging is a significant sector where products inevitably reach local and international consumers. This industry is the backbone of our business, but regrettably, this sector has not yet been given industry status.

The packaging industry is the world economy's third-largest and fifth-largest industry in Asia.

KP assembly passes Provincial Ombudsman (Amendment) Bill 2024

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly on Monday passed the Provincial Ombudsman (Amendment) Bill 2024 while Khyber KP Zakat and Ushr (Amendment) Bill 2024, the Provincial Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2024, and the KP Police (Amendment) Bill 2024 were introduced in the house.

Assembly Secretariat Employees Terms and Conditions of Service Bill 2024 was also presented. The passage of the Provincial Ombudsman (Amendment) Bill aims to enhance accountability in the province. The bill, introduced by Law Minister Aftab Alam, passed with a majority vote. It stipulates that the Ombudsman will serve a three-year term, with a maximum age limit of 60 years, and will have the authority to address

corruption complaints from citizens.

The KP Zakat and Ushr (Amendment) Bill 2024 facilitates the collection of Ushr from landowners, lessees, or occupants. The Assembly Secretariat Employees Terms and Conditions of Service Bill 2024 was referred to the Select Committee, chaired by Law Minister Aftab Alam, with the Deputy Speaker and Advocate General as members.

The government proposed amendments to the Police Act 2017, including changes in the recruitment process for Assistant Sub-Inspectors and increasing the quota for police martyrs' families from 5% to 12.5%.

The Assembly also adopted several resolutions. PPP Parliamentary Leader Ahmad Kundi highlighted the deteriorating law and order situation.

Investigation into Janikhel incident referred to KP Standing Committee

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly has referred the investigation into the Jani Khel incident, in which four people were killed, to the Standing Committee.

The Assembly session, presided over by Speaker Babar Saleem Swati, began with a delay of two and a half hours.

During the session, MPA Adnan Khan of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) party questioned the Home Department about the 2021 incident in Jani Khel, Bannu, where four bodies were found.

He inquired about the actions taken since the agreement made with the then-Chief Minister but received an unsatisfactory response from the department.

Adnan Khan demanded that the matter

be referred to the Standing Committee, citing the government's lack of concrete steps to address the issue. Law Minister Aftab Alam clarified that the agreement was made with the district administration, not the Chief Minister, and a package was announced for the affected families.

Provincial Minister for Public Health mentioned that talks with the affected families were planned and a package would be announced soon. Adnan Khan persisted in his request for the matter to be referred to the Standing Committee.

Speaker Babar Saleem Swati emphasized the importance of addressing the security concerns of lawmakers and suggested forming a committee to tackle these issues.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi presides over the 4th senate meeting of the University of Agriculture D.I.Khan at Governor House.

Chairs 18th Senate meeting of Gomal University Governor stresses for improvement in quality of education, finance

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday chaired the 18th Senate meeting of Gomal University Dera Ismail Khan here at Governor House and stressed the administration of the varsity to bring improvement in quality of education and in finance.

During the meeting, the annual budgets for the fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 were conditionally approved, subject to a re-evaluation by the Senate's standing committee.

Governor Faisal

Karim Kundi on this occasion issued directives to all universities to conduct a third-party audit within six months.

He advised Gomal University to complete its third-party audit process within two months instead of one and to inform the Chancellor's Office in writing.

The Governor also directed for details regarding the university's solarization plan.

An allocation of 80 million rupees has been set aside for this purpose, with 40 million rupees provided by the Higher

Education Commission (HEC) and the remaining amount to be covered by the university's own resources, briefed the Governor.

"A total of 480 million rupees is required for the complete solarization of the university," the Governor emphasized the need to make every effort to secure the necessary funds and mentioned discussions with State Life Insurance to develop a scheme for universities.

He urged Gomal University administration

to provide the required information promptly to facilitate the process and set an example for other institutions.

He said that technical issues were noted in the budget preparation, and the committee will review the transparency of the statistics. Governor Faisal Kundi stressed that the university should contribute regularly to its pension fund, noting a current need of 1.7 billion rupees solely for pension payments. He expressed the desire for universities to become self-reliant and increase their resources.

IGP releases Rs2m for medical treatment

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr Usman Anwar on Monday released over Rs2 million for providing medical facilities to police employees in Lahore as well as other districts.

According to the details provided by the IGP office, Constable Shifa Ullah Khan from DG Khan was granted Rs500,000 for knee and leg surgery; Office Superintendent Muhammad Shafiq Anwar Rs500,000.

Court adjourns hearing of Punjab Assembly illegal recruitment case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-corruption court on Monday adjourned the hearing of the Punjab Assembly illegal recruitment case until September 4 and gave a final opportunity to former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi to submit an exemption application, stating that his client had not recovered from a fracture yet and that doctors had advised him to rest. He pleaded with the court to exempt Parvez Elahi from personal appearance for one day.

after being brought from jail.

The other accused who were on bail also appeared and marked their attendance. A counsel on behalf of Chaudhry Parvez Elahi submitted an exemption application, stating that his client had not recovered from a fracture yet and that doctors had advised him to rest. He pleaded with the court to exempt Parvez Elahi from personal appearance for one day.

Intense rains, RCB personnel put on high alert

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Cantonment Board has put its filed personnel on high alert after the city has witnessed intense rain with gusty winds on Monday. Since the MET Office has predicted more rain during the current monsoon spell in Punjab province, the RCB's filed teams have been tasked to be vigilantly prepared to respond with full magnitude. Rawalpindi Cantonment Board's CEO Syed Ali Irfan Rizvi had issued instructions to all the officers to stay in the field in this regard.

British High Commissioner, Governor discuss climate change, bilateral issues

Independent Report
LAHORE: The British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott called on Governor of Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan and discussed ways to strengthening bilateral relations and tackling challenges of climate change during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Monday.

Governor Sardar Saleem Haider said Pakistan attaches great importance to relations with Britain, adding that the British government's cooperation in education, health, social and other sector is commendable.

He said climate change is a global issue, stressing despite having minimum contribution in carbon emissions climate, Pakistan has suffered a lot due to climate change. He said that climate change is

also having adverse effect on the agricultural sector of the country.

Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said federal and provincial governments are working on various projects to deal with the issue of climate change. He said Pakistan has plenty of renewable energy resources. He said that there is a need to bring people towards solar energy to deal with the energy crisis. The Governor informed the British High Commissioner about the efforts to solarize the Governor House Lahore and universities of Punjab.

He hailed the British government for the water management program started in different districts of Punjab.

British High Commissioner Jane Marriott, speaking on the occasion.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Human Rights Association hold protest outside PPC.

US Deputy Chief Mission appreciates formation of Youth Assembly

MULTAN (APP): US Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Schofer appreciated the formation of Youth Assembly at Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture Multan and stated that youth were future of Pakistan and it could play role in promotion of civic, social justice and gender equality.

He said this while addressing ceremony of Youth Assembly, held

under auspices of "HumAhang" at local hotel on Monday. The US deputy chief of mission also lauded the active role of the varsity.

He hoped that youth assembly would surely play its role for professional success by shaping minds of the students. He also pledged that US would continue to support such initiatives.

Andrew Schofer stated that he was first time visiting Multan.

International News

Western powers, UN warn Tel Aviv against escalation

Monitoring Desk
MAJDAL SHAMS: While Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant on Sunday vowed to "hit the enemy hard", raising fears that the Gaza conflict will spread after a rocket attack on Golan Heights, the European Union as well as Lebanon called for an independent probe into what happened.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the Western powers, including the US, Britain France and Germany condemned the attack and appealed for calm, as Iran warned Israel any new military "adventures" in Lebanon could lead to "unforeseen consequences".

Israel's army called it "the deadliest attack on Israeli civilians" since October 2023 and blamed Lebanon's Hezbollah movement for firing the rocket but the Iran-backed group that has targeted Israeli military positions in the past in response to illeg

gal occupation of territory and unabated strikes on Palestinians said it had "no connection" to the latest incident.

The rocket hit Majdal Shams, whose population are Arabic-speaking Druze. Many residents of the Druze town have not accepted Israeli nationality since Israel seized the Golan Heights from Syria in 1967.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who returned early from the US and went immediately into a security cabinet meeting, said: "Hezbollah will pay a heavy price" for the attack, "a price it has not paid before". Earlier, Netanyahu had told the US Congress that Israel would do "whatever it must" to secure its northern border.

Blaming Hezbollah for "crossing all red lines", Israel said it hit Hezbollah targets "both deep inside Lebanese territory and in southern Lebanon". Syria denounced

Israel's "false accusations" against Hezbollah and said Israel was looking for "pretexts to enlarge its aggression". Also, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani warned Israel "any ignorant action of the Zionist regime can lead to the broadening of the scope of instability, insecurity and war in the region" and Israel would be then responsible for "the unforeseen consequences and reactions to such stupid behaviour".

In a statement on X, Lebanon's Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib on Sunday called for an "international investigation or a meeting of the tripartite committee held through UNIFIL to know the truth" about who was responsible for the attack and "called for the complete and comprehensive application" of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 that ended a 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah.

Hungary's Orban says Russia stands to gain as 'irrational' West loses power

Monitoring Desk
BUDAPEST: Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said on Saturday Russia's leadership was "hyper rational" and that Ukraine would never be able to fulfil its hopes of becoming a member of the European Union or NATO.

Orban, a nationalist in power since 2010, made the comments during a speech in which he forecast a shift in global power away from the "irrational" West towards Asia and Russia.

"In the next long decades, maybe centuries, Asia will be the dominant centre of the world," Orban said, mentioning China, India, Pakistan and Indonesia as the world's future big powers.

"And we Westerners pushed the Russians into

this bloc as well," he said in the televised speech before ethnic Hungarians at a festival in the town of Baile Tusnad in neighbouring Romania.

Orban, whose country currently holds the rotating EU presidency, has sharply differed from the rest of the bloc by seeking warmer ties with Beijing and Moscow, and he angered some EU leaders when he went on surprise visits to Kyiv, Moscow and Beijing this month for talks on the war in Ukraine.

He said that in contrast to the "weakness" of the West, Russia's position in world affairs was rational and predictable, saying the country had shown economic flexibility in adapting to Western sanctions since it invaded Crimea in 2014.

No one has full picture of airport assault, says Manchester mayor

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: New footage has surfaced showing the alleged assault of three police officers at Manchester airport, followed by an officer kicking a man in the head. The chaotic scenes, captured in the video obtained by the Manchester Evening News, depict an officer kicking and stamping on the head of a man lying face down on the floor. A Greater Manchester Police (GMP) officer was suspended after the video was widely shared on social media, sparking protests in Rochdale and Manchester city centre. The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) announced that the officer is now under criminal investigation for assault. The next steps involve determining whether to refer the case to the Crown Prosecution Service and deciding if the officer should face disciplinary proceedings.



TOKYO: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa address a press conference.

Five killed in Israeli strike on Gaza camp

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: The civil defence agency in Hamas-run Gaza said an Israeli strike Sunday hit tents at a declared safe zone in the Palestinian territory's south, killing at least five people.

A witness said a newborn was among the dead in Al-Mawasi near Khan Yunis city, where tens of thousands of displaced Palestinians have sought refuge from the war, now nearing its 11th month. Since Monday, Israeli forces have operated in and around Khan Yunis including in parts of the coastal area of Al-Mawasi.

Miriam al-Astal who lives in Al-Mawasi said a newborn baby was killed. "We were sitting in the tents... when suddenly we heard an explosion," she said. "I swear" there was no militant activity in the area, she said.

Israel had warned on Monday its forces would "forcefully operate" in the Khan Yunis area — from which troops withdrew in April — and on Saturday the civil defence agency said that 170 people have been killed by the renewed fighting and military operations. The military said its latest operations there were to prevent rocket fire.

French minister says foreign involvement not ruled out in rail sabotage

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: France's interior minister said on Saturday he could not rule out foreign involvement in an attack that sabotaged signal stations and cables on the country's high-speed rail network, causing travel chaos on the opening day of the Olympic Games.

Friday's pre-dawn attacks damaged infrastructure along the lines connecting Paris with cities such as Lille in the

north, Bordeaux in the west and Strasbourg in the east. Another attack on the Paris-Marseille line was foiled, SNCF has said.

There has been no immediate claim of responsibility.

"Who is responsible? Either it's from within, or it's been ordered from abroad, it's too early to say," Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin told France 2 television.

Iran's Khamenei grants Pezeshkian presidential powers

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gave on Sunday his official endorsement of Dr Masoud Pezeshkian as the country's ninth president, following snap elections won by the reformist camp's candidate.

In a message read by the director of Khamenei's office, the supreme leader said: "I endorse the vote (for) the wise, honest, popular and scholarly Mr Pezeshkian, and I am appointing him as the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Yemenia Airways to resume flights to Cairo and India from Yemen's Sanaa

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Yemenia Airways announced on Sunday that commercial flights from Yemen's Sanaa to Egypt and India will resume starting Sunday evening, Yemen's state news agency SABA said.

US upgrades military command structure in Japan

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: The United States on Sunday announced plans for a major revamp of its military command in Japan to deepen coordination with its ally's forces, as the two countries labelled China the "greatest strategic challenge" facing the region.

The announcement followed security talks in Tokyo between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin and their respective Japanese counterparts, Yoko Kamikawa and Minoru Kihara.

"The United States will upgrade the US Forces Japan to a joint force headquarters with expanded missions and operational responsibilities," Austin told reporters after the so-called "2+2" talks.

"This will be the most significant change to US Forces Japan since its creation and one of the strongest improvements in our military ties with Japan in 70 years," the ministers said in a joint statement that the new command structure would be implemented in parallel with Tokyo's own plans to establish a joint command for its forces by March 2025.

The overhaul is among several measures taken to address what the countries said was an "evolving security environment", noting various threats from superpower China. The statement criticised what it called Beijing's "provocative" behaviour in the South and East China Seas, joint military exercises with Russia and the rapid expansion of its nuclear weapons arsenal. Beijing's "foreign policy seeks to reshape the international order for its own benefit at the expense of others."

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China's foreign minister warns Philippines over US missile deployment

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has warned the Philippines over the U.S. intermediate-range missile deployment, saying such a move could fuel regional tensions and spark an arms race.

The United States deployed its Typhon missile system to the Philippines as part of joint military drills earlier this year. It was not fired during the exercises, a Philippine military official later said, without giving details on how long it would stay in the country. China-Philippines relations are now at a crossroads and dialogue and consultation are the right way, Wang told the Philippine Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo on Friday during a meeting in Vietnam, the capital of Laos where top diplomats of world powers have gathered ahead of two summits. Wang said rela

tions between the countries are facing challenges because the Philippines has "repeatedly violated the consensus of both sides and its own commitments", according to a Chinese foreign ministry statement.

"If the Philippines introduces the U.S. intermediate-range missile system, it will create tension and confrontation in the region and trigger an arms race, which is completely not in line with the interests and wishes of the Filipino people," Wang said. The Philippines' military and its foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Wang's remarks. China and the Philippines are locked in a confrontation in the South China Sea and their encounters have grown more tense as Beijing presses its claims to disputed shoals in waters within Manila's its exclusive economic zone.

President for enhanced BISP outreach, number of beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday underscored the need for enhancing the outreach of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) as well as the number of beneficiaries for the uplift of underprivileged sections of society.

The President expressed these views during a briefing given by the Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Mrs Rubina Khalid, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

He asked the Chairperson of BISP to establish an office at Gwadar so that

the deserving people of the area could benefit from the Programme. Taking note of the 0.45% service charges by the banks from BISP cardholders, the president said that the service charges needed to be waived off, and in this regard, the State Bank of Pakistan should be approached to ask banks for opening accounts for BISP beneficiaries.

He said that the new payment system would also protect BISP beneficiaries from exploitation. He also called for engaging donors and the private sector to support BISP in its endeavours to

provide scholarships to the maximum number of deserving students.

During the briefing, the President was informed about the core initiatives taken by BISP, including the Benazir Kafalat Program, Benazir Taleemi Wazaif Program, BISP Scholarships for Undergraduates Program and Benazir Nashounuma Program. Chairperson BISP informed that Rs 598.718 billion had been allocated for BISP during the ongoing fiscal year. She said that Benazir Kafalat was the flagship program of BISP,



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari being briefed about the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) by Chairperson BISP, Mrs. Rubina Khalid at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Patricia Scotland, Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations in a group photograph during visit to the National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) at NDMA Headquarters.

Robust plan must to showcase Pakistan's resilience-building initiatives at COP29: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam said that all-out efforts would be taken to project Pakistan's climate vulnerability and resilience-building measures in different socio-economic sectors, particularly agriculture, water, energy, health, education and gender.

Chairing the first meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee on the 29th session of the Conference of Parties (COP 29) here on Monday, she urged the meeting participants to come with a concrete plan in close coordination with relevant federal and provincial departments to show-

case Pakistan's resilience-building initiatives being implemented by federal government and provinces.

The meeting focused on preparations for the country's active participation in the upcoming COP29, a UN-led annual global climate summit, which is scheduled to kick off from 11 to 22 November 2024 at Baku, Azerbaijan's capital. "We must come up with a well-thought out plan to showcase the country's resilience-building measures with own resources and highlight the finance, technology and capacity-building needs to strengthen further the country's resilience against myriad climate risks

Naval Chief takes up maritime security during Romania visit

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf paid an official visit to Romania and held a joint meeting with the Chief of Defence Staff of Romania and the Chief of the Romanian Navy.

According to an ISPR statement released on Monday, they discussed issues relating to regional maritime security and stability, bilateral military co-operation and professional matters of mutual interest.

Besides, Admiral Naveed Ashraf also deliv-

Gilani expresses govt's desire to expand bilateral relations with UK

LONDON (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Monday said that Pakistan greatly values its bilateral relations with United Kingdom (UK) and desires to further expand the bilateral relations to new levels for mutual benefit.

The Chairman Senate expressed these views in a meeting here with Speaker of the House of Commons Lindsay Hoyle during his visit to the UK.

The Chairman Senate, along with a delegation of Senators, is visiting UK to explore opportunities for further strengthening bilateral, multilateral and institutional cooperation in diverse sectors.

Chairman Senate was accompanied by Senators Agha Shahzeb Durrani, Faisal Salim Rehman, Ashraf Ali Jatoi and Members of the National Assembly, Syed Abdul Qadir Gilani and Syed Qasim Ali Gilani.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman Senate highlighted the historical and cultural ties that both sides have enjoyed since long and said that the historical bond between the two has paved the way for deepening political, diplomatic, economic ties and people to people contacts.

He further observed that these ties were further strengthened by Pakistani

diaspora, which was acting as a bridge between Pakistan and UK, thus providing solid foundation for a dynamic and prosperous partnership.

He said that our historic legacy, shared values and mutual goodwill were the ingredients for a strong partnership between Pakistan and UK.

The Chairman Senate also acknowledged the significance of broad based parliamentary cooperation and said that Pakistan attached great importance to parliamentary diplomacy.

He said that sharing democratic experiences and learning democratic values was central to Commonwealth, as a family of nations. Both Pakistan and the UK enjoy excellent cooperation at Commonwealth level and Pakistan was playing an active role on this important platform. "As the representatives and voices of our people I believe we have a singular responsibility in acting as bridges between our peoples and institutions of governance", Chairman Senate observed.

The meeting also discussed Enhanced Strategic Dialogue (ESD) between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, which was established in 2011. The ESD serves as the institutional mechanism guiding Pakistan-UK bilateral relations.

It is pertinent to mention that ESD was initiated in 2011 during the tenure of Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The meeting discussed that Enhance Strategic Dialogue may be converted into Enhanced strategic partnership.

The Chairman Senate also highlighted the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). He said that Pakistan valued British MPs role in highlighting human right abuses in IIOJK, in the UK Parliament.

Regarding Gaza, the Chairman Senate said that Pakistan was making all possible efforts through the relevant forums to bring an end to atrocities in Gaza. He also called upon UK to raise its voice against the human rights violations.

During the meeting, the Chairman Senate said that interaction and exchange of views between the parliamentary leadership and the parliamentarians was a significant step towards broadening, deepening, diversifying and augmenting inter parliamentary relations.

He proposed to maintain the momentum of high level visits, and exchange more frequently between the two government, parliaments and peoples.

Islamabad Police ensures safe travel during rain

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Islamabad Police officers are performing their duties in the field regarding cautious driving and road safety during the rains in the federal capital.

The recent spells of intermittent rain continue in Islamabad. Despite the rain and harsh weather, police officers are providing awareness to citizens about road safety and cautious driving during construction work at various locations in the city and provide every possible assistance to ensure the best travel facilities. The citizens praised this initiative of Islamabad Police, stating that Islamabad Police plays a key role in preventing traffic accidents and maintaining an integrated traffic system in the city.

The citizens are urged to follow traffic laws and ensure the safety of their own and others' lives by driving cautiously during the rains.

HEC, PBC collaborate to uplift quality of legal education

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) through its Directorate of Legal Education (DLE) and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Monday to streamline efforts to uplift the standard and quality of legal education in the country. The signing ceremony was attended by the Federal Minister for Law & Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar and Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed.

Members of PBC including Syed Anjad Shah, Hassan Raza Pasha, Haroon Rashid, Director (DLE) Barrister Usama Malik and Director (Admn./Litigation) HEC Tariq Iqbal were also present at the occasion. The MoU was signed by Prof. Dr. Anwar Gilani, Consultant (Quality Assurance) HEC and Barrister Usama Malik. It aims to enhance collaboration to revamp the syllabus and quality of LLB graduates in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Bar Council through its Directorate of Legal Education (DLE) and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The ceremony attended by Minister for Law & Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar and Chairman Higher Education Commission Dr. Mukhtar.

PTA carries crackdown on illegal issuance of SIMs in 5 cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Offices Lahore, Faisalabad and Peshawar have conducted a series of raids against franchisees cellular companies, located in Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Kot Momin, Kohat and Hangu.

The franchisees were reportedly involved in the illegal issuance of SIMs, often associated with criminal activities such as fraud, identity theft, and other illicit operations.

During the raids, the FIA seized 4 laptops, 1 PC, 12 BVS devices, active SIMs, mobile phones, hard disks, original CNICs with photocopies and soft copies of Afghan passports and POR cards. Fifteen persons working for the franchisees were arrested on the spot and FIRs have been registered by the agency, said a news release.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam chairing first meeting of Prime Minister's Committee on COP 29.

Senate Committee on Human Rights meets

ISLAMABAD (APP): Meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, chaired by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, was held at the Parliament Lodges and attended by Senator Muhammad Humayun Mohmand, Senator Poonjo Bheel, Senator Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur, Senator Syed Ali Zafar, Senator Jam Saifullah Khan, the Federal Minister for Law, Justice, and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, the Secretary of the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR), and senior officials from the affiliated Ministry.

The committee members engaged in a comprehensive briefing on the main functions, workings, and institutions of human rights. It was informed that there are seven human rights institutions, namely the National Commission for Human Rights, the National Commission on the Status of Women, the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, the Zamab Alert Response and Recovery Agency, the Child Protection Institute, Islamabad, the Council on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Senior Citizens Council, with the latter four based in Islamabad.

Additionally, the meeting included a briefing on social welfare centers and development projects planned for the year 2024-25. The committee members inquired about the legal process for women in jail. The Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, explained that the National Commission has a mandate different from legal aid, which is not their responsibility. Legal aid is available for deserving candidates who apply for it. A district committee, headed by a designated official, ensures prisoners are kept in a reasonable environment as per jail mandates and forwards their reports to the government.

While briefing on major achievements, Senator Tarar informed the members about the launch of the AWAZ app for reporting human rights violations on Android. This app is linked to the Prime Minister's office and is available for 18 hours a day, making it convenient for citizens. MoHR officials also reported on the monitoring of human rights violation cases, the National Action Plan for Human Rights, and the awareness activities, training sessions, and workshops conducted by MoHR.

ICT admin cracks down on dengue violators: arrests 4, seals 3 outlets

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a determined effort to combat the spread of dengue, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has intensified operations, resulting in the arrest of four individuals and the closure of three businesses for violations of standard operating procedures (SoPs) set by the government.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the authority has ramped up their anti-dengue campaign, with significant actions taken in Sector F-7.

The Assistant Com-

missioner (AC) City led an operation that resulted in the arrest of four individuals.

These arrests were made due to continuous violations of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) designed to curb the spread of dengue.

Three business outlets were also shut down for failing to implement the required anti-dengue measures. These closures are part of a broader effort to ensure compliance with health regulations aimed at preventing the breeding of dengue-carrying mosquitoes.



ISLAMABAD: Police personals stands alert and checking vehicles at police check post on Srinagar Highway due to security high alert in the Federal Capital.

NHMP launches Radio FM 95 in 3 major cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of National Highway and Motorway Police (NHMP) Salman Chaudhry on Monday announced launch of Radio FM 95 transmission in three major cities including Nowshera, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sargodha Punjab and Jamshoro for Sindh.

According to him, the initiative was a significant milestone in promoting road safety education among commuters on national highways.

He said since its inception, Radio FM 95 has been broadcasting informative and engaging content, including road safety tips.

IESCO for adopting precautionary measures in rainy season

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has advised power consumers to adopt precautionary measures during the rainy season as little negligence can cause fatal incidents.

"As the incessant rains continue in the entire IESCO's Regions, the risk of electrical accidents becomes more prominent," IESCO Chief Director Operation Muhammad Aslam Khan told here Monday.

The IESCO requested esteemed customers to take necessary precautions to ensure their safety during rainfall and keep proper and safe distance from electrical installations like transformers, electric wires, poles and meters during the rain. Never touch electrical appliances with wet hands when your body is wet.

He said to prevent personal and property damage from short circuits, ensure old and faulty wiring is repaired. Do not keep electrical appliances on standby position, avoid ironing clothes barefoot, use rope instead of metal wire to hang clothes, and do not use metal wires for drying clothes, he said.

He said that never touch broken electrical wires and never tie animals to electric poles or under transformers.

Additionally, line staff must adhere to all safety equipment and precautionary measures during their work.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Chairperson Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament Lodges.

CDA, EOBI collaborate on mega commercial projects in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) have agreed to collaborate on mega commercial projects in Islamabad.

The partnership aims to enhance revenue generation and contribute to the city's development.

During a meeting between CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa and EOBI Chairman Khaqan Murtaza, on Monday, various commercial initiatives and projects were discussed.

EOBI chairman expressed keen interest in investing in these projects, recognizing their potential for substantial returns.

Chairman CDA said the collaboration will explore new avenues for investment and development within Islamabad, with CDA sharing a basket of projects with EOBI for future collaboration. This strategic partnership marks a pivotal step towards enhancing the infrastructure and economic landscape of Islamabad, reflecting a shared commitment to progress and prosperity.

22 outlaws held, narcotics, weapons with ammunition recovered

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police apprehended 22 outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours beside recovering narcotics and weapons from their possession.

A public relations officer on Monday said that in response to the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Islamabad Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directions, the Aabpara police team arrested two accused namely Arain Zafar and Umer Hussain and recovered 600 gram hashish and one 30 bore pistol from their possession. The Secretariat police team arrested an accused namely Ikram and recovered one dagger from his possession.

Likewise, the Margalla police team arrested two accused namely Arshad Mehmood and Iram Shahzad and recovered two 30 bore pistols from their possession. The Sumbal police team arrested an accused namely Kashif and recovered one 30 bore pistol from his possession.

Similarly, the Shams Colony police team arrested two accused namely Waris and Tahir Mehmood and recovered one 30 bore pistol and one dagger from their possession. The Industrial Area police team arrested an accused namely Waseem and recovered two 30 bore pistols from their possession. Moreover, the Khanna police team arrested an accused namely Muhammad Babar and recovered 1000 gram heroin from his possession. The Kirpa police team arrested two accused namely Saqlain and Hassan Irshad involved in illegally filling gas cylinders.