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COAS chairs 265th Corps Commanders' Conference Military leadership rejects unwarranted criticism on Operation Azm-e-Istehkam

Operation aimed at harnessing counter-terrorism efforts for enduring economic prosperity, says ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Corps Commanders' Conference has reiterated to continue full support of ongoing efforts in uplifting the socioeconomic growth and wholeheartedly assisting the government in curbing all illegal activities which hamper investors' confidence, economic stability and growth.

Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir presided over 265th Corps Commanders' Conference in Rawalpindi today.

The forum paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of Shuhadas of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies and the citizens who have laid their lives for peace and stability in the country.

The forum undertook a comprehensive review of

internal and external security situation of the country and had detailed discussion on various aspects of Azm-e-Istehkam, which is aimed at harnessing the national counter terrorism efforts in a synchronized manner to dismantle the nexus of terrorism and illegal spectrum in the country for enduring stability and economic prosperity.

It was noted with concern the unwarranted criticism by some quarters and deliberate misrepresentation of the vision, only for furthering their vested interests.

The forum also deliberated upon regional security situation, especially Afghanistan and reaffirmed its commitment to regional peace and security.

It expressed solidarity

with the people of Kashmir and Palestine. Forum condemned serious human rights violations, war crimes and genocide being perpetrated in Kashmir and Gaza.

The forum affirmed that military leadership is cognizant of the full spectrum of the challenges and resolved to shoulder its constitutionally mandated responsibilities with support of the resilient people of Pakistan. It underscored that onslaught of politically motivated digital terrorism, unleashed by conspirators, duly abetted by their foreign cohorts against state institutions is meant to induce despondency in the nation and sow discord through peddling of blatant lies, fake news and propaganda.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir presiding over 265th Corps Commanders' Conference.

CM keen to launch Keenjhar expansion plan to store more water for Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah during a meeting with a World Bank delegation led by its Country Director Najy Benhassine, discussed the need to increase the storage capacity of Keenjhar Lake to manage the ever-increasing water demand of Karachi.

According to the CM, Keenjhar Lake is crucial for providing drinking water to Karachi and its surrounding areas. The proposed project includes improving the KB Feeder Lower Canal System, extending Keenjhar Lake, and developing social and environmental plans.

The World Bank has expressed support for the project, which is estimated to cost around \$300 million. Additionally, the Pre-feasibility of modernisation of right bank canals of Sukkur Barrage was carried out under the Sindh Water Sector Improvement Project (WSIP), and detailed feasibility would be carried out under the ongoing Sindh

Water and Agriculture Transformation Project (SWAT) at an estimated cost of \$200 million.

Sindh Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro briefed the meeting about the Keenjhar Lake expansion and KB Feeder improvement projects. The CM and World Bank team discussed a 10-year engagement strategy called Country Partnership Framework (CPF) 2025-34 to achieve five different goals. The goals include reduced child stunting, reduced learning poverty, more resilience to climate change, decarbonization of the economy and more inclusive job opportunities.

The objective of initiating Reduced Child Stunting is to improve access to basic health, diversified nutrition and family planning services. The other objective is to improve access to clean water, sanitation services and hygiene.

Reduced learning poverty: Under this project access to quality schools and foundational learning would

be improved. Minister Education Sardar Shah said that the education dept was working to increase equitable access to quality early childhood education (ECE), and primary and secondary education to promote social cohesion and to provide greater opportunities for learning, participation and 21st-century skills to marginalized groups, particularly girls and women.

The CM said that education dept was also working to improve the quality of learning outcomes by strengthening the teaching/learning process through innovations.

Resilience to climate change: Under the plan the agriculture sector would be made more resilient to water scarcity and drought. The project would also increase resilience to floods and disasters. The decarbonisation of the economy aims to provide access to cleaner and more sustainable energy while reducing air pollution from sources such as transportation and industry.

PPP to present its stance in APC on combating terror in country, says Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

Chairman PPP emphasizes need for developing consensus on national issues terming it crucial for continuity of democratic process and stability of country; huge potential needed to be explored in mineral enriched province

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chairman Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had stated that People's Party delegation will participate in the APC, presenting their stance in the All Parties Conference called by Prime Minister for establishing peace in the country and Operation Azm-e-Istehkam.

"PPP is in favour of reaching a consensus on all matters pertaining to the country, including fighting terrorism, since we have our own policy and a strong commitment to eliminating terrorism from the country. The APC will provide an opportunity for all political parties to express their opinions," he said while addressing a press conference at CM Secretariat, Quetta on Friday.

The Chief Minister

Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, PPP Balochistan President Changez Jamali, PPP MNA Ejaz Jhokrani, provincial ministers and other party leaders were accompanied the PPP Chairman.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was on two-day visit to Balochistan wherein he was briefed about the pace of ongoing uplift schemes, proposed development projects for Balochistan.

He also held detailed deliberations with the provincial leadership and workers of the party.

The PPP Chairman while addressing news conference emphasized the need for developing consensus on the national issues terming it crucial for continuity of the democratic process and stability of the country.



QUETTA: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti addressing a press conference at CM House.

PM's visit to Central Asian states achieves a major milestone: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar Friday said that the government had achieved a milestone with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent official visit to Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, especially on diplomatic and economic fronts.

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his delegation received a splendid reception during his visits to the Central Asian states," the minister said while addressing a news conference.

The Pakistani ports were the mainstay of the discussions of the prime minister with the top officials of the Central Asian states that were landlocked

countries and had a keen interest in increasing partnership with Pakistan, he said.

The land and railway routes also came under discussion to promote bilateral trade between them, he added. For giving a boost to Pakistan's bilateral trade with the two Central Asian states, the provision of facilities to the business community was also discussed during the meetings, he noted.

Tarar said PM Shehbaz Sharif's meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Kazakhstan was held in a welcoming and friendly environment.



Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme, and Major General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman, Chairman PTA, during a meeting at PTA Headquarters Islamabad to discuss measures for safeguarding BISP beneficiaries.

Massive increase in inflation after budget 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (INP): The first week of the new fiscal year 2024-25 after the budget brought a surge in inflation, with a 1.28 percent increase in the weekly inflation rate.

As per the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) weekly report, the overall annual inflation rate has reached 23.59 percent.

The PBS's report showed that prices of 29 essential items increased in the past week, while prices of five essential items remained stable and 17 items saw a decrease in prices.

As per the report, to-

mato prices soar by 70.77 percent in the last week, with the average price per kilogram exceeding Rs 200.

The PBS's weekly report read that flour prices increased by 10.57 percent, powdered milk by 8.90 percent, diesel by 3.58 percent, petrol by 2.88 percent, and LPG by 1.63 percent.

The prices of chicken, pulses, and garlic also increased in the last week while onion and potato prices decreased by 9.05 percent and 1.04 percent respectively.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah in a meeting with a delegation of World Bank led by its Country Director Najy Benhassine held at CM House in Karachi.

Cabinet body approves 6 months' extension in Refinery Policy 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Cabinet Committee on Energy, which met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Friday, approved the extension of six months in the Refinery Policy 2023 regarding the upgradation of the existing refineries.

The committee directed the Ministry of Petroleum to take into confidence the oil refineries established in the country and prepare a comprehensive plan for their upgradation on a priority basis. The committee was also presented with a detailed report on the circular debt of the power sector from July 2023 to May 2024.

The report stated that the volume of the power sector's circular debt was Rs 2,655 billion till May 2024. The committee also

approved the Standardized Security Package Document under the Power Policy 2015 for small water projects of the private sector. This initiative is aimed at promoting private investment in the electricity sector and quickly resolving the tariff and other issues.

The prime minister decided to resolve complaints regarding the electricity supply of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan.

He constituted a committee to prepare a plan of action to ensure the uninterrupted supply of electricity in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The committee also approved setting up a support unit with two-year tenure to increase the efficiency of electricity distribution companies, prevent electricity theft and timely collection of bills.

President, PM greet Keir Starmer on victory in UK election

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday congratulated Labour Party leader Keir Starmer on his victory in the parliamentary election in the United Kingdom.

The president wrote on his X timeline that Pakistan looked forward to working with the new UK government to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday felicitated Sir Keir Starmer on the landslide victory of his Labour Party in the general elections of the United Kingdom.

The prime minister, in a post on his X account, said he looked forward to working closely with the new UK government.

Defense Minister welcomes PTI's decision to join APC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Friday welcomed the decision of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to join the All Parties Conference (APC).

Speaking to a private news channel, he noted that the government had extended invitations to PTI for talks in the past, and this offer remains open.

Asif highlighted that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) supreme Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had always kept the doors of negotiations open, demonstrating political insight.

Two killed, 5 injured in Mardan blast

MARDAN (APP): Two persons were killed and five others sustained injuries in a bomb blast near Jalala Bridge in the Takht Bhai tehsil of Mardan on Friday.

District Police Officer (DPO), Zahoob Babar Afridi told the media that two people were killed and five others injured, including a police officer, woman and child.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Energy in Islamabad.

Sindh Govt decides to establish 300 model schools

KARACHI (APP): Sindh government has decided to establish 300 model schools across the region with a view to modernize the traditional education system in the province.

The decision was made during the first meeting of the Advisory Board of Model School Support Unit, chaired by Sindh Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah, said a statement on Friday.

The meeting aimed to discuss measures for quality improvement and modernization of the education system.

The minister emphasized the need for a modern management system and announced plans to establish model schools in each taluka, with two schools for boys and girls in each area.

The selection process for the schools is expected to be completed by July 25, with the model schools

program set to launch in the next academic year. The selected schools will be provided with modern facilities, including sports grounds, libraries, science and IT labs.

Sardar Shah stressed the importance of public-private partnerships and community involvement in running the model schools.

The goal is to create an exemplary education system that can be replicated in other schools, ultimately transforming the traditional education system in Sindh.

Interviews for the appointment of principals for the selected model schools will be conducted by July 20.

Secretary School Education Sindh Zahid Ali Abbasi, STEDA Chairman Syed Rasool Bakhs Shah, and other advisory board members attended the meeting.



KARACHI: A fuel station seen Closed in Provincial Capital. Owners of petrol pumps across the country strike against 0.5% turnover tax imposed in the federal budget 2024-25.



LAHORE: Activists of Pakistan Central Muslim League hold a protest against inflation in Pakistan, outside press club in the Provincial Capital.

Karachi faces fuel shortage amid PPDA strike

KARACHI (INP): Karachi is facing fuel shortage as the stock of petroleum products has run out due to the strike of the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association. As per details, the fuel stations in Karachi and across Pakistan were shut-down on the call of the PPDA from 6 AM today.

According to sources, the supply of petroleum products from Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and other oil marketing companies' terminals is ongoing.

Meanwhile, the Oil Tanker Owners Association has distanced itself from

the petroleum dealers' strike. Railways, airports, power plants are being supplied fuel, said Oil Tanker Owners Association President Shams Shahwani.

On Thursday, Pakistan State Oil (PSO) announced that the supply of petroleum products will be ensured across the country.

PSO confirmed that its supply chain is fully operational, guaranteeing that petrol pumps would remain stocked despite the strike.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Trade cooperation

At their meeting on the side-lines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation-Plus summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to improve bilateral trade ties. They discussed the issues impeding financial and banking connectivity for easing bilateral trade flows as Mr Sharif called for reviving and expanding trade under a barter system. Mr Putin responded positively, saying that ties between Moscow and Islamabad had recovered in recent years due to improvement in trade linkages. He was hopeful that both Russia and Pakistan would enhance their energy and agriculture cooperation.

Mr Sharif also used his visit to renew calls for strengthening Pakistan's trade and economic cooperation with the Central Asian states, asking their leaders to establish road and rail connectivity and offering them transit rights through this country to trade with the rest of the world via the Karachi port. Speaking at the inaugural session of the trilateral summit of Pakistan, Türkiye and Azerbaijan, he proposed tripartite institutional mechanisms to strengthen commercial ties. He also mentioned plans to host a regional connectivity summit to provide trade corridors to Central Asia. While rail and road connectivity with Central Asia is a long shot, Mr Sharif's meetings with regional leaders indicate his desire to end Pakistan's growing trade isolation by integrating the national economy with that of other countries in the region. That Pakistan remains the least integrated economy regionally, in spite of its geographical advantage and potential to become what Mr Sharif calls an "ideal trade conduit" in the region speaks volumes about our policymakers' "trade isolationist" mindset.

In fact, Islamabad is not part of any effective regional trading bloc. The two regional economic blocs Pakistan is a part of — the Economic Cooperation Organisation and the South Asian Free Trade Area — have been dormant since their formation. While other members of these blocs have significantly boosted economic cooperation, our share of trade with ECO and the South Asian nations is negligible. Out of the four countries Pakistan has borders with, it is only with China with which we have significant trading linkages. With the other three — India, Iran and Afghanistan, our trade position is dismal.

Several factors have impeded Pakistan's economic integration within the region but political and territorial disputes with neighbouring countries, imagined and real security concerns, a narrow band of exportable products, and reliance on the West for both trade and aid are among the main reasons for our continued economic isolation. Trading blocs have helped their respective member states become competitive and have contributed greatly to their economic development. Will Mr Sharif be able to translate his dream of integrating Pakistan within the region by liberalising trade cooperation with South and Central Asia? That remains to be seen.

Islamic social justice

Ghulam Shabbir

With the rare exception of India and China on its eastern peripheries the 'heart of the earth', ie, Rome and Persia, was riddled with wars and was profusely bleeding. Conditions in Europe were also far from satisfactory when, to suture the world social fabric, Islam emerged onto the scene of history in Arabia.

Human history had come full circle. Judaism and Christianity were either addressing human problems on a limited basis or igniting sectarian wars, while old tribal sanctions were fast losing their sheen, and hence were unable to address the malaise. The times were fraught with tragedy when, in the words of Shah Waliullah, Islam appeared as a moral necessity for destroying the corrupt socioeconomic structures of Persia and Byzantium to build anew.

Amidst profound chaos, a man disenchanted with the human plight would occasionally go to a cave in Hira to get respite from the tragedy around him in the excessively mercantile Makkah — a city of stark socioeconomic disparities, which had relegated the disenfranchised segments of society to a diminutive existence. Then, a window opened from the ghayb (Unseen) which brought new life into this desert city, and indeed far beyond its environs. The entire Quran dawned on the heart of the Prophet (PBUH) and settled right and wrong with wisdom from God.

The religious experience of the Prophet emerged as a symbiosis of monotheism and socioeconomic justice. So lucid and vivid was Hazrat Muhammad's first address to his community that the religio-political and mercantile

elites took it as a warning. Pointing to the socioeconomic thrust of his message, H.A.R Gibb writes that the darker side to the prosperity of Makkah, ie socioeconomic inequality, was one of the deep inner causes of the Holy Prophet's unease, which instead of turning into a movement for social revolution, was transformed into a religious movement under the impact of a vivid and immediate experience of a unique God.

Gibb's remark reflects the West's obsession with the so-called duality of spiritual and material, which he pasted onto Islam. Otherwise, to the Quran, from the very beginning monotheism and social justice organically include each other; the rejection of one implies the negation of the other. This was what became the moral social order demonstrated by the first monotheism-based 'republic' of Madinah.

Later, dictatorship, orthodoxy and Sufi-theosophy challenged the purpose of Islam as a social proposition and focused more on ritualism in religion, substituting its collectivism and snatching its moral initiative. Social justice is neither a one-off principle nor does it have Judaic-Christian or Muslim traits; it is directly proportional to the intellectual, scientific, and moral cognition of man as an ever-developing phenomenon. The 19th-century reformer Jamaluddin Afghani also arrived at the same conclusion that socioeconomic reforms, instead of materialistic metaphysics or the mediaeval idea of religion, should be based on monotheistic principles. He propelled into action an illustrious class of intellectuals who produced a vast literature on Islamic social justice, but

on the realm of policy goals and directives this initiative fell prey to Marxism. There was an attempt to graft communist policies onto religion. Thus, Islamic socialism co-evolved with communism, its fate tied up with its surrogate mother — Marxism — and with the fall of Soviet Russia, Islamic socialism turned out to be a damp squib.

The pristine Islam planted socioeconomic egalitarianism in the fertile soil of monotheism, which proved to be a seedbed of socioeconomic equality and human egalitarianism, while communism sowed economic egalitarianism in the barren soil of materialism, and soon withered away. In the Pakistani context, Iqbal inspired by Afghani's thought dreamed of a land free of the master-slave relationship; Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan committed allegiance to Islamic socialism and Z.A. Bhutto swept to power on the tide of Islamic socialism. History depicts the clergy and secular elite as Siamese twins indulged in a cut-throat war, but on removal of the thin veneer of hypocrisy both are found to be bedfellows. On this plane, Iqbal rejected orthodoxy and termed secularism positively harmful for mankind.

Deep down, the orthodoxy's 'minimal' Islam accepts secularism. Modernism and its spin-offs have rendered our planet unliveable for the lowly, hence the golden 'best community' of the Quran is duty-bound to formulate Islam as a social proposition of socioeconomic justice and translate it into reality to prove that Islam can best resolve the socioeconomic and political crises of man. -- Courtesy Dawn

Patrons vs people

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

On Feb 8, a significant number of Pakistan's people, mostly the young, threw out the selectors' script and cast their vote for the PTI. Most knew that their mandate would not be respected, but chose to rebel against the establishment and its hangers-on anyway.

The vote-as-rebellion not only targeted our self-proclaimed 'holy guardians' but also put paid to a large number of seasoned politicians known as 'electables'. These historically powerful influentials may possess large amounts of agricultural land, real estate, industry or other economic capital. Their repeated appearances as MNAs and MPAs reflect deep entrenchment in daily life, especially as mediators between working people and everyday state institutions like the thana, katcheri and patawari.

By voting against these entrenched patrons, many young people demonstrated that politics can transcend the drudgery of life, and can, instead, be informed by ideological commitments. One need not agree with the premise that Imran Khan is a saviour or that the PTI is a genuinely anti-establishment force to recognise that those who made this choice on Feb 8 voted for an idea over entrenched forms of patronage.

One election does not signify an overhaul of our patronage-based order, nor does it displace the establishment that heads the political food chain. But it is important to consider how the vote-as-rebellion might be a stepping stone towards something more substantial. If there is to be a pathway out of the rapid downward spiral of state and society, we should recognise the historical

roots of our predicament.

Today's patronage-based system was institutionalised during Zia's dictatorship. Prior to the 1977 coup, mainstream politics here — like much of the world — was largely organised along ideological lines. The political left espoused socialism, anti-imperialism and ethnic-national claims, while the political right projected an Islamist ideology. The left was winning until Zia banned organised politics, student and trade unions, and reintroduced patronage as the name of the political game. I have previously called this the 'politics of common sense'.

By sponsoring religious ideology and fusing it with a cynical form of patronage, Zia set the stage for mainstream political parties to become mere agglomerations of first-past-the-post constituency-level politicians who were more interested in sustaining themselves as patrons and less in debating ideas and policy.

This 'politics of common sense' was reinforced in the global arena by the neoliberal offensive, spearheaded by IFIs and Wall Street investors. So if local-level politics was reduced to thana, katcheri and patawari, with an 'Islamic touch', government policy was largely determined by IMF conditionalities on the one hand, and discretionary funds to MNAs and MPAs to facilitate private accumulation on the other.

The predominant exception to this 'politics of common sense', largely facilitated by the deep state, was the militant right-wing. Entities like the local Taliban and TLP are symbiotically linked to parliamentary Islamists, and thus patronage with an 'Islamic touch' survives. Ethnonationalists and an emaciated left have contin-

ued to keep their flags flying but the local and global political economy has remained stifling.

Imran Khan and PTI emerged on the political scene claiming to be opposed to the established order. But in 2013 and 2018, the PTI acquired governmental power largely by mobilising entrenched electables. During this period, the party and its leader were also on the 'same page' as the establishment.

When relations soured after April 2022, many electables jumped ship. The party faced repression. But demographic change — two-thirds of Pakistanis are very young — and the PTI's unmatched social media reach meant that its wider support base was not seriously eroded. And on Feb 8, a number of young people came out to defy the 'politics of common sense'.

What happens from hereon is undetermined. Feb 8 only showed us that ordinary Pakistanis can swim against the pro-establishment tide. Remember that young people in the Baloch and other ethnic peripheries have been swimming against this tide for long. Left-progressives have also been challenging the IMF's neoliberal dictates and various forms of class power. A genuinely anti-establishment and ideological politics cannot simply be based on the adulation of messiah-like figures. It must articulate a genuine political and economic alternative to the status quo. It certainly cannot be based on a slightly modified version of state ideology in which religion is used as a political weapon against the oppressed. A new ideological politics demands a new common sense that unites Pakistan's youthful majority around the principle of collective liberation. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Aleem for promoting mutual trade, communication links with South & Central Asian countries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan Friday said that South and Central Asian countries must promote mutual trade and communication links by developing all three means of air, rail and road connectivity and transportation.

Prompt and quick actions were needed in that regard for promoting the mutual trade and

communication across the region, the minister said while talking to Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin, who called on him, according to a press release.

He said, "Pakistan wants to promote bilateral trade and business activities with all the Central Asian states and in this context special incentives are being offered for investment."

The minister apprised

ambassador regarding his visit of Tajikistan in the last week of May.

The Kazakh ambassador invited the minister to participate in the Trade and Logistics Forum, which would be held in Aktau, Kazakhstan, on July 19-20. Twelve major countries of Central and South Asia are participating in the forum.

He also handed over this invitation on behalf of Kazakh Minister for Transport Marat Krabov and

expressed his gratitude for offering by the Government of Pakistan to promote bilateral trade relations.

The ambassador said his country was keenly interested in investing in Pakistan and practical progress would be made soon in that regard.

He emphasized that road connectivity and communications were very much necessary to increase the bilateral links between the two countries.



QUETTA: A delegation of Quetta Chamber of Commerce led by Senator Bilal Khan Mandokhail meeting with Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Provincial Ministers are also present.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the delegation of Pakistan Tax Bar Association.

Predatory IPPs contracts should be declared null & void: Saquib Fayyaz

Independent Report
KARACHI: Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has said that federal government should cancel all agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs); and procure electricity for the national grid from cheaper and cost-effective sources — without any strings vis-à-vis capacity charges.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, informed that exorbitant and unbearable electricity tariffs have led to

widespread industrial closures and massive job losses. There is an installed generation capacity of over 40,000 MW; while peak demand and transmission capacity is merely 25,000 MW — resulting in a significant excess and utilized generation capacity, he added.

Acting FPCCI Chief apprised that PKR. 2 trillion capacity payments to 40 companies are paralyzing the national economy; and, IPPs continue to receive payments in the name of capacity charges even in the instances when there is no electricity.

Pak rupee gains 12 paise against \$US in interbank trading

ISLAMABAD (INP): In interbank trading on Friday, the Pakistan rupee gained by 12 paise against the previous day's closing of Rs278.49 and closed at Rs 278.37.

However, as per Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market was recorded as Rs 277.75 and Rs 280.50 respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 60 paise to close at Rs 301.43 against the last day's closing of Rs 300.83.

A digital corridor helping Pakistani young entrepreneurs

BEIJING (APP): Chinese e-commerce companies are helping Pakistani young entrepreneurs to expand their businesses across the country.

"Our platform could be said to be the Pakistani version of Pinduoduo. As an e-commerce platform targeting price-sensitive users, groceries and daily necessities are within our scope," Fahad Raja, co-founder of Pakistani e-commerce platform Deal

Kart, introduced himself at the EuroAsia Pakistan Digital Economy Forum held in Beijing.

"As a global giant, Pinduoduo has not yet started operations in Pakistan. But that's not a problem, we are building a Pinduoduo for ourselves."

Raja said that Chinese companies, especially e-commerce companies, are closely related to his career, CEN reported.

Twin cities to benefit from SNGPL's gas pressure improvement initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has undertaken significant projects aimed at improving gas pressure in Rawalpindi and the Federal Capital, especially during the winter season.

In Islamabad, SNGPL has commissioned a new 24-inch diameter gas pipeline along Srinagar Highway to enhance gas pressure.

Spokesman for SNGPL, shared that the new pipeline spans 11 kilometers and was completed within six months. This project is one of the largest capacity-building initiatives executed by the gas distribution company in Islamabad.

He expressed optimism that this pipeline would resolve the low gas pressure issues faced by residents of Islamabad.

Electricity system in Pakistan is rusty: Awais Laghari

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Energy Awais Ahmad Khan Laghari on Friday told the Upper House that entire electricity system in Pakistan was rusty which needs complete overhauling.

Responding to calling attention notice of Senator Falak Naz about excessive and un-announced load shedding of electricity in Upper and Lower Chitral

causing problems for the residents of these areas, the minister said that the complete system would restore in two weeks time.

He said Golan Gol Hydro power project produces 108 megawatt electricity but due to some technical issue it stopped power generation.

The other option to restore electricity was to provide electricity from national grid through

PESCO but the line constructed and managed by WAPDA was also faulted which caused problem however the teams are working on war footings for complete restoration of electricity in Chitral, he said. He also apologized over the inefficiency of employees and said that unless the entire system would not be overhauled, there would be no change in the system.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships, X-Press Altair, San Francisco Bridge, MSC Positano, Bitumen Kosei, FSM and Achilles-S scheduled to load/offload Container, Bitumen, LPG and Mogas, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile two more ships, IVS Kestrel carrying Steel coil and Palm oil also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

Swedish envoy praises thriving business environment for Swedish companies in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan, Henrik Parson admired the flourishing business environment for Swedish companies in Pakistan. In a significant diplomatic meeting, the Swedish envoy commended the robust cooperation and support extended to Swedish companies operating in Pakistan, said a press release issued here Friday.

During his call on Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, Ambassador Parson highlighted the positive experiences of Swedish businesses in the country, noting their impressive growth and profitability.

"I have personally met with all Swedish companies currently active in Pakistan to gather their insights," Ambassador Parson stated.

"Remarkably, none of them had anything negative to say. On the contrary, they all reported significant growth and profitability. This is a testament to the conducive business environment in Pakistan."

Members NY State Assembly, US Pakistani Public Affairs Committee call on CM KP

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of the members of New York State Assembly and American Pakistani Public Affairs Committee, led by Deputy Speaker Phil Ramos, called on Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in Islamabad the other day. Provincial ministers Syed Qasim Ali Shah, Faisal Khan Tarakai, Muzammil Aslam, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Additional Chief Secretary Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah and other concerned high ups of the provincial government were also present on the occasion. Matters related to promoting state to state relationships between the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and

New York State came under discussion. Similarly, prospects for mutual cooperation in the different social sectors were also discussed in the meeting. Both sides agreed to sign Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for partnership in Health, Education, Trade, Human Resource and other important sectors. It was also agreed on the occasion to initiate Nursing Exchange and Tele Health programs with the mutual cooperation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and New York State.

Talking to the delegates, the chief minister said that the provincial government had always welcomed and appreciated

the support of US government in the different public welfare projects, adding that expending cooperation between both the governments would further strengthen the relationships between Pakistan and the United States.

Touching upon the priorities of his government, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur said that the health and education had been the top most priority of PTI government in the province since day one, and we had introduced multiple reforms in these sectors, which had resulted in significant improvement in providing quality healthcare and learning facilities to the people as per their expectations.

KP Govt decides to streamline development process in oil, gas producing districts

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided to further improve the production bonus guidelines issued for the better use of revenues in the districts with oil and gas production capacity and to involve the district administrations of the respective districts in the consultation process. The working has been started on forming committees for the purpose of using the income from oil and gas reserves discovered in Dera Ismail

Khan and North Waziristan in the development process in the respective districts so that the population related to the natural resources of oil and gas can be maximum benefited. In this regard, in the light of the instructions issued by Chief Minister, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Energy and Power department organized a one-day consultation seminar at a local hotel here Friday regarding the improvement of the guidelines of production bonus funds in the districts with oil and gas.

KP Governor condemns Takhtbhai explosion

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi here Friday condemned explosion near Jalala bridge Takhtbhai in Mardan district and expressed sorrow over loss of two lives in the blast. The Governor expressed sympathy with the families of the bereaved families. He prayed for highest place of the victims in eternal peace and speedy recovery of the injured. The Governor said that he equally shared the grief and sorrow through which the victims families were passing through.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique presides over the briefing session of Cooperatives Department. MNA Armaghan Subhani is also present.



LAHORE: A delegation of Shia Ulema Council meeting with Provincial Minister for Health and Chairman Cabinet Committee for Law and order Khawaja Salman Rafique.

Punjab health minister calls for unity during Muharramul Haram

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Health and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order Khawaja Salman Rafique emphasised the role of scholars in fostering unity among Muslims during Muharram-ul-Haram. He conveyed the message during a meeting with a delegation from the Shia Ulema Council on Friday.

The discussions centered on security measures for the upcoming Muharram. Saad Rafique assured that the government planned comprehensive security

arrangements for Majalis, processions, saabel, niaz, and azadari. He highlighted a special security plan and stated that police forces were instructed to implement fool-proof security measures throughout the province. The minister also stressed the importance of proactive involvement of peace committees to maintain harmony.

The Shia Ulema Council's delegation, including Qasim Ali Qasmi, Sagheer Abbas Virk, and Safdar Hussain Jafri, acknowledged the robustness of the security plans.

Crackdown against corrupt officers ongoing in Punjab Food dept

LAHORE (APP): A crackdown against corrupt officers is ongoing as per the direction of Punjab Food Secretary Moazzam Iqbal Sipra. According to official sources here on Friday, legal action has been taken against two more officers of the Punjab Food department. One year service of Principal Assistant Deputy Director Food Rawalpindi (Stenographer) has been confiscated while promotion of Assistant Food Controller Rawalpindi has been stopped for three years.

Both officers were found facilitating in wheat and flour smuggling besides helping hoarders and profiteers. Punjab Food Secretary Moazzam Iqbal Sipra said that zero tolerance is being implemented against black sheep in the department. He said that hindrances in providing relief to common man would be removed.

Two bodies found from Faisalabad

FAISALABAD (APP): The bodies of two people including a sexagenarian man were found from different areas in Faisalabad during the past 12 hours. A police spokesman said here on Friday that some passersby spotted the body of a 60-year-old man lying in the waiting area of Allied Hospital-I.

KP Governor visits NVTTC, highlight significance of market oriented training to youth

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi has said that steps would be taken for empowerment of women and youth and to train them according to demands of contemporary market. He said this during his visit to National Vocational Technical Training Commission (NVTTC) on Friday. On the occasion, KP Governor was also briefed by Chairperson of NVTTC, Gulmina Bilal and Executive Director, Muhammad Amir about working of the commission. KP Governor termed Pakistani workers serving outside the country as ambassadors and said that

they played a significant role in sending foreign exchange. He said that majority of laborers working in gulf countries belong to Pakistan and added that they can earn a better livelihood in native areas if provided training modern technologies.

Faisal Karim said that youth and women would also be provided trainings in field of mining, tourism and gemstone sector enabling them to explore opportunities in Central Asian States. Governor also urged authorities in NVTTC to develop a liaison with universities and educational institutions to train youth in modern and diversified fields.



BAHAWALPUR: Activists of Pakistan People's Party hold a banner during protest on the eve of black day on 5th July, outside press club in the city.

931 Traffic Wardens to regulate traffic during Muharram

RAWALPINDI (APP): Over 931 Traffic Wardens under the supervision of inspectors and DSPs would perform duties on city roads to control traffic flow during Muharram.

According to a City Traffic Officer (CTO), Rawalpindi Tamoor Khan, Traffic Police Officers, and Wardens have also been directed to take action against vehicles having tinted glasses, revolving lights, unregistered vehicles and

motorcycles and others moving without proper and fake number plates. In order to ensure the security of the mourning processions during Muharram-ul-Haram, the City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi has issued a comprehensive traffic plan. According to the plan, there would be a complete ban on parking any vehicle or pushcart on the route of the procession. Fork lifters would move with Muharram processions.

International News

Newly elected UK PM Keir Starmer says Britain must rediscover its identity

Monitoring Desk LONDON: Newly elected UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Friday said Britain needed to rediscover its identity and undergo a wider reset, in his first words outside his new office at 10 Downing Street, promising to fight to restore trust in politics and serve all voters.

Greeted in Downing Street by a large crowd of cheering aides and supporters after formally accepting King Charles's invitation to become prime minister, Starmer's first address made the case for moderate politics to repair voters' broken trust.

"It is surely clear to everyone that our country needs a bigger reset, a rediscovery of who we are, because no matter how fierce the storms of history, one of the greatest strengths of this nation has always been our ability to navigate a way to calmer waters," he

said. "This depends upon politicians, particularly those who stand for stability and moderation, as I do." He added: "My government will fight every day until you believe again. From now on, you have a government unburdened by doctrine, guided only by the determination to serve your interest. To defy those quietly those who have written our country off."

"You have given us a clear mandate. And we will use it to deliver change." King Charles III earlier officially appointed Starmer as prime minister during an audience at Buckingham Palace.

A photograph released by the palace showed the monarch shaking hands with Starmer, whose party won a landslide election victory. The king earlier accepted the resignation of Conservative leader Rishi Sunak.

"The king received in

Audience The Right Honourable Sir Keir Starmer MP today and requested him to form a new administration," a palace statement read.

"Sir Keir accepted his majesty's offer and kissed hands upon his appointment as prime minister and first lord of the Treasury."

Starmer vowed to bring change to Britain as its next prime minister after his Labour Party surged to a comprehensive win in a parliamentary election, ending 14 years of often tumultuous Conservative government.

The centre-left Labour was set to win a massive majority in the 650-seat parliament with Sunak's Conservatives poised to suffer the worst performance in the party's long history as voters punished them for a cost of living crisis, failing public services, and a series of scandals.



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer speaks, at Number 10 Downing Street, following the results of the election, in London, Britain.

India, China agree to work on border issues

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: Indian Foreign Minister S u b r a h m a n y a m Jaishankar met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Thursday in Kazakhstan where the two agreed to step up talks to resolve issues along their border, New Delhi said in a statement.

India and China share a long Himalayan border, much of it poorly demarcated, and bilateral ties have been sour since a military standoff in July 2020 when at least 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese troops were killed. India said Jaishankar met Wang on the sidelines

of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Astana where they agreed that "prolongation of the current situation in the border areas is not in the interest of either side."

The two agreed to enhance meetings between their diplomatic and military officials "to resolve the remaining issues at the earliest," the Indian foreign ministry said in a statement. China and India should properly handle their differences and ensure relations advance on a stable track, a Chinese foreign ministry statement quoted Wang as saying during the talks.

Six Chinese nationals killed in DR Congo attack

Monitoring Desk BENI: Militia fighters attacked a Chinese-linked mining site in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo on Wednesday, killing six Chinese nationals and at least two Congolese soldiers, local officials said. China condemned the attack, which took place in Djugu territory, in the gold-rich Ituri province.

Djugu administrator Rughin Mapela said it was carried out by the CODECO (Cooperative for the Development of the Congo) militia.

British teacher jailed for 'abusing' schoolboys

Monitoring Desk LONDON: A British teacher who had sex with two teenage students and had a baby with one of them was sentenced on Thursday to six and a half years in jail. Rebecca Joynes, 30, was on police bail for sexual activity with one victim, identified as Boy A, when she began having sex with the second, Boy B, by whom she became pregnant. Sentencing Joynes, a judge said she had been a "high achiever" who had thrown her career away and had her baby taken away from her.

Struggling Biden faces big test with ABC interview, vows to fight on

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden, scrambling to defuse a political crisis over his shaky debate performance, will participate in a television interview on Friday that will be closely watched for signs of whether his mental acuity is failing.

Biden will travel to Madison, Wisconsin, to rally Democratic voters. During the trip he will be interviewed by ABC News, part of a flurry of events over the next week aimed

at showing Americans he still has the stamina to run against Republican candidate Donald Trump in the November 5 election.

While Biden insists he is staying in the race and that his health is not faltering, he is under enormous pressure to step aside and open a path for 59-year-old Vice President Kamala Harris.

Some donors are making their displeasure known loudly, halting funding or looking at possible Democratic alternatives.

Hezbollah rains 200 rockets on Israeli military sites

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Lebanon's Hezbollah launched a big rocket and drone attack at Israel on Thursday and threatened to hit new targets in retaliation for the killing of a top commander, in the latest surge of violence in the steadily worsening conflict across the border.

Sparked by the Gaza war, the conflict between Iran-backed Hezbollah and Israel has been gradually intensifying for months, raising fears of a full-scale war, which both sides have indicated they want to avoid and diplomats are working to prevent.

As the latest violence played out in areas at or near the frontier — in keeping with the pattern of the last nine months — the sound of sonic booms rattled nerves for the second successive day in Beirut and other parts of Lebanon.

Israeli jets broke the sound barrier over several areas of the country, Lebanon's National News Agency reported.

Hezbollah said it launched more than 200 rockets and a swarm of

drones at 10 Israeli military sites in retaliation for Israel's killing of Hezbollah commander Mohammed Nasser in the south on Wednesday. Nasser is one of the most senior Hezbollah commanders to be killed by Israel during the conflict. The Israeli military said around "200 projectiles and over 20 suspicious aerial targets were identified crossing from Lebanon into Israeli territory", a number of which were intercepted by Israeli air defences and fighter jets.

Senior Hezbollah official Hashem Safieddine, speaking at an event in Beirut commemorating Nasser, indicated his group would widen its targeting.

"The series of responses continues in succession, and this series will continue to target new sites that the enemy did not imagine would be hit," Safieddine said. Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said on Wednesday Israeli forces were hitting Hezbollah "very hard every day" and will be ready to take any action necessary against the group, though the preference is to reach a negotiated arrangement.

Rishi Sunak resigns after historic loss in UK elections

Monitoring Desk LONDON: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak departed from Buckingham Palace following his resignation as prime minister Friday morning, after the Conservative Party suffered staggering losses in the general election.

He left 10 Downing Street after giving his final speech as prime minister, hours suffering a landslide defeat by the left-of-center Labour Party, which will form a government for the first time in 14 years.

Rishi Sunak said he would step aside as Conservative leader once arrangements were made to select his successor, as the

party sought to rebuild. Earlier, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak conceded defeat in the national election, saying the opposition Labour Party had won.

"The Labour Party has won this general election and I have called Sir Keir Starmer to congratulate him on his victory," Sunak said after winning his parliamentary seat in northern England.

"Today, power will change hands in a peaceful and orderly manner, with goodwill on all sides. That is something that should give us all confidence in our country's stability and future."

CM Murad orders strengthening provisional narcotics wing to control drug menace

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh government has decided to further strengthen the Excise & Narcotics Control Department in order to protect the new generation, especially children, from the dangers of drugs. This decision was made during a meeting chaired by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at the CM House.

Senior Minister for Information and Excise & Narcotics, Sharjeel Memon, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary of Excise & Taxation Saleem Rajput, DG Narcotics Control Usman Siddiqui, and others attended the meeting.

Minister Excise & Narcotics Sharjeel Memon briefing the CM said that

he has controlled drug peddling in Hyderabad and has taken strict measures in Karachi to stop its penetration in educational institutions and even in the slum areas.

At this, the CM said that the penetration of synthetic drugs into educational institutions was a serious threat to our children. "I want to stop it once and for all for which the police, ANF and Excise & Narcotics dept would have to work together," he said.

The senior minister announced the establishment of Excise & Narcotics check posts in the bordering areas of Sindh with other provinces. He mentioned that the Excise & Narcotics check-post at Hub, which was abolished

in 2007, would be revived to control drug smuggling into Sindh.

In response to a question, the CM stated that the Excise & Narcotics Control department has 47 police stations including six in Karachi, 11 in Hyderabad, eight in Sukkur, 10 in Larkana, five in Mirpurkhas, and seven in Shaheed Benazirabad.

It was disclosed the department has also check-posts, three each in Karachi and Larkana, two each in Hyderabad, Sukkur and Shaheed Benazirabad divisions. Murad Ali Shah directed the Minister of Excise & Narcotics to further strengthen Narcotic police with necessary equipment, vehicles and gadgets so that they work at full capacity.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Digitization and Reforms of FBR.

Senate told NADRA to cover over 11,000 UCs across Pak for data registration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Parliamentary Services and Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Friday apprised the Upper House of the Parliament that the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) would cover almost 11,777 union councils (UCs) across the country to enhance its population data registration footprint at the grassroots level.

The Minister was responding to the question of Senator Fawia Arshad during the second meeting of the 340th session of the Senate.

Senator Tarar said the

NADRA's UC level initiative would be rolled out across the country, whereas initially 1150 UCs have been selected horizontally starting from the mega urban centers of the country covering every nook and corner and it would not be restricted to the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

He added that there was a total of 11,777 UCs in the country and within 2.5 years small NADRA Centers would be established providing three main facilities of child registration certificate (CRC) - Form B, Cancellation of NIC due to death (CD), and NIC reprint or lost.

PM pays glowing tribute to Capt Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has paid glowing tributes to Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed on his 25th martyrdom anniversary.

In a statement Friday, he said Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed demonstrated unprecedented bravery, courage and bravery on the Kargil front, which was also praised by the enemy.

He said Sher Khan Shaheed set an example of loyalty to the motherland, sense of duty and fighting for the defense of the motherland without caring for his life, which will always be remembered.

Karachi woman killed, daughter wounded in police cross fire

KARACHI (INP): A 60-year-old woman was mistakenly shot dead and her 19-year-old daughter was critically wounded on National Highway near Gulshan-i-Hadeed in Karachi.

The incident occurred when a police received a tip off about the presence of suspected criminals in a white corolla car.

The police immediately chased the suspect leading to an exchange of gunfire between the officers and the suspects.

The family in the private car tragically became victim to one of the gunshots. The mother was identified as Sara Ibrahim and was pronounced dead on the spot.

Police comb guest houses, localities in Tandojam

HYDERABAD (APP): The Hyderabad police carried out a search operation as part of the security measures for the upcoming month of Muharram-ul-Haram in Tandojam area.

The police spokesman Awais Rajput informed on Friday that the police searched all the hotels and guest houses in the area besides strictly directing management of those places to update the police on a regular basis about the visitors and guests.

Three die in Karachi mishaps

KARACHI (INP): Three including a child died in separate mishaps in different localities of the metropolis on Friday.

According to details, an over speeding dumper knocked down a motorcycle carrying two people near Ayesha Manzil, Karachi.

Both bike riders died on the spot in the accident and bodies were shifted to hospital for postmortem and identification.

A child identified as Jamal died after he fell down the stairs of home near Ibrahim Hyderi in Korangi.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting of Excise, Taxation and Narcotic Control Department held at CM House in Karachi.

Delegations of Lawyers Forum & traders meet Bilawal: Chairman PPP directs CM to solve issues of Balochistan lawyers, traders on priority

Directs to establish mechanism for direct solution to labourers' problems

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has directed to the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti to resolve the issues of lawyers and traders communities of the province on priority basis.

These directives were issued by the Chairman PPP during meetings with the representatives and leaders of Peoples Lawyers Forum and Balochistan's traders' community separately here at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Friday.

The Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, senior leader of PPP, Ejaz Jakhani, Provincial President of PPP, Changez Jamali, provincial ministers and members of assembly belonging to the party besides other leaders were also present in the meetings.

During meeting with the delegation of Peoples Lawyers Forum, the Chairman PPP was informed about the issues being faced by the lawyers' community of the province.

The Chairman PPP directed to the Chief Minister to resolve the issues of lawyers on priority basis. The Lawyers Forum was comprised President

Digitisation of taxation system, Govt priority to prevent evasion of billions: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, calling the digitisation of taxation system government's priority to prevent tax evasion worth billions of rupees, on Friday directed the authorities concerned to immediately create a dashboard to monitor the ongoing digitisation and implementation of the reforms.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to review the reforms process of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), instructed to bring the taxable non-filers into the tax net and revoke the discretionary powers of the customs appraisers, and sought an implementation report from FBR chairman within 24 hours.

During the briefing on FBR's digitisation, the meeting was informed that during the FBR digitisation, 4.5 million taxable individuals have been identified who were not part of the tax net.

It was told that consequent to the government's

measures, over 300,000 more individuals have filed their tax returns within few weeks.

Besides, the refunds of 4,000 companies have been stopped during last two weeks, following the detection of under-invoicing and forged sales tax returns.

The prime minister said that the tax evaders as well as the officers and staffs facilitating them would be brought to book and vowed not to spare those plundering the public kitty. Besides, the taxpayers fulfilling their responsibility timely would be acknowledged too, he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that state-of-the-art scanners would be installed at the seaports to ensure transparency and prevent corruption in the system.

He also sought a comprehensive report on the magnitude of tax evasion and the measures for its prevention.



QUETTA: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari giving away keys of scooter to a student who got position in matriculation examination. Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Provincial Minister are also present.

Top 10 position holder students of Matric meet Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

Independent Report
QUETTA: The top 10 position holder students of Secondary School Certificate (SSC)'s annual examinations met the Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Friday.

During the course of meeting, Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari applauded the top three position holder students including Ayesha Ghazwanfar (first), Sadia Tahir Kamran (second) and Syeda Samreen Agha (third).

The Chairman PPP

also appreciated other position holder students Attaullah, Yasmin Bibi, Fatima Mehboob, Qayamuddin, Zubaida Bibi, Atiqa Niaz, Sanaullah, Atiqa Khan, Khansa Kakar, Asfandyar Khan, Karishma Devi and Mubashar Ahmed.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also interacted with the students and talked about their achievement in the examinations. He also asked about their future academic plans.

Meanwhile, the Chairman PPP distributed electric bikes among the position holder students.

Attaullah Tarar says: Newspapers received advertisements of Rs 9 bln as compared to news channels

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar on Friday said the newspapers of the country had received the maximum advertisements of Rs 9 billion whereas the new channels were given Rs 6 billion advertisements.

Responding to the question of Senator Sarmad Ali Khan pertaining to criteria for news channels and newspapers during the question hour session of the second meeting of the 340th session of the Senate of Pakistan, the Minister informed that the newspapers were facing financial crisis due to which the current government paid special attention to it.

Attaullah Tarar said at present as per the 1997 Services Manual, advertisements were given to the news and media outlets. He added that a policy for advertisement was introduced in 2021 which was amended in 2022.

"There is no criteria to gauge electronic media's eligibility for getting advertisements."

ATC cancels arrest warrants of KP CM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has cancelled arrest warrants of KP Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur for not appearing in the court due to his official engagements.

The petition seeking suspension of arrest warrants of Ali Amin Gandapur CM KP issued in respect of a case registered against him in police station I-9 came up for hearing in ATC Islamabad Friday.

Ali Amin Gandapur while surrendering before court said he could not appear in the court due to official engagements.

During the hearing of the case KP CM requested the court to cancel the arrest warrants.

SC to hear appeal against restoration of Hafiz's CNIC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan would take up the appeal on July 10, filed by National Database Regulatory Authority (NADRA) against restoration of CNIC of Jamiat Ulema e Islam (JUI-F)'s leader Hafiz Hamdullah.

A two-member bench, led by Justice Munib Akhtar, would hear the case on the fixed date. The registrar office has issued the cause list in this regard.

It may be mentioned that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had dismissed the decision of NADRA and ordered to restore the CNIC of Hafiz Hamdullah.

The authority has challenged the verdict of IHC before the SC.

SSGC cuts off Pakistan Steel Mills' gas connection

KARACHI (INP): Over the issue of non-payment of bills and gas theft, Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) has severed the gas connection to Pakistan Steel Mills on Friday.

According to the spokesperson for SSGC, a notice regarding the disconnection was issued, but Pakistan Steel did not respond.

The SSGC spokesperson added that the Ministry of Energy did not respond to the company.

The spokesperson said Pakistan Steel had previously informed the company through a letter about the ECC's decision to stop paying gas bills, adding that the Ministry of Industries and Production sent this notice.

The company had requested Pakistan Steel clarify their payment position, but no explanation has been received from Pakistan Steel so far, the spokesperson said, adding that the SSGC also wrote to the Ministry of Energy about the issue, but no response has been received yet.

Pakistan, Algeria to explore new avenues for partnership in trade, education

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Friday extended heartfelt felicitations to the Council of the Nation and the people of Algeria on the auspicious occasion of their Independence Day.

In his message, he acknowledged the valiant struggle and sacrifices rendered by the people of Algeria to attain freedom and sovereignty.

He admired the bond of friendship between Pakistan and Algeria, which is

based on mutual respect and shared aspirations for peace and progress.

He said that both countries enjoy cordial relations at the international level and have supported each other in various international forums.

Expressing optimism for the future, he said that Pakistan and Algeria would continue to work together to diversify cooperation and explore new avenues for partnership in trade, education, technology, and cultural exchanges.



HYDERABAD: Members of Human Rights Youth Organization are holding protest demonstration against prolong electricity load shedding and high inflated electricity bills, at Hyderabad press club.

SEPCO conducts operation against electricity thieves, seized 4 transfers, more than hundred thieves arrested

LARKANA (APP): Under the leadership of SEPCO Circle Larkana Superintendent Engineer Shah Muhammad Bajkani, along with SEPCO staff and police force conducted an operation on Friday, against electricity thieves in the city's Rehmatpura area and seized 2 transformers of two ice factories and arrested 6 workers. SEPCO's superintendent engineer has suspended the line Superintendent Irshad Ahmed and started an investigation.

In this regard, SEPCO Circle Larkana Superintendent Engineer Shah Muhammad Bajkani told a

press person together with ASP City Asher that in connection with the ongoing campaign against electricity thieves, the owners of two ice factories in Rahmatpur police station area using electricity illegally by hiding electricity transformers. 6 workers were arrested and 2 transformers were confiscated.

He said that the accused tried to get a connection to the ice factory in the name of a woman, which was rejected.

The theft in the ice factory was causing a loss of Rs. 35 lakh per month. The departmental inquiry has started.



KARACHI: Police officials and Rangers carried out the combing search operation against criminals as security has been tightened in city in connection of Muharram-ul-Haram coming ahead, at Korangi Alfalah in Karachi.

Commissioner Sukkur for strong coordination with religious scholars for peaceful Muharram

SUKKUR (APP): Commissioner Sukkur division Fayaz Hussain Abbasi said that the month of Muharram-ul-Haram was a sacred month, during which scholars from all schools of thought should play their role in maintaining harmony and address the challenges that were arising with utmost seriousness. He emphasized that the lack of communication often leads to the escalation of issues, and therefore, it is essential to ensure timely and effective communication to prevent such problems.

Chairing a high level meeting at his office here Friday to review arrangements for the upcoming Muharram-ul-Haram in the division the Commissioner directed the Police and law enforcement agencies to implement comprehensive security measures across the division during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram and to maintain a high level of vigilance to prevent any potential disturbances and ensure the maintenance of peace and public order.

He further directed the senior management of SEPCO and SSGC to maintain uninterrupted power and gas supply during the month of Muharram, he also directed the municipal authorities to ensure the provision of essential services, including sanitation, cleaning of drainage, street lighting and heatstroke relief camps to facilitate the peaceful observance of the sacred month. On this occasion, DIG Sukkur Pir Muhammad Shah emphasized the need for unity and harmony among all stakeholders during the month of Muharram.



KARACHI: Activists of Markazi Muslim League (PMML) are holding protest demonstration against price hike of petroleum products, prolong electricity load shedding and high inflated electricity bills, in Karachi.

PIC orders HEC to finalize actions on scholarship misuse

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) has ordered the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to expedite and finalize actions against the misuse of scholarships and the breach of public trust.

The order comes in response to an appeal filed by citizen Azmat Khan, highlighting the need for immediate governance measures.

The appellant has sought list of scholars who went abroad on HEC scholarships over the past decade. Specifically, the list should include details of scholars from 01-01-2013

to 31-12-2023, distinguishing between those pursuing M.Phil and PhD programs.

Additionally, the list should identify students who did not return or complete their study programs within the stipulated time period and detail the actions taken against them by the HEC.

In its response to the appeal, HEC cited Section 7(g) of the Right of Access to Information (RTI) Act, 2017, asserting that the sought information is exempt from disclosure as it could potentially lead to the harassment of individuals, particularly female scholars.



KARACHI: Members of Jamshoro Sujag Forum are holding protest demonstration to mark the 5th July 1977 as Black Day, at Karachi press club.

DC chairs meeting regarding Muharam arrangements

HYDERABAD (INP): Deputy Commissioner Tharparkar Abdul Aleem Jagirani presided over a meeting in his office to review arrangements made for Muharam ul Haram.

DC directed officers of relevant departments to maintain law and order situation in the district, ensure health facilities, cleanliness and availability of drinking water during the first 10 days of Muharram ul Haram. DC said that all religions impart lesson of love, cohesion brotherhood and harmony which are essential for building a civilized society.

He directed officers concerned to ensure all ar-

rangements ahead of Muharam ul Haram including cleanliness drive, availability of lights and other arrangements so that people particularly mourners do not feel any inconvenience. He appealed ulema and religious leaders belonging to different sects to show tolerance, cohesion, interfaith harmony and peace during the sacred month and keep a vigilant eye on miscreants and extremists to avert an untoward incident during Ashura days. DSP Tharparkar Waqas Durani apprised the meeting that fool proof security plans have been prepared to maintain law and order situation.