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Israeli presence in occupied Palestinian territory is illegal and must end: ICJ

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: The United Nations' highest court said on Friday that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories and settlements there are illegal and should be withdrawn as soon as possible, in its strongest findings to date on the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

The advisory opinion by judges at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), known as the World Court, was not binding but carries weight under international law and may weaken support for Israel.

"Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the regime associated with them, have been established and are being maintained in violation of international law," President Nawaf Salam

said, reading the findings of a 15-judge panel.

The court said Israel's obligations include paying restitution for harm and "the evacuation of all settlers from existing settlements".

In a swift reaction, Israel's foreign ministry rejected the opinion as "fundamentally wrong" and one-sided, and repeated its stance that a political settlement in the region can only be reached by negotiations.

"The Jewish nation cannot be an occupier in its own land," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

The opinion also angered West Bank settlers as well as politicians such as Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich, whose national-

ist religious party is close to the settler movement and who himself lives in a West Bank settlement.

"The answer to The Hague - Sovereignty now" he said in a post on the social media platform X, in an apparent appeal to formally annex the West Bank.

Israel Gantz, head of the Binyamin Regional Council, one of the largest settler councils, said the ICJ opinion was "contrary to the Bible, morality and international law".

The ICJ opinion also found that the U.N. Security Council, the General Assembly and all states have an obligation not to recognise the occupation as legal nor "render aid or assistance" toward maintaining Israel's presence in the occupied territories.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over the meeting of Irrigation Department at Chief Minister House.

IT courses program being launched for thousands of youngsters: Governor Sindh

HYDERABAD (APP): Sindh Governor Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori on Friday announced an initiative to strengthen the country's economy by providing IT courses to young people of Hyderabad.

He said that the country was currently indebted to the IMF, and strengthening the economy was very crucial. He maintained that after launching the program in Karachi, it has now been extended to Hyderabad, with future plans to introduce it in Sukkur, Mirpurkhas, Larkana and Shaheed Benazirabad.

He expressed these views while talking to the media at Niaz Stadium Hyderabad on the occasion of the entry test organized to conduct IT courses for the youth under the Governor Sindh IT Initiative Program. This initiative aims to equip young people with skills in artificial in-

telligence and other IT fields. The entry test will last for three days and see around 50,000 students participate.

Governor Tessori described the impact of these courses, which will enable young people to get online employment and contribute to the country's economic stability. He mentioned that the IT sector's growth was essential, noting that Pakistan's IT exports were currently low compared to neighboring countries. He added that the cost of IT courses for one student was about six thousand dollars, which will be provided free of cost to the youth of Hyderabad under this program.

He said that after the completion of these IT courses, these young people will be able to improve their economic conditions, these courses were started in Karachi where the young people were earning dollars today. The Govern-

or Sindh maintained that a special quota will be allocated for the families of media persons in this program.

He expressed confidence in the youth's ability to excel in IT and reiterated his commitment to creating opportunities for the public rather than engaging in politics. Tessori stated that under this program about one million children will be able to get training and contribute to the country's development.

He added that we will also distribute free laptops to the children, for which we had talked to the CEO of Dell Pakistan.

The event was attended by various dignitaries, including Head of Selani International Trust Molana Bashir Ahmed Farooqi, Commissioner Hyderabad Bilal Ahmed Memon and other political and social figures, while thousands of students participated in the entry test.

Murad orders solar parks plan for free electricity to low-income consumers

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a meeting, has decided to implement the PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto's program to provide free-of-cost electricity to consumers living off-grid and to those using 50 to 100 MW electricity by implementing the solar energy solution.

This decision was taken in a meeting held at the CM House in which different proposals were discussed. Minister P&D and Energy Nasir Shah, CM Advisor for Cooperative Societies Ahsan Mazari, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary Energy Musadiq Khan, and others attended the meeting.

Off-Grid: The CM was told that there were 2.6 million off-grid households of them 500,000 may be provided Solar Home Systems (SHS) in the first phase. The CM said that a 100-watt SHC was enough for 3 LED bulbs, a 35W DC fan and a 6-hour battery backup with Mobile charging ports. Nasir Shah told the CM that the cost of an SHS comes to around Rs50,000 each and the total cost for 2.6 million SHS would be around 25 billion.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman H.E. Fahad Sulaiman Khalaf Al Kharusi called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM Shehbaz offers Pakistan's support to Oman in dealing with terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday strongly condemned the dastardly terrorist attack on Imam Bargah Ali bin Abu Talib in Wadi Kabir district of Muscat that took place on July 16 and offered Pakistan's support to Oman in elimination of terrorism in all of its forms. The prime minister, talking to Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman Fahad Sulaiman Khalaf Al Kharusi, who paid a courtesy call on him, appreciated Oman's swift response and cooperation with the Pakistan mission in the repatriation of the dead bodies and treatment of the injured.

The attack on Imam Bargah had resulted in the death of six people, including four Pakistani nationals, and over thirty injured, nearly all of whom were Pakistanis.

The prime minister said Pakistan had itself been the victim of terrorism for the past several decades. During the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz conveyed his good wishes for Sultan Haitham bin Tariq while fondly recalling his telephone conversations with the Sultan on Eid ul Adha as well as Eid ul Fitr earlier in the year.

The prime minister reiterated his invitation to the Sultan of Oman to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience. On the bilateral front, the prime minister stressed that Pakistan and Oman enjoyed close, brotherly ties with a shared history, faith, and culture. He expressed Pakistan's desire to further strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two countries, particularly in trade, investment, energy, and defense. In this regard, Prime Minister Shehbaz thanked the ambassador for encouraging a trade and investment delegation to undertake a visit to Pakistan next week, while assuring him that the relevant Pakistani authorities would extend full cooperation to the delegation while seeking mutually beneficial outcomes.

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Pakistan asks Afghan authorities to take action against terrorist groups

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Friday strongly urged the Interim Afghan Government to take immediate, robust and effective action against the perpetrators of the 15 July attack at Bannu Cantonment and to prevent such attacks in the future as such attacks undermined bilateral relations and regional stability.

"We conveyed to the Afghan authorities our serious concern on the terrorist attack at Bannu Cantonment on 15 July 2024 and the continued use of Afghan territory by Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to carry out deadly attacks in Pakistan with impunity," Foreign Office spokesper-

son Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in her weekly press briefing.

She said the Bannu Cantonment attack underscored the urgent need for Afghanistan to take concrete and effective action against terrorist sanctuaries within its borders.

"Despite Pakistan's repeated calls for action, the presence of TTP and other terrorist groups in Afghanistan continues to pose a serious threat to regional peace and security," she said adding "We urge Afghanistan to take effective action against these groups and to ensure that the Afghan territory is not used for terrorism against Pakistan."



HYDERABAD: Governor Sindh, Kamran Tessori talking to media persons during the Aptitude Test Examination ceremony of the IT courses program under the Sindh Governor Initiative held at Niaz Stadium in Hyderabad.

Peoples Bus Service: New routes announced in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh Transport Department has announced to launch of three new routes for the Peoples Bus Service in Karachi.

Sindh Transport Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the new routes for the Peoples Bus Service include Hawksbay to Tower, which will commence operations on July 22, and an extension of Route 12.

From July 23, the Peoples Bus will start its service from Qaidabad, Korangi, and Memon Goth to Tower, which was earlier from Khokhrapar.

Additionally, an electric bus route will be introduced from Kathore to Numaish, starting on July 24, and a new route from

Yousuf Goth to Tower will begin operations on July 25.

The transport minister said that the aim of these new routes is to provide affordable transportation services to the citizens of Karachi.

Furthermore, the department plans to introduce more new buses and routes in the future to enhance the public transport system in the city.

Last month, the Sindh government announced new routes for People's Bus Service in Karachi.

Sindh Transport Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon addressed the transport woes of Karachi by announcing additional Peoples Bus Service routes.

PM Shehbaz summons CCI meeting on Monday

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has summoned a meeting of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) on Monday (July 22) to ponder over key energy projects and issues relating to the power sector.

The meeting will be attended by the four chief ministers and the federal ministers, in which CMs will put up issues relating to their provinces in the meeting.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister will raise the issue of dues the Centre owes to his provinces and other incentives.

The CCI meeting will also endorse key development projects of the Centre and the provinces.



ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah alongside Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Islamabad Capital City administration and representatives of Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan addressing a joint news conference.

Govt, TLP to accelerate efforts to support innocent Palestinians

TLP calls off days-long Faizabad sit-in after reaching agreement with govt; Govt to dispatch goods to Gaza before July 31, says Rana Sanaullah

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Federal government and Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan have agreed to continue and accelerate efforts to support the innocent Palestinians.

This was announced by Adviser to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah while addressing a joint news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, alongside Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Islamabad Capital City administration and representatives of Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan.

Sindh Home Minister, IGP attend funeral prayers of martyred policeman

KARACHI (APP): The funeral prayers of Constable Yousuf, who was martyred in the firing of unknown suspects in the limits of Samanabad Police Station, was offered at Police Headquarters Garden, South.

Sindh Home Minister Zia Ul Hasan Lanjar along with IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon, Additional IGP - Karachi Javed Akhtar Odho, Zonal DIGPs, District SSPs, Pakistan Rangers Sindh officers, relatives of the martyred constable, friends and local people attended the funeral prayer on

Friday. The Sindh Home Minister expressed his condolences and sympathy with the relatives of the martyred constable and said that the Sindh government and the Sindh Police Department were with them in these moments of extreme grief.

Paying tribute to the services of the martyred constable of the Sindh Police, the minister said that the sacrifices of the police martyrs for the security of life and property of the people and the establishment of peace were priceless and unforgettable.

PML-N, PPP agree to file review petition against PTI reserved seats verdict

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) agreed on Friday to file a review petition against the Supreme Court's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) reserved seats verdict. According to a private channel, a meeting was held between the ruling coalition to discuss administrative matters in Punjab, the current political situation, and the government's proposal to ban PTI. It was decided that further consultations would be held regarding the ban on PTI, and a review petition would be filed against the Supreme Court's verdict.

The PML-N delegation included National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, and Rana Sanaullah. The Attorney General and other officials were also present at the meeting while the PPP delegation comprised of Sherry Rehman, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, and Nadeem Afzal Chan. Just days after the Supreme Court resurrected PTI, the PML-N-led ruling coalition decided last week that a reference will be sent to the top court seeking a ban on PTI, adding that the government will also initiate Article 6 (high treason) proceedings against ex-PM Imran Khan, ex-President Dr Arif Alvi and ex-deputy speaker Qasim Suri for dissolving the National Assembly.

Senate body for export-led growth of Pakistan as envisioned by PM Shehbaz Sharif: Senator Anusha

KARACHI (APP): Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce, Senator Anusha Rahman on Friday said that the Senate Committee on Commerce wanted export-led growth of Pakistan as envisioned by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

She said this while talking to media after chairing a meeting at the Intellectual Property Organization (IPO) House here.

Earlier, she along with

the members of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce, Senator Sarmad Ali, Senator Talal Chaudhry and Senator Bilal Khan held a meeting with the IPO officials. Chairman IPO, Farukh Amil, Registrar Copyright, Nasarullah, the IPO officials and other notables were also present on the occasion.

Senator Anusha Rahman said that the IPO handled the issues related to the operations of the orga-

nizations, companies and merchandise vital for export-led growth. She said that the challenges being faced by the IPO need to be resolved. She said that the objective of this Committee was that the IPO should perform to its optimal capacity under the ambit of its relevant laws. The IPO should fulfill the requirements for its existence in the global community because the IPO has domestic as well as international outreach, she added.



KARACHI: Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce Senator Anusha Rahman chairing the meeting of the IPO officials during a visit to the IPO House Karachi. Committee members Sarmad Ali, Bilal Ahmed Khan, Muhammad Talal Badar also present on the occasion.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Misplaced priorities

Trouble is brewing in KP, where terrorist outfits are growing ever more emboldened in their attacks. This week, two outrageous assaults on a cantonment and a rural health centre in Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan, respectively, claimed the lives of 15 Pakistanis, including 10 soldiers, in the latest escalation by TTP-backed militants, who are believed to be operating from safe havens in Afghanistan.

Though Islamabad has issued a 'strong demarche' to Afghan representatives, demanding "immediate, robust and effective action" over the attack on the Bannu cantonment, it has been clear for a while that the de facto government in Kabul is failing to rein in the TTP, which is now the "largest terror group" operating on its soil, according to a recent UN report. It is imperative, therefore, for the Pakistani state to act against these terrorists and their facilitators. However, its plans have so far been frustrated by the state's poor strategising.

About two weeks ago, the government had floated a proposal for an all-parties conference to discuss Operation Azm-i-Istehkam, which had been welcomed by the opposition parties, including the PTI. However, after the early enthusiasm, there has been no development on this front, and it is feared that the initiative may be delayed indefinitely due to the breakout of fresh hostilities between the PTI and the current regime.

This is dangerous from a national security perspective, as plans for combating a major existential threat have inadvertently become subservient to the seemingly never-ending political tussle. The state must keep in mind that it is not just the PTI, but several mainstream parties that have serious concerns about the proposed operation, and it is vital to get them on board before the state launches kinetic operations. Not doing so risks provoking the citizens residing in these areas, which may create unnecessary complications.

Consider, for example, that the first reaction from Bannu residents to the assault was to issue a statement that, among other things, made it clear they would not evacuate the area in case of a military operation. Locals said they would rather stand up and fight the terrorists themselves than abandon their homes for another anti-terrorism drive. They recognise the problem, but they have no interest in the solution being proposed by the state. This is mainly a political failure, arising from the government's inability to manufacture broad-based consensus around the need for a military operation. There is an urgent need for this failure to be rectified. Too many lives are being lost to an enemy that is growing in strength the longer the infighting continues in the corridors of power. The government must call its APC at the earliest and invite all stakeholders to take part. This matter cannot be delayed further.

Milk banks

Nikhat Sattar

From the 1950s onwards, it became common practice to feed formula milk to babies, even newborns. Many women considered breastfeeding to be outdated or unnecessary, or they were ill and unable to feed their babies in the natural way. Later, research showed that human milk was best for its nutritive value as well as bonding between mother and baby.

The WHO recommends that breastfeeding be carried out at least for the first six months, and then, preferably, for another 18 months; ie, for a total of two years. This is the exact period stipulated in the Quran for breastfeeding (2:233).

Therein lies a problem. Some mothers die soon after childbirth or they are so ill that they have no or very little milk. Some children are also born preterm or are very fragile and unable to accept formula milk. On the other hand, some babies are stillborn or die early, leaving the mother not only distressed but unable to use the milk she is producing. The Quran proposes a solution based upon a carefully designed agreement between the two families concerned. The woman who can offer her milk feeds the child for at least two years and is compensated by money or equivalent for her invaluable services. This results in a bond between the child and this mother that is almost the same as a mother and her biological child. More importantly, the children of this foster mother become foster siblings to the child, and marriage between the two is forbidden.

To manage the problem of lack of human milk for babies who need it, human milk banks have been around since 1909, and the experience has been very useful. Hu-m-an milk banking

involves a detailed, intensive process that includes rigorous screening. All milk must be properly collected, stored, pasteurised and cultured in accordance with clearly defined guidelines.

Milk banks are operating in 35 countries, but the only Muslim country with extensive usage is Iran. Singapore started using them in 2017, and Malaysia is planning for 2025. In Malaysia, "after a series of consultations with the Islamic authorities, milk kinship is no longer an issue". In Pakistan, a milk bank was inaugurated at the Sindh Institute of Child Health after obtaining a fatwa from a Darul Uloom, but this facility was closed within a week when the fatwa was revised.

Why are milk banks not common in Muslim countries? The reason is that Muslims believe that if a child drinks the milk of a woman who is not its biological mother, a "milk relationship" would be established, creating a potential marriage problem. Ulama also object to this practice on grounds that this would become a commercial practice, and women would offer their milk in order to earn money.

In this controversy, a major point has been missed. This has been highlighted by the scholar Javed Ghamidi, who suggests that the 'milk kinship' between feeding mother and baby is established only when the woman has decided that she will feed this child and takes it to her breast. The entire process is extremely sensitive and involves considerable emotion and planning. The baby, as it grows up, remains attached to the foster mother and its foster siblings as if they were its blood relations. This is a carefully established arrangement. None of these elements are

present in the operation of a milk bank. The late Egyptian scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi also saw no religious problem in establishing or using these banks and issued a decree to the effect in 1983.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is of the same view, saying that milk kinship is formed only if the baby is breastfed. On the issue of women making this an earning practice or the process becoming commercialised, Ghamidi says that there is nothing wrong with making payments to the women who are providing milk. In Islam, even after divorce, the ex-husband is supposed to make payment to the ex-wife if it is decided that she will breastfeed the baby. Any process can be exploited through unethical means. Milk banks need careful guidelines, SOPs and trained and sensitive staff as well as individuals with counselling experience.

Kuwait operates a modified version of the bank. Milk would be obtained from one woman for a single baby, thus making it easier to avoid possibility of marriage between 'milk siblings'. The donor and the recipient baby's biological mother or father also meet. Indonesia is also planning to establish similar milk banks. In all countries with sizeable Muslim populations, religious scholars of all sects were consulted in the early stages and only then were milk banks set up.

Pakistan would do well to study models from Iran and other countries and consult stakeholders as well as non-traditional scholars. In this, as well as in other issues, the three basic Islamic principles of public interest, necessity and doing no harm must be applied. -- Courtesy Dawn

Strategic games

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

It is August 2021. Pakistani spymasters, pro-establishment ideologues and then prime minister Imran Khan unanimously celebrate the re-conquest of Afghanistan by the Taliban. The age-old pursuit of a 'friendly government' in Kabul has been achieved.

Fast forward three years. The shadowy entity which goes by the name of the TTP is again present in Pakhtun tribal districts like Waziristan. The same TTP and its affiliates plan and perpetrate attacks in settled districts like Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan, in the former case directly targeting the army cantonment.

Many innocents perish, as Islamabad issues recriminations against the 'friendly government' in Kabul. The security establishment warns it will respond with indiscriminate military operations to crush 'terrorism', without explaining why innumerable operations in the past didn't cut off what appears to be a never-ending supply of 'terrorists'.

The train of events is both predictable and tragic. Long before the last American troops left Afghanistan, progressive voices in Pakistan — both Pakhtun and others — had warned against hailing the change of guard as some kind of anti-imperialist triumph. Many also foresaw that Islamabad's backing of the so-called Afghan Taliban 2.0 regime would inevitably translate into rejuvenated religious militancy in the Pakhtun border districts.

If the people of KP and Balochistan are again paying the price of the establishment's delusions of grandeur, they, along with millions of ordinary Afghans, are also set up to be guinea pigs in a fresh wave of geo-

political sparring involving many regional and global actors.

Recall that, under the terms of the so-called Doha peace deal inked in February 2020, the US willingly handed Afghanistan back to the Taliban. Domestic political imperatives meant that the Pentagon could no longer justify extending what was already the longest war in US history. So, Washington decided to pursue its interests in Afghanistan and the wider region through other, familiar, means.

Even without troops on the ground, the US will resist China's growing influence over the Taliban government, evidenced by Beijing's offer to include Afghanistan in the billion-dollar Belt & Road Initiative. Then there are the Gulf kingdoms, Saudi Arabia in the lead, seeking to extend their expanding economic and geopolitical footprint in the region building on their historical ties with the Taliban. Finally, there is Afghanistan's immediate neighbour to the west, Iran, whose oil resources and enmity with both Washington and the Taliban also make it a party to the latest iteration of the Great Game.

The Great Game is, of course, the epithet for the strategic rivalry that played out from the 19th century onwards between the then British and Russian empires for control over Afghanistan, Persia and the wider central Asia region. A variety of hot and cold wars between the so-called Great Powers extended into the 20th century, intensifying after World War II, when the US empire sought to contain communist USSR and China.

Turkey and Pakistan were cultivated as garrison states on the frontline of this war against communism, as was Iran, until the Shah was deposed in the late 1970s.

But the biggest and most brutal confrontation played out in Afghanistan from 1977 onwards under the guise of the anti-Soviet 'jihad' against the left-wing PDPA government. Funded by Saudi Arabia and the US, and prosecuted by Pakistan, the legacy of this disastrous policy is now playing out for the umpteenth time.

Orientalist narratives in the West and racism in mainland Pakistan caricature Pakhtuns on both sides of the Durand Line as religious fanatics wedded to prehistoric, uncivilised mores. This provides the justification to brand them 'terrorists' to be wiped out. Even though militancy in Baloch areas is largely secular in nature, a similar totalising narrative is deployed to dehumanise the Baloch people too. Little has changed in Pakistani and imperialist statecraft since the carrot and stick days of the British Raj.

Pro-establishment types will never tell us why there is no peace despite the 'friendly government' in Kabul. On the other hand are those who still think that the US invasion of Afghanistan was a godsend and refuse to acknowledge both the historical crimes of US imperialism and its continuing complicity in the cold wars of today. And then there are the voices who think China is to be supported at all costs because it ostensibly opposes US hegemony, regardless of what that means for the Pakhtun, Baloch and other masses across the region. The least we can do is speak up for the nameless masses paying a bloody price for the strategic games waged by unaccountable states. That is the bare minimum requirement for liberation from imperialism, shadowy spymasters and the Taliban. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Huawei's Training Program set to elevate Pakistan's IT exports: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that Pakistan's Information Technology exports will rise with Huawei's annual professional training to 300,000 Pakistani students.

Talking to a four-member delegation led by Ethan Sun, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Huawei Pakistan, the prime minister stressed that collaboration with Huawei was essential for providing advanced IT training in various fields, especially for young people.

The prime minister emphasized that the government values its sustain-

able partnership with Huawei in Pakistan's digital economy. The government will prioritize including both women and the youth of Balochistan in this training program.

The prime minister stated that promoting the digital economy requires building a strong foundation of talented professionals within the country.

The prime minister stated that the recent visit to Huawei's headquarters in China was highly beneficial. The prime minister emphasized that digitizing government institutions was crucial for implementing a modern, automated,

and efficient governance system.

The delegation briefed the prime minister regarding the progress of ongoing projects under the cooperation agreement between Pakistan and Huawei for the Digital Pakistan Program.

The prime minister was informed that a new Massive Open Online Courses system for IT training has been developed and will be launched with the support of provincial governments.

The delegation suggested backing the development of a national data center in line with Pakistan's

national cloud strategy.

This initiative will improve cloud services and lead to considerable cost reductions. Huawei was interested in collaborating with the Pakistani government to transform Islamabad into a smart city. As part of the Islamabad Smart City project, various services such as traffic management, health care, education, and parking will be accessible through a digital platform.

Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ishaan Afzal, and other senior officials were also present in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: CEO of Huawei Pakistan Mr. Ethan Sun along with a delegation called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association, called on the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research.

Jazz secures landmark credit facility to enhance 4G network, promote digital inclusion nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator has successfully secured the largest private sector syndicated credit facility, totalling up to Rs 75 billion.

The banking consortium was led by The Bank of Punjab (BoP), and this 10-year financing arrangement will significantly support Jazz's ongoing 4G network expansion and technological upgrades while supporting its new ServiceCo model, said a news release. The signing ceremony was attended by VEON Group CEO, Amir Ibrahim, CEO of

Jazz, and the Presidents of participating banks along with their representatives.

The consortium includes prominent financial institutions acting as mandated lead advisors and arrangers, namely Habib Bank Limited, Bank Alfalah Limited, Meezan Bank Limited, MCB Bank Limited, Allied Bank Limited, The Bank of Punjab, Askari Bank Limited, Habib Metropolitan Bank, Soneri Bank Limited, Bank Islami Pakistan Limited and MCB Islamic Bank Limited.

Jazz, a major investor in Pakistan with over 30 years of history and investments exceeding USD 10.6 billion, leads the industry with a 45% revenue market share and serves over 71.4 million subscribers, including 49 million 4G users.

The company recently announced a major shift from a traditional mobile operator to a ServiceCo structure, creating Strategic Business Units (SBUs) focused on digital financial services, software & analytics, data centers & cloud, and entertainment & digital platforms.

Govt to introduce track and trace policy in local cotton, ginning

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Minister for Industry and Production, National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday said that the government has decided to introduce track and trace system in local cotton and ginning industry aimed at avoiding tax evasion. Talking to a delegation of the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association, who called on minister, he said that the cotton industry has a pivotal role in the rural economy and the potential to provide employment opportunities for a large

portion of the skilled and semi-skilled workforce in the country. The meeting discussed matters relating to additional taxation measures on seed cotton and cotton seed cake in the current budget, said a press release.

The minister said that a track and trace system will be implemented on locally produced cotton bales in order to avoid tax evasion to protect local farming communities as well as the industrial sector of the country.

US Ambassador calls on Minister for Privatisation

ISLAMABAD (APP):

The Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan, Donald Blome Friday called on Minister of Privatisation, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan. Both the sides discussed matters relating to mutual interest, especially promoting trade and business between both the countries, said a press release. The meeting held detailed discussions on various issues including fur-

ther strengthening Pakistan-US relations, especially, investment opportunities in Pakistan also came under discussion in which business community from United States of America also interested. Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Aleem Khan expressed his determination to promote Pakistan-US business relations and said that there are many opportunities in the challenges faced by the Pakistani economy for which various measures.

Govt taking initiatives for economic revival: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Friday that the incumbent government intended to take up short, medium and long-term initiatives to ensure economic revival of Pakistan.

The minister was chairing the first steering committee of the FCDO-funded Revenue Mobilisation, Investment and Trade (REMIT) programme, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

British High Commissioner, Jane Marriot co-

chaired the meeting while among others it was attended by Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Dr. Jehanzeb Khan and senior government officials. The finance minister emphasized that the government's focus on inclusive economic growth could be complemented by the support of development partners with a focus on performance and implementation.

Reviewing the work done by the programme in the areas of revenue mobilisation, investment climate, macroeconomic governance and trade, with

cross-cutting themes of gender and climate change, the minister appreciated the overall progress to date.

He also emphasized the need for government stakeholders to be more proactive in taking up implementation.

The minister appreciated the technical assistance provided, stressed on consolidation of interventions and on speeding up on government implementation for impact. Jane Marriot, thanked the minister for his interest in the programme interventions and commitment to reform that will take Pakistan forward.

Gold rates decrease by Rs.3,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.3,000 and was sold at Rs.251,000 on Friday against its sale at Rs.254,000 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.2,572 to Rs.215,192 from Rs.217,764 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.197,259 from Rs.199,617.

Pakistani jeweler eyes bigger role in China-ASEAN trade

BEIJING (APP): In a move to bolster the global footprint of Pakistani jewelry, Pakistani jeweler Aqeel Chaudhry attended the CIE in Guangxi event held in Nanning, the provincial capital of Guangxi, China this month, highlighting his commitment to the Chinese market and exploring new horizons for business expansion within the ASEAN region.

The event, which attracted 110 international companies and investment promotion agencies in attendance, including 73 Fortune 500 companies and industry leaders, served as a platform for fostering international business collaborations and unlocking new market opportunities, local media reported. Chaudhry's presence underlined his keen interest in Guangxi's strategic position as a gateway to ASEAN countries, thereby expanding the reach of Pakistani jewelry.

KP Governor assure to resolve problems of Wazir tribesmen

PESHAWAR (APP): A representative delegation of the Wazir tribe belonging to Bannu Domain called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Faisal Karim Kundi and informed him about their problems. Provincial President of Pakistan People's Party, Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha and Provincial Secretary Coordination, Farzand Ali Wazir were also present on the occasion.

The delegation briefed the governor about the overall situation of their area and the problems being confronted by people. Talking to the delegation, the KP governor said that deteriorating law and order conditions have negatively impacted business activities in the area. Expressing concern over the situation, he assured that promises made to tribal people would be fulfilled

and efforts would be made to bring tribesmen into the national mainstream of development. He said that voice would be raised at available forums for the facilitation of tribal people and to provide them opportunities for growth and development. He also urged locals and the young generation to support the efforts of security forces in maintaining peace in the area.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan meets with affected individuals from the Dasu Hydro Power Project at the CM Secretariat.

KP Govt sanctions 25pc, 20pc adhoc relief allowance to employees

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa sanctioned an Adhoc Relief Allowance 2024 at the rate of 25 percent of the basic pay as on June 30, 2024 to the employees from BS-17 to BS-22 and 20 percent to the employees in BS-03 to BS-16 falling under the civil servants of the provincial government including contingent of paid staff and contract employees employed against civil posts in Basic Pay Scales on standard terms and conditions of contract appointment, said a notification issued by the Finance Department

here on Friday. The Adhoc Relief Allowance with effect from 1.07.2024 will be subject to income and admissible during leave and entire period of LPR except extraordinary leave and will not be treated as part of emoluments for the purpose of calculation of pension/gratuity and recovery of House Rent. Similarly, it will also be not admissible to the employees on their repatriation from posting/deputation abroad at the rate and amount which would have been admissible to them had they not been posted

abroad. The term 'Basic Pay' for the purpose of Adhoc Relief Allowance 2024 will also include the amount of the personal pay granted on account of annual increment (s) beyond the maximum of the existing pay scales. The Adhoc Relief Allowance-2024 shall be accommodated from within the budgetary allocation for the Year 2024-25 by the respective Departments/organizations and no supplementary grants would be given on this account to all the government employees of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with effect from 1st July, 2024.

Governor Punjab recognizes businessmen as backbone of economy

RAWALPINDI (APP): Governor Punjab, Sardar Salim Haider has said that businessmen are the backbone of the country's economy. Traders always played an important role in economic prosperity in the country, he said adding that the government is doing everything possible to solve the problems of traders.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the delegation of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), which called on him here on Friday, led by President Chamber Saqib Rafique. The delegation informed the governor regarding the problems of the business community. The governor said that business circles have always played a role in the development of the country. "We are making every possible effort to solve the problems of the businessmen", he said. Later, a delegation of lawyers also met the governor. Speaking to the lawyers, the governor said that the role of lawyers is very important for the rule of law and supremacy. Lawyers have always made sacrifices for the stability of the democratic system, the rule of law and the constitution.



LAHORE: A delegation of Lawyers from Rawalpindi meeting with Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.

KP Assembly discusses Bannu incident, law and order situation

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly convened on Friday to discuss the firing incident on a peaceful procession in Bannu and the deteriorating law and order situation in the province. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) MPA Adnan Khan, speaking on a point of order, highlighted that the people of Bannu, who were peacefully demanding peace, were fired upon, resulting in 20 injuries. He urged the government to take action against the perpetrators and ensure the safety of the people.

manding governmental action against terrorism to protect the citizens. Other members of the provincial assembly also called for steps to restore peace in the province. Provincial Minister Dr. Amjad Khan reassured the assembly that the government was taking the law and order situation seriously. He announced that an inquiry into the Bannu firing incident had been ordered and a committee would be formed to investigate the incident and ensure public safety.

Speaker KP Assembly Babar Salim Swati emphasized the need for a collaborative approach to address the issue, suggesting the formation of a committee comprising on the government and the Opposition members.

Woman killed, three family members injured in accident

KHANEWAL (APP): A woman was killed while three other family members injured as their motorcycle collided with a tree near Thatha Sadiqabad road.

According to details, a citizen named Muhammad Irfan was going to home Chak No 136/10-R from Tibba Sultan Pur along with family members riding on a motorcycle. Suddenly, the motorcycle went uncontrolled and collided with a tree. As a result, his wife 30-year-old Beenish died on the spot while Irfan, his daughter Eman and minor boy Anus sustained injuries. The injured were shifted to Tehsil headquarters hospital Jehania for medical aid.

Punjab sets up flood relief camps amid threat of flooding

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Disaster Management Khawaja Salman Rafique announced on Friday that the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) had established flood relief camps in anticipation of potential flooding. The announcement was made during his visit to the PDMA Head Office here. He highlighted the risk of flooding due to recent rains in the Koh-e-Sulaiman mountains, which could lead to rising water levels in rivers and mountain streams. He assured the

public that the situation is being closely monitored around the clock in the Epidemic and District Control Rooms, and that prompt measures will be taken to protect lives. He also urged the public to take necessary precautions during the rainy season. During his visit, he reviewed various schemes aimed at preventing river erosion. He also toured the PDMA control room to assess the rain situation across the province. DG PDMA, Irfan Ali Kathia, provided a comprehensive briefing on the current weather conditions and the safety measures in place.

Eight dead, 1,359 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least eight people were killed and 1,359 others injured in 1,204 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 600 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 759 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed that 693 drivers, 50 underage drivers, 152 pedestrians, and 522 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. The statistics showed that 226 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 264 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Multan with 77 accidents.

Health Minister meets MSF officials, discusses ongoing projects

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister of Health, Syed Qasim Ali Shah met with officials from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) at his office to discuss ongoing projects of international humanitarian organization.

treatment of leishmaniasis at City Hospital Peshawar and Budh Bher Hospital. They also informed the minister about their work in Khalifa Gul Nawaz Hospital and Tirah Valley in Khyber District. The MSF officials also discussed their plans to establish a leishmaniasis treatment center at the Dargai Hospital in Khyber district.

The meeting was attended by Director EPI Dr. Arif, Director MCH Dr. Khizr Hayat, DHO Khyber Dr. Zafar Ali Khan, Focal Person Health Department Dr. Mohammad Nabi Jan Afridi, and other relevant officials. During the meeting, MSF officials briefed the Minister of Health on their ongoing projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including the establishment of two clinics for the

They informed the minister that a five-year project has been designed, which will be technically and financially supported by MSF. The project will also include the establishment of a pediatric health care center and a blood bank.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Transport Bilal Akbar Khan chairs meeting regarding Marri Rail Link Project.

International News

Relentless Israeli attacks claim 54 lives in Gaza

Monitoring Desk GAZA STRIP: The Gaza health ministry said on Thursday that 54 people have been killed in 24 hours as Israel kept up its heavy bombardment of recent days.

All health facilities in southern Gaza have been pushed to their "breaking point" by the influx of casualties, the International Committee of the Red Cross said. Television images showed mourners at Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the central town of Deir el-Balah, where several white-shrouded corpses lay on the ground. One man cradled the covered body of a child.

Also on Thursday, the Israeli parliament voted to oppose a Palestinian state as an "existential threat". The vote, which drew swift criticism from the Palestinian leadership and the international community, is largely symbolic but laid

down a marker ahead of a planned address by Netanyahu to the US Congress next Wednesday. The veteran hawk has shown little interest in efforts by the US administration to broker a truce and prisoner release deal for Gaza, insisting that "absolute victory" over Hamas is within reach and vowing to ramp up the military pressure.

Neighbouring Jordan said the vote "constitutes a serious violation of international law and a challenge to the international community". France expressed "consternation", noting that the text was "in contradiction" with multiple UN Security Council resolutions.

The resolution passed by Israeli lawmakers in the early hours said a Palestinian state on land occupied by the Israeli army would "perpetuate the Israel-Palestinian conflict and destabilise the region". The resolution passed by 68

The establishment of a Palestinian state on lands occupied by Israel in the Six-Day War of 1967 has been the cornerstone of the international community's efforts to resolve the conflict for decades. UN chief Antonio Guterres was "very disappointed" by the Israeli parliament's move. "You can't vote away the two-state solution," his spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.



Republican presidential nominee and former U.S. President Donald Trump is joined on stage by wife Melania and other relatives after he finished giving his acceptance speech on Day 4 of the Republican National Convention (RNC), at the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S.

'Isolated' Biden faces calls to drop re-election bid

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Joe Biden still has mild Covid symptoms but is continuing to work, his White House doctor said on Thursday, a day after the US president tested positive for the disease shortly after conceding he would consider dropping his re-election bid if doctors diagnosed him with a serious medical condition. "The president is still experiencing mild upper respiratory symptoms associated with his recent Covid-19 infection," doctor Kevin O'Connor said in a letter. "He does not have a fever and his vital signs remain normal".

The 81-year-old Democ-rat gave reporters the thumbs up and said "I feel good" as he cut short a trip to Las Vegas and flew to his beach home in Delaware to go into isolation, which will take him off the campaign trail for days. The infection comes at a critical moment for Biden's campaign, with the president seeking to show he is up to the job after a disastrous debate performance against rival Donald Trump sparked concerns about his health and calls from some Democrats for him to step aside.

Thailand says cyanide killed 6 foreigners in hotel, including perpetrator

Monitoring Desk BANGKOK: Cyanide poisoning caused the deaths of six foreigners whose bodies were found in a room in a plush Bangkok hotel, Thai authorities said on Wednesday, with the suspected killer among the dead. Traces of the rapid-acting, deadly chemical were found during autopsies of the bodies and on drinking glasses and a teapot in the room at the luxury Grand Hyatt

Erawan hotel where the dead were discovered late on Tuesday, according to police and a hospital. Interviews with relatives of the three women and three men who died revealed there had been a dispute over debt related to an investment, according to police, who said they were investigating how the cyanide was obtained. The six were all of Vietnamese ethnicity, two of those US nationals.

Ex-CIA analyst charged with spying for South Korea

Monitoring Desk NEW YORK: A grand jury has indicted a former US Central Intelligence Agency analyst on charges of acting as a spy for the South Korean government in exchange for luxury goods, bags and fancy meals, the BBC reported on Thursday. Sue Mi Terry, who previously worked as a senior official for the White House National Security Council, faces two counts of failing to register as a foreign agent and conspiracy to violate the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

Arson suspected as fire kills seven in France

Monitoring Desk NICE: Police were hunting three arson suspects on Thursday after an apartment building fire killed seven people in the southern French city of Nice, Prime Minister Gabriel Attal said. The dead include three children — 5, 7 and 10 years old — and a 17-year-old who tried to escape by jumping from a window, they added. The apartment is located in the low-income neighbourhood of Les Moulins.

Taiwan must rely on itself for defence, foreign minister responds to Trump

Monitoring Desk TAIPEI: Taiwan must rely on itself for defence and is likely to keep increasing spending and modernising its military given the threat it faces from China, Foreign Minister Lin Chia-lung said on Friday, responding to criticism from Donald Trump. US former President Trump, the Republican candidate in a rematch with President Joe Biden, said in an interview published this week that "Taiwan should pay for its defence", adding that the island had taken American semiconductor business. The United States is the most important international backer and arms supplier of Taiwan, which China claims as its own. Despite the lack of formal diplomatic ties, Washington is bound by law to provide the means for the island's defence. But Taiwan has no formal defence pact with the United States, as Asian neighbours Japan and South Korea do, since Washington terminated a previous treaty with Taipei in 1979 when it switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing. Biden angered China in 2022 by saying US forces would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion, a deviation from a long-held US position of "strategic ambiguity".

Asked about Trump's comments, Lin told foreign reporters in Taipei that "we pay great attention to" them, and Taiwan-US relations are built on the bipartisan support Taiwan enjoys in the United States. "I think everyone has a consensus on the main point, which is the China threat," said Lin, who took up his post on May 20 as part of the cabinet of newly elected President Lai Ching-te.

North Korea plans to launch major tourism site next year though it still blocks foreign tourists

Monitoring Desk SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited a major tourism site being constructed on the country's eastern coast and discussed steps to open the zone by next year, state media reported Thursday, though the country still blocks visits by most foreign tourists. The Wonsan-Kalma zone is one of Kim's most talked-about tourism projects. For years, North Korea has been building luxury hotels and recreational facilities there to create a key attraction for international visitors. But the project reportedly suffered setbacks due to shortages of construction materials as a result of toughened U.N. sanctions and COVID-19 restrictions. Kim toured the Wonsan-Kalma zone with top deputies on Tuesday and discussed preparations for its opening by May 2025 as decided by a ruling

party meeting in January, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. "A coastal wonderland to be known to the world as the best tourist resort of (North Korea) will be successfully built," Kim was quoted as saying by KCNA. It cited Kim as saying construction has entered its final stages. North Korea has been slowly easing its harsh pandemic-era curbs and entry restrictions as part of its efforts to revive its economy. But it still hasn't reopened its borders to foreign tourists, except for a relatively small number of Russians who visited earlier this year as ties boomed between the two countries. A return of Chinese travelers would likely provide a much bigger source of revenue as they represented about 90% of international tourists visiting North Korea before the pandemic.

Bangladesh TV news off air, communications widely disrupted as student protests spike

Monitoring Desk DHAKA: Television news channels in Bangladesh were off the air and telecommunications were widely disrupted on Friday amid violent student protests against quotas for government jobs in which nearly two dozen people have been killed this week. There was no immediate word from the government. French news agency AFP reported that the death toll in Thursday's violence had risen to 32. Reuters had reported that 13 people were killed, adding to six dead earlier in the week, and could not immediately verify the higher number. There was fresh violence in some parts of the country on Friday and police were using tear gas to disperse protesters, a Reuters photographer said. India's Economic Times newspaper reported

that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government "was forced" to call in the army late on Thursday to help "maintain order". Reuters could not independently verify the information. Although the protests were sparked by student anger against the controversial quota system, some analysts have said that tough economic conditions, including high inflation, rising unemployment, and depleting foreign reserves, were pouring fuel on the fire.

Belarus to introduce 90 day visa-free regime for 35 European countries

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: Belarus, traditionally a close ally of Russia, said on Wednesday it would introduce a 90-day visa-free regime for citizens of 35 European countries in a sign Minsk may be keen to ease tensions with the West. Under the new policy, citizens of the 35 listed nations - which include Germany, Britain and France - will be able to enter Belarus without a visa and stay for up to 90 days per year. Currently, travellers from those countries can only remain in Belarus for 30 days and must fly in via Minsk airport. The new policy takes effect on Friday, the National Border Service said in a statement.

The protests have also opened old and sensitive political faultlines between those who fought for Bangladesh's independence in 1971, including Hasina's Awami League. Authorities had cut some mobile services on Thursday to try to quell the unrest but the disruption spread across the country.

Kashmir's Accession to Pakistan Day" observed with fabulous zest, renewed pledge

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): The people of Kashmir living in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu Kashmir (IIOJK), and around the world observed "Kashmir's Accession to Pakistan Day" on Friday. They renewed their resolve to continue the struggle for freedom from Indian unlawful occupation and to realize the idea of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. This spirit is based on the historic resolution passed in Srinagar on this day in 1947.

On July 19, 1947, the Kashmiris adopted a historic resolution in a special meeting of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at the residence of veteran Kashmiri leader and later founding President of Azad Jammu Kashmir government, Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan in Srinagar, demanding accession of entire Jammu and Kashmir state to Pakistan in accordance with the as-

pirations of the people of the Muslim-majority Himalayan State.

The people of Kashmir observe this historic day every year with a renewal of the pledge to continue the struggle, with full vigour, for the achievement of their birthright to self-determination and translate the idea of accession of the entire Jammu Kashmir state to Pakistan under the spirit of the historic resolution passed this day in 1947 into reality.

In AJK, it was a public holiday to facilitate the masses from all sections of the civil society to participate in the ceremonies held to mark the historic day.

The representative leaders of people of all spheres of life from various parts of the concerned districts reiterated complete solidarity with the people of Pakistan with a renewed pledge to materialize the dream of accession to the entire Jammu Kashmir state to Pakistan into reality in

the light of the historic resolution.

The day dawned with special prayers in the mosques for the liberation of all occupied Muslim lands including Indian-held Jammu Kashmir and Palestine, the success of the Kashmir freedom struggle and for the rest of the departed souls who laid down their lives for the cause of liberation of the motherland from the Indian illegal rule.

Special meetings including seminars and symposiums were held in all ten districts and tehsil headquarters of AJK including in the state's metropolis - Muzaffarabad to commemorate the historic day with the renewal of the pledge to continue the struggle to attain their birthright to self-determination and accomplish the dream of the accession of entire Jammu Kashmir state to Pakistan under the spirit of the historic resolution passed.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Abu Dhabi Ports Pakistan calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Gilani for exploring new avenues of cooperation between Pakistan-Algeria

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Friday underscored the need to further diversify Pakistan-Algeria relations and explore new avenues of cooperation to further add impetus to bilateral relations. "Pakistan enjoys excellent relations with Algeria which are rooted in history, religion and similarity of views on various regional and international issues" he expressed these views during a meeting with Algerian Ambassador Brahim Romani.

He also acknowledged and appreciated Algeria's

support to Pakistan in the United Nations and at other international fora, in particular, the support for Pakistan's various candidatures.

He called for broadening the political and economic ties. "There is a great need for closer trade and economic relations as the current level of trade is far below its true potential", the chairman stated.

He highlighted the significance of frequent exchange of business delegations to boost trade and explore opportunities for joint ventures and investment.

NA Speaker urges youth to play role in nation-building

ISLAMABAD (INP): Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Friday urged youth to play their role in nation-building rather than indulging in propaganda and political polarization.

"Acquainting Youth with parliamentary procedures and norms is pivotal for the growth of democracy in Pakistan", he expressed these views during his keynote address to the orientation session of the Young Citizen Internship Program 2024.

He also said that youth need to be acquainted with the committee system of Parliament as the standing committee plays an effective role in legislation.

Abu Dhabi Ports Pakistan to invest \$250m in Karachi Port in 10 years: PM told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer of Abu Dhabi Ports Pakistan Khurram Aziz Khan on Friday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and informed that the company would invest \$250 million in Karachi Port during the next 10 years.

The company CEO, who was accompanied by a delegation, also told that a fully equipped multipurpose terminal, being constructed through a \$130 million investment, would be completed within two years.

The delegation members briefed the prime minister about the company's investment in the improvement of the container terminal facility at Karachi Port featuring

X control, automated gates, 200-meter expansion in berth, crane rail track and development of infrastructure.

It was told that after the development of new infrastructure, cargo ships of up to 120,000 tons capacity would be able to anchor at the port to boost economic activity.

Prime Minister Shehbaz called for using modern technology and machinery to improve cargo and container handling at the port besides reducing the clearance time to a minimum.

He said that the objective of the agreement with Abu Dhabi Ports was to ensure transparency, enhance capacity and improve port operations.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Sri Lankan High Commission Admiral (R) Ravindra Chandrasiri Wijegunaratne.

Pakistani prisoners in Sri Lanka to return home within 7 days: Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sri Lankan High Commissioner Admiral (Retd) Ravindra Chandra Srivijay Gunaratne on Friday met Minister of Interior and Narcotics Control, Mohsin Naqvi and discussed issues of mutual interest including the release of Pakistani nationals imprisoned in Sri Lanka.

Both sides agreed to expedite the necessary steps for the release of Pakistani nationals imprisoned in Sri Lanka jails within 7 days. Sri Lanka's High Commissioner, Admiral (Retd) Ravindra Chandra Srivijay Gunaratne assured all possible support in this

regard. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed gratitude to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner for his support in facilitating the repatriation process.

"All necessary steps are being finalized to ensure the swift return of Pakistani citizens imprisoned in Sri Lanka," he said.

In addition to the prisoner repatriation, the meeting also discussed anti-narcotics and border security issues. Naqvi emphasized the need to further develop mutual relations and promote cooperation in counter-narcotics and border security.

DEC meeting held to initiate effective campaign against power theft

HYDERABAD (APP): The Deputy Commissioner Zain ul Abideen Memon chaired the meeting of District Enforcement Committee

are not paying their electricity bills and then pinpoint those involved in electricity theft.

He emphasized the need for a joint campaign to arrest individuals involved in electricity theft.

The Deputy Commissioner directed HESCO and police officials to cooperate with each other and finalize the data.

He urged the relevant officers to complete the billing process as soon as possible so that the campaign against electricity theft could commence immediately.

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LARKANA: Members of Hindu Panchayat are holding protest demonstration for demanding recovery of missing innocent girl Piryia Kumari as soon as possible, in Larkana.

Najmi Alam starts comprehensive free cattle vaccination campaign

KARACHI (APP): Adviser to Chief Minister on Livestock and Fisheries Syed Najmi Alam on Friday embarked on a comprehensive free cattle vaccination campaign, to prevent a possible spread of diseases in the province.

He started a campaign launched by the Sindh government from Bheans colony Karachi. Secretary Kazim Jatoti was also with him on this occasion.

The Sindh Government has inaugurated the Car Pet Vaccination Campaign to protect cattle from diseases so that cattle can be protected from diseases by vaccination through the campaign launched in whole Sindh with the efforts of the government.

It has been decided to upgrade the cattle hospital established in the Bheans colony to 24 hours so that

the cattle owners can get help from doctors in an emergency.

Najmi Alam said that our effort is to make the Veterinary Hospital of Bheans Colony the biggest center. Addressing the event, Syed Najmi Alam said that tracker systems will be installed in the motorcycles of the staff working in the vaccine campaign to find out whether the vaccine has reached certain areas or not.

He said that the established hospitals for animals will be further improved to ensure the treatment of other animals including cattle.

Syed Najmi Alam said that five big veterinary hospitals are being built in Sindh because the department could not succeed in preparing the vaccine, but the work on dog and snake bite vaccines is going on.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb is chairing the meeting on the Establishment of Programme Steering Committee (PSC) for the UK-Funded REMIT Programme.

SC not to hear PML-N review plea in reserved seats case for now

ISLAMABAD (INP): A three-judge committee of the Supreme Court, formed under the SC Practice and Procedure Act 2023, has decided by majority vote not to schedule the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) review petition against the court's decision in the reserved seats case immediately, reported a private TV chan-

nel quoting sources.

The sources indicate that the committee, consisting of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, senior puisne judge Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, and Justice Munib Akhtar, has deferred the proposal to fix the PML-N's petition against the July 12 short order in the reserved seats case.

AC checked quality & prices of food items

SUKKUR (APP): Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sukkur, Sobia Rao paid a surprise visit to the local bazaar and checked the quality and prices of food items.

She reviewed the availability of basic food items such as flour, oil, ghee, rice, pulses, vegetables, meat, poultry, and bread at official rates for consumers.

She informed shopkeepers about the Sindh provincial government's clear instructions and emphasized strict adherence to the officially prescribed rates.

The AC Sukkur also directed that price lists be displayed prominently at their shops.

Karachi-bound bus catches fire on Motorway in Sukkur

SUKKUR (INP): A fire suddenly broke out in a bus of a private company going from Multan to Karachi on M5 Motorway in Sukkur on Friday.

According to a Motorway spokesperson, on receiving information of fire in a bus, Admin Officer Sukkur Motorway Mohammad Usman Shabbir along with staffers rushed to the spot immediately.

The spokesperson said that lives of all 55 passengers and crew members were saved by their timely action.

Sector Commander Abdul Waheed Rabbani also reached the spot and personally supervised the operation, spokesperson said.

The fire apparently broke out due to a short circuit. However, quick action was taken with the help of fire extinguishers to save precious human lives, said spokesperson.

Rain lashes Hyderabad, adjoining areas

HYDERABAD (INP): Hyderabad and its surrounding areas experienced heavy rainfall, leading to significant disruptions and challenges for residents. As per details, the downpour turned weather pleasant but resulted in the suspension of power supply in most areas of Sindh's second-largest city. The power failure has caused drainage pumping stations to shut down, exacerbating the situation.

Residents in key areas such as Latifabad, Qasimabad, and several other neighborhoods are grappling with severe waterlogging. The accumulation of rainwater on roads has disrupted daily life, making it difficult for people to commute and carry out their routine activities.

ECP to implement SC's order in reserved seats case: spokesperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday decided to implement the Supreme Court's order in the reserved seats case.

"The Election Commission has decided to implement the decision of the Supreme Court", the ECP spokesperson said in a statement issued here.

The ECP held a meeting to discuss and implement the SC's decision, he said and added that instructions were issued to the legal team of the ECP that if there is any obstacle in the implementation of the Supreme Court's decision, then they should immediately identify it so that the Apex Court can be referred for further guidance.

In response to criticism by a political party, the ECP while condemning and rejecting the act said that the demand for resignation was ridiculous and the Commission would continue to work in accordance with the law and the constitution without any pressure, the statement said.



LONDON: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashhood calls on Secretary General of the Commonwealth, The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC at the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Power outages affecting citizens, water supply in Hyderabad: Mayor

HYDERABAD (APP): The Mayor of Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (HMC) Kashif Ali Shoro has taken notice of extensive and prolonged power outages in Hyderabad immediately after rainfall which started in the wee hours of Friday.

The Mayor's spokesperson informed that the Mayor conveyed those complaints of the citizens to Chief Executive Officer of Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) Roshan Ali Otho during a meeting at the latter's office.

He apprised the CEO that a record breaking summer season was being endured by the citizens of Hyderabad, adding that the extensive hours of scheduled and unscheduled load shedding and transmission faults aggravated miseries of the people.

Shoro complained that the pole mounted transformers which develop faults were not being timely replaced due to

which the affected localities were suffering several days long outages.

The Mayor also briefed the CEO HESCO about the problem of water shortage which had continued in the city since the last several weeks, attributing the shortfall to power outages.

The water filtration plants of Hyderabad Water and Sewerage Board Corporation (HW&SBC) were witnessing very long hours of load shedding owing to which the process of filtration was halted many times a day, he added.

Shoro also pointed out that HW&SBC's drainage pumping stations also stop pumping sewage several times a day due to which sewage water flows out from the drains on the roads. The Mayor requested the CEO to address the power outages issue so that the citizens could breathe a sigh of relief and the systems of water supply and drainage could also work effectively.



HYDERABAD: A view of rain water accumulated on the road after last night's downpour is causing trouble for commuters at makki shah road in the city.

Pakistan center of Kashmiris' hopes: AJK PM

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while terming Pakistan as the center of Kashmiris' hopes, has said that the historical day of July 19 had special significance in the history of freedom struggle of Kashmir. "It was on this day in 1947 when Kashmiri leadership decided to align their destiny with Pakistan", he said in his message issued on the occasion of Kashmir's accession day to Pakistan being observed today (Friday).

The prime minister said that observance of day on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) was a reflection of Kashmiris' unconditional love and faith with the state of Pakistan. "Those who laid down their lives in pursuit of

this ideology are our real heroes", he said, adding that love for Pakistan ran in the blood of every Kashmiri.

Anwar ul Haq said that Kashmiris had rendered matchless sacrifices to materialize the dream that was envisioned by their ancestors much before the creation of Pakistan. He expressed the optimism that the day was not far off when the Kashmiris' struggle and sacrifices would bear fruits. Terming Kashmiris' unconditional love for Pakistan as the biggest eyesore to India, he said that the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) had made immense sacrifices in the state's journey towards eventual accession to Pakistan.



LAHORE: Members of Sawt-ul-Gaza Forum are holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Lahore press club.

Shibli Faraz opposes appointment of ad hoc judges in letter to CJP Isa

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) stalwart and Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Shibli Faraz has written a letter to the Chairman of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) and Chief Justice of Pakistan, Qazi Faez Isa, urging the JCP to reject the proposal for appointing ad hoc judges.

Senator Shibli Faraz expressed concerns in his letter that the appointment of ad hoc judges gives the impression that the judiciary is being influenced for the benefit of a particular party. Senator Shibli Faraz emphasized that the appointment of ad hoc judges should not create the perception of balancing opin-

ions against a specific party within the judiciary.

The opposition leader in the Senate argued that pending cases cannot justify the appointment of ad hoc judges after the appointment of permanent judges. He noted that the proposal for ad hoc judges came on the same day the Supreme Court ruled in favour of PTI with a 5-8 decision and that no transparent procedure was followed for the selection of ad hoc judges.

He added that the proposed ad hoc judge, retired Justice Maqbool Baqar, held significant positions in the caretaker government while retired Justice Tariq Masood prolonged the military custody case of 100 PTI supporters.