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97th Anniversary of PLA hosted at GHQ Pakistan, China ties exceptional, based on unwavering belief in each other: COAS

Both militaries continue to engage in bilateral cooperation; Relations between Pakistan Army and Peoples Liberation Army are strong-Army Chief; No force can destroy brotherhood between two militaries: Zaidong.

RAWALPINDI (Agencies): Revitalising bilateral ties between Pakistan and China, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir has said that they "are exceptional and have always weathered the vicissitudes of the strategic environment with mutual trust and unwavering belief in each other's support".

The army chief made the remarks on the occasion of the 97th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China hosted at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, a statement is-

sued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday.

According to the military's media wing, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong was the chief guest on the occasion. Defence Attaché Major General Wang Zhong, Chinese Embassy officers and officials from the tri-services of Pakistan attended the event.

General Munir, while welcoming the Chinese guests, congratulated the PLA and praised its contribution to Chinese defence, security and the nation's

development.

During his speech, the army chief termed the Pak-China bilateral ties "exceptional" and based on "unwavering belief in each other's support".

"Relations between the Pakistan Army and the Peoples Liberation Army are strong and both militaries continue to engage in bilateral military cooperation, demonstrating the iron-clad brotherhood between the two countries," he concluded.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Zaidong

Continued on page 2

President, PM wish COVID-hit Joe Biden a speedy recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday expressed good wishes for the early recovery of President Joseph R. Biden of the United States of America, who has tested positive for COVID-19.

President Zardari conveyed his sincere hopes for President Biden's good health and well being, according to a President House statement.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has extended good wishes to US President Joe Biden for his "swift and complete" recovery after he tested positive for Covid-19 after which he went into isolation, which will take him off the election campaign trail for days.

In a post uploaded on X platform on Thursday morning, PM Shehbaz Sharif wrote: "Wishing President Biden swift and complete recovery from Covid. Good wishes."

May 9 cases: Qureshi shifted from Adiala jail to Lahore

RAWALPINDI (Online): PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi has been shifted from Adiala jail to Lahore. Jail sources told Online Shah Mehmood Qureshi was shifted from Adiala jail to Lahore under stringent security on Thursday Morning for appearance in Anti Terrorism Court (ATC).

Five tourists dead in road accident in Ziarat

ZIARAT (INP): At least five tourists were killed and two sustained injuries on Wednesday when their vehicle met with an accident in Ziarat city of Balochistan. According to police officials, rescue workers arrived at the scene upon receiving information that the tourists' vehicle met with the accident on Domera-Ziarat road.

All the victims and injured hailed from Quetta city of Balochistan and had arrived in Ziarat on a tour, police said.

Pak Railways announces fare increase from today

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Railways has announced a fare increase for all trains, with effect from Friday, July 19. PR notification issued here on Thursday stated that fares would be increased by one percent for all mail, express, inter-city, and passenger trains, including outsourced services. This adjustment was being implemented under the rationale of fare rationalization.

The fare for all freight and goods trains would see a two percent increase. All stations, booking offices, reservation offices, and relevant staff had been informed in this regard.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the reforms and digitisation of the Federal Board of Revenue.

PM Shehbaz directs increase of Appellate Tribunals to 100 for accelerated tax case handling

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday instructed that the number of Appellate Tribunals be increased to 100 to expedite the resolution of tax cases.

Chairing a review meeting on reforms and digitization in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the prime minister also directed an increase in the number of Appellate Tribunals for Customs cases and the creation of a dashboard to evaluate the performance of Tax Appellate Tribunals.

The prime minister stated that tax refund fraud amounting to Rs 800 billion was uncovered in the past four months, and emphasized further improvements to the tax refund system.

The prime minister expressed that increasing revenue was achievable through reforms in the FBR. He lamented the unfortunate and unnecessary

delays in many of the FBR's reform projects.

The prime minister emphasized zero tolerance for delays in sales tax refund payments and instructed the immediate formulation of a strategy to recover unlawfully issued refunds.

The prime minister directed the complete digitization of the Fraud Detection and Investigation Department of the FBR and the development of a strategy to centralize all ongoing reform projects within the FBR.

The prime minister instructed the relevant authorities to employ the latest technology and the best personnel for the digitization of the FBR.

Shehbaz Sharif instructed the implementation of a unified sales tax system for all taxpayers by October 2024.

The prime minister was briefed that a unified

sales tax return system, successfully implemented by the telecom sector, was being introduced for taxpayer convenience. FBR aimed to integrate with revenue authorities across the country through a unified sales tax platform.

The prime minister assured timely funding for upgrading the customs system and directed the FBR to devise a strategy for designing and implementing the new software system.

The prime minister was informed about the reforms in Inland Revenue and Customs, along with the progress achieved in digitizing the FBR in the last eight weeks.

The prime minister was informed that McKinsey, a globally recognized consultant, was overseeing the digitization process of the FBR, and positive outcomes from this

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti inspecting Museum during his visit to Central Police Officer Quetta. Commander 12 Corps Lt. General Rahat Naseem Ahmed Khan is also present

CM, Commander 12 Corps review security arrangements for Ashura in CPO Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti visited the Central Police Office Quetta to review the security arrangements made for the processions of Ashura in Quetta.

It was informed that the central procession of Ashura is being monitored through the CCTV cameras. In addition to this, the aerial surveillance is also being conducted through the drone cameras.

Moreover, the Chief Minister was also briefed about the security situation of the processions in other districts of the province.

Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti expressed satisfaction made for the Ashura-e-Muharram in Quetta and other parts of the province.

During the briefing, the

New case of Toshakhana: Imran, Bushra challenge their arrest in IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi have challenged in Islamabad High Court (IHC) their arrest in new case of Toshakhana.

PTI founder and Bushra Bibi have filed petition in IHC Thursday seeking court's orders for declaring their arrest illegal besides releasing them.

The petition said PTI founder and Bushra Bibi were arrested in other fake case without any justification after their acquittal in Nikah during iddat case for the sake of political victimization. The political oppo-

nents, federal and Punjab governments want to keep Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi under detention for long period. Both were arrested during the period when their petitions against their call up notices were pending hearing in IHC.

Arresting both of them when their petition was pending hearing is based on ill intent. Political opponents are using NAB for persistent political victimization. The superior courts have stressed in their decisions that arrest cannot be made merely on registration of case.

CM chairs meeting on preparation for CCI: GoB decides to present stance of province at federal level in wholehearted manner

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to present stance of the province at federal level and that in the upcoming meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI) in wholehearted manner.

The decision to this effect was made in a meeting chaired by the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti here on Thursday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included the parliamentary secretary for Inter-provincial Coordination, Ms.

The meeting reviewed the matters about upcoming meeting of the

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister said that the interests of province would be given preference in the next meeting of CCI at every cost, and all the decisions would be made keeping in view the public interest.

He said that it is the endeavour of provincial government to present the case of province at federal level in wholehearted manner and take practical steps for overall development and prosperity of the province resolving the issues of



Meena Majeed Baloch, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary, Inter-Provincial Coordination, Syed Sikandar Shah, Secretary Irrigation, Hafiz Abdul Majid, Secretary Irrigation, Bashir Ahmed Bazai besides other concerned high ups.

province with the federal government.

Moreover, the Chief Minister also reiterated his government's resolve to make utmost efforts to ensure acquisition of the receipts out of the province's resources from the federal government.

Governor thanks PM, his whole team for initiative: Quetta-Jeddah direct Umrah flights to start from August 6 thanks to Governor Balochistan

Sheikh Jaffar Mandokhail says people of province would be saved from hardships and inconvenience of travelling to Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, etc. in future with start of flights from Quetta to Jeddah to perform Umrah

Independent Report

QUETTA: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has decided to launch direct Umrah flights from Quetta on August 6.

The direct flights between Quetta-Jeddah would be operated twice in week, stated the General Manager PIA Balochistan, Abdul Ghaflar Miankhail in an official hand out issued here on Thursday.

The flights from Quetta to Jeddah would be operated on every Tuesday and Friday, for the reservation of seats have also been started, stated the General Manager PIA.

It may be mentioned here that the Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail had made sincere endeavours for launch of the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah for

those wanting to perform Umrah in Saudi Arabia.

In this regard, the Governor Balochistan had taken up the matter, actually the longstanding demand of people of the province with the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif during his one-on-one meeting with him (PM) during his recent visit to Quetta.

According to the official hand out, the Prime Minister had assured to the Governor that he would be hearing the good news about start of the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah.

Afterwards, the Governor Balochistan had also asked the Chairman and General Manager PIA Balochistan to take steps for operating the direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah.

Pakistan launches national drug survey to combat narcotics menace

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has initiated a nationwide survey to gather data on drug users, marking a significant step towards creating effective anti-narcotics strategies.

This embarked on a critical mission to combat drug abuse by conducting a national drug survey, the first in 11 years.

The security forces' clearance operation has been completed, securing the area from any potential danger.

drug users from across the country, including homes, educational institutions, and slums, providing valuable insights for anti-narcotics efforts.

The National Drug Survey will be a comprehensive and authoritative exercise, covering homes, educational institutions, slums, and other areas. The data collected will enable policymakers to make informed decisions in the fight against narcotics.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting of Committee regarding National Drug Survey.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong Maj Gen Wang Zhong, Defence Attaché, Chinese Embassy officials and officers from tri-services of Pakistan cutting cake at the 97th anniversary of the founding of Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) of China, hosted at the GHQ.

Issue of Article 6 against PTI leaders can be brought in Parliament: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarrar on Thursday said that ad hoc judges should be appointed as the constitution permits for this. He said that the matter of imposing Article 6 on PTI leaders could be brought to the Parliament for debate.

In a statement, the minister denied the news about the extension of the tenure

of Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa and said that because of the high pension bill, the debate about the extension of the tenure of government employees arose.

He said that in late April or early May, there was a meeting with the Chief Justice regarding the Judicial Commission in which he stated that he was not interested in extending the tenure.

Balochistan Police launches Online complain website in Central Police Office

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Police launched the Online Complain Website here on Thursday. The Provincial Ministers Mir Shoaib Nausherwan and Ms. Rahila Hameed Durrani formally inaugu-

Commandant Balochistan Constabulary, Agha Muhammad Yousaf, DIG Police Quetta, Aitezaz Ahmed Goraya, Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Lt. (Retd) Saad bin Asad and other senior police officers. While briefing the par-



rated the Police Online complain Website along with the Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh at the Central Police Office.

Also present on the occasion were the Additional Inspector General of Police, Muhammad Saeed Khan,

CM expresses satisfaction over successful ending of Ashura Muharram processions

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed satisfaction over successful ending of the Ashura-e-Muharram processions in Quetta and other districts of the province.

The Chief Minister praised performance of district administration, police, levies and Frontier Corps (FC) in this regard.

He said that all concerned departments en-

sured complete security of small and big processions of Ashura-e-Muharram in an excellent manner by demonstrating best performance.

The Chief Minister said that the district administration as well as jawans and personnels of police, Levies and FC have demonstrated excellent performance ensuring effective security of the Ashura processions while performing their duties, which is commendable.



QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti speaking to a delegation of divisional Presidents and General Secretaries of PPP who called on him under leadership of senior leader of the party, Senator Sardar Umar Gorgej

PTI demands issuance of reserved seats notification, CEC resignation

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has demanded the issuance of notification regarding allocation of reserved seats to the party, declaring imposing any ban on the PTI would tantamount to government's countdown. Talking to media men after attending joint parliamentary party meeting of the PTI and Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) in Islamabad on Thursday, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said the government was on "a collision course" with the judiciary, "It's time to get Supreme Court's decisions including the reserved seats one implemented," he added. Omar Ayub once again demanded the resignation of the chief election commissioner after the apex court's verdict to allocate reserved seats to the PTI. Shibli Faraz said the PTI getting back its "snatched" mandate. "The Supreme Court's decision has rocked the government and the rulers are running out of options," he added. Shibli Faraz further said that it is being said that the government is there only for 18 months after which and technocrats' set up will take over. According to sources, Gohar Ali Khan, Omar Ayub, Shibli Faraz, Sahibzada Hamid Raza and Sheikh Waqas Akram attended the joint parliamentary party meeting which was held at the Parliament House. The meeting was also attended by Asad Qaiser, Ali Muhammad Khan, Zartaj Gul, Atif Khan, Shandana Gulzar, Awb Abbas Pabbi, Mohsin Aziz, Faishak Saleem, Raja Nasir Abbas and Humayun Mohmand. The members discussed the four-point agenda including reviewing implementation of the Supreme Court's decision regarding reserved seats and gave their input, the sources said, adding the PTI leaders later stage a protest march outside the Parliament. Before the meeting, Gohar Ali Khan said that appointing ad hoc judges in the Supreme Court is meant to undermine the apex court's decision on reserved seats. "We will respond to any government's decision to ban the PTI. Nothing can challenge the public's power," Gohar said.

Pakistan, China ties exceptional...

Continued from page 1 thanked COAS Munir for hosting the event for the 97th anniversary of the founding of the PLA. "Pakistani military has always been at the forefront of countering terrorism and has made great sacrifices for the peace and stability of Pakistan and the region," the diplomat said. "We stand ready to work with our brethren to combat terrorism and firmly believe that no force can destroy the iron-clad friendship between China and Pakistan and the brotherhood between the two militaries", he concluded. Prior to this prestigious event, Chinese Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) Liu Jianchao paid a three-day visit to Pakistan last month to co-chair the third meeting of the Pakistan-China Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM) for the political parties on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In his meeting with COAS Munir, he had lauded the Pakistan Army's support in providing security to Chinese nationals and projects in the country, according to the ISPR. They had also discussed matters of mutual interest, including regional peace and stability, and reviewed progress on the multibillion-dollar CPEC project.

PM Shehbaz directs increase...

Continued from page 1 initiative have begun to surface. The PM was informed that there were 83,579 tax-related cases amounting to Rs 3.2 trillion pending in various courts and tribunals. It was conveyed in the forum that during the current government's tenure, several initiatives have been undertaken to handle tax cases. In the past four months alone, courts have settled 63 cases amounting to approximately Rs 44 billion. The prime minister was briefed that modern technology has identified 4.9 million individuals capable of paying taxes. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif instructed to prioritize bringing wealthy individuals and capitalists into the tax net, ensuring no additional burden on the poor. During the briefing, the PM was informed that since April 1, 2024, 150,000 retailers have been registered using the FBR Trader Friendly mobile phone application. The PM instructed to maintain consultations with retailers to enhance the effectiveness of this system. The prime minister also instructed to prepare proposals for reforming the Pakistan Revenue Automation Authority (PRAL). The PM was informed that the implementation of the Integrated Transit

Ahsan Iqbal reviews implementation status of CPEC-related decisions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal presided over a meeting on Thursday to review the implementation status of the decisions regarding CPEC projects, especially those made during Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to China. "There is complete agreement between the leaderships of China and Pakistan on the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, also known as CPEC 2.0," he said while chairing the meeting. The minister said his visit to China last week was a continuation of the PM's discussions with the Chinese President and Prime Minister, which focused on the strategic implementation of these decisions to ensure the success of CPEC 2.0. Mentioning the global interest in China's economic development model, he said world leaders were keen to benefit from China's innovative approach. "As of 2018, Pakistan was the biggest beneficiary of China's economic model and open market due to CPEC," he remarked. However, he said, progress slowed down after 2018, leaving Pakistan behind while other regional corridors completed their projects. Despite these setbacks, Ahsan Iqbal stressed the continued importance of CPEC due to Pakistan's strategic geographical position. He urged the Ministry of Railways to expedite the documentation and preparatory steps for the ML1 project. "During my recent visit to China, we agreed to convene an early meeting of the Joint Financing Committee for the ML1 project, which will take place within a month," he announced. He stressed the need for full preparation by the Ministry of Railways and other concerned departments for this critical meeting. "Given CPEC's unique status, there are ample growth opportunities. To capitalize on these opportunities, we must be serious about completing the projects included in Phase 2.0," he added. The minister also called for a collaborative effort from all relevant ministries and institutions to ensure the timely completion of CPEC projects. "The governments of China and Pakistan have agreed to start work on the ML1 project soon. The duration and stages of completion will be determined in the upcoming meeting of the Joint Financing Committee."

Advertisement for 'Bharat Jyoti' featuring a portrait of a man and text in Urdu/Hindi. Includes contact information and a QR code.

TENDER NOTICE

Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The Executive Engineer (Road) CW, PP&H Department District Dera Bugti invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates. Tender Fee Rs. 1000/- and Bid Security 2% for each work.

Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Works, E/Cost. Lists construction projects like bridge at Ghazi Langar and Dera Bugti with associated costs.

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 98,278,029 PKR amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-4 and above (Upto 200 million) In Relevant Category And Specialized Code is CE02(i) (Bridge Structures), CE01-(f) (Road and Pavements Drainage & Retaining Structure), Green Challan of Rs. 1000 CDR 2% of Estimated Cost 02 Bridge work undertaken and completed amounting to Rs. 60,000 Million in last 05 Years Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 05 August, 2024 till 12:00 PM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 01:00 PM on EPPS System Address: Office of Executive Engineer (Road) CW, PP&H Department, District Dera Bugti Phone no: 0835410560 Fax no: 0835410562 Email: muhammadjaz23821@gmail.com

Executive Engineer (Roads) CW, PP&H Department District Dera Bugti. PRQ No.273/18-07-2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Assistant Director Local Government & Rural Dev. Dept. Pishin is pleased to invite sealed percentage-based bids as per the rates by BCSR-2023 (amended up-to-date) from interested firms/suppliers/contractors having valid registration with PEC, Income Tax/GST and BRA for the following works under the PSPD 2022-25 where the time limit for mentioned projects is 30th of June, 2025 which is subjected to availability of funds. The Bid security in the form of Call Deposit for undermentioned works is 02% of estimated cost.

Table with 3 columns: S.#, NAME OF SCHEME/S, E/COST. Lists construction projects like drain and sewerage system in Killi Shinughr District with a cost of 25.00 M.

METHOD OF PROCUREMENT: The procurement shall be made in accordance with Baluchistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (BPPRA) rules-2014 (amended up-to-date). Single Stage - Two envelope procedure will be followed for this open competitive bidding. Tender/bidding documents can be obtained from the office of undersigned on submission of tender fee of Rs.2000/= (Non-refundable), deposited through Green challan in A/C:4157218156 NBP ADLG Pishin in NBP in the favor of undersigned. The same bidding documents can also be downloaded from B-PPRA website. The name of firm/s and address must be clearly mentioned on the green challan along with written application on letter head of the firm/s. Bid Validity period is 90 days. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA OF BIDDER: Bidding firms must have valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in category C-6 or above along with specialized codes as per bidding documents. The Bidding firms must be registered in Income tax/GST with FBR and BRA and their names must be in Active Tax Payer Lists (ATL). Only one bid can be submitted against one NTN (B-PPRA Rule 25-3). Firms must provide fresh No blacklisting and No litigation declarations on 100/- pkr attested affidavit. Authorized representatives of bidding firms must submit fresh Power of Attorney on 100/- pkr attested affidavit. For further details, read evaluation criteria in Bidding Documents. BIDS SUBMISSION & DEADLINE: The Technical and Financial proposals by bidding firms must be delivered to the address mentioned below before or on 02-August-2024 till 11:00 am. The documents received after the due date and time will not be accepted. BIDS OPENING: The envelope containing "Technical Bids" will only be opened on the same day i.e. 02-August-2024 at 12:00 pm. Whereas, Financial bids of technically qualified bidders will be open afterwards. TERMS & CONDITIONS: (1) Bids not accompanied call deposit will be rejected. (2) Bids received after specified date and time will be rejected. (3) The conditional and telegraphic bids will not be accepted. (4) Bids from Blacklisted firm/s will also be rejected. ADDRESS: Office of Assistant Director LG & RD District Pishin at Deputy Commissioner Complex, Pishin Bypass, District Pishin. Tel No: 0826-420300.

(ASSISTANT DIRECTOR) Local Govt & Rural Dev Dept, Pishin. PRQ No.296/18-07-2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER. EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PROJECT DIVISION I QUETTA. The EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PROJECT DIVISION I QUETTA invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates Bid Security 4% and Tender Fee Rs.2000/- for each work. Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Works, E/Cost. Lists construction projects like drains at Agriculture Extension and Mir Haqmal with costs ranging from 49,523,800 to 49,524,300.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER. The Assistant Director Local Government & Rural Dev. Dept. Pishin is pleased to invite sealed percentage-based bids as per the rates by BCSR-2023 (amended up-to-date) from interested firms/suppliers/contractors having valid registration with PEC, Income Tax/GST and BRA for the following works under the PSPD 2022-25 where the time limit for mentioned projects is 30th of June, 2025 which is subjected to availability of funds. The Bid security in the form of Call Deposit for undermentioned works is 02% of estimated cost. Table with 3 columns: S.#, NAME OF SCHEME/S, E/COST. Lists construction projects like road in Killi Abdullah Khan Killi Gulbaran Killi with a cost of 20.00 M.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER. The Executive Engineer Urban Planning & Development Department Makran Division at Kech invites sealed percentage tender based on composite schedule of rates 2023, G.O.B. amended up-to-date from interested contractors / firms for the work listed below: Earnest Money 2%, Tender Fee Rs.1500/- and Time limit 30-06-2025 for each work. Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Work, E/Cost. Lists solar WSS scheme projects for Sebdan, Bahot, Chhat and Nigwar districts with costs ranging from 44306934/- to 49519915/-.

CANCELLATION. The office of the Assistant Director Local Government Sibi called NIT with PRQ No. 11/01-07-2024. NIT published in Daily newspapers Quetta on 01-07-2024. The Development works under PSPD 2024-25 is hereby cancelled.

SENIOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, LOCAL GOVT DEPTT, SIBI. PRQ No.293/18-07-2024

EXTENSION IN DATE. The tenders under PSPD for the year 2024-25 are invited vide this office NIT No.640-41 dated 03/07/2024 having TS NO. 242507479423, TS NO. 242507479893, TS NO. 242507479543, TS NO. 242507479713, TS NO. 242507479933, TS NO. 242507479993, TS NO. 242507479123, TS NO. 242507479213, TS NO. 242507477283, TS NO. 242507480163, TS NO. 242507477713, TS NO. 242507477943, TS NO. 242507476513, TS NO. 242507480173, TS NO. 242507476623, TS NO. 242507476963, TS NO. 242507473063, TS NO. 242507480183, TS NO. 242507473373, TS NO. 242507473433, TS NO. 242507478453, TS NO. 242507480113, TS NO. 242507478543, TS NO. 242507478903, TS NO. 242507472533, TS NO. 242507480203, TS NO. 242507472803, TS NO. 242507472873, TS NO. 242507471833, TS NO. 242507471963, TS NO. 242507472053, TS NO. 242507472143 which were Published in Newspapers vide PRQ No. 91/04-07-2024. The date of opening of tenders is hereby extended & scheduled on 16-08-2024. Other terms & condition will remain the same as published before.

Executive Engineer, Public Health Engineering, Division Loralai. PRQ No.284/18-07-2024

CANCELLATION. The Tenders called for Construction of various water supply schemes under PSPD No.5416, 5422, 5418, 5521, 5527, Under PSPD 2024-2025, District Chaman, which is opened on Dated:23-07-2024, under PRQ No.95/04-07-2024, Published in daily News papers. The TSE Nos are as under:- TSE242507482593, TSE242507482763, TSE242507482913, TSE242507483093, TSE242507483413, TSE242507483453, TSE242507483503, TSE242507483533, TSE242507483583, TSE242507483663, TSE242507483733, TSE242507483803, TSE242507483913, TSE242507484023, TSE242507484123, TSE242507484403, TSE242507484593, TSE242507484773, TSE242507484923, TSE242507485023, TSE242507485073, TSE242507485093, TSE242507485163, TSE242507485263. Now the same Tender is cancelled due to Authorization awaited from department, the same scheme will be tendered after received Authorization from department.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PHE DIVISION CHAMAN. PRQ No.286/18-07-2024

Rubina emphasizes introducing Intl standard skill training program for beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid has underscored the importance of introducing a quality, international-standard skill training programme for BISP's beneficiaries and their family members.

During a meeting with a delegation from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) led by Sofia Shakil, Director of Human and Social Development, Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized that this initiative aims to facilitate the poverty graduation of beneficiary families, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to the national economy.

The meeting, held at the BISP Headquarters on Thursday, included notable

participants such as Commission Leader/Principal Social Protection Specialist, Xin Long and Senior Social Protection Officer, Omer Bin Zia.

Senator Rubina Khalid also highlighted the critical need for human resource development, emphasizing the skills and certifications that are in high demand internationally, such as healthcare and hospitality management. "By equipping our beneficiaries with these skills, we aim to open up employment opportunities abroad, thereby enhancing their socio-economic prospects," she stated.

Sofia Shakil acknowledged the significance of skill development, praising BISP's dynamic and institutionalized mechanisms.

She expressed ADB's commitment to expanding its support on the supply side and looked forward to enhancing collaboration with BISP on education, health and nutrition particularly at the provincial level.

Earlier, the ADB's fact-finding mission also met with Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad, to discuss the modalities for additional financing of the Integrated Social Protection Development Programme. Principal Public Sector Specialist, Laisasia Tora gave a detailed briefing on the programme.

Secretary BISP emphasized the importance of utilizing the BISP's National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) database and expansion of the Adolescent Girls' Programme.



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, talking to police officials during his visit to various imam-bargahs in the federal capital on the day of Ashura

Foolproof security measures ensure for Ashura processions

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited various imam-bargahs in the federal capital on the day of Ashura, a public relations officer said.

During the visit, he met with the officers on duty and encouraged them. He reviewed the security arrangements for the procession and directed the officers to ensure foolproof security measures.

On this occasion, he said that Islamabad Police and the district administration have made foolproof arrangements for the security of various processions on the day of Ashura. Since the first of Muharram, all processions have been provided with foolproof security.

He further said that the security at any point on the day of Ashura is not compromised. A search was also conducted within a five-kilometer radius of the main procession routes.

Officers from the Special Branch and the bomb disposal squad were present to ensure the security arrangements for the main procession.

In addition, police officers, civil administration, and personnel from Pakistan Rangers were also performing their duties. He added that the organizers of the procession and scouts are standing with us for comprehensive security arrangements.

Islamabad Police has taken foolproof measures for the security of the procession. Mobile services have not been suspended anywhere, he added.

He further said that, the Ashura procession is extremely important for Islamabad and Rawalpindi. We have a great responsibility, and we are always ready to fulfill it. The procession routes were completely closed off with barbed wire and tents.

The processions were monitored through drone cameras and Safe City surveillance cameras. Participants were allowed entry only through specific routes, and they were searched with metal detectors, with scouts assisting the police in the search process.

Parking for specific vehicles and motorcycles for the participants was kept away from the procession route.

Snipers were deployed on rooftops to ensure effective security for the procession. On the special directions of the IGP Islamabad, all senior police officers kept reviewing the security arrangements for the procession.

He further said that every officer of Islamabad Police is performing their duty diligently, which is commendable.

We will stand side by side as a team to ensure the protection of every individual's life and property. More than 16,000 officers of Islamabad Police will perform their duties from the first of Muharram until the 40th day.

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Missing children safely recovered upon arrival at Islamabad Airport

ISLAMABAD (Online): In a significant achievement, two missing children were safely recovered upon their arrival at Islamabad Airport from Bishkek.

This marks the first successful case under the newly integrated INTERPOL system with the Integrated Border Management Information System (IBMIS), a major initiative spearheaded by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) under the direction of Director General Ahmad Ishaque Jahangir, PSP, PPM.

The children, Muhammad Huzaifa and Ahmed Umair Abid, were reported missing by the Punjab Police in a case registered at Police Station Barki, Lahore in 2022.

In response, NCB-INTERPOL Pakistan issued yellow notices to facilitate their recovery. The INTERPOL Find System,

which was integrated into the FIA's operations in April this year, played a crucial role in this successful operation.

The newly implemented system connects the immigration database with INTERPOL's global database, enabling efficient tracking of missing persons and stolen passports. It also aids in the apprehension of wanted criminals upon their arrival in Pakistan.

The close collaboration between INTERPOL Islamabad and FIA Immigration Islamabad was instrumental in the recovery. FIA Immigration Islamabad has handed over the children to the concerned police officials for further action.

DG FIA commended the team of INTERPOL and Immigration at Islamabad Airport for their exemplary performance.

AIOU launches programs for skilled workforce, employment opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Vice Chancellor Allama Iqbal Open University has instructed all the four faculties of the university to introduce programs that produce a skilled workforce in line with market demands, aiming to secure honourable employment for students upon graduation. According to the AIOU, this directive aligns with his vision and mission to modernize the university's educational programs and introduce job-oriented programs.

In response to these instructions, the Faculty of Sciences has introduced new programs for the Autumn Semester 2024 admissions, including BSc (Honors) Agriculture, BS Physics (with a Data Science minor), BS Health and Physical Education, and BS Information Technology, along with new certificate courses in AutoCAD (Civil).



ISLAMABAD: The main procession of Ashura day coming from Imam Bargah Ashiq Hussain Teeli Mohalla passing through Committee Chowk in the city.

Investigation into Arshid murder case: IG Islamabad, Chief of JIT to appear in IHC on July 25

ISLAMABAD (Online): IG Islamabad and JIT chief will appear in Islamabad High Court (IHC) on July 25 being summoned by the court in the case pertaining to investigation into Arshid Sharif murder case.

They will present record in respect of cases registered in Pakistan.

The court has summoned Attorney General (AG) as well.

During the previous hearing Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamir Farooq had remarked 44 meetings took place and he had no concern with them. Tell me if some thing has been done or not.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) said in the incident took place in Kenya.

Nothing can be done unless cooperation is extended from Kenya. Some progress has been made. Record of all the cases registered in Pakistan has been obtained.

CJ IHC Aamir Farooq had heard the petition seeking formation of Judicial Commission (JC) to investigate Arshid Sharif murder case. Court had directed IG Islamabad and head of JIT to appear in person. The court summoned Attorney General (AG) also on July 25 for court's assistance.

The police told the court red warrants of two accused Waqar and Khurram who are living in Kenya have been issued.

AAG Munawar Iqbal Dogal told the court JIT has completed the investigation to the extent of Pakistan.

Consultation is underway on the matter of MLAs agreement. 44 meetings of JIT have been held.

The CJ IHC remarked incident took place in Kenya and nothing can be done unless cooperation is extended from there.

The CJ IHC remarked then say this nothing has been done so far.

AAG replied No Sir, some progress has been made. The record of all cases registered in Pakistan has been obtained.

The CJ IHC remarked then what happened. What final result has been achieved. We should ask AG to appear in the court in person.

The court adjourned the hearing of the case till July 25.

Rana Afzal says: Pak ties with neighbor countries much better than previous times

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to PM Rana Ishaan Afzal on Thursday said Pakistan's ties with all neighbors have improved significantly compared to previous times as his government was trying its level best to create "a balance in relations with all countries" in line with national interests and the prerequisites for peace.

Talking to a Private news channel, he said Pakistan always played an active role in peace and stability in the region, adding,

that Pakistan believes in maintaining a "balanced" relationship with all "friendly countries. He also urged the world countries to work jointly to meet the challenges of climate change, poverty and resolution of conflicts for the restoration of peace.

"We want to resolve all outstanding issues with India through dialogue", he said, adding, we need a continued and uninterrupted dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue which is our only way forward".

Police official dies, three injured as van overturns on motorway

ISLAMABAD (APP): One Police official died and three others were injured when a Police van met an accident at Colonel Sher Khan Interchange on M-1 here on Thursday.

According to National Highways and Motorway Police North Zone spokesman, Muhammad Saqib, the police van was coming to Islamabad from Peshawar when it overturned as one of its back tyres burst. The six police officials present in the van were shifted to Mardan Medical Hospital.



ISLAMABAD: Citizens spending their evening hours in Fatima Jinnah Park having fun and walk in the Federal Capital.

Aitzaz moves SC for early hearing of his case on recovery of missing persons

ISLAMABAD (Online): Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan has filed a petition in Supreme Court (SC) for early hearing of the case filed in connection with recovery of missing persons.

It has been said in the petition SC had heard Aitzaz Ahsan petition on January 03. SC had sought details from federal government regarding missing persons. Over six months have passed, the case could not be fixed for hearing again.

The court had sought

written assurances from the government that enforced disappearances will not take place. The enforced disappearances are still continuing despite court's orders.

PTI member of assembly Sahibzada Amir Sultan, Muazzam Jatoui and Atta ur Rehman of social media have been lifted.

Aitzaz Ahsan has taken plea in his petition that his case regarding enforced disappearances be fixed for hearing next week.

Rain likely at isolated places; humid weather to continue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast mainly hot and humid weather for most parts of the country.

However, rain-windstorm/thundershower is likely at isolated places in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, Potohar Region, Islamabad, Punjab, southeastern/upper Sindh and northeastern Balochistan.

As per the synoptic situation, monsoon currents from Arabian Sea were penetrating upper and central parts of the country.

A westerly wave was present over upper parts and likely to affect central and upper parts from today.

During the last 24 hours, rain-windstorm/thundershower occurred in Punjab, Islamabad, upper Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, southeast/lower Sindh, northeastern Balochistan and Kashmir, while heavyfalls also occurred at isolated places.

Hot and humid weather prevailed over other parts of the country.

The rainfall recorded was Punjab: Jhelum 54mm, Sialkot (City) 47, Airport 25, Hafizabad 40, Mangla 38, Gujranwala, Mandi Bahaudin 27, Rawalpindi (Chaklala) 21, Shamsabad 10, Kacheri 06, Sheikhupura 21, Islamabad (Golra 12, Zeropoint 08.

Rana hold PTI govt responsible for prevailing economic crisis, inflation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs and Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah Thursday said the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was responsible for the current economic crisis. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the economic measures taken by the incumbent government are yielding positive results, adding, that the situation will further improve in the coming months and inflation will be reduced. Talking about banning PTI, he said the federal cabinet will finally approve the declaration on whether to move a reference

to the Supreme Court seeking a ban on PTI or not, adding, that the government will take any decision under the law and constitutional rules. He said we respect the judiciary wholeheartedly and we have the legal right to appeal against the decision and the government is going to file the review petition. The government would not confuse this constitutional issue with politics, he added. To another question, he criticized that initially government had offered peaceful dialogue with PTI but they repeatedly refused, adding, that Khan neither believes in the democratic process nor his political agenda.

09 outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police apprehended 09 outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered drugs and weapons from their possession, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Islamabad Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directions, the Tarnol police team arrested three accused namely Hameed Ullah, Sajjad Khan and Bilal Khan involved in drug peddling activities and recovered 530 gram heroin from his possession.

DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza directed the police officials to further intensify the crackdown against the criminal elements. "Safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard".

Azerbaijan, Pakistan join hands to beautify Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark initiative to enhance the beauty of the Federal Capital, Chairman Horticulture Experts Team of Azerbaijan recently met with CDA Chairman, Mohammad Ali Randhawa, to kickstart the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Baku and Islamabad.

Under this collaboration, horticulture experts from Azerbaijan will initially focus on renovating and landscaping four key locations including Srinagar Highway, Shakar Parian, Saidpur Village, and Melody Food Park.

This effort is part of a larger plan by the CDA's environment teams, which are already carrying out landscaping work in various other areas of the city.

Randhawa, emphasized the urgency of the project, directing that work on the Islamabad beautification plan should commence immediately.

He stressed that horticulture work should be conducted simultaneously at all sites across the city to ensure a cohesive and swift transformation.

In addition to the landscaping efforts, the Engineering Wing of Baku will provide expert technical advice and support, enhancing the project's overall efficiency and effectiveness.

Azerbaijan will also gift various horticulture tools and machinery to Pakistan, significantly boosting the local capability for such endeavours.

Moreover, the horticulture experts from Baku will establish a nursery in Islamabad, further contributing to the city's green initiatives.

Chairman Randhawa highlighted the importance of setting clear timelines for the renovation of all targeted areas, ensuring that the project proceeds smoothly and punctually.

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Austria Andrea Wicke on behalf of the Austrian president, pinning the gold medal 'Decoration of Honour in Gold for Services to the Republic of Austria' on the protocol officer of the embassy, Ashraf Khan at an investiture ceremony at her residence



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Austria Andrea Wicke on behalf of the Austrian president, pinning the gold medal 'Decoration of Honour in Gold for Services to the Republic of Austria' on the protocol officer of the embassy, Ashraf Khan at an investiture ceremony at her residence

UNDP delegation meets Convener of Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Thursday met with Bilal Azhar Kayani, the Convener of the Parliamentary Taskforce on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The delegation included Regional Advisor Najia Hashemee, Chief Technical Advisor Mary Cummins, Deputy Chief Technical Advisor Ali Al-Bayati, and Program Advisor M. Qasim Janjua.

The delegation briefed the Convener on UNDP's interest in providing assistance and facilitation to the Parliamentary Taskforce on several SDG goals: Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

They also discussed plans to initiate a five-year project titled "Integrated Governance Inclusion Program," set to begin in January 2025 and conclude in December 2029.

During the meeting, Bilal Azhar Kayani elaborated on the plans of the Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs. He explained that the task force has divided the 17 SDG goals into four categories defined by the United Nations—People, Prosperity, Planet (Earth), and a combined category of Peace & Partnerships—to ensure the dedicated and effective pursuit of the goals.

Each sub-group within the task force has a sub-convenor representing one of the four major parliamentary political parties, both genders, and both houses of Parliament to promote bipartisanship and gender equality.

The UNDP delegation expressed confidence in Kayani's leadership and agreed to extend assistance and support.

They aim to maintain a meaningful working relationship with various UN departments and to conduct, participate in, and facilitate sessions aimed at knowledge-building and capacity-building for MPs.



ISLAMABAD: Children playing in Fatima Jinnah Park in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority clears encroachment at Pir Wadhari Mor to restore its original beauty of the city in Federal Capital.

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Independent

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A way forward

In the midst of the storm triggered by the government's ill-advised announcement about banning the PTI, there is a ray of hope. Aide to the prime minister Rana Sanaullah clarified that the decision had yet to be okayed by the cabinet. He reportedly told a local publication late Monday that while the government has not finalised its decision, it saw only two choices before it: talks, or all-out war. Mr Sanaullah regretted the fact that PTI founder Imran Khan had not been amenable to talks.

A day later, Deputy PM Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif indicated that the matter would be taken forward in consultation with the government's allies and parliament. While the government's stance reflects a paucity of ideas, it is important to note that negotiations and consultation are seemingly not off the table. Before political leaders inflict more damage, they must give talks a chance.

If direct negotiations are not possible, one option the government must consider is to form a parliamentary Committee of the Whole comprising all current lawmakers. The entire gamut of major challenges should be put up for debate before this committee, including security, economic issues and the prevailing socio-political instability. Doing so will help take the attention away from the daily ugliness that defines politics today. It may even provide an opportunity to reset the political narrative: it is unconscionable that all politics is being dominated by the travails and intrigues of a handful of individuals while the masses suffer. Leaders from both sides of the aisle may take the debate as an opportunity to demonstrate to their voters that they are not single-issue politicians; that they are cognisant of the challenges before them and have the capacity and will to work them out.

During this time, the political environment should be improved for there to be constructive engagement between the rival factions. It is the responsibility of the parties in government, as wielders of state power, to create the conditions necessary for constructive talks. It is extremely counter-productive for ministers to come on TV and endorse the ongoing victimisation of political opponents, as there is a very real risk that the short-sighted policies being adopted by various state institutions, which are being celebrated uncritically by the government, may end up sabotaging all hopes for greater 'istehkam'. Stability can only return when the cycle of violence stops. The government would do well to heed these words.

Meanwhile, the PTI must provide a realistic framework for at least the first few rounds of engagements, which preferably does not involve impossible preconditions. A rigid approach will only extend the party's needless suffering till the government breaks, while a give-and-take approach may yield better results. Politics should not be reduced to a zero-sum game.

Rafia Zakaria

One of the best gifts an artist — in this case, a visual artist — gave me was to show me what she called her 'rejection folder'. I had only begun to write, and I had been doing what writers are in the habit of doing — complaining about all the places that had rejected my writing. "Look at this folder," she told me, "and I have several more." She added, "If you want to be a writer, the hardest thing you must learn to endure is rejection. You have got to develop a thick skin and you have to conquer your ego, and keep trying and trying and trying." She was, and is, a very successful artist, and I took her words seriously.

Many eminent authors have said the same thing. Stephen King, one of the most prolific authors writing today, tells the story of how he became an author. As a teenager, this famous author of books like *Misery* and *The Shining*

had begun to write short stories. According to King, he began to type out these stories and send them to magazines to be published. Inevitably, the stories would be returned to him with rejection letters. The teenage King, at this point, stuck a nail in the wall and hung his rejection letters on it. By the time he was 14, King had so many rejection letters on the nail that there was no room for more. At this point, he went and got a much bigger nail and fixed that to the wall. The key to becoming a writer, if you really want to be one, according to him, is simply to put a bigger nail in the wall. If you can be accepting of rejection — and indeed, writing for publishing is an exercise in just that; ie, a submerging of one's ego — then you can be a writer.

Of course, this is not the only way to become an author. In terms of skill, the most important exercise is to read good writing. The easy and wide availability of the internet means that increasingly

good writing is widely and freely available. Websites such as The Guardian, for instance, are still accessible without a subscription, regardless of where one is in the world; other aggregators such as Arts & Letters Daily collect the best writing from around the internet — again much of it for free. These are not 'easy' but edifying reads, in the sense that they encourage both thought and effort towards improving one's language and one's intellectual capacity.

The consequence of all this is still not good writing. As another author, Ira Glass (of the show *This American Life*), once said, the consequence of reading a lot of good writing is that one becomes aware of just how not good your own writing is. This, ironically, is an important step in the process; ie, knowing that one's writing is not good and, despite this somewhat dispiriting knowledge, continuing to write. Discernment then

— knowing what writing is good, what can transport you into another world or into another thought without you remembering that you are reading another person's words — is crucial. Good writers can do this effortlessly; their words are amorphous on the page and merge with your subjectivity, your thoughts, and your individual experience in a manner that you are no longer aware of the boundary between them and yourself.

In learning discernment, the young writer — and I do not mean young in years, but a writer who has just begun to write — learns that the effort is not to become a writer like some other writer but to hone your own craft; to engage in the process of constantly becoming better such that the boundaries between your words and the readers' thoughts become ever more blurred.

All this is the story of published writing. Writing does not have to

be published to be valuable or to benefit. One of the most curious and inexplicable magic that writing can confer is that, while sitting before the blank page or screen, it allows our minds to distil what is true and most essential to us. When we speak, it is to engage others, and in so doing, we can slip into inauthenticity and artifice. We can start to say what they wish to hear or say, what we wish were true about ourselves rather than what is.

Writing is a monologue with the self; there is nothing between the person and the page. For this reason, the likelihood of the truth emerging from within oneself and into the world, from the subconscious into the conscious, is great. The value of this writing is arguably far greater than writing for the sake of being published, because as Carl Jung, the famous psychoanalyst, once said, the subconscious will continue to control you until it is brought into the realm of

the conscious. We only become aware of our patterns when we are able to understand what lies deep in our psyche and generate them.

Writing of this last kind is powerful also because it allows a person to create their own narrative. Joan Didion, the American author, titled her book *We Tell Ourselves Stories in Order to Live*, but the truth is that when we tell our own stories, we can live with greater ease and a sense of control that is not mere perception or illusion.

The most powerful gift that writing has to offer anyone who wishes to avail it is to free that person from a slavish submission to the opinions and evaluations of others; it can transform tragedy into trials that can be overcome, disability into challenges met, lack of privilege into hardship endured. There is no ceremony or ritual that marks any person as a writer except the simple yet unimaginably significant act of starting to write. — Courtesy Dawn

Shadow of authoritarianism**Zahid Hussain**

It is a desperate move that may bring down the entire edifice. The plan to ban the most popular political party in the country is the most senseless, self-destructive action the government can take. It is nothing short of harakiri. Whether or not the decision is implemented, its very announcement has jolted the foundations of the existing political power structure. The ruling coalition is already in tatters.

It was quite a spectacle as a frothing, fumbling federal information minister announced the decision not only to ban the PTI, but also to start sedition proceedings against the party's leader Imran Khan, and former president Arif Alvi. Frustration was palpable when he also vented his anger against the top judiciary, implying partisanship. He was all over the place.

The latest apex court ruling on the reserved seats in favour of the PTI seems to have rattled the ruling PML-N and the security establishment. The perceived pushback by

the judges has come as a serious blow to the military-backed dispensation.

Not only does the court order give the PTI its due share of reserved seats in the National Assembly, it also recognises it as a parliamentary party. The judges have tried to remedy some of the wrongs that had made the legitimacy of the Feb 8 election questionable.

With the redistribution of the reserved seats, the PTI will emerge as the single largest party in the Lower House. It may not affect the majority of the PML-N-led coalition government, but the loss of some two dozen reserved seats will end its two-thirds majority in both Houses, which is required to make amendments to the Constitution.

The majority decision by the full bench of the Supreme Court was a damning indictment of the establishment's efforts to suppress the PTI. The quashing of the conviction of Imran Khan and his wife in the illegal marriage case by a sessions court last week has further frustrated the much-weakened hybrid dispensation, which seems to have lost all control.

The former prime minister has already been acquitted in the other two cases in which he was convicted on the eve of the Feb 8 polls. Fresh cases have been framed in order to prevent his release. But, behind bars, Khan remains the most powerful political leader threatening the establishment-dominated regime.

The reckless decision to ban the party is yet another sign of desperation to hold onto sliding power. It has put the entire system at the stake. It is evident that the establishment that has propped up a tottering ruling coalition is behind the plan. The decision has obviously been approved by Nawaz Sharif, the former three-time prime minister who calls the shots as head of the ruling PML-N. It is ironic that a leader who himself was removed from power some years ago has become an instrument in the establishment's game plan. He seems not to have learnt any lesson from his own personal political history.

While the PML-N claims that all coalition partners are on board, statements from the leaders of some parties in the alliance expose the divide within. For instance, some PPP leaders said that their party had not been consulted on the decision to ban the PTI, though there is still some ambiguity about its position on the issue. With the presidency and some other constitutional positions being held by the party, it remains to be seen how the PPP resists pressure from the establishment.

Any support for the decision to ban the PTI will destroy the democratic credentials of a party that has itself been a victim of the establishment's machinations. The PPP must make its position clear.

With no major political party supporting the PML-N action, the establishment stands isolated. It is unlikely that any reference on banning the PTI will be ratified by the apex court, which has already declared the PTI a political party.

There have been a few examples in the

country's history of a mainstream political party being outlawed. But it has never helped to attempt to eliminate a party's popular support base. One such case was that of the National Awami Party, which re-emerged as the Awami National Party after the ban. Similarly, the PPP faced restrictions by Gen Musharraf's military government in the 2002 elections and had to contest under the banner of PPP Parliamentarians.

Even if the PTI is banned, its support base will not diminish. The establishment did everything to keep the PTI out of the elections but failed to prevent the people from voting for the candidates it supported. Had the election results not been manipulated, the party would have won a majority in parliament. The installation of a government with questionable legitimacy and total dependence on the establishment has been a major cause of the continuing political instability in the country.

Despite all the efforts to demolish it, the PTI remains the most

powerful political force in the country. The latest Supreme Court ruling has given the party an immense boost and has increased the concerns of the establishment and ruling alliance. The decision to ban the party and charge its leaders with treason reflects a state of panic, which it is feared, may lead to more thoughtless action by the weakened hybrid rulers to suppress whatever is left of the democratic process.

There is loud talk of the possibility of a state of emergency being imposed, which would curtail judicial powers. The shadow of authoritarianism is looming large. Any such move would be disastrous for the country, which is facing multiple challenges.

Not only is the economy in dire straits, a serious national security challenge in the form of escalating terrorist attacks that are claiming the lives of a growing number of soldiers also exists. Pakistan needs political reconciliation rather than confrontation as it faces an existentialist threat.

After the fall**Mahir Ali**

It's emblematic of the current moment in American politics that the incumbent president's physical and mental health remains a bigger cause for concern than that of his challenger even after the latter survived an assassination attempt.

After informing his Praetorian guard that he was keen to be reunited with his shoes, Donald Trump, a couple of streaks of blood running down his face from where a sniper's bullet had grazed his ear, told his Secret Service protectors to wait while he pumped his fist and encouraged his audience to 'Fight, fight, fight!' before he was led offstage. The clenched fist went up once again as he entered a black van.

Images from the incident will no doubt enhance Trump's chances of re-election four years after a defeat that many of his supporters believe was unfairly engineered. His biggest advantage, though, remains his doddering opponent in the race who is barely able to walk, let alone convincingly run. The Democratic Party ought to have recognised long before the presidential debate debacle of June 27 that relying on Joe Biden to defeat Trump a second time was a mug's game. It has been fairly obvious for what in political terms is an eternity that a physically and intellectually enfeebled president isn't up to the task.

Biden's apparent personal conviction that only he can stave off the serious risk of Trump's return to the White House does not stand up to scrutiny. No one can claim with any certainty that Kamala Harris or another alternative would be an adequate bulwark against the Republican candidate, but their chances of mak-

ing any kind of impression on the electorate diminish with each passing day.

This week's choreographed coronation of Trump at the Republican national convention in Milwaukee would have been reminiscent of a Nuremberg rally even without the supplementary advantage of the revanchist Führer's injured ear. His running mate is Ohio senator J.D. Vance, who described Trump eight years ago as a putative 'American Hitler'. He later had a MAGA epiphany, and now blames the Democratic campaign for Saturday's violence, even though the motives of the shooter, a 20-year-old registered Republican, are yet to be determined.

It will be both surprising and unfortunate if Biden does not step aside before the Democratic Party's equivalent event in Chicago next month. This year, coincidentally, is being compared to 1968, when a Democratic convention in the same city attracted radical protests and shocking police violence. The likeliest Democratic nominee, Robert F. Kennedy, had been shot dead less than three months earlier, about two months after he shared with a crowd the horrifying news of Martin Luther King Jr's assassination.

The rebels of 1968 were particularly infuriated — like King and, to a lesser degree, Kennedy — by the horrors their nation was perpetrating in Vietnam. Precisely a year before he was cut down, King excoriated his nation's government as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today".

He was right then, and he would be right today — but that does not penetrate the consciousness of the American political class, which has vociferously been decrying political violence lately

while insouciantly ignoring the extent to which the repressive apparatus of the state strives to sustain an appalling status quo at home, while taking various organs help to implement it abroad. Foreign policy is supposedly Biden's strong suit. As far as anyone can see, it entails endless conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and the destruction of Palestine.

Biden's record as a borderline segregationist senator beholden to corporate America and the national security state, then as vice president and eventually president, does not add up to much. It's accurate but insufficient to claim that Trump would be much worse. The Clinton and Obama Democratic presidencies paved the way for George W. Bush and Trump. Biden could still bow out to give his possible successor a fighting chance. Divine intervention might be required, given his claim that only the Almighty could persuade him to do the decent thing. But family, friends, allies and donors could help to end what has aptly been described as elder abuse.

The gerontocracy that stretches from the White House to the divided Senate and the rapidly conservative supreme court isn't America's only problem. Chances are that both its global hegemony (Biden claims to 'rule the world') and the viability of the republic founded in 1776 will diminish in November, for better (in the case of the hegemony) or worse. This verse from an ostensibly apolitical song Paul Simon wrote circa 1968 sadly continues to resonate: 'Sitting on a sofa on a Sunday afternoon/ Going to the candidates/ Debate/ Laugh about it, shout about it/ When you've got to choose/ Every way you look at it you lose.' — Courtesy Dawn

Qasim A. Moini

Communities across the Muslim world, particularly in South Asia and the Middle East, are familiar with the heartrending epic of Karbala, as the event is firmly embedded in the cultural consciousness, crossing sectarian and, in some cases, even religious lines.

Mention the word Karbala in these societies, and images of thirst, suffering and, most of all, the valiant stand of Imam Husain and his committed followers against a numerically superior Syrian/Kufi force immediately emerge. For centuries, depictions of this fateful battle have been heard from the pulpit and sorrowful verses recounted in noha and marsiya, as well as details mentioned in historical written accounts (maqatil).

Whoever hears and reads these accounts is struck by the barbarity unleashed upon the children and kinsmen of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) by the Umayyad forces. Yet, glimpses of that barbarity can be seen today, in a land only a few hundred kilometres from the burning desert of Karbala. That land is Gaza, and Israeli forces have, since Oct 7, 2023, unleashed atrocities on Palestine's defenceless people not too different from the cruelty that was the hallmark of Yazid's troops in Karbala.

Fourteen centuries ago, concepts such as protection of non-combatants and prevention of war crimes were nowhere near as well-defined as they are today. Yet, in this supposedly civilised era, those in sharp suits sitting in Tel Aviv have displayed the same disregard for human life and dignity that the Kufi and Syrian legions did on the day of Ashura in 61AH. Yazid may have perished, but the Yazidi ideology clearly survives.

Karbala glimpses

The similarities between seventh-century Karbala and 21st-century Gaza are uncanny. When Imam Husain's small force, including women and children, arrived at Karbala on the second of Muharram, the Umayyad forces prevented them from getting water from nearby channels. By the time the day of Ashura arrived, the minor children were crying out due to unbearable thirst, yet the Umayyad generals refused the Imam access to water.

Similarly, Gaza has been under an almost airtight Israeli blockade since 2007, described as an open-air prison. After the Oct 7 events, the Israelis have tightened the blockade, using starvation as a weapon, bringing Gaza to the brink of famine. Seeing images of emaciated Palestinian children is unbearable for anyone with a soul. Clearly, the 'only democracy in the Middle East', as some describe Israel, is fine with using cruel seventh-century tactics to starve civilians into submission.

Moreover, women and children are supposed to be spared during combat. But in Karbala, the granddaughters and other female relatives of the Holy Prophet were meted out unspeakable treatment. In Nafasal Mahmum, one of the more authentic maqatil compiled by the venerable scholar Shaikh Abbas Qomi, it is written that: "...the ladies were drawn out of the tents and the tents were set on fire. The women of the Prophet's family were bareheaded, bare-foot and marauded similar to the ones in captivity."

The women of Gaza have had to endure similar treatment by the 'world's most moral army'. For example, even The New York Times has said that "nearly 60,000 pregnant women" are suffering from malnutrition, dehydration

and other healthcare complications.

During the event of Karbala, the Umayyad forces showed no mercy, not even to children. For example, Hazrat Qasim, the son of Imam Hasan, who was barely in his teens, was martyred in a particularly barbaric fashion by the Umayyad hordes. Moreover, when Imam Husain was left alone in the field, another of Imam Hasan's children, an infant named Abdullah, rushed to his beloved uncle's defence, but was martyred in merciless fashion. And who can forget the youngest martyr of Karbala, Abdullah bin Husain, known as Ali Asghar. The suckling was attacked by a powerful arrow piercing his tiny neck while in the Imam's arms.

In Gaza, thousands of children have been slaughtered by the Israelis, while thousands more have been left orphaned. Heartbreaking images of mothers wailing over their murdered children are enough to move even the most stone-hearted to tears.

Just as 14 centuries ago, the world watched as the grandson of the Holy Prophet and his family members were surrounded and martyred without mercy, similarly today, the global community silently watches the genocidal spectacle playing out in Gaza. But despite their trials and seemingly unending grief, the people of Gaza can take solace from the example of Husain, who lived with dignity, and preferred to die than bow before oppressors. In one of his most famous sermons, Imam Husain emphatically declared "far be it that we accept humiliation". Karbala teaches us that those who bravely resist oppression will live forever, while the oppressors will very soon meet an unedifying fate. — Courtesy Dawn

All resources will be utilized to solve public issues. Sardar Saleem

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that the government is trying practically to solve the problems of the people. He added that all resources will be utilized to solve public problems.

He expressed these views while talking on the occasion of holding an open court for solving public problems in Punjab House Rawalpindi. According to the details, an open court was held by Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider in Punjab House Rawalpindi to resolve public issues.

A large number of people were present in the open court. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that solving the problems of the people is the main responsibility of the administration.

He said that the doors of the Governor's House

are open for the people. He issued instructions on the spot to convey the problems of the people to the concerned officials for redressal.

Meanwhile, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, visited the routes of Ashura processions in Raja Bazar, Rawalpindi in connection with 10th Muharram. On this occasion, the Punjab Governor reviewed the security arrangements. Earlier, a briefing was given to him regarding the security of Ashura processions in the Commissioner's Office Rawalpindi.

Later, Governor Punjab also visited Safe City Control Room and Control Room established in TMA office. During the visit, the Punjab Governor reviewed the process of monitoring the routes of the processions. He lauded the administration for making

fool proof security arrangements and expressed satisfaction over the security arrangements. Commissioner Rawalpindi Aamer Khattak, RPO Rawalpindi Babar Sarfraz Alpa, DC Rawalpindi, Hasan Waqar Cheema and other administrative officers were also present on this occasion. Later, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider while talking to the media after participating in the Ashura procession at Raja Bazar Fawara Chowk Rawalpindi said that the true spirit of Islam exists today due to the sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA). He further said that love for Ahl-I-Bait is part of our faith. He said tragedy of Karaba reminds us of the great sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and his companions. He said that their courage and steadfastness is beacon for all the oppressed.



HYDERABAD: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah visit along with advisor attending the mourning procession of Ashura on Youm-e-Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram-ul-Haram station road.

Defamation case Court seeks arguments on damage claim of Rs 10blns by Shehbaz against Imran

LAHORE (Online): Sessions court has sought arguments on Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif damage claim of Rs 10 billion in defamation case against PTI founder. Additional Sessions judge Muhammad Farhan Nabi of Sessions court Lahore issued written order regarding hearing of miscellaneous petition of Shehbaz Sharif.

It has been said in the court's order that Saad Sibghat Ullah Sultan counsel for Shehbaz Sharif appeared in the court during the hearing of the case.

Mian Muhammad Hussain new counsel for Imran Khan presented his power of attorney in the court.

It was said in the written order of court that counsel for PTI founder said he was appointed counsel now in this case.

The counsel for PTI founder sought time for giving arguments on miscellaneous petitions.

The court summoned the counsels on August 13 for arguments on miscellaneous petition regarding damage claim of Rs 10 billions by Shehbaz Sharif against PTI founder.

Turkish Consulate organizes ceremony to mark failed coup attempt in 2016

KARACHI (APP): Turkish Consulate in Karachi has organized a ceremony to remember 15th July failed coup attempt in Turkey in 2016.

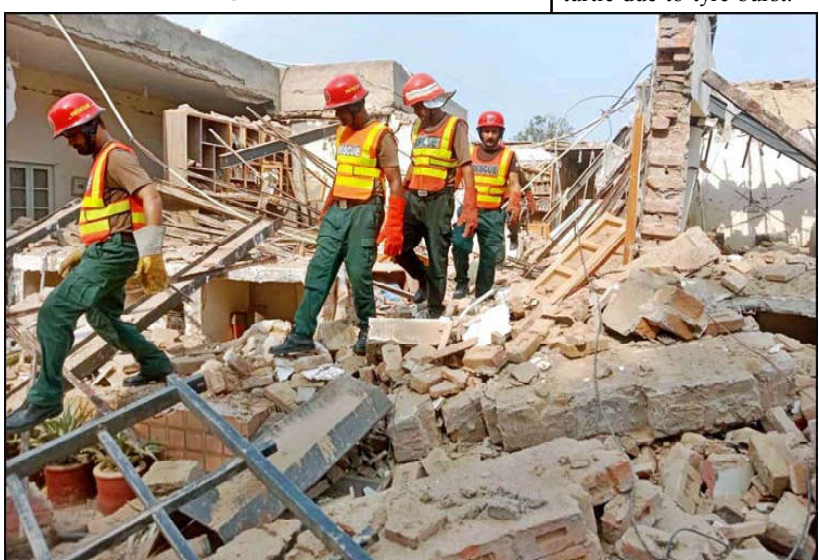
The Acting Consul General of the Republic of Turkey Ali Fuat Erkurt pay homage to the Turkish people who laid down their lives to protect democracy in the country.

Ali Fuat Erkurt said that we remember and reflect on a dark chapter in our nation's history the coup attempt of July 15, 2016. On that fateful night, a faction within our military, led by the Fetullahist Terrorist Organization, in other word FETO, sought to overthrow our democratically elected government and undermine the very foundations of our republic.

He was addressing a gathering held at Turkiye Consulate which was attended by large number of Turkish nationals living in Karachi, intellectuals, educationists and elite of city. The Turkiye envoy said the coup attempt was not just an attack on our government, it was an attack on our democracy, our freedoms and our way of life. FETO, led by Fethullah Gulen, infiltrated our institutions over decades, using deception and manipulation to advance their agenda.

According to Police sources, Abdul Hadi (5 years old), Abdul Muaid (3 years old), and Abdul Rafi (8/9 months old) were brought to the hospital by Nawanshar police. The incident occurred while Hajira Bibi was visiting her parents' home in Mohalla Musa Zai, Nawanshar.

He said that their betrayal on July 15th was the culmination of years of plotting against the Turkish state. FETO, which attempted the July 15 coup attempt, is not only a terrorist organization, but also an espionage organization with a "cult" character.



BAHAWALPUR: Explosion due to gas leakage at the Cholistan Department building inside Islamia University Baghdad campus, four people injured and half the building collapsed and Rescue 1122 operations are ongoing.

CM condemns terrorist attack

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif strongly condemned a terrorist attack on rural health centre in Dera Ismail Khan.

She paid rich tribute to the lady health visitor and children martyred in the line of duty. The chief minister expressed her sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved families.

Mother allegedly slaughters her three minor children in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): In a shocking and tragic incident, Hajira Bibi, wife of Wajid a resident of Mohalla Musa Zai, Nawanshar Shehar Abbottabad on Thursday, allegedly slaughtered her three minor children. The children, aged 3 years, 5 years, and 8 months, were immediately shifted to Ayub Medical Complex for treatment.

According to Police sources, Abdul Hadi (5 years old), Abdul Muaid (3 years old), and Abdul Rafi (8/9 months old) were brought to the hospital by Nawanshar police. The incident occurred while Hajira Bibi was visiting her parents' home in Mohalla Musa Zai, Nawanshar.

7 injured in accident

NOWSHERA (APP): At least seven persons were injured in a police mobile van accident that occurred near Col. Shaikh Khan Interchange of Nowshera district, tv channels quoting police reported on Thursday. According to details, a police mobile van was crossing the Col. Shaheed Shaikh Khan Interchange when it turned turtle due to tyre burst.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider listening the problems of the people during open court for held for solving public problems in Punjab House Rawalpindi.

CM Sindh sets time line for removing encroachments, restoring parking areas in city

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah presided over a meeting to follow up on the progress of removal of encroachments from the city, Malir Expressway, TP-4, Hub Canal and the removal of encroachments from the footpaths, green belts and roads from the city.

Those who attended the meeting included provincial ministers, Saeed Ghani, Zia Lanjar, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, SMBR Baqaullah Unar, MD SSWMB Imtiaz Shah, Secretary Finance Fayaz Jatot, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, Secretary Planning Khair Mohammad Kalwar, DG SBCA Rasheed Solangi,

Special Secretary Local Govt Aisha Hameed, MC Afzal Zaidi, Karachi CEO Water Board Salahuddin, Zubair Channa and PD Malir Expressway Niaz Soomro.

The CM said that the footpaths are meant for the people to move hassle-free on the city roads, but they have been encroached upon under the nose of the administration. "Now, the green belts of the roads have also been encroached upon by the Dhabas and other such make-shift type of settlements."

Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi said that the assistant commissioners have started documenting encroachments on the footpaths, roads green belts and even debris put on the roads for under-construction buildings.

He added that the administration would submit a detailed plan to the government for removal of the encroachments.

At this, the CM said that it was the job of local bodies, local administration and the police not to allow encroachment on the public spaces but "sorry to say I compelled to take up such issues".

Mayor Murtaza Wahab told the CM that he was working on the plan for the removal of encroachment from the KMC roads in a planned manner. "Due to Muharram activities, the tasks could not be taken up," he said and added now it would be completed by removing all kinds of encroachments.



LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Allama Tahir Ashrafi addressing a press conference at Press Club.

Mayor sets timeline for effective management of KMC hospitals

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Thursday directed that the KMC hospitals should be managed more effectively within the next 10 days and all

Medical Superintendents were asked to submit their proposals to improve the functioning of the hospitals. Chaired a meeting of the Medical and Health Department officials of the KMC, Murtaza Wahab said the attendance of employees must be ensured and a biometric system should be installed in all hospitals. He warned that the persistently absent employees should be dismissed according to the rules and regulations. He emphasized enhancing medical facilities at the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital and activating all of its departments. Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza

Wahab said Karachi Metropolitan Corporation was spending a substantial amount of its budget on providing medical services to citizens. Therefore, these hospitals should play an effective role in providing standard healthcare facilities to the poor and middle-class citizens. The Mayor also suspended the services of Senior Director Admin and Accounts of Medical Department, Rashid Sabzwari on his absent from duty. Murtaza Wahab particularly emphasized improving the functionality of emergency wards, OPDs, and laboratories of KMC run hospitals through technical and professional skills possessed by doctors and paramedical staff. In this regard, he directed the officers that recommendations should be submitted so that after their assessment.

Service delivery being improved at govt hospitals: DC

KHANEWAL (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Muhammad Ali Bukhari said that all possible efforts were being made to improve service delivery at government hospitals to provide the best health facilities to the masses as per directives of the provincial government.

During a surprise visit to Basic Health Units (BHUs) at Village 136/10-R and 140/10-R on Thursday, the deputy commissioner said that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has issued clear instructions to ensure the best health facilities at government hospitals.

He said that he was conducting surprise visits to all government hospitals and basic health units with the vision to improve service delivery. He checked the attendance of doctors and other staff of the hospital and also reviewed health facilities.

PPP Sindh MPA calls on Governor KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Asif Khan, Member of Provincial Assembly Sindh, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Thursday called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House and discussed various problems of the province.

During the meeting, Asif Khan, commended the role of Governor Faisal Kundi, acknowledging him as a sincere and dedicated person to represent the province. He praised the Governor's efforts in addressing provincial issues effectively.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi highlighted the historical and cultural significance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, emphasizing its rich natural resources.

He expressed his commitment to alleviating poverty in the province through sustainable development initiatives harnessing its natural wealth.

The Governor said

that efforts related to youth engagement, women empowerment, education, and healthcare were also underway.

He said that plans for establishing a task force to address educational and healthcare challenges in the province were included in priorities. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of mutual commitment towards advancing the socio-economic development agenda in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, reflecting a collaborative approach between provincial leadership and stakeholders.

This interaction underscores ongoing efforts by political leaders to address regional issues and foster development. Meanwhile, the Governor prayed for the early recovery of senior journalist and former president Peshawar Press Club Shamim Shahid. He sent a bouquet to him and praised Shahid's services in journalism.



PESHAWAR: Member Provincial Assembly Sindh Asif Khan calls on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

LHC orders for demolition of brick kilns causing smog without any notice

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) while ordering to demolish the brick kilns causing smog without notice has remarked deputy commissioners of Punjab will be responsible if court orders are violated at brick kilns.

Justice Shahid Karim of LHC issued written orders on hearing of the petitions filed with reference to eradication of smog.

Justice Shahid Karim issued 7-page written order on the petitions including petition of citizen Haroon Farooqui.

The court while ordering to demolish the brick kilns causing smoke has remarked the black smoke emitting from brick kilns constructed on old technology be demolished without issuing any notice.

The court orders are

being violated openly on bricks kilns. Environment department is responsible for violation of court's orders.

It was written in the court's orders that we are giving last warning to deputy commissioner Sheikhupura and deputy director environment for implementation of court's orders. If court's orders are violated on brick kilns then deputy commissioners of Punjab will be responsible.

It was said in written order that LWMC has filed report. As per report CEO has imposed ban on all sweepers to work on Canal road from 7 a.m to 10 a.m.

Member of judicial commission will visit industries adjacent to Lahore Ring road who will review all the industries are implementing SOPs related to smog.

KP govt to take action against illegal housing societies

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government Arshad Ayub Khan Thursday said that heavy fines will be imposed on illegal housing societies and notices will be issued to them, if they still do not register themselves, then such societies will be sealed.

He expressed these views while presiding over the meeting, Secretary Local Government Dawood Khan was also present. Speaking on the occasion, the provincial minister directed for framing a comprehensive policy for the regularization of illegal housing societies, NOC and other legal

requirements should be fulfilled, otherwise such housing societies should be sealed.

He directed for presentation of the complete record of all the illegal societies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the next meeting. A list mentioning the time period of the operation of illegal societies should also be prepared, he added.

The minister said that not only the public exchange rather the general public also face problems from the illegal societies. Due to the lack of NOC for gas and electricity connections, residents of such societies also face hardships.

Punjab Minister visits various hospitals in district

SARGODHA (APP): Provincial Minister for Construction and Communications, Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth, Thursday visited District Headquarters (DHQ) hospitals in Khushab, Mianwali, and Bhakkar districts, on the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

The Minister inquired about the facilities being provided to patients at Mother and Child Hospital Mianwali and DHQ Hospitals Khushab and Bhakkar. He checked the stock of medicines in the hospitals and the attendance of doctors and paramedical staff.

The Provincial Minister Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth also

interacted with patients who had come for check-ups at the hospitals and inquired about the attitude of the hospital administration and the facilities being provided to them. The Minister commended CEO Health and MS Hospital Khushab for maintaining excellent arrangements in the hospital and also appreciated the work of the local administration.

Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is committed to providing the best medical facilities to the people in their areas and that excellent arrangement have been made in the health sector in the past few months.

Finance minister reaffirms commitment to export-led growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to foster export-led growth and providing a conducive environment to local manufacturers.

The minister was talking to the delegation of Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturers Association (PMPMA) that called on him here, said a press release issued by the finance ministry.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining policy continuity and

increasing the focus on the policy framework for exports. The minister acknowledged the valuable feedback and underscored the government's commitment for expanding the entire digital ecosystem in the country.

Earlier, the PMPMA delegation thanked the minister and highlighted the necessity for a stable and supportive policy environment that encourages local manufacturers.

They advocated for measures to ensure that international brands support the domestic industry and consequently,

the national economy. The delegation also presented proposals aimed at promoting the growth of the local industry and increasing the exports of the mobile phone manufacturing industry.

According to the statement, the meeting concluded with a mutual agreement on the need for a strategic and supportive policy framework aimed at fostering local manufacturing and enhancing export potential, thereby contributing to the broader goals of national economic growth and digital transformation.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the delegation of Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturers Association (PMPMA).

Senate committee urges TDAP to work on mineral exports

KARACHI (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Commerce has called on the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) to focus on the country's mineral exports, offering full support to achieve this goal.

The directive was issued during a meeting held on Thursday at the TDAP office here, presided over by Senator Anusha Rahman, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce.

Senator Anusha Rahman urged the TDAP to establish a dedicated department for mineral exports and to submit a comprehensive research

report on the matter. The committee also emphasized the importance of focusing on the exports of active pharmaceutical ingredients (API).

During the session, TDAP Chief Executive Zubair Motiwala, along with other senior officials, provided an overview of the organization's functions. Heads of various divisions within TDAP also presented performance reports of their respective departments.

The meeting was attended by several committee members, including Senators Talal Chaudhry, Sarmad Ali, and Bilal Ahmed Khan.

Cotton calendar 2024-25 issued for south Punjab farmers after consultations with experts, WWF

MULTAN (APP): Cotton Calendar 2024-25, dubbed as a roadmap to better cotton crop with cost-effective pest control mechanism prescribed under the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) model, was released here Thursday on the orders of Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ali Ateel after it was finalized following brainstorming by the agriculture department, experts and World Wild Life Fund (WWF). The initiative was a replication of the year 2021 when the first cotton calendar was issued and farmers had then amassed sizable crop with efficient and cost-effective pest

control under the IPM program, said an official release issued here.

The calendar will serve as a comprehensive advisory for farmers who believe the IPM program should continue to be practised on the south Punjab's vast cotton landscape to get higher production.

Farooq Safdar, a cotton farmer from Mauza 5-Kassi Kabirwala, said, it was the IPM program that helped him get 65 Maunds per acre with only two pesticides spray. Botanical spray proved better against white fly, he added.

A Sadiqabad-based farmer, Muhammad Ishaq said his crop remained safe

against white flies and he was able to get 40 Maunds per acre production of cotton. Muhammad Amin from Chak 109 Yamzan, Bahawalpur, said, low chemical sprays under the IPM plan helped friendly pests remain alive while yellow sticky cards and botanical sprays helped tackle the white fly problem and cotton fiber did suffer blackening.

Moreover, Muhammad Aslam from Kot Addu, Muhammad Ramzan from Multan, and Muhammad Yousof from Makhdoom Rasheed declared the cotton IPM program the best roadmap to higher cotton production.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja chairing 60th Board of Directors meeting of Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB).

FESCO striving to provide quality services to consumers

FAISALABAD (APP): Convenor Customer Services Committee FESCO Board of Directors Mian Farukh Iqbal has said Faisalabad Electric Supply Company is striving to provide quality service to its consumers and in this connection, help is also being taken from social media and the latest technology for redressing electricity related complaints on top priority basis.

Addressing the 17/45th meeting of Customer Services Committee at FESCO Headquarters here on Thursday, he said that FESCO had precious asset of 5.3 million active consumers out of which 80 per cent consumers belong to domestic category. He said that FESCO complaint numbers remained active round the clock and the people could contact the company through 118 and

1818 for getting their electricity related complaints lodged at any time. New features are also being added in these numbers to facilitate the electricity consumers at maximum extent in addition to providing them the facility to track updated status of their complaints.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO Engineer Muhammad Amir said that FESCO has launched pro-rata program in eight districts of its region so that the consumers could be issued real time billing comprising on units of 30 or 31 days of each month.

He said that overbilling was just a propaganda against the company because the FESCO had given benefit of 1 million units to 137000 consumers in the month of June through pro-rata.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, X-press Antalia, Zhong Gu Bo Hai, Maya Gas-1, Horizon-1 and Fair Star carrying container, LPG and Gas oil, berthed at QICT Terminal, Engro Terminal, Sui Southern Gas Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Wednesday. Meanwhile four more ships, Lucky Chem, Silver Heba, Naeba Galaxy and Milaha Qatar are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on during last 24 hours.

Eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them six ships, X-Press Antalia, Zhong Gu Bo Hai, Ardmore Cherokee, Maya Gas-1, Sea Destiny and Horizon-1 are expected to sail on Thursday.

Cargo volume of 59,341 tonnes, comprising 51,351 tonnes imports cargo and 7,990 tonnes export cargo carried in 1,119 Containers (649 TEUs Imports and 470 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

3-day conference on Water, Energy & Food Ecosystem on July 22

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS), in collaboration with the other partners, is organizing the 25th Conference of the Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS) on "Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus for the Security of the OIC Countries" from July 22-24.

The conference, to be held in Islamabad, will be arranged in collaboration with the Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS), The Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) and the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan.

The conference intends to address the linked concerns of water, energy, food, and ecosystem security.



HUNZA: Business women of local community displaying cherry for selling purpose for tourists.

Romanian embassy, PRBC sign MoU to boost trade between Romania, Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of Romania to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Pakistan Romania Business Council (PRBC) to strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation between Romania and Pakistan.

The MoU signed by Eduard-Robert PREDA, Charge D'Affaires, Embassy of Romania to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Chairman of PRBC, Sohail Shamim FIRPO, and recognized the outstanding services rendered by PRBC since 2011 in promoting bilateral trade between the two countries.

The agreement establishes a framework

for cooperation between the Embassy of Romania and PRBC, with the Embassy extending full support to PRBC's endeavours to promote and strengthen bilateral trade.

Additionally, the protocol acknowledges the recent expansion of PRBC through the formation of its North Chapter.

The embassy and PRBC have agreed to collaborate in enhancing economic cooperation and bilateral trade between Romania and Pakistan. This partnership aims to foster greater economic ties and mutual benefits for both nations.

The signing of this protocol marks a significant milestone in the bilateral relations between Romania and Pakistan.



LAHORE: A vendor waiting for customers to sell second hand toys at his roadside setup in Provincial Capital.

SAU joins global alliance to improve agricultural research, innovation

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam, along with three other Pakistani universities, have been included in the International Alliance for Agricultural Technology Development.

The Vice Chancellor SAU Dr. Fateh Mari congratulated all faculty and staff of the university on this significant achievement.

According to the spokesperson of the university, SAU has been included in the Silk Road Agriculture Education and Research Innovation Alliance along with Quaid-e-Azam University, Pir Mehar Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University and Ayub Agricultural Research Institute. This important development was officially announced at the 9th Silk

Road Agricultural Education and Research Cooperation Forum held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The purpose of this initiative was to promote collaboration between leading institutions in China and Pakistan, particularly in the joint development and exchange of new food crops, vegetable varieties, and medicinal plants, researchers involved in this agricultural cooperation program have selected 19 stress-resistant wheat strains and identified a new wheat variety suitable for large-scale cultivation in Pakistan.

This new variety is expected to improve wheat production and physiological salt stress tolerance by 27%, reduce costs by 13%, and increase farmers' income by approximately 25%.

Shaza chairs PSEB board meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja Thursday chaired the 60th Board of Directors meeting of the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB).

Secretary IT Captain (Retd) Muhammad Mahmood was also present, said a news release.

Chairman of the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), Muhammad Zohaib Khan, attended the meeting via video link.

The meeting discussed the mandate and functions of the Pakistan Software Export Board.

NA body on Petroleum Division briefed on ongoing, new initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Standing Committee on Energy (Petroleum Division) was briefed on Thursday about several ongoing and new initiatives by the Petroleum Division to improve services for people across the country.

The Secretary of the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) provided a comprehensive overview of the ministry's functions and its attached departments.

The meeting was chaired by Syed Mustafa Mehmood, MNA, and was also attended by the Federal Minister for Energy (Petroleum

Division). The entire performance of the ministry was examined during the introductory discussion, with an emphasis on the main problems and possible solutions.

The meeting was attended by Members Syed Naveed Qamar, Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Shahid Ahmed, Anwar-ul-Haq Chaudhary, Rai Haider Ali Khan, Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharal, Gul Asghar Khan, Salahuddin Junejo, Muhammad Mo'in Aamer Pirzada, Asad Alam Niazi, Mian Khan Bugti.



KARACHI: Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Commerce Anusha Rahman presiding over a committee meeting at Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP).

Rupee gains 07paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Thursday witnessed an increase of 07 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.17 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.10.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279 and Rs 280.50 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by Rs 1.1 to close at Rs 304.94 against the last day's closing of Rs 302.94, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen gained 02 paise and closed at Rs 1.78, whereas an increase of 60 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound.

Gold rates up by Rs.4,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 4,600 and was sold at Rs 254,000 on Thursday against its sale at Rs 249,400 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 3,944 to Rs 217,764 from Rs 213,820 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 199,617 from Rs 196,002, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

SECP management discusses development of capital market

ISLAMABAD (APP): The top management of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) met with the Board of Directors of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) to discuss the strategy for the development of the capital market.

The participants from SECP included Akif Saeed (Chairman), Abdul Rehman Warraich (Commissioner - Securities Market Division) and other senior members of the management, said press release issued here on Thursday. The participants discussed the challenges faced in the capital market

and deliberated ways to address them. The meeting was focused on areas such as enhanced governance, operational compliance, increasing the stock market investor base, and striving for continuous digitalization in the capital market.

The need for coordination among various stakeholders for development of the market, as well as creating awareness among potential investors, was keenly emphasized during the meeting. In addition, the participants explored ways to strengthen connections between the capital markets of Pakistan.

Gram to be cultivated over 856 thousand hectares

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has set a target to produce about 410 thousand metric tons of gram and 4.56 thousand tons of lentil pulses during financial year 2024-25 to fulfill the domestic requirements of legumes as well as for exporting.

During the year 2024-25, chillies to be cultivated over 73.40 thousand hectares as the crop output has fixed over 191.10 thousand tons, he added.

Meanwhile, the output of other pulses including mung bean and mash have been fixed at 178.80 thousand tons and

8.60 metric tons respectively, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Talking to APP here on Thursday, he said that during the season 2024-25, gram crop to be cultivated over 865 thousand hectares, where as the lentil pulse would be sown over 6.64 thousand hectares. He said that the mung bean to be cultivated over 214.80 thousand hectares and mash over 11.05 thousand hectares during the period under review to fulfill the domestic requirements of leguminous vegetables.



FAISALABAD: Labourers packing freshly harvested maize into sacks for transport to factories and market in the city.

Israel bombards central Gaza as tanks advance deeper in Rafah

Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: Israeli forces bombarded the Gaza Strip's historic refugee camps in the centre of the enclave and struck Gaza City in the north on Thursday, killing at least 21 people, and tanks pushed deeper into Rafah in the south, health officials and residents said.

A barrage of Israeli airstrikes killed 16 in Zawayda town, Bureij and Nuseirat camps and the overcrowded city of Deir-Al-Balah, the last major urban centre in Gaza not to be invaded by Israeli forces, health officials said. In Gaza City in the north, medics said five Palestinians were killed in two separate strikes.

The Israeli military said in a statement its forces killed two senior Islamic Jihad commanders in two airstrikes in Gaza City, in-

cluding one whom it said had taken part in the Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel that triggered the Gaza war.

In Rafah, residents said Israeli tanks advanced deeper in the western side of the city and took position on a hilltop there. The Israeli military said forces located several tunnels and killed several gunmen.

At Al-Amal Hospital, run by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, Palestinian health officials deepened at least 12 bodies buried inside the medical facility to bury them at another location.

Reuters footage showed medical workers digging up bodies from graves inside the facility, wrapping them in white shrouds before placing them inside vehicles for transfer to a new burial site

as some relatives watched, some in tears.

Areej Hamouda, a mother of one of the dead, clutched some of the sandy earth from the grave of her son and kissed it before medics exhumed the body.

"They (Israel) shot him and he had a loaf of bread with him, which he had to beg for to get for his daughter, they shot him in the eye and the head - it rained on him, he was washed with blood," Hamouda said, weeping. "He was (lying) there all day long, they weren't able to move him, (then) they pulled him with a rope when they brought him to be buried here." The fighting has pushed the 60-bed Red Cross field hospital in Rafah to the brink of capacity, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said in a statement on Thursday.



The collapsed minaret of Abdullah Azzam mosque leans against a house after the mosque was hit by an Israeli strike, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip.

Philippines, China to set up new channels to handle South China Sea rows

Monitoring Desk

MANILA: The Philippines and China have agreed to set up new lines of communication to improve their handling of maritime disputes, according to a document and a Philippine diplomatic source, as ties sour over clashes about territory in the South China Sea.

The two countries have traded barbs repeatedly over jurisdiction in the contested South China Sea as the Philippines, emboldened by support of defence ally the United States, challenges China's permanent presence around strategic features in-

side Manila's exclusive economic zone. Three communication channels would be established specifically for maritime issues, according to the source, who provided a document with highlights of an "Arrangement on Improving Philippines-China Maritime Communication Mechanisms", which was signed on July 2. "China has always been committed to working with the Philippines to properly address maritime issues through dialogue and consultation," Foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a briefing when asked about the agreement.

Biden tests positive for Covid, will self-isolate in Delaware

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden, under pressure from fellow Democrats to drop his reelection campaign, tested positive for Covid-19 while visiting Las Vegas on Wednesday and is self-isolating after experiencing mild symptoms, the White House said. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre announced the positive test for the 81-year-old Democrat after Biden cancelled a speech due to the diagnosis.

Saudi crown prince congratulates new Iranian president

Monitoring Desk

RIYAD: Saudi Arabia's crown prince on Wednesday congratulated Masoud Pezeshkian to congratulate him on winning the election, Saudi state media reported.

Mohammed bin Salman and Pezeshkian "praised the development of relations between the two countries at various levels, stressing the importance of continuing to enhance cooperation in various fields," the official Saudi Press Agency reported.

Police, students clash in Bangladesh as protests over job quotas kill 6 more people

Monitoring Desk

DHAKA: Thousands of students armed with sticks and rocks clashed with police in Dhaka on Thursday, as the Bangladesh authorities cut some mobile internet services to quell anti-quota protests that have killed at least 12 people this week.

The nationwide protests are the biggest since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was re-elected to a fourth term in office, and are fuelled by high unemployment among the youth, with nearly a fifth of the

170 million population out of work or education.

Six people died in clashes with police in Dhaka on Thursday, including a bus driver whose body was brought to a hospital with a bullet wound to his chest, and a student, officials told Reuters. Hundreds more were injured, they said. Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government was willing to talk to the protesters, who want the state to stop setting aside 30 per cent of government jobs for the families of those who fought in the 1971 war.



Anti-Quota protesters clash with students backing the ruling Awami League on Dhaka University campus.

Spain warns workers of heat risks as summer's first heatwave looms

Monitoring Desk

MADRID: Spain will suffer its first heatwave of the summer starting on Thursday, the meteorology service AEMET said, as the government kicked off on Wednesday a heat risk awareness campaign for people working mostly outside.

After the Iberian Peninsula saw cooler than usual weather so far this summer, AEMET expects temperatures to exceed 38 degrees Celsius in most of the coun-

try on Thursday, reaching as much as 42-44 C in the southern Guadalquivir Valley. The peak of this episode will be on Friday, when most areas will warm up to 40 C. AEMET has issued a heatwave warning for a large part of Spain, including the Balearic islands in the Mediterranean. The National Institute for Safety and Health at Work launched the campaign "With sun it's time for caution" on Wednesday to address the risks such as heat stroke and solar radiation.

British public were failed by flawed planning for COVID pandemic, inquiry finds

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: Britain let down its citizens by leaving the nation ill-prepared for the COVID-19 pandemic because of significantly flawed planning and failures by ministers and scientific experts, a public inquiry concluded in a scathing report on Thursday.

Britain recorded one of the world's highest number of fatalities from COVID with more than 230,000 deaths reported by December 2023, while the nation's finances are still suffering from the economic consequences.

Former Prime Minister Boris Johnson ordered an inquiry in May 2021, and its first report, which

examined the nation's preparedness for an outbreak, was damning.

"Had the UK been better prepared for and more resilient to the pandemic, some of the financial and human cost may have been avoided," the report by the inquiry chair, former judge Heather Hallett, said in the report.

"The inquiry has no hesitation in concluding that the processes, planning and policy of the civil contingency structures within the UK government and devolved administrations and civil service failed their citizens." The inquiry found there had been a "lack of adequate leadership" with "groupthink" clouding expert advice.

Malaysia's former PM Mahathir hospitalised over coughing

Monitoring Desk

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's 99-year-old former prime minister of two decades, Mahathir Mohamad, has been admitted to hospital for coughing, his spokesman said on Thursday.

Mahathir has been at the National Heart Institute since Monday and will remain in hospital for a few days, his spokesman said, without providing further details on his condition.

Car hits Paris cafe terrace, one dead, several seriously hurt

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: A motorist ploughed a car into a cafe terrace in Olympic host city Paris on the evening of July 17, killing one person and seriously injuring several others in a suspected accident, officials told AFP.

The incident happened less than 10 days before the start of the Olympic Games in the French capital.

A source in the state prosecution service who asked not to be named said police later arrested the driver and detained him on suspicion of manslaughter.

A police source earlier said the driver fled the scene in northern Paris.

US military pier for carrying aid to Gaza will be dismantled

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: The US military-built pier to carry humanitarian aid to Gaza will be dismantled and brought home, ending a mission that has been fraught with repeated weather and security problems that limited how much food and other supplies could get to starving Palestinians.

Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, deputy commander at US Central Command, told reporters in a Pentagon briefing on Wednesday that the pier achieved its intended effect in what he called an "unprecedented operation."

As the US military steps away from the sea route for humanitarian aid, questions swirl about Israel's new plan to use the port at Ashdod as a substitute. There are few details on how it will work and lingering concerns about

whether aid groups will have enough viable land crossings to get assistance into the territory besieged by war between Israel and Hamas.

Cooper said the Ashdod corridor will be more sustainable and it has already been used to get more than a million pounds of aid into Gaza.

"Having now delivered the largest volume of humanitarian assistance ever into the Middle East, we're now mission complete and transitioning to a new phase," said Cooper. "In the coming weeks, we expect that millions of pounds of aid will enter into Gaza via this new pathway."

He said there is currently 5 million pounds of aid in Cyprus, awaiting transit to Ashdod, and they expect delivery to start "in the coming days."

French lawmakers vote on parliament president in post-election move

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: France's deeply fragmented parliament met on Thursday for the first time since this month's inconclusive election to vote on the assembly's president, in a ballot that could be key to who calls the shots in the country's politics for years to come.

A grouping of leftist parties unexpectedly came first in the election, ahead of President Emmanuel Macron's centrists and Marine Le Pen's far-right, but no one group won a majority.

Electing the lower house of parliament's president, equivalent to a speaker who organises the chamber's agenda and runs debates, is usually a formality. The process has taken on more importance this time, with Macron weakened and a lot of uncertainty over who will form the next government and how effective it could be in a divided parliament.

The vote could also

offer clues as to whether a coalition government that commands a working majority can be formed and what its political colours could be. The New Popular Front (NFP) left-wing alliance, hastily assembled before the snap election, wants to run the government but has been fighting bitterly since the July 7 second round of voting over who to put forward as prime minister.

It hopes its candidate for parliament chief, veteran Communist lawmaker Andre Chassaigne, who is well-liked across party lines, could be elected. This could be a boost to its chances of forming a government, by showing the alliance can command a majority in the assembly.

Chassaigne's election would show parliament's "freedom and independence" from Macron, Benjamin Lucas, a Green party lawmaker from the NFP group, told Reuters.

UK's Starmer calls for deeper cooperation on Ukraine and Europe's problems

Monitoring Desk

BLENHEIM PALACE: Britain's new prime minister, Keir Starmer, called on Thursday for closer cooperation in Europe to advance support for Ukraine and tackle the continent's most pressing problems: illegal migration, climate change and energy security.

Opening a meeting of the European Political Community (EPC) of more than 40 nations at Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Winston Churchill, Starmer made his bid for a reset in post-Brexit ties with the European Union.

He distanced himself from the previous Conservative government which had threatened to withdraw from an international treaty on human rights, offering other European leaders a clean slate.

"Under my leadership, Britain will be a friend

and a partner, ready to work with you, not part of the European Union, but very much part of Europe," Starmer said in his remarks, referring to Britain's exit from the EU after a 2016 referendum.

"United by our determination to defend them (shared values), and certain about what we can achieve together," he told other leaders at the EPC, a grouping distinct from the EU and created after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The one-day meeting provides Britain's new leader with another opportunity to push for closer defence cooperation especially before the possible election of Donald Trump, who alongside his new pick for running mate, J.D. Vance, suggests that Europe must do more to protect its own security.

Kenya's government appeals for protests to stop, but court suspends ban

Monitoring Desk

NAIROBI: Kenya's government on Thursday ratcheted up its appeal for weeks of protests to stop and police tried to ban demonstrations in the heart of the capital Nairobi only to be overruled in court.

Police introduced the ban saying the protests, which have claimed at least 50 lives since erupting nearly a month ago, had been infiltrated by criminal gangs. But a court on Thursday suspended the ban while a case challenging it was heard. Some activists called for people to gather on Thursday with camping gear to "occupy" Uhuru Park adjacent to the city centre, amid a heavy police presence across Nairobi.

The youth-led protests across Kenya against proposed tax hikes have continued even after President William Ruto withdrew the legislation and fired almost all of his cabinet.

Activists say they want Ruto to resign and are calling for reforms to clean up corruption and address poor governance.

The country has lost approximately 6 billion

Kenyan shillings (\$46 million) as a result of the demonstrations, government spokesperson Isaac Mwaura said, without explaining how he arrived at that figure.

"The president and the government at large (have) heard you loud and clear and we are ready to act on your concerns," Mwaura said in a televised statement. The protests, which have been organised online without the apparent support of opposition political figures, have created the biggest crisis of Ruto's two years in power.

"We have credible intelligence that organised criminal groups are planning to take advantage of the ongoing protests to execute their attacks, including looting," chief of police Douglas Kanja Kiricho said in a statement late on Wednesday. "No demonstrations will be permitted in the Nairobi Central Business District and its surroundings until further notice." Kenya's High Court in Nairobi suspended the police order until a case filed by public interest litigation group Katiba Institute was heard and ruled upon.



Ursula von der Leyen addresses lawmakers before a vote to choose the next President of the European Commission, at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France.

More than 10 million people displaced by Sudan war, IOM says

Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: More than 10 million Sudanese, or 20% of the population, have been driven from their homes since the war there began, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said, as the world's largest displacement crisis continues to worsen.

additional 2.8 million people were already displaced by previous conflicts in the country.

Fighting between the army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces that broke out in the capital Khartoum last year quickly expanded across Darfur to the west, with the RSF taking control of most centres.

UN experts say hunger has replaced violence as the largest driver of migration from Darfur, where they face difficulty delivering aid.

"All refugees I met said the reason why they fled Sudan was hunger," said World Health Organisation country director Dr. Shible Sabbani to reporters after visiting refugees from Darfur, the source of half of the displaced population, in Chad.

Oman Shia mosque attackers were Omani citizens: police

Monitoring Desk

MUSCAT: The three gunmen who shot and killed six people at a Shia Muslim mosque in Oman in an attack claimed by the banned militant Islamic State (IS) group this week were all Omani nationals, police said on Thursday.

The assault began on Monday evening at the Ali bin Abi Talib mosque in the Wadi al-Kabir neighbourhood of Oman's capital Muscat as Shia Muslims gathered.

The Royal Oman Police said the three gunmen were brothers and "were killed due to their insistence on resisting security personnel".

Chinese, Canadian foreign ministers to meet in Beijing

Monitoring Desk

OTTAWA: Canada's Foreign Minister Melanie Joly will meet with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Beijing on Friday for talks on bilateral relations and security issues, Ottawa said on Thursday.

Joly is making the trip to China, her first as foreign minister, at the invitation of Wang, the Canadian foreign ministry said in a statement.

The top diplomats will discuss global and regional security issues as well as "possible avenues for collaboration on common challenges," the ministry said.

"As the world faces increasingly complex and intersecting global issues, Canada is committed to engaging pragmatically with a wide range of countries to advance our national interests and uphold our values," Joly said in the statement.

Germany to halve military aid for Ukraine despite possible Trump White House

Monitoring Desk

BERLIN: Germany will halve military aid for Ukraine next year, even with the possibility that Republican candidate Donald Trump could return to the White House and curb support for Kyiv.

German aid to Ukraine will be cut to four billion euros (\$4.35bn) in 2025 from around 8bn euros in 2024, according to a draft of the 2025 budget seen by Reuters.

Germany hopes Ukraine will be able to meet the bulk of its military needs with the \$50bn in loans from the proceeds of frozen Russian assets agreed by the Group of Seven, and that funds earmarked for armaments will not be fully used.

"Ukraine's financing is secured for the foreseeable

Workers assemble scooters at the Caribbean Electric Vehicles (VEDCA) factory in Havana, Cuba.

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"Ukraine's financing is secured for the foreseeable

future thanks to European instruments and the G7 loans," German Finance Minister Christian Lindner said on Wednesday at a news conference.

Washington pushed to "front load" the loans to give Ukraine a big lump sum now.

Officials say EU leaders agreed to the idea in part because it reduces the chance of Ukraine being short of funds if Trump returns to the White House.

Alarm bells rang across Europe this week after Trump picked Senator JD Vance, who opposes military aid for Ukraine and warned Europe will have to rely less on the United States to defend the continent, as his candidate for vice president.

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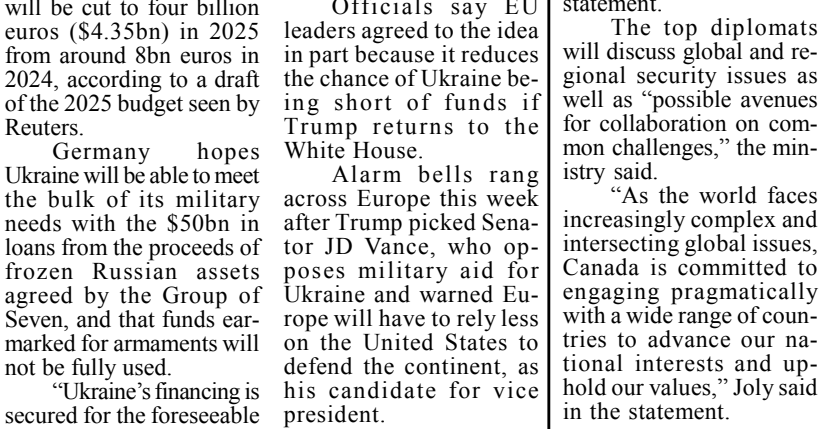
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Ahsan Iqbal launches 'Key Findings Report' on first-ever digital census-2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday unveiled the "First Ever Digital Census Key Findings Report," compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The report, which marks a significant milestone for Pakistan, provides comprehensive data crucial for the development of urban and rural areas and effective disaster response. Addressing a ceremony, the minister highlighted Pakistan's achievement as the first country in South Asia to conduct a digital census. "The data collected through this census will be instrumental in guiding our development efforts and enhancing our ability to respond to natural calamities," he stated. The census, mandated by the constitution to be conducted every ten years, faced scrutiny in 2017 when the Sindh government expressed concerns over the results, he said. So, the new census had to be conducted before 2027, he said, adding "Work on this new census began after April 2022."

In a short period, the minister said, over 120,000 individuals were trained to carry out the digital census, following the PBS and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) developed the necessary software under significant time constraints and pressure. "The results of the census have opened our eyes and reflect a concerted effort," he remarked.

Ahsan Iqbal acknowledged the support of the armed forces and police, which was critical to the census's success. Despite initial slow progress due to complications in the fieldwork, the minister said the process was expedited with provincial support. The consensus of all stakeholders was achieved, and the work was completed with the aid of satellite geo-tagging and imagery provided by the Pakistan Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO). The 7th Digital Census was unanimously approved by the Council of Common Interests (CCI). Addressing the broader implications, Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the economic challenges faced by Pakistan, adding "Due to economic instability, we are suffering from a lack of resources and have fallen behind globally."

He lamented that Pakistan, once an aid provider to South Korea, now lagged significantly behind in development. Similarly, he pointed out that while Malaysians used to send their children to Pakistan for higher education, Malaysia has since advanced in education, economy and other fields. He also acknowledged that India and Bangladesh have outperformed Pakistan in all sectors. "We are not behind them in intelligence and ability," he asserted. "But if we do not open our eyes, we will not be even counted in the global competition."



QUETTA: A 3-members delegation of AEOs meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan is also present

Creating hindrances in jail meetings of Imran IHC gives indication for initiating contempt of court proceedings against Adiala jail authorities

ISLAMABAD (Online): Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan of Islamabad High Court (IHC) has indicated to initiate contempt of court proceedings against Adiala Jail authorities for creating hindrances in jail meetings of PTI founder Imran Khan. Justice Ejaz Ishaq Khan has remarked "it is not acceptable at all. He cannot be stopped from seeing any document. If it is done so in future then contempt of court notice will be issued. This is tantamount to block justice process. There are more than 200 cases against Imran Khan. All cases are of political consequences. You want to show it that these all are real cases. Those who come to meet Imran Khan should also comply with Jail SOPs. He gave these remarks during hearing of the petition on Thursday. The petition in connection with meetings of Imran Khan with his lawyers came up for hearing in the court Thursday. Superintendent Adiala Jail filed the list in connection with meetings of PTI founder in Adiala jail. Advocate Shoaib Shaheen counsel for said to the court during the hearing let us see this list. Let it should contain jail hearings in meetings. Our leaders including both of the opposition leaders were kept standing and were not allowed to meet Imran Khan despite the fact court had ordered to work out SOP for two meetings in a week. Advocate General (AG) said the lawyers who represent PTI founder don't come. The lawyers who are active politically come to meet Imran Khan. Those who had gone to Adiala jail demanded that the meeting of all should be arranged simultaneously. Advocate Shoaib Shaheen said our vehicles are stopped at a distance of one and half kilometer from jail.

Govt may invoke Article 17 to ban PTI: Rana Sanaullah

LAHORE (INP): PML-N leader and former federal minister Rana Sanaullah has stated that the government has the authority to issue a declaration to ban any political party under Article 17 of the Constitution. Speaking on a private TV program, Rana Sanaullah explained that if the cabinet approves the declaration, it will be submitted to the Supreme Court within 15 days. If the Supreme Court concurs with the declaration, the party in question will be banned. Sanaullah emphasized that the government has the same rights as the PTI, and it is within their constitutional rights to present their case and strive for success. He added that there is no harm in the government attempting to secure its position if it can constitutionally acquire seats.

AJK PM hails 'Accession to Pak Day'

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has hailed Pakistan as the beacon of hope for Kashmiris, as the region prepares to celebrate 'Accession to Pakistan Day' on July 19. This historic day marks the 1947 decision by Kashmiri leadership to align with Pakistan, a move that has become a cornerstone of their freedom struggle. Haq praised the unwavering love and faith of Kashmiris in Pakistan, saying it has been the driving force behind their sacrifices. He honored the heroes who have laid down their lives for this cause, and expressed optimism that their struggle will soon bear fruit. The AJK Prime Minister also highlighted the immense sacrifices made by the people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir, who have faced brutal tactics, including the Jammu massacre that killed 250,000 Kashmiri Muslims. Despite this, their love for Pakistan remains unshakable. As Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control celebrate 'Accession to Pakistan Day', Haq reiterated that their bond with Pakistan is unbreakable, and that they will continue to strive for their forefathers' dream of accession to Pakistan.



QUETTA: President HELP Balochistan, former Health Minister Dr. Ameer Muhammad Jozzezi and Col. Javed offering Dua after laying foundation stone of MNCH in Harnai in collaboration with FC Balochistan



QUETTA: Shiite Muslims mourners to Imam Hussain (R.A) are participating religious procession to show their devotion and respect for cradle as they remember the martyrs of Karbala, during Ashura mourning procession in connection of 10th Muharram-ul-Haram, in Quetta.

Delegation of PPP divisional leaders meet Chief Minister: Sarfraz Bugti vows to strengthen party at divisional level further, resolve all matters thru mutual understanding

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) believes in the manifesto of public service and vowed to strengthen the party further at divisional and district level. He also pledged to resolve all the matters through mutual understanding at the party's level and expand the activities of public interest fully all over the province. In addition to this, the sports and cultural activities would be promoted in all districts of the province. The Chief Minister was speaking to a delegation of divisional Presidents and General Secretaries of PPP who called on him under leadership of senior leader of the party, Senator Sardar Umar Gorgeji, here on Thursday. Also present in the meeting was provincial Secretary Information of PPP, Sardar Sarbuland Khan Jozzezi. During the course of meeting, the matters were discussed about reorganization of the party at provincial level besides other related ones. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that party's office bearers and workers are our asset, and as such their issues would be resolved at district level on directives of the Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He said that another sitting would be held with all office bearers of the party on its matters next week. The divisional office bearers of party appreciated vision of the Chief Minister regarding public service.

IHC declares Sanam detention illegal

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while declaring detention of PTI worker Sanam Javed has disposed of the petition on the statement of Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP). AGP gave statement in the court that Sanam Javed will not be arrested in any other case now. He said Sanam Javed is now free and she can go to her province. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked I saw on internet Sanam Javed uses highly inappropriate language. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb inquired from the counsel do you give guarantee Sanam Javed will not use inappropriate language now.

and for her release came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb Thursday. AGP gave statement in the court that Sanam Javed will not be arrested in any other case now. He said Sanam Javed is now free and she can go to her province. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked I saw on internet Sanam Javed uses highly inappropriate language. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb inquired from the counsel do you give guarantee Sanam Javed will not use inappropriate language now.

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QUETTA: Haji Abdul Haq Mandokhail and Mazharul Haq Ali Khanzai meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Pakistan Bar Council demands formation of Constitutional Court

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Bar Council has called for the formation of Constitutional Court in the country through a constitutional amendment. As per details, the bar council said that the proposed court would exclusively hear political and constitutional cases, providing timely justice to the people. The Pakistan Bar Council believes that the establishment of a constitutional court would save valuable time and provide swift justice to the common man. The council has also expressed support for the appointment of ad hoc judges to help expedite the decision-making process in cases. Currently, a significant amount of the Supreme Court's time is spent hearing political cases, and the establishment of a constitutional court would help alleviate this burden.

District-level monsoon contingency plans discussed: DG PDMA visits vulnerable districts to address urgent issues during monsoon

Jahanzeb Khan visits landslide affected area in Sherani and earthquake affected area Dargai Eshpalo in Loralai; distributes relief goods among affectees

QUETTA: The Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and Relief Commissioner, Balochistan, Jahanzeb Khan conducted a comprehensive visit to several districts, including Killa Saifullah, Zhub, Sherani, and Loralai. Accompanied by Commissioner of Zhub Division Tariqur Rehman, the RC/DG PDMA's visit focused on assessing the most vulnerable communities within these districts. The Deputy Commissioners guided the RC/DG through the critical areas, briefing him on the local challenges and the conditions of the sites. A key part of the visit involved discussions on the district-level monsoon contingency plans. The Relief Commissioner/DG PDMA directed to the Deputy Commissioners to ensure preparedness and effective response to potential monsoon-related disasters. He also visited the landslide-affected area on the N-50 National Highway in Danasar, District Sherani. The DG PDMA, along with the Deputy Commissioner, evaluated the ongoing efforts of the Levies force and National Highway Authority (NHA) teams. He commended their prompt response to the landslide incident. Additionally, the DG PDMA also visited the earthquake-affected area of Dargai Eshpalo in Tehsil Makhiter, District Loralai. He inspected the damaged infrastructure and properties, and distributed relief goods among the affected residents. Immediate directives were issued to the Deputy Commissioner of Loralai to ensure the swift provision of additional relief goods to those in need.

Bugti expresses resent on result delay of teaching test in SBKWU, directs probe

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister (CM) Mir Sarfraz Bugti expressed his resentment on the delay of the result of teaching test under Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBKWU) and directed CMIT to conduct an inquiry setback of the result. The views were expressed on Thursday by the Spokesperson of the Balochistan government in a statement regarding the delay in the results of the teaching test under SBKWU. He said that the CM expressed his anger when the education department did not receive the results of the teaching test. Shahid Rind said that Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has sought an explanation for not receiving the results so far despite court orders and writing letters to SBKWU four times, the results have not been provided to the Education Department. He said that the SBKWU has been found guilty of violating the agreement with the education department in several cases. According to the agreement, the teaching test was to be conducted by SBKWU, but these tests were carried out by a third party, as per the memorandum of understanding (MoU), the grievances of the complainants were to be redressed and the results announced within seven days, he said. Shahid Rind said that according to the memorandum of understanding, SBKWU was supposed to give the results in May 2023 while the matter went to court in June 2023. He said that the CM also directed to issue a legal notice to SBKWU University in this regard. The CM has ordered the Chief Minister Inspection Team (CMIT) to investigate the delay in the matter, he said adding that the government's position on the issue of the SBKWU test was clear and the court orders would be followed in this context.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Provincial Ministers and MPAs offering Fateha on sad demise of Aslam Jan Sanjrani, uncle of MPA Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani

Balochistan govt committed to ensure all facilities, resolve issues: Shoaib Noshervani

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Minister for Finance Mir Shoaib Noshervani on Thursday said that the incumbent government is trying to utilize all available resources for the welfare of public and provision of all facilities to resolve the problems. The Balochistan government under the leadership of Chief Minister (CM) Mir Sarfraz Bugti is committed to provide relief to the people and improve governance in the province. In a meeting with various delegations in his office, the minister said that the promotion of education, provision of health facilities and ensuring of clean drinking water to the people of the province are among the top priorities of the government. Noshervani said that the government is trying to bring positive change in every sphere of life to remove the backwardness in the province so that the problems can be solved at their doorsteps. He reaffirmed his commitment that he will always be present for the service and prosperity of the people of the province and his constituency. Later, a delegation of lawyers from Kharan met the provincial finance minister Mir Shoaib Noshervani and informed him about their problems. The provincial minister gave full assurance to the lawyers to resolve their problems.

Sarfraz Bugti pays homage to Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto on 39th death anniversary

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has paid homage to Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto on his 39th death anniversary. In a statement issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister recalled the personality, ideology and democratic approach of Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto in golden words and said that he always played key role for promotion of the democracy and democratic behaviors. The Chief Minister said that Shahaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto's death anniversary reminds us of the great sacrifices which have been rendered by the Bhutto family for democracy in the country. He said PPP would continue its struggle for establishing democracy, equality and progressive society. The Chief Minister said that the dream of martyr leaders of the party was establishment of a democratic, prosperous and equitable society. He said that PPP is determined to turn this dream into reality.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Population Hadia Baloch meeting with Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Naushervani

KP Govt distances itself from PTI ban issue

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has opted out of involvement in the PTI ban issue, placing full responsibility on the party's central leadership. Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam clarified that decisions regarding the federal government's stance on the issue would be handled centrally. He emphasized consultations with the provincial leadership while criticizing the federal government's legal grounds as weak. Alleging misuse of Article 6, Alam accused the federal government of undermining the law and betraying the nation through regime changes. He questioned the legitimacy of government transitions based solely on letters, hinting at potential treason charges against those involved. Furthermore, Alam criticized the federal government's inability to substantiate any FIRs to date, highlighting what he described as a state of confusion within the administration.