

Rana Sanaullah advocates for sports' role in social legacies

PARIS (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah Khan, emphasized the significant impact of physical education and sports on creating enduring social legacies during his attendance at the "Change the Game!" Ministerial Forum at UNESCO, Paris.

Participating in the discussion focused on 'Leveraging Quality Physical Education & Sport for Sustainable Social Legacies,' he highlighted Pakistan's commitment to empowering youth through initiatives such as the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and the Youth Talent Hunt Programme, aimed at not only identifying future athletes but also instilling long-lasting social values.

Apart from participating in the opening ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympics and visiting UNESCO headquarters, Rana Sanaullah Khan actively engaged in discussions at the forum on utilizing high-quality physical

education and sports to achieve sustainable social outcomes.

He commended UNESCO for organizing such a critical event ahead of the Paris Olympic Games, emphasizing how large-scale sports events unite people globally in healthy competition.

Acknowledging Pakistan's youthful demographic, with two-thirds of its population under 24 years old, Rana Sanaullah Khan underscored the Prime Minister's efforts to empower young people through education and active participation.

He stressed that sports not only foster individual resilience and essential skills like leadership and teamwork but also promote international friendships, mutual understanding, cultural diversity celebration, and improve the physical and mental well-being of youth.

The advisor to prime minister appreciated UNESCO for organizing this

high-level forum in the run-up to the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

He added that mega sports events, like Olympics, act as a unifying force in bringing together the entire world in healthy competition - where all of us are winners.

The advisor said that Pakistan is a country of 240 million people and two-thirds of the population is below the age of 24 - making Pakistan one of the youngest countries in the world.

Keeping this in view, the prime minister launched a special initiative, called "Prime Minister's Youth Programme", to engage, educate, and empower youth.

He appraised all that under this Programme, a 'Youth Talent Hunt Programme' was organized across Pakistan for 12 different games to shortlist future athletes and to impart social values that would be an asset for them for life.



QUETTA: A delegation of elected LG representatives led by District Chairman Zhub Haji Muhammad Khan meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Dr Suleri says Re-negotiations with IPPs on principles of transparency, accountability crucial to end capacity payments' burden

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri on Wednesday said that re-negotiations of agreements with the independent power producers (IPPs) based on principles of transparency and accountability is crucial to end increasing burned of capacity payments on the masses.

In an exclusive chat with the SDTV here, the SDPI Executive Director provided a clear way forward to address the power sector crisis leading to increased tariffs hurting the common masses' incomes.

He said the IPPs were introduced as panacea in the beginning during the 15-16 hours electricity load shedding occurring in the past, and were promoted as a remedy to make up that shortfall.

Dr Suleri noted that during the process of establishing IPPs, there were flaws in the policies that promoted prevailing elite capture prevailing, whereas proper procedures, due diligence and Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) rules should be followed in the renewal process of IPPs licenses and agreements.

Capacity payment charges, he said needs to be understood that it was

like any resource hired for services was left unused but the lender was charging for that resource even if it was kept idle.

"The process of hiring those services needs to be discussed as the resources employed without assessing its compatibility, capacity and efficiency brings the onus on the decision-making quarters for the failure. The policies that are flawed have been made by the government of Pakistan exploited by IPPs," he said.

Many of the agreements with the IPPs have sovereign guarantees awarded to the IPPs, whereas incase of abrupt abolishment of those agreements there would be court of arbitration or grievance redressal mechanisms coming into force causing further damage to the government, he added.

He suggested that the way forward is to introduce tariff rationalisation, more usage of electricity in the system, local IPPs irrespective of ownership will have to be brought on table to renegotiate tenor and capacity payment charges, terms and conditions, along with abolishment of dollar denominated returns and back door diplomacy for the Chinese IPPs under CPEC.

Thousands of people will face amputations if preventive measures are not taken

Experts call for better food governance to combat NCDs menace

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is facing a significant rise in Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and is largely unprepared for the impact. Approximately 65% of premature deaths in the country are due to NCDs, with over 33 million people diagnosed with diabetes and an additional 10 million pre-diabetic. At least 42 million people are hypertensive, and obesity is increasing, especially among the youth. These diseases can be prevented through diet, lifestyle changes, and access to standard treatments. Key dietary risk factors include high consumption of sodium, fats, trans fats, and sugars, which are prevalent in Pakistan's food supply, particularly in ultra-processed foods. Improved food governance is crucial to ensure access to nutritious food.

To address this, Islamabad Food Authority (IFA), Centre for Governance and Public Accountability (CGPA) held a seminar today at Blackhole Islamabad, resulting in concrete policy recommendations.

Dr. Tahira Siddique, Deputy Director of the IFA, emphasized the authority's



commitment to food safety in Islamabad, including raids & penalties for non-compliant manufacturers. "We need to increase the lab and human resource capacity of IFA to test food samples for contamination and excessive quantities of trans fats, sodium, and sugars. However, we are committed to ensuring the health security of Pakistan," she stated.

Mr. Zubair Faisal Abbasi highlighted the need for updated standards: "There is a strong need to update the mandatory standards about the composition of ingredients in manufactured foods, easy to understand front of packet labeling requirements and efforts to increase food diversity as well as the nutritional density of foods."

Prof. Dr. Shakeel Mirza said, "Food governance is closely linked with the effectiveness of health policy frameworks, and if our foods are substantially adding dietary risk factors such as free sugars, high quantities of sodium, and trans fats, we are losing not only health but also the food security of our nation."

Other 40 Participants including Lubna Naz, Dr. Yusra Gillani, Dr. Uzair Ahson called for Pakistan to develop a health focused policy framework, including taxation, subsidies and healthcare expenditures. They suggested subsidizing healthy foods for the poor rather than ghee and sugar during Ramadan packages and emphasized that government procurement policies should discourage the high use of dietary risk factors."



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Mir Muhammad Khan Lehri meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti

PTI's new tactics to malign armed...

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Agreement with IMF despite challenges and announced a three-month relief package for 96% of domestic power consumers.

Highlighting the role of Afghanistan in the surged wave of terrorism, the prime minister said the government was in interaction with them as Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif also visited there.

"But how is it possible that we hosted millions of their people here without any complaint? We treated them like our brothers and never considered them as a burden. But we were rewarded in the form of TTP attacks on our citizens to mar the country's peace and business. This is not acceptable," he remarked.

He said Pakistan was ready to face any kind of situation as its valiant armed forces had sacrificed their lives to safeguard the country and its people.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also highlighted that the perpetrators of the May 9 riots, who had also attacked parliament, PTV and besieged the PM House in the past, had resorted to new tactics to malign the country and its armed forces as a malicious campaign was run against Army Chief General Asim Munir from the official website of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

"We will not tolerate any such steps against the country, its innocent people, and armed forces," he said and called for national unity to protect the national interest.

The prime minister apprised the members of a decision to abolish the visa fees for 126 countries as a "quantum jump" to bring ease of doing business and attract businessmen, tourists and travelers to Pakistan. The decision, made after a threadbare discussion, would be tabled before the cabinet for its consideration, he added.

He said the deficiency of the visa fees would be made up by foreign exchange earned through investment and tourism, including religious tourism of which Pakistan has immense potential.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the visitors would get visas within 24 hours through the electronic travel authorization form. Besides, the E-gates would be established at Gwadar Port and nine airports - initially in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi airports.

The prime minister strongly condemned the unprecedented human rights abuses of Israel against Palestinians as around 40,000 Palestinians had been killed including thousands of children and women.

He said despite the resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council and UN General Assembly and the decision by the International Court

of Justice, Israel was unbudged from its oppression which was highly condemnable.

The prime minister drew attention to the attacks on Pakistan's missions in Germany and London. He said the Foreign Office had timely taken up the matter and that the envoys of the countries concerned should be given demarches to seek the protection of Pakistan's missions.

Meanwhile the federal cabinet in a meeting with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the chair, on Wednesday, adopted a resolution reiterating support for the Palestinians, condemning Israel acts of barbarity and called for initiation of war crimes proceedings.

Addressing the meeting, the prime minister said Israel's continuing barbaric acts in Palestine had been unprecedented in the human history as it was targeting the innocent citizens including children and women in Gaza and rest of other Palestinian areas.

The prime minister said that during Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and SCO plus summits in Astana, he had raised a strong voice for the rights of the oppressed people of Palestine.

He stressed for resolution of Palestine issue in accordance with the United Nations resolutions, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister also strongly condemned an attack and vandalism of national flag at Pakistan's Mission in Frankfurt, Germany and said that elements involved in such act should face strict legal action.

He also condemned the recent incidents of terrorism in the country and paid tribute to the personnel of security forces who laid down their lives in these incidents. The prime minister prayed for the high ranks of the shuhada in Jannah.

"The federal cabinet, in its meeting, approved enforcement of online visa application system for the citizens of 126 countries aimed at promotion of business and investment activities and tourism sector. Under the system, the citizens of these 126 countries would get business and tourist visas within 24 hours and would be exempted from paying free visa processing fee," the press release in Urdu text said.

Moreover, for the facilitation of Sikh Yatraees having passports of third country, the cabinet approved separate sub-category in visa on arrival facility. For this purpose, a dashboard would be introduced at ministry of interior to supervise the online visa system.

The federal cabinet, on the recommendations of

Islamabad, Balochistan, Sindh, Lahore and Peshawar High Courts and ministry of law and justice, also granted its approval to notifying special courts and banking courts with regard to banking cases.

These included establishments of Special Court on Offences in Banks at Islamabad under Section 37 of the Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan Act 1997, Special Court on Offences in Banks at Quetta and similar Special Courts at Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Peshawar, the latter would be set up as Banking Court-1 Peshawar. These special and banking courts would function under Security Exchange Commission.

The cabinet also gave a go ahead to signing of MoU between Pakistan and Denmark for promotion of public private partnership over logistics, transport, green and sustainable growth, water waste management, urban green development, alternate energy and construction of basic infrastructure.

The earlier resolution passed by the cabinet in support of Palestinians and shared by PM Office Media Wing in Urdu language, said till October 7, 2023 more than 39,000 Palestinians had been martyred due to barbarity of Israel. Human populations, hospitals, schools, UN and media offices, workers and media people, none among them were safe from indiscriminate bombing, firing and killing spree. The Palestinians areas had turned into graveyard and heaps of destruction. Such a precedent of barbarity, cruelty and brutality was unmatched in the recent history.

More condemnation of Israeli acts of cruelty and aggression was not suffice as despite ICJ's decisions, UN resolutions, demands of human rights bodies, institutions and protests by the civilized people of the world, these acts of brutalities continued unabated, it was added.

The resolution further demanded of the international community and institutions to impose embargoes upon Israel for its war crimes besides, initiation of other legal, diplomatic and administrative measures. A berserk state should be made to abide by the international and rights laws and stop spilling of blood of innocent Palestinians otherwise, the conflict could be widened, it cautioned.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) had already declared Israeli presence in Palestinian areas as illegal and termed Israeli settlements in Palestinian areas as violation of the international laws. The ICJ should also order compensation to the Palestinians for such scale of destruction, it was asserted.



QUETTA: MPA Maulana Hidayatur Rehman meeting with President Quetta Press Club Abdul Khaliq Rind

No state can run comfortably without due levies: AJK PM

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq said on Wednesday that every citizen in the state should realize the fact that no state could sustain or be able to function without due levies including income tax.

"Demanding fulfillment of rights and privileges is indeed a constitutional right of every citizen but paying taxes to the state on their earnings is also their first and foremost responsibility", he said this while addressing swearing-in ceremony of District Bar Association in Kotli. "If citizen refuses to pay taxes on their earnings then how will this system work", he questioned.

The prime minister said that fulfilling every demand of the masses was not an easy job, adding "It needs a huge budget and abundant resources". The government had a budget

of Rs 220 billion which included a deficit budget of Rs 31 billion, he pointed out.

Regarding the supply of clean and safe drinking water to the Kotli city, the prime minister said that steps were being taken to solve the water problem in the city. He said that it had been decided to expand capacity of beds in DHQ Kotli to 200 beds.

He said that the government was considering the reduction of property taxes. The prime minister said that revenue could be generated through investment in hydro-power and tourism sectors, adding that it was only possible when there was peace and stability in the region.

Chudhary Anwarul Haq reiterated his government's commitment to establish merit and rule of law in the state. He said that NTS had been made the system transparent for job seekers.

Governor exhorts LEAs...

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He asked the concerned high ups to remain vigilant round the clock and enhance coordination among them for effective security in the division.

He also directed to take concrete steps for provision of health, education, clean drinking water and other facilities to the people at their doorsteps.

He also emphasized upon attendance of the officers and other employees at their duty places. He asked the officers to perform their duties with dedication.

Meanwhile, a delegation of local government representatives led by District Chairman Zhub, Muhammad Khan Kibzai also met the Governor Balochistan the same day.

During the meeting, overall working of the local government bodies and development works were discussed.



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan Labour Federation hold protest rally in favor of their demand.

24" dia. x 31 kms gas transmission pipeline project enhancing supplies to Karachi's West Region inaugurated by MD, SSGC

KARACHI (PR): As a customer centric organization, Sui Southern Gas Company continuously pursues to facilitate its worthy customers in meeting their gas related requirements by regularly enhancing its facilities through deployment of various developmental projects.

One such project was inaugurated today by SSGC's Managing Director Mr. Imran Maniar when he inaugurated the commissioning of transmission pipeline for supplying gas to Karachi's West Region. This 24" dia x 31 kms pipeline from MVA ACPL to SMS Surjani will largely address the issues of low-pressure supply of gas to Company's industrial customers located in the western region. The cost of the entire project is recorded as Rs. 3,859 million. The project will segregate the low-pressure domestic and commercial consumers from high-pressure industrial consumers of SITE and Hub Industrial Areas. The present demand of these industrial customers is around 130-140 MMSCFD whereas the future excessive demand is estimated to be 80-100 MMSCFD. Hence around 269 MMSCFD demand would be met through this new pipeline. This pipeline will also serve as feeding source of 16" dia x 5 kms pipeline from SMS Surjani to Madinat-al-Hikmah, which is one of the 05 projects of SSGC's Master Plan of expansion of Distribution Network in Karachi. Moreover, this project also includes modifications of Surjani Stepdown assembly that will result in more effective and efficient control philosophy, leading to better monitoring and control of Unaccounted-for-Gas (UFG) activities.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony organized by SSGC's Technical Services Division, Mr. Maniar highly appreciated the efforts of SSGC's engineers, workers and technicians deployed in the team dedicated for this project on completing it in the given timeline despite of extreme hot weather during last one and a half month. He informed that the execution of this project will reduce UFG through two ways, i.e. reduction in the unwanted high gas pressures in the domestic sector and by improving pressures and volumes in the industrial sector. The Managing Director attributed this remarkable achievement to the unified integration and dedicated team work of Projects and Construction (P&C), Planning and Development (P&D), Procurement, Finance, Procurement Stores, HSE&QA, L&EM, Security Services and Counter Gas Theft Operations (SS&CGTO) and Corporate Communication Departments. Heads and executives of these departments were also present at the inauguration ceremony.

Amin Rajput MDD (F & A) / CFO, Ghulam Moen Butt, ASGM (Technical Services) Brigadier @ Muhammad Abuzar, DG (SS&CGTO) and Ghulam Ali Mahar, DGM-Incharge (P&C) also spoke on the occasion and lauded the exemplary commitment and dedicated efforts of concerned teams in commissioning this much needed project.

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Tanveer stresses to focus skill training in addition with promoting higher education

AIOU's Golden Jubilee commemorative postage stamps launched

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries, Production, and National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain emphasized the need for focusing on skills education and vocational training, in addition to promoting higher education, to achieve economic development and social prosperity in the country.

Addressing a ceremony held to unveil commemorative postage stamps marking the golden jubilee of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), the minister stated that alongside higher education, skill training would enable graduating students to secure dignified employment upon completion of their education.

Minister Hussain also called for integrating 2.5 million out-of-school children into the educational network to cultivate their productivity as citizens of the country, stressing that education is crucial for economic growth and social

prosperity. He commended AIOU's role in advancing the education sector in Pakistan and reiterated the commitment to providing all necessary resources for promoting quality education. Speaking at the event, Dr Nasir Mahmood highlighted the university's golden jubilee celebration, emphasizing the significance of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's contribution in establishing AIOU as a national asset.

Dr. Nasir mentioned the recent declaration of an education emergency by the prime minister and underscored the university's potential role in this national initiative. He outlined a plan involving 200,000 registered teachers with AIOU nationwide, each responsible for a group of 30 children, aiming to educate 5 million children over the next five years.

During the ceremony, Director General Pakistan Post Samiullah Khan and

Additional Director General Rizwan Javed Hashmi noted the fruitful collaboration between AIOU and Pakistan Post, sharing a common vision and mission. They highlighted the joyous occasion of the university's 50th anniversary and announced the issuance of 100,000 special stamps, available at all major post offices across the country. An unveiling ceremony of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Golden Jubilee commemorative postage stamps was held here yesterday.

Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, was the guest of Honor, while Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood hosted the event.

Addressing the ceremony, Rana Tanveer Hussain said that Allama Iqbal Open University has made significant progress in the field of education, with 2.5 million children out of school in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Atta Ur Rehman, chairman senate standing committee on religious affairs and inter-faith harmony presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Senate Committee expresses dismay on Zaireen problems

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Senate Religious Affairs Committee took up the matters of pilgrims heading to Iran and Iraq on Wednesday.

Senator Raja Nasir Abbas, a member of the committee, said that pilgrims faced a number of problems at Taftan border. Things available at border are expensive and of sub-standard.

Forum should talk to the Balochistan government about the complaints on the Taftan border. The chairman committee said that some members of the committee should go to Taftan and look into the matter and also talk to the

Balochistan government. The member of the committee said to create a complaint cell related to the complaints from the pilgrims and will call the planning commission for the construction of Pakistan House on the Taftan border.

Member Committee Raja Nasir Abbas said to build temporary residences for pilgrims in collaboration with FC and Ministry.

The religious affairs secretary told the committee that a directorate for pilgrims is being made in Baghdad, while Iran is also making a new policy for pilgrimages in Iraq and Syria.

ICT Senior Citizens Act, 2021 Call for finalization of ROBs; allocation of funds for the implementation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Participants at the Event on Policy Analysis and Advocacy, organized by the Secretariat of the Older People Rights Network (OPRN) in collaboration with HelpAge International, have issued an urgent call for the finalization of the Rules of Business (ROBs) and the allocation of appropriate funds for implementing the Islamabad Capital Territory Senior Citizen Act, 2021.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) emphasized the need for immediate government action to address gaps and inadequacies in services available for older people in Islamabad, highlighting that the existing provisions are either missing or unsatisfactory, said a press release.

Pakistan, the fifth most populous country globally, has over 11.6 million people aged sixty and above, making up 7% of its population. This number is projected to rise to 43.3 million by 2050. Recognizing this demographic shift, the Islamabad Capital Territory Senior Citizen Act was enacted in 2021.

The Older People Rights Network (OPRN), Islamabad, is a coalition of over 15 civil society organizations dedicated to advocating for the rights of older people and persons with disabilities. Established in December 2023 and supported by HelpAge International, the network serves as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and policy advocacy. It involves stakeholders such as ministries, parliamentarians, district administrations, senior citizen groups, media, and the public on issues related to ageing, senior citizens' rights, needs, challenges, and contributions. The event brought together OPRN members and senior citizens to review and evaluate current policies and laws affecting older people in Pakistan, identify deficiencies in the current system, and formulate actionable recommendations for policy advocacy and future initiatives. The event was chaired by Jehan Ara Moeen, a senior citizen, activist, and former PTV newscaster. In her opening remarks, Moeen stressed the importance of protecting the rights of older people.



Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain addressing an unveiling ceremony of Allama Iqbal Open University Golden Jubilee commemorative postage stamps in Islamabad

Muqam grills PTI chief over refusal to undergo polygraph test

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam quips PTI chief's refusal to undergo polygraph test.

"He who used to say 'I fear no one,' is now afraid of the lie-detecting machine," Muqam said in a statement.

Muqam said that he (Imran Khan) used to say "I am not scared of anyone," is now scared of the

lie-detecting machine. "If he (Khan) is not lying, why is he afraid of the lie-detecting machine?" he questioned.

He falsely claimed "I will die but not go to the IMF" and how can he confront the polygraph machine?"

"Whether he refused the lie-detecting machine's challenge, since the machine does not say 'good to see you,' the minister questioned.

FGEHA sets to auction commercial plots in G-13

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) is all set to auction its three mixed-use commercial plots in G-13 on August 7, as not only to generate more revenues but also to attract investors.

"The authority has already advertised the auction of the plots in different leading newspapers and urged the interested persons to obtain brochures from FGEHA office," an official in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP.

The official said that the prime location of these plots makes them suitable for a range of purposes, including multi-use businesses, shopping centers, corporate offices, and banks.

Three 'agents' arrested in fake passports case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested three agents from Peshawar who were allegedly involved in providing Pakistani passports to Afghan nationals.

According to the details, FIA's Anti-Human Trafficking Circle in an operation in Peshawar arrested three suspects namely Rahmatullah, Tariq Javed, and Abu Bakar.

According to the FIA, the suspects were part of a human smuggling network and providing Pakistani passports to Afghan nationals in exchange for large sums of money.

IHC adjourns cases challenging changing of election tribunal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday adjourned hearing on petitions challenging the changing of election tribunal hearing cases about the three constituencies of the federal capital.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the petitions against the change of tribunal by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The lawyers of the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N)'s successful candidates completed their arguments during the hearing.

The lawyer argued that there was no dishonesty in the decision to change the election tribunal. The ECP has not done anything wrong by changing the tribunal, he said.

The decision was taken under the law for dispensation of justice and confidence in the tribunal beyond prejudice, he said.

The lawyer of the three successful candidates of PML-N Islamabad, Waqas Mir argued that the issue of admissibility of the election petitions is to be seen first. He said that the Election Tribunal issued notices to the successful candidates in the first hearing and called for Form 45 and a written reply.

He said that in the next order, the Election Tribunal issued notices to the returning officers and ordered them to issue warrants for non-appearance. Keeping these orders in mind, a transfer request was made to the ECP.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Rotary Club membership certificate given to Nadia Amad.

CAT upholds CCP's order against media industry giants

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has dismissed the appeal filed by the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA), upholding the Competition Commission of Pakistan's (CCP) directive to major media industry players to refrain from violating competition laws in a decisive ruling.

The CCP's action resulted from a thorough enquiry initiated by a complaint from M/s Bol Media

Network, M/s Labbaik (Pvt) Limited, and M/s Bol Enterprises (Pvt) Limited against PBA, Broadcaster Advertisers Council (BAC) and Medialogic (Pvt) Limited. Bol alleged in its complaint that Medialogic had denied it ratings through an arrangement concealed within three distinct agreements involving the PBA, BAC, Pakistan Advertisers Society (PAS), and Medialogic, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

Islamabad Police committed to resolve public issues on priority: DIG Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Ali Rizvi, the DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza on Wednesday said that the Islamabad Police is committed to resolve public issues on priority.

He said this while listening to the complaints and issues of the public as well as police officials during the Khuli Kachehri held at his office. Senior police

officers were also present on this occasion.

During the Khuli Kachehri, he listened to the complaints of the citizens and marked their applications to the concerned officers for timely action on merit. He also directed them to send reports to his offices in the given time frame. He further said that strict action will be taken against officials involved in bribery or corruption and a zero tolerance policy will be adopted in this regard.



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

Punjab Govt, DHA start drive to restore Takht Pari Forest

ISLAMABAD (Online): Punjab government and Defence Housing Authority (DHA) Islamabad are jointly starting a campaign from Saturday to restore Rawalpindi's historic Takht Pari Forest.

All segments of the society have been invited to fully participate in the campaign.

WASA MD appeals to keep Nullah Leh, bridges clean to avoid monsoon mayhem

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Water and Sanitation Agency Managing Director Muhammad Saleem Ashraf Wednesday appealed to the public to refrain from throwing trash, debris, and other solid waste into the nullah, stressing that such actions create a significant hindrance in the flow of water during monsoon.

This obstruction can lead to devastating floods during the monsoon season, putting lives and property at risk, he warned while talking to PTV news channel. "We urge residents to take responsibility for their actions and dispose of waste properly. Let us work together to keep Nullah Leh clean and ensure a safe and flood-free monsoon season," he added.

The WASA MD also announced plans to increase surveillance and enforcement along the nullah to prevent dumping and encourage community involvement in maintaining the waterway's cleanliness.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Board of Investment, Abdul Aleem Khan meets with the Chinese Ambassador, His Excellency Jiang Zaidong to Bolster Economic Cooperation.

Babar Nawaz accuses opposition leader for rigging 2024 polls

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (N) leader Babar Nawaz Khan on Wednesday demanded the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to take action against the rigging in his constituency National Assembly (NA) 18 Haripur during the 2024 General Elections.

Addressing a news conference here, Babar Nawaz Khan, a former member National Assembly accused his political rival the Opposition Leader in the National Assembly, Umar Ayub Khan of rigging the polls.

He demanded the Election Commission to take action on his petition filed against the alleged rigging in

NA-18.

He said that Umar Ayub was guilty of financial corruption and misrepresentation in the affidavit submitted to the Election Commission. He further said most of the votes in his constituency comprised of population residing in hilly areas, which takes three to four hours to reach the polling stations.

"PTI members themselves believe that fake votes casted votes in the elections. I had filed a petition in the Election Commission against this rigging, but Umar Ayub, who considers himself the champion of fair and transparent elections, started opposing him to dismiss his petition.



ISLAMABAD: Work in progress on Park Road expansion project in the Federal Capital.

CDA chief vows regular board's meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Wednesday decided to hold regular meetings of its board to track the progress of its initiatives aimed at uplifting and beautifying the federal capital.

He decided to this effect while chairing an important meeting to discuss the key issues regarding the sector development of Islamabad, the Islamabad Development Plan, and the financial position of authority.

The meeting was attended by members of CDA Board, Administrator Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad and other formations concerned, said a news release.

During the meeting, the member briefing provided a detailed briefing on the CDA's fiscal status and revenue generation efforts.

It was decided that revenue generation status would be presented every

week, detailing both targets and achievements to ensure transparency and accountability.

Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa emphasized the need for regular oversight by instructing that weekly board meetings be held to track progress and make necessary decisions promptly.

Several major initiatives were discussed in detail during the meeting. These included the computerization of land and property records, the operationalization of a smart app for essential services, and the beautification of the Diplomatic Enclave and parks.

The Serena Chowk underpass project, a one-window operation for customer facilitation, and ongoing mega road infrastructure projects were also discussed, signaling the CDA's comprehensive and multi-pronged approach to the overall development of Islamabad city.

Complaint lodged against ETPB official for bribe, fraud in FIA

ISLAMABAD (APP): A formal complaint has been submitted to the Director of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone, against Imran Arif Janjua, a Deputy Administrator at the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) for accepting a substantial bribe in exchange for a government job appointment.

The complainant, Muhammad Shabbir, detailed the incident in his complaint that his nephew, Shehroze Iqbal, is an educated young man who has been struggling to find employment. In an effort to secure a government job for Shehroze, Shabbir was introduced to Imran Arif Janjua by a mutual friend. Janjua, who is cur-

rently posted as the Deputy Administrator of Plazas at the ET Complex near the private hotel in Islamabad, assured Shabbir that he could arrange for Shehroze to be appointed as a Naib Tehsildar. In return for this favour, Janjua demanded a sum of five million rupees.

Shabbir claimed that he paid three million rupees in cash to Janjua, in the presence of witnesses Muhammad Rafiq (CNIC No. 37405-0374582-7) and Muzamil Hussain (CNIC No. 37405-8414262-5), both residents of Rawalpindi. He promised that the remaining two million rupees would be paid upon the issuance of the appointment letter.

However, despite the

passage of six months and the initial payment, Janjua has not fulfilled his promise, nor he has arranged the job for Shehroze.

In his complaint, Shabbir has requested the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to initiate appropriate criminal proceedings against Janjua. He has also called for an inquiry into Janjua's assets acquired during his service.

The complaint, dated July 22, 2024, was filed by Shabbir urging the FIA to investigate the allegations and take necessary action in accordance with the law.

Upon contacting ETPB Deputy Administrator Imran Arif Janjua, he denied the allegations, stating that the application was based on false premises.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Thursday July 25, 2024

Reforming militants

A major question confronting the state concerns those militants who have laid down their arms — euphemistically referred to as the ‘good’ Taliban. Ask the people of areas badly hit by militancy, and they want nothing to do with these individuals.

For example, at the recently concluded Bannu Amn Jirga, participants wanted the ‘good’ Taliban out of their area, while calling for an end to pickets set up and patrols by such fighters. This is a dilemma for the state: what to do with those who are willing to forgo violence? The matter is complicated, and a solution should be found by consulting the people’s representatives, security experts and academics.

By all means those terrorist ideologues and facilitators responsible for the killing of thousands of Pakistani civilians and security men over the years cannot be welcomed with open arms, and must face the courts. Similarly, militants — good or bad — cannot be allowed to roam around freely and create a parallel structure, even if they have surrendered to the state: only the government has the authority to maintain law and order across the country.

But the question of the thousands of foot soldiers, particularly child fighters groomed by terrorist groups and juveniles, is more complex. Pakistan is not alone in facing this dilemma; for example, around 40,000 wives and children of IS fighters are currently being held in a Syrian camp run by Kurdish armed groups, as in most cases their countries of origin refuse to take them back.

Instead of giving militants — who surrender to the state and promise to renounce violence — complete liberty, they can be put through deradicalisation programmes.

Such initiatives have been tried before, in Swat for instance, at centres run by the military as well as NGOs. Initially, hard-core militants should be separated from low-level cadres not involved in gratuitous violent activity, with the former punished as per the law.

The deradicalisation process should involve psychological help as well as education and vocational training, so that the reformed militants can contribute to society. Even after completion of the programme, security forces need to keep an eye on the erstwhile militants so that they do not ‘relapse’ and return to the path of terrorism.

Of course, this is not easy, and will require funds and consistent effort. Moreover, the successes and failures of previous deradicalisation programmes need to be scientifically analysed so that the same mistakes are not repeated.

Deradicalisation should be seen as one component of countering violent extremism, which is part of the revised National Action Plan. Along with religiously inspired militants, it can also be extended to Baloch fighters who wish to renounce violence, and reintegrate into society.

Zahid Hussain

After months of silence, we heard from the military’s spokesperson. The televised presser was supposed to be a briefing on counterterrorism efforts and the recent violence in Bannu.

But the talk digressed to ‘digital terrorism’, which Lt-Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry described as the most serious threat to national security. He blamed a ‘certain’ political party and ‘vested interests’ for maligning the security forces. He was also unhappy with the legal system that he said had failed to convict the perpetrators of May 9. The presser turned into an exercise in political polemics, with the general appearing upset at the state of affairs.

But answers are needed as to what has gone wrong with the counterterrorism campaign. The presser took place days after a series of terrorist attacks in KP that have shaken the troubled province. It was one of the bloodiest days for the security forces last week when 10 soldiers were martyred in two separate

terrorist attacks in Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan. A number of civilians were also killed. The escalation in terrorist attacks raises questions about our strategy to fight the menace.

Most worrisome, however, was the violent public protest that broke out a day after in Bannu town. The anger over escalating terrorist incidents turned against the security forces. Several civilian casualties were reported in the clashes. According to Lt-Gen Sharif, the incident was orchestrated by a “political lobby” and played up in the digital media.

What happened in Bannu is actually a reflection of the widening trust gap between the public and security forces. Nothing could be worse for a security apparatus, which has been the main target of terrorist attacks, than to confront its own people. Instead of blaming digital media, the reasons for the growing public distrust must be probed. It is apparent that the people are not happy with the way the state has been dealing with militancy. This is an alarming situation for a country that is facing an

existentialist threat.

The military spokesperson denied that the security forces were planning to launch a new military operation against militant groups. It was stressed that the “purpose of the operation was only to reinvigorate the already in-place National Action Plan”. “Very important issues [are] being sacrificed at the altar of politics,” it was said.

But the fact is that it was the initial statement by the government on launching the counterterrorism operation Azm-i-Istehkam following a meeting of the apex committee that created the confusion. There was certainly no clarity on how the government was planning to deal with domestic security challenges. Contradictory statements by federal cabinet ministers added to the confusion.

It was only after a public outcry and robust opposition from political parties, particularly those in KP, that the government backtracked and announced that there was no plan to launch a full-fledged kinetic operation. It was apparent that it was Beijing’s concerns over terrorist attacks

against Chinese nationals working on CPEC projects that had compelled Islamabad to make the announcement about the operation. Now it is doubtful that this changing of stance will help address Chinese concerns.

It is also not clear how the objectives of the counterterrorism campaign, as articulated by Gen Sharif, would be implemented in the absence of a coherent policy. No one knows about the contours of a ‘renewed and reinvigorated National Action Plan’, which is as vague as the previous plan that was framed in the aftermath of the massacre of some 140 students and teachers of the Peshawar Army School by militants.

Almost a decade on, the state has not been able to implement any of those 20 points. Now the military is talking about a new and comprehensive national action plan that has yet to be discussed in parliament. Given the worsening political instability in the country and escalating tension between Islamabad and the KP government, one cannot expect the state to effectively fight militancy. The Bannu incident has widened

the fault lines. The government has not even tried to develop a broad consensus on a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy, despite the escalating terrorist threat, which has claimed hundreds of lives — of both civilians and security personnel.

With the security establishment so deeply involved in political manipulation, the capacity to deal with grave national security challenges has been greatly weakened. It has also been the reason for increasing public scepticism that was demonstrated in the Bannu protests. It is ironic that a front-line force in the fight against militancy should become the target of public wrath.

While some of the anti-state propaganda on social media may indeed be orchestrated by vested interests, one cannot label criticism of the establishment’s involvement in politics and its questionable actions in suppressing democratic freedom ‘digital terrorism’. What does the establishment have to say about the allegations of harassment of high court judges by intelligence agencies and its alleged interference in the ju-

dicial process? Moreover, the footprint of the establishment in the manipulation of the election results is undeniable. It can hardly be deemed a coincidence that, hours before the presser, the PTI’s central secretariat in Islamabad was raided over accusations that it was orchestrating an anti-state campaign on social media, which the military spokesman describes as “digital terrorism”.

This was a political presser that will only make the security establishment more controversial. One wonders what the purpose of the presser was. The spokesperson’s remarks have serious political implications at a stage when the country desperately needs political temperatures to be lowered in order to deal with the menace of terrorism. It is apparent that the presser has fuelled political tensions, and left people more confused over the counterterrorism campaign. In this atmosphere, it would not be surprising to see more Bannu-like incidents. It is highly unfortunate for the country, which has to contend with a most serious challenge to its security. -- Courtesy Dawn

Giving up is good sometimes**Rafia Zakaria**

This is not just about the decision of the United States. That is, however, a good place to begin. On Sunday, President Joe Biden decided to forego competing for elections for a second term. Beyond the political strategising, it is a bizarre decision. Here you have a situation where a man elected to the most powerful position in the world, who commands the world’s largest and most advanced military and the world’s largest economy, has voluntarily relinquished the possibility of doing it again for another four years.

The political particulars of the situation will undoubtedly be discussed at length by any number of analysts and political commentators over the next few weeks. Beyond that, however, is the startling scenario of someone giving up an opportunity or a position that they had worked for all of their

lives. As history has long shown, those with the most power are least likely to want to give it up — such is after all the intoxication of great importance that those occupying very high positions began to believe in the myth of their own significance. Those who can separate the office or position from themselves are extraordinary in every way.

There is also the underlying question of knowing when it makes more sense to give something up rather than to hold on to it, when quitting — counter-intuitive as that is — makes more sense than continuing the course. One reason that this is a tricky issue is that we quit all the time and most times we are inordinately talented at coming up with reasons that justify doing so. We construct lists of them in our head, share them with those with whom we speak, and so on.

Sometimes we curse the goal itself as not worthy of having been followed — the

destination was misunderstood somehow, or other extraneous circumstances justified the abandonment of what was once intended. All of this is normal and a part of the usual circumstances.

It is also true that we sometimes struggle with giving up things in which we have invested a good bit of our efforts and resources. One example is a person who once he or she begins to read a book or watch a movie feels great pressure, halfway through or even earlier, to complete reading or watching it.

This is true even if the book or the movie is objectively awful — the person is not enjoying it or getting any enrichment at all from the exercise. This means that a large chunk of one’s time, even leisure time, is wasted on reading to the end books that one does not like or watching an inane movie until its over. In cases like this, the issue is misconstrued as one of staying the course versus giving up. The actual issue

here is of giving oneself grace for having made an incorrect assessment.

It can be illustrated from a much larger example. In recent weeks, a video went viral on YouTube and TikTok. The video features an MIT-trained neurosurgeon who is now unemployed and spending time with his dog hiking in the mountains. In the video, the doctor explains how he spent years and years training to be a brain-spinal cord surgeon. What motivated him, he explained, was the possibility that he could one day relieve human suffering.

However, as he progressed in his field, he found that he was not always able to relieve his patients’ suffering. In fact, he discovered that more often than not he was not able to relieve suffering and sometimes even ended up causing more of it. This was too much of a burden on his conscience and he found that the situation was causing him great moral

injury. He was the sole breadwinner and felt that the years of training and the course he had chosen meant that he should stay with it. But his thoughts caused him to sink into a deep depression until ultimately, he decided to quit.

Decisions like this are complicated. Many of us have been or will be in situations where we feel like there are no choices at all or the ones that we have are so constricted and constrained that they are just as good as not having a choice.

Here is where the measure of our character lies. Whether it is the case of the American president or a neurosurgeon or one of us, the question becomes one of how close we are to fulfilling our life’s purpose and how diligent we are being in avoiding harm to those who are dependent on us.

These considerations are generally good in allowing us to see that not only do we always have the oppor-

tunity to make choices but that in some cases, what is best for us and for other people involves giving ourselves the grace to say that we may have misjudged an earlier situation. When we make decisions to pursue a certain course, whether it is to begin or end a relationship, read a book, watch a movie, quit a career or even the American presidency we do it with the information that is best available to us in that moment.

Times change, new challenges arise, people betray us and others join us in our journeys and through all this new information becomes available that requires reassessment. Sometimes, such a reassessment means that we must change course, quit the path that we have been on and begin a new journey. Giving up on some things, some paths, some people is good sometimes because while our choices may not always be good ones, we do always have a choice.

Mental health rights**Ali Burhan Mustafa**

Some years ago, in a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court issued a transformative decision in the Safia Bano case, significantly advancing the integration of mental health considerations into the country’s criminal justice system.

Led by a five-member bench, with renowned psychiatrist professor Dr Mowadat Hussain Rana serving as amicus curiae, the court declared that carrying out the death sentence in the case of a mentally ill prisoner incapable of comprehending their punishment violated the principles of justice.

The ruling mandated the formation of medical boards for comprehensive evaluations, resulting in the commutation of some death penalties to life imprisonment.

It also directed legislative amendments and prison rule revisions to ensure fair treatment and proper care for mentally ill inmates. This included establishing specialised forensic mental health facilities and training programmes for judicial personnel. By setting a precedent for considering severe mental illness as a mitigating factor in capital cases, the decision aligned Pakistan’s legal framework more closely with international human rights standards, emphasising a just and humane approach to mentally ill individuals within the criminal justice system.

In cases involving Imdad Ali, Kaneezan Bibi, and Ghulam Abbas, Pakistan’s judiciary grappled with complex issues of mental health and criminal responsibility. Imdad Ali, initially facing death for a murder in Burewala, had his sentence commuted to life imprisonment due to

schizophrenia. Kaneezan Bibi, convicted of multiple homicides in Toba Tek Singh, also had her death penalty changed to life imprisonment because of schizophrenia. Ghulam Abbas, convicted of murder in Rawalpindi, saw his execution halted after a medical board identified cognitive impairments and psychotic symptoms.

These cases underscored the need for clear protocols in handling mental incapacity claims during trials and highlighted the crucial role of psychiatric assessments in ensuring fair judicial decisions, reflecting a growing awareness of mental health in Pakistan’s legal system.

In 2016, a three-member Supreme Court of Pakistan bench, presided over by chief justice Anwar Zaheer Jamali, issued a verdict imposing capital punishment on Imdad Ali. The judgement, which posited that schizophrenia did not qualify as a mental disorder, elicited substantial controversy and juridical discourse. This ruling underscored the ambiguities and shifting perspectives within Pakistan’s judicial framework concerning mental health issues. The judgement was later reversed.

Before Partition, Pakistan’s mental health laws were rooted in colonial-era statutes like the Lunacy Act of 1912 and provisions from the Indian Penal Code of 1860, maintaining outdated views through Chapter XXXIV of the Criminal Procedure Code. Despite the supersession of the Evidence Act of 1872 by the Qanun-i-Shahadat Order in 1984, terms like ‘lunatics’, ‘unsound mind’ persisted, impacting mental health practices post-independence. It wasn’t until 2001, un-

der Gen Musharraf’s administration, that the first mental health ordinance emerged, later affected by the 18th Amendment. Provincial legislation in Sindh (2013), Punjab (2014), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2017), and Balochistan (2019) aimed to modernise mental health laws.

Since 2021, despite clear directives from the Supreme Court in the Safia Bano case, critical aspects of mental health and forensic psychiatry in Pakistan have languished. The establishment of specialised forensic psychiatric expertise, crucial for medical board evaluations, remains unrealised due to a lack of initiative from the state, the Higher Education Commission, and academic institutions.

Furthermore, no efforts have been made to reform prison rules uniformly across Pakistan or to create specialised forensic settings for mental health offenders. Capacity-building initiatives for judicial officers, law professionals, security personnel, and others involved in mental health cases have also been conspicuous by their absence.

This stagnation is alarming given the Supreme Court’s explicit recommendations. The failure of both the legislative and executive branches to implement necessary reforms reflects a concerning disregard for mental health within Pakistani society. The disconnect between judicial directives and practical implementation underscores a pressing need for immediate action to address these systemic shortcomings and uphold the rights and well-being of individuals affected by mental health issues in the criminal justice system. -- Courtesy Dawn

No joy in Dhaka**Mahir Ali**

There is a sense of irony in watching tanks and armoured personnel carriers on the streets of Dhaka, defending a government that traces its lineage to the forces that resisted the Pakistani army’s ultimately futile effort to abort the birth of Bangladesh in 1971.

This month’s unrest in the nation once known as East Pakistan was spurred by the re-imposition of laws that reserved around 30 per cent of government jobs for the descendants of those who fought in the Bangladesh war of liberation. The quota was uncontroversial when it was introduced by the present prime minister’s father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in 1972. Hardly anyone could have objected to special consideration for the stalwarts of the resistance to Islamabad’s hegemony, or their families.

Half a century later, such a law is harder to defend — particularly when unemployment among graduates is substantially higher than the national average. The quota was effectively rescinded in 2018, until revived by a high court last month. After dozens of deaths and hundreds of arrests, it is likely to take much more than a supreme court decision sharply reducing the quota to diminish the rage that led to the unrest, which has lately been subdued following curfew and shoot-on-sight orders.

Unfortunately, Sheikh Hasina Wajed’s reign across four consecutive prime ministerships since 2009 — plus a previous stint as Bangladesh’s second woman prime minister after Khaleda Zia — has been accompanied by an apparent determination to turn Bangladesh into a one-party state. That’s precisely what her father had disastrously plumped

for in the months before he and most of his family were murdered by Bangladeshi army officers in 1975.

Bangladesh had a Gen Zia in charge two years before Pakistan did, but he was killed by the military in 1981, paving the way for a fellow general more in line with the Pakistani Zia’s religious predilections. A joint effort by Hasina and Khaleda Zia managed to topple Ershad, and Zia became prime minister for a second term. It appeared a better outcome than achieved by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan, but yet another military intervention led to the imprisonment of both the ‘begums’. However, by 2009 Hasina was back at the helm.

She has been there ever since, come hell or high water, based substantially on condemning the opposition to prison, or worse. There have been deaths in jail and disappearances under her watch, and her aim is seen as a one-party state of the kind her father sought to institute months before he was assassinated. Despite all his missteps, nothing of that sort was on the agenda of Mujib’s Pakistani equivalent, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Courtesy of Dr Kamal Hossain, Bangladesh managed to establish a constitution in 1972, before Pakistan managed to do so almost a year later. Unlike Pakistan’s, it was undeniably secular and potentially socialist. Hossain, who served as first law minister and then foreign minister under Mujib, was caught unawares when the leader alongside whom he had been imprisoned in Rajshahi in 1971 proclaimed a one-party state in February 1975. He was murdered alongside family members in August that year, and the military coup spawned the equally short-

lived Zia rule, followed by the Ershad interregnum that in many ways imitated the fundamentalist trajectory of Pakistan’s Zia.

The return of democracy has not been smooth, with subsequent military interventions vying for attention with political squabbling that always seemed to have more to do with egos than ideology.

Bangladesh’s economic growth rate since 2009 has been impressive, based to a large extent on garment exports — which have relied primarily on sweat-shops with occasionally deadly locations. It’s an industry that mostly employs vulnerable women, and in which demands for safer working conditions and higher wages have been crushed by the state.

The achievements of Sheikh Hasina’s government stretch from relatively impressive economic figures to state capture stretching from the military to the judiciary. No civilian government in Pakistan can claim to have been equally successful, notwithstanding the obvious parallels related to punishing political opponents.

The question for Hasina’s government now is whether backtracking on quotas that are assumed to have benefited the ruling party will suffice to calm popular anger that extends beyond that particular claim to unequal growth, and suspected corruption where the current cultists can more readily be pinpointed under effective one-party rule.

Notwithstanding Bangladesh’s successes, its failures cannot be ignored. Far less repression and a lot more democracy could set it on a more productive path — and the same essentially goes for Pakistan. But embarking on it with Hasina’s Awami League still at helm could be seen as an impossible dream. -- Courtesy Dawn

Sindh CM launches revival of natural route of Dhoro Puran to Shakoor Lake

HYDERABAD (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah inaugurated the restoration of natural water channels from Dhoro Puran to Shakoor Lake to save 1.27 million acres of land. He said that the federal government constructed the Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) during the 1980s, but the excavation of its Spinals blocked the natural waterways.

As a result, the lands of Badin, Mirpurkhas, Sanghar and Nawabshah started submerging during floods and degraded, turning saline, the wetland ecosystem was completely damaged, and livelihood opportunities shrank. Keeping in view these problems, particularly the livelihoods and the damaged wetland ecosystem, the Sindh government has decided to

revive the natural route of Dhoro Puran to construct a Spinal Escape regulator at RD 210 and rehabilitate Dhoro Puran up to Shakoor Lake, he added.

CM expressed this while speaking at the public gathering after inaugurating the LBOD system, Sindh minister for irrigation Jam Khan Shoro, Secretary Irrigation Zareef Khoro, elected representatives of the area and the notables attended the program.

The CM, sharing the background of the LBOD project, informed that from 1984 to 1997, the LBOD Stage-I project was executed by Wapda to relieve waterlogging and salinity in 1.27 million acres of land in Shaheed Benazirabad, Mirpurkhas, Sanghar and Basin Districts.

He maintained that the LBOD spinal drain

connects the drainage network to the sea through a tidal link. The LBOD spinal drain collects surplus drainage and distributes it through a weir to two branch drains, the Kadhan Pateji Outfall Drain (KPOD) and the Dhoro Puran Outfall Drain (DPOD). He added that the spinal drain system was designed to direct the high salinity drainage into the KPOD and then to the sea. The KPOD connects to the sea via a 26-mile-long canal, called the Tidal Link.

The CM said that 204 drains from three divisions, totalling 1735 miles in length, would discharge into the LBOD. These include 108 drains from Badin, spanning 813 miles, 51 drains from Mirpurkhas, covering 454 miles and 43 drains from Sanghar, extending over 336.6 miles.



BADIN: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah inaugurating newly constructed regulator of spinal drain of LBOD at RD210 near Shadi Large.

CM Maryam Nawaz launches medicines warehouse project

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif inaugurated one of Pakistan's largest medicines warehouse projects aimed at improving healthcare services across the province in a landmark initiative. The launch took place at the Central Warehouse in Maraka here on Wednesday, overseen by the Health Department, where the CM announced provision of free medicines to hospitals in various districts. During the ceremony, the CM emphasised the importance of ensuring timely access to essential medicines for the public. She directed the immediate operationalisation of additional medicine warehouses in Rawalpindi,

Faisalabad, and Multan. The project includes nine fully functional warehouses with the capacity to store medicines and medical equipment worth over Rs 17 billion. Highlighting the project's scale, the CM personally operated a forklift to load the first batch of medicines for distribution. She inspected the quality of furniture, medical equipment, and other goods prepared for the hospitals. The CM also verified the validity of the medicines and the standard temperature maintenance systems in place at the warehouse. Secretary Health Ali Jan Khan provided a detailed briefing, noting that the warehouses are equipped with state-of-the-art

facilities to store medicines at standard temperatures. Under the CM's direction, the project has amassed over Rs. 10 billion worth of medicines and Rs. 7 billion in new medical equipment, furniture, and supplies, including three-colored disposable bed sheets. The ceremony was attended by prominent figures including Senator Parvez Rashid, Provincial Minister for Information & Culture Azma Zahid Bokhari, Provincial Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir, Special Assistant Zeeshan Malik, Dr. Adnan Khan, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Secretary Health Ali Jan, and Secretary Information Ahmed Aziz Tatar.

Governor KP advocates for sustainable development in oil, gas exploration areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in a strategic meeting held with Ahmed Hayat Lak, Managing Director of the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), on Wednesday emphasized the critical need for enhancing community welfare and sustainable development in regions impacted by oil and gas exploration activities.

The discussions focused on three key initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life for residents in these areas. Member Provincial Assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ahmed Kundi was also present in the meeting.

Governor Faisal Kundi underscored the importance of facilitating health and education services in areas where OGDCL has successfully explored oil. Recognizing the significant contributions of these regions to the province's and the country's energy resources, he advocated for

investments that will ensure residents benefit directly from these natural resource discoveries.

This initiative aims to bridge the gap in healthcare and educational infrastructure, providing long-term benefits to the local population.

Addressing the energy needs of less privileged communities living around the oil and gas exploration sites, the Governor called for the deployment of solar energy systems funded by OGDCL. Many of these communities struggle with the high cost of electricity bills, making it difficult for them to afford consistent power supply.

He said by utilizing OGDCL's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds to provide solar systems, these communities can gain access to sustainable and cost-effective energy solutions.

This move is expected to promote sustainable energy practices, reduce dependency on conventional power sources.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi visiting the Saint Jan Cathedral Church at Cantt area.

Minister Yousafzai vows strict action against illegal cutting of trees

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Forests and Environment Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai has said that strict legal action will be taken against those involved in cutting of the forests and no one would be spared in this regard.

He expressed these views while talking to delegations from various areas here in office on Wednesday. Taking action against the people involved in forest cutting and officials of the forest department in violation of ban on cutting, he said that 3 officials will be suspended and an FIR will be registered against those involved to send them to jail.

The provincial minister said that forests and tourism are inseparable and for this purpose a record plantation will be carried out in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai said the provincial government had taken notice of a video regarding cutting of trees in Alai Sub-Division of

Battagram and an 8-member committee was formed under the chairmanship of Syed Zubair Shah Range Forest Officer with directives to furnish a report within 48 hours.

According to the report of the committee, three officials of the forest department and an individual were found involved in deforestation. The officials have been suspended and directives for further investigations have been issued.

He said that the officials of the Forests Department have also been instructed to keep a close watch on such incidents and exhibit no concessions to those who cut the forests and taking more measures to protect the forests.

The provincial minister further said that some people are carrying propaganda against them on social media regarding deforestation and old videos from some foreign countries are being shared. He said that he had not issued orders for cutting even a single tree.



LAHORE: The students of various universities called on Chancellor/Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here at Governor House.

Most important purpose of education is to develop tolerance in oneself: Saleem

Independent Report LAHORE: The students of various universities called on Chancellor/Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here at Governor House Lahore today. The students informed the Governor Punjab about various issues including girls' hostels, transport and increase in fees.

Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that the youth are the future of the country.

He further said that in addition to imparting education to them, the aspect of their moral training is also very important. He said that the most important purpose of education is to develop tolerance in oneself. Governor Punjab further said that it is the responsibility of the institution to provide a clean environment in the

universities. He said that concrete steps are being taken to improve the universities, especially for the prevention of drugs. Governor Punjab said he would visit the universities himself soon. He said that the doors of the Governor House are always open for the students.

Governor Punjab appreciated the proposal of youth portal given by the students and assured to start work on it as soon as possible. On this occasion, the students thanked the Governor Punjab and said that they got the opportunity to meet the chancellor directly for the first time and tell their problems. Governor Punjab assured to solve the various problems faced by the students on priority basis. During the meeting, General Secretary PPP Central Punjab Hasan Murtaza was present.



LAHORE: PTI workers and MPAs stage hunger strike camp at the main gate of the Punjab Assembly of the provincial capital.

Minister announces expansion of Lab & collection centers

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has announced that the government is increasing the capacity of lab and collection centers in hospitals across the province. The announcement was made during his surprise visit to the lab and collection centers at the Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC) and Services Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS) here on Wednesday.

During his visit, the minister reviewed the medical facilities provided to patients in both labs. He emphasised the importance of enhancing these facilities to improve patient care. Provincial Health Minister and Health Secretary also interacted with patients at the PIC and SIMS lab and collection centers, inquiring about the quality of medical services they received. Principal of SIMS, Prof. Zohra Khanam, Medical Superintendent of PIC.

Minister chairs meeting on Christian Marriage Act

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh chaired a meeting on the Christian Marriage Act and problems being faced by the minorities at Human Rights Department camp office, here on Wednesday. The Christian community marriage laws and other issues were reviewed in the meeting, while suggestions were also sought from the

participants for issuance of Christian marriage licences. The participants discussed the problems being faced in computerisation of marriage certificates from the union councils, necessary changes in the curriculum of minority children, renewal problems in the registration of Churches, proposals to keep the validity of Christian marriage

PPP criticizes KP gov't over deforestation

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Secretary Information, Amjad Khan Afridi, has strongly criticized the provincial government for its failure to prevent deforestation.

In a statement, he claimed that the government's slogan of protecting forests is merely a paper exercise, with no real action taken on the ground.

He said that forest officials have failed to protect our forests, alleging that trucks loaded with timber are operating day and night under government patronage.

He highlighted the helplessness of the public against the powerful timber mafia, which he accused of operating with impunity.

Amjad Afridi warned that due to government negligence, both forests and wildlife are nearing extinction.

He urged the government to take immediate and effective measures to stop deforestation and safeguard the remaining forests and wildlife.

7th batch of Punjab Police Internship Program begins

LAHORE (APP): Under the education-friendly vision of Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, Punjab Police Student Internship Programme is continuing successfully and the seventh batch of the student internship programme has commenced, featuring 81 students from Punjab University and the University of Lahore, who are pursuing their BS degrees in Criminology and Criminal Justice programmes.

The inaugural ceremony was held at the Central Police Office here on Wednesday. DIG Training Punjab Rao Munir Zia informed the students about the features of the internship programme.

DIG Training Punjab Rao Munir Zia said that the students included in the internship program have been attached to various field formations in groups for a duration of six weeks.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora chairs meeting regarding Christian Marriage Act at other problems.

Mariyum demands Punishment after confession of Imran about May-9 events

LAHORE (APP): Senior Punjab Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb has said that the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has confessed to his role in instigating the events of May 9, and now he should be punished for his crimes. Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday she described the PTI founder's statement as a moment of guilt, witnessed by the entire nation. She alleged that the PTI founder had repeatedly attacked the state institutions since 2014, including an assault on the PTV.

She called for accountability, asserting that the PTI leader

manipulated the RTS system to rig the 2018 elections, thereby imposing his leadership on the country. She also accused him of engaging in digital terrorism, damaging the nation's reputation through foreign conspiracies, and advising the IMF against providing financial assistance to Pakistan in 2022, pushing the country towards economic hardship.

The minister labeled May 9 as a dark day in the country's history, accusing the PTI of inciting violence and targeting government properties. She criticised the party for allegedly using social media to spread misinformation.

Ban imposed on transportation of timber in KPK

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, taking notice of news in a section of media about logging, on Wednesday imposed complete ban on transportation and procurement of wood.

The government has also constituted seven teams to check transportation of timber and to investigate issue of logging.

Meanwhile, anti-corruption department has also started probe into illegal cutting of forest reiterating that stern action would be taken against officials that were found involved in logging.

District Forest Officer Manshera has also been suspended for giving permission to cut trees despite a ban on forest cutting.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Imran Nazeer presides over the 282nd meeting of Provincial Quality Control Board.

PML-N-led govt to complete five years' term: Sher Gorchani

RAJANPUR (APP): Provincial Minister for Mines and Minerals, Sher Ali Gorchani said Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)- led government would complete its five-year constitutional term.

Talking to media persons here Wednesday, he said there are few elements who want to derail democracy, economic development, prosperity and thus seeking to sabotage law and order situation of the country.

They wanted to meet the nefarious task by disseminating disinformation about the government, he said.

He said Pakistan entered into avenue of prosperity under leadership of Mohammed Nawaz Sharif which was unprecedented in comparison to past.

He termed Punjab gained exemplary status among the four provinces through guidance of first-ever woman chief minister, Mariam Nawaz.

"Development and prosperity of South Punjab was mission of incumbent government to which it would never back down, he added. He said they are determined to bring subdivisions of Rajanpur like Jampur Fazilpur and eastern mozas at par with upper Punjab with regard to development and prosperity.

He said they would get approved status of tehsils for Jampur, Mohammadpur Dewan and Dajal as per the promise. The minister informed that the projects worth Rs. 30 million were approved only for development in Jampur.

WASA installs machinery to digitalise system

FAISALABAD (APP): The Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Faisalabad has installed machinery to digitalise its entire system and it would start functioning very soon.

Addressing a meeting here on Wednesday, Deputy Managing Director Services WASA Ikram Ullah Chaudhry said that WASA was striving to provide quality service. In this connection, it has decided to digitalise its water supply and sewerage system. He said that necessary machinery has been installed at Babar Chowk to digitalize WASA system with the help of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and this pilot project would be completed on war-footing within shortest span of time.

He further said that WASA was undertaking the improvement of water supply project Jhall Khanuana which would help WASA to provide potable drinking water to more than 200,000 people in eastern part of the city.

He said that an awareness campaign has also been launched in the project area about provision of quality services and recovery of WASA dues and this drive would hopefully bring positive fruits.



GILGIT: Minister Population Welfare Gilgit-Baltistan Dilshad Bano presenting shield to International Advisor UNFPA Mela Hidayat during a seminar on "Embracing the power of inclusive data towards a resilient and equitable future for all" in connection with World Population Day 2024.

308 raids conducted on drug-traffickers hideouts in single day

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said on Wednesday that in one day, 308 raids were conducted on drug-traffickers' hideouts across the province, including Lahore. As a result, 153 suspects were arrested, and 150 cases were registered. The operations led to seizure of 110 kilograms of charas, three kilograms of heroin, and 1,327 litres of liquor from suspects' possession.

The IGP said that since the special campaign began on February 26, police teams had conducted 37,550 raids on drug-dealers' hideouts across Punjab. As a result,

17,933 accused involved in drug trafficking were arrested, and 17,431 cases were registered. Seized from the suspects' possession were 10,518 kilograms of charas, 596 kilograms of Ice, 190 kilograms of heroin, 276 kilograms of opium, and 1.7 million liters of alcohol. He directed to further intensify the intelligence-based operations against drug dealers and smugglers. He Punjab said that RPOs, DPOs should personally monitor the anti-narcotics operations.

IG Punjab directed that regular search and combing operations should be continued in hotspot areas.



Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik held a meeting with the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Mr. Rashid Meredov in Islamabad

Korea, Japan, Pak collaborating on groundbreaking agriculture initiatives: Chairman PARC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali Wednesday shared a vision for a transformed agricultural sector in which Pakistan will join forces with Korea and Japan to leverage cutting-edge technologies and expertise to enhance Pakistan's capacity for producing quality-based disease-resistant seeds.

Talking to PTV news, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, unveiled a game-changing trilateral partnership with Korea and Japan, poised to drive innovation, boost crop yields, and ensure food security in Pakistan. This historic collaboration marks a new era in agricultural cooperation between our nations, he added.

"By pooling our resources and expertise, we

can address pressing challenges, ensure food security, and propel Pakistan's agriculture sector into a new era of growth and prosperity", he mentioned.

To produce local seeds in Pakistan, he said that Korea's expertise in seed technology and Japan's knowledge in plant breeding will be combined to enhance Pakistan's capacity for producing high-quality, disease-resistant seeds.

This will reduce reliance on imported seeds, ensuring self-sufficiency and improved crop yields, he added.

He further explained that Research and Korea's renowned research institutions will collaborate with PARC to establish state-of-the-art research facilities, focusing on developing climate-resilient crop varieties, improving soil health, and

exploring novel agricultural practices.

He said that the Korean-Pakistani cooperation will expand in the field of machinery and vegetable seed production.

Responding to a query, he disclosed that Pakistan's introduction of seed potato production using Aeroponics technology marks a significant milestone, adding that seed potatoes are essential for cultivating high-quality potatoes, and this innovation ensures a consistent supply of disease-free, high-yielding seeds. The successful adoption of Aeroponics technology for seed potato production demonstrates Pakistan's commitment to embracing innovative solutions for sustainable agriculture, he added.

As the country continues to explore new technologies and collaborations,

WAPDA supplied 34.436b units to national grid during FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has supplied around 34.436 billion clean and low-cost units from its various hydel stations to the national grid system during the last fiscal year 2023-24.

As per official data, 22 hydel power stations of WAPDA cumulatively provided 34.436 billion units of electricity in 2023-24, which is 3.266 billion units more than that of fiscal year 2022-23.

Tarbela Hydel Power Station generated 13.424 billion units, Tarbela 4th Extension 4.672 billion units, Ghazi Barotha 6.556 billion units, Mangla 5.276 billion units, and Neelum-Jhelum Hydel Power Station generated 762

million units. While, rest of the generation i.e. 3.747 billion units - was contributed by other hydel power stations of WAPDA.

This increase in hydel generation by WAPDA to the tune of 3.266 billion units helped save national exchequer an amount of Rs. 143.7 billion, if the same quantum of electricity had to be generated through imported furnace oil.

WAPDA achieved this additional hydel power generation because of the improved hydrology and effective operation and maintenance of its Hydel Power Stations.

It is pertinent to note that the cumulative installed generation capacity of WAPDA Hydel Power Stations.

Aleem invites Chinese companies to invest in different sectors of economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister of Investment Board, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Wednesday said that Pakistan is extending business visa facility to investors from 124 countries including China and invited more Chinese companies to invest in different sector of national economy.

Abdul Aleem Khan along with Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal and Special Assistant to Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi briefed the Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong on the investment opportunities existing in different sector of the economy, said a press release.

In this session, the

details of the establishment of industries from China to Pakistan under matchmaking industry were presented. During the briefing, seven major sectors were finalized, which include medical equipment, plastic industry, textile, leather, edible meat, fruit & vegetables and waste.

While giving briefing to Ambassador of China Jiang Zaidong and the Chinese delegation, Abdul Aleem Khan said that there are opportunities in Pakistan to invest in infrastructure, housing and other important sectors.

He invited more Chinese companies to come to Pakistan and invest here. He assured that the Chinese brothers are our guests and their fool proof security would be assured at all

costs and welcomed the participation of Chinese Ambassador in the briefing session.

Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong assured all possible support for investment in Pakistan and said that business organizations from China will fully participate in the promotion of trade here.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi said that with China Friendship, brotherly relations, investment is always the top priority for Pakistan.

Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan said that Pakistan-China investment is a joint responsibility of the Board of Investment and the Ministry of Commerce, which will be fulfilled efficiently.



QUETTA: A delegation of Poultry Farms Association meeting with Provincial Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development Bakht Muhammad Kakar.

Rupee sheds 10 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 10 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.50 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.40.

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 280.75 respectively.

The price of Euro came down by Rs 1.24 paise to close at Rs 301.55 against the last day's closing of Rs 302.79, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen gained 02 paise and closed at Rs 181.80, whereas a decrease of 82 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 358.81 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 359.63.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 02 paise each to close at Rs 75.82 and Rs 74.24 respectively.

Governor KP calls for promoting industrial sector of KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday called upon the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to explore measures for enhancing sustainable industrial development in different regions of the province on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi said this while in a meeting with the Chairman FBR, Malik Amjed Zubair Tiwana and discussed different aspects of ensuring revenue and development of the trade and industrial sector of the province to attain sustainable economic growth and social

prosperity in the country. The senior officials of FBR and other concerned officers also attended the meeting, which also deliberated on measures to promote industrial growth in the province.

Speaking on the occasion, the governor lauded the efforts of the Federal Government and revenue-collecting authority in developing the industrial sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that the business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) plays a major role in revenue contribution to the national treasury.

Faisal Karim said that the federal government has already given relief to the KP industrial sector.



Ambassador of France to Pakistan, Nicolas Galcy called on Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan in Islamabad.

Finance minister vows to protect consumers' rights on priority, empower vulnerable

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance Ali Pervaiz Malik Wednesday reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to consumer protection, assuring that it will remain a top priority where Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was taking aggressive measures to not only end power outages but also uplift the most vulnerable segments of society. Talking to a private news channel, he while elaborating on the government's strategy explained that efforts are underway to create a conducive business environment for the power sector to flourish.

"We are not just focusing on privatization, but also on building a

robust framework that encourages investment, innovation, and competition," he said.

This multi-pronged approach, he added, will not only enhance the efficiency and reliability of power supply but also attract private sector participation, driving economic growth and job creation, he mentioned.

He said that Power and Finance ministry working together and consulting with neighboring countries how to control these power crises effectively. Malik emphasized that consumer protection will remain at the forefront of these efforts, ensuring that vulnerable segments are shielded from exploitation.

MNSUA to organize 8th Mango festival from July 26

MULTAN (APP): A two-day 8th Mango Festival titled "Eco Smart Mango Production" featuring display of over 100 varieties, "King of fruits" dish making competition and informative seminar on new technology will open at Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture on July 26.

Event organizer, Dr Mubashir Mehdi told this news agency.

PSX gains 409.92 points to close at 79,397.01

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 409.92 points, a positive change of 0.52 percent, closing at 79,397.01 points against 78,987.09 points on the last working day.

A total of 386,980,823 shares were traded during the day as compared to 316,245,462 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 14,899 billion against Rs 17,074 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 430 companies transacted their

shares in the stock market, 228 of them recorded gains and 155 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 47 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were SILK Bank Limited with 36,867,747 shares at Rs 1.10 per share, HASCOL Petrol with 25,777,994 shares at Rs 6.69 per share and PIA Holding Company with 17,163,702 shares at Rs 16.31 per share.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 70.00 per share price, closing at Rs 7,020.00.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Finance Mir Shoaib Noshervani presides over the 7th meeting of Local Councils Finance Commission.

LESCO chief reviews availability of material

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) Chief Executive Officer Engineer Shahid Haider chaired a meeting here on Wednesday to review the matters pertaining to availability of materials and related equipment for smooth functioning of power supply system.

He directed the quarters concerned to take effective measures to ensure availability of materials and related equipment.

In case of non-availability of materials, he said, consumers face difficulties; therefore, no negligence would be tolerated in this regard, especially with regard to meters and transformers. The CEO directed that all the officers concerned to remain present in the offices from 11am to 1pm and to listen to the public problems and solve them immediately.

The LESCO Director (HR) Zameer Hussain Kolachi, Chief Finance Officer Bushra Imran, Director (Customer Services) Sarwar Mughal, Chief Engineer (Operations) Abbas Ali, Chief Engineer (T&G) Zafar Aqbal, Chief Engineer (P&D).

Mian Zahid warns of public & power producers clash over inflated bills

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, as well as former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has warned that the risk of confrontation between the public and electricity companies is increasing due to exorbitant bills.

Talking to business community on Wednesday, he said that people now have to pay electricity bills that exceed

their income, leading to quarrels in their homes.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that inflated bills were breaking relationships, and people were shedding blood over it.

He claimed that capacity payments were penalizing the general public and the industrial sector.

Public anxiety and agitation could spiral out of control at any time, so the government should act quickly to stabilize the situation, he warned.

The business leader stated that the elites and the government.

New LESCO BoD formed, Amir to head

LAHORE (APP): New Board of Director (BoD) of Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has been constituted, with Amir Zia as its chairman.

He said that a meeting of the new BoD was held on Zoom here at LESCO Headquarter in which the new Chairman Amir Zia, General Secretary Asad Sahafi, and members Rana Obaid, Zubair Liaquat, Zafar Mehmood and Tahir Basharat Cheema participated.

Chief Executive Engineer Shahid Haider welcomed all the board members to LESCO and gave a briefing regarding the affairs of LESCO. Customer Services Director Sarwar Mughal, Director (HR) Zameer Hussain Kalachi, Chief Finance Officer Bushra Imran, Chief Engineer (PMU) Shoaib Asim, Chief Engineer (PIU) Ijaz Bhatti, Chief Engineer (O&M) Zafar Iqbal, Chief Law Officer and DG (Mirad) Altaf Qadir attended the introductory meeting with the members of the newly formed Board of Directors of LESCO.

Seeks to expand their footprint in region South Asia market presents promising destination for Chinese investors: Chandi

Independent Report KARACHI: "South Asia, with its vast market potential and growing economies, presents a promising destination for Chinese investors and businesses seeking to expand their footprint in the region" stated Mr. Chandi Raj Dhakal.

This was stated by

to explore the vast range of sectors and industries where collaboration can thrive. The possibilities are endless, from infrastructure development and energy cooperation to tourism, manufacturing, and information technology.

The 17th China-South Asia Business Forum con-



Mr. Chandi Raj Dhakal, Vice President, SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry who led a high-level business delegation from South Asia to participate in the 17th China-South Asia Business Forum, in Kunming, China.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, he said that SAARC is a region of opportunities, commonalities, and civilizational values that encourages all stakeholders

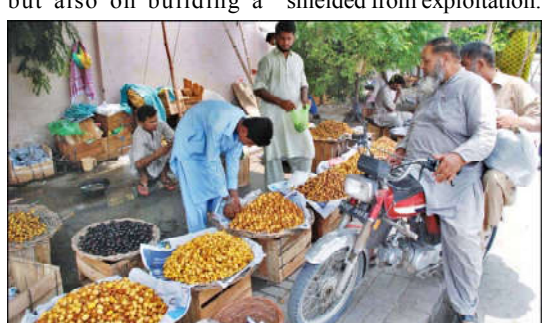
vened under the theme "Unblocking Supply Chains, Fostering New Development", a cornerstone event fostering economic ties in Wyndham Yunnan Hotel, Kunming, China. This year, the rotating chair of CSABF was with Pakistan. Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Senior Vice President, FPCCI emphasized the role of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Meeting reviews CM's initiatives for agriculture sector

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Agriculture & Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani presided over a meeting at Agriculture House, Lahore in which progress on the initiatives, approved by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the Agriculture Department, were reviewed.

During the meeting, Minister Kirmani was told

that so far, more than 327,000 farmers had submitted online applications for Chief Minister's Punjab Kissan Card and after scrutiny, more than 130,000 applications had been sent to the Bank of Punjab for approval. The process of registration of dealers of fertiliser, seed and pesticides companies was also going on. So far, 3,000 dealers have registered.



BAHAWALPUR: Vendors displaying variety of dates at his roadside setup in the city.

Pak Kissan Ittehad urges revisiting IPPs agreements to save agriculture

MULTAN (APP): Chairman Pakistan Kissan Ittehad Khalid Khokar said that food security was a major international issue and that the recent increase in electricity tariffs for tube wells would be disastrous for the agriculture sector.

During a press conference at the local press club on Wednesday, Khokar shared the agriculture's critical role in the country's economy, noting last year's 6.5% growth in the sector. He stated that out of the total \$31.5 billion in exports, agriculture's share exceeds \$24 billion. Khokar lamented that historically, electricity costs for agriculture were lower than for industry. He argued that agriculture was becoming unfeasible due to

high tariffs and input costs, including fertilizers. The chairman expressed concerns over agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs), particularly the high capacity charges, which he claimed amount to Rs 2200 billion. He called for revisiting these agreements, highlighting that payments to IPPs are made in dollars which also put stress on the economy.

Khokar also revealed a 21% decline in Urea fertilizer sales in June, warning that this could hurt per-acre production. He also hinted at a 30% drop in cotton cultivation area, which could damage the economy. If Pakistan produced 20 million cotton bales, it wouldn't need to take loans, he claimed.

Senate Committee on reviews key policies and operational updates

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Senate Standing Committee on Industries and Production, chaired by Senator Aon Abbas, convened today at Parliament Lodges.

The meeting commenced with a detailed overview of the working, regulatory role, and key functions of the Engineering Development Board (EDB). The officials

provided a comprehensive overview of Solar and Allied Equipment Manufacturing and the Automobile Policy EV incentive regime. The Chairman of the Committee, Senator Aon Abbas, recommended that in the next meeting, EDB officials must provide details of the implementation plan for the EV Policy 2030.

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ISLAMABAD: Senator Aon Abbas, chairman senate standing committee on industries and production presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament Lodges.

Kamala Harris leads Donald Trump 44pc to 42pc in US presidential race, poll finds

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Vice President Kamala Harris opened up a marginal two-percentage-point lead over Republican Donald Trump after President Joe Biden ended his re-election campaign and passed the torch to her, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found.

That compares with a marginal two-point deficit Biden faced against Trump in last week's poll before his Sunday exit from the race.

The new poll, conducted on Monday and Tuesday, followed both the Republican National Convention where Trump on Thursday formally accepted the nomination, and Biden's announcement on Sunday he was leaving the race and endorsing Harris.

Harris, whose campaign says she has secured the Democratic nomination, led Trump 44 per cent to 42pc in the national poll,

a difference within the 3-percentage-point margin of error.

Harris and Trump were tied at 44pc in a July 15-16 poll, and Trump led by one percentage point in a July 1-2 poll, both within the same margin of error.

While nationwide surveys give important signals of American support for political candidates, a handful of competitive states typically tilt the balance in the US Electoral College, which ultimately decides who wins a presidential election. A pollster with Trump's campaign played down any polling showing an increase in Harris' support, arguing that she was likely to see a temporary rise in popularity because of widespread media coverage of her new candidacy.

"That bump is likely to start showing itself over the next few days and will last for a while," pollster Tony Fabrizio said in a

memo circulated to reporters by Trump's campaign.

Candidates often expect a bump after formally accepting their party's nomination at stage-managed, televised conventions such as the one that Trump had last week. But the poll showed no sign of that.

Bump or not, the most recent Reuters/Ipsos poll underscored the rationale for Biden dropping out of the race and for Harris replacing him on the ticket.

Some 56pc of registered voters agreed with a statement that Harris, 59, was "mentally sharp and able to deal with challenges," compared to 49pc who said the same of Trump, 78.

Only 22pc of voters assessed Biden that way.

Biden, 81, ended his reelection effort after a debate with Trump in which he often stammered and failed to aggressively challenge attacks by Trump that included falsehoods.



A view shows wreckage of a Saurya Airlines plane that caught fire after skidding off the runway while taking off at Tribhuvan International Airport, in Kathmandu, Nepal

Bangladesh PM Hasina says opposition to blame for deadly unrest, maintains curfew

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said a curfew imposed last week following days of clashes between protesters and security forces would be lifted when the situation improved.

Her comments came a day after the South Asian country's top court agreed to scrap most quotas in a ruling on Sunday, following days of clashes between protesters and security forces that prompted the government to shut down internet services, impose a curfew and deploy the army.

A top court on Sunday agreed to scrap many of the proposed quotas after at least 147 people were confirmed dead in the violence.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina blamed her political opponents for deadly violence that swept the country during recent student-led protests against quotas in gov-

ernment jobs, stating on Monday that a curfew would be lifted when the situation improved.

Her comments came a day after the South Asian country's top court agreed to scrap most quotas in a ruling on Sunday, following days of clashes between protesters and security forces that prompted the government to shut down internet services, impose a curfew and deploy the army.

Hospital data showed at least 147 people were killed in one of the worst outbreaks of violence in recent years.

Hasina, 76, won a fourth-straight term in power in January in a national election boycotted by the main opposition party.

UK to do away with migrant barge

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain's new government will end the use of the controversial Bibby Stockholm barge to house migrants off the south coast of England as part of its overhaul of the asylum system, it said on Tuesday. Use of the vessel, which can house up to 500 men, began under the Conservative government with the aim of cutting the 8 million pounds a day cost of hotel accommodation for asylum seekers while their claims are processed. Anchored off Dorset, it became a high-profile symbol of Britain's tough asylum policy under the Conservatives, with human rights campaigners comparing it to a prison ship and criticising its use as inhumane.

UK government scrapping use of a barge off English coast to house asylum-seekers

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The British government said Tuesday it will scrap the controversial use of a barge to house asylum-seekers off the south coast of England as part of its immigration system overhaul.

The Labour government that took power earlier this month said that ending the contract for the Bibby Stockholm would save 20 million pounds (\$26 million) next year.

It's part of a larger plan to save over 7.7 billion pounds (\$9.9 billion) over the next decade by clearing a huge asylum backlog.

The boat has been at the center of controversy since it was first towed into Portland harbor in Dorset a year ago to house up to 500 asylum-seekers.



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators gather on the day of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's address to a joint meeting of Congress, on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S.

Plane crashes in Nepal with 18 dead, pilot sole survivor

Monitoring Desk
KATHMANDU: A passenger plane crashed on takeoff in Kathmandu on Wednesday, with the pilot rescued from the flaming wreckage but all 18 others aboard killed, police in the Nepali capital told AFP.

Nepal has a woeful track record on aviation safety and the Himalayan republic has seen a spate of deadly light plane and helicopter crashes over the decades.

The Saurya Airlines flight was carrying two crew and 17 of the

company's staff members, Nepali police spokesman Dan Bahadur Karki told AFP.

"The pilot has been rescued and is being treated," he added. "Eighteen bodies have been recovered, including one foreigner. We are in the process of taking them for post-mortem."

The flight was being conducted for either technical or maintenance purposes, Gyanendra Bhul of Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority told AFP without giving further details.

Israeli lawmakers back declaring UN agency 'terrorist'

BEIRUT (Online): The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) may be declared a terrorist organization, its staff stripped of immunity and its activities inside Israel outlawed, under a series of bills that have been proposed in the Knesset.

The UNRWA was established in 1949 to deal with Palestinian refugees and has a mandate to operate in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza. Israel has accused it of aiding and abetting

Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups. "We are on the UN's blacklist in any case. All the excessive mortality ended on October 7," MK Yulia Malinovsky of Yisrael Beiteinu, who proposed to designate the UNRWA as a terrorist organization, said on Monday. She called the agency "a fifth column" within Israel. The Knesset voted 50-10 in favor of her bill, in the first reading. Israeli lawmakers also advanced the bills that would ban the UNRWA from any activity.



Residents queue in Dhaka to receive credit on their prepaid electric bills after an internet blackout during the anti-quota protests.

Yemen firefighters struggle against port blaze after Israel strikes

Monitoring Desk
HODEIDA: Firefighting teams on Monday struggled to contain a massive blaze at Yemen's rebel-held Hodeida port, days after a deadly Israeli strike damaged oil storage facilities and endangered aid ships in the harbour.

Heavy flames and black smoke spiralled into the sky for a third consecutive day following the strike on Saturday, said an AFP correspondent in Hodeida.

Firefighters appeared to have made little progress, with the blaze seemingly expanding in some parts of the port, the correspondent said, amid fears it could reach food storage facilities.

The strike on Saturday was the first by Israel on the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country and in response to a Houthi rebel drone strike that breached Israel's air defences, killing one person in Tel Aviv the day before.

Thousands in Ukraine attend funeral of former lawmaker and critic of Russia who was killed in Lviv

Monitoring Desk
LVIV: Several thousand mourners attended the funeral Monday in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv for a former lawmaker best known for her campaign to promote the Ukrainian language who was fatally shot in the street by an unknown assailant.

Iryna Fariou, 60, was shot on Friday and later died from her wounds in a hospital. A search is underway for her attacker, who fled the scene. Ukrainian officials said the attack is being investigated as an assassination.

Her daughter Sofia Semchysyn commented about her killing. "Killed, they killed her near her house during the day, on a sunny day."

Fariou served as a member of the Ukrainian parliament between 2012 and 2014, and was best known for her campaigns to promote the use of the Ukrainian language, urging that Ukrainian officials should not speak Russian. She controversially criticized Russian-speaking members of Ukraine's Azov regiment who defended the port city of Mariupol in the first days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Lviv resident Olha Arden, 64, praised Fariou. "For me she is a patriot, a nationalist and she is our fighter for the Ukrainian language, the strongest fighter," she said. "For 32 years she fought for the Ukrainian language. We respect and honor her."

Blast at Mexico tequila factory kills five

Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY (INP): An explosion at a factory producing Jose Cuervo tequila in Mexico killed five people Tuesday, local authorities said. "So far the deaths of five people are confirmed, workers of the company," the civil protection unit in the western state of Jalisco said in a statement. Two others were injured, one seriously, the statement added. It was not yet known what caused the blast in Tequila municipality, with the company saying it happened during maintenance work.

UN welcomes declaration on ending division, strengthening unity by Palestinian factions

NEW YORK (Online): United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has welcomed the declaration on ending division and strengthening unity signed by 14 Palestinian factions in Beijing. According to the UN Chief, the Secretary General termed the deal an important step towards furthering Palestinian unity. He said Antonio Guterres has encouraged all factions to overcome their differences through dialogue and urged them to follow up on the commitments made in Beijing.

Residents of eastern Canadian community menaced by wildfire can return home

Monitoring Desk
TORONTO: Thousands of people ordered from their homes in the face of a raging wildfire in a remote corner of eastern Canada can return home this week as the risk to their community diminished, authorities said over the weekend. About 9,600 residents of Labrador City in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador had to evacuate the evening of July 12.

Chinese lunar probe finds water in Moon samples

Monitoring Desk
SHANGHAI: A Chinese lunar probe found traces of water in samples of the Moon's soil, scientists have said, as the country pushes its ambitious space programme into high gear.

The Chang'e-5 rover completed its mission in 2020, returning to Earth with rock and soil samples from the Moon.

The lunar samples "revealed the presence of trace water", the group of scientists from Chinese universities wrote in the Nature Astronomy journal published on Monday.

A NASA infrared detector already confirmed in 2020 the existence of water on the Moon.

Growing cooperation between Russia and China in Arctic, Pentagon says

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Russia and China are increasingly cooperating in the Arctic region, which could impact regional stability, the US military said as it released its strategy for the Arctic region on Monday.

Russia has reopened hundreds of Soviet-era military sites in the Arctic, the report said. China, which describes itself as a "near-Arctic" state, also has ambitions there and has said it intended to build a "Polar Silk Road." China has its eye on mineral resources and new shipping routes as ice packs recede with rising temperatures. "Increasingly, the (People's Republic of China) and Russia are collaborating in the Arctic across multiple instruments of national power," the Pentagon's report said.

"While significant areas of disagreement between the PRC and Russia

remain, their growing alignment in the region is of concern, and (the Department of Defense) continues to monitor this cooperation," it added.

Arctic sea routes are increasingly being used for connecting major economies across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans as global warming shrinks ice packs and allows for longer ice-free periods at sea.

China and Russia have been working together to develop Arctic shipping routes as Russia seeks to deliver more oil and gas to China amid Western sanctions while China seeks an alternative shipping route to reduce its dependence on the Strait of Malacca.

The Pentagon report added that China was looking to leverage "changing dynamics in the Arctic to pursue greater influence and access, take advantage of Arctic resources."

Bangladesh govt accepts apex court ruling to cut job quotas

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: The Bangladesh government said on Tuesday it would heed a Supreme Court ruling that 93 per cent of state jobs be open to competition, meeting a key demand of students after a week of some of the country's deadliest protests in years.

But students raised fresh demands including the scrapping of a curfew, restoration of internet services and a reopening of campuses, leaving unclear whether the government's acceptance of the court decision would completely defuse the unrest.

Relative calm prevailed for a second straight day in Dhaka and most major cities although the army chief said security had still not been entirely restored after he surveyed the capital city by helicopter.

The government an-

nounced an easing of the curfew imposed to help contain the unrest, lifting it from Wednesday between 10:00am and 5:00pm to allow people to shop for essentials, with offices reopened between 11:00am and 3:00pm.

Bangladeshi authorities also shut down mobile internet and deployed the army after clashes between protesters and security forces spread across the South Asian country of 170 million.

At least 150 people have been killed in the violence with more than 1,600 arrested in the two main cities Dhaka and Chittagong. The protests tailed off after the Supreme Court ruled on Sunday in favour of an appeal from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government and directed that 93pc of jobs should be open to candidates on merit.

Macron's political gamble casts shadow over Paris Olympics

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron hoped the Paris Olympics would cement his legacy. But a failed bet on a snap legislative election has left him politically stunted, casting a lingering shadow over Macron's moment on the international stage.

As he prepares to welcome more than 100 heads of state and tens of thousands of spectators for Friday's opening ceremony along the Seine, Macron is a fragile force - an unpopular president presiding over a caretaker government as it hosts the world's largest sporting event amid heightened security fears.

"Macron expected to welcome the Games like an emperor," said French historian Patrick Weil. "But now he's a lame duck."

Walking around the Olympic Village on Monday, Macron defended his decision to dissolve parliament and denied the ensuing political instability would overshadow the Games.

"It was me who decided," he said, referring to his determination to call the election ahead of the Games.

"There is no bitter taste. On the contrary, we did the things that needed to be done before (the Olympics). Now we can fully focus on the Games."

And in a bid to keep the crisis at bay for a few weeks, he appeared to suggest he was unlikely to name a prime minister until the Games were over.

Macron called the legislative vote after a thumping by the far-right National Rally (RN) in last month's EU election, saying he wanted the poll to provide clarity.

Taiwan curtails annual war games as Typhoon Gaemi barrels towards island

Monitoring Desk
HUALIEN: Taiwan curtailed its annual Han Kuang war games on Tuesday as Typhoon Gaemi barreled towards the island and the government issued a land warning given the expected strong winds and torrential rain as it hits the coast.

Gaemi, the first typhoon of the season to affect Taiwan, is expected to make landfall on the northeast coast between sometime on Wednesday night and the early hours of Thursday, according to the island's Central Weather Administration.

Currently categorised as a medium strength typhoon by Taiwan, it is then likely to move across the Taiwan Strait and then hit the southeastern Chinese province of Fujian in the early hours of Friday.

To see total rainfall of up to 1,800 mm (70 inches) during the typhoon, the weather administration said.

Taiwan's annual Han Kuang military drills taking place this week have been curtailed, including cancelling fighter jet exercises on the east coast, the defence ministry said.

"The impact from the typhoon at present on the east coast is rather obvious," ministry spokesman Sun Li-fang told reporters at the Hualien air base. "So we will adjust some of the air and naval elements given the typhoon situation."



People walk up the gangway into a barge moored to the quayside at Portland.

Pakistan, Turkmenistan agree to expedite TAPI pipeline project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Turkmenistan have agreed to expedite the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, affirming their resolve for continuous engagement.

This agreement was reached during a meeting on Wednesday between Pakistan's Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr Musadik Malik, and Turkmenistan's Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rashid Meredov, who is on a two-day visit to Pakistan.

The Turkmen delegation accompanying Rashid Meredov included Ata Haljanov, head of the International Economic Cooperation Division at Turkmenistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Eziz Nazarov, head of the Legal Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Muhammetmyrat Amanov, Chairman of the Board and CEO of TAPI Pipeline Company Ltd; Atadjan

Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan; and Eldar Peranov, Third Secretary of the Embassy of Turkmenistan. Pakistani officials present at the meeting included Additional Secretary Hasan Yousafzai, Joint Secretary Shahbaz Tahir, and MD of Interstate Gas Systems Limited, Nadeem Bajwa.

Dr Musadik Malik welcomed the Turkmen delegation and expressed his gratitude for the hospitality offered by the Turkmen side during his last visit to Turkmenistan.

He said the visit of the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan marks a significant milestone in the strengthening of diplomatic and economic ties between the two nations.

TAPI pipeline project, the minister said, will lower energy costs, which can boost industrial growth, create jobs, and foster economic development. Reliable and affordable energy supplies are vital for industrial sectors and overall economic stability, he added.

This project, he said, aimed at fostering economic integration and energy security, has witnessed substantial progress through collaborative efforts and resolved continuous engagement among both countries.

He further added that Pakistan is fully committed to this project which is significant for regional energy cooperation and infrastructure development.

Rashid Meredov expressed his profound appreciation for the warm welcome extended by the Pakistani side. "Together we will chalk out a roadmap for cooperation between both countries" he added.

Muhammetmyrat Amanov, CEO of TAPI Pipeline Company Limited mentioned that with the special interest of Petroleum Minister and Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) TAPI has seen significant progress and is on the right track.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal chaired a high-level meeting with provincial planning ministers.

Chairs meeting of provincial planning ministers Ahsan stresses collective efforts for national development

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to revitalize the spirit of federalism and promote economic and social development, Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting with provincial planning ministers.

He stressed the need for collective efforts to achieve national development goals, particularly in the wake of the seventh census results, which predict a doubling of the population within 24-30 years.

The minister expressed concern over Pakistan's lagging position in healthcare and education, citing issues like diabetes, hepatitis, tuberculosis, malnutrition, stunting, and out-of-school children. He directed the Federal Bureau of Statistics to collect data on out-of-school children and emphasized the need

for federal-provincial collaboration in healthcare and education.

Despite fiscal constraints, the minister committed to funding federal universities through the Federal Government and Provincial universities through Provincial Governments. He acknowledged the brain-drain due to lack of incentives for university faculty and called for consultative workshops on the five-year plan, involving provinces, stakeholders, think tanks, and experts.

The minister reiterated the need for collective efforts to achieve national development goals, committing to hold monthly consultative meetings with Provincial Planning Ministers to ensure ongoing collaboration and progress.

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Tarar launches Awaz App to address HR violations

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar has launched the Awaz App, a groundbreaking mobile application designed to address and report human rights violations effectively.

This initiative marks a significant advancement in the country's efforts to enhance the protection and welfare of individuals.

The Awaz App is a testament to the Ministry of Human Rights' commitment to utilizing technology for social good, ensuring rapid responses to critical human rights issues. The App allows users to report human rights violations, including cases of missing or abducted children, directly through the platform.

These reports are immediately forwarded to relevant authorities for redressal.

Upon receiving a report, the app activates an Alert System that triggers a coordinated response involving law enforcement, government departments,

and community organizations. Crucial information about reported incidents is disseminated through various channels, including social media, WhatsApp groups, news outlets, and public announcements.

This approach maximizes public awareness and engages Law enforcement agencies are mobilized to initiate search operations and investigations to locate missing or abducted individuals promptly.

The app's primary objective is to ensure the safe recovery of victims, with comprehensive support services provided once they are found. These services include legal counseling, legal aid, and medical assistance.

While inaugurating, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, highlighted the App's role in fostering a safer and more responsive environment for addressing human rights issues. "The Minister stated, "We are proud to introduce the Awaz app as a pivotal tool in our ongoing efforts to protect and uphold human rights.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti

Governor says: Time comes to ensure participation of common men in dev. of society

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor of Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that the time has come to ensure participation of common men in development and construction of the society.

The Governor said that being representatives of people, they have noble cause to serve them.

He said that it becomes national duty of local government's representatives to serve the masses of their respective areas, empower and develop them.

For this, it is necessary to listen to the voiceless and become their advocate for their basic needs.

The Governor was

speaking to the delegation of elected local government's representatives who called on him under leadership of District Chairman Zhub, Muhammad Khan Kibzai in Zhob on Wednesday.

The Governor urged the public representatives to educate the communities for participation in process of decision making and get them involved in social activities.

He said that our combined bright future can be saved by increasing public rights and powers.

He also exhorted them to maintain responsibility, transparency, answerability and moral standards while representing the people.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani meeting with Provincial Minister for Livestock & Dairy Development Bakht Muhammad Kakar

US Envoy addresses "Intl Conference on Strengthening Pakistan-U.S. Relations"

ISLAMABAD (Online): US Ambassador Donald Blome while addressing "International Conference on Strengthening Pakistan-U.S. Relations" at Federal Capital said that United States and Pakistan share a long history of partnership and cooperation.

It is a relationship that has endured despite its many challenges. Some observers contend the United States and Pakistan have sometimes struggled to understand each other. But that assessment simplifies

and obscures what we have accomplished through several decades of collaboration. "I want to make clear why this relationship is important for the United States and why we have invested in it over the years. Simply put, we recognize Pakistan's enormous potential. It is one of the world's most populous countries, with a growing and dynamic young population. And in my engagements with that young generation, I continue to be impressed by their ambitions.

Fawad Chaudhry says: Zardari, Nawaz on the wrong side of history

LAHORE (INP): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry said on Wednesday that Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif were on the wrong side of the history.

He made these remarks during his appearance in an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in a case registered against him.

He said the cabinet meeting would deliberate on banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, adding that whoever was siding with Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari won't be able to survive in politics in future.

Speaking about PTI founder Imran Khan, he said the 14-month long illegal incarceration of Imran Khan couldn't achieve anything for the government as people had voted for his party without the PTI having a party symbol for the polls.

He warned the government against rampant human rights abuses which may lead to anarchy.

"The world is watching everything happening in Pakistan where even court orders are brushed under the carpet," he cautioned.



ZHOB: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail listening problems of people

Seminar marking Population Day: Hadia Nawaz calls for making education & empowerment of women ultimate target

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Parliamentary Secretary for Population Welfare, Ms. Hadia Nawaz has stressed the need to make education and empowerment of women ultimate goal. She said that the education makes the women independent and empowers them as such they must be encouraged to get higher education.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Population Welfare was addressing a seminar on World Population Day organized by the District Population Office at Quetta Press club on Wednesday.

The Secretary Population Welfare, Abdullah Khan, Director General Population, Ghulam

Musafa, former Minister, Mrs. Roshan Khursheed Bharucha, Head of the UNFPA Balochistan, Dr. Sarmad Saeed Khan, senior District Population Officer, Ayub Kakar and other concerned officials were among the prominent participants of the seminar.

The seminar focused on the reproductive health, family planning and balance in resources and population.

Ms. Hadia Nawaz stressed that education of women plays important role in controlling population. She also stressed that there is a need to take steps for informing the parents about better education and upbringing of their children.



QUETTA: Population Welfare Department Secretary, Abdullah Khan Noorzai talking to media persons during seminar on the occasion of World Population Day, in Quetta.

DC Dera Bugti holds open court, resolves public issues

Independent Report
DERA BUGTI: On the special instructions of the Chief Minister of Balochistan and the guidance of the Chief Secretary, an open court session was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Dera Bugti, Kaleemullah Kakar. The session was attended by FC 87 Wing Commander Muhammad Hanif Khattak, SP Dera Bugti Asim Shafique, Assistant Commissioner Dera Bugti Zahoor Ahmed Baloch, Assistant Commissioner Loni Biberg Lehri, District Chairman Haji

Khairullah Nasser, and heads of various departments, as well as a large number of people from different walks of life.

The Deputy Commissioner listened to the public's problems in detail and issued orders to the relevant departments to resolve several issues on the spot. Addressing the participants of the open court session, he said that practical steps would be taken to resolve the issues identified today. He added that his priorities include maintaining law and order, provision of water, electricity, health.

DC chairs district Intelligence Coordination Committee meeting in Jhal Magsi

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Jhal Magsi Syed Rahmatullah Shah on Wednesday chaired a review meeting of district Intelligence Coordination Committee. The meeting was attended by 151 Wing Commander (Lt. Col.) Sohail Ahmed, SP Jhal Magsi Subhan Ali Magsi, Tehsildar Gandawa Hadi Bakhsh Kakar, (Major) Abdul Hakeem Abro, and other intelligence agency officers.

Deputy Commissioner Jhal Magsi Syed Rahmatullah said the offi-

cial participants in the meeting that the rules issued by the Balochistan government, Home Department and better coordination and immediate information sharing between all institutions were emphasized so that any emergency could be avoided in time.

Negotiations and consultations were held in the meeting regarding further maintenance of law and order and improving the situation of security arrangements and other important issues.

Home Minister condoles death of Bahadur Khan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has expressed grief and condolence over death of Bahadur Khan Langove.

In a condolence statement issued here on Wednesday, the Provincial Minister paid rich tributes to late Bahadur Khan for his party and the areas of Kalat and Khaliqabad.

He said that late Bahadur Khan devoted his life for prosperity of the areas besides waging struggle for the party.

Mir Ziaullah Langove expressed sympathy with the bereaved family of the late Bahadur Khan and said that his services are unforgettable and would be remembered in golden words.

He also prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss of his death.

Electricity supply from Iran suspended for Makran

MAKRAN (INP): Electricity supply from 132kV Jackie Gore-Mand and 132kV Polan-Jiwani transmission lines from neighbouring Iran has been suspended, reported on Wednesday.

In this regard, the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) spokesperson said that due to the suspension of power supply from both 132kV transmission lines from Iran, the power supply to all grid stations of the Makran division has been affected.

CTD shoots dead TTP militant in operation in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): A militant, belonging to the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), was killed in a Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) operation near Karachi's northern bypass, CTD official said on Wednesday. CTD DIG Asif Ijaz said the operation was conducted after the department was informed of the presence of militants in the area. "The slain militant, who has been identified as Umar Farooq, died on way to a hospital.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador H.E. Jiang Zaidong being briefed by Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, during a high level meeting in Islamabad. Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal and Special Assistant to Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi is also present in the meeting.

Advisor to CM supports "Meri Pehchan Project": Provision of equal opportunities to women of Balochistan crucial for socio-economic progress: Rubaba

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Advisor to the Chief Minister Balochistan for Women Development department Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi had meeting with representatives from DOCH (Pvt) Limited on Wednesday.

The discussion centered around several pivotal projects aimed at fostering women's empowerment and economic participation in the province.

During the meeting, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi expressed strong support for "Meri Pehchan Project," which aims to provide women in Balochistan with a distinct

identity and recognition.

"The Meri Pehchan Project is a vital initiative that resonates deeply with our mission to uplift women in Balochistan," said Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi. "Our government is dedicated to supporting such projects that empower women and grant them the recognition they deserve."

Another significant topic of discussion was the activation and establishment of Women Chambers of Commerce at both provincial and district levels. Dr. Buledi emphasized that establishing Women Chambers of Commerce will create robust platforms for

women to engage in business activities, share resources, and support each other's entrepreneurial efforts. The conversation also focused on enhancing training programs for women, particularly in the Naseerabad district. Dr. Buledi stressed the importance of equipping women with essential skills to enable them to make significant contributions to their communities and the broader economy.

"Investing in the training and development of women, especially in districts like Naseerabad, is crucial for our socio-economic progress.



QUETTA: Dr. Mahrang Baloch of Baloch Yakjehti Committee and other addressing a Press conference

IHC seeks interior secy, police, NAB, FIA reply in Bushra Bibi's case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday issued notices to the secretary interior and senior officials of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the police and sought their replies in the former prime minister Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi case.

Bushra, in her petition, had prayed to the court to order the concerned departments to provide her with details of the cases registered against her as well as not to arrest her in any

new case besides allowing her to approach a relevant court for justice.

IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Aamer Farooq heard the former first lady's petition. The court then adjourned the case's hearing until next week.

On the other hand, hinting at the formation of a larger bench to hear the petition filed by PTI leader Ali Bukhari against the Election Amendment Act, the IHC CJ on Wednesday summoned the attorney general of Pakistan (AGP) to assist the court in deciding the case.

Pak army rescues foreign climbers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Army commandos has successfully rescued foreign climbers from Holland, Singapore, and Ecuador on Wednesday who fell ill due to severe weather conditions while attempting to summit K2.

According to a private news channel, the climbers experienced health issues during their expedition.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting