

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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President & CEO Barrick Gold meets, briefs about assistance projects:

Govt. determined to promote foreign investment; has capability to provide effective security to investors: CM

Mir Sarfraz Bugti says comprehensive plan formulated for security of the foreign projects in Balochistan; recruitments made in Levies

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that his government is determined to promote foreign investment in the province, and we have the capability to provide effective security and protection to the foreign investors.

He said that comprehensive plan has been formulated for security of the foreign projects in Balochistan.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the President and Chief Executive

Speaking to Mr. Mark Bristow, the Chief Minister said that bright future of Balochistan and Pakistan are linked with the international and national projects.

He also said that the steps are being taken for promotion of foreign investment in collaboration of the federal and provincial governments.

Referring the measures taken for security of the foreign investors and projects, the Chief Minister said that recruitments have been made in the Levies force for security of the foreign projects.



Officer of Barrick Gold Corporation, Mr. Mark Bristow, who called on him here at the CM's secretariat on Thursday.

During the course of meeting, matters about mining and ongoing assistance projects were discussed.

He on the occasion stressed the need to project and highlight the welfare works being done by the Barrick Gold Corporation.

He directed to the concerned to highlight the welfare projects through effective communication strategy.

Rs 1.6 billion dues of media industry paid in transparent manner: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar informed the Information Standing Committee of the National Assembly on Thursday about clearance of Rs 1.6 billion in dues to the media industry by the government in a transparent manner, which would eventually help them to pay every media worker salary in time.

The minister disclosed the details about the dues' clearance in the committee meeting which was presided over by Pullain Baloch and

briefed about the functioning of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and its attached departments.

Pointing out a halt in advertisements to certain media channels on favoritism basis in the past, Attaullah Tarar confirmed seamless distribution of the ads to the channels on merit and in accordance with the criteria.

He said there were presence of the dummy newspapers which were being printed only for the sake of ads, describing the practice a major challenge for the

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PTA, NADRA ink MoU to streamline identity verification process



ISLAMABAD (APP): To streamline the identity verification process for telecom service providers, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and NADRA Technologies Limited (NTL) signed an agreement on Thursday. This collaboration is yet another step towards 'ease of doing business' in Pakistan, especially for prospective telecom service providers.

The signing ceremony was attended by the Chairman PTA Major General @ Hafeez Ur Rehman and Chairman NADRA Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar. Member Finance PTA Muhammad Naveed and Member Compliance & Enforcement PTA Dr. Khawar Siddique Khokhar along with senior officials from both PTA and NADRA were also present on the occasion, said a news release.

Chairman PTA in his welcome note termed the partnership as a positive step towards efficient and

transparent licensing procedure which will create ease for telecom service license applicants.

On the occasion, Chairman NADRA said that NTL will provide biometric verification services through its nationwide network of NADRA e-Sahulat franchisees to verify the identities of concerned officials and staff of telecom service providers and other related entities.

As part of the new process, PTA will create a profile for each applicant, applying for a PTA license. Once the applicant receives their tracking ID, they will visit the nearest e-Sahulat outlet and present the tracking ID for biometric verification. The verification result will then be securely transmitted to PTA.

The collaboration between PTA and NADRA is a significant step towards improving the efficiency and transparency of telecom services licensing process in the country.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed participating through video link in the high level meeting held with the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal in the chair in Islamabad

PM to attend new Iranian president's inauguration on July 30

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is scheduled to visit Tehran to attend the inauguration of President-elect of Iran Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, being held on July 30.

The prime minister will attend the ceremony on the invitation of the Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch announced at the press briefing.

"The visit attests to the commitment by the two countries to strengthen leadership level engagement and bilateral cooperation," the spokesperson remarked.

Earlier on July 8, the prime minister had telephoned President-elect Dr. Massoud Pezeshkian to congratulate on his election.

Both leaders discussed ways to enhance cooperation, particularly in trade, commerce and investment, and foster a stronger partnership for regional stability.

"I look forward to working closely with President-elect Dr. Pezeshkian to further strengthen Pakistan-Iran bilateral ties and promote regional peace and stability," he had said in an earlier post on his X timeline.

Court acquits Qureshi in May 9, incidents case

ISLAMABAD (APP): A lower court on Thursday issued order for acquittal of former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and other accused in cases pertaining to the incidents of May 9.

The court said that Mr Qureshi was accused of provoking the protesters. It said that penal code 109 couldn't be applied on accused until he was found clearly involved in crime.

It said that the crime was not proved to the extent of Shah Mehmood Qureshi. It said that MPO-19 and section 144 was also applied in case against Mr Qureshi. It said that only a relevant officer could file the complaint under these sections.

It said that the prosecutions case was weak as district magistrate was not a complainant against the accused. The accused couldn't be given sentence in the case even after recording the evidences. The court accepted the acquittal of Qureshi and 14 other accused in the case.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Mr. Pullain chairing the committee meeting at Parliament House.

ECP notifies 39 MNAs as PTI members following SC order

39 lawmakers contested Feb 8 elections as independent candidates and later joined SIC; Asad Qaiser, Sher Afzal, Latif Khosa, Zartarj Gul among notified MNAs; ECP uploads notification on website to declare MNAs' affiliation with PTI

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday declared 39 lawmakers — who contested the February 8 elections as independent candidates and later joined the Sunni Itehad Council (SIC) — as members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in line with the Supreme Court's July 12 verdict in reserved seats case.

The ECP uploaded the notification on its website to declare 39 NA lawmakers as the former ruling party's members who had

shown their affiliation with the PTI in their nomination papers for the February 8 nationwide polls.

The decision was taken in a key session held under the chair of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja today in which they reached a conclusion to upload the notification of 39 lawmakers' affiliation with the Imran-founded party.

In the notification, Shandana Gulzar, Sher Ali Arbab, Asif Khan, Syed Shah Ahad Ali Shah, Shahid Khan, Naseem Ali Shah,

Sher Afzal Marwat, Osama Ahmed, Shafiqat Abbas, Ali Afzal Sahi, Rai Hyder Ali Khan and Nisar Ahmed were declared PTI candidates.

Also, Mehboob Shah, Junaid Akbar, Ali Khan Jadoon, Asad Qaiser, Shahram Khan, Mujahid Ali, Anwar Taj, Fazal Mehmood Khan, Arbab Ameer Ayub have been declared as successful candidates of PTI.

Moreover, according to the Election Commission

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QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail presiding over 1st meeting of Senate of University of Panjgur

Governor Balochistan says Decisions made with collective wisdom happen to be effective & credible every time & every place

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that the democracy is actually political manifestation of the collective wisdom and the decisions made with the collective wisdom happen to be effective and credible every time at every place.

He said that the joint decision making can lead to the effective and sustainable solution keeping in view the advantages and disadvantages even at the level of university.

He said that if the journey of establishment of

University of Panjgur ends, then the long journey of achieving the international standards and putting it on path of development is still remaining.

The Governor was chairing first meeting of the Senate of Panjgur University here on Thursday.

Those who were present on the occasion were the judge of Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Abdullah Baloch, Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Dr. Abdul Malik Tareen, Secretary Education, Hafiz

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Minister Home takes notice of incident of firing at trucks carrying minerals in Mastung

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has taken notice of the incident of firing at trucks carrying minerals in Mastung.

According to an official letter, the Provincial Minister expressed deep concern over the incident occurred in Khad Kocha area of Mastung and directed to the Additional Chief Secretary

Home to take action against the district administration of Mastung.

He also directed to take departmental action against Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner Mastung over their failure to prevent the incident.

It was also mentioned that negligence was committed in maintaining law and order by the local administration of Mastung on the national highway.

Secretary General ECO calls on him

PM reaffirms Pakistan's support to ECO in boosting intra-regional trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed his commitment that Pakistan would continue to lend its full support to Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in enhancing intra-regional trade among ECO countries as well as on the ECO reforms agenda.

He was talking to Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Amb. Khusrav Noziri who called on him at the PM House.

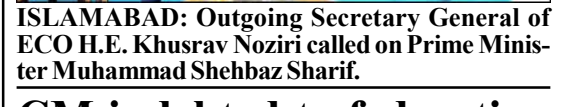
He highlighted the significance of "ECO Vision 2025", signed during the 2017 ECO Summit in Islamabad under then Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, as an important document for the ECO.

The outgoing Secretary General apprised the Prime Minister about ECO's initiatives and activities as well as his reform agenda to revitalize ECO during his tenure.

The prime minister appreciated the Secretary General's efforts and contributions to promote ECO as a regional platform for cooperation and extended best wishes for his future endeavors.

He noted with pleasure that Amb. Noziri was a graduate of Pakistan's Foreign Service Academy. The prime minister also conveyed his warm wishes for President Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan.

The prime minister also stated that Pakistan was proud that the incoming Secretary General of ECO would be Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. The Secretary General conveyed his gratitude for Pakistan's consistent support to him during his tenure as Secretary General ECO.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Secretary General of ECO H.E. Khusrav Noziri called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

CM indebted to federation on grant for rehabilitation activities in flood affected areas of Balochistan

Mir Sarfraz Bugti proposes to include CS & ACS in committee formed for taking review of progress of the project; suggests to hold meeting for review of Kachhi canal project immediately

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed thanks to the federal government on the grant for rehabilitation activities in the flood affected areas of the province.

The Chief Minister was participating through video link in the high level meeting held with the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal in the chair in Islamabad on Thursday.

The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief

Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan and other high ups participated in the meeting through video link.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that the floods of 2010 and 2022 caused heavy devastations in the province. He, however, thanked the federation on the grant for rehabilitation in the flood affected areas of the province.

He said that it is necessary

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QUETTA: Members of Aalmi Majlis Tahafuz-e-Khatam-e-Nabuwat (PBUH) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Quetta press club.

Jashne Azadi to be celebrated in all divisions, districts: GoB decides to hold Independence Day celebrations all over province with great enthusiasm and zeal

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti chairs meeting about preparations of Independence Day

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to hold the Independence Day celebrations with great enthusiasm and zeal all over the province.

This was decided in a high level meeting chaired by the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti here on Thursday.

The Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, administrative secretaries of provincial government departments and police high ups were in attendance at the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the preparations and arrangements for Independence Day to be celebrated

in the province. Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti announced that the Jashne Azadi would be celebrated with enthusiasm in all divisions and districts of the province.

He said that the people of Balochistan are patriotic and caressing the country. The Chief Minister said that 14th August is close to our hearts. He said that we would give message to the world by celebrating the day with enthusiasm that every individual has love for Pakistan in one's heart. Every individual would efface the false narrative of

Continued on page 2

KP Apex Committee vows to not tolerate terrorism, take strict action against terrorists

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur on Thursday chaired the Apex Committee meeting to address the current security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, focusing on recent terrorist incidents and formulating strategies to maintain law and order.

The meeting saw participation from key civil, military, and law enforcement officials, underscoring the need for unified efforts against terrorism.

The committee decided uncompromising action against terrorism and sectarianism. The provincial government will take strict action against individuals and groups involved in terrorism and sectarian hatred. The Chief Minister has directed all departments to ensure no leniency is shown.

The law enforcement and intelligence agencies will strengthen coordination to effectively monitor and counter terrorist activities through increased surveillance and intelligence-sharing.

Citizens are encouraged to report suspicious activities to law enforcement agencies. The Chief Minister ordered the police to crackdown on armed groups and individuals.

The administration will ensure public safety and protect lives and property of the citizens.

The committee also decided to request a judicial inquiry into the Bannu incident, while the government will

conduct its own inquiry to determine individual responsibilities.

The apex committee said that peaceful protest is recognized as a right, but citizens are urged to avoid violence and taking the law into their hands.

The committee highlighted the sacrifices of the army, police, and security agencies, stating that undemocratic agendas and unnecessary criticism of government institutions harm the sentiments of the martyrs' families and should be avoided.

The committee was informed that there is no ongoing military operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; police and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) will handle terrorist elements with enhanced manpower, vehicles, weapons, and other essentials.

The police force has been directed to remain on high alert, increase patrolling, and prioritize southern districts.

The CTD will operate in suspected areas, with support from the army and security forces in remote border regions.

A committee headed by the Commissioner, including representatives from all stakeholders, will be established to resolve misunderstandings between the public and institutions.

These measures aim to restore peace and stability, ensuring the safety and security of all citizens in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti cutting cake of birthday of President Asif Ali Zardari. Provincial Minister Ali Madad Jattak and Senator Sardar Umar Gorgare are also present



KUNMING: Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Khalil Hashmi spoke at 5th China-South Asia Cooperation Forum in Kunming, China. He appreciated China's valuable contribution in creating these collaboration platforms. The Ambassador underscored urgent need to channelize SAARC towards realization of its goals.

Rs 1.6 billion dues of...

Continued from page 1

The PTV Entertainment would be brought under public-private partnership in the near future as part of the initiatives to reform and improve the PTV.

He told the panel that the revenue of PTV Sports had doubled but there was a need for improvement in entertainment programs and news sections of the PTV.

The minister said a Center for Digital Communication would be established at Pak-China Friendship Centre soon to promote the country's image and government's initiatives.

Attaulah Tarar said he was grateful to Secretary Information Shahera Shahid, who had played a great role in reforming the ministry.

He informed the panel that officers of the Ministry of Information were also posted in Pakistani embassies abroad.

The body was informed that the External Publicity Wing not only dealt with foreign publications but it was also playing its role for promotion of the soft image of Pakistan abroad.

The members of the committee sought a detailed report on the performance of the officers of the Ministry of Information posted abroad.

In response to a question, the Federal Information Minister said that

amendments were being proposed in the Newspapers Employees (Conditions of Service) Act, 1973 to bring electronic media workers under the ambit of Wage Board award.

He added that the privatization of Shalimar Recording Company was being seriously considered as the company was continuously incurring losses.

As regards the Center for Digital Communication, the body was informed about the importance of presenting the government's policies and initiatives effectively.

Information Secretary Shaheera Shahid underlined the importance of such a platform to curb fake news against the national security and sovereignty.

The committee was further informed that Pakistan Television (PTV), Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) and Shalimar Recording and Broadcasting Company (SRBC) have appointed Ministry officers as heads under temporary arrangements.

between the academia and industry at the level of public sector universities in accordance with the socio-economic requirements.

The Governor exhorted the Vice Chancellors to pay more attention on the natural sciences while opening new departments.

Meanwhile, certain important decisions were made following the recommendations of the participants.

In the end, Governor gave away the commemorative shields to the participants of first Senate meeting of the University of Panjgur.

PM commends armed forces for Hoshab anti-terror operation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday commended the armed forces for their successful operation against terrorists in District Hoshab, Balochistan.

The prime minister stated that the soldiers of the Pakistan Army successfully carried out the operation and sent the terrorists to hell, according to a statement issued by Prime Minister's Office.

The prime minister remarked that the officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army were tirelessly working day and night to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the country.

Shehbaz Sharif stated that the entire nation, including himself, takes pride in Pakistan's armed forces and stands firmly with the Pakistan Army in the fight against terrorism to cleanse the country.

US urges respect for democracy, equal treatment of all political parties in Pakistan

WASHINGTON (INP): US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller on Wednesday said that United States urges respect for democracy and equal treatment of all political parties in Pakistan.

Briefing the media in Washington, Matthew Miller said: "Internal political matters in Pakistan are something that we do not take a position on. We urge respect for democracy, respect for human rights, and treatment of all political parties equally."

Replying to a question, Matthew Miller said that Biden administration has requested to Congress for \$101 million to Pakistan to strengthen democracy and fight terrorism.

He further said that he would use that \$101 million 'multi-purpose aid' for the types of programmes to strengthen democracy and civil society, to counter terrorism and extremism, to support economic reforms and debt management.

Pakistan welcomes "Declaration of Unity" by Palestinian factions; lauds China's role

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Thursday welcomed the "Declaration of Unity" signed by the Palestinian political factions in Beijing while recognizing and commending China's role in bringing the factions together for meaningful negotiations.

"Unity amongst the Palestinian people is of paramount significance in view of the ongoing war crimes against the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, and the blatant disregard for international law by the Israeli occupation forces," Foreign Office spokesperson Murtaz Zahra Baloch said at her weekly press briefing.

Calling upon the international community to intervene immediately to bring an end to the ongoing illegal and incessant aggression in Gaza, she reiterated Pakistan's support for the realization of the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, their right of return to Palestine and the establishment of an independent state of Palestine with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. Regarding the periodic report of the Hu-

man Rights Committee in Geneva on India, she said during the proceedings, important questions were raised about arrests under draconian laws like Public Safety Act and Public Security Act, and frequent suspension of mobile internet service in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

"This demonstrates continuing concerns of the international human rights machinery about the dismal human rights situation in IIOJK. We call on the international community to take note of these human rights abuses by India in IIOJK and to bring an end to the suppression of the Kashmiri people," she said and reiterated Pakistan's continued political, diplomatic and moral support to Kashmiri people. The spokesperson announced that at the invitation of the Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will visit Tehran on July 30, 2024, to attend the inauguration ceremony of the President-elect of Iran Dr. Masoud

Pezeshkian. The visit attests to the commitment by the two countries to strengthen leadership level engagement and bilateral cooperation, she added.

Similarly, Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi will lead the Pakistan delegation at the 31st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting, being held on 27 July 2024 in Lao People's Democratic Republic where he will take part in discussions on political and security issues, share Pakistan's perspective and also hold bilateral meetings with the participating dignitaries. She also apprised the media of the visit of Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov from July 22-25 who called on President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, besides holding extensive talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and co-chairing the Third Round of Pakistan-Turkmenistan Bilateral Political Consultations.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan being briefed about shifting of agriculture tubewells to solar energy in the province

Decisions made with collective...

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Muhammad Tahir, Chairman BRA, Noorul Haq Baloch, Principal Secretary to Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai, Director General of Higher Education Commission, Dr Zahoor Ahmed Bazai, Additional Secretary of Finance Department, Mumtaz Langove, Justice (Retd) Abdul Hameed Baloch, retired Session Judge Zareef Baloch and other members of the senate of Panjgur University.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor stressed that we have to take serious the aspect of collaboration between the academia and industry at the level of public sector universities in accordance with the socio-economic requirements.

The Governor exhorted the Vice Chancellors to pay more attention on the natural sciences while opening new departments.

Meanwhile, certain important decisions were made following the recommendations of the participants.

In the end, Governor gave away the commemorative shields to the participants of first Senate meeting of the University of Panjgur.

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sary to set up meet office of the rehabilitation projects in Quetta. He on the occasion suggested to include Chief Secretary and Additional Chief Secretary Development in the committee formed for review of the projects.

The Chief Minister said that not only the communication links would be strengthened with early execution of the development projects of Balochistan included in the federal PSDP, but it would also have positive impacts on the overall development and infrastructure of the province.

For this purpose, federal government's cooperation is necessary, adding he stressed.

Referring the Kachhi canal project, the Chief Minister said that it is an important agricultural project.

He on the occasion stressed the need to hold meeting for review of the Kachhi canal project immediately.

Agreeing to the proposal of Chief Minister, the Federal Minister Planning directed to hold the review meeting immediately.

ECP notifies 39 MNAs as PTL...

Continued from page 1

notification, Rana Atif, Changaiz Ahmed Khan, Muhammad Ali Sarfaraz, Khurram Shehzad Virk, Latif Khosa, Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan, Aamir Dogar, Zain Qureshi, Rana Muhammad Faraz Noon, Mumtaz Mustafa, Shabbir Ali Qureshi, Anbar Majeed, Awais Haider and Zartag Gul have also been declared successful candidates of the PTL.

The PTL MNAs who have been notified by the ECP were those who had shown their party affiliation with the Imran-founded party in their nomination papers before the 2024 general elections.

Having been deprived of its election symbol, the PTL's candidates contested the February 8 elections as

independents. However, these independents were directed by the party to join the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) to be eligible for the reserved seats.

After winning the most seats in the general polls earlier this year, PTI was denied reserved seats by the ECP while its decision was also upheld by the Peshawar High Court (PHC), citing the party's inability to submit list of candidates for reserved seats in the stipulated time.

The apex court had on July 12 ruled that PTI was and is a political party that won general seats in the national and provincial assemblies in the February 8 elections, thus, is entitled to reserved seats.

The SC full bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez

Isa, by a majority of 8, set aside the Peshawar High Court's judgment of March 25 and declared the ECP order of March 1 to be ultra vires the Constitution, without lawful authority and of no legal effect.

Following the SC directives, the electoral body held multiple sessions to deliberate on the verdict.

Regarding the independent candidates' issue, the ECP stated in a session last week that 39 candidates of the embattled party had shown their affiliation with the PTI in their nomination papers. However, 41 candidates who had been declared independents hadn't mentioned PTI in their nomination papers neither they disclosed their affiliation with the party nor submitted the ticket of any party, it added.

CORRIGENDUM

This office Notice for Inviting Tender for different development works published in daily leading Newspapers under PRQ No. 64/03-07-2024. Necessary amendments have been made in Basic Eligibility, Technical Evaluation as per the advice of B-PPRA and same has been uploaded on B-PPRA.

Moreover, the date of submission of documents is 16-08-2024 at 11:30 AM and tender opening on the same date at 12:30 PM. The other terms and conditions will remain same.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
IRRIGATION DIVISION ZHOB

PRQ No.383/25-07-2024

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-242507507783 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The Union Council Spozand Dasht invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

Tender Fee Rs.4000/- and Bid Security 4%

S.No	Class of Object	E/Cost
1	Installation of street light and Home Solar Solar and Renovation of office Building Union Council Dasht, District Mastung.	10,000,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 7,000,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 4% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 4,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 09 August, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 09 August, 2024 till 11:00 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 12:00 PM Address: Union Council Spozand Dasht Phone no: 3325283195 Email: tariqnam23@gmail.com

CHIEF OFFICER
UNION COUNCIL SPOZAND
DASHT DISTRICT MASTUNG

AB No.104/25-07-2024

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CM indebted to federation....

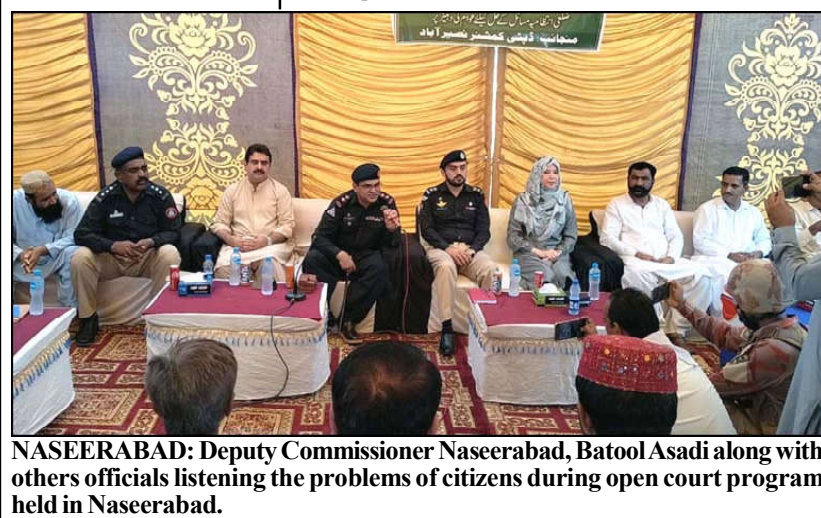
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structure of the province. For this purpose, federal government's cooperation is necessary, adding he stressed.

Referring the Kachhi canal project, the Chief Minister said that it is an important agricultural project.

He on the occasion stressed the need to hold meeting for review of the Kachhi canal project immediately.

Agreeing to the proposal of Chief Minister, the Federal Minister Planning directed to hold the review meeting immediately.



NASEERABAD: Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad, Batool Asadi along with others officials listening the problems of citizens during open court program held in Naseerabad.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer Urban Planning & Dev. Department, Naseerabad Division at D.M Jamalilhas invited to Sealed Tender (as per Schedule B and A) on the Composite Schedule of Rates 2023 from interested Firm / Contractors of the following works -

S.#	Name of Works.	E/Cost
1.	Rehabilitation and Additional works Baba Madho Darbar Jalal Khanbagh District Kachhi (PSDP No.4258) TSE-242507507733	19,809,691/-

The Procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules, 2014 amended up to date. BASIC ELIGIBILITY: The Firm/ Contractors must have valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council who also has deposited case for renewal (2024-25) in relevant Category, Firms (Single Entity) having valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in the Category C-6 & C-5 or above and the relevant Specialized code. The firm must register in Balochistan Revenue Authority and presence in active tax payer list (ATL) Valid Registration with Income Tax & Presence in Active Tax Payer List in FBR (ATL) Turnover at least of last three years. The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work. The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Call Deposit or Bank Guarantee of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Other Mandatory conditions and Detail Criteria mentioned in the Bidding Documents. Sequential page numbering of Bid Proposal. Signing and stamping of bid proposal wherever indicated as well as initial/ signature and seal on all other pages of proposals. The Proposal is bound as hard book to deny addition/ removal of pages' METHOD OF PROCUREMENT: Single Stage-Two Envelope Procedure. ISSUANCE: The Firms can obtain the bidding Documents from the office of the Executive Engineer Urban Planning & Dev. Department, Naseerabad Division at D.M Jamalilupon payment (nonrefundable) bidding document fee Rs. 2000/- of each tender above deposited in government treasury under head of account C-03870 through Green Challan Form in National Bank of Pakistan (NBP). (The NIT & Bidding Document can also be downloaded from www.bppra.org.pk. In this regard, the interested bidders must submit Green Challan Form deposited in government treasury one day prior to the bid opening in the office of under-signed. Deadline of Submission: The bidding Documents duly filled and attached with copies of supporting documents must be delivered in sealed envelopes by hand or through registered mail to the address mentioned below on or before on 12/08/2024 at 10:30 am. Opening: The bids will be opened on 12/08/2024 at 11:30 am, before the procurement committee in the presence of firm/ contractors or their authorized representatives/agents. Place of issuance and submission will be: - Address: Office of the Executive Engineer Urban Planning & Dev. Department, Naseerabad Division at D.M Jamalil Telephone No.0333787188 Fax No.0829668307 Bid Validity Period: Ninety (90) Days. Email: zenuppndnbalmdj78@gmail.com.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Urban Planning & Dev. Department
Naseerabad Division at D.M Jamalil

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PM meets with KP lawmakers, assures development, relief measures in province

ISLAMABAD (APP): Members of the National and Provincial Assemblies from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Thursday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the PM House.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Eng. Ameer Muqam, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, and other high-rank-

ing officials.

In the meeting, the prime minister assured the lawmakers that the development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly the merged districts, was the top priority of the government.

He said the PMN-N government had always prioritized worked for the development of the merged districts.

Assuring the provision of standard health and education facilities in the merged districts, the prime

minister said the government would establish Danish Schools in the area to provide international standard quality education to the local students.

The prime minister also emphasized the need to stop electricity theft, promote solar energy, and provide relief to the poor and middle class.

He said the government was converting agricultural tubewells to the solar energy across the country that would help in development of the agricul-

ture sector, increase the cultivation land and save billions of dollars in term of imported fuel.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said recently the government had announced big relief for poor and middle income people in electricity bills.

On the occasion, he also announced the formation of a committee, chaired by the Deputy PM, to find sustainable solutions to the problems faced by the elected representatives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the members of KP Assembly called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Former Speaker National Assembly, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Senator Saleem Mandviwalla and parliamentarians cutting cake to celebrate birthday of President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari at Parliament House.

Gilani praises President Zardari for strengthening democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Thursday praised President Asif Ali Zardari for strengthening democracy and upholding the constitution.

At a ceremony organized by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance, on the 69th birthday of Asif Ali Zardari, he also appreciated the dedication and sacrifices of the Pakistan People's party (PPP) leadership.

He said, "Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto not only made Pakistan a nuclear power but also made its defense impregnable. For the prosperity of

the people and the country, Shaheed Bhutto gave the gift of the Constitution" he added.

He added that the PPP leadership has tirelessly worked for the strengthen democracy in the country, upheld the constitution, empowered women, and brought uplift of the public. Endless sacrifices of the leadership of PPP are commendable, he said.

After Bhutto's martyrdom, Benazir Bhutto followed in her father's footsteps, strengthening of democracy, upholding the constitution, and fostering public service.

Following Benazir Bhutto's assassination, President Asif Ali Zardari

took over the reins of the country, gifted the 18th Amendment, ended the exploitation of the provinces, and ensured the provision of equal rights to all provinces. He also acknowledged the efforts of the current PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, in advancing the country's progress and prosperity.

He credited Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's tireless work for the fact that both President Asif Ali Zardari and he himself hold their current positions.

With two provincial governments and two governorships, the PPP remains committed to its constitutional and public welfare struggles.

'Over 70,000 complaints of overseas Pakistanis redressed during the current year'

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Wafaqi Mohtasib, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has instructed all departments dealing with the overseas Pakistanis to redouble their efforts for early resolution of their problems. He directed the NADRA authorities to set up its offices in Bahrain and Baghdad and asked the Airport Security Force (ASF) to issue entry passes to the OPF officials performing duties at the "One Window Facilitation Desks".

The Wafaqi Mohtasib observed that the Overseas Pakistanis were the backbone of Pakistan's economy and they were a major source of foreign exchange in the country and deserved to be facilitated in all respects. He gave these instructions on receipt of a report with regard to the Overseas Pakistanis with special reference to the problems being faced by

them. It may be pointed out that the Secretary, Wafaqi Mohtasib Office, Mr. Afzal Latif yesterday chaired a meeting of senior officials of the Ministries and Government Departments dealing with the Overseas Pakistanis, which considered ways and means to reach out to the Overseas Pakistanis and improve the delivery of services to them.

During the meeting, the Grievance Commissioner for the Overseas Pakistanis gave a detailed presentation on the problems being faced by them. He said that over 70,000 complaints received so far during the current year have already been addressed.

It may also be mentioned that a full-fledged office of the Grievance Commissioner for the Overseas Pakistanis has already been working in the Wafaqi Mohtasib's office.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan in a meeting with Federal Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam at his Office.

PIMS incinerator continues spewing health hazardous dark smoke

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Hospital incinerator established to get away with hazardous hospital waste through incineration and safe management of its remains has become a nuisance for the residents of F-8, G-7 and G-8 sectors facing dark smoke with an increased ratio of pollutants being spewed since last quarter of the year.

An incinerator is a highly capital-intensive infrastructure developed to convert solid or liquid waste of both hazardous and non-hazardous nature into gas or ash, reducing to less bulky, less toxic or less harmful material.

The major products, of incineration of waste, are carbon dioxide (CO₂), wa-

ter, and ash, whereas the items of serious concern are compounds containing sulfur, nitrogen, and halogens that are highly detrimental to health and the environment. The incinerator is operated at a high temperature ranging from 850°C to 1200°C that helps convert waste into flue gas CO₂ and water as end products.

When contacted, the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), the official informed that the matter was already in the notice of the Agency and the matter was being taken as per the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1997. Suleman Bilal, a local area resident told APP that it is a usual practice during morning and evening durations when the incinerator starts working.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1516.36 feet and was 118.36 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 202,000 cusecs and 190,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1198.45 feet, which was 150.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 22,600 cusecs and 12,000 cusecs respectively.

DIG Islamabad holds khuli katchery to address public grievances

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Ali Rizvi, the DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza 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.

He emphasized that Islamabad Police would not leave any stone unturned to secure the lives and property of the citizens. "Such interaction would be continued in future to provide maximum relief to the citizens," he added. He said that, interaction during "Khuli Kachehri" would help to promote friendly policing and will also ensure self-accountability, immediate resolution of citizens' problems. The protection of life, property and self-respect of citizens comes first, he maintained.

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Senate education body for resolving degree attestation issue by HEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training Senator Bushra Anjum Butt on Thursday committed to addressing the widespread challenges of attestation and equivalency faced by students across all regions, including students involved in the pending cases.

Chairing the Senate Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training, she expressed her dedication to youth empowerment through education.

She emphasized the need to collectively resolve these issues without dwelling on past grievances, stressing that politics should not be played at the stake of the future of the nation's youth.

Senator Butt acknowledged the concerns of the HEC's chairman and expressed readiness to collaborate towards resolution. Consequently, the committee decided to convene a detailed session at HEC to outline the way forward on attestation matters. They also resolved to handle each case individually for fair treatment, and proposed a checklist on the HEC website outlining mandatory attestation and equivalency document requirements from universities, emphasizing swift resolution of students cases.

Addressing concerns about fraudulent degrees and attestation, Senator Butt highlighted the HEC's responsibility to identify and mark universities issuing fake degrees, advocating for clear public messaging and awareness campaigns.

have to be taken place in order to prevent issuance of fraudulent degrees, along the process, safeguarding the nation's integrity. Additionally, universities facing issues were invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss their challenges.

The committee members unanimously prioritized student welfare, emphasizing swift resolution of students cases.

Addressing concerns about fraudulent degrees and attestation, Senator Butt highlighted the HEC's responsibility to identify and mark universities issuing fake degrees, advocating for clear public messaging and awareness campaigns.

Open University (AIU) Vice Chancellor Secretariat.

As per the data of the 7th Digital Census-2023, he regretted that Pakistan's literacy rate stood at around 61 per cent, stressing the need for improvement to enable the younger generation to compete in the era of digital revolution and rapid innovation that has transformed all fields.

"In today's world, the competition has shifted from pen literacy to digital literacy, intellect and capability in research and development," he added.

CM GB calls on Federal Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & GB and SAFRON Engr Amir Muqam on Thursday said that government would take all possible measures for the development of Gilgit-Baltistan. In a meeting with Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan, he said Gilgit-Baltistan had vast tourism potential which had not fully been exploited, said a press release. He said that Prime Minister would soon visit Gilgit-Baltistan.

Amir Muqam said that government was taking steps for the welfare of Gilgit-Baltistan people.

Increased literacy essential for achieving developed nation status: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday highlighted the importance of increasing the literacy rate in the country to achieve national development and prosperity.

"There is not a single country in the world that has progressed without achieving a 90 per cent literacy rate," he said while addressing the groundbreaking ceremony of the Center for Excellence for Childhood Development at the Allama Iqbal

Open University (AIU) Vice Chancellor Secretariat.

As per the data of the 7th Digital Census-2023, he regretted that Pakistan's literacy rate stood at around 61 per cent, stressing the need for improvement to enable the younger generation to compete in the era of digital revolution and rapid innovation that has transformed all fields.

"In today's world, the competition has shifted from pen literacy to digital literacy, intellect and capability in research and development," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Member Parliament from Opposition benches stage hunger strike camp outside Parliament House in the Federal Capital.

CDA resumes death, birth registration services

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Thursday resumed death and birth registration services suspended by National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) due to outstanding dues.

CDA chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa timely intervention into the matter led to restoration of vital services in the capital.

Randhawa, upon receiving notice of the suspension of services contacted Chairman NADRA to resolve the issue.

Following his instructions, the Municipal Corporation Islamabad (MCI) immediately settled all outstanding payments to NADRA, leading to the restoration of services.

To prevent future disruptions, Chief Commissioner Randhawa directed authorities to take permanent measures to ensure timely payment of NADRA's dues. He emphasized that no shortcomings would be tolerated in facilities provided to Islamabad's citizens.

Ministry all set to amend govt accommodation allotment rules

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Housing and Works is all set to modify government accommodation allocation rules to facilitate federal government employees.

"A proposed amendment to modify the Allocation Rules, 2002 is under consideration which will be implemented as soon as possible, sources in the Ministry told APP.

They mentioned that the ministry plans to eliminate Rule 20 of Government House Allotment. This rule currently allows

a government house allocated to a retired federal employee to be assigned to their employed son or daughter. The sources said the waiting list employees are of the view that the rule is based on injustice to transfer the government house from father to child on retirement as it deprives the right of senior employees who have been waiting for a long time. They said the officers and employees get their son or daughter recruited before retirement and the house is allotted to them.

Police committed to resolve public issues on priority: SP Khan Zaib

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, SP Security Operations Khan Zaib 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 during the Khuli Kachehri held at his office. Moreover 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.

He emphasized that Islamabad Police would not leave any stone unturned to secure the lives and property of the citizens. "Such interaction would be continued in future to provide maximum relief to the citizens," he added.

He said that interaction during "Khuli Kachehri" would help to promote friendly policing and will also ensure self-accountability, immediate resolution of citizens' problems. The protection of life, property and self-respect of citizens comes first, he maintained.

Minister urges national unity for country's prosperity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance, Revenue, and Power Ali Pervaiz Malik urged 'national unity' and slammed the opposition's pursuit of self-interest, warning that their actions are hindering the country's economic recovery.

Talking to a private news channel, he has made a passionate appeal for national unity, urging all stakeholders to put aside their differences and work together for the country's prosperity.

Malik warned that the opposition's self-serving agenda is not only hindering the government's efforts to address economic issues but also threatening the country's stability and progress.

Responding a query related to opposition call for protest, he made it clear

that the government is not afraid of opposition's protests, but emphasized that any demonstrations or gatherings must be conducted in accordance with the law and through proper legal channels, including obtaining necessary permissions.

In a bid to maintain public order and ensure the smooth functioning of democratic processes, the government urges protesters to adhere to established protocols and procedures, he mentioned.

The government has made it clear that protecting state interests is our top priority, he mentioned.

He stressed that the government's primary responsibility is to serve the people and ensure the country's progress and stability, and it will not be swayed by political pressure or vested interests.

IRSA releases 314,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 314,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 337,100 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1516.36 feet and was 118.36 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 202,000 cusecs and 190,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1198.45 feet, which was 150.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 22,600 cusecs and 12,000 cusecs respectively.

CDA chairman inspects Park Road Extension Project, directs timely completion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, conducted a surprise visit to the Park Road Extension Project, stressing the need for swift completion of the construction work.

During the visit, Chairman Randhawa directed the project team to expedite work on all sections of the project, ensuring round-the-clock presence of the Project Director to oversee the progress. He also instructed the team to collaborate with traffic police to minimize inconvenience to citizens due to the ongoing construction. Randhawa warned that no further delays would be tolerated, emphasizing the importance of completing the project without any additional hindrances. Despite the warnings, the Chairman expressed satisfaction with the progress made in the last two months.



ISLAMABAD: A dedicated teacher instructs children from surrounding slums in a makeshift school near F-6 in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan Customs holds three days workshop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Customs has taken a significant step forward by hosting a three-day workshop with international experts from Maersk and KGH, following the completion of business process mapping in June 2024.

Being one of the first public sector organizations of Pakistan that embraced automation and digitization of its processes, Customs is poised to adopt the latest technological tools available to enhance efficiency, transparency and accountability in the department, said Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) news release here.

This workshop was attended by senior management of customs including Members, Director-Generals and other senior officers to decide the design of future customs strategy

document.

Building upon the previous experience of a digitized Customs Clearance System (WeBOC), Pakistan Customs intends to implement the most modern digital solutions to enhance revenue, border compliance and facilitate trade.

Pakistan Customs has remained cognizant of the challenges posed by growing globalization of cross-border trade and transit supply chains, geographic dispersion of manufacturing and adoption of disruptive technologies.

The traditional role of Customs from physical border checks is changing to a multi-functional and whole-of-government strategic player in border controls, trade facilitation, regional connectivity and economic growth.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Faisal Saleem Rehman, chairman senate standing committee on interior presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Friday July 26, 2024

Bad measures

The ongoing tussle between the current regime and PTI will only end up causing lasting harm to Pakistan. This much can be expected when all rules and laws have been set aside, and politics is being dictated by individuals' egos rather than the greater good. After a long campaign of coercion and intimidation, which has yielded nothing of import, the regime is now insisting on dismantling the country's largest political party on arguably frivolous charges.

However, doing so will only provoke the PTI's large support base and further deepen the distrust between it and the state. Meanwhile, in foreign lands, PTI leaders are working single-mindedly on internationalising their party's suffering by approaching different lawmakers to share their grievances. They do not seem to realise that engaging foreign interests in Pakistan's domestic political affairs may weaken their country's standing and make it much more difficult for it to assert its position in its international dealings.

It is most unfortunate that matters have come to this, and both sides deserve equal blame. The state has already taken its intimidatory tactics too far with its campaign of arrests and abductions. There is no reason why it should now also seek to rob millions of Pakistanis of their right to be represented by the PTI.

Its desperate moves are only provoking those at the receiving end to more and more extreme measures as they attempt to reassert themselves. It should realise that it is actively creating the conditions for more civil unrest, instead of finding solutions to the challenge.

Likewise, it defies understanding why, after its long campaign against foreign interference during the cipher saga, the PTI is now inviting international pressure on the Pakistani state. The party may be battling the might of the state, but this fight must be fought in Pakistan, not on foreign soil. It also seems unjustified for the PTI to be taking the fight abroad without exhausting all its options within Pakistan. It cannot get what it most desires without first making sacrifices, yet the party has barely tried to forcefully assert itself. Political victories cannot be achieved without mobilising a party's support base, but the PTI seems least interested in doing this. Just like the regime, it, too, seems to be making the fatal flaw of completely disregarding ordinary citizens. This brings us back to the first point: Pakistan's political crisis has turned into a tug-of-war between a handful of individuals fighting for very narrow objectives. They do not seem to have realised that they have put the country's best interests at risk. Both sides must de-escalate and agree to keep within their lanes. The law and the national interest must be respected. Pakistan cannot afford this domestic cold war any longer.

Samia Liaquat
Ali Khan

The World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Gender Gap Report provides some information on how the burden of caring for children and the elderly, is borne disproportionately by women. This is one of the reasons why global female labour force participation rates dipped during and immediately after the Covid pandemic, and have only recently risen back to pre-pandemic levels. While there are economies where this burden of care is being shared more equally between women and men, there are regions where inequality is much higher. South Asia is one such region.

World Bank research finds that where women take extended maternity leave, there is a stronger chance that they will not re-join the labour force. However, they also find that extending paternity leave to men has a positive correlation with women re-entering the labour market. As companies in Pakistan think more thoroughly about how to enhance in-

clusive workplaces, such research and learning becomes critical. A bird's eye view of various industries, however, shows that while there are some focused on developing their female cohort and talent, many still do not believe the evidence that employing women makes good business sense. The short-term financial costs of integration within a largely male work environment, and the perception of having to give female employees 'special' treatment holds them back.

Women face a disproportionate number of barriers when trying to enter or remain in the workforce. Local research on the jobs market has found that in many cases, the way jobs are advertised and interviews taken, are plagued with discrimination. This may not be intentional, but is a result of the normative patriarchal environment which governs our thought processes and behaviours. The more intentional discrimination occurs when women are not considered the 'right' fit for the job, and/or assumptions are made about when they will get married/pregnant and eventually leave the com-

pany.

The difficulties women face once married, and lack of support offered within their home environment, often means that these assumptions turn out to be true. Retaining women in the corporate workforce is difficult and the attrition rate is very high. Even where companies try to hire equal numbers of men and women in entry-level positions, they find this ratio skewing back to favour men because many more women drop out of the workforce. Fast forward 10-15 years, when that cohort reaches positions of seniority, the ratio between the sexes drops even further. According to the Global Gender Gap Index, women make up only six per cent of senior officials and senior managers in Pakistan today. The situation is dire.

Facilitating women's entry or re-entry into the workforce requires some fundamental reconfiguration in society's perception of gender roles. Men are considered the primary breadwinners. This sense of responsibility is fed into their psyche from a young age, and must be a scary burden to carry.

Women are not made to feel that they need to bear any economic responsibilities. But they are made to feel that they are burdens. Their roles as wives, mothers, daughters and daughters-in-law, and the responsibilities they bear are given no value. But, this is exactly where the care economy develops.

Naila Kabeer and Nancy Folbre, both widely respected economists, have broadened the current debate on what should be determinants of growth by monetising care. Their field of feminist economics brings the intersectionality of inequality, power dynamics and social and environmental benefits into reconceptualising economic theory.

Folbre has made some important contributions in our better understanding of the care economy. She has identified that care work is highly productive, yet greatly undervalued. Caring for children, elders and others leads to enhanced human capabilities which are at the centre of economic productivity. The benefits are available to society as a whole, but carers are either not compensated (in monetary terms) or compen-

sated very little for this work. If women stop providing this service, the cost to the economy and to society cannot be estimated. Pakistani society cares for its elders. We have the opportunity to break a negative paradigm by using this traditional value. How? By creating avenues which reward men for taking more active roles as caregivers (within the home), and simultaneously giving women and girls better economic opportunities and choices. And by making national policy that enables a more inclusive determination of growth and the goal of equitable progress. At the very least, companies and government offices should provide flexi-timing and child care options to male and female employees. Paternity leave should be mandated. Males should be encouraged to take time out to care for sick parents. And women should be encouraged to take up economic activity. This is where government and corporate policies become essential and the first step towards breaking taboos.

Some of the biggest successes I see when it comes to changing the paradigm have been in extremely poor rural communities. When women are perceived as earners, their status within the home and the community changes. When they understand their rights and find their voices, they become confident and powerful.

My most humbling, yet elevating, experience was in Tharparkar, a few years ago, when I was talking to some women in a remote village. They had received training and financial support to become economically active and over time their incomes had increased sustainably. We talked about business and family, social challenges and their thoughts on the future. One woman, who had been quiet for the most part, turned to me to speak. Her well-lined face reflected the harshness of living in a remote desert community, but her eyes were sparkling. With purpose and pride she responded, "I have put all my seven children through school with my earnings, not my husband, me". That, readers, is true greatness. -- Courtesy Dawn

The billionaires bash

Khurram Husain

There is nothing quite like a punch-up among the billionaires. That is exactly what we have going on these days with the whole 'capacity payments to Independent Power Producers' (IPPs) issue. If you're confused about what exactly is going on and trying to figure out who is right in all of this, let me help you with one simple line: this has nothing to do with you. Relax.

Here is what's happening: a fight has broken out between the textile lobby and the power generation companies of this country. Both sides are large controllers of capital. Both have access to organised lobbying bodies. Both command clout with the government. But one can influence the narrative as it plays out on TV much better than the other because people are already crushed under electricity bills and are preparing to experience another hike when bills for July are delivered in a couple of weeks.

The one that has gone public is the textile lobby in the hopes of

mounting pressure to bring about some sort of intervention, either by the government or the courts. Their problem is that the capacity payments they are villainising as the source of all the economic problems plaguing the country are protected by sovereign guarantees that are enforceable in international arbitration councils. Their second problem is that many of these are owed to Chinese producers where contractual changes are a non-starter. Where they are not owed to Chinese producers, they have already undergone some amount of re-negotiation when the same issue came up in 2021.

Why has the textile lobby declared war on the IPPs? The simple answer is their power tariffs have been hiked. As a matter of fact, their tariffs were hiked in the middle of last year, along with everyone else's including yours and mine, and they had grown accustomed to a subsidised tariff that was supposedly given for exporters (in fact, a study looking at who benefited from that subsidised tariff found most of the ben-

efit was flowing to a small number of mills, which were not even large exporters. (But that's another story.) They called it the 'Regionally Competitive Energy Tariff', and to give it all a very professional appearance, they also gave it an acronym, RCET. In the lobbying world of policymakers, a thing doesn't exist until it has an acronym.

So there it was. An RCET given to textile houses in the days of the PTI government had to be withdrawn because the government could no longer afford it and could find no evidence that it was spurring exports. Exports did indeed rise since the RCET was introduced, but there was little to no evidence linking that rise to the RCET, save perhaps for one study funded by the textile lobby itself.

Giving subsidised energy to the textile sector had been a long-standing demand of theirs for many years. Successive governments were wary of this lobby though, knowing their tendency to profit from government handouts, whether

through energy subsidies or credit schemes or tax breaks. The PTI government caved in fast to their demand, however, and announced a sharply subsidised energy regime for textile exporters almost immediately upon coming to power.

Energy subsidies for textiles were announced in October 2018. They were expanded in January 2019, then rolled back partially by September 2020 when consensus within the PTI government around the merits of the RCET broke down. The ministers for planning, energy and finance urged the withdrawal of the RCET regime, while commerce lobbied not only for its continuation. As a compromise, the RCET was revised upward at nine cents per unit and left at that till it was finally withdrawn altogether last year.

That's when the textile lobby mobilised to get it restarted. In late 2023, according to them, their power tariffs had risen to more than 14 cents per unit (by comparison I was billed 22 cents per unit in my last bill) and during a meeting at the energy

ministry, they stumbled across what they thought was an interesting thing. They found that the structure of power tariffs in Pakistan includes a Rs14 per unit charge that is used to subsidise a lower tariff for those who consume less than 600 units per month. Seizing upon this, they started demanding that this amount be cut down and shifted either to the budget, or some other source.

The interim authorities left it for the incoming government to sort out matters. The new government offered to cut this subsidy amount partially, but then in early July came a tariff rebasing exercise under which tariffs were hiked once again, so the benefit from cutting the subsidy largely evaporated.

The textile lobby had turned on the power producers already by this point, but the impact of the tariff rebasing exercise in July led them to intensify their attack. They argue that unjust capacity charges are powering the tariff, and produce detailed findings, which they claim show power plants that were shut

throughout the last financial year receiving payments of Rs3 billion, or more in some cases.

Let's support their demand for a forensic probe into payments made to power producers. But recall that in 2021, in a similar fight, there was also a probe into 'excess profits' made by the IPPs and the government of that time re-negotiated tariffs, and told us that they had secured reductions totalling Rs800bn in future payments. Where are those benefits today?

Probe or no probe, don't for a moment think that any of this is happening for you, or that it will produce reduced electricity bills for you. This is purely the textile industry making strenuous efforts to find its way back to a subsidised energy regime that they had grown accustomed to from 2018 onwards.

The core problem here is not capacity charges. The core problem is devaluation, because the dollar value of your electricity bills has not risen by much more than 30 per cent in the past decade. Check and find out.

Crooks together

F.S. Aijazuddin

Either Thomas Crooks — the 20-year-old sniper who shot Donald Trump during the recent election rally in Pennsylvania — was an excellent marksman and nicked only Trump's ear deliberately, or he missed his target's head by accident.

Gradually, more and more details are emerging of that portentous incident which could have changed modern history. Crooks had been meticulous in his preparation. He chose the rooftop location for its uninterrupted view of the podium where Trump would stand. He flew a drone over the rally site hours before the event began. (The police have since recovered the drone.)

Crooks used an AR-15 style high-powered rifle. His first shot "came less than a quarter of an inch from entering [Trump's] head, and struck the top of his right ear". Having mis-seeded Trump, Crooks fired multiple shots, killing a firefighter and injuring two spectators.

Lessons learned from J.F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963 came into play. A Secret Service counter sniper reacted swiftly. Although he could see "only Crooks' gun scope and the top of his eye and forehead", he fired and in a "one-in-a-million shot" killed Trump's would-be assassin.

Who was this young not-so-sharp shooter, fresh out of high school? A fellow student in Bethel Park high school described him as smart and friendly, "definitely nerdy for sure", but he "never gave off that he was creepy or like a school shooter". And in a phrase used years ago by Alfred Hitchcock with chilling effect about the villain Norman Bates in his horror movie Psycho, the student added: "He seemed like he wouldn't hurt a

fly." Conspiracy theories have already begun to swirl about this event. Why did the Secret Service not reconnoitre the venue with more professional thoroughness? How did Crooks aiming from his more advantageous machin fail with repeated firings when the Secret Service man succeeded in a "one-in-a-million shot"?

Did Trump know when to duck? (Many might recall president Ronald Reagan's riposte to his wife Nancy after the assassination attempt on him in 1981: "Honey, I forgot to duck!") Was Crooks a fall guy like Lee Harvey Oswald, a casualty of murky, murderous US politics?

One wonders whether there will be a second Warren-style Commission to obfuscate the truth.

By not killing Donald Trump, Crooks has gouted Donald Trump's nomination as the Republican presidential candidate. Intere-stingly, Trump has recovered faster than the painter Van Gogh did after his ear wound.

The November elections are only a few months away. Harried Democrats have been demanding a change in leadership. Biden has answered their prayers by withdrawing and proposing his obedient Vice President Kamala Harris as his substitute. Biden ought to have heeded the advice of a Republican predecessor — Abraham Lincoln: "Never change horses in midstream."

It is a truism that the US presidential elections have a seismic effect on almost every country in the world. A left-wing Keir Starmer may take over in the UK. An ornamental Ursula von der Leyen may return as a second term president of the European Commission. Emmanuel Macron may continue in a

presidency with a built-in expiry date. None matter except for China and Russia in international geopolitics. The president of America always will.

Ever since 1945, the US has been involved perpetually in a war, somewhere. The Cold War is now a 'Warm War'. For 20 years, Af-ghanistan was in. Hamid Karzai and his de-signer chogha are now out. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky and his comma-nder T-shirts and false fatigues are in. Peace summits are out.

According to the German Kiel Insti-tute, since 2022, the US and the Euro-pean Union have pledged or provided 'more than \$380 billion' in military, fi-nancial and humanitarian aid to Ukra-ine. Even innocuous Azerbaijan has supplied bombs, but via Sudan. Pakistan, not to be left behind, decided to provide Ukraine with Kamikaze drones and Man-portable air-defence systems (MANPADS) surface-to-air missiles. The Afghan war lasted 20 years and cost \$3 trillion. Who can predict how long the Ukrainian war will last? Probably as long as it takes to bleed Russia dry, or America's allies run out of patience, or a re-elected President Trump decides that enough is already too much.

The pattern of EU elections has raised an interesting possibility. When 27 disparate European countries can hold 'free and fair elections' to elect a president, isn't there an argument for countries affected directly by the decisions of a US president to be allowed a say in his (or her) appointment? After all, their destinies are involved, their stability affected by the whims of one man chosen by 170m or so insular American voters. It is a frightening thought that Crook's single bullet, not a mass ballot, has already decided the fate of the free world. -- Courtesy Dawn

Urban flooding

Dr Noman Ahmed

Taking precautionary steps to minimise the damage wreaked on life and property seems high on the agenda of the various tiers of government in Karachi. The chief minister has held several meetings with the relevant authorities regarding effective preparations to cope with the expected rains and flooding. The president called on the chief minister, mayor and others to take swift action to prevent flooding in Karachi neighbourhoods.

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation has the mandate to manage the main storm drains that fall under its jurisdiction. But it is unfair to expect a lot from KMC, given its limited financial strength and technical capacity. As Karachi is likely to receive torrential rains in early August, it is time for swift action.

One reason for urban flooding is uncoordinated real estate development, as seen in suburban Karachi. Construction has also been going on in areas strictly recommended for livestock rearing, urban farming, forestation, etc. The so-called anti-encroachment drives, in part to enable water to drain properly, have proved largely ineffective.

Much of Karachi's development took place under the overall framework of plans and schemes carried forward from pre-independence times. The British had brought in a municipal system to plan and develop urban infrastructure. Storm drains were an essential feature. Through land surveys and the use of available means to assess rainfall and the surrounding terrain, Karachi was protected as rainwater was effectively drained. The measures were also meant to enable Karachi to withstand torrential rains. The sewer-

age system was planned in conjunction with a drainage plan, though both functioned independently.

Periodic maintenance, repairs and an effective monitoring process made the system dependable. Manuals, SOPs, and projections were diligently prepared. Engineering wisdom and sound urban planning logic enabled the administration to manage Karachi well. The system became distorted when these practices were not institutionalised after independence.

Some quarters are talking about using the sewerage system for rainwater disposal. This must be reconsidered. Karachi has many informal settlements located along the edges of major nullahs. Various settlements in Lyari, Orangi, Malir and the central parts of the city are examples. While life and activities benefit from convenient access for disposing domestic waste water, urban flooding becomes a threat.

Until around three decades ago, Karachi's storm drains, natural and manmade, helped mitigate flooding. Not anymore. The hydrology of the drains is impacted by illegal sand mining that continues relentlessly along natural water courses. Many formal outfalls have also encroached upon these nullahs, creating obstacles for the free flow of water.

The parking area of a major judicial office in Karachi has apparently been constructed on a drain. Unrestricted dumping of solid waste and construction debris directly into the nullahs also reduces the carrying capacity of the water flows.

Unsuitable repairs raise the level of main roads, allowing rainwater to gush into the streets. This is found in almost every neighbourhood in

Karachi. A thriving informal sector uses nullahs and rivers as sites of waste recycling enterprises. With the connivance of municipal staff, much of this waste is regularly brought to the nullah sites where recyclable items are separated and organic or worthless waste is made to settle on the river beds. Thus the silt content continues to expand.

Several sites in Lasbela along the Lyari river are linked to recycling. They can be connected to the city waste management system to prevent the random disposal of solid waste in nearby water bodies. When Karachi faced torrential rains a decade ago, locations along the river and nullah were severely flooded as the water could not find a proper path for outward flow. Meanwhile, it is not clear whether mega transportation projects such as the Red Line BRT and Yellow Line BRT are synchronised with the drainage network.

With rains predicted, the local and provincial governments must identify unsafe locations across the city, and urge the public to take precautionary measures. Person-nel to assist people in safeguarding life and property must be deployed without delay.

In the meantime, the longer view ought to be kept in mind. Regular cleaning of roadside drainage channels, putting a stop to the dumping of solid waste into drains/water bodies, strengthening embankments, dredging river and nullah beds, repairing sewerage schemes and separating them from drainage, creating voluntary resettlement options for nullah dwellers and accelerating the natural absorption of water through sound floodwater retention strategies should be expedited. -- Courtesy Dawn

Murad calls for shifting of utilities, speeding up work on BRT Redline

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a meeting to review the progress of the BRT Redline project, has directed all utilities-providing agencies to shift their installations within a month so that the work on the project can be sped up, meanwhile, the traffic police would properly manage the traffic to reduce public inconvenience which has become unbearable.

The meeting was held at the CM House, and was attended by Senior Minister Sharjeel Memon, PSCM Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, MD SSWMB Intiaz Shah, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, DIG Traffic, MC KMC Afzal Zaidi, KE Representatives Sadia Dada, Haris Siddiqui and project director of the BRT Redline.

Senior Minister Transport Sharjeel Memon briefing the CM said that there were two Lots of civil works of the BRT Redline project. Lot 1 starts from Malir halt and ends at Mosmiyat and Lot-2 from Mosmiyat to Numasih. The physical progress of Lot-1 has been achieved by 9.46 per cent and lot-2 by 15.3 per cent.

Memon told the CM that work on Lot-1 and Lot-2 would be completed by March 2026 and June 2026 respectively.

The CM said that in the entire area of the Red Line Corridor, there were serious traffic issues, therefore people in the areas were in distress. "I want you to speed up the work on the project so that public distress can be alleviated," he told the



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting to review progress on the BRT Red Line Project held at CM House in Karachi

Punjab Governor says: Pakistan and China always enjoyed fraternal relations based on love and trust

Independent Report
LAHORE: Chinese Consul General in Lahore, Zhao Shirin met with Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, ways to further strengthen bilateral relations and ongoing development projects under CPEC were discussed.

Talking on this occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, said that Pakistan and China always enjoyed fraternal relations based on love and trust. He said that people of both countries were also bound in a close bond. The Governor of Punjab said that the work on China Pakistan Economic Corridor Project was progressing rapidly, however, there was need to further ramp up the speed. He said that the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor project is beneficial for both Pakistan and China.

Punjab Governor said that the CPEC Project will bring development and prosperity in Pakistan. He further said that the reforms and rapid development of the Communist Party of China for the betterment of the country was exemplary.

Chinese Consul General, Zhao Shirin said that work was underway on various development projects in the backward areas of Punjab province with the cooperation of China. The Chinese Consul General appreciated President Asif Ali Zardari's dynamic role in the mega project of China Pakistan Economic

Sharjeel inaugurates Route-8 of People's Bus Service in Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon inaugurated Route 8 of the Yusuf Goth to Tower People's Bus Service in Karachi on Thursday.

The inaugural ceremony was held in Yusuf Goth and attended by Pakistan People's Party MPA Liaquat Askani, former MNA Qadir Mandukhel, and People's Party leaders Habib Jadoon, Faisal Jamot and others.

Addressing the ceremony, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said, "Today is a very important day as the route of the People's Bus Service from Yusuf Goth to Tower is starting. The promises made by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, President Asif Ali Zardari, Faryal Talpur, the Chief Minister of Sindh and the elected representatives of the people are being fulfilled."

He said that the leadership of the Pakistan People's Party was working day and night to provide maximum relief to the people. In the last four days, new buses have been deployed, and new routes have been started by the Sindh government. Millions of people will benefit from these new routes, he added.

The senior minister said that in this era of inflation and intense heat, the government of Sindh was providing air-conditioned buses at minimum fares, ensuring that people could easily reach their destinations. This initiative aims to make daily travel, including commutes for work and education, more convenient and comfortable, he said.

The minister said that when petrol prices increased and there was talk of raising bus fares, the Chief Minister stated that the government of Sindh would not burden the people and that subsidies would be provided. "The Sindh government has introduced a women-only pink bus service and an eco-friendly electric bus for the first time in Pakistan. The best hospitals in all of Pakistan are in Sindh; name any other province where the government provides free treatment like Sindh".



LAHORE: Chinese Consul General in Lahore, Zhao Shirin called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Rana optimistic about country's prosperous future; highlights business-friendly policies

KARACHI (APP): Chairman of the PM Youth Development Programme, Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan, expressed optimism about the country's future, stating on Thursday that it is on the right path and will achieve prosperity with a stable economy in the near future.

He made these remarks during an Insurance Policies Issuance Ceremony hosted by the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) at a local hotel.

Rana Mashood highlighted the business-friendly policies of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the current Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. He noted that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has a vision to boost the country's exports, implementing various initiatives with the aim of reaching an export target of \$60 billion.

He commended the PPAF's efforts to empower the nation's youth, recognizing their significant role in the country's development.

At the event, 25 insurance policies were distributed to small and medium enterprises from 22 districts in Sindh and Balochistan. These policies, part of the European Union-funded Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) program, are designed to protect crops and livestock in the agricultural sector from climate-related risks. The EU-funded GRASP program is dedicated to empowering rural SMEs by facilitating their access to financial services. It has established connections between SMEs and financial institutions to support this goal.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan leader, Khawaja Izzat-ul-Hassan along with other talks with media persons during press conference outside Supreme Court Karachi Registry building in Karachi

Minister holds meeting to discuss Hindu marriage registration process

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora Thursday presided over a consultative meeting regarding registration of the Hindu marriages in the Punjab province.

The purpose of the meeting was to make the process of legal registration of Hindu community marriages easier and more effective. Secretary Human Rights Ali Bahadur Qazi, deputy secretary minorities, President Pakistan Hindu Mandir Management Committee Krishan Sharma, Professor Minhaj University Sabir Naz said that it would be better to include all the representatives of the Hindu community in the consultation meeting. The provincial minister assured the participants that it would be taken forward only after mutual consultation of all.



KARACHI: Chairman of the PM Youth Development Programme, Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan addressing an Insurance Policies Issuance Ceremony organized by the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) at a local hotel

Nasir inaugurates 7th ISEM Pakistan Solar Exhibition

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Energy and Planning, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, inaugurated the 7th ISEM Pakistan Solar Exhibition and Conference at the Expo Centre Karachi on Thursday.

The 3-day exhibition is aimed at promoting awareness, fostering industry collaborations and driving the adoption of solar energy technologies across Pakistan with a focus on sustainable energy practices and it has drawn the participation of various leading solar companies showcasing their innovative products and solutions. Nasir Shah, speaking at the inaugural ceremony, highlighted the potential to catalyze growth and development in the renewable energy sector and reiterated government's commitment towards creating an enabling environment for sustainable energy initiatives, encouraging private sector investment and promoting technological advancements in solar energy production and distribution.

Sindh government has planned to establish solar parks for enhancing power generation capacity as well as adding up more electricity to the national grid, the Sindh energy minister stated adding that the initiative was aimed at providing up to 100 units of free electricity to consumers in the province.

Expressing discordance to the idea of taxing the solar power Shah maintained that the province of Sindh was rich in natural resources particularly in the energy sector and it offers viable opportunities for domestic and foreign investment in the sector.



LAHORE: Punjab Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman addressing a press conference at Punjab Assembly in the Provincial Capital.

Solid measures stressed for resolving women's problems in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): A prominent advocate for women's rights Haroon Sarab Diyal and Women and Youth Rights Activist Raveen Mehak Diyal have urged the UN Women Pakistan and the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) to take immediate action to address issues faced by minority women especially living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) merged areas.

In a joint press release issued here on Thursday, they said despite efforts to promote women's economic empowerment, minority women in these regions continue to face significant challenges due to limited access, lack of documentation, and insufficient resources.

They were of the view that departments concerned including the Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Women's Development, Ministry of Minority Affairs, FATA Development Authority, and local authorities should work together to address these issues.

Under the project "Advancing Women Economic Empowerment in Pakistan," UN Women Pakistan and NCSW can play a crucial role in conducting research and assessments to gather data on women's economic conditions and challenges.

They added that the project also call for engaging with local stakeholders to understand the ground reality, developing targeted,

Senior minister says: 27 acres of land retrieved in Faisalabad

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said in a statement that 27 acres of land in Chak No. 534 GB in Faisalabad has been retrieved from the illegal occupants.

An official nursery has been established on the retrieved five acres of land immediately. She said that in order to find a permanent solution to smog, plantation has been launched on the remaining 22 acres of land.

Senior Provincial Minister said that on the direction of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Forest department is establishing a forest for the livestock and ecosystem after retrieving government land from the illegal occupants.

She said that growing new forests will help significantly in getting rid of smog and air pollution. She acknowledged that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif is taking important steps for the protection and growth of forests.

CJ PHC approves appointment of 10 new civil judges

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Justice (CJ) Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Thursday approved the appointment of 10 new civil judges with Registrar Peshawar High Court issued notification for appointment of civil judges here.

Muhammad Salman, Fida Hussain, Anjum Jahangir are among the nine appointed civil judges. Muhammad Abdullah, Khizr Hayat, Shams Khan, Muhammad Hanif, Fatima Murad.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Khawaja Imran Nazir and Director NADRA Colonel (ret) Saqib Mehmood exchanging documents during MoU signing ceremony regarding Registration of Birth and Death Registration in Punjab.

Punjab takes major step towards digital healthcare records

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Khawaja Imran Nazir announced a groundbreaking initiative on Thursday to digitalise birth and death records at the primary healthcare level, marking a significant milestone for the department.

The announcement was made during a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony with the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), held at the PSHD committee room here. The MoU aims to integrate digital record-keeping at all Basic Health Units (BHUs) and Rural Health Centres (RHCS) across the province. This joint initiative between P&SHD and NADRA is set to enhance birth registration processes, making Punjab the only province sharing this data directly with NADRA. This integration allows citizens to obtain birth certificates promptly, streamlining the process and ensuring accuracy.

Khawaja Imran Nazir emphasized the vital role of Lady Health Workers (LHWs) in raising awareness among the public about this new system. He highlighted that the digitization initiative, including the record-sharing with NADRA, will facilitate a transition to a paperless system. He said that this move extends to government hospitals, which now maintain digital records for all patients, including those in outpatient departments (OPD) and pediatric wards. The digital records will help develop strategies for understanding the causes, factors,

Five people crushed to death by speeding car in Daska

DASKA (APP): At least five persons including women were killed on the spot while other two were critically injured when a speeding car hit a motorbike in Daska a tehsil in Sialkot District of Punjab on early Thursday morning.

According to details, Rescue sources said that the appalling road crash occurred at Daska where five family members on motorcycle were crushed to death by a speeding car coming from opposite side, a private news channel reported.

They said the deceased comprised a father, mother and children, while the injured people in car were also moved to hospital, rescue sources added.

PFA cracks down on fake drinks in Attock

ATTOCK (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has seized and destroyed over 23,000 liters of fake carbonated and fizzy drinks in Attock, on Thursday.

According to PFA Spokesperson, The Punjab Food Authority's team working alongside the police, raided two warehouses near village Haji Shah where the fake drinks were being stored for sale. The drinks were found to be produced in counterfeit bottles and containers of well-known international brands.



PESHAWAR: UNHCR official busy in modification of Afghan Refugees after an extension granted by the govt till Jun 30, 2025 here at PCM centre Chamkani.

Stake-holders meeting to address issues faced by KP and other Ports

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level meeting was convened at the Ministry of Maritime Affairs here on Thursday to address the pressing challenges faced by the Karachi Port Trust (KP). The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission from the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Mohammed Jehanzeb Khan.

This crucial gathering included key stakeholders such as the Secretary Maritime Affairs, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Secretary Railways, Secretary Commerce, Secretary Communication, the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, the Chairman of Karachi Port (KP) and Port Qasim Authority (PQA), the President of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ambassador at Large for Investment, the President of the Stevedore Conference, representatives from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the CEO of the Trade Development Authority (TDA), and the Chairman of the National Shipping Corporation.

The primary objective of the meeting was to align all stakeholders towards resolving the challenges faced by KP, instituting necessary reforms, and upgrading infrastructure to meet international standards. Additionally, the session aimed to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure the full operational capacity of KP and all other ports thereof.

In this context, the Chairman of KP was directed by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to clearly identify the challenges at



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain presided over a meeting of the Sugar Advisory Board (SAB).

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia to enhance ties in IT & Telecom sector

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja met with Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy on Thursday.

Matters of mutual interest and enhancing ties in IT and Telecom sector between the two countries were discussed in the meeting.

Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima said Pakistan aspired to boost its relations with Saudi Arabia in the field of IT and Telecommunication. She said that Saudi Arabia is attractive market for Pakistani tech companies,

urging Saudi Arabia to facilitate Pakistani IT companies registered with Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), in getting visa and travelling for Saudi Arabia.

Shaza Fatima said that Pakistan also wanted jointly work with Saudi Arabia in the field of cyber security.

Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy said that Saudi Arabia will fully cooperate with Pakistan in the field of IT and Telecommunication. He also ensured to support and facilitating Pakistani tech companies in getting visa and travelling.

Steps being taken for uplift of livestock sector: Ashiq Kirmani

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Livestock Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani said on Thursday that hefty amount had been allocated in recent provincial budget for uplift of the livestock sector. He said this while presiding over a meeting of Marketing and Business Development Committee of Punjab Cattle Market Management and Development Company

here. He said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was paying special attention towards strengthening the livestock sector and added that numerous projects were being started for betterment and prosperity of livestock farms.

The Punjab government was ensuring maximum provision of facilities to exporters of animals.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan H.E. Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy.

Pakistan's regional exports increase 20% in FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's exports to the seven regional countries witnessed an increase of 20 per cent during the fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

"The country's exports to the regional countries including Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and the

Maldives account for a small amount of \$4334.467 million, which is 13.94 per cent of Pakistan's overall exports of \$31,090.229 million during July-June (2023-24)," State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

China tops the list of countries in terms of Pakistan's exports to its neighbouring, leaving behind other countries such as Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

KP and present a matrix of possible solutions and key stakeholders for resolution. A detailed presentation was delivered, highlighting the following critical issues: Delay in clearance of cargo: Identifying bottlenecks in the customs clearance process. Uncleared goods: Addressing the backlog of goods that remain uncollected. Cargo transportation: Enhancing the efficiency of cargo movement within and outside the port. Delayed grounding system: Improving the system for timely grounding of containers. Absence of port labs: Establishing port laboratories to expedite testing and compliance procedures. Traffic congestion: Developing strategies to manage and reduce congestion within port areas.

USF completes 130 projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Since its inception in 2006, the Universal Service Fund (USF) has completed 130 projects, while 31 projects are currently in progress and are expected to be completed within one and a half years.

An official of the Ministry of IT and Telecom said that 1.5% of the revenue from all service providers goes into the USF, which uses these funds to provide services in underserved and unserved areas, ensuring the availability of data and voice services.

The primary objective of the USF is to connect all citizens of the country, as digitalization has become a crucial priority for both businesses and communities.

Rupee gains 10 paise against dollar

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

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.85 and Rs 280.5 respectively.

The price of Euro went up by 46 paise to close at Rs 302.01 against the last day's closing of Rs 301.55, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen gained 02 paise and closed at Rs 1.82, whereas an increase of 25 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 359.06 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 358.81.

Pakistan's total liquid foreign reserves \$ 14.335b

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan stood at US\$ 14,335.4 million as of July 19 while the reserves held by the central bank were recorded as \$ 9,027.2 million.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), in a statement issued on Thursday, informed that its liquid foreign reserves decreased by \$ 397 million to \$ 9,027.2 million due to external debt repayments during the week ended on July 19, 2024.

Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were recorded as \$ 5,308.2 million during the week under review, it added.



BEIJING: Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, Minister for Energy (Power Division) and Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, Finance Minister in a meeting with President of Sinosure Mr. Sheng Hetai.

Rana Tanveer directs to open fertilizer model centers in every district

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Thursday directed the fertilizer companies to establish model centers in every district to facilitate farmers and ensure the availability of fertilizers at fair prices.

This decision was made during a meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee chaired by the minister, which aimed to review the availability and prices of fertilizers in the country.

In this regard, he said the farmers would be able to buy fertilizer at the original price at the centers and this initiative would end the manipulation of agencies and dealers.

He said Fuji Fertilizer Company established a few model centers last week whereas the minister directed Engro Fertilizer Company to share proposals for establishment of model centers on a priority basis.

"The government is committed to protecting farmers from exploitation by middlemen and agencies," Rana Tanveer said. He instructed the provinces to take strict action on hoarding and price manipulation.

The committee expressed satisfaction over the availability of fertilizer stock.

The committee also sought suggestions from all the stakeholders for Rabi season planning.

8th Kunming Fair in China Pakistan declared theme country: Atif Ikram Sheikh

Independent Report KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has expressed his gratitude that Pakistan has been honored as it was declared as the Theme Country - where Governor of Yunnan Province, China, was the Chief Guest and either ministers or presidents of national chambers from huge economies like China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam were present.

It is pertinent to note that Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, led the Pakistani delegation to attend the high-profile 8th China - South Asia Expo in Kunming, China. The delegation includes the



likes of Mr. Shabbir Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar were also in attendance.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh stressed that the importance and strategic nature of Pakistan - China economic relations manifested in the fact that their bilateral trade has crossed \$20 billion psychological mark.

8th South Asia Expo (CSAE) - a six-day event

Additionally, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar were also in attendance.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh stressed that the importance and strategic nature of Pakistan - China economic relations manifested in the fact that their bilateral trade has crossed \$20 billion psychological mark.

8th South Asia Expo (CSAE) - a six-day event

New bird flu variant sparks urgent action in Asia-Pacific

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has issued a call for immediate regional action to tackle rising cases of avian influenza in the Asia-Pacific region.

This urgent appeal came after a consultation of regional experts in Bangkok, supported by USAID and the CDC, said a press release issued here Thursday. The recent developments are worrying and thirteen new human cases of avian influenza have emerged in Cambodia, with additional cases reported in China and Vietnam since late 2023.

Complicating the situation is a new variant of the virus, posing new challenges for scientists, public health officials, and communities.

The highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus has now spread more widely than ever, reaching South America and Antarctica. It is also infecting new species, including scavengers, marine mammals, carnivorous pets, farmed fur animals, and recently, dairy cattle.

Areas like the Greater Mekong Subregion, Indonesia and the Philippines are under increased scrutiny due to their diverse ecosystems and limited biosecurity measures. While Thailand and Myanmar have not reported outbreaks in years, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh are currently battling outbreaks.

"The recent surge in avian influenza outbreaks is deeply concerning."



KARACHI: Visitors take keen interest at stall during the International Solar Energy Meet (ISEM) Pakistan Solar Exhibition, held at Expo Center.

Pakistan's diplomatic missions in EU briefed on ease of registering companies

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) as part of its objective to facilitate foreign investments in Pakistan, conducted an online session for Pakistan's diplomatic missions and consular offices in European Union.

The session, collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) was attended by representatives from 27 of Pakistan's missions/consulates in Europe, including Brussels, Hauge, Dublin, Athens, Paris, Rome, Madrid, Lisbon, Stockholm, Copenhagen,

Prague, Berlin, Vienna, Warsaw, Sofia, Sarajevo, Tunis, Bern, Budapest, London, Minsk, Baku, Oslo, Ankara, Bucharest, Moscow, Kyiv and Belgrade.

Officials from SECP provided an overview of the most recent changes made with the intention to streamline the online incorporation procedures in Pakistan. Moreover, councilors were informed that since all processes are now fully digitalized and completed online, potential investors can register their companies and easily manage post-incorporation filings from overseas.

Requirements, particularly those pertaining to international investors, such as the attestation of registration documents through embassies or apostilization in accordance with the Hague Convention were explained in detail and recent measures implemented to support entrepreneurs in the country were also highlighted.

The participants appreciated SECP for conducting the awareness session and both SECP and MOFA agreed to conduct similar sessions to facilitate foreign investors in the future.



ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Neil Hawkins called on Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan.

WAPDA Chairman visits K-IV to review progress on project

LAHORE (APP): WAPDA Chairman Engr Lt Gen (ret) Sajjad Ghani visited Greater Karachi Bulk Water Supply Scheme, K-IV, and reviewed construction progress on various sites of the project, including intake works, pumping stations, pressurized pipeline, access road, project offices and project colony.

According to WAPDA spokesman here Thursday, General Manager (Projects) South and Project Director Amir Mughal briefed the Chairman about the contract-wise progress achieved so far, timelines for the remaining works and the plans to meet the targets. Financial progress and requirement of funds to complete the project in accordance with the

timelines were also discussed during the visit. It was briefed that cumulative progress on the project stands at 46 percent, while a sum of Rs. 59.5 billion has so far been spent on construction of the project. Phase-I of the project, with approved PC-I of Rs. 126 billion, is planned to be completed in December 2025, which is subject to timely provision of funds. Emphasizing upon the significance of K-IV Project for Karachi, the Chairman directed the project team to expedite construction works for completion of the project as per the schedule. He also directed them to maintain close liaison with other stakeholders for timely arrangement of power supply by the Government of Sindh.



ISLAMABAD: Meeting with CEO Karachi Gateway Terminal (KGTL), Pvt. LTD (Abu Dhabi ports) was held under the Chairmanship of DCPC, Dr. Mohammed Jehanzeb Khan at Ministry of Maritime Affairs.

Commerce minister assures support for SCO Conference to be held on 11th September

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal minister greeted a delegation from the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) led by its president, Atif Akram Sheikh.

The minister accepted the invitation and appreciated the FPCCI's role in advancing Pakistan's business sector and pledged full ministerial support for their ongoing and future initiatives. "The FPCCI is the apex body representing Pakistan's trade and industry and we are committed to supporting them on any platform for the betterment of the business community," said the minister.

The minister further acknowledged the importance of the upcoming SCO conference, which will feature B2B sessions on key sectors such as Regional Tourism in the SCO and Digital Transformation and IT Collaboration in the region.

During the meeting, FPCCI President Atif Akram Sheikh conveyed the business community's good wishes and discussed potential business opportunities at the conference. He highlighted the significance of including FPCCI representatives in upcoming business delegations to Saudi Arabia, UAE, China, Russia, and other countries.

The minister responded positively, agreeing to involve FPCCI in the formulation of the delegations to strengthen international business ties.

Thousands fill Washington's streets to protest Israel's war in Gaza during Netanyahu visit

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Thousands of protesters against the war in Gaza converged on Washington on Wednesday to condemn Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit, chanting "Free, free Palestine" as they marched toward the Capitol before police deployed pepper spray on some in the crowd.

Demonstrators calling for an end to the war that has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians filled several blocks as they weaved through the streets of the nation's capital carrying Palestinian flags and signs with messages such as "arrest Netanyahu" and "end all U.S. aid to Israel." Outside Washington's Union Station, protesters removed American flags and hoisted Palestinian ones in their place to massive cheers in the crowd.

Throng of demonstrators rallied near the Capitol before starting their march ahead of Netanyahu's joint address to Congress, but police blocked them from getting close to the building. Police said they used pepper spray after some protesters became "violent" and "failed to obey" orders to move back from the police line.

Before Netanyahu's speech, some protesters tried to block his route to the Capitol but were removed from the street by police. After being turned away by officers near the Capitol, protesters wound through the Capitol Hill neighborhood for several blocks before gathering in front of the nearby rail station.

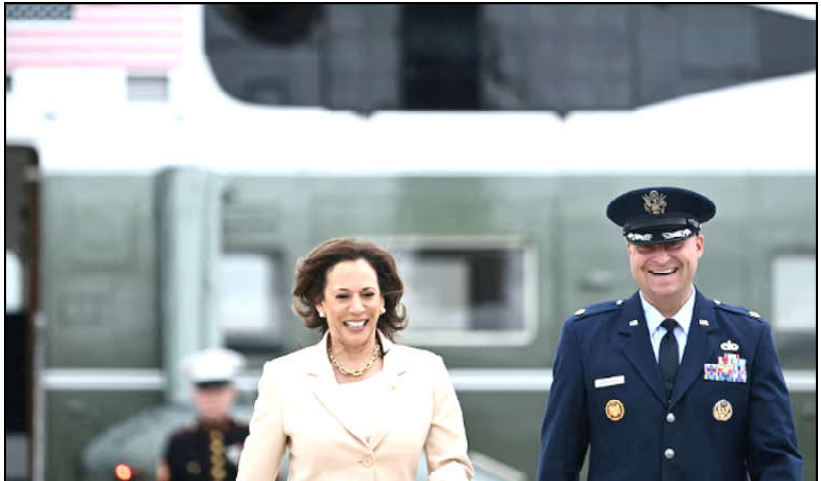
Nine people were arrested across Washington, including four people on charges of assaulting a police officer outside Union Station.

Outside of Union Station, protesters shouted, "Let them go!" at officers who formed a circle around several people who were arrested.

One person grabbed a police officer's riot shield and then raised his fists in a fighting stance. An officer was seen grabbing a Palestinian flag from a woman and tossing it aside. At least one protester appeared to be overcome from the effects of pepper spray.

Cheers rang out as a fire burned what appeared to be a papier-mache likeness of Netanyahu. Protesters spray painted graffiti on a monument to Christopher Columbus, including the words, "Hamas is coming" in large red letters. "Free Gaza" was scrawled in green.

Among the protesters was a group of artists from Baltimore displaying a massive papier-mache sculpture meant to depict President Joe Biden with blood on his hands and devil horns.



U.S. Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris is welcomed by US Air Force Operations Officer Phillip Caraghiaur as she arrives to board Air Force Two at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, U.S.

Trump turns his full focus on Harris at first rally since Biden's exit from 2024 race

Monitoring Desk
CHARLOTTE: Donald Trump unleashed a barrage of attack lines Wednesday against his likely new opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris, whom he called his "new victim to defeat" and accused of deceiving the public about President Joe Biden's ability to run for a second term.

The rally in Charlotte, North Carolina marked his first public campaign event since Biden dropped out of the 2024 matchup and Harris became the Democrats' likely nominee. The rally concluded minutes before Biden addressed the nation to explain he dropped his reelection bid to "pass the torch" to Harris, who is 22 years younger than him.

"So now we have a new victim to defeat: Lyin' Kamala Harris," Trump said, labeling her "the most incompetent and far-left vice president in American history."

Trump called her a "radical left lunatic" and said she was "crazy" for her positions on abortion and on immigration. He also mispronounced her first name repeatedly, a denigrating approach to the first Black woman and person of South Asian descent likely to lead a major party's presidential ticket.

Trump's speech signaled the next stage for the campaign may be especially brutal and personal, even as some GOP leaders warned overtly racist and sexist attacks against Harris.

Kenyan protesters detained in march to honour fallen comrades

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: Kenyan police detained several people on Thursday who attempted to present a petition to the president's office and lay flowers to honour those killed a month ago on the most violent day of anti-government protests, protesters said.

Among those detained were Boniface Mwangi, a prominent activist involved in the protests, they said.

One of the protesters, Hanifa Adan, said on X that some of the parents of people killed in the June 25 protest had been detained on Thursday.

Asked by Reuters to comment, a police spokesperson said she would check on the reported detentions.

Videos posted on social media by activists showed the marchers just before they were detained,



Police detains Kenyan activist Boniface Mwangi during an anti-government demonstration following nationwide deadly riots over tax hikes and a controversial now-withdrawn finance bill, in Nairobi, Kenya.

Gutted TV station showcases anger at Bangladeshi PM

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Torn portraits of Bangladesh's independence hero litter a ransacked state television station — a pointed expression of public fury against his daughter, who just witnessed the worst unrest of her premiership.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressed the nation on Bangladesh Television (BTV) last week to appeal for calm, just as a police crackdown on student protests was poised to tip into violent disorder.

The next day a mob of hundreds stormed the state broadcaster and set fire to an office building, along with dozens of other government and police posts around the capital Dhaka.

Volunteers help migrants reverse water trauma in Spain's Canaries

Monitoring Desk
SPAIN: Smiling broadly, perhaps to hide their nervousness, dozens of young African migrants wearing swimming goggles took their first strokes and exhaled into knee-deep water on a Tenerife beach, led by Spanish volunteer instructors. Many are suffering from water trauma after a perilous crossing to the Canary Islands from countries such as Senegal or Mauritania crammed into precarious boats. Some barely survived and others lost family members or friends to the ocean.

"There are people who come with a terrible fear that you see when they get into the water holding your hand as if clinging to life," said Jorge Balcazar, coordinator of Project Agua at the rescue charity Proemaid, saying some people had spent up to 15 days at sea.



Riot police confront pro-Palestinian demonstrators as they protest near the US Capitol as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a joint meeting of Congress.

Israeli raids displace thousands in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli forces carried out new raids in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, hours before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was due to address the US Congress.

The latest Israeli attacks destroyed homes in towns east of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza and thousands of people were forced to head west to seek shelter, residents said.

The Palestinian Civil Emergency Service said it had received distress calls from residents trapped in their homes in Bani Suhaila, east of Khan Yunis, but were unable to reach the town.

Medics later said two Palestinians had been killed in an airstrike on Bani Suhaila, where Hamas said fighters had detonated a bomb against an Israeli army personnel carrier.

The Israeli military said it had been operating in areas from which fighters had been able to fire rockets into Israel and attack Israeli troops. Gaza health officials said Israeli military strikes in the past 24 hours had killed at least 55 people, the latest casualties in fighting that health authorities in the enclave say has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians.

India and China agree to approach border issues with urgency

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Thursday in Laos, where the two leaders agreed to resolve border issues as soon as possible. The two countries share a long Himalayan border, much of it poorly demarcated, and relations between them have been sour since a military clash in July 2020 when at least 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese troops were killed.

Jaishankar met Wang on the sidelines of the Southeast Asian bloc ASEAN summit in Laos, just three weeks after their last meeting in Kazakhstan, India's foreign ministry said on Thursday.

"Agreed on the need to give strong guidance to complete the disengagement process. Must ensure full respect for the LAC (Line of Actual Control) and past agreements," Jaishankar said in a post on X. After their last meeting in Kazakhstan, Wang had said the two countries must handle and control the situation in the border areas while resuming normal exchanges in other areas.



Venezuelan opposition presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez and Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado participate in a presidential election campaign rally in Valencia, Carabobo State, Venezuela.

South Africa's climate action too slow to meet its bold pledges

Monitoring Desk
JOHANNESBURG: South Africa, the world's 14th biggest carbon emitter, has made strong commitments to climate action but is moving too slowly to wean itself off coal and roll out renewables to meet them, a key report said on Thursday. Africa's most industrialised country has been lauded for making ambitious pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions — which are higher even than

Tanker capsizes off Philippines, one crew missing, battle to contain oil spill

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: A marine tanker carrying industrial fuel sank in rough seas off the Philippines on Thursday, causing a large oil spill as coast guard rescuers search for a missing crew member, officials said. Sixteen of the 17 crew members of MT Terra Nova have been rescued, Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista said, after the ship capsized off the coastal town of Limay in Bataan province. A search is underway for the missing sailor. "There is already oil spill. Right now, we cannot dispatch our resources because of strong winds and high waves," Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista told a situation briefing.

The ship was carrying 1,494 metric tonnes of industrial fuel, Bautista said. Based on accounts of the rescued crew, Balilo said they encountered rough seas before the ship capsized.

Philippine coast guard spokesperson Armando Balilo told a separate briefing a 97-metre coast guard vessel had been deployed to search for the missing crew and combat the oil spill. Smaller vessels are waiting for the weather to clear before they could sail.

An aerial survey by the coast guard showed an oil slick spreading roughly two nautical miles and being driven by strong waves.

"We are racing against time. We will do our best to contain the fuel," Balilo said.

Death toll from Ethiopia landslides could jump to 500, UN says

Monitoring Desk
ADDIS ABABA: The death toll from landslides in Ethiopia earlier this week has risen to 257 and is expected to almost double, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) said on Thursday. Heavy rains triggered a landslide burying people in the Gofa Zone of southern Ethiopia on Sunday night and a second one on Monday engulfed those engaged in rescue efforts.

Kenya's president Ruto nominates Douglas Kanja to head police service

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: Kenya's President William Ruto has nominated Douglas Kanja to be vetted for the post of inspector general of police, Ruto's office said on Thursday. Kanja had been acting in the same position since mid-July, when the previous holder, Japhet Koome, resigned after intense criticism of officers' conduct during anti-government protests the previous month in which at least 39 people had been killed.

The demonstrations against proposed tax increases began peacefully but turned violent.

French police arrest second 18-year-old man suspected of planning attacks

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: France's anti-terror police PNAT said a second 18-year-old man had been arrested on Thursday in connection with plans to commit one or several attacks against people.

It did not mention a link to the Olympic Games, which start in Paris on July 26, but France is on its highest state of alert as it gears up to host millions of visitors.

Frankfurt airport open again after climate activists block runway

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Frankfurt airport, Germany's busiest, has resumed operations after suspending flights on Thursday morning when several climate activists blocked runways by gluing themselves to the tarmac.

Planes were able to take off and land again, the airport said on its website, but passengers were still advised to check on their flight status before setting off for the airport. A spokesperson for Frankfurt, a vital international transit hub and one of Europe's biggest airports, said around 140 flights had been cancelled out of 1,400 planned on Thursday.

US President Joe Biden says time to pass torch to 'younger voices'

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden told Americans on Wednesday that he quit the 2024 election to unite the country, saying in a historic Oval Office speech that it was time to pass the torch to "younger voices."

"I revere this office. But I love my country more," the 81-year-old said in an elegiac prime-time address to the nation urging his divided country to embrace democracy and shun hatred.

"The defence of democracy, which is at stake, is more important than any title," Biden said. "I have decided the best way forward is to pass the torch to a new generation. That is the best way to unite our nation."

In his first televised address since his stunning decision, Biden also hailed his Vice President Kamala Harris, 59, who is set to be the new Democratic presidential nominee. "She's experienced. She's tough. She's capable," Biden said in his fourth address of his presidency from behind the Resolute Desk — and likely his last.

Biden bowed out of the race later than any other president in US history, giving in to weeks of pressure from Democrats after a disastrous debate performance against Donald Trump raised concerns about his age.

Speaking in a hushed voice after a Covid infection, Biden used the powerfully symbolic setting to insist on his achievements — while admitting it was time to move on.

He said there was a "time and a place for new voices, fresh voices — yes, younger voices. And that time and place is now."

Russia, China turn to digital payments as sanctions hamper bilateral trade settlements

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: The increased use of digital assets in cross-border settlements between Russia and China is easing bilateral payment issues, digital platform Qifa told Reuters, as some settlements directly through banks are taking months to clear due to sanctions.

Qifa, founded in 2013 and Chinese-owned, initially focused on importing Chinese consumer goods to Russia. This year, however, it launched bilateral trade, tapping into surging trade between the two countries even as the threat of secondary U.S. sanctions on Chinese banks complicates payment flows with more stringent compliance procedures.

The dwindling pool of banks in China willing to risk possible sanctions retribution has caused payment bottlenecks and increasingly complex steps to avoid delays, including a workaround using small, regional Chinese banks, that can operate below the radar.

Facing those hurdles, Qifa, which operates out of Beijing and Moscow and will soon list on the Moscow Exchange, has turned to digital asset and cryptocurrency settlements that can happen in a single day.

Qifa founder Sun Tianshu said the company was closely monitoring legislation on both sides of the border and was already facilitating cross-border payments using tether (USDT) — a so-called "stablecoin" that retains a steady value in dollars. Russia allows settlements using some digital financial assets that can bypass the banking system such as tether. The Russian parliament is also considering a bill that would legalise all cryptocurrencies as a means of payment in foreign trade.

Harris plans to continue to build presidential momentum in speech to teachers union

Monitoring Desk
HOUSTON: Vice President Kamala Harris is slated to continue her days-old presidential push by speaking Thursday to the American Federation of Teachers, the first labor union to formally endorse her candidacy.

Having emerged as the likely Democratic nominee after President Joe Biden exited the race, Harris plans to travel aggressively to spread her message and rally voters. The outreach occurs as the former and retooled Biden campaign, now under Harris' control, figures out its strategy for generating turnout and maximizing her time in a 100-plus day sprint to the November election against Republican Donald Trump.

But in Trump, Harris is up against the survivor of a recent assassination attempt with tens of millions of loyalists who are devoted to putting him back in the Oval Office.

Just as Harris is trying to draw a contrast with Trump, he is trying to do the same with her. Trump went on the offensive against Harris at a Wednesday rally in North Carolina, telling his crowd of thousands that she is a "real liberal" who is "much worse" than Biden. The former president said Harris had misled voters about the health of the 81-year old Biden and his ability to run for the presidency.

"For three and a half years, Harris shamelessly lied to the public to cover up Joe Biden's mental unfitness, claiming that 'crooked Joe' was at the absolute top of his game," Trump said. "I don't think so. I don't think so." The vice president's address at the union's biennial convention in Houston follows a Tuesday rally in the Milwaukee area and a Wednesday.

Typhoon Gaemi hits Chinese seaboard, widespread flooding feared

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Typhoon Gaemi roared into southeastern China on Thursday after churning across the Taiwan Strait, prompting warnings of swelling rivers, flash floods and waterlogging in cities and provinces that were hit by extreme rains just several weeks ago.

Gaemi, the third and most powerful typhoon to hit China's eastern seaboard this year, made landfall in Fujian province at 7:50 p.m. (11:50 GMT) after whipping Taiwan with gusts of up to 227 kph (141 mph), some of the strongest winds recorded in the Western Pacific Ocean.

Ahead of its arrival, 240,800 people in Fujian were evacuated.

Despite slightly weakening since its landfall in Fujian's Putian, a city of over 3 million, Gaemi and its giant cloud-bands are forecast to unleash intense rainfall in at least 10 Chinese provinces in the coming days.

The arrival of Gaemi has drawn comparisons with Typhoon Doksuri last year, which triggered historic flooding as far north as Beijing and caused nationwide losses of nearly \$30 billion.

Authorities said water levels in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River as well as the vast freshwater lakes of Poyang and Dongting in central China could rise, returning to dangerous levels seen in early July after intense summer rains.

Due to its high vapour content, Beijing cautioned that Gaemi could spawn strong rainfall in the Chinese capital, about 2,000 km (1,242 miles) north of Putian, even as the storm weakens into a tropical depression. Gaemi's rains could cause flash floods and waterlogging particularly in parts of northern China where the soil remains saturated after being lashed by a passing system of storms earlier this week, authorities warned.

In Taiwan, Gaemi killed three people, triggered flooding and sank a freighter after the strongest typhoon to hit the island in eight years made landfall on Wednesday night.

China reaffirms support to Pakistan's economic growth

BEIJING (APP): China has reassured continued support to Pakistan's economic development.

The assurance was given by China's Minister of Finance Lan Fo'an during his meeting with Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Minister for Energy Sardar Awaish Ahmad Khan Laghari in Beijing.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb underscored the special significance of China-Pakistan financial and banking cooperation in the all-weather and iron-clad strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

He thanked the Chinese side for its invaluable economic and financial support to Pakistan in time tested way.

The Minister informed the Chinese side about the Government's economic reform agenda, including the efforts to strengthen tax revenue generation, energy and SOE reforms and achieve sustainable growth.

The Minister for Energy outlined the ongoing reforms in the energy sector. He emphasized the government's resolve to successfully overcome the operational and organizational challenges.

The Minister of Finance of China appreciated Pakistan's resolve for a strong economic recovery.

He explained the Chinese experience of structural reforms over the last thirty years and suggested that this could be a good example for Pakistan to emulate.

He emphasized that both countries have a longstanding partnership.

Later, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Sardar Awaish Ahmad Khan Laghari also held a useful meeting with the President of China Export and Credit Insurance Corp at its Headquarters and discussed the latest reform agenda of the government of Pakistan.

During the meeting, both ministers lauded SINOSURE's role in the development of Pakistan, particularly during the first phase of CPEC.

They showed confidence that SINOSURE will continue its full support for completing ongoing and new projects under the second phase of CPEC especially now led by the private sector.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding Prime Minister's Youth Programme.

Comprehensive strategy required for improving governance: Politicians & bureaucrats equally responsible for deterioration of governance in Balochistan: CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that the politicians and bureaucrats are equally responsible for deterioration of governance in the province.

He stressed that formulation of comprehensive strategy is necessary for bringing improvement in governance. We have formed a committee for bringing reforms in the province.

He said that there have always been coalition governments in Balochistan and these (coalition) governments happen to be compromised and the Chief Minister is blackmailed. He said that all of us have played our role in spoiling governance in the province.

Our resources are plundered and the budget allocated for development is subjected to corruption. The Chief Minister

expressed these views while addressing a seminar on "good governance, civil service reforms and public service delivery" organized by the Balochistan Civil Service (Executive Branch) Officers Welfare Association here at the Sikandar Jamali Auditorium, Civil Secretariat on Thursday.

The former Senator and scholar, Senator (Retd) Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, administrative secretaries of the government departments, other senior officers participated in the seminar.

Addressing the seminar, Chief Minister insisted that we have been facing the challenges of law and order, governance and climate change.

He said that he witnessed lack of governance in the province after assuming the office of Chief Minister. He said that we should

not overlook the reality. He said that the success story is to deliver better with the lesser resources.

He pointed out that Rs. 80 billion are allocated for health sector in the budget, and treatment of every person of the province can be done in the most expensive private hospital in this budget.

The Chief Minister regretfully pointed out that our non-development expenditures are increasing with every passing day, and we wouldn't have money for payment of salaries to the employees after five years, until any miracle happens.

He also said that the province can't be developed with Rs. 200 billion. Our resources are embezzled even, he added.

Mushahid Hussain Syed and others also addressed the seminar and spoke at length on the topic.

PM orders strategy for youth to get equitable job access

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the relevant authorities to prepare a comprehensive strategy with respect to provision of employment opportunities to the youth of the country on equal basis.

Calling the youth as the assets of Pakistan, the prime minister said the country's development was linked with their welfare and progress.

Chairing a meeting regarding Prime Minister's Youth Programme at the PM House, he said, with their immense talent, the youth could change the fate of the country if they were provided with the required resources.

The prime minister was of the view that provision of employment opportunities to the youth was the government's top priority.

He said all the training programmes at National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NVTTC) should be focused on creating job opportunities for the students. He directed to conduct a detailed survey of job market and then accordingly start the skill training programmes.

During the meeting, it was informed that under PM Laptop Scheme, some 600,000 laptops had so far been delivered to the students. Under this scheme, the government would provide additional 100,000 laptops during current year.

The meeting was informed that 64% students who got training under the Youth Skills Development Programme managed to get respectable jobs during previous three years.

Gilgit Khunjrab Motorway game changer for China, Central Asia; Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan has directed the National Highway Authority (NHA) to setup priorities for the construction of highways and identification of new projects. He observed that there would be no compromise on the quality of construction of highways and roads so Chairman NHA should depict honest and competent officers for the projects.

Chairing a high-level meeting of the NHA here Thursday, the federal minister said that the real problem was the funds as just

spending money was not a miracle so the Government departments have to take steps to raise their income. He further said that the officers of the NHA should take advantage of their abilities and expertise to develop a model of working on projects in other countries as well so that the annual income of the Authority could be increased.

Regarding the construction of highways and roads in the northern region, Abdul Aleem Khan said that the construction of the Gilgit-Khunjrab Motorway could prove to be a game changer by providing access to China and Central Asian States.



QUETTA: IGFC Balochistan Major General Ameer Ajmal and Commissioner Quetta Hamza Shafqat in a group with President Central Anjuman-e-Tajiran Abdul Rahim Kakar and others

Ji's caravans proceed for Islamabad to take part in today's dharna

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caravans of Jama'at-e-Islami (JI) proceeded for Islamabad from different areas of Balochistan on Thursday.

The caravans of JI workers headed by the provincial leaders including Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi, Zahid Akhtar Baloch and others left by trains, passenger coaches and own vehicles.

The members of provincial assembly, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch and Abdul Majeed Badini also proceeded for Islamabad along with their caravans. The JI caravans would participate in the JI protest dharna being staged in Islamabad today (Friday). The JI's central Ameer, Hafiz Naemur Rehman to lead the protest sit-in against the increasing inflation, electricity tariffs, taxes and other public issues.

Balochistan's business leaders to participate in Trade Expo in Indonesia

ISLAMABAD (APP): The business leaders of Balochistan on Thursday decided to participate in the "Trade Exhibition in Jakarta, Indonesia in October this year, to promote bilateral economic ties between Pakistan and Indonesia.

A delegation of the industrialists and business leaders of Balochistan, led by former president Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Engr. Daroo Khan Achakzai, had a meeting with Charge d'Affaires of the embassy of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusumahas.

The delegation include President Chaman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Oluş Yar Khan, President Zhoob Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Asfandyar and Business leader, Haji Jamaluddin.

They invited Charge d'Affaires Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma to visit Balochistan and promote bilateral economic and trade ties between Pakistan and Indonesia. Councilor, economic and trade affairs of the Indonesian Embassy, Axelsyah R. Miraza from the economic section of embassy and economic team was also part of the bilateral dialogue.



BEIJING: Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue and Sardar Awaish Ahmad Khan Laghari, Minister for Energy (Power Division) in a bilateral meeting with Chinese Minister of Finance Lan Fo'an.

Jam Kamal hails landmark partnership to combat hepatitis in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday hailed landmark collaboration between two innovative bodies to combat hepatitis in Pakistan by 2030.

This collaboration aligns with the government's vision of eliminating hepatitis by 2030 and heralds a new era of advanced medical technology and innovative healthcare solutions in Pakistan, said a press release issued here.

The minister termed the newly announced partnership between Lab Diagnostic Systems (LDS) and Hangzhou AICHEK Medical Technology Co. Ltd. as a progressive initiative that

sets Pakistan on the road to self-sufficiency.

He emphasized that such collaborative efforts will not only strengthen the deep-rooted ties between China and Pakistan but also significantly improve the healthcare system through self-reliance.

This partnership with AICHEK Medical Technology is set to bring groundbreaking innovations in In-Vitro Diagnostics (IVD) and biomedical reagents to Pakistan. AICHEK, renowned for its comprehensive IVD product solutions, will work closely with LDS to enhance the local healthcare infrastructure and ensure the availability of cutting-edge medical technologies.



Secretary General ECO, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Islamabad.

CM expresses satisfaction over successful operation of security forces in Hoshab

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed satisfaction over the successful operation of security forces in Hoshab area.

In an official statement issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister appreciated the key role and great sacrifices of the security institutions for maintaining law and order in Balochistan.

He said that recovery of huge quantity of arms

and ammunition in the successful targeted operation is an important success of the security forces.

The Chief Minister said that the people of Balochistan are always standing by their security institutions.

He vowed that we would continue to raise morale of the security institutions with our national spirit.

Besides, the terrorists would also be chased till the end, the Chief Minister maintained.

Rana Sanaulah pledges collaboration on sports with commonwealth nations

PARIS (APP): The Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs, Rana Sanaulah Khan Thursday stressed Pakistan's dedication to harnessing the power of sports to build a more inclusive and resilient society and looked forward to collaborating with fellow Commonwealth nations to share best practices, drive progress towards shared goals, and inspire a new generation of athletes and leaders.

In his remarks at the 11th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Conference in Paris, he expressed pride in sharing Pakistan's full commitment to the theme "Building Inclusive and Resilient Societies through Sports".

The adviser, with the status of federal minister has stated that the events of 11th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in Paris highlights the power of sports to unite, inspire, and drive positive change in our societies.

He said the government has declared 2025 as the year of sports revival in Pakistan, with a dedication to promoting sports as a catalyst for social change. The Prime Minister's Youth Programme was driving this initiative by ensuring full participation and harnessing the full potential of Pakistan's youth.

In Pakistan, he said significant strides have been taken to ensure good governance and human rights.

FM meets Secretary General ECO

ISLAMABAD (Online): Secretary General ECO, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 25 July 2024.

The outgoing Secretary General apprised the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister about ECO's initiatives and activities as well as his reforms agenda to revitalize ECO during his tenure.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister appreciated the Secretary General's services for the organization. He reaffirmed Pakistan's full support in enhancing intra-regional trade among ECO member countries and ECO reforms agenda. Noting that former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Dr. Asad Majeed Khan will take up the mantle of ECO Secretary General in August, the Deputy Prime Minister expressed the hope that Dr. Khan would continue the good work done.

Section 144 imposed across Punjab, I'bad ahead of PTI's protest

LAHORE (INP): The Punjab Home Department has imposed Section 144 across the province and Islamabad, banning public gatherings and rallies for three days.

According to the notification, issued on Thursday, section 144 will be in effect from Friday, July 26 to Sunday, July 28.

The ban has been imposed to maintain law and order and to prevent any potential terrorist threats.

The notification stated that the administration will ensure the implementation of the order across Punjab and Islamabad.

The imposition of Section 144 prohibits gatherings of five or more people, and any violation of the order can lead to legal action.

Lasbela admin takes action to prevent flooding in river, canals

LASBELA (APP): The Lasbela district administration has swiftly taken action to prevent potential flooding in the Narg River, on Thursday.

According to DC Office, on the instructions from Deputy Commissioner Humira Baloch, immediate measures were implemented to stop the erosion of flood rails in the Narg River that threatened to overflow into the Khedinka Dhora channel.

Under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Bela Ali Shah Abbasi, a bulldozer was deployed to the site to reinforce the flood rails and prevent further erosion.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment, Abdul Aleem Khan chaired a high-level meeting of the National Highway Authority.

IPPs getting billions of rupees without producing electricity in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): A debate blaming the exorbitant electricity prices on expensive power purchase agreements with IPPs has been raging for the past couple of weeks.

The worst agreements made with power plants have resulted in Independent Power Producers (IPPs) receiving capacity payments, which are entirely borne by the poor citizens. In this regard, a detailed report was presented in a private TV channel says that there are five most expensive IPPs in Pakistan which are listed below.

Roush Power Plant: Established in 1999 for a duration of 30 years, it provides electricity at the rate of 745 PKR per unit.

China Power Hub: The plant is producing electricity at Rs350 per unit.

Port Qasim Electric: Provides electricity at 177 PKR per unit.

Saba Power Plant: Also established in 1999 for 30 years, producing electricity at 117 PKR per unit.

Pakgen Power Plant: Produces electricity at the rate of 95 PKR per unit.

What is a Capacity Payment? Capacity payment refers to the payment made monthly by consumers to the power-producing company to maintain its capacity to generate electricity.



QUETTA: Peoples Party (PPP) Balochistan President, Changaiz Khan Jamali along with Rozi Khan Kakar, General Secretary and others addressing a press conference, in Quetta.

Ceremony held in connection with World Population Day in Loralai

QUETTA (APP): A function was held in connection with World Population Day at Municipal Committee Loralai on Thursday.

Addressing at the ceremony, the chief guest Afzal Khan Umankhail said that after stopping the rampant increase in population through family planning, it would be possible to provide education, health and other basic necessities of life by using the limited resources in a better way.

Other participants included MS Teaching Hospital Loralai, PPHI Officer MND Officer Akhtar Muhammad Assistant Director Municipal Committee Amanullah Utmanakhail District Population Officer Zakaria, Khan Mandukhail Incharge RHS Dr. Nasreen Gul. Ms. Dr. Nigat of the Health Department expressed their opinions. The speakers said that various economic, social, educational and health problems were being faced due to increasing population.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for Independence Day celebrations