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QUETTA: President National Party Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti.

Imran ready to tender conditional apology over May 9 mayhem

PTI founder's apology linked to alleged involvement of his party protesters that can be ascertained via CCTV footage

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: Imran Khan, the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has offered a conditional apology for the widespread protests and violence that occurred on May 9, 2023.

He called for the release of CCTV footage to verify the involvement of PTI members in the incidents.

"If any PTI members are found guilty of participating in the events of May 9, I will apologise, expel them from the party, and ensure they face punishment," Imran stated during an informal conversation with journalists.

He emphasised that accountability must be applied universally, questioning why only the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) is held in high regard.

"I was dragged by the Rangers, yet there seems to be no respect for Pakistan's most popular figure, both nationally and internationally. Don't I deserve an apology as well?" he remarked, referring to his own treatment during the protests.

The statement reflects ongoing tensions between the PTI and state authorities, as the PTI founder continues to challenge the official narrative surrounding the May 9 incidents.

The call for transparency and accountability is expected to stir further political debate in Pakistan.

Earlier, Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, Director-General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), reaffirmed the military's unwavering stance on the violent protests of May 9.

He reiterated that those involved in the riots must be held accountable.

President emphasizes upon discouraging fake news, disinformation

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday underlined the need for discouraging the spread of fake news and disinformation by promoting a culture of fact-checking and verifying information.

He said the media should uphold the highest standards of journalism and play its role in promoting tolerance, unity and ethical values in the society.

The president expressed these views while talking to Chairman Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) Muhammad Saleem who called on him and presented PEMRA Report 2021-23, at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Talking to chairman PEMRA, the president said that modern communication technologies had opened up new challenges and the media was required to play a responsible and constructive role in shaping the public opinion.

A code of conduct regarding the spread of misinformation and propaganda should be observed, he further stressed.

President Zardari also stressed upon the need of improving capacity of PEMRA by adopting modern tools and technologies and building a pool of talented human resources.

He opined that the media should also raise awareness about socio-economic issues, besides promoting a soft image of the country.

The chairman PEMRA briefed the president about the role and performance of PEMRA in the regulation and development of the media landscape of the country.

The president affirmed his support to further strengthen PEMRA.

PM Shahbaz reaffirms focus on Balochistan's progress, welfare

Chagai Mineral Corridor being developed to maximize the use of Balochistan's mineral reserves; A railway line would be constructed from Chagai to Gwadar to facilitate access to the mineral reserves of Chagai and surrounding areas for Gwadar port

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated on Wednesday that the development and prosperity of the people of Balochistan was a key priority for the incumbent government.

In a meeting with former Senate Chairman and Balochistan Assembly Member Sadiq Sanjrani, the prime minister discussed various issues related to the Balochistan province.

The prime minister announced that the Chagai Mineral Corridor was being developed to maximize the use of Balochistan's mineral reserves, and several additional projects were under consideration for the corridor, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

A railway line would be constructed from Chagai to Gwadar to facilitate access to the mineral reserves of Chagai and surrounding areas for Gwadar port. Additionally, a grid station was being established in Chagai to enhance the electricity supply system, and measures were being taken to ensure a continuous water supply in the area, said the prime minister.

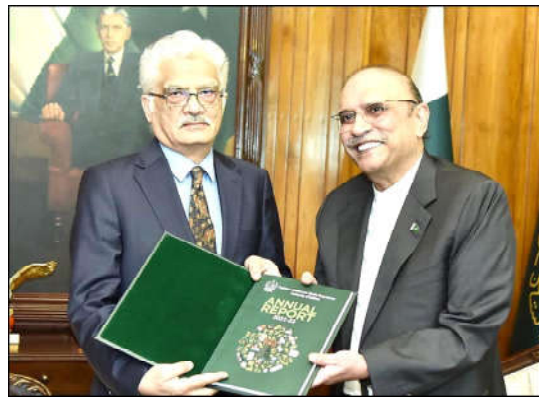
Sanjrani updated the prime minister on the Nokkundi Master Plan strategy for the development of Nokkundi city.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the federal government had allocated a historic development budget in the current fiscal year, for the promotion of Information Technology and Telecom sectors.

He said the incumbent government was prioritizing steps for increasing country's IT export.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a four-member delegation of GSM Association, led by its Asia Pacific head Julian Gorman, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for IT and Telecom Shaza Khawaja Fatima, Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority Major General (retired) Hafeezur Rehman and other relevant senior officials.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) Muhammad Saleem, presented PEMRA Report 2021-23 to President Asif Ali Zardari, at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Dr. Malik meets CM Balochistan to discuss provincial situation

QUETTA: Former Chief Minister of Balochistan and National Party leader Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch met with Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti to discuss the current situation in the province. Dr. Malik emphasized the need for peaceful resolution of issues through dialogue and negotiations with the Baloch Unity Committee's sit-in and protesters.



ISLAMABAD: Former Chairman Senate and Member of Balochistan Assembly Sadiq Sanjrani calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

People sitting abroad in name of "Azad Balochistan" have nothing to do with rights of Balochistan: Zia

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has categorically stated that the people who are sitting abroad on the name of "Azad Balochistan" have nothing to do with rights of the province.

In an official statement issued here on Wednesday, the Provincial Minister Home said that the people living in Europe for supporting the foreign agenda are playing the fire and blood bath in the province.

Mir Ziaullah Langove said that some so-called Baloch leaders are leading prosperous life together with their children after getting the European citizenship.

He said that our people are being enticed through social media while sitting abroad. These so-called leaders should face the circumstances after coming to Balochistan instead of using social media "X".

He asked these people not to make attempt to spoil the circumstances of the province, who are otherwise leading life full of enjoyment.

The Provincial Minister stressed that the people of Balochistan have to make decision not that they would not be misguided by those living in Europe.

He said that those appeasing the enemy countries have nothing to do with the development and prosperity of the country especially Balochistan.

He pointed out that the innocent people of Balochistan are being provoked on lawlessness through false propaganda on social media.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani and Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran cutting cake during a ceremony in connection with Independence Day at Children Academy.

Raheela emphasizes importance of freedom

Independent Report
QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani highlighted the significance of appreciating freedom and remembering the sacrifices made to achieve it. Speaking at a ceremony organized by the Children's Academy Trust Quetta to mark Independence Day, she emphasized that the creation of Pakistan was not only in the name of Kalma but also involved Allah's will.

Minister Durrani expressed her delight at the students' awareness of the history of independence and the sacrifices made to achieve it. She reminded them that entire villages and families were destroyed, and trains full of corpses were received. Innocent children were brutally martyred in front of their parents, and parents were martyred in front of their children.

The ceremony was attended by special guests, including Director General of Public Relations Muhammad Noor Khetran, Vice Chairman of Children's Academy Mohammad Asif, Secretary General Abdul Ghaffar Langah, and a large number of students and teachers from various schools. Minister Durrani's speech emphasized the need to value freedom and remember the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for it, as well as their families.



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehri briefing Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail during his visit to Bolan University of Medical & Health Sciences.

Governor visits Bolan University of Medical & Health Sciences, maintains: New history to be written by producing around 2,000 medical experts annually from 1st Medical University of province

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that introducing BS programmes in nursing, medical laboratory, dental and surgery and other sectors by the first Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences (BUMHS) is a revolutionary initiative.

He said that new history would be written by producing around 2,000 medical experts annually from first Medical University of Balochistan.

He said that we would be able soon to produce thousands of medical experts and community health organizations in the health sector at the national level.

He said that the success of BS programmes is a proof of the resolve of the educational standard, most modern facilities and experienced medical faculty of the BUMHS. The Governor was speaking on occasion of the visit to BUMHS here on Wednesday.

Also present on the occasion were the Vice Chancellor of BUMHS, Professor Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehri and Principal Secretary to Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai.

The Governor was briefed about the overall performance and future course of action of the Medical University.

He said that a visionary administrator or politician can provide strong base to any higher educational institution through the vision compatible with the vast and modern requirements.

Then these institutions promote preventive methods, creative capabilities and critical thinking, he mentioned adding that the good institutions put positive impacts on the overall healthcare system.

Discussions with JI leaders remained fruitful: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar says the discussions with Jamaat-e-Islami have been fruitful with several issues being resolved in writing.

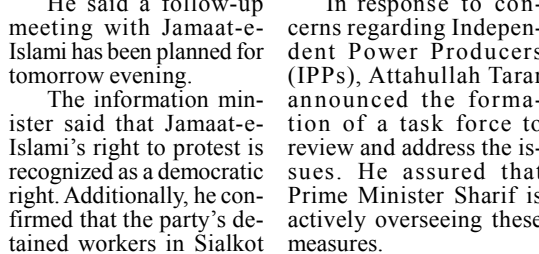
While briefing the media persons on recent discussions with Jamaat-e-Islami in Rawalpindi tonight, he said demands of Jamaat-e-Islami are aligned with the government's agenda.

He said a follow-up meeting with Jamaat-e-Islami has been planned for tomorrow evening.

The information minister said that Jamaat-e-Islami's right to protest is recognized as a democratic right. Additionally, he confirmed that the party's detained workers in Sialkot have been released.

Highlighting the positive outcomes and progress made during the negotiation, the Minister emphasized that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is committed to reducing electricity prices, with a significant subsidy of 50 billion rupees provided to consumers using up to 200 units of electricity for the months of June, July, and August.

In response to concerns regarding Independent Power Producers (IPPs), Attahullah Tarar announced the formation of a task force to review and address the issues. He assured that Prime Minister Sharif is actively overseeing these measures.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presenting shield to Base Commander PAF Quetta Air Commodore Shahid Afzaal.



QUETTA: At least 15 persons died while 33 injured in different mishaps during the monsoon rains hit various parts of Balochistan. This was disclosed in an official report shared by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) the other day.

15 die, 33 injured in rain related mishaps during last two months in Balochistan, reports PDMA

Independent Report
QUETTA: At least 15 persons died while 33 injured in different mishaps during the monsoon rains hit various parts of Balochistan. This was disclosed in an official report shared by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) the other day.

According to the report, two deaths each were reported from Dera Bugti, Khuzdar, Barkhan, Loralai with 25 injured only in Dera Bugti since June 7, 2024. One death each has also been reported from Kechhi, Kech, Musakhail. As per the report, in all 93 houses were completed damaged while 180 were partially damaged during the rains.

The torrential rains also caused damages to the standing crops cultivated on 372 acres in different parts of the province.

Besides, 36 kilometer length roads were also affected due to the heavy rains and flashflood in different areas. In addition to this, four bridges were also partially damaged during the rains.

Meanwhile, the PDMA report suggested that 82 cattle were also perished due to the lightning in Lasbela district.

Imran Khan visits Media Academy, gets briefing on issues: Serious steps to be taken for resolving issues of media persons, assures Secretary Information

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Secretary Information Department, Imran Khan has stated that it is included in the priorities of government to make the means of communication compatible with the requirements of present era. He assured that serious steps would be taken to resolve the issues being faced by the media persons in province.

The Secretary Information was speaking on occasion of the visit to Media Academy here on Wednesday. The Director General Public Relations Balochistan, Muhammad Noor Khetran was also accompanied the Secretary Information.

The President Quetta Press Club, Abdul Khaliq Rind and office bearers of the cabinet welcomed them.

The President of Quetta Press Club briefed them about the Quetta Press Club, Media Academy, classes and other sections. He also informed the Secretary Information about functioning of the Media Academy and the future projects.

The Secretary Information gave patient hearing to the issues associated with the Press Club and newspaper industry.



QUETTA: Secretary Information Imran Khan and Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran visiting studio during their visit to Media Academy.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Another overture

Along with criticising India for its flawed approach in held Kashmir to mark Youm-i-Istehsal on Monday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif used the occasion to make a fresh peace overture to New Delhi.

Aug 5 marks the date in 2019 when India revoked held Kashmir's special constitutional status, in effect annexing the territory despite its disputed status as per international consensus. The prime minister observed that a peaceful solution was required to settle the Kashmir question, while adding that "durable peace in South Asia" depended on the resolution of this 77-year-old dispute. Of course, settling the Kashmir issue at the negotiating table — with the participation of Pakistan, India and the Kashmiris — could set in motion the process of normalisation in the subcontinent, but only if New Delhi is interested in pursuing peace.

Unfortunately, there has been little indication that India is ready to mend fences with Pakistan. Instead, along with earlier lukewarm felicitations exchanged by both sides, India has been increasingly using the overplayed 'terrorism' card to stall any chances of dialogue with Pakistan. Last month, while attending an event to mark the Kargil conflict, Indian PM Narendra Modi used inflammatory language targeted at this country, accusing Pakistan of fomenting unrest in the region through proxy groups. If India continues to use such language, peace in the region will remain a remote possibility. But Mr Sharif has done the right thing by continuing to invite India to talk out all outstanding issues. India should take up this offer for an improved geopolitical atmosphere in the subcontinent.

While the resumption of direct peace talks anytime soon is unlikely, both states can start with confidence-building measures. For example, the respective high commissioners have been absent from both capitals since 2019, which is unprecedented during peacetime. Restoring both missions to their full diplomatic strength can be a starting point for rebuilding better ties. Moreover, backchannel dialogue can be initiated, even if the current focus of this engagement is 'talks about talks'.

Pakistan is due to host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Heads of Government meeting in October. India is also part of this multilateral body and should send a high-level delegation to the event. The point is that engagement is the only way that mistrust between Islamabad and Delhi can be overcome. India keeps playing the same tune, harping on about 'terrorism', but Pakistan also has significant evidence linking India to malign activities on its soil.

Therefore, both states can remain locked in this perpetual cycle of blame and retribution, or turn a new leaf and look to the future. While Mr Modi's ideological comrades in the Sangh will scowl at the very thought of peace with Pakistan, the Indian leadership should rise above parochialism and accept Islamabad's dialogue offer.

Diplomacy deficit

Mahir Ali

Paeans to Joe Biden's diplomatic skills have been flowing since the fruition of a prisoner exchange between Russia and the West. The deal apparently took years to negotiate.

From a Western point of view, the consequences are commendable. It's easy to accept that the American journalist, a few other Westerners, and the small bunch of Russian dissidents who were liberated ought never to have been incarcerated.

But where do those diplomatic skills vanish when it comes to negotiating an end to the war of attrition between Russia and Ukraine? Sure, Vladimir Putin is the culprit insofar as he launched the war, and one could argue endlessly about the extent of US/Nato/EU provocation. But the point is to end the hostilities, and in this context the US has served more as a hindrance than a facilitator.

Its role in the Middle East follows an equally naked trajectory of near blind support for Israel and its actions, including assassinations, combined with blanket assurances of assistance to the Zionist regime. Israel's fatal attacks against Hamas' political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukur in Beirut came shortly after a genocidal maniac called Benjamin Netanyahu received 58 standing ovations during the Israeli prime minister's address to the US Congress. Netanyahu spouted a stream of nonsense, such as condemning American agitators against his genocide — many of them young Jews — as agents of Iran.

The US, meanwhile, has deployed more warships to coordinate Israel's 'defence' in the event of attacks from Iran, Lebanon or elsewhere.

This week, the US Central Command chief visited Israel to discuss "joint preparations", and the US defence secretary, according to the Pentagon, "has ordered adjustments to US military posture designed to... increase support for the defence of Israel".

It is precisely this kind of American posturing that condemns the world to endless strife while contributing to the coffers of the military-industrial complex. Israel has for ages demonstrated its proficiency as the most effective terrorist state anywhere on earth, yet has never featured on any list of sponsors of terrorism. Israel's crimes against humanity have stood out since 1948, yet it has got an easy pass from the self-ordained upholders of the global conscience, thanks in part to the abhorrent atrocities perpetrated against European Jews by the Nazi state.

There have been echoes of Nazism ever since, not least in Bangladesh in the run-up to its independence in 1971. Hasina Wajed's flight to India on Monday was a dramatic and welcome denouement, but it does not clarify what the future holds. It's not hard to justify the uprising against her authoritarian misrule, but reports of concomitant atrocities against Hindu communities are alarming, and the future of the Rohingya refugees from neighbouring Myanmar, that Bangladesh has reluctantly accommodated, rests in the balance.

Sudan's predicament is even worse. Unlike Bangladesh, it faces a repeat of both the Darfur genocide a couple of decades ago and the famine of 1984. A conflict between the Sudanese armed forces and the Rapid Support Forces — an outgrowth of the Janjaweed militia that terrorised Darfur — followed a falling out between the gen-

erals who aborted their nation's drift towards democracy after the toppling of Omar al-Bashir in 2019.

That was a welcome development, but Sudan's descent into a deadly crisis should serve as a warning to Bangladesh — just as the Awami League's premature jubilation after the January elections should remind Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro that manipulation may not pay off, and that his threat to 'pulverise' his opponents on the streets (who include many former Chavistas) might seriously backfire. It is incredibly dumb for the US to recognise Maduro's opponent as the legitimate president, especially since this kind of absurdity came a cropper just a few years ago. But if Maduro is truly a disciple of Hugo Chávez, he should recognise that his time is up.

Far away in the UK, Keir Starmer has almost echoed Maduro in his threats against the 'far-right thugs' who have wreaked havoc across cities in England in the wake of the horrific attack on young girls in Southport. It was an outrage, but one that involved neither an 'illegal immigrant' nor a Muslim. That did not deter fascist elements from unleashing violence against libraries, mosques and asylum-seeker hotels. The law-and-order response from the new Labour government might stifle the symptoms, but appears to ignore its causes.

Almost a century ago, Antonio Gramsci announced from an Italian prison something along the lines of 'the old world is dying and the new world struggles to be born: now is the time of monsters'. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris shake hands with the monsters. Donald Trump is determined to be one himself. -- Courtesy Dawn

Eco-anxiety truths

Muhammad Hassan Dajana

Climate anxiety plagues minds and hearts globally, creating a silent, inner storm. The constant stream of news about approaching climate catastrophes fuels emotional turmoil. Questions — "what will happen to the world?", "how can we stop environmental degradation?" — haunt us but remain unanswered. Climate anxiety is a genuine and increasingly pervasive problem that impacts us at multiple levels.

According to psychologist Melanie Klein's paradigm, climate anxiety has two forms: first, depressive anxiety, involving loss, regret and dependency controlled by neurotic defences, and second, paranoid-schizoanalytic anxiety, involving persecution and feelings of annihilation, fought by denial, projection and splitting.

Individuals often distance themselves from impending news either by emotionally shutting down or becoming engrossed in tasks to ignore broader societal contexts — responses can lead to demotivation, disengagement and subpar performance, accompanied by sadness and frustration. This turmoil intersects with mental health issues: depression, panic attacks and PTSD. Affective neuroscience highlights how fear of external threat and loss precipitates climate anxiety, evoking reactions similar to those experienced during the pandemic.

Climate anxiety affects individuals across demographics. Some time back, a global survey in The Lancet of 10,000 young people aged 16 to 25 years in 10 countries, revealed alarming figures: 59 per cent expressed extreme worry about climate change accompanied by sadness, anxiety and powerlessness, and over

45pc said it impacted daily life and had raised existential questions about a warming planet.

Additionally, "extreme and slow-moving" weather events contribute to intimate partner violence, substance abuse and suicidal tendencies. Displacement, infrastructural breakdown, food insecurity and unemployment exacerbate mental health challenges. Vulnerable populations, including women and those with pre-existing mental illnesses, are particularly impacted.

In the US, around 10pc experience climate anxiety, 9pc feel uncontrollable worry, and 7pc report diminished pleasure due to global warming. Worry has steadily risen over the past two decades, with 27pc expressing significant concern.

According to Yale Sustainability 2023, the number of worried individuals has tripled in six years, highlighting a growing awareness of the issue.

To understand the gravity of climate anxiety, we need to engage in conversations, listen to the quiver in voices, notice furrowed brows, and recognise that this emotional turmoil matters. Certain coping strategies are recommended:

a) Mindful breathing: deep breathing anchors one in the moment. The world may be at a difficult point but we cannot be productive if we are unhealthy.

b) Purposeful action: channel anxiety by reducing personal carbon emissions and supporting eco-friendly initiatives with environmental groups.

c) Support network: climate anxiety can be isolating. Communicating with friends, colleagues and others provides relief, sparks innovation and bolsters the commitment to make a difference.

d) Self-care: mental and emotional health is essential. Engage in stress-reducing activities, such as exercise, meditation and making time for nature.

e) Activism: join environmental organisations to support initiatives, donate to environmental causes and volunteer for habitat restoration.

f) Information: it is important to know about climate change with an understanding of science, policies and solutions for effective climate action.

g) Build resilience: strengthen coping mechanisms and skills to navigate stress. Resilience aids productive engagement and mitigates climate anxiety.

h) Limit online time: set a schedule for news consumption and avoid pseudo-fulfilment on social media.

i) Focus on the present: acknowledge future uncertainties and concentrate on actionable steps. Emphasise immediate actions and well-being over existential concerns.

While individual actions matter, systemic change is crucial to addressing climate change. Governments and politicians must develop laws and policies to mitigate the crisis. By supporting sustainable energy programmes, advocating for climate policies and holding officials accountable, we can make a greater impact.

Collaborating on individual and systemic levels is essential to combating climate change, alleviating anxiety and building a sustainable future.

This is vital not only for environmental sustainability but also for the protection of community mental health and resilience worldwide. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Agri scientists, policy makers urged for actively contributing in sector development

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, on Wednesday urged agricultural scientists and policymakers to actively contribute to the improvement of the local agriculture sector to ensure food safety and security in the country.

Speaking at the inauguration of the seed potato complex and the International Symposium on Seed Potato Production and Supply Chain, the minister highlighted that despite Pakistan's agricultural economy, the country continues to import food items.

The event was organized by the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) in collaboration with the Korean Program on International Agriculture (KOPIA). Its goal is to produce virus-free seed potatoes to enhance local crop yields and generate an exportable surplus.

The ceremony was attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, senior officials from PARC, NARC, KOPIA, as well as representatives from national and international organizations, development partners, agricultural scientists, experts, private sector

organizations, NGOs, and progressive farmers from across the country.

During his address, the minister emphasized the importance of fostering public-private partnerships to advance agricultural research and ensure its effective dissemination to farmers. This, he stated, is crucial for increasing per-acre yields of all major and minor crops to meet domestic needs.

The minister noted that potatoes are a significant cash crop in the country and the third-largest food crop, cultivated over 837,669 acres in various seasons and regions.



Federal Ministers, MNFS&R Rana Tanveer Hussain, Korean Ambassador to Pakistan, Park Ki Jun, Dr. Kwak Do-Yeon, DG NICS/RDA Korea, Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Dr. Cho Gyoung-Rae, Director KOPIA-Pakistan inaugurating Aeroponic Green Houses for seed production at NARC Islamabad.

Govt committed to Digital Pakistan Vision: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja Wednesday said that the present government is committed for the fulfillment of Digital Pakistan vision.

On the directives of the Prime Minister, Ministry of IT & Telecom is taking steps for digital transformation in the country, she said this while delivering keynote address at Digital Nation Summit organised by GSMA in collaboration with Ministry of IT & Telecom.

She also emphasised the need of ending digital

divide between rural and urban areas of the country.

Shaza Fatima said that under Prime Minister's vision of digitalization, the economy, governance and society are being digitalised.

She said that Telecom industry has important role in country's economic uplift.

She said that effective steps are being taken for boosting Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the country.

The Minister said that remarkable progress have been achieved with over 80 percent teledensity

and over 190 million subscribers. "Our broadband customers continue to grow", she added.

She said that the government is working on National IT Policy focused on ease of doing business and tax breaks to accelerate economic activity in this sector. She said that Pakistan's IT Exports saw record surge as it reached 3.223 billion dollars during FY 2023-24.

She said that there were great opportunities for youth in IT sector, as government is focused upon equipping youth with latest digital skills.

Tax deptt partners with ICT admin for market worker registration

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Income Tax Department is expanding its efforts to register all market workers in the Federal Capital, aiming to increase the tax net with support from the district administration. In a recent meeting with the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, officials from the Income Tax Department outlined plans to include all market workers

in the tax system, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration. This initiative seeks to bring a broader range of individuals, including street vendors and those selling vegetables and fruits, under the tax umbrella. The department emphasized the need for collaboration with the district administration to ensure the success of this effort.

SMBR visits Revenue Tower in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Punjab Nabeel Javed paid a surprise visit to under-construction four-story Revenue Tower at Farid Court House on Wednesday to review the construction work. He said during his visit there would be no compromise on quality of material used in the new tower and issued orders for swift completion of the building's decoration and renovation.

FM highlights initiatives to enhance economic growth, stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday again highlighted the initiatives aimed at enhancing economic stability and promoting long-term growth.

In a meeting with Ambassador of Finland to Pakistan, Hannu Ripatti, who called on him, the minister shared updates on Pakistan's economic performance, highlighting rise in tax collection, increased remittances, and foreign exchange reserves exceeding USD 9 billion.

He emphasized the positive evaluation from international credit rating

agencies, which reflect the stability of Pakistan's economic environment, according to press release issued by Finance Ministry. The Minister also discussed the successful conclusion of the 9-month Standby Agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the recently finalized staff-level agreement for a 37-month IMF programme. Additionally, the Minister outlined ongoing initiatives, including end-to-end digitization in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to broaden the tax base, reforms in the energy sector, restructuring of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and focus on export-led growth.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressing Digital Nation Summit.

Jazz xlr8 partners with GSMA innovation fund to support high-potential startups

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jazz Pakistan's leading digital operator, through its startup accelerator program 'xlr8', has partnered with the GSMA Innovation Fund to identify and support high-potential startups, especially in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), health, education, entertainment, and digital lifestyle. This strategic collaboration aims to foster innovation and stimulate large-scale socio-economic and environmental impact said a news release. Under the partnership, Jazz's xlr8 program will support the

GSMA Innovation Fund startups by providing Jazz expertise in digital platforms which are based on building and launching Pakistan's largest homegrown apps like SIMOSA and Tamasha, access to Jazz's 71 million users based on intelligent segmentation, specialized mentoring from Jazz domain experts, extensive digital growth & data analytics and platform architecture expertise. Additionally, Jazz will offer technology development, B2B support, and access to 9 million farmers and 18 million SIMOSA app users.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb was called on by the Ambassador of Finland to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Hannu Ripatti.

PTA, NCSW, GSMA host workshop on bridging mobile gender gap

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) and Global System for Mobile Communication (GSMA) Action Collation for bridging the digital divide organized a one-day workshop titled "Bridging the Mobile Gender Gap".

The workshop featured participation from representatives of the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom, Ministry of Federal Education &

Professional Training, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Defense, Universal Services Fund, Ministry of Human Rights and other government and private entities said a news release issued here on Wednesday.

The workshop aimed to address the digital gender divide in Pakistan by bringing together government and civil society stakeholders to improve gender in ICTs.

Gold rates dip by Rs. 500 per tola to Rs.255,500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased further by Rs.500 and was sold at Rs.255,500 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs. 256,000 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.429 to Rs.219,050 from Rs. 219,479 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.200,795 from Rs. 201,189, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was report at the port where three ships, Saehan Jasper, Ginga Liger and Maran Gas Asclepius carrying Palm oil, Chemicals and LNG, berthed at Liquid Terminals, Engro Vopak and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on Tuesday. A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours.

Murad, WB team discuss projects of \$3.4bn, set timeline to expedite work

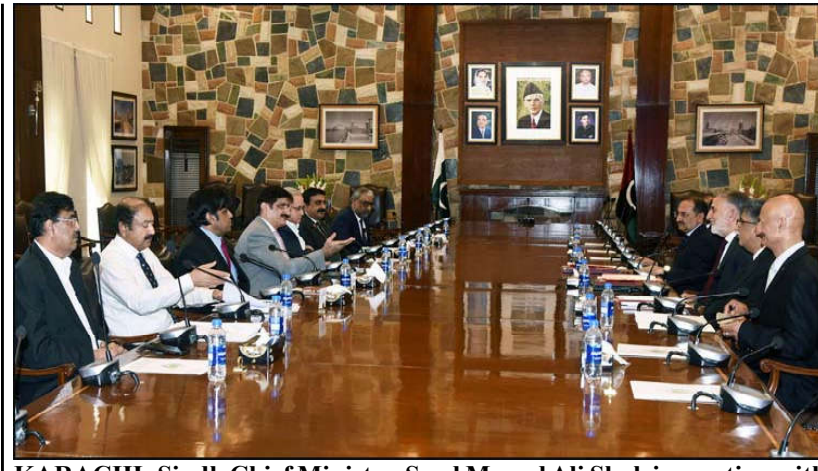
KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and the World Bank high power team led by the Country Director Najib Benhassine reviewed the overall progress of World Bank-assisted 14 projects of \$3.4 billion and agreed to remove the bottleneck that exists and speed up the slow pace projects for their timely completion.

The review meeting was held at the CM House on Wednesday morning and was attended by Provincial Ministers Sharjeel Memon, Dr Azra Fazal, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Sardar Shah, Jam Khan Shoro, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Chairman P&D Najam Shah and provincial secretaries and project director of the world bank-assisted projects. The World Bank team comprised Kamran Akbar, Murtaza Noorani, Omar Riaz, Waleed Anwar, Uzma Sadaf, and others.

The Karachi Mobility Project (KMP) aims to enhance mobility, accessibility, and safety along selected corridors in the city. It comprises the construction of two bridges (Jam Sadiq Bridges) for Yellow Line BRT corridors, the development and operation of the BRT Yellow Line System, and capacity building and technical assistance for the project.

Progress regarding the Jam Sadiq bridges, it was reported in the meeting that the concept design was finalized on August 6, mobilization has been completed, the test pile was cast on July 7, and load tests are scheduled to be conducted on August 12.

As far as the development and operationalisation of a BRT system for Yellow Line, the meeting was told that Financial bids opened in April 2024. The WB issued the required consent and now Contract Signing is expected to be held next week. The Competitive and Livable City of Karachi (CLICK) project has been launched to improve urban management, service delivery and the business environment in the city and provide an immediate and effective response to an eligible crisis or emergency.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah in meeting with National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nazir Ahmed discuss the progress of ongoing inquiries and investigations within the province, at CM House in Karachi.

MoU signed between Istanbul, Lahore medical universities

LAHORE (APP): A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for cooperation between the medical universities of Istanbul and Lahore on Wednesday.

Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique signed the MoU on behalf of the University of Health Sciences (UHS) Lahore during a meeting with faculty members from both UHS Lahore and Istanbul University of Health Sciences, Turkiye, according to a handout issued here on Wednesday.

The meeting was chaired by Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique, who attended directly from Istanbul University of Health Sciences, Kemalitan Aydin, a well-known Turkish politician, also attended the meeting. During the event, the Vice-Chancellors of UHS Lahore and Istanbul University of Health Sciences briefed attendees on the educational facilities available at their respective institutions.

In his remarks, the health minister highlighted the close and fraternal relations between Pakistan and Turkiye, emphasizing the exemplary health system of Turkiye and the shared goals between the two countries. He mentioned the recent advancements in Punjab's healthcare system, including the launch of an air ambulance service and the establishment of the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer and Research Center in Lahore and the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cardiology in Sargodha.

Punjab governor announces cycles, kits for rally participants

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has announced new sports cycles and kits for the participants in the First Jashan-e-Azadi President Asif Ali Zardari Cycle Rally 2024.

Welcoming the cycle rally participants upon arrival at the Governor's House here on Wednesday, he warmly welcomed the cyclists and PPP workers from Kasur.

He said that the doors of the Governor's House were open to all and sundry, adding that the rally is a celebration of the 69th birthday of President Asif Ali Zardari.

The governor, accompanied by PPP leader Haji Azizur Rehman Chan, said the rally also marks the 77th Independence day of the country.

The First Jashan e Azadi President Asif Ali Zardari Cycle Rally started from city of the great Sufi poet Bullah Shah - Kasur and will culminate at Jinnah Sports Complex Islamabad on August 13 - a day before the 77th Independence Day of the country.



LAHORE: A group photo of Governor Punjab Sardar Malik Salim Haider with athletes of President Asif Ali Zardari Sports Cycle Rally at Governor House.



RAWALPINDI: Workers are busy in draining accumulated rain water after heavy rain at Imam Bara road area, in morning hours in the city.

2 children drown in rain drains

RAWALPINDI (APP): Flooding in drains due to heavy rain on Wednesday morning claimed two more lives. The incidents occurred in two different areas where search and rescue operations have been initiated by the District Emergency Service-Rescue 1122.

According to the details, an 8 year old child was crossing a floody street and slipped in deep water which swept him away, in Boston Khan Road. The CCTV footage shows two children trapped in water, trying to escape the heavy water flow.

Both the children tried to cross the water, during which one child drowned into the drain while the other survived.

In another tragic incident, a 5 year old girl drowned in an open drain near the Adyala Road area.

The spokesman Rescue 1122, Muhammad Usman informed APP that search and rescue operations were initiated in both areas immediately.

Kamran for contribution of all for progress and prosperity of nation

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday said that we must all play our part to promote the progress and prosperity of our nation.

In this endeavor, we need to hold each other's hands and move forward together," this he said while addressing a ceremony organized by the Noor Project.

The event was also attended by The Noor Project's founder Amjad Wattoo and honorary president Rear Admiral (retired) Faisal Shah. Governor Sindh

Kamran Khan Tessori further stated, "I am deeply impressed by the tireless efforts of the Noor Project team. Their welfare initiatives are commendable." He highlighted that his notification as Governor Sindh was issued on the blessed day of 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal, upon which he vowed to serve the people wholeheartedly.

"Alhamdulillah, today, fifty thousand young people are receiving IT training at the Governor House. These students are now capable of earning between \$300 to \$600 per month.

Two passengers killed in bus, truck collision in Bahawalpur

BHAWALPUR (APP): At least two innocent lives were lost and several others were left battered and bruised as the two vehicles crashed into each other with immense force at Jhangra Sharqi Interchange Bahawalpur on early Wednesday morning.

According to details, Rescue sources said that the accident occurred in Bahawalpur where a truck collided with a bus and took the lives of two people on the spot, a private news channel reported. The rescue sources said that truck caught fire right after the accident however the rescue team arrived on the spot of the incident.

Alhamra achieves milestone with Intl exhibition in Qatar

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Arts Council, Alhamra, has again demonstrated its dedication to elevating Pakistani art globally, marking a significant milestone in its ongoing endeavors.

The council's forthcoming participation in an international exhibition in Qatar exemplifies its commitment to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich cultural heritage internationally. During an essential meeting, organized by the National Heritage and Culture Division, all arrangements for Pakistan's representation at the exhibition were finalized, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

Alhamra's Executive Director, Sarah Rashid, played a pivotal role in this meeting, providing detailed insights and updates to the attendees.

In recognition of her leadership, the government has appointed Sarah Rashid as the focal person overseeing the preparations for the international exhibition.

Sarah Rashid expressed profound pride in Alhamra's role, stating, "It is a great honor for Alhamra to represent our nation on such a prestigious platform.

Minister says: Irrigation land to be retrieved from grabbers

MULTAN (APP): Provincial minister for Irrigation, Mian Kazim Ali Pirzada on Wednesday directed the officers concerned to submit detailed assessment report regarding grabbing and encroachments at irrigation land within next 15 days to make proper plan to retrieve the land.

Talking to media persons, the minister said that different initiatives were being taken by the provincial government to facilitate masses as per vision of the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. He said that the irrigation department paying special focus on the arrangements to prevent water theft. He lauded the officers concerned to ensuring equal distribution of water adding that after so many years the water reached to the farmers of tale of the canal.

International News

Israel kills 12 Palestinians in West Bank raids

Monitoring Desk
JENIN: Palestinian officials said Israeli forces killed 12 people in three separate raids in the northern West Bank on Tuesday, as violence in the occupied territory showed no sign of abating.

Five people were killed in the Jenin area and four in Aqaba town in Tubas district when Israeli forces carried out early-morning raids, the health ministry in Ramallah said.

The Israeli army said three people were killed and two arrested in another raid in the village of Kafr Qud, west of Jenin.

The Palestinian Red Crescent had earlier reported deaths and injuries "due to the occupation's shelling of two vehicles in the eastern neighbourhood of Jenin".

Aqaba residents said Israeli troops arrived at dawn and surrounded the house of Amid Ghanam, leading to clashes between troops and young Palestinians.

Ghanam and two others were killed in the clashes, while another teenager was killed near a hospital, Tubas governor Ahmed Assad told AFP.

"The army entered and surrounded the house as snipers took positions on nearby rooftops and shot anyone who moved," he said.

The teenager was shot when the troops "entered the area of the hospital", Assad said. Aqaba mayor Abdel Razaq Abu Arra said the teenager "was killed in cold blood". "This Zionist crime is a systematic crime that the Israelis carry out on a daily basis," he added.

Lebanon's group Hezbollah launched a series of drone and rocket attacks into northern Israel on Tuesday but warned that its much-anticipated retaliation for Israel's killing of a top commander last week was yet to come.

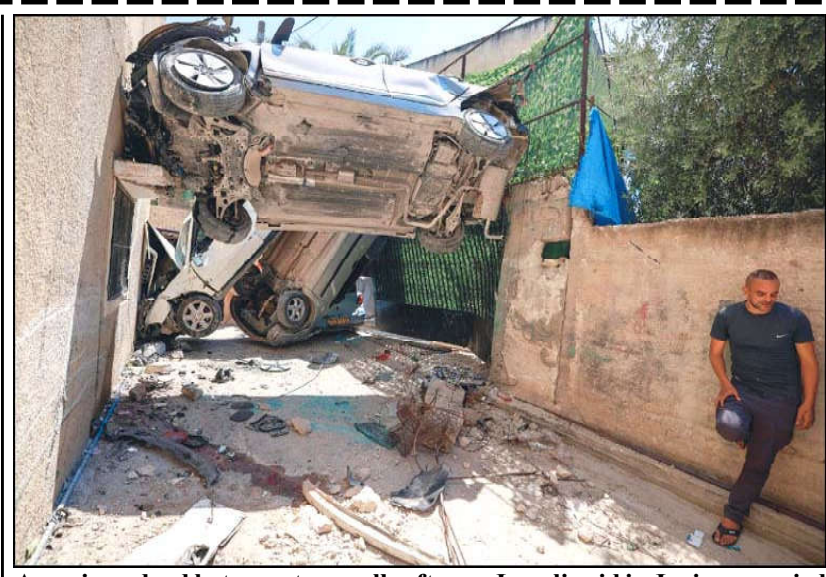
Hezbollah said it launched a swarm of attack drones at two military sites near Acre in northern Israel, and also attacked an Israeli military vehicle in another location.

The Israeli military said a number of hostile drones were identified crossing from Lebanon and one was intercepted.

Israeli medical officials said seven people were evacuated to hospital, to the south of the coastal city of Nahariya, one in critical condition.

The Israeli military said an initial investigation indicated the injuries were caused by an interceptor that "missed the target and hit the ground, injuring several civilians." It said the incident was still under review.

A Hezbollah source told Reuters that "the response to the assassination of commander Fuad Shukur has not yet come."



A car is wedged between two walls after an Israeli raid in Jenin, occupied West Bank.

Harris draws more support among Black voters, Trump up slightly among white voters

Monitoring Desk
GEORGIA: Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris is drawing more support from Black voters than President Joe Biden did when he was in the race this year, while Republican Donald Trump's support among white voters has risen somewhat in recent months, according to an analysis of Reuters/Ipsos polling.

The analysis, which examined more than 10,000 responses from seven nationwide Reuters/Ipsos polls conducted since May, points to significant strengths and vulnerabilities for Harris, the US vice president who took over Biden's campaign when the president dropped his re-election bid on July 21.

Some 70 per cent of Black voters polled in July picked Harris over Trump on a hypothetical ballot, up from 59pc who backed Biden in May and June.

Trump's share of the Black vote rose marginally to 12pc in July from 9pc in May and June.

Trump, meanwhile, is seeing increased support from white voters. Some 50pc picked Trump in July polls, up from 46pc in May and June. Harris had the support of 38pc of white voters in July, compared to 36pc in May and June.

The race remains essentially tied, with Harris and Trump each getting 43pc support in an aggregate of last month's polls. Biden and Trump each had 40pc in the polls conducted in the previous two months.

The analysis examined poll responses gathered throughout July on a hypothetical Harris-Trump contest and included responses from before Biden, 81, ended his bid.

Flurry of diplomacy to ease Mideast tensions as Israel awaits Iran attack

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Diplomatic pressure mounted on Monday (Aug 5) to avoid an escalation between Iran and Israel following high-profile killings that have sent regional tensions soaring, while numerous governments urged their citizens to leave Lebanon.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said late Sunday that his country was "determined to stand against" Iran and its allied armed groups "on all fronts". As its war against Iran-backed Hamas in Gaza nears its 11th month, Israel has been bracing for retaliation from the Tehran-aligned "axis of resistance" for the assassinations of two senior figures.

Palestinian armed group Hamas's political leader Ismail Haniyeh was killed in Tehran on Wednesday in an attack blamed on Israel, which has not directly commented on it. The killing came hours after an Israeli strike on Beirut left Hezbollah military chief Fuad Shukur dead.

Tehran said on Monday that "no one has the right to doubt Iran's legal right to punish the Zionist regime" for Haniyeh's killing. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told his counterparts from the G7 nations in a conference call on Sunday that any attack, which he expected to be a joint undertaking between Hezbollah and Iran, could happen within 24 to 48 hours, as early as Monday, US news site Axios reported. Blinken asked his counterparts to place diplomatic pressure on Tehran, Hezbollah and Israel to "maintain maximum restraint", it added.

Blinken warns Iran but also Israel not to 'escalate'

Monitoring Desk
ANNAPOLIS: Both Iran and Israel should avoid escalating conflict, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Tuesday, in his most direct wording toward US ally Israel on the Middle East's spiraling tensions.

"No one should escalate this conflict. We've been engaged in intense diplomacy with allies and partners, communicating that message directly to Iran. We communicated that message directly to Israel," Blinken told reporters.

Iran has vowed a response after Israel was suspected of killing Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

President Joe Biden has hinted at frustration with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the assassination, which came just as he hoped to make progress in talks to reach a ceasefire in the 10-month Gaza war.

"Our commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. We will continue to defend Israel against attacks from terrorist groups or their sponsors.

Hamas names Yahya Sinwar as Haniyeh's successor

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Hamas named its Gaza leader Yahya Sinwar as successor to former political chief Ismail Haniyeh, the group said on Tuesday. Analysts see the appointment as a move that reinforces the radical path pursued since the Oct 7 raid. Sinwar has been in hiding in Gaza, defying Israeli attempts to kill him since the start of the latest conflict.

"The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas announces the selection of commander Yahya Sinwar.

5 people killed in a helicopter crash in the mountains northwest of Nepal's capital

Monitoring Desk
KATHMANDU: All five people on board a helicopter were killed when it crashed Wednesday in the mountains just northwest of Nepal's capital, authorities said. The bodies of four men and a woman were pulled from the wreckage, said Krishna Prasad Humagai, the government administrator of Nuwakot district. Police and army rescuers reached the area and two rescue helicopters were also sent to assist in the operation, the official said. The crash site is in the Suryachaur area, which is just northwest of Kathmandu, and is on a mountain covered by forest. The helicopter had taken off from Kathmandu international airport at 1:54 p.m. local time and was heading towards the town of Syaprubeshi. The helicopter, an Eurocopter AS350 belonging to Nepal-based Air Dynasty, had lost contact with the tower just three minutes after takeoff, according to a statement from the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal.

Lebanon's Hezbollah launches drone attacks on Israel, says more to come

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's armed group Hezbollah launched a series of drone and rocket attacks into northern Israel on Tuesday (Aug 6) but warned that its much-anticipated retaliation for Israel's killing of a top commander last week was yet to come. Hezbollah said it launched a swarm of attack drones at two military sites near Acre in northern Israel, and also attacked an Israeli military vehicle in another location. The Israeli military said a number of hostile drones were identified crossing from Lebanon and one was intercepted. It said several civilians were injured to the south of the coastal city of Nahariya. Reuters TV footage showed one impact site near a bus stop on a main road outside the city.

In a statement, the Israeli military said sirens sounded around Acre, but that turned out to be a false alarm. It said its air force struck two Hezbollah facilities in south Lebanon.

Fears are rising that the Middle East could be tipped into full-blown war following vows by Hezbollah to avenge Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukur's killing, and by Iran to respond to the assassination in Tehran last week of the head of Palestinian militant group Hamas. A Hezbollah source told Reuters that "the response to the assassination of commander Fuad Shukur has not yet come". Earlier on Tuesday, four people were killed in a strike on a home in the Lebanese town of Mayfadoun, nearly 30km north of the border, medics and a security source said. Two additional security sources said those killed were Hezbollah fighters, but the group had not yet posted its usual death notices.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif planting a sapling to launch Monsoon Tree Plantation campaign.

Pakistani pilgrims to get major facility at entering Iraq: visa fees waived, special flights announced

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Iraqi Ambassador Hamid Abbas Lafta announced a slew of measures aimed at easing travel restrictions and enhancing convenience to facilitate Pakistani pilgrims traveling to Iraq for Arbaeen.

The landmark decisions were reached during a high-level meeting on Wednesday between the two sides who promised to make the journey smoother and more accessible for thousands of devotees.

Both sides agreed that Pakistani pilgrims traveling to Iraq for Arbaeen would no longer need to surrender their passports upon arrival.

The meeting decided that the Pakistani pilgrims would be issued visas by the Iraqi Embassy, bypassing travel agents and the quota for Pakistan pilgrims would be increased.

It was also decided that special flights would be operated from Pakistan for Pakistani pilgrims while a new consulate will be opened in Karachi and both sides initiate a crackdown on agents charging excessive fees from pilgrims. The meeting also decided Visa waiver agreement on diplomatic and official passports while it was requested for the visa fee waiver for the ordinary pilgrims.

provide equal facilities to Pakistani pilgrims, ensuring a hassle-free experience.

Mohsin Naqvi thanked the Iraqi counterparts for their cooperation, while Ambassador Lafta extended an invitation to visit Iraq.

In a swift follow-up, Naqvi secured approval from Federal Aviation Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif to allow Iraqi airlines to operate special flights, with Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) also set to announce its schedule soon. This development marks a significant improvement in travel arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims, promising a more convenient and accessible journey to Iraq.

The decisions aim to

Tarar says: Parliament converted a rule into law to stop floor crossing as envisaged in Constitution

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Wednesday the Parliament was a supreme institution and through the Election (Amendment) Act it had converted a rule into a law to stop floor crossing as envisaged in the Constitution.

Addressing a press conference here, he said that Bilal Azhar Kayani of Muslim League (Nawaz) had presented the Election Act Amendment Bill in the National Assembly whereas Senator Talal Chaudhry moved it in the Senate.

The minister said that the bill was passed by the National Assembly and the Senate by majority votes and became an act.

He maintained that the Constitution and law were clear regarding floor crossing and the new piece of legislation and fur-

ther elaborate the matter. According to the rules, he said an independent candidate had to join any party within three days after the announcement of official results of the elections.

The minister posed a question if a member's party could be changed after submitting an affidavit for joining a party.

He said that two Supreme Court judges had raised important points and questioned that even after 15 days, the detailed decision was not issued by the majority judges in the bench. Tarar said that the PTI-backed independents joined a party that did not exist in Parliament, how could that party get any seat as those seats were given on the principle of proportion. Moreover, he said under proportional representation rules, it was binding on each political

party to display its candidates lists for both women and minority seats.

He said one fails to fathom the logic and stance of the PTI leadership that they should not hold intra-party elections without any legal action or punishment on that account.

About the situation in Bangladesh, he said that the government and people of Pakistan stood with the people of that country. He appreciated the determination and resilience of the Bangladeshi people for standing up against the regime marred by corruption.

Tarar said in Pakistan, the PTI founder chairman had compared himself with Sheikh Mujeeb eulogizing his stance in 1971 which Pakistanis considered as against national interests. PTI leaders during television talk shows claimed that their leader was like Sheikh Mujeeb, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Ambassador of Iraq Hamid Abbas Lafta.

Digitization of economy inevitable for national development: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday emphasized the crucial role of digital technology in driving economic growth, transparency and good governance. "Digitalization of the economy is inevitable for achieving the national development," he said while addressing the first National Digital Summit.

He highlighted the importance of leveraging technology to address pressing issues, promote transparency, and foster economic development.

He advocated for adopting digital technologies to enhance infrastructure, human resource development and digital literacy.

The minister stressed the significance of collaboration between educational institutions and the tech industry, saying it was essential for promoting profes-

sional and digital skills among youth.

He informed the gathering that the government was taking the required measures to promote digital skills among young people.

The minister also mentioned that the government was strengthening cyber-security to protect citizens, businesses and government institutions.

Furthermore, he said efforts were being made to promote digitalization in rural areas and ensure affordable internet access.

He emphasized the need for public-private investment in making technological advancements and encouraged startups, small and medium enterprises in this sector. He called for equipping 65 per cent of the youth population with modern skills and invited experts to share their innovative ideas to achieve the required results.

Minister C&W directs to keep heavy machinery ready to tackle any emergency

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Communication and Works, Mir Saleem Khosa has stated that there is a key role of heavy machinery in improvement of infrastructure as such it must be ready to tackle any emergent situation.

The Minister was speaking on occasion of the visit to different sections of the E and M Workshop Division of the department here on Tuesday.

The Secretary C&W Department Lal Jan Jaffar, Chief Engineer E and M, Mehrullah Jozgezi and others were also present on the occasion.

The Minister and Secretary C&W went round of

different sections of the workshop. He was also briefed about the overall working of the department and its E and M Division.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary C&W said that there is a key role of the department in development of the infrastructure. In this role, the role of heavy machinery of the department has the backbone status. The Minister directed to keep the heavy machinery ready in every kind of situation.

He said that it is our top priority to resolve the issues of department on priority basis. The Secretary C&W directed to keep the out of order machinery in Workshop in order.

August 8 tragedy; a black day for Balochistan: NP

QUETTA: The National Party has termed the August 8 tragedy as the blackest day in Balochistan's history, which has brought sorrow to every household in the province. The party spokesperson said that on that day, dozens of educated lawyers were martyred in a blast, which was a tragic incident.

The spokesperson criticized that despite the passage of time, those responsible for the worst act of terrorism have not been identified, which raises questions about the relevant institutions and courts. The spokesperson added that Balochistan has been suffering from worst terrorism for the last two decades, but instead of addressing the issue seriously, the real representatives of Balochistan have been marginalized, turning the province into a playground, which is yielding negative results day by day.



QUETTA: XEN Workshop Habibur Rehman briefed Provincial Minister C&W Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa and Secretary C&W Lal Jan Jaffar during their visit of E&M Workshop Division Quetta

Early warning meteorological system operational at Gwadar Port

GWADAR (INP): Gwadar Environment Department (GED) operationalized an early warning meteorological system at Gwadar Port in collaboration with China Meteorological Administration (CMA) to help analyze and identify potential weather- and climate-related risks and hazards in Gwadar. "It aims at enabling early actions to save and protect lives, livelihoods and assets of people at risk," GED official told Gwadar Pro.

and Gwadar suffered severe flooding, resulting in significant damage to lives, infrastructure, and livelihoods of the affected population.

The estimated damage to Balochistan Province amounted to \$1.625 billion," he said. With the early warning system, Gwadar is better positioned to deal with frequent, extreme, and unpredictable climate-related hazards. The early warning system is made up of four elements: disaster risk knowledge, detection,



ISLAMABAD: H.E Donald Armin Blome, Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan calls on Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain.

Thanks to Dr. Rubaba Special permission granted by PMDC to BMC students for double batch admissions

QUETTA: The Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan for Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, has successfully secured special permission for double batch admissions for medical students from Balochistan.

According to details, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi recently met with officials from the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), where she briefed them on the issues faced by medical students from Balochistan. The PMDC officials, acting on Dr.

Buledi's recommendations, have withdrawn their previous decision and granted permission for four students to be admitted to medical colleges, along with special permission for double batch admissions from Balochistan for the next academic year. This means that students from Balochistan, who previously had to wait a year to get admission to medical colleges compared to students from the rest of the country, can now join medical colleges without waiting a year, alongside students from other parts of the country.



QUETTA: Secretary Finance Babar Khan presiding over a meeting regarding financial affairs of Balochistan Costal Development Authority (BCDA) and Panshi Fish Harbour Authority (PFHA).

Independence Day to be celebrated with enthusiasm: Dr Ishaq

QUETTA (APP): Medical Superintendent of Provincial Quetta Dr. Ishaq Panzezi on Wednesday said that on the occasion of Independence Day, the entire nation should unite and pledge to spread the teachings of peace, brotherhood, and love to and enlighten future generations about the sacrifices of their elders.

Addressing the ceremony, Registrar Al-Hamad University, Urwa Javed said that freedom was a great blessing and August 14 was a day of unity and agreement for the Pakistani nation, the whole nation was proud of this great blessing.

large number of children and their parents also participated in the event.

MS Civil Hospital, Dr. Ishaq Panzezi said that on the occasion of Independence Day, the entire nation should unite and pledge to spread the teachings of peace, brotherhood, and love to and enlighten future generations about the sacrifices of their elders.

Addressing the ceremony, Registrar Al-Hamad University, Urwa Javed said that freedom was a great blessing and August 14 was a day of unity and agreement for the Pakistani nation, the whole nation was proud of this great blessing.

Governor condoles death of Ghafoor Kasi

QUETTA: The Governor of Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has expressed deep grief and sorrow over death of former Deputy Inspector General of Police, Abdul Ghafoor Kasi.

In an condolence message issued here on Wednesday, the Governor said that late Abdul Ghafoor Kasi was a very gentle, sociable and dutiful police officer.

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

SSP Sibi vows to protect lives and property of citizens

SIBI: SSP Sibi Ghulam Sarwar Bhayo has said that the top priority of the police is to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property. He stated that his doors are always open to hear legitimate complaints from the public.

Bhayo emphasized that the role of police is crucial in maintaining law and order in society.



QUETTA: Relatives of Junaid Baloch and Mama Qadeer addressing a Press conference.

DC Harnai inspects flood-damaged Serwati band, Pulosin bridge

HARNAI: Deputy Commissioner Harnai, Muhammad Arif Khan Kakar, visited the Serwati Band and Pulosin Bridge affected by recent floodwaters. Accompanied by officials from the Irrigation Department, including the SDO and others, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the damage caused by the recent monsoon rains.

Emergency repairs have been initiated on a war footing, with Irrigation and B&R officers overseeing the work, which is ongoing 24/7.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani and Provincial Advisor Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti.

OIC Ambassador vows to ensure Kashmir resolution under UN mandate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador Hameed Ajibaiey Opeleyeru, Permanent Observer of the OIC Mission to the United Nations, has reiterated the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) commitment to ensuring the resolution of the Kashmir dispute in line with international law and resolutions of the United Nations.

Speaking at an event marking the fifth anniversary of India's unilateral actions in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Opeleyeru said the OIC has adopted a plan of

action to expedite the resolution of the crisis Equally ominous is the fact that this crisis that has historically threatened peace, stability and security of South Asia.

Opeleyeru expressed solidarity with the people of Kashmir in their struggle for self-determination, emphasizing that the OIC recognizes their just and legitimate struggle. "There is no doubt that the United Nations has been seized of the question of Jammu and Kashmir since the Security Council Resolution 47 of 21 April 1948," he added.



QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Captain (R) Raja Abbas Ather, chaired a meeting of all district departments to discuss preparations for Independence Day celebrations on August 14.

Celebrating Independence Day is a sign of a living nation: Abbas Ather

CHAMAN: Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Captain (R) Raja Abbas Ather, chaired a meeting of all district departments to discuss preparations for Independence Day celebrations on August 14. He emphasized the need for all departments to take necessary measures to ensure a successful celebration.

DC Chaman directed all department heads to decorate their offices with Pakistani flags and colorful bunting. He also stressed the importance of cleanliness and sanitation in the

city, parks, and grounds, and instructed the Municipal Corporation to take all necessary measures to ensure a clean and tidy environment. Ather Abbas Raja emphasized that there would be no compromise on cleanliness on Independence Day and directed all department heads to ensure that their offices are clean and tidy.

The meeting was attended by all department heads and officials, who were instructed to make necessary arrangements for a successful celebration of Independence Day.

PDMA writes to Commissioners to enforce Section 144 at picnic points & areas during Monsoon

QUETTA: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has asked the Commissioners of all eight divisions of the province to enforce Section 144 at the picnic points and areas during the Monsoon season. In an official letter issued to the Divisional Commissioners by the Di-

rector Planning and Coordination, PDMA, it was stated that in areas where the picnic points are situated must be declared as prohibited areas by putting obstacles and the people should not be allowed to enter there for the purpose till the situation comes into normalcy. This is necessary to avoid any human loss,

mentioned in the official letter issued by the Director PDMA to the divisional Commissioners.

It was also stated that the control rooms must be established in all the districts which would remain operational keeping in view the alarming situation which may arise any time due to monsoon season.



QUETTA: Secretary S&GAD Syed Faisal Ahmed presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for celebration of Independence Day