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Visits FC South Headquarter: All stakeholders ought to come on one page for sustainable development of Balochistan, stresses Mohsin Naqvi

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi has stated that all stakeholders would have to come on one page for sustainable development of Balochistan. He said that prosperity and development of Balochistan is linked with sustainable peace. He underlined the need to take comprehensive measures for empowering youth of the province. He said that Frontier Corps (FC) South is on the frontline to foil the nefarious designs of Fitna al Khawarij. The Federal Interior Minister was presiding over a meeting at the FC South Headquarter on Sunday. He was briefed about the operations against the Fitna al Khawarij and smuggling. Speaking on the occasion, Mohsin Naqvi appreciated the performance of FC South for establishing peace and prevention of

smuggling. He said that the FC South is playing exemplary role for peace in hard circumstances. Besides, the force is also playing lead role for peace in the province.

Mohsin Naqvi said that he is proud of the professional proficiency and bravery of the officers and personnels of FC South.

He assured that the requirements of FC south would be met remaining in the resources.

During the course of briefing, it was informed that the illegal goods of worth Rs. 4.7 billion were confiscated during last six months.

He was also briefed about the overall professional performance of the FC south.

Earlier, the Federal Interior Minister was welcomed by the Inspector General FC South, Major General Bilal Sarfraz Khan upon his arrival at the FC south Headquarter.



TURBAT: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi laying floral wreath at the Yadgar-e-Shuhada in Frontier Corps Balochistan (South) Headquarters.

Governor Balochistan says We have to take revolutionary measures by utilizing digital technology in modern era

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that our institutions have the backbone status in providing infrastructural framework for good governance and strong administration in the country and province. But expectations of high performance and dignified future of can not be made with the weak backbone, he insisted adding because experience proves that a weak base cannot support the high ambitions.

The Governor said that this is our collective misfortune that the particulars and data of our majority institutions and directorates aren't computerized in the fast era of digital information technology even. He made it crystal clear that if we didn't make computerization of our system

and institutions immediately for meeting the modern requirements and public needs, then we can face serious issues in near future.

Therefore, we have to take steps for taking revolutionary measures in order to remove these flaws just because, our overall performance is badly affected without computerizing our system and the institutions.

He regretfully pointed out that it takes several months to pass even a minor file in the government offices. As a result, our precious time, energy and investment is wasted and the common people suffer from long deprivations.

Therefore, it is necessary to speed up the official performance, ensure computerization in the institutions and take concrete steps for removing sense of deprivations prevailing among the people, adding he stressed.



MURREE: British High Commissioner Jane Marriott meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and PML-N President Nawaz Sharif

Maryam, Nawaz discuss education, health issues with British HC

LAHORE (APP): British High Commissioner (HC) Jane Marriott met Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif on Sunday and discussed education, health, climate change issues in Pakistan. The meeting held in Murree also discussed increasing education opportunities for students from Punjab in the top universities of the UK.

British HC about sustainable measures being taken for elimination of environmental pollution. During the meeting, it was agreed to benefit from mutual skills to deal with the challenges of climate change.

Maryam informed the British high commissioner about the key performance indicator (KPI) system for monitoring the police and administration to improve the quality of governance, including the ongoing initiatives for Digital Punjab.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on the matters related to Power Division, Ministry of Energy.

PM Shahbaz vows to tackle power issues, streamlining energy matters on priority

"Whole-of-the-government approach should be adopted to resist power theft"

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday expressed the government's resolve to stop electricity theft, reduce line losses, and improve the power distribution system across the country.

He informed that recently the government had appointed new board chairmen and members in five power distribution companies (DISCOs) through a transparent process. He hoped that these appointments would further improve the performance of DISCOs.

Presiding over a meeting held here to review the matters of Power ministry, the prime minister directed the Power Minister and Secretary Power Division to coordinate with the provinces concerning halting the electricity theft, performance of DISCOs and other matters of the sector.

"A whole of the government approach should be adopted to resist power theft across the country," the prime minister said.

He directed the provincial governments to maintain the number of police force and Tehsildars as per the DISCOs' needs. He also

ordered the concerned authorities to deal with the corrupt elements in the power distribution companies with an iron hand and take strict action against them.

He directed DISCOs to make the kutchehri system more effective and result-oriented for public complaints.

PM Shehbaz said that the steering committee formed to shift agriculture tube wells to solar energy in Balochistan should convene immediately.

The meeting was informed that the Standard Operating Procedures

(SOPs) regarding the transfer of agricultural tube wells in Balochistan to solar energy had been notified to the Steering Committee.

The meeting was further informed that a package was being prepared regarding the acknowledgement of officers who had shown good performance.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahmad Khan Cheema, Minister for Power Awaiz Khan Leghari and other officers of the relevant ministries and divisions.

Supreme Court delists election tribunal case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court on Sunday delisted the election tribunal case. A five-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, was scheduled to hear the case on Monday, August 19.

PTI's lawyer Salman Akram Raja filed a request for postponement, stating that senior lawyer Hamid Khan is abroad until Sept 6. The request asked for the case to be postponed until Hamid Khan returns, as he has also submitted a leave application.

11 die, several injured in rain-related incidents

KARACHI (INP): In various rooftop, wall collapse and electrocution incidents during heavy rainfall 11 people were killed and several other injured across the country.

A house's rooftop caved in in Attock's Pindi Ghaeb area leaving four people dead.

Moreover, a four-year little girl died and three other injured in another rooftop collapse incident in Sadiqabad district during rainfall.

Meanwhile, a man electrocuted to death in Tabba Sultanpur area.

The rooftop of a house collapsed in Jacobabad's Garhi Khairo town leaving a mother and son dead. The rain-related incidents claimed three lives in Sindh's Jacobabad district during last 24 hours.

In a rooftop collapse incident in Badani area of Kashmir district a woman died and four others were injured during rainfall. A girl died when a mud hut collapsed in Shahdadkot district's Warah town.

Lightning kills two in Khuzdar

QUETTA (APP): Two persons were killed in lightning strikes as rain lashes parts of the Balochistan province.

Levis officials said that lightning strikes incident was reported in Sarona area of Khuzdar. At least two people and eleven goats died as a result of lightning, it added.

The dead bodies were shifted to hospital for medico-legal formalities.

Tarar accuses PTI of anti-national agenda linked to Indian connections

Information minister alleges PTI of aligning with foreign adversaries to further its agenda against Pakistan; Raoof Hasan's ties with Indian journalist exposed PTI; Indians bankrolled PTI and calls it "foreign-funded" party; Now, it is understandable why May 9 riots took place; 'Faiz-Niazi nexus' embodied 'worst example' of hostility towards state

ISLAMABAD (APP): Information Minister Ataulah Tarar criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, alleging that its connections with Indian elements have exposed its anti-national agenda.

He accused PTI of aligning with foreign adversaries to further its agenda against Pakistan, specifically citing interactions between PTI leader Raoof Hasan and Indian journalists as evidence.

Tarar claimed that the collaboration between PTI's founder and Faiz



Hameed, along with the party's engagement with anti-Pakistan journalists across the eastern border and decisions to bring extremist elements back via the western border, represents a severe betrayal of

No compromise to be made on stability of country: Those doing politics of hatred can't be loyal to country: Zia

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has asserted that any compromise can not be made on the stability of country under the garb of politics and those doing politics of hatred can not be loyal to the country.

In an official statement issued here on Sunday, the Provincial Minister said that the Indian facilitation was revealed in spreading the anti-state narrative by the PTI leader Rauf Hasan.

He said that the enemy country India is conspiring against Pakistan through the social media and digital terrorism.

Mir Ziaullah Langove also said that India is not digesting Pakistan's development and prosperity.

He urged PTI to think of the country instead of



QUETTA: Relatives of missing persons hold a protest outside Quetta Press Club.

President for enhancing national forest coverage to mitigate impacts of climate change

KARACHI (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari had called for enhancing the national forest coverage by planting more trees to help mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change and global warming.

He said that Pakistan was one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and global warming, and urged the youth and civil society in helping increase forest cover and planting more trees to mitigate their adverse impacts.

The President expressed these views while planting a "Neem" sapling at Bilawal House, Karachi, as a part of the annual Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign on Sunday (August 18) also marks the National Tree Plantation day in Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that "Neem" was an environment friendly tree, offering numerous environmental benefits, such as clean air,

cool shade and acting as a natural mosquito repellent.

He recalled that during Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed's first tenure as Prime Minister, he had served as the Minister for Climate and had initiated a tree plantation campaign, wherein Neem trees were planted throughout the country. He said that the need to plant trees had become of paramount importance in view of the rising temperatures in Pakistan.

President Asif Ali Zardari urged the nation, particularly the youth and civil society, to actively participate in the Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign and plant as many trees as possible in their neighborhoods and surroundings for a better environment.

The President stated that Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign was a great opportunity to enhance forest cover, increase greenery in Pakistan.



KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari planting a "Neem" sapling at Bilawal House as part of the Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign.

Shaza refutes reports of internet slowdowns or closures

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja Saturday, refuted reports that the government had slowed down or closed the internet nationwide.

Addressing a press conference, she said, "The news circulating on social media that the government is throttling the internet is completely baseless and has no reality."

She further clarified that issues with certain apps were causing difficulties in downloading, leading to an increase in VPN usage, which contributed to the slowdown in internet speeds. However, she said, "These issues have been resolved due to the government's efforts."

Technical experts and internet service providers have also refuted reports that the government had slowed down or closed the internet nationwide.



KHANEWAL: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani talking to media persons after the Convocation of the Punjab College Mian Channu.

High alert declared at all points of entries in Balochistan in context of possible monkeypox outbreak

QUETTA: The Health Department Balochistan has declared high alert at all points of entries of the province in context of the possible monkeypox outbreak.

In this regard, the Director General Health Services has issued a letter to the District Health Officers of Quetta, Gwadar, Chaghai, Kech, Hub and Chaman instructing them to take all required measures at the point of entries in their districts to detect any suspected case of monkeypox, report it to the focal person for monkeypox response.

It may also be mentioned here that the WHO had declared public health emergency of international concern due to a surge in cases of monkey pox and a new more deadly strain.

DGHS, Balochistan) has been designated as the focal person for further guidance regarding shifting to BMCH for testing and management, designated for quarantine and isolation, with proper IPC measures in place. The Director General Health said "your vigilant and proactive measures will be highly appreciated ensuring the protection of our population from the spread of this deadly infectious disease."

It may also be mentioned here that the WHO had declared public health emergency of international concern due to a surge in cases of monkey pox and a new more deadly strain.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Politics of subsidies

That the ongoing electricity crisis could result in political difficulties for the government was obvious from PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif's 'address to the nation' on Friday. The fact that the party supremo himself announced power sops for middle-class consumers confirms that he is making a frantic effort to avert a political crisis in his erstwhile stronghold of Punjab.

Clearly, he wants to rectify the sagging support for his party and is willing to invest personal capital in the pursuit of voters that the party appears to have lost to inflation in general and the escalating energy prices in particular. Mr Sharif also seems to believe that he still has higher approval ratings than his daughter, the Punjab chief minister, and his brother, the prime minister. This would explain why he announced the electricity subsidies, a task that would normally fall to either the prime minister or chief minister.

The announcement of Punjab-specific electricity subsidies also highlights the issue of energy sector provincialisation — both by design and default. Encouraged by greater autonomy under the 18th Amendment, we have seen the provinces trying to gradually venture into cheaper, renewable and hydropower generation. Sindh and KP have also made some strides towards their own transmission network. Such moves indicate a growing awareness among the provinces of the difficulties faced by power consumers due to high prices and blackouts in low-recovery areas.

However, while the problem exists across the country, the Punjab government's ability to divert Rs45bn from its budget towards significant consumer subsidies — for users of up to 500 units per month during August and September — is a step that only a province flush with cash can afford. Others, especially KP and Balochistan, are still facing significant financial distress in spite of their increased share from the federal tax divisible pool under the NFC award. In fact, both provinces are struggling to balance their budgets and produce the surplus required by the centre to contain the consolidated fiscal deficit within IMF-prescribed limits. Even Sindh has limited room for such subsidies for its citizens in case the PPP wants to follow suit.

While the ruling party expects this relief measure to help it politically in Punjab, the step is not going to sit well with voters from the other provinces. There is every possibility that the anger over power prices there will turn towards the PML-N. Nonetheless, the loss of support in smaller provinces should be less of a worry for the party leadership.

The bigger issue is how the IMF, whose executive board is expected to approve the recently concluded \$7bn deal, reacts to it. The lender had not taken very kindly to a similar subsidy announced by the federal government for lifeline consumers. Will it ignore Punjab's extravagance?

Brick in the wall

Muna Khan

I had to join Facebook, Twitter and Slack when I started graduate school in 2016 — for different messaging purposes. I thought all of this could be done on WhatsApp but then, it was not a popular app in the US. My Chinese classmates, meanwhile, found all the apps 'primitive' as they could do so much more back home on WeChat — from messaging to gaming to paying utilities to live streaming.

But you don't have internet freedoms like we do, American students would say, oblivious to Mark Zuckerberg's attempts to chip away at their privacy or how platforms were acquiescing in authoritarian governments' requests to take content down. The few discussions I witnessed in class came off as some sort of nationalism, years of being taught their country was the good guy keeping the bad guy out.

In case you didn't know, the US military paved the way for the internet to be built when the US defence department set up Advanced Research Projects Agency, which created Arpanet in the late 1960s, to allow research institutes to communicate with armed institutes' agencies through a large-scale computer network. That was born from a fear of Soviet attack. The Soviets were attempting to create what we now refer to as the internet, roughly a year after Arpanet, but could not.

Technology has long been used to keep 'enemies' out. Someone or something is always trying to be the gatekeeper of information but the internet has disrupted everything since its birth in 1983. The more it has evolved, the more the attempts to clamp down on it, almost always in the name of security.

Techno-nationalism

— how countries link innovations to identity, stability and national interests — aims to influence global power. Donald Trump, for example, blacklisted Huawei Technology over spying concerns in 2019 but thanks to Chinese government support, the company made a remarkable comeback. The US is reportedly thinking of co-opting US allies in a "broader containment campaign" and exploring additional sanctions, reports Bloomberg.

When China created the great firewall in 2000 that is being referenced in conversations about the reported Rs30 billion firewall in place here, it did so to keep foreign influence out, it says. Its techno-nationalism led it to hold an advantage over others (though at the cost of civil liberties). Technological innovations, for example, increase job opportunities, investment and economic growth, maybe even exports if other countries become reliant on your country's technology. This can also lead to global competition as we're witnessing in the China-US rivalry.

In the decade since it created the Made in China 2025 plan, the country may just be able to achieve what it set out to do: reduce dependency on foreign supply chains in industries like AI, robotics and self-driving cars. China's plan is viewed as a threat by, and to, the West.

I'm sure it led to Joe Biden passing the Chips and Science Act, 2022, which gave \$280bn in new funding to boost domestic research and manufacturing of semiconductors in the US. It also gave billions in subsidies for chip manufacturing, billions to public sector research in the sciences, and many incentives aimed at strengthening the country's supply chain with the aim of countering China.

And now, onto our

techno-nationalism which, in a word, is 'cringe', irrespective of who is in charge. It aims to globally isolate us, without giving us tools to enable us to build or empower. We don't have a Chinese superapp like Weibo. We have Vigos and we all know their purpose.

An entire country is being made to pay for the so-called sins of one political party. This is essentially what this firewall is about. This wall's creators, implementers and def-enders have never had to worry about making ends meet.

At the time of writing, the Pakis-tan Software Housing Association warned the country could lose at least \$300 million due to disruptions caused by the firewall. Businessmen are warning of dire consequences. Freelancers have complained of lost opportunities on sites like Fiverr. My friend Mohsin, a fashion designer, told me he has not received an order online in 10 days which is highly unusual. I won't even bother about civil liberties because they have never mattered in the country but I hope they will matter now that the internet has slowed for everyone.

Anything grounded in nationalism produces greater harm because it prioritises security over civil liberties, and favours the wealthy (corporates) who influence policymaking to suit their interests. It clashes with Pakistan's diverse population. Another solution is needed, one grounded in sense and sensibilities. We can't afford the isolation and chaos this firewall is going to bring. Someone explain this to the men in charge, who have much to lose if they go ahead with this firewall.

-- Courtesy Dawn

Indian foreign policy

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

When it started its life as an independent country in 1947, India chose a foreign policy that would keep it 'non-aligned' in the polarised environment created by the US-USSR Cold War. India leaned towards the Soviet Union, maintained rather cold relations with the US, sought friendly ties with China premised on the Panchsheel (the five principles of peaceful coexistence), and saw itself as a member of the developing world. In South Asia, it embarked on a hostile relationship with Pakistan for separating from so-called 'Mother India'.

Decades later, India's foreign policy has undergone a paradigm shift, particularly since the dawn of the 21st century. With the US pivot to Asia, India has become the partner of choice for America's Indo-Pacific Strategy that seeks to contain the further rise of China. India's relations with China remain tension-ridden, even though both countries have flourishing economic and commercial ties. With Russia, India maintains a close relationship, notwithstanding the fact that the US-led West and Russia are at daggers drawn over the prospect of Ukraine joining Nato. India is, thus, playing a tight balancing act in its relations with the major powers. It describes its present foreign policy as the pursuit of national interests through 'strategic autonomy'.

With UN-led universal multilateralism on the retreat, India has entered into several mutually incompatible multi-alignments, such as BRICS, SCO, and QUAD. It considers itself a leader of the Global South, and has deepened its ties with East Asia and Africa.

What has helped India maintain largely posi-

tive relations with all major powers is its growing economy and stable democracy. As the world's fifth largest economy, it has sufficient buying power to purchase expensive military hardware from diverse sources, attract foreign investments for its growing economy, particularly its road and rail infrastructure, and enhance manifold its trade with the rest of the world. The Indian diaspora has been mobilised to project a positive image of the country. At the same time, however, divisive Hindutva nationalism, demonisation of minorities, and massive unemployment and high inflation have tarnished its stature.

While a lot has changed in India's global profile, what has not is its foreign policy towards its South Asian neighbours. India continues with its hostile posture towards Pakistan, and pursues a competitive, even rival relationship with China. Its policy to engage only with non-Taliban Afghan groups has failed. It has also bullied Nepal through economic embargos and the occupation of part of its territory. In the south, Sri Lanka often faces tough choices in its relations with both India and China. Bangladesh, surrounded on three sides by India, has experienced suffocating Indian dominance, particularly under Sheikh Hasina Wajed who recently fled to India. The Maldives has often demonstrated its discontent with Indian interference. Consequently, India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy is in the doldrums, undermining its global ambitions.

Central to India's overbearing attitude towards its South Asian neighbours is the China factor. India is unhappy with China's close ties with Pakistan and Chinese attempts to enter into cooperative relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, the Maldives, and even Bhutan whose foreign policy is controlled by India. These countries find China's BRI projects a lucrative option and wish to exercise their own 'strategic autonomy' to benefit from the investments regardless of the Sino-India competition. India needs to recognise the legitimate right of its neighbours to be-neath from the in-vestment opportunities that accompany cooperative engagement with China.

Pakistan is one country that has never accepted Indian hegemony in South Asia. This has been reason enough for India to make every effort to isolate it. The Kashmir dispute is unresolved because of India's refusal to let Kashmir exercise its right to self-determination. India has suspended all contact with Pakistan, especially since 2016, and chosen to demonise the country by harping on the mantra of cross-border terrorism. In fact, it is Pakistan which now faces India-sponsored terrorism. However, since India's economy has done well and is a large market, in contrast with Pakistan's, the world tends to lend a more sympathetic ear to Indian narratives.

For South Asia, India is the elephant in the room. The entire region would benefit if India gave up its dominating posture, and let other South Asian countries exercise the same strategic autonomy vis-à-vis India that the latter wishes to have vis-à-vis the US, China, and Russia. Taking the region along would help India build up its global profile that it cherishes. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Govt's tourism initiative to put Pakistan's hidden gems on Map: CM's Aide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Information Eiman Shah on Sunday highlighted the government's focus on promoting tourism, leveraging the country's unique natural treasures to attract visitors and drive economic growth.

Pakistan's hidden treasures, long waiting to be discovered, are now being polished for the world to see thanks to the government's new tourism initiative, Eiman Shah said while talking to PTV news channel.

the Chief Minister said Pakistan is home to a treasure trove of unexplored natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and ancient history, waiting to be polished and presented to the global community.

Shah noted that the government's tourism promotion strategy includes infrastructure development, facilitation of travel procedures and marketing campaigns to showcase Pakistan's unique cultural and natural heritage.

This multi-pronged approach aims to attract a significant increase in

tourist arrivals, generating revenue and creating employment opportunities, he mentioned.

The Special Assistant also highlighted the government's efforts to promote sustainable tourism practices, ensuring that the growth of the sector benefits local communities and preserves the country's natural environment. By engaging with stakeholders and implementing eco-friendly initiatives, the government aims to create a responsible and thriving tourism industry, he highlighted.



SARGODHA: A mechanic busy repairing bicycle at Liaquat Market.

Local tractors assembling registered 45.74% growth in FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Tractors assembling in the country during the financial year ended on June 30, 2024 witnessed growth of 45.74 percent as compared to the production of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-June 2023-24, about 46,272 tractors were locally produced as compared to the production of 31,752 tractors of the same period of the last financial year, according to the provisional Quantum Index Numbers of Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (QIM) for June 2024,

released by the Pakistan bureau of Statistics.

The overall Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (LSMI) sector has shown a growth of 0.92 percent during the period from July-June 2023-24 when compared with the same period of last. The LSMI output decreased by 0.03% for June, 2024 when compared with June, 2023 and 4.70% when compared with May 2024, it added.

The production in July-June 2023-24 as compared to July-June 2022-23 has increased in food, wearing apparel, coke & petroleum products.

AC visits Sunday bazaar, fines price gougers

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to protect consumers, Assistant Commissioner City Farhan Ahmad on Sunday conducted a surprise visit to the bustling G-6 Sunday bazaar, scrutinizing price lists and enforcing the plastic bag ban. According to the spokesman of ICT administration, Assistant Commissioner City, Farhan Ahmad, led a team to the G-6 Sunday Market to ensure compliance with price regulations. The officials inspected price lists at various stalls, taking action against two shopkeepers for overcharging customers. The visit aimed to enforce the government's directive on price control and plastic bag usage. On the occasion, he emphasized the ongoing efforts to implement the plastic bag ban, promoting eco-friendly alternatives. During the visit, citizens refused to purchase from vendors without displayed price lists.



LAHORE: People are buying vegetables in Sunday weekly bazaar at Shadman area in the Provincial Capital.

Ease of bilateral visa in Pak, Egypt to strengthen economic, trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid said that the ease of bilateral visas between Pakistan and Egypt will strengthen the economic and trade ties between the two countries and tourism sectors also flourish.

Egypt is also the centre of world tourism due to its historical heritage and Pakistan is also one of the most popular countries for tourism, the Ambassador said.

Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid told APP in an exclusive talk that the northern regions of Pakistan are rich in natural beauty with beautiful landscapes, in which there are six highest mountain peaks in the world. He said that during his visit to Skardu, for the first time, he came to know about the northern regions of Pakistan and the lush green fields Desai region in Skardu is most attractive for world tourists.

The ambassador said that the role of the private sector is very important to increase cooperation in the field of tourism between Pakistan and Egypt, for which the business community of both countries must play their due role in this regard.

He said that Pakistan and Egypt are bound in historical, religious and cultural relations which cover many dimensions, and we have to make the new generation aware of our historical heritage.

Indonesian Expo 2024 in Capital City attracts public attention

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of Indonesia in Islamabad has been successfully attracting more public attention through the a three-day Indonesian Expo 2024.

The Expo is the first of its kind ever held from August 16-18th 2024, having the iconic shopping center, as part of a series of events to commemorate the 79th Anniversary of the Indonesian Independence Day held at the Centaurus Mall, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

The Indonesian Expo aimed to provide a vibrant cultural backdrop to the business-oriented events as well as programs related to

people-to-people contact. Among schedules on the stage are traditional and cultural shows including Indonesian martial arts called Pencak Silat, creative and religious performances by Indonesian students in Pakistan, and theme-based discussions on crucial issues to bring Indonesia and Pakistan closer in trade, tourism, and investment as well as education and religious moderation. Many options are available during the Expo to elevate public awareness about Indonesia. Thousands of enthusiastic visitors enjoyed the Expo atmosphere by visiting photo booths designed in an iconic Indonesian heritage background.



PESHAWAR: President All Tribal Contractors Association, Haji Zahir Jan addressing a press conference at Peshawar Press Club.

Diminishing cotton production affecting textile sector

MULTAN (APP): The breathable cotton fabric makes suitable attire given the hot weather conditions which at times turn extreme and is still the choice fabric for many whether at home in casual mood or out to enjoy a party. However, the fluffy cotton flowers that used to dominate the South Punjab landscape are not that much dominating these days. And textile sector does not like the story to go this way.

Khawaja Muhammad Usman, an Industrialist associated with textile and former president of Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) said that Pakistan agriculture does not grow as much cotton as the

textile millers' need, to spin, weave and stitch enough yarn, fabric and garments that can turn cotton chain into a smart forex earning machine. The operations chain of cotton economy employs a larger work force from field to ginning factories and onward to textile mills and garment factories.

Pakistan's total work force, according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) survey 2020-21, was 71.76 million out of which 67.25 million were employed. Over 37.4 per cent were associated with agriculture, and 37.2 per cent in services sector. Some 25.4 per cent human resources earn working for industry, a significant

portion of which is associated with textiles.

They earn livelihood for families by developing products ranging from yarn, towels, bed sheets, fabric, garments, sports garments that fetch dollars from lucrative foreign markets and this national scale effort contributes 60 per cent in the total yearly export earnings for Pakistan. Recently, Vice President, Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC), Dr. Yusuf Zafar raised concerns over the statistics of ongoing cotton season and forecast the production would likely be around 6-7 million bales, far below what the textile sector and the overall national economy

expected.

He attributed the decline to a smaller cultivation area, prolonged heatwaves, unexpected rains, and severe whitefly infestations. It would be far below the textile industry's demand of 16 million bales and the shortfall will necessitate the import of approximately 5-6 million bales, the PCCC top scientist said.

The PCCC media focal person and head of CCRI technology transfer wing Sajid Mahmood recalls that cotton production decline started after 2016 due to lack of funding on research. He said that the country's ace cotton research body PCCC had

faced financial crisis owing to non-payment. He said, Pakistan achieved over 14 million bales production once and later it remained oscillating between 11-13 million bales. However, after 2016, the production started declining and had touched new low in 2022 with 4.5 million bales when floods had swept away crop lands in South Punjab. South Punjab Secretary Agriculture Saqib Ali Ateel described climate change as a big trouble confronting cotton and everybody was worried about the unpredictability of weather patterns. Farmers got good results from early farming last year but early sown crop was confronted by heatwave this season.

Governor Kundi worries about worsening law and order situation in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Supreme Court and Divisional President of Peoples Lawyers Forum, Sardar Adnan Sadozai District President, Sardar Hizbullah Khan Gundapur Divisional General Secretary, Sardar Qaiser Zaib District General Secretary, and Abid Awan Advocate District General Secretary of Pakistan Peoples Party. Also present were Gohar Rahman Khattak, Provincial President of the People's Lawyers Forum, and Lajbar Khan Khaleel, Provincial General Secretary, Advocate. Kundi assured that he would

contact the Chairman of the State Life Insurance Corporation regarding benefits for lawyers.

He also proposed that land be identified for a lawyers' colony in Dera Ismail Khan.

In addition, he suggested that a judicial complex be established in the Tank area, discussing the matter with the Federal Minister for Law.

The Governor proposed allocating a quota for young lawyers in the Judicial Academy that would address the issue of starting LL.M. classes at Gomal University.



PESHAWAR: Members of Christian Community are enlightened candles as they are marking 1st anniversary of Jaranwala Incident, in Peshawar.

Punjab IG instructs all regions to eliminate criminal gangs

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, has said that zero tolerance should be ensured for delays in registering FIRs, restricting complainants, and corruption, with strict action to be taken.

He expressed these views while giving instructions to officers during a meeting he chaired at the Central Police Office. He emphasized that the crackdown for arrest of A-category proclaimed offenders should be made more effective, and the rate of challans and recovery should be further

improved. He instructed that DNA samples in cases of abuse against women and children be sent immediately for forensic analysis. In high-profile cases, the quality of investigation and compliance of issued protocols must be ensured at all costs. The IG directed all regions to eliminate criminal gangs and resolve pending complaints on 1787 and the CM Portal within the given timeline. He appreciated the performance of DPOs in districts, including Khushab and Bhakkar.

Flash flooding alert issued in South Punjab districts

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has issued a flash flooding alert for several districts in south Punjab over the next 36 hours due to heavy rains on Sunday.

The affected areas include the divisions of Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan and Bahawalpur, with a significant risk of flash flooding, particularly in the hills of Dera Ghazi Khan. The commissioners of Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, and Bahawalpur, along with the Deputy Commissioners of Rajanpur, Kot Adu, Layyah, Muzaffargarh, Khanewal, Lodhran, Vehari, Rahim Yar Khan, and Bahawalnagar, have been placed on high alert. Director General PDMA Irfan Ali Kathia has instructed all relevant departments to stay vigilant and be prepared to handle any emergency situations. Continuous monitoring of the situation is being conducted from the PDMA control room, which operates 24/7. Rescue services, including 1122, are on standby with machinery and staff ready for immediate response.



KHANEWAL: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani addressing during the Convocation of the Punjab College Mian Channu.

PMA demands ad-hoc, contractual doctors to be regularised

MULTAN (APP): Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) on Sunday demanded of govt that adhoc and contract doctors be regularized through executive notification and hiring should not be made through locum. Addressing a joint news conference participated by doctors of 25 districts of Punjab at a local hotel, PMA Punjab stated that if Punjab healthcare commission did not meet their demands by September 16, they will be forced to hold sit-in.

PMA Punjab President Dr. Col (Retd) Ghulam Shabbir, PMA

Multan President Dr. Masood ur Rauf Hiraj, PMA Lahore President Dr. Ashraf Nizami, and others stated that the Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) has started closing down healthcare facilities. No action is being taken against quackery, and doctors are being unfairly targeted.

They condemned the hiring of loving and added that 70 pc of healthcare services were being provided by the private sector, and despite unfavorable conditions, doctors are continuing to work.

PDMA rejects rumors of water discharge from India

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab has denied reports circulating in the media that India has released 200,000 cusecs of water into Pakistan. In a statement released on Sunday, the PDMA clarified that no significant water discharge from India has been observed beyond normal levels. The PDMA emphasized that the information attributed to them in various media outlets is incorrect, and no such statement or press release has been issued by the authority.

ANF recovers 78 kg drugs in eight operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover 78 kg drugs and arrested nine accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman. He informed that 2.8 kg ice was recovered from two passengers going to Saudi Arabia and Bahrain at Islamabad Airport. 40.8 kg hashish and 2.4 kg opium were recovered in two different operations conducted near M-1 Islamabad while two accused were rounded up.

DG PARD presents shield to CEO PCP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Director General of Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (PARD) Cpt @ Adnan Gul has praised the services of Dr Syed Muhammad Ilyas, CEO Paraplegic Center Peshawar (PCP) for the treatment and rehabilitation of patients disabled by spinal cord injuries as well as running the hospital in an efficient manner. He said that this unique medical institution in the entire South Asia will further march ahead under his leadership.

In this regard, he presented a shield to Dr. Muhammad Ilyas on behalf of PARD in a simple ceremony organized in the academy, and declared him as the best teacher for the under training administrative officers. He said that apart from Dr. Ilyas' professional approach, the trainee officers are also appreciative for the medical, social and teaching services of the Paraplegic Center which is a matter of honor.

Punjab Governor says: People to people contact between Tajikistan, Pak need to be enhanced

Independent Report LAHORE: The ambassador of Republic of Tajikistan, Yusuf Sharifzoda called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. Honorary Consul General of Tajikistan Mian Nazir Ahmad was also with him. In the meeting, issues of mutual interest, strengthening of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan in the fields of trade, culture and education were discussed. Talking on this occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Salim Haider Khan said that Pakistan and Tajikistan have deep brotherly relations due to common religion and culture. The two sides expressed determination to enhance relations in every sector, especially in the field of trade. Governor Punjab said that there are investment opportunities for foreign investors in various sectors in Pakistan and Tajik investors can benefit from the facilities given to businessmen through the Special Economic Facilitation Council. He said that business activities should increase between Pakistan and Tajikistan.



LAHORE: The ambassador of Republic of Tajikistan, Yusuf Sharifzoda called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Detractors jealous of Punjab CM's performance: Arora

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora, in a statement issued here on Sunday, said the excellent performance of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz had made her detractors jealous, which was a clear proof of success of the Punjab government. "The performance of Punjab is being appreciated worldwide, which is an honour for Maryam Nawaz and her team," he said in a statement. He said that a historic budget had been allocated for religious minorities in Punjab, aiming to ensure their welfare. He emphasised that religious tourism was being promoted throughout the province, which would contribute to enhancing performance of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz and a practical demonstration of the government's commitment to serving people. The provincial minister described the decision to provide relief on electricity bills as a gift to the people of Punjab and announced that the Punjab government.

International News

Israeli strikes in Lebanon and Gaza leave 27 dead

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: At least 27 people, including two children, were killed in Israeli air strikes, with around 10 fatalities in Nabatieh, south Lebanon, and at least 17 in the Gaza town of Zawayda, according to health officials.

The 10 victims of Israeli airstrike in south Lebanon were all Syrian citizens, state news agency NNA said, adding that a final toll of the strike would be announced after DNA tests were conducted to determine the identity of the victims.

The Israeli military said the airstrike targeted a weapons depot used by Hezbollah fighters.

The Israeli strike came after ceasefire talks between Palestinian Islamist group Hamas and Israel in Doha paused on Friday with negotiators due to meet again next week.

Hezbollah later said in a statement that it had struck the Ayelet Hashahar Kibbutz in northern Israel

in retaliation for the Nabatieh strike. Two soldiers were wounded in a rocket attack from Lebanon, the Israeli military said, adding that a total of 55 rockets had been fired in latest strikes from Lebanon.

Also on Saturday, an Israeli drone targeted a motorcycle in the Qadmous area east of Tyre in south Lebanon, NNA reported, adding that one person was injured. A security source said one person was killed in the motorcycle attack.

Tensions have soared in the region in recent weeks, after a rocket strike blamed on Hezbollah killed 12 children and teens in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Israel responded with the killing of a top Hezbollah commander in the suburbs of Beirut.

At least 17 Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded in the Israeli strike in the Gaza town of Zawayda on Saturday, health officials said, as Is-

rael issued new evacuation orders, citing Hamas rocket fire nearby. Most of the people killed were from the same family and they included eight children and four women, according to health officials. Israel's military said it was aware of the reports of the strike and was looking into them.

"They were asleep in their beds, kids and babies, then three missiles targeted their place," said Abu Ahmed Hassan, a neighbour. The owner of the house was a known merchant, he said. "There are no military activities here at all," he added.

Israel's military spokesperson in Arabic posted instructions on X on Saturday for people in parts of central Gaza, including in Maghazi district which is near Zawayda, to evacuate to a designated humanitarian zone.

He said militants were firing rockets from those locations and that the military was preparing to act against them.



Palestinians stand at the site of an Israeli airstrike on a shelter housing displaced people, amid the conflict between Israel and Hamas, in central Gaza Strip.

Thai king endorses Paetongtarn Shinawatra as prime minister

Monitoring Desk BANGKOK: Paetongtarn Shinawatra was endorsed as prime minister by Thailand's king on Sunday, two days after parliament elected her, paving the way for her to form a cabinet in the coming weeks.

Paetongtarn, 37, becomes Thailand's youngest prime minister just days after ally Srettha Thavisin was dismissed as premier by the Constitutional Court, a judiciary

central to Thailand's two decades of intermittent political turmoil.

Daughter of divisive former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Paetongtarn won by nearly two-thirds in a house vote on Friday to become Thailand's second female prime minister and the third Shinawatra to take the office, following Thaksin and her aunt Yingluck Shinawatra.

Japan's PM Kishida plans US visit

Monitoring Desk TOKYO: Outgoing Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is finalising plans to visit the US in late September for the UN General Assembly and a possible meeting with President Joe Biden, the Yomiuri newspaper reported on Saturday.

The visit may take place for several days starting on Sept. 22, the report said, citing multiple government sources it did not identify. The Japanese Foreign Ministry, in response to a request for comment from Reuters, said "Nothing has been decided yet".

Israel says investigation underway in Palestinian prisoner abuse case

Monitoring Desk JERUSALEM: Israel is conducting a "robust investigation" of suspects accused of sexually abusing a Palestinian prisoner and is committed to upholding international legal standards regarding the treatment of detainees, the foreign affairs ministry said on Sunday. The UN special rapporteur on torture on Friday condemned what she called a "particularly gruesome".

Hamas dismisses 'illusion' that Gaza truce is 'closer'

Monitoring Desk DOHA: A senior Hamas official on Saturday dismissed optimistic talk by US President Joe Biden after negotiations in the Gulf emirate of Qatar.

"To say that we are getting close to a deal is an illusion," Hamas political bureau member Sami Abu Zuhri said. "We are not facing a deal or real negotiations, but rather the imposing of American diktats."

He was responding to Biden's comment on Friday that, "We are closer than we

have ever been." Biden spoke after two days of talks in Qatar where Washington tried to bridge differences between Israel and Hamas. The two sides have been at conflict for more than 10 months in the Gaza Strip. Previous optimism during months of on-off truce talks has so far proven futile. But the stakes have significantly risen since the killings in quick succession in late July of Fuad Shukur, a top operations chief of Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, and Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh.

Harris and Trump offer worlds-apart contrasts on top issues in presidential race

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Vice President Kamala Harris has replaced President Joe Biden atop the presidential ticket, but his "finish the job" campaign mantra can still largely apply to her top policy goals. She's promising to continue a lot of what Biden was doing during the past four years if she's elected to four of her own.

Former President Donald Trump, for his part, is itching to get back to the White House and accomplish what he didn't during his first term.

Since Biden stepped down last month, the vice president has announced few major policy proposals beyond a new push to prevent price gouging by food producers and grocers and plans to cut taxes for families, attempt to bring down homebuying and

rental prices and reduce medical debt. Harris also used a recent rally in Las Vegas, where the economy runs on the hospitality industry, to call for ending taxes on tips paid to restaurant, hotel and other service employees. That came more than a month after Trump used his own Las Vegas rally to promise the same on tips.

Despite her lack of specifics on policy, the vice president has committed generally to some major policy positions on various matters, promising to sign sweeping legislation that's unlikely to clear Congress.

Those include measures codifying the federal right to an abortion, increasing the federal minimum wage, imposing an assault weapons ban, requiring universal background checks for firearm purchases.

More than 120 firefighters tackle blaze at London's Somerset House

Monitoring Desk LONDON: Around 125 firefighters tackled a fire in the roof of London's Somerset house on Saturday, though the historic building's major art collections, including works by Manet, van Gogh and Cezanne, were undamaged.

The London Fire Brigade (LFB) said 25 fire engines were deployed to tackle the blaze after the alarm was raised just before midday. The police said there were no reports of injuries.

Somerset House, on a site which overlooks the River Thames and dating back to 1547, is a former royal palace and stately home and is now an arts, cultural and entertainment centre. "Crews are now working to extinguish the final pockets of fire," Keeley Foster, the LFB's assistant commissioner, told a media briefing. "The fire was located in part of the building's roof

space. The age and design of the building proved a challenge for crews as they initially responded."

She said crews would remain at the site overnight and the cause of the fire was under investigation.

The fire took hold in Somerset House's west wing, where offices and not works of art are located.

The Courtauld Gallery, which houses masterpieces from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, is in the building's north wing.

"It's too early to comment on the building's condition," said Jonathan Reekie, director of Somerset House Trust.

"I'm confident that the damage is to one small part of the building."

He said that although the main Somerset House building would remain closed to the public until further notice, the Courtauld Gallery would reopen on Sunday.

Libya's UN-brokered deal at risk as escalation fears mount

Monitoring Desk TRIPOLI: Reemerging bloodshed and power struggles in Libya have raised fears of a broader escalation, threatening to deal a fatal blow to the UN-brokered political transition and push the war-torn country deeper into turmoil.

The vast North African country of 6.8 million people has struggled to recover from years of conflict after the 2011 Nato-backed uprising that overthrew longtime dictator Moamer Qadhafi. Libya remains divided between a UN-recognised government based in the capital Tripoli and a rival administration in the east, backed by military strongman Khalifa Haftar. Although relative calm has returned in recent years, clashes

still periodically break out between Libya's myriad armed groups. Earlier this month, nine people were killed and several wounded in fighting east of Tripoli between two groups, both affiliated with the UN-recognised government of Abdulhamid Dbeibah.

On Sunday, a group of men, some of them armed, briefly besieged the Central Bank of Libya headquarters in the capital, local media reported, in what they said was an attempt to force the resignation of its governor, Seddik Al Kabir. US ambassador Richard Norland said attempts to oust Kabir were "unacceptable", warning that replacing him "by force can result in Libya losing access to international financial markets".

Chechen leader drives armed Tesla truck, praises Musk in video

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: The strongman leader of Russia's Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, published a video on Saturday showing him driving a gun-mounted Tesla Cybertruck and praising the billionaire owner Elon Musk.

Kadyrov, who has ruled Chechnya with an iron fist for over 17 years, is a vocal ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin and says he has deployed thousands of troops to help the Kremlin with its Ukraine offensive. The 47-year-old Chechen leader could be seen behind the wheel of the truck as he drove in the regional capital Grozny, a video posted on his Telegram channel showed.

Govt taking steps to increase investment in petroleum sector: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday said the government was taking steps to increase foreign investment in the petroleum sector by resolving the key issues of the sector.

The Deputy PM, presiding over the first meeting of a committee, formed to consider the issues faced by the petroleum sector's E&P companies and to resolve issues of the industrial sector, resolved to take

every possible step to provide all facilities to the foreign companies that would help attract further investment in the country.

The meeting considered the recommendations to improve the financial system for off-shore exploration.

Deputy PM also directed to prepare a framework to implement the recent amendments made in the Petroleum Policy 2012.

Heads of local and foreign E&P companies, on the occasion, highlighted con-

cerns about the security and stability of the sector due to increased circular debt.

Deputy PM directed the relevant authorities to resolve the issue of circular debts in the power sector on priority.

Private sector members of the committee also expressed their concerns regarding the downstream gas sector and stressed the need to open up the sector to private companies to improve its sustainability.

After detailed discussions, the forum directed

the Petroleum Division to work closely with the industry and other stakeholders.

The forum also directed the Petroleum Division to suggest appropriate amendments to the Ogra Ordinance to introduce a mechanism for the adjustment of gas rates on a monthly or quarterly basis.

On security issues, the Forum directed the Interior Division to work closely with E&P companies and other stakeholders.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar presides over the first meeting of a committee, formed to consider the issues faced by the petroleum sector's E&P companies.



NASEERABAD: View of stagnant rainwater due to poor sewerage system after heavy downpour of monsoon season, showing the negligence of concerned department, at different areas of Dera Murad Jamali.

Bilawal seeks report from CM Sindh about damages due to rains

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has sought a detailed report from the Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, regarding the damage caused by the ongoing rains across the province and the measures taken by the provincial government to assist the affected people.

According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP expressed his deep concern over the damage caused by the heavy rains in various parts of Sindh.

He instructed the chief minister to provide a comprehensive report on the damages and relief efforts in Sukkur, Larkana, Khairpur, and other areas across the province.

Bilawal Bhutto remarked that the Sukkur and

Larkana divisions are once again bearing the brunt of climate change effects.

He directed the mayors of Sukkur and Larkana to ensure the swift drainage of rainwater from the low-lying areas of these cities. Bilawal Bhutto further instructed that an immediate investigation be conducted into the breach in the dam in Khairpur district, emphasizing the need to minimize the damage and provide prompt assistance to the affected people.

He stressed that the Department of Relief and Rehabilitation and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) must fulfill their responsibilities in assisting the rain-affected communities.

He assured the victims that the PPP would stand by them and provide unwavering support during this difficult time.

Priority to restore economy, Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Ahsan Iqbal, on Sunday said that the restoration of Pakistan's economy was the government's most significant challenge.

Speaking to a private news channel, he said that with dedicated efforts, the country would return to a path of progress and development within the next two to three years.

The government was committed to address these issues and steering the country towards stability, "he said.

The current economic difficulties are because of the reason when the country was handover to an "inexperienced individual" in 2018, he added.

Despite the challenges, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) will overcome these financial hardships, as they done in the past.

Secretary C&W directs to all staff of dept to remain high alert in recent rains

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Secretary Communication and Works (C&W) Department, Lal Jan Jaffar has directed to all staff of the department including officers and other staff to remain alert high in view of the recent rains in the province.

According to an official hand out issued here on Sunday, the Secretary C&W directed to all staff of the department to get ready along with the necessary machinery to face any emergent situation round the clock.

In addition to this, the Secretary directed to ensure the rehabilitation of all the link roads in view of the emer-

Another 32,200 illegal refugees leave Pakistan in one month

ISLAMABAD (APP): The repatriation of Afghan nationals residing illegally in Pakistan continues, with thousands returning to their homeland.

Official figures reveal that between July 21 and August 17, an additional 32,200 undocumented Afghan citizens left Pakistan. This brings the total number of repatriated Afghans to 691,853 since August 17, 2024.

The repatriation process has involved 732 families transported in 674 vehicles.

The presence of a large number of undocumented Afghan nationals in major cities like Karachi had led to concerns about smuggling and extortion.

However, the joint efforts of the Pakistani government and military leadership have successfully facilitated the ongoing removal of undocumented individuals from the country.

This repatriation effort is a significant step towards addressing concerns related to security and illegal immigration in Pakistan.

Naqvi expresses deep grief over loss of precious lives in rain related incidents

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi has expressed deep sorrow over the loss of precious lives due to rain-related incidents in various parts of the country. He extended heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased. Interior Minister prayed for the swift recovery of those injured in the incidents. He said that he was deeply saddened by the loss of life and property caused by various accidents due to the rains. He further stated that we share the grief of the bereaved families and prayed to the Almighty to grant them patience.

19 August to be remembered as Black Day in Parliamentary History: Ayaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday said that August 19 will always be remembered as the darkest day in the parliamentary history of the country.

The speaker said, "Ten years ago, on this day, a conspiracy against democracy was hatched, and the Parliament House was besieged and ransacked by the workers of so-called political parties."

"Shameful act is highly condemnable in every sense of the word. Parliament, being the supreme institution, deserves respect and dignity", he expressed these views in his message on the eve of completion of 10 years of the attack on the Parliament. He also underscored that protecting the sanctity of the Parliament is a collective responsibility and violating the sanctity of Parliament is unimaginable for any democratic individual.

He lamented that the heartbreaking memories of the day would remain etched in the minds of the people and keep reminding them of the attack on democratic values and principles. He also noted that the attack on the parliament was not only an attack on democracy but also a blow to the basic pillars of the State.

The Speaker praised the bravery and perseverance of all the parliamentarians, staff and security personnel of the Parliament, for defending the Parliament under such hostile circumstances.

The Speaker also appreciated the role of the leadership and MPs of the then government, the largest opposition party in the

Gwadar Free Zone inks agreement with Xinjiang Pilot Free Trade Zone

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a fresh strategic move, Gwadar Free Zone (GFZ) has inked a comprehensive economic agreement with Xinjiang Pilot Free Trade Zone (XPFTZ) to build a new pattern of interactive development for logistic, trade, and commercial growth under the framework of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Gwadar Free Zone signed the economic pact and forwarded it to the administration of Xinjiang Pilot Free Trade Zone for needful action, Gwadar Port Authority official told Gwadar Pro.

China Industry Overseas Development Association is also part of the agreement to expedite coordinated development of the

two regions, he added.

"It has been agreed by the contracting parties to jointly promote the economic development of the two trade zones.

Cooperation in the fields of energy, textile, agricultural products, trade and logistics will be enhanced through this agreement," he said, adding that a joint working group would be established to carry out coordination and implementation.

Regular communication mechanisms will be established among the parties.

Gwadar Free Zone comprises two parts, Gwadar South Free Zone spreading over 60 acres and Gwadar North Free Zone spanning over 2221 acres.

Samina deploras atrocities in Kashmir and Palestine

QUETTA (APP): Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, the chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Senate on Human Rights, said the world has remained a silent spectator on the violation of human rights in Kashmir and Palestine.

In her statement issued here on Sunday, she said that there is so much contradiction in saying and acting on these things in this world. "On the occasion of the International Day of Humanitarianism today, no one has seen the ongoing Israeli atrocities in Palestine. The world has remained a silent spectator on the violation

of human rights in Kashmir and Palestine", she remarked.

She said that thousands of innocent Palestinian Muslims have been martyred, including many innocent children. On the ongoing persecution of Kashmiris in India, other major organizations, including the United Nations Security Council, have not raised a strong voice against the ongoing oppression in Palestine, she added. She said that Israel is stubbornly not willing to stop the self-inflicted war against the innocent Palestinians and this process is going on.

Levies force retrieves two occupied Govt schools from Qabza mafia

QUETTA: The Levies force raided two government schools, which otherwise were occupied by the illegal occupants, in Duki area on Sunday.

According to the Assistant Commissioner Duki, Zahoor Ahmed Baloch, the government schools retrieved from the illegal occupants were handed over to the Education department after taking them back.

The raid was conducted at the Government Middle School Killi Khair

Muhammad Mithi Nasiran and Primary School Killi Bojar.

The Assistant Commissioner Duki said that the headmasters and staff deputed in the schools were also absent for long. Both the schools were being used as guest rooms.

He warned that the stern action would be taken against the absentee staff of the schools. He said that there are 123 non-functional schools in Duki district while 145 schools are working as one teacher school in the district.

Indian media's reporting on IIOJK shows blatant partisanship, bias: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian media is increasingly becoming a mouthpiece for the RSS/BJP, especially concerning the situation of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

A report released by Kashmir Media Service, today, said the RSS-aligned media's coverage of IIOJK is marked by fabricated and misleading stories about the Kashmiris' freedom struggle.

It said since August 2019, Indian media's reporting on Kashmir has shown blatant partisanship and bias. Bharatiya Janata Party-influenced media is disseminating falsehoods about the real conditions in the occupied territory, it added.

The report said the

portrayal of Kashmir in Indian media consistently distorts the actual ground realities. It said Indian media uses fake news to distract international attention from human rights violations by Indian troops in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

It lamented that the Indian media excelled at spreading misinformation and fake news, adding the media coverage of Kashmir by Indian outlets represents a severe breach of journalistic integrity.

The report said Indian journalists and TV anchors align their narratives with the Modi regime's official stance on Kashmir and the aggressive and hateful rhetoric of Indian media supports Modi's authoritarian agenda in occupied Kashmir.



QUETTA: Chairman Ameenullah Kakar addressing the oath taking of Youth Action Committee.



CHAMAN: Director General Health Services Balochistan Dr. Ameen Khan Mandokhail enquiring about the health of patients during his visit to Civil Hospital.

Secretary C&W directs to all staff of dept to remain high alert in recent rains

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Secretary Communication and Works (C&W) Department, Lal Jan Jaffar has directed to all staff of the department including officers and other staff to remain alert high in view of the recent rains in the province.

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In addition to this, the Secretary directed to ensure the rehabilitation of all the link roads in view of the emer-



QUETTA: Wapda technician is installing electric wires on an electric pole after damages, at Sarki road in Quetta.

Shakeel Khan sacked on corruption charges, says Barrister Saif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Saif assured that the party guaranteed that there would be no lawlessness in Islamabad procession.

Addressing a press conference here, he alleged that hurdles were being created by Islamabad administration in the way of the party for staging a public gathering on August 22.

He insisted that there will be no violation of law in the public gathering and all the matters will be completed peacefully. He stressed that the party always organised public gatherings with the approval of the administration.

Giving his response on resignation of minister Shakeel Ahmed, he cleared the air about rumours of corruption in departments

2 injured in roof collapse incident

JAFARABAD (APP): In a tragic incident, at least two people were sustained injured in a roof collapse incident in Tangwani Jafarabad area on early Sunday morning.

According to the police, two people critically injured when a house roof collapsed due to heavy rain fall in Tangwani, a private news channel reported.

Rescue teams rushed to the scene to provide medical assistance and evacuate the injured.

The two individuals, whose identities have not been disclosed, were taken to a nearby hospital for treatment. Their condition is reported to be stable but further updates are awaited.

Railways to restore Sir Syed Express on Sept 1

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has decided to restore Sir Syed Express (35UP/36DN) between Karachi Cantonment to Rawalpindi from September 1 under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

The Sir Syed Express (35UP) will depart from Karachi Cantonment at 9:00 PM via Hyderabad, Khanpur, Khanewal, Faisalabad, Sangla Hill, Wazirabad, Gujrat, and Jhelum, before arriving in Rawalpindi at 8:55 PM the following day, an official told APP.

Likewise, he said the Sir Syed Express (36DN) will leave Rawalpindi at 1:30 PM and follow the same route, reaching Karachi Cantonment at 1:50 PM the next day. He said the train will comprise one AC Sleeper, one AC Business class, one AC Standard class, four Economy Class coaches, a Dining Car, a Brake Van, and a Power Plant.

Pedestrian dies after being hit by Chinese driver

ISLAMABAD (Online): A citizen was killed in a traffic accident in the limits of Margalla Police Station in the Federal Capital.

A citizen, Waliullah, was killed in a collision with a foreigner's car near Fatima Jinnah Park F-9 Sector.

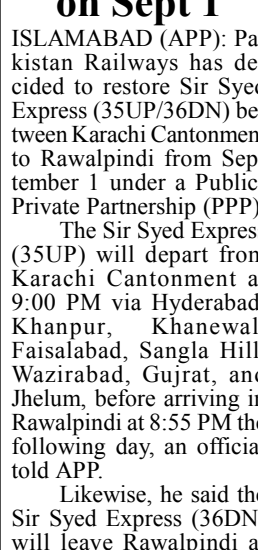
Passerby Waliullah was walking when suddenly hit by the car of a foreign citizen who has been detained. Waliullah, who is about 23 years old, died on the spot due to the accident. The car is being driven by a Chinese driver who has been identified. The Chinese driver was also slightly injured in the accident. Rescue 1122 shifted Waliullah's body to the hospital. The police reached the spot and started further investigation.

PTI decries 'changes' in Punjab election tribunals amid electoral disputes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday castigated the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for attempting to change Punjab election tribunals, appointed by the Lahore High Court (LHC) chief justice to settle electoral disputes.

Addressing a press conference, PTI leader Barrister Salman Akram Raja said that the people of Pakistan cannot forget the February 8 general elections, wherein according to him, the worst rigging took

Garbage collectors searching for useful things for sell by which they can earn their livelihood for support of their families, at a roadside garbage dump located on New Adda area in Quetta.



QUETTA: Garbage collectors are searching for useful things for sell by which they can earn their livelihood for support of their families, at a roadside garbage dump located on New Adda area in Quetta.