

Independent

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Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 179, Safar 16, 1446 AH Thursday August 22, Pages 04, Price Rs.15

Army chief reiterates resolve to win war against terrorism

Says a strong bond between people, govt, and military is guarantee of Pakistan's security and development; People who had built narrative of Pakistan's default are found nowhere today; Youth most expensive asset of Pakistan, no one to be allowed to waste it; State's responsible to protect nation from social media's adverse effects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday said the youth of the country was the biggest and most valuable capital that would not be allowed to waste under any circumstances. Addressing the Youth Convention here, the Chief of Army Staff said that knowledge distin-

guished a person from others, whereas seeing the sparkle in the eyes of young people made one believe that the future of Pakistan was in safe hands. The Army Chief said it was the responsibility of the state to keep the masses at bay from the malicious implications of social media-induced confusion and sedition. A strong relationship

between the people, the government and the army was the guarantee of Pakistan's security and development, he said, adding, "Those who were creating the narrative of Pakistan's default, where are they today?" "If you want to know the importance of a free state, ask the people of Libya, Syria, Kashmir, and Gaza. As Muslims we are

forbidden from despair," the COAS said. The Chief of Army Staff told the youth that life was a test, and read the Qur'anic verse, "Do people think that they will be left alone for saying, 'We believe,' and they will not be tested?" At the end of the speech, the Army Chief recited this poem of Allama Iqbal addressing the youth.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir distributing laptops among the high achievers during National Youth Convention held in Islamabad.



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

35 Pakistani pilgrims killed after bus overturns in Iran

TEHRAN (Online): At least thirty-five Pakistani pilgrims have been killed and fifteen others critically injured in a bus accident in Iranian city of Yazd. According to initial reports, the accident occurred due to failure of brakes. Injured have been shifted to near-by hospital.

Most of the passengers belong to Larkana, Ghotki and other cities of Sindh. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have expressed deep grief and sorrow over loss of precious lives in the tragic bus accident of Pakistani Zaireen in Iran. The President and the Prime Minister commiserated with the bereaved families and prayed for the departed souls. The President directed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to bring the bodies

to Pakistan and provide timely aid to the injured. President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday expressed his deep grief over the death of Pakistani pilgrims in a bus accident that took place in Iran. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed his deep grief over the loss of lives in a bus accident carrying Pakistani pilgrims in Yazd city of Iran. "Deeply saddened by the loss of lives at a bus accident of Pakistani Zaireen near Yazd in Iran. My thoughts are with the bereaved families. May the injured recover at the earliest," he said in a statement. The prime minister directed Pakistan's embassy in Tehran to extend all possible assistance to the affected families and ensure medical treatment of the injured.

Youth empowerment, key to Pakistan's bright future: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday said that the youth had significant potential and could greatly elevate country's reputation if given appropriate opportunities. In a conversation with Asrar Khan Kakar, the newly elected President of the Oxford Union Society, the president extended his congratulations on his election to the coveted position. The president highlighted that Asrar Kakar, a resident of Balochistan province, had attained a significant honor through his election and that his achievement would inspire other young people. He expressed the optimism that Israr Khan would continue to bring honor to the country with his future achievements.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal addressing a conference on "Empowering a Digital Pakistan" organizing by Institute of Regional Studies & COPAIR.

On directives of Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto: Balochistan & Sindh agree to adopt same stance on water distribution formula at IRSA platform

Independent Report QUETTA: The provinces of Balochistan and Sindh have been agreed on adopting same stance on the formula of distribution of water at the platform of IRSA. The Balochistan province would endorse every stance of Sindh under the IRSA formula. This was decided in a meeting the Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari presided over through video link on Wednesday. The meeting was attended by the Provincial Minister for Irrigation, Balochistan, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani from Quetta and Provincial Minister for Irrigation, Sindh, Jam Khan Shoro from Karachi.

Both the ministers informed the meeting about performance of their respective departments. It may be mentioned here that the meeting was aimed at agreeing to one same stance about the formula of distribution of water at the platform of IRSA. Thus, they adopted the same stance on directives of the Chairman PPP. The Chairman PPP sought the details of losses caused due to the flash floods in Sindh and Balochistan. The provincial ministers informed the chairman PPP about the damages caused due to the rains and floods besides the steps taken by their departments for the compensation.

GoB announces to introduce biometric attendance & face recognition system in Govt offices

Independent Report QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has announced to introduce the biometric attendance and face recognition system for the attendance of government employees in the offices. In first phase, the modern system of attendance would be enforced in the Civil Secretariat. This was announced in an official handout issued here on Wednesday. Needless to mention here that the very initiative has been taken on directives of the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan for ensuring timely attendance of the government employees in the government offices.

EC accepts intra party election of PML-N, JI

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission (EC) has issued new list of registered political parties and intra party election of JI and PML-N have been accepted. According to list issued on EC website 66 political parties are registered. The name of heads of these political parties have been included in the list. As per list the intra party presidential election of PML-N and intra party election of JI have been accepted. Name of PTI chairman has not been updated on website being the matter of PTI intra party election pending hearing in EC.

EC denotifies Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango

Dismisses the petition filed against the competence of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti

QUETTA (Online): Election Tribunal has denotified home minister Balochistan Mir Ziaullah Lango besides ordering re-election in 7 disputed polling stations of PP-36 Balochistan Assembly (BA). The EC has declared portfolio held by home minister Balochistan null and void. Justice Abdullah Baloch of Election Tribunal Balochistan High Court during the hearing of the petition nullified the portfolio of home minister held by him. JUI-F candidate Mir Saeed Langau rival candidate of Mir Zia Ullah Langau in PP-36 Balochistan Assembly had filed election petition in election tribunal. Akram Shah advocate had persuaded the election

New Toshakhana case IHC dismisses petition filed by PTI founder, Bushra against their arrest

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has dismissed the petition filed by PTI founder Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi against their arrest in new Toshakhana case declaring it infertile. The court has advised to adopt legal way of filing bail after arrest in Accountability Court (AC). The petition filed by Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi against their arrest in new Toshakhana case came up for hearing before IHC bench comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Babar Sattar Wednesday. Suleman Saifdar counsel for PTI founder appeared in the court. NAB prosecutor said Toshakhana reference has been filed. Now they have powers to file bail after arrest plea in the court. Governor, CM grieved over loss of lives of zayreen in coach accident in Iran Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Bugti have expressed deep grief and sorrow over loss of lives of zayreen in a bus accident occurred in Iran. In their separate condolence statements issued here on Wednesday, the Governor and Chief Minister expressed empathy with the bereaved families of those died in the fatal accident of bus in Taftan check point. The Governor said that we share the grief of bereaved families of all those died and injured in the accident. He prayed for early recovery of the injured persons. He also prayed that may Allah Almighty give enough strength and patience to the bereaved families to bear the tragic loss of death of their dear ones. In his message, the Chief Minister said that the bus accident is sorrowful and he is grieved over loss of precious lives in it. He said that we equally share the grief of death of people with their families. He also prayed that may Allah Almighty grant the bereaved family enough patience to bear the loss of their lives.

PM calls for collective efforts to achieve development goals

Govt to dole out maximum funds for youth empowerment; Calls 1973 Constitution a binding force for the nation

Imran demands open trial of Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed

RAWALPINDI (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan while demanding open trial of Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed has said his and Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed matter is not internal affair of army. "The facts will come before the world due to open trial, he said this in an informal talks with the journalists in Adiala jail Wednesday. Terming Gen (Retd) Faiz zero from hero after retirement he said Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed issue is not issue of national security. It is local issue. I demand army chief to conduct open trial of Gen (Retd) Faiz because facts will come before the world due to open trial. But I know they will conduct closed doors trial instead of open trial. All the cases against me have collapsed. Neither any contact nor any link remained between him and Gen (Retd) Faiz after his retirement. When some one retires he becomes free. May 9 conspiracy started with my arrest. As certain it who gave orders of my arrest. I know who issued my arrest orders. No 1 Badshah who controls Rangers is super king. However he avoided to mention name. Gen (Retd) Faiz could give me what benefit after his retirement. They are fools who say that Gen (Retd) Faiz has given me any benefit. I am former civilian prime minister. Pakistan image will be tarnished if they take me to military court, he remarked.



ISLAMABAD: President Elect of Oxford Union, Israr Khan Kakar, calls on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

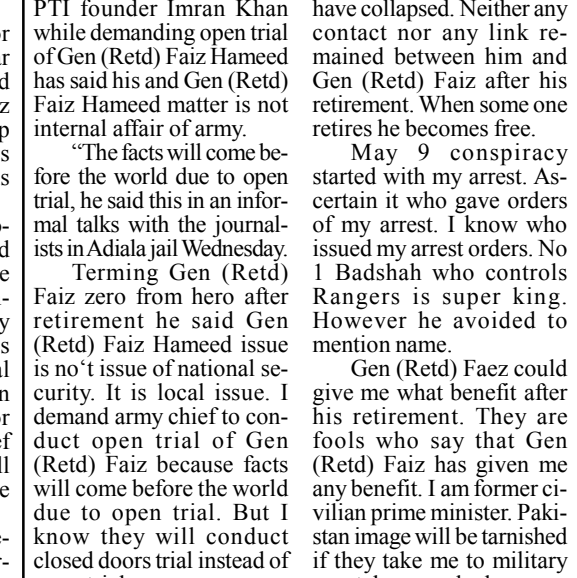
PTI founder meddles in military affairs with demand for Faiz Hameed's open trial

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday said PTI founder had meddled in the affairs of Pakistan Army by demanding an open trial for ex-Spy Chief. The minister, in a news statement, regretted that the PTI founder had made multiple attempts to make the matter related to Faiz Hameed controversial. Instead of giving statements in defense of Faiz Hameed, the PTI founder should better made his position clear in the 190 million pounds case, Tarar said, adding his controversial statements showed that he was suffering from "serious anxiety and uncertainty". The minister said the PTI founder was reluctant to accept that the issue of Faiz Hameed was internal matter of the Army, which proved that the ex-spy chief was his "asset". He said it seemed that the PTI founder was in mental disarray as sometime he called Faiz Hameed an "asset or a hero", while on some occasion took completely an otherwise stance. In the Faiz Hameed case, he said it appeared that the PTI founder had no qualms about using people for his own personal interests. The minister said the PTI founder was expert in ditching his own well wishers.

Govt advertisement rates to be increased soon: Info Secy

ISLAMABAD (PR): The Federal Secretary Information, Ambreen Jan assured the APNS Executive Committee that the long pending Govt advertisement rates will be increased soon. Ms Ambreen Jan Secretary Information and PIO, Mr. Mobasher Hasan attended the meeting of Executive Committee of the APNS held at Islamabad presided over by its President Ms. Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani. APNS Secretary General Sarmad Ali apprised the Secretary Information about the problems being faced by the newspaper industry due to non implementation of the decision of the Prime Minister, Mian Shabbaz Sharif announced at the end of his first tenure to increase govt advertisement rates. He highlighted the issues faced by the print media related to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting including constant decline in the quantum of government advertisements, non payment of current and old outstanding dues, streamlining of ABC, renewal of newspapers' registration and functioning of the Press Registrar office. The APNS suggested that to resolve the issue of non payment of current dues, a revolving fund be established at the

Information Ministry for payment to newspapers on behalf of sponsoring departments. The members of the executive committee apprised the Secretary Information about the problems faced by them including non implementation of regional quota, problems in transfer of declarations after demise of the publisher and establishment of PID regional office at Bahawalpur. The Secretary Information assured the Executive Committee that the Ministry of Information has moved a summary for rate increase to the Finance Ministry which would be processed shortly.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir presenting gift to a child during national youth convention at Pak china friendship centre, in the Federal Capital.



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Daily *Voice of Masses*
Independent

Troubled tribunals

It is unlikely that the public will get timely closure on the many controversies raging over the Feb 8 general election. The tribunals appointed under the Elections Act of 2017 to settle election-related disputes will not be able to meet their 180-day deadline, it has emerged in a report released by the Free and Fair Election Network.

Fafen has highlighted that, so far, only 7pc of the 377 petitions have been resolved, with Balochistan's tribunals alone in achieving a double-digit disposal rate of 17pc. Sindh, KP and Punjab lag far behind with disposal rates of 7pc, 4pc and 0.5pc, respectively, while the tribunal appointed for Islamabad's seats has yet to dispose of a single case. Punjab, where the most challenges have been filed, still has only two tribunals functioning out of the eight sanctioned, mainly because of the Election Commission of Pakistan's refusal to honour the Lahore High Court's decisions about who should head them.

The nation saw the post-polls fiascos play out on their television screens and has awaited answers about what exactly went wrong. It may be recalled that, in a replay of the ECP's results transmission system's failure in 2018, this time, too, a new and improved results consolidation system had failed to function, and the announcement of the results was put off without any explanation from the Commission.

While these delays were happening, many candidates and their supporters saw their victories magically turn into defeats and vice versa. Complaints flooded in from across the country of results being finalised behind closed doors after kicking out those who had contested the elections. Many new controversies emerged post-Feb 9 that threw both the credibility of these elections and the ECP's impartiality into further doubt.

From supposedly 'final' results being retracted, revised, and then reissued, to recounts being done without candidates being informed, to glaring discrepancies in the results issued to candidates and the results endorsed by the authorities — so much was so obviously wrong that it defied understanding how these gross irregularities would be upheld.

This is where the election tribunals, acting as third-party arbiters between the disputing candidates, were supposed to provide closure. They should have done so within the mandated six-month period, which would have helped the system self-correct as soon as possible. Alas, it seems that these disputes will continue to linger for the foreseeable future, weakening an already struggling democracy.

The delay will only mean that the legitimacy of the coalition government will continue to remain in doubt, which will undermine its authority and allow political instability to continue to fester.

Tragically, the systems that were meant to act as a check and balance on our institutions and ensure compliance with the constitutional order keep failing us constantly.

Poking the bear

Mahir Ali

Twenty-Four years ago, just months into his first term as Russia's second post-Soviet president, Vladimir Putin was pictured partying at a dacha in Sochi while his nation coped with the loss of a nuclear-powered submarine during naval exercises; all of its 118 personnel perished in the disaster. The vessel was called Kursk.

Back in 2000, the Russian media had few qualms about calling out official incompetence and presidential indifference. Fast forward to 2024, and none of the officially tolerated press or TV outlets can be expected to seriously fault the authorities for this month's swift foray into Russian territory by Ukrainian troops. The barely resisted incursion occurred in the Kursk oblast.

The region's name should also resonate with anyone familiar with the key events of World War II. The most formidable clash of tanks in history entailed a monumental loss of life — upwards of a million, by some accounts — but the Battle of Kursk is mainly remembered as a turning point when, following a hard-won triumph in the Battle of Stalingrad, the Soviet Red Army turned the tide against the Nazi invaders. Less than two years later, it was at the gates of Berlin.

More than 80 years later, both sides in the unnecessary conflict try to tar each other with the Nazi tag; both rely to some extent on far-right forces within their military structures. But whatever the follies and fallacies of Moscow and Kyiv, this is not World War II, and it's crucial to all humanity that it does not turn into World War III. That threat still cannot be discounted, although the flashpoint

might be in a different part of the world, but it is not imminent. However, the consequences of the Ukrainian advance into Russian territory remain unclear, and the messaging from Kyiv about its motivation has been somewhat muddled. It serves as a temporary morale booster for Ukrainians, no doubt, as well as a slap in the face for Putin's pretensions as Mr Security — someone who would keep Russians safe from all foes. He has failed several times in that respect over the years, but it is not clear whether the present embarrassment will suffice as a potential tipping point.

The Ukrainian president has said that the successful attack on Russian soil was intended as a negotiating tactic — presumably to persuade Putin that the border is vulnerable in both directions, so his insistence on retaining large chunks of Ukraine as part of any peace deal is untenable. However, Volodymyr Zelensky and his aides have also talked about creating a buffer zone, and expressed the hope that some of the Russian troops on the front line in eastern Ukraine might be withdrawn to Kursk, which was poorly defended by inexperienced young conscripts, hundreds of whom are now in Ukrainian custody, possibly intended to serve as bargaining chips in future PoW exchanges.

Might that work, or will Putin's instinct be to exact revenge, for which Ukrainian civilians may pay the biggest price? Putin's tendency is to prefer revanchism over compromise. Russia's apparent inability thus far to meaningfully resist the Ukrainian military in Kursk — the first time in 80 years that foreign forces have advanced so

far into its territory — should serve as an even bigger reminder than his one-time confidant Yevgeny Prigozhin's revolt last year that Putin's republic does not measure up to its projected illusions. There is good reason, no doubt, to resent the Nato encirclement of Russia, which has been proceeding for decades, but that hardly justifies the decision to invade Ukraine, let alone pretend that the coveted territory ought never to have been separated from the 'motherland'.

Without delving into history, suffice it to say that Putin's ill-considered gambit returned to bite him on the backside, whereas it remains to be seen whether Zelensky's gamble will pay any dividends. The conflict needs to end, but neither Ukraine and its Western allies nor Russia are inclined to contemplate the kind of compromises that would facilitate such an outcome — echoes of Gaza, arguably. US sources suggest that Kyiv's Kursk initiative derailed talks in Qatar towards an agreement on not targeting energy facilities: chiefly power plants in Ukraine and oil refineries in Russia, but including nuclear facilities. That information adds to the absurdity of Zelensky's apparent assumption that the Kursk advance would sufficiently rattle Putin into making concessions. The Russian president, evidently intending to deny all responsibility (as usual) if what comes next does not fit his narrative, flew off to Azerbaijan on a scheduled visit. Echoes of the submarine incident.

What might come next in this sordid conflict remains to be seen. But anyone who expects Putin to come to his senses in the face of territorial blackmail is living in a fool's paradise. -- Courtesy Dawn

'Doing okay'

Arooj Waheed Dar

Persistently high inflation in Pakistan is eroding the purchasing power of the poorest, limiting access to basic facilities. The World Bank estimates that poverty will remain around 40 per cent, with 10 million people at risk of falling below the poverty line due to potential economic shocks. Despite this, social protection programmes receive minimal attention, with Pakistan allocating less than one per cent of GDP to social assistance, thus offering little relief to the poor.

With the government's limited fiscal space and competing priorities, it is clear that investment in social sectors is likely to remain low. Therefore, the government must focus on creating a conducive environment for social delivery organisations (SDOs) to step in and address these gaps.

The Doing Good Index of the Centre for Asian Philanthropy and Society examines the regulatory and societal environment in which private capital is directed towards philanthropy. It ranks countries in four categories based on its findings: 'doing well', 'doing better', 'doing okay' and 'not doing enough' (from best to worst). According to the DGI 2024 report, which surveyed 122 SDOs in Pakistan through the SDPI, the country is classified as 'doing okay', indicating an unfavourable regulatory environment. This classification represents a decline from its 'doing better' status in 2020.

The report highlights a drastic increase in the regulatory burden for SDOs between 2020 and 2024. This period coincides with severe impacts on marginalised communities in Pakistan due to Covid-19, climatic

shocks, and the Russia-Ukraine war. Instead of easing the regulatory burden for SDOs during this critical period, further hurdles were put up with primary focus on heightened scrutiny of political funding and rigorous monitoring of financial flows to NGOs under the pretext of preventing money laundering and terrorism financing.

The report shows that in Pakistan, the process for obtaining clearances and registering an SDO takes an average of 360 days, significantly longer than the Asian average of 123 days. Once registered, additional complex laws hinder the smooth functioning of SDOs, creating disincentives for philanthropic work.

In terms of finances, SDOs are facing growing difficulties in transferring and receiving foreign funds. This issue is compounded by a decline in local funding due to reduced purchasing power, which limits individuals' capacity to donate. Consequently, SDOs are struggling to meet their financial needs and to expand their coverage. The absence of incentives and hurdles in claiming tax incentives for corporate donors exacerbates the situation.

Furthermore, the procedures for accessing government procurements are reported to be highly complex. Non-transparency remains a significant concern.

The proportion of SDOs receiving government contracts has noticeably declined between 2020 and 2024, alongside a sharp decrease in the perceived transparency of the procurement process. During 2020 to 2024, the percentage of SDOs that viewed the procurement process as transparent dropped from 48pc to 10pc. Additionally, the percentage of SDOs that found it easy to win government contracts fell from 30pc to 6pc, and those finding it easy to access procurement information decreased from 64pc to 11pc.

Unfortunately, it is not the first time in Pakistan that political agendas have taken precedence over social welfare and public well-being. As with many other decisions, the move to increase regulatory burdens on SDOs appears largely driven by the desire to undermine a particular political party. The PTI foreign funding case, coupled with Pak-istan's efforts to comply with FATF requirements, led to tighter controls on foreign funding, not just for political parties but also for NGOs. Along with decreased funding for NGOs, this has created rent-seeking opportunities, as most government contracts are awarded to well-connected SDOs.

According to the report, the majority of SDOs believe that the removal of this undue regulatory burden can significantly enhance their performance, allowing them to better cater to the needs of an increasingly deprived population. Moreover, a single oversight department should be established to streamline the process and reduce procedural delays and red tape.

While philanthropy is ubiquitous in Pakistan, much of it is informal and unrecorded. Regulating these activities is crucial to ensure comprehensive coverage and to prevent duplication.

With negligible public spending in social sectors, it is essential for the government to set political agendas aside and create a conducive environment for SDOs to address these deficiencies. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Minister expresses gratitude for € 91.1 million German support for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema on Wednesday, expressed his gratitude for the € 91.1 million German support for Pakistan's post-flood, climate-resilient reconstruction.

Ms. Svenja Schulze, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Government of Federal Republic of Germany called on the Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema along with the delegation comprising

of German Parliamentarians, German Ambassador to Pakistan, and other senior officials.

Ahad Khan Cheema welcomed the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development and members of her delegation on their visit to Pakistan.

He appreciated the Government of Federal Republic of Germany for being a valuable development partner and specifically highlighted its bilateral economic



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatisation, Board of Investment & Communications Abdul Aleem Khan presided 222nd meeting of Privatisation Commission Board.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema exchanging views with Svenja Schulze, German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development during meeting held in Islamabad.

SAB recommends 100,000MT of sugar exporting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday chaired a meeting of the Sugar Advisory Board (SAB) which recommended exporting 100,000 metric tons of sugar.

In this regard the final approval for sugar export will be given by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet, said a news release.

Minister for

Jam, German Minister Svenja Schulze forge stronger economic ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister Jam Kamal Khan on Wednesday met with Germany's Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Svenja Schulze, in Islamabad to bolster economic and trade relations between the two nations.

The meeting focused on advancing economic collaboration, with a particular emphasis on sustainable business practices and labor standards, said a press release issued here.

Minister Schulze

Pakistan to introduce new currency notes

ISLAMABAD (INP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) decided to replace currency notes with denominations ranging from Rs 10 to Rs 5,000.

According to details, SBP Governor Jameel Ahmed told the Senate Standing Committee on Finance that the central bank will soon permission from the federal cabinet to introduce the new currency note. He said that new currency note denominations of Rs 10, Rs 20, Rs 50, Rs 100, Rs 500, Rs 1000, and Rs 5000 having all new features will

Gold rates up by Rs.300 per tola to Rs.261,000

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.300 and was sold at Rs.261,000 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs.260,700 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.257 to Rs.223,765 from Rs.223,508 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.205,118 from Rs.204,882, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

OICCI highlights private sector's role in mitigating climate change

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has launched an insightful report titled "Pakistan's Climate Crossroads: Private Sector Solutions to Pakistan's Climate Challenges".

Commenting on the report, OICCI President Rehan Shaikh stated, "Given the climate vulnerabilities threatening

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships, MSC Positano, Agios Dimitrios, Horizon 1 and Madison Eagle carrying Container, LPG and Coal, berthed at Container Terminals, Engro Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Gaschem Mosel, Epic Burano and New Apex are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on today morning.

'UAE investors seek joint ventures with PFC'

LAHORE (APP): The UAE investors have shown keen interest in forming joint ventures with the Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) to tap into the global market by meeting international standards.

According to a message received here Wednesday from the UAE, a delegation led by CEO PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq was visiting gulf states and holding meetings with their counterparts.

He said the collaboration between the UAE investors and the PFC was seen as a strategic move to capitalize on the growing demand for high-quality furniture worldwide, particularly in export markets. Pakistan's furniture industry, known for its craftsmanship and traditional designs, has significant potential to expand globally if aligned with modern production techniques and international quality standards.

Chairperson BISP discusses Nashonuma program with Sindh Health Minister

Independent Report
KARACHI: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, Wednesday, emphasized the role of the Benazir Nashonuma Programme in addressing health and nutrition challenges among poor and deserving women and children in Pakistan.

The BISP Chairperson, in a meeting with Sindh Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho here, had a detailed discussion on the BISP Nashonuma Programme and collaboration of BISP and provincial health departments to further enhance the outreach of the program.

Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted that the program was aimed at improving the nutritional status of pregnant women and children under two years of age. The initiative was designed to prevent stunting, improve weight gain during pregnancy, reduce anemia and micronutrient deficiencies, and raise awareness about maternal and early child health, she added.



PESHAWAR: Renowned Social Activist Ashraf Khan meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

Kp govt committed to revitalize Higher Education Sector: Secretary HED

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is fully committed to address the challenges faced by the higher education sector, particularly within the province's universities.

He praised the efforts of the Higher Education Task Force, led by Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq vice chancellor KMU, which is operating on an emergency basis to address these challenges.

Minister inspects development work at Kohat

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate on Wednesday inspected the ongoing scheme after completing the asphalt work on Shekhan Road in Kohat.

The Minister directed the timely completion of work of shoulders of the said road without compromising on the quality and quantity of work.



KARACHI: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) call on Minister of Health Sindh Azra Fazal Pechuho at Sindh Secretariat Karachi.

Governor KP contacts Pak envoy in Iran; expresses grief over tragic bus accident

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday expressed grief and sorrow over the traffic incident at Yazd city in Iran which claimed the lives of 28 Pakistani zaireen and injured 23 persons.

providing all possible assistance to the victims. Ambassador Tipu assured that every effort would be made to support the affected individuals, despite the accident site being 700 kilometers away from the consulate, said Governor Kundi.

Two killed, 7 injured in roof collapse in Bannu

BANNU (APP): Two women were killed and seven others sustained injuries while buried under the debris due to roof collapse in Khorgai Musakhel, area of Domel, Bannu. According to a private news channel, the incident took place when a roof of the house collapsed due to a lightning strike.

SHC summons all accused in Murtaza Bhutto murder case on Oct 01

KARACHI (Online): Sindh High Court (SHC) has summoned on October 01 all the accused in Mir Murtaza Bhutto murder case.

The court granted exemption for one day each to Shoaib Saddam and Wajid Durrani. Ibrahim Saif ud Din advocate counsel for the petitioner while opposing applications said this case is pending hearing since long which may be completed soon.



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Munam Zafar addresses to media persons during press conference, at Idara Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.

PWPA seminar highlights CM's vision to empower women

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Women Protection Authority (PWPA) organised a seminar at Punjab University (PU) on Wednesday to spread awareness regarding Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's vision to empower women.

Pakistan's chapter was officially launched at the university's Social Work Department, marking the formal beginning of the initiative in Pakistan. The PWPA chairperson, speaking at the event, said it was a significant step towards promoting digital literacy and gender equality in Pakistan.

Minister reviews registration process for Himat Card

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister for Social Welfare and Baitul-Mal, Sohail Shaikat Butt visited various parts of Rawalpindi Division to review registration of CM Punjab Himat Card package persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Syed Chowk, the minister directed the concerned teams to encourage the PWDs for maximizing registration for the Himat Card.

Free medical camps setup in Kacha

HYDERABAD (APP): On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad, Shahriyar Gul Memon, the Health Department and Livestock Department have set up free medical camps in various villages of Kacha.

International News

12 killed in fresh Israeli strike on school shelter

Monitoring Desk
GAZASTRIP: Gaza's civil defence agency said an Israeli strike on a school-turned-shelter killed at least 12 people on Tuesday, while the Israeli military said it struck a Hamas command centre.

children, fleeing the site after the strike. In recent weeks, the Israeli military has struck several schools across Gaza, primarily in Gaza City, accusing them of housing Hamas command centres, which the Palestinian group denies.

the bodies of six prisoners from a tunnel in Gaza's southern area of Khan Yunis after a battle with Palestinian fighters. The prisoners were Yagev Buchstab, Alexander Dancyg, Yoram Metzger, Nadav Poplewell, Chaim Perry, previously announced dead, and Avraham Munder, whose kibbutz of Nir Oz near Gaza announced his death earlier in the day.



Palestinians carry their children as they flee after an Israeli strike on a school housing displaced people, in the Rimal neighbourhood of central Gaza City.

Death 'the only certainty' for Gazans, says UN official

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: In war-ravaged Gaza, death appears to be the "only certainty" for 2.4 million Palestinians with no way to escape Israel's relentless bombardment, a UN official said Tuesday, recounting the growing desperation across the territory.

lutely devastating," Wateridge said from the Nuseirat area of central Gaza—a regular target of Israel's aerial assaults. Since fighting broke out in October, Israeli forces have pounded the besieged territory from the air, land and sea, reducing much of it to rubble.

Lebanon says five killed in fresh Israel strikes

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's health ministry said early Wednesday that Israeli strikes in the country's east killed one person and wounded 20 others, hours after it said four people were killed in the south. The strikes came more than 24 hours after Israel carried out similar raids deep inside east Lebanon and as tensions mounted in the wake of the Israeli killing of a top Hezbollah commander.

village of Nabi Sheet, without specifying what was targeted. A source from a local hospital told AFP that five children no older than 10, all from the same family, were among the wounded.

Afghan Taliban dismiss 280 men without beards from security forces

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: The Taliban's morality ministry has dismissed more than 280 members of the security force for failure to grow a beard and have detained more than 13,000 people in Afghanistan for "immoral acts" in the past year, officials said on Tuesday.

Blinken ends latest Mideast visit without a cease-fire, warning 'time is of the essence'

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken ended his ninth visit to the Middle East since the war in Gaza began without securing any major breakthrough for a cease-fire deal, warning on Tuesday that "time is of the essence" even as Hamas and Israel signaled that challenges remain.

Kyiv says its forces under heavy Russian attack in east Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's military said its forces had come under multiple Russian attacks over the course of Tuesday on the Toretsk and Pokrovsk fronts in eastern Ukraine. In a statement, the military said Russian forces attacked Ukrainian positions around Toretsk, including the settlement of Niu-York, but did not say what the outcome of that fight was.

Serial killer escapes from police custody in Kenya

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: Kenyan police launched a major manhunt on Tuesday after a man they claim has confessed to murdering and dismembering 42 women escaped from a Nairobi police cell, along with several other detainees.

Moscow sees one of Ukraine's largest drone attacks as fighting rages in Kursk and eastern Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Moscow came under one of the largest attacks yet by Ukrainian drones since the start of fighting in 2022, Russian authorities reported Wednesday, saying they destroyed all of those headed toward the capital. The drone attacks come as Ukrainian forces are continuing to push into Russia's western Kursk region.

strong defenses around the capital made it possible to shoot down all the drones before they hit their intended targets. Russia downed 45 Ukrainian drones overnight, including 11 over the Moscow region. Some Russian social media channels shared videos of drones apparently being destroyed by air defense systems, which then set off car alarms. Alexander Bogomaz, the governor of the Bryansk region, which borders Ukraine, reported a "mass" attack on his region but said that all 23 drones were destroyed.

Pro-Palestine protesters breach Democratic convention fence in Chicago

Monitoring Desk
CHICAGO: Thousands of mostly peaceful pro-Palestinian protesters marched in Chicago on the opening day of the Democratic National Convention on Monday, in a show of anger against the Biden administration's support for Israel in the Gaza conflict.

in handcuffs. Chicago police confirmed at a press conference that arrests were made but did not say how many. Chanting intensified ahead of the fence breach, as protesters reached a neighborhood park on Chicago's West Side and pushed to amplify their calls for a ceasefire. Amid the noise, the crowd turned its frustration toward Vice President Kamala Harris, referring to the Democratic candidate as "Killer Kamala".



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding country wide anti smuggling drive.

FAO workshop highlights key steps in Balochistan's Water Management overhaul

QUETTA (APP): The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) hosted a workshop in Quetta to discuss new policies and legislation aimed at revolutionizing water management in Balochistan. FAO gathered around 80 stakeholders in Quetta to discuss the Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Project (BIWRMDP), the IWRM Policy and Water Bill for Balochistan including representatives from Balochistan's irrigation, agriculture, forestry, and livestock departments, as well as media professionals and members of both local and international NGOs, said in a press release issued by FAO.

The workshop aimed to disseminate information about these new initiatives, which could significantly reshape how water resources are managed in the province. Developed with FAO's technical assistance and funded by the World Bank under the Balochistan Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Project (BIWRMDP), the IWRM Policy and Water Bill seek to modernize water governance in Balochistan. The initiatives are designed to create a legal framework that ensures the sustainable and fair distribution of water resources. This framework also aims to strengthen institutions, promote inclusive water management practices, and establish ef-

Asghar appeals to all political parties to support genuine demands of Chaman parlat

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial President of Awami National Party (ANP) Asghar Khan Achakzai has appealed to all political parties to support the genuine demands of Chaman parlat (protest sit-in).

He said that Chaman parlat is not desire of any individual or any party. Rather it is question of the livelihood of thousands of people.

We make the pledge not to speak against any political leader, religious and tribal personalities from the Chaman protest.

He urged the parlat

Govt decides not to abolish National Health Ministry

ISLAMABAD (INP): The government has decided not to abolish the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, sources said on Wednesday.

According to sources, some departments under the ministry will be merged instead and the ministry will be right-sized.

Sources revealed that the ministry will coordinate with international organizations and provinces to improve healthcare services. The government is also considering transferring employees of merged departments to other departments.



LAHORE: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Chairman, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Sajjad Ghani presenting a five million rupees cheque to Arshad Nadeem, Javelin Throw Olympian Gold Medalist during ceremony held at Wapda House in Lahore.

Irrigation Dept. initiates legal action against canal water pilfering in Naseerabad Div.

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Irrigation Department, Balochistan has initiated legal action against the pilferage of water in canals fall in the Naseerabad division.

According to the Irrigation Department's official sources, FIR has been registered against those involved in the pilferage of water and impeding flow of water illegally in different canals in Sohatpur district.

The FIR has been lodged against Samuallah, Yasir Khan, Samuallah, Muhammad Hamza and others by the Sub-Engineer, Irrigation (Drainage), Zafar Ali.

The Irrigation Department has warned that no one would be allowed to pilfer canal water. Besides, no one would be allowed to make breach in the canal or stop the flow of water in canals illegally, it was further warned.

Governor, Justice Jamal, Jan Jamali, others condole death of Younas Mandokhail

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, senior judge of Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Jamal Mandokhail, former Speaker and Governor, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali and a large number of other personalities visited the residence of former Chief Secretary, Muhammad Younas Mandokhail and expressed condolence with his family over his death, here on Wednesday.

The Governor and others also offered feteiha for the departed soul of Younas Mandokhail.

Those visited the residence of Younas Mandokhail for condolence and feteiha were included from different walks of life including parliamentarians, lawyers, civil servants, doctors and others.

Younas Mandokhail died after protracted illness in Quetta. Later, he was laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard in Zhob.

Those involved in smuggling will not be allowed to cause harm to national economy: PM

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif while directing to make more effective and speed up the steps against smuggling has said those involved in smuggling will not be allowed to cause harm to national economy.

"Use of modern technology to stem smuggling be ensured. The vehicles of transporters used in smuggling be confiscated and legal proceedings initiated against them beside facilitators and elements involved therein, he said this while chairing review meeting for prevention of smuggling in the country Wednesday.

It is good omen that smuggling has gone down due to effective actions by the respective institutions.

FBR, interior ministry and other institutions should forge more better cooperation among them. . .

A comprehensive strategy be worked out and presented for better opportunities of jobs to the people living in border areas, he stressed.

All the institutions should accelerate their efforts for complete elimination of smuggling, he added.

The meeting was briefed that a comprehensive campaign is underway under the Ministry of Interior to check smuggling of petroleum products, cigarettes, mobile phones, gold, tea, clothes, commodities, vehicle tires and spare parts. It was informed that a web portal has been launched for prevention of Sugar and Urea, while preparation of a mechanism for identification of non-custom paid vehicles and their mapping is also in final stages.

The meeting was apprised that fifty-four joint check posts have been established under the directives of the Prime Minister to curb smuggling.

Similarly, 212 vehicles of Afghan Transit Trade fleet, which were feared to be used in smuggling, have been identified and banned.

Bank guarantee has been made compulsory instead of only insurance guarantee for the Afghan Transit Trade.

The meeting was apprised that besides an overall significant decline in the smuggling of essential goods, smuggling of petroleum products has been curtailed to fifty percent while Sugar 80 percent.

It was said in the briefing the cost of the smuggled goods confiscated during the financial year 2023-24 stands at Rs 106 billion.

The trend for hoarding has also declined due to anti smuggling campaign in the country.

The participants were also informed about the action taken against the officers found involved in conniving in smuggling. The process of identification of elements involved in smuggling, transporters and their facilitators is underway speedily. Help is being taken from data base of NADRA, Excise and other institutions in this regard.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani presenting a shield to Chairman Draft Committee and Chief Engineer Canals Nasir Majeed at conclusion of National Water Resource Management Policy and Water Bill Workshop

Gross human rights violation in IIOJK, Palestine trial of conscience of modern world: Ayaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker NA Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Wednesday said that gross human rights violations in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and Palestine is the trial of the conscience of the modern world. "Severe Human Rights violations in IIOJK and Palestine warrant immediate attention of the civilized world" he expressed these views during his meeting with the President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, Belarus today.

He said that resolving the Kashmir issue as per resolutions of the United Nations Security Council is pivotal for regional peace and stability, and an immediate ceasefire in Gaza is also essential for ending the Palestinian Genocide, according to a news release received here.

He said that Pakistan is the least contributor to climate change but the most severely affected Nation due to the devastating impact of climate change.

He added, "The issue of global climate change re-

quires global efforts." While highlighting the friendly ties between both nations, he said that Pakistan and Belarus enjoy cordial ties based on shared interests.

He expressed his resolve to strengthen relations between both nations further. The Speaker added, "Pakistan is blessed with vast potential in energy and trade."

Ayaz Sadiq also said that Pakistan-Belarus Bilateral Relations are characterized by mutual respect. He further underscored that Pakistan-Belarus ties would expand through collaboration in economic, industrial, and agriculture sectors. During the meeting, matters related to enhancing bilateral relations, including trade and parliamentary relations, were deliberated in detail.

Both sides also expressed determination to further strengthen bilateral relations. The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko remarked that Belarus attached great importance to its close ties with Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: NDMA conducted the first National Industrial Disaster Preparedness & Response Exercise at NDMA HQs.

NDMA conducts first National Industrial Disaster Preparedness & Response drills

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) successfully conducted the first of its kind two-day National Industrial Disaster Preparedness & Response Exercise at NDMA headquarters. Chairman NDMA Lt General Inam Haider Malik inaugurated the Exercises.

The prime objective of National SimEx on Industrial Hazards was to highlight the importance of effective management through proactive decision-making and timely implementation of on-ground measures to minimize the impact of industrial incidents, a news release said.

The exercise underscored the need for a strengthened coordination mechanism to ensure timely preparedness efforts and foster collaboration between government entities and industrial partners. Participants included Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs), rescue agencies, and key players from the chemical and petroleum, oil & gas industries including Lucky Core Industries Limited, Sitara Chemical Industries Limited, Ittehad Chemicals Limited, NIMIR Industrial Chemicals Limited, Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited, Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited, Engro Fertilizer Company Limited, Pak-Arab Refinery Company Limited, Attock Refinery Limited, Pakistan Refinery Limited, Cynergycico Pakistan Limited, Sui Southern Gas Company Limited and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Company Limited.

Senior representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industries & Production, and Ministry of Defence Production also attended the two-day exercise, highlighting the event's significance and the collective commitment to enhancing industrial disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Participants lauded the efforts of NDMA and remarked this SimEx as a significant step towards building a resilient framework for industrial disaster management in Pakistan, ensuring that all stakeholders are well-prepared to handle potential emergencies effectively.

Shoib Nausherwani maintains: Govt. determined to remove backwardness of Balochistan, resolve issues of people

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoib Nausherwani has stated that the provincial government is determined to remove backwardness of the province and resolve issues of the people under leadership of Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

He was speaking to different delegations who called on him in his office here on Wednesday.

The Minister Finance heard the issues as raised by the members of delegation and assured to address them.

The Minister Finance said that he is fully aware of the issues being faced by the people of province and his constituency. He said that it is aim of his life to resolve the issues of people at their doorstep.

He said that removing backwardness of the province and resolving issues of people is included in top priorities of the government so as to put the province on path of development and prosperity.

He assured that our government would not leave any stone unturned to resolve issues of the people.

He said that he is a public representative and as such he would not disappoint the people at all. He also said that he believes in provision of facilities to the people and would always available to the people for the purpose.

PTA blames submarine cable fault for recent internet disruptions

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has claimed that a fault in a submarine cable is the primary reason behind the recent internet disruptions experienced across the country.

In a briefing to the Standing Committee on Information Technology, PTA Chairman Hafiz Rahman explained that a fault in one of the seven fiber optic cables bringing 7.5 terabits of data into Pakistan has caused the service disruptions. He stated that this particular cable is expected to be repaired by August 27.

Flood-damaged roads in Bela Tehsil restored

HUB (APP): The communication roads cut off due to heavy rains and floods in Bela Tehsil of Balochistan were restored on Wednesday.

According to DC Office, the restoration work began immediately after the communication link was disrupted last night under the direction of Secretary Communications and Construction Balochistan Lal Jan Jafar. The district administration of Lasbela and engineers from the Department of Communications and Construction worked tirelessly to restore the roads, particularly in Goth Ismailani, which was heavily affected by the floods. Deputy Commissioner Lasbela Humira Baloch stated that all staff of the Department of Communication and Construction are on alert and machinery is ready to address any further issues caused by the monsoon rains.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat presenting traditional stick to Abdul Rasheed Kakar for getting Pride of Performance in the field of education

Saleh directs to take steps for provision of healthcare facilities in all Govt's hospitals

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Secretary Health, Saleh Muhammad Baloch has underlined the need to take steps for provision of all possible healthcare facilities in the hospitals at the earliest.

He also directed to take steps to remove shortage of the medicines in the hospitals.

The Secretary said that it is our top priority to provide medical facilities to the people and for this, we have to work as team.

He also directed to ensure steps for procurement of the medicines as per the rules and regulations and that under the budget allocated for the financial year. He said that all available resources are being mobilized for the health sector according to the directives of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the Provincial Minister for Health. The Secretary was presiding over the meeting about procurement of the medicines in hospitals here on Wednesday. Those who were present in the meeting were included Director General Health, Dr Amin Mandokhail, Director MSD Dr Ismail Mirwani.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Finance Mir Shoib Nausherwani in a meeting with Additional Chief Secretary P&D Hafiz Abdul Basit

Comprehensive plan devised for success of Quetta anti-polio drive

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Quetta Lieutenant @ Saad Bin Asad presided over a meeting of DPEC, reviewed the monitoring, training, security and other arrangements of the anti-polio campaign to be started from September 10, 2024.

In the meeting, a comprehensive plan has designed to make the upcoming anti-polio campaign successful and to administrator the polio vaccine drops to all children under five years of age.

In a meeting, Assistant Commissioners City, Sariab, Sadar, Kuchlak, DHO, DDHO, District EPI Officer, Divisional EPI Officer, Union Council Coordinators were participated.

A detailed report of the previous campaign was reviewed in the meeting, in which effective measures were taken to remove the deficiencies.

It was also decided in the meeting that police lady constables will also perform duty along with the teams during the anti-

polio campaign starting from September 10 in Quetta.

It is decided that the parent or family who refuses to administer the polio vaccine drops will be arrested.

In the meeting, a report was also presented about the sensitive areas. During the campaign, announcement would be done from all mosques regarding the administration of immunization drops.

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Quetta said that no negligence will be tolerated during the anti-polio campaign. He said that parents have a responsibility to cooperate with the administration in vaccinating their children against polio.

Saad added that teachers and religious scholars should educate people about the harmful effects of the paralytic polio and adopt the preventive measures to become polio-free. He urged that society members to play their role for the complete eradication of polio.



QUETTA: Former Chief Minister Balochistan Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch addressing officers at CPO office as chief guest