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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing the inaugural ceremony of Buna-Raast Connectivity Project Implementation Phase.

Will announce a five-year economic plan very soon as parameters finalised: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that he would unveil a five-year economic revival plan in the coming weeks as broad parameters had already been finalised through months-long deliberations with the stakeholders.

The prime minister, addressing the launching ceremony of the Buna-Raast connectivity project, said the "Home-Grown Economic Program" would envisage measures to boost the country's economy by uplifting agriculture, information technology, and other untapped sectors.

"Our program is under discussion and I will announce it very soon. Great work has gone into it. It involves discussions and deliberations with all stakeholders over the last many months. Recently we have finalised its broad parameters. By next week or so, we will finalise it. I will go to the people to announce the program for the next five years," the prime minister remarked.

Highlighting the challenges of reforms in the Federal Board of Revenue and power sector, he told the gathering that he was personally monitoring the digitisation of FBR and that the government was hopeful of positive outcomes of power sector reforms.

"There is no magic band. It is all about hard work, sacrifice, blood and sweat. Our nation is robust and strong. Our people are full of hope and energy. Let us put our work together. Let us not waste time on debates as we had done in the past. Let us now use this time for actual implementation on the ground. Insha Allah, you will see we will have dividends and will find our place in the comity of nations through hard work, hard work and hard work," he said.

CM issues orders to get Killa Saifullah patient treated from abroad at Govt's expenses

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has issued orders for treatment of a patient belonging to Killa Saifullah from abroad at the government's expenses.

According to the spokesman of provincial government, Shahid Rind, the cervical spinal cord of Muhammad Ashraf would be got treated from the proposed hospital in abroad.

In this regard, the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti issued directives for medical treatment of the patient besides directing to the Health Department Balochistan for completing necessary action.

The spokesman of Balochistan government assured that the provincial government would get Muhammad Ashraf treated from abroad.

On government's plea Supreme Court removes controversial paragraphs in Mubarak Sani case

CJP Isa-led bench says expunged paras can't be cited as precedent; JUI-F to observe "thanksgiving day"

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered the removal of the controversial paragraphs in the ruling of Mubarak Sani case.

The Supreme Court heard an urgent application from the Punjab government, requesting the removal of certain portions from its July 24 verdict in the Mubarak Ahmad Sani case.

A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, took up the matter. The other members

were Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

The bench accepted the Punjab government's application and ordered the removal of paragraphs No 7, 42 and 49-C.

On Feb 6, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, annulled the conviction of Mubarak Sani who had been charged in 2019 under the Punjab Holy Quran (Printing and Recording) (Amendment) Act.

The court observed in its ruling that the offence for which the defendant was convicted was not actually criminalised until 2021. As a result, the Supreme Court ordered the petitioner's immediate release.

This decision sparked what was described by the government and legal circles as a "malicious and defamatory campaign" against the chief justice, leading the Supreme Court to issue a public clarification.

President, PM, Interior Minister condemn 11 cops martyred as bandits attack with rockets in RYK

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): At least 11 policemen were martyred and seven others injured in an attack on police mobile vehicles by dacoits of Kacha near Machka police camp II in Rahim Yar Khan.

A group of dacoits launched the attack when one of the vehicles in the convoy broke down. Some of the policemen were also missing after the incident.

The culprits first attacked the police vehicles with rocket launchers before opening fire. Injured policemen have been shifted to Sheikh Zayed Hospital in Rahim Yar Khan for treatment.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the attack on a police convoy in Rahim Yar Khan.

A press release from the President's House, the President stated that the President extended his condolences to the families of the police officers, who were martyred in the attack.

The president emphasised the need for strict action against criminals in the Kacha area and warned that attacks on personnel of police and law enforcement agencies would not be tolerated.

The president paid tribute to the martyred policemen and prayed for their elevated ranks. He also wished for the speedy recovery of those injured in the incident.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has strongly condemned attack on Police convoy in Rahim Yar Khan.

In a statement, he expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of police personnel in the attack.

The Prime Minister prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks and patience for their families.

Governor urges people to develop Zhob as exemplary education city

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that we are determined to materialize the dream of making Zhob as education city.

The Governor was speaking to the delegation of Government Teachers Association (GTA) who called on him under leadership of Maulana Mashhood Shah here on Thursday.

He said that it is his mission to impart quality education to the people at their doorstep. He said it is top condition to make easy access to the educational facilities and infrastructure in remote areas, besides creating educational environment there.

He urged the people to develop Zhob as exemplary education city. Let's change Zhob such an exemplary education city which gives importance to education, he insisted.

He stressed that we have to brighten the minds of new generation with modern knowledge so that they may lead successful life and take new strides of development.

In order to achieve the good objective, the Governor exhorted to all conscious segments of the society to come forward and play their role.

Earlier, the Governor said that the people having the vision of future and spirit of public service know that the new opportunities of development and change are created where there education grows.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Shahab Ali Shah meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Special anti-polio campaign to be kicked off in Balochistan from September 9: EOC

Independent Report

QUETTA: The special polio immunization campaign is scheduled to be launched in Balochistan from September 9, 2024.

The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for polio eradication Balochistan sources informed that the anti-polio campaign has been planned in backdrop of the cases reported in the province during current year.

It may be mentioned here that in all 12 cases of polio have so far been reported in the province.

The sources said that the necessary arrangements are being made for the upcoming anti-polio campaign in the province.

The sources said that there have been reports about the fake finger marking by some teams engaged in the anti-polio campaign.

According to the sources, action is being taken against over 500 teams of the Quetta bloc on the charges of involvement in the fake finger marking.

The sources said that the cases of refusals are also being reported in which parents refuse to get their children administered the anti-polio vaccine.

Some people also reportedly hide their children when the anti-polio teams visit their homes for immunization, the sources revealed.

COAS cautions students against perils of misinformation and fake news in digital age

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Thursday emphasized the significance of education, critical thinking, and innovation in addressing contemporary security challenges.

He said this during a meeting with a delegation of 44 students from Harvard Business School (HBS) Trek-2024, representing nine different countries, who called on the COAS here at the General Headquarters, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The interactive session provided a platform to share perspectives on Pakistan's pivotal role in promoting regional peace and stability, its unwavering efforts against terrorism, and its commitment to upholding democratic values.

The Army Chief highlighted Pakistan's vast potential and encouraged the attendees to form their own opinions based on personal experiences.



Commander Pakistan Fleet Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi exchanging views with Real Admiral Saleh Bin Abdullah Alamri of Royal Saudi Navy Force during his visit to Karachi

Two children killed, five injured after gunmen attack school van in Attock

ATTOCK (APP): Some unidentified attackers Thursday opened indiscriminate firing on a school van and killed at least two students and injured five others and the driver in Dhari Kot area of the district.

The police sources said a van carrying students to Malik Anwar Ul Haq Memorial School, when the culprits opened fire and killed Ramin Akhter, aged 2 years and Arova, 10.

They said five other students including Mohib Ali, Sumaira, Shazif, Haseeb Ali, Shazim and the van's driver, Afzal 48 received injuries in the firing incident. The outlaws fled from the scene, they added.

Rescue 1122 team shifted the bodies and injured to District Headquarters Hospital.

Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif took notice of the incident and directed the authorities concerned to take urgent action to nab the culprits.

Royal Saudi Naval Forces delegation visits Karachi

Independent Report

KARACHI: Delegation of Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) visited Karachi.

The delegation was led by the Commander Jeddah Naval Base, Rear Admiral Saleh bin Abdullah Al-amri.

The delegation discussed matters of mutual interest including bilateral cooperation during their call on with Commander Coast Vice Admiral Raja Rab Nawaz and Commander Pakistan Fleet Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi.

Rizwan Sheikh assumes charge as Pakistan's ambassador to US

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to the United States, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, assumed responsibilities of his new assignment Wednesday, saying that cementing the US-Pak relationship, strengthening economic ties and enhancing



people-to-people contacts would be his top priorities.

Speaking to the mission officers, he also underscored the importance of the Pakistani community in the U.S., describing them as the country's valuable asset.



HUB: Chairperson BISP Senator, Mrs. Rubina Khalid chairing a meeting with the members of LIEDA.

Chairperson of BISP inaugurates mobile registration service in Hub

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Rubina Khalid inaugurated the mobile registration service in Hub on Thursday.

The inaugural ceremony of mobile Registration service was attended by the Advisor to Chief Minister, Mir Ali Hasan Zehri, local personalities, government officials and workers of the Pakistan Peoples Party.

According to the concerned officials, at least four mobile vans are included for registration of the deserving women from Hub district for the BISP.

The process of registration would be easier for the deserving women belonging to the remote areas of Hub district in the BISP through the mobile service.

It was informed that some 25,000 deserving women have the facility of BISP in Hub district so far.

Achakzai says Constitution allows us to hold public meetings, processions

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief of Pashtoonkwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP), Mehmood Khan Achakzai has said that the Constitution of Pakistan allows us to hold public meetings and procession. In a statement issued here on Thursday, he said that our public gatherings were not aimed to abuse anyone but for justified rights of countrymen.

Mehmood Khan Achakzai said that police have their own duty but they were employees of state and not employees of any personality of political party.

MoU signed with Google Tech Valley: Information Dept. set to become first department stepping in to paperless system thanks to Google Workspace

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Secretary Informational Department, Government of Balochistan, Imran Khan has stated that the Information Department is going to become first Department of the province which is taking first step towards the system of work without paper.

For the purpose, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with the Google Tech Valley. The Tech Valley is also working together with the Information Department in the project.

The Secretary Information said that the Department has the intention to move towards the paper-free work fully.

The modern and effective methodology would be promoted by reducing the traditional work through the new system.

The Secretary Information was presiding over the important review meeting under the aegis of Directorate General of Public Relations here on Thursday.

The Director General of Public Relations, Muhammad Noor Khetran and other officers participated in the meeting.

The meeting discussed about the use of Google workspace and promotion of the paperless work in the department.

During the course of meeting, it was told that 30 Google accounts have so far been developed for the department under which, the business account, video conferencing, live chat and other facilities are being provided.

The Secretary Information maintained that different features of the Google workspace such as video conferencing, live chat and live editing of the documents would be used for making the daily affairs effective.



HUB: Spokesman of President Asif Ali Zardari for Balochistan, Advisor for Trade and Industry Mir Ali Hassan Zehri addressing a ceremony

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Signs of trouble

The state — both its civilian and military components — needs to take note of the troubling developments on the militancy front, before the country is dragged into a new cycle of terrorist violence.

The signs are not good, as an increasing number of security personnel are being targeted in the field, while militant groups have begun to make inroads in areas thought to have been cleared of the terrorist menace.

At least three soldiers were martyred in a gunfight with militants in Bajaur on Sunday, close to the Afghan border. The latest casualties indicate the grim reality that Pakistan has been losing an unacceptably high number of men in confrontations with terrorists.

Moreover, in KP's Tirah valley, there are disturbing reports that fighters belonging to the banned TTP and Lashkar-i-Islam have begun patrols in certain areas. LI had been active in the region for years; its dreaded leader Mangal Bagh was killed in Afghanistan in 2021. The TTP and LI have combined forces in the past, and the reactivation of the latter outfit is a fresh headache for the state.

Where troop fatalities are concerned, as this paper has highlighted previously, better gear and training are required to save lives. As per media figures quoting ISPR, at least 139 troops have been martyred while confronting terrorists up till July 2024. Militants employ asymmetrical methods, which are difficult to counter for traditional militaries. Even the American and Soviet militaries could do little to defeat foes using asymmetrical methods. Therefore, perhaps crack new units need to be trained in such methods to outsmart the militants in the field, while intelligence-based operations should neutralise terrorists before they can strike. Regarding the patrols of terrorist groups, this development should not be taken lightly by the state. Locals in the Tirah area told this paper that while TTP and LI fighters were moving around with freedom, the police and Levies had 'vanished'. Moreover, residents said militants were demanding food and shelter from them, which the locals could only refuse at their own peril.

The administration cannot leave people in the affected areas at the mercy of terrorists. The writ of the state must be established forthwith as no violent non-state actor can be allowed to set up parallel governance structures. It should be remembered that militants started taking over territory in Waziristan and Malakand in similar fashion. These developments morphed into full-blown insurgencies that required the state to invest much blood and treasure to quell. The same mistake must not be repeated. Perhaps the powers that be should redirect their attention from 'digital terrorists' and hone in on the actual terrorists who have risen up against the state in the past, and appear intent on doing so again.

A golden buffalo

F.S. Aijazuddin

The Summer Olympics 2024 are over. The victors have returned to savour their spoils, the vanquished to count their losses.

These Olympics had 10,714 athletes competing before a worldwide audience of 30.6 million viewers — truly a global spectator sport.

None but Olympians know the price they have had to pay — for full-time training, co-aching, medical, travel and other costs, apart from being deprived of a regular income.

The International Olympic Committee does not grant any awards beyond the medals themselves. It believes that the spirit of the Olympics is enough: "It is not to win but to take part; it is not the triumph but the struggle."

Before the Paris Olympics began, the World Athletics Federation announced that \$2.4m (\$50,000 each) would be given to each gold medalist in the 48 athletic events.

National Olympic committees supplement this with incentives to their own nationals. Hong Kong topped the list with \$768,000. (It won two golds.) Singapore offered \$745,000, but that was clearly not enough. It won only one bronze. The lowest incentive (\$13,000) came from Australia, whose athletes won 18 golds. But as one Olympian put it: "A gold medal is a wonderful thing, but if you're not enough without it, you'll never be enough with it."

Each country honours its Olympians in different ways — some with victory parades, others with cash rewards, a few with national awards. Far-sighted nations support their athletes on their way up Mount Olympus. The myopic wait until they have succeeded, and then applaud them

on the way down. Pakistan's Olympian Arshad Nadeem has been smothered with garlands and suffocated with banquets ever since his triumphant return. The cornucopia of gifts emptied upon him have included a cash of Rs280m, plus cars and other gifts.

In Punjab, the governor gave him cash of Rs2m and a car. The chief minister Punjab presented a cheque of Rs100m and the key to a Honda Civic car '92.97'. The chief minister also presented Nadeem's coach Salman I. Butt with a cheque of Rs5m.

In Sindh, the chief minister awarded Nadeem Rs50m. The Karachi mayor announced a Rs50m cash award for Nadeem and promised to establish an athletics academy named after the Olympian. The Sindh sports minister gave a cheque, both from his department and personal funds. The local government minister declared that an important road in Karachi would be named after Arshad Nadeem. The planning and development minister gifted a car to Arshad Nadeem's mother.

Army Chief General Asim Munir announced the allotment of a residential plot at DHA Multan (once a huge mango orchard).

Wapda has awarded Rs1m to Nadeem while his employer Lesco has proposed his promotion to the 19th grade. And President Zardari promised to award him the country's highest civilian honour — the Hilal-i-Imtiaz.

It is proposed to grant the Sitara-i-Imtiaz to Salman Butt (Nadeem's coach), and also to Nadeem's mother. While her efforts, like Nadeem's, were a solo achievement, some might cavil whether a SI award should be distributed so freely. They might say it demeans its stature. Apart, that is, from it being regarded as a re-

buke to shared parenthood. Surely, Nadeem's father Muhammad Arshad deserves acknowledgement too. He supported his son from his modest, honest earnings for 36 years as a construction labourer.

Nadeem has asked the government for a modern track and field stadium and a university for women in his hometown — Mian Channu.

In all this maelstrom of flattery, Nadeem has retained his se-nse of humour. When asked about the buffalo gifted to him by his father-in-law, Nadeem re-plied: "I was a bit surprised [...] I wondered since my father-in-law is a very rich person and has a lot of land... if only he had given me four to five acres of farmland instead of the buffalo".

The rustic father-in-law may feel miffed. Having given Nadeem first his daughter and now a healthy buffalo, in Mian Channu that is regarded as largesse enough.

Hopefully, all the promises made to Arshad Nadeem will be honoured. He should heed the advice of the late Prince Philip who had experience in such matters.

Prince Philip visited Lahore in the 1990s to raise funds for the World Wildlife Fund (of which he was president). He attended an auction of paintings by local artists. As soon as the auction ended, he took the Pakistani auctioneer aside and advised him to collect the money before the successful bidders left the event. "Be quick. They tend to change their minds once they have had their photographs taken with me."

The ancient Greeks rewarded their victorious Olympians with a crown woven from fresh laurel leaves.

They found it cheaper than cash, and handy the morning after as fodder for the buffalo. — Courtesy Dawn

Roof of dignity

Dr Noman Ahmed

In a recent move, the Sindh cabinet approved Rs10.065 billion to resettle all those uprooted along Gujjar, Orangi and Mahmoodabad nullahs. The various demolition drives conducted in recent times razed thousands of houses, rendering scores homeless. The matter landed in the Supreme Court; specific directives were issued to the provincial government in the judgement on Oct 25, 2021, as well as other rulings. These verdicts lay down the concept and procedure of developing a resettlement scheme. Based on the submission of its reports, the Sindh government was directed by the apex court to provide land and essential infrastructure to the affected at the earliest.

A robust campaign was launched by the Karachi Bachao Tehreek, which demanded housing for demolition-affected people. Apart from those left to suffer along the three nullahs, many others still need a proper response, such as the victims of the anti-encroachment drive for the Karachi Circular Railway who are still running from pillar to post for some relief. Besides, the listing and verification process of the nullah affectees has been questioned by residents and community leaders in the neighbourhoods; it was argued that only bulldozed houses were counted, not the households that lived in them as many structures were home to two or three families. This may trigger numerous conflicts when the construction work begins.

Additionally, other concerns must be addressed with a focus on lessons learnt from previous resettlement endeavours. For instance, despite transportation and housing ex-

perts highlighting the enormous number of houses and households earmarked for demolition and displacement in the Lyari Expressway Resettlement Project — a joint initiative of the federal and provincial governments — the authorities went ahead thoughtlessly. Over a quarter of a million were displaced.

The now defunct City District Government Karachi announced the allocation of plots measuring 80 square yards with Rs50,000 for every household. Four sites were allotted in Taiser Town, Hawkesbay and Baldia Town and an estimate of 14,811 plots was provided. But the affectees, claiming that their numbers were far greater, approached the court. In the end, the government provided 30,743 plots on 1,234 acres of land. The overall cost of the rehabilitation project rose significantly. It is, therefore, important that utmost care is taken by the authorities during reviews of the actual affectees' records. Political interference and influence have to be thwarted for transparent allocation of land to the affected.

Moreover, construction requires comprehensive urban planning and design input. The authorities would do well to remember that a physical plan includes road layouts, right of way for buried infrastructure, neighbourhood parks and playgrounds, commercial areas, educational and healthcare spaces. An urban design exercise to accommodate mixed-use development is also considered necessary.

At present, Taiser Town is a sparsely populated area with low-density, low-rise development. In 20 years, this locality will be under pressure to lodge more residents, resulting in haphazard densification. This should be tackled in due

course with a larger plan comprising reserved areas for medium- and high-density developments for the locality.

In sum, without a forward-looking and technically sound urban design scheme, an isolated resettlement project cannot deliver appropriate living and working conditions for residents and visitors. Another crucial aspect is the availability of social support; eviction affectees are traumatised and need counselling so that they can connect with the housing scheme and become active participants in the decision-making process.

There should be more organisations such as Saibaan to mobilise communities and Khuda ki Basti in Karachi and other cities must be remembered as model blueprints that can be replicated. The welfare association enabled low-income groups to formulate infrastructural choices and arranged for affordable technical assistance with donations.

While road infrastructure and water supply are vital, settlers will be dependent on water tankers and informal paratransit mobility in the initial years. The average person now uses rickshaws and employed youth, as riders, service providers and small-scale entrepreneurs, have motorcycles. All the government needs to do is develop roads to link settlements to the city as connectivity alleviates the need for off-grid electricity and LPG gas depots. A technically viable, socially compatible and administratively accommodating approach towards vital development initiatives carves out comprehensive templates, which can be implemented across the country for many years to come. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Digitization of E-commerce sector, government's top priority: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Arab Monetary Fund Dr. Fahad M Alturki Thursday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and discussed matters relating to mutual concerns.

The prime minister highlighted that Pakistan and Arab countries enjoy long standing brotherly relations that were further strengthening with the passage of time.

He said the Government of Pakistan was taking steps to legally bring the foreign remittances to the country. "The digitization of E-Commerce sector and the

economy is top priority of the government," he said adding that a large number of Pakistanis were residing in the Gulf countries who send a large amount of foreign remittances to Pakistan.

The prime minister said that setting up a digital connection between Pakistan and the Middle East with the cooperation of Raast and Buna was a welcoming sign.

Buna-Raast connectivity project will make the digital transactions in the country more effective, PM Shehbaz said adding that "this important step would help regularizing the flow

of foreign exchange reserves in the country and improve the digital governance system".

Transfer of the foreign remittances from abroad to Pakistan would become easier with the help of Buna-Raast project, he said adding that "Buna-Raast project reflects our joint vision".

Chairperson Arab Monetary Fund Dr. Fahad M Alturki said that Pakistan was the first country outside Arab World that had connected with the Arab Monetary Fund project Buna. He said with the help of Buna-Raast, the economy of both sides would further develop.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Arab Monetary Fund Dr. Fahad M Alturki calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan achieved 'Macroeconomic stability,' economic indicators showing positive trends: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday said that the countries achieved micro-economic stability and all the economic indicators showing positive trends.

He said that currently, the country is going through a phase of economic stability and the government will be led on the path of sustainable economic growth with a good economic foundation.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said this while addressing the Inaugural

Ceremony of Buna-Raast Connectivity Project Implementation Phase here.

He said that all economic indicators, including foreign reserves, workers remittances, policy rates, exchange rate, revenue collection and twins deficits including Current Account are going positive, leading towards growth and adding that foreign investors are showing confidence on the Pakistan economy.

Aurangzeb said that "We have two months import cover and the exchange rate is also stable."

He said that during

the last two months, foreign companies and potential investors are showing their interest to make investment in the different sectors of the economy.

The minister said that the government is working on the digital economy and through the digitization of the economy, "We prioritize documenting the local economy."

He said that because of prudent economic policies of the government and through reforms and administrative measures the country received the \$3 billion workers' remittances in the last month of July 2024.

Export of sports goods increases 12.51% in July 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): The export of sports goods from the country witnessed an increase of 12.51 percent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2024-25) as compared to the exports of the corresponding last year.

The country exported sports goods worth US\$ 29.358 million during July 2024 as opposed to the export of US\$ 26.093 million during July 2023, showing growth of 12.51

percent, according to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Among the sports products, the exports of footballs rose by 14.20 percent, surging from US\$ 15.565 million to US\$ 17.775 million during the month under review.

The gloves exports also increased 24.24 percent by going up from US\$ 3.707 million last year to US\$ 4.606 million, the PBS data revealed.

SCCI delegation meets minister for industries

SIALKOT (APP): A detailed meeting between a delegation of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI) and Minister for Industries, Commerce, Investment and Skills Development Punjab Chaudhry Shafay Hussain was held on Thursday, which discussed issues of restoration of cancelled plots of SEPZ, waiver of late construction and maintenance charges, execution of Sialkot Industrial Zone and allocation of funds for sustainable operations of Business Facilitation.

Enhanced efforts propel Pakistani agricultural exports to China

ISLAMABAD (APP): Many Pakistani seed companies have cooperated with Chinese counterparts to carry out hybrid rice breeding on a large scale, and have cultivated a variety of hybrid rice that adapts to the planting conditions in different regions, and their export competitiveness continues to increase. In addition to rice, vegetables such as onions, peppers, tomatoes, and fruits such as mangoes and cherries that come from the south Asian country, are also quite

competitive in the international market.

"The government is closely following the trends in the international agricultural product market as well as actively coordinating relevant measures with exporters. With the active promotion of various departments, Pakistan's agricultural product exports will further grow," noted Waheed Ahmed, chairman of All Pakistan Fruit & Vegetable Exporters Importers and Merchants Association.

Rains good for paddy and sugarcane crops

LAHORE (APP): Recent rains have left positive impact on paddy and sugarcane crops while cotton and vegetables growers must follow the Agriculture Department's guidelines to protect their crops from negative effects of rains. A spokesman for the Agriculture Department said here on Thursday that paddy crop had been cultivated on more than 6 million acres of land in Punjab. He said recent rains had left positive impact on rice crop. In Punjab sugarcane had been cultivated on more than 2 million acres of land.

EU's GSP-Plus status to Pak significant for increasing trade in both sides: Kionka

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador said

Talking to APP, the Ambassador of the European Union (EU) to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka on Thursday said the European Union's Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus status (GSP+) to Pakistan is an exemplary step for increasing economic and trade cooperation between the two sides. "Pakistan and the European Union are major trading partners and Pakistan's annual exports with the EU are 30 percent of its total exports, which is far below its potential and needs to be increased", the

Ambassador said. Talking to APP, the Ambassador of Pakistan said that after getting GSP-Plus status trade between Pakistan and the European Union has increased manifold and the role of the private sector is significant for increasing the trade volume on both sides.

She said that the private sector, including the Chambers of Commerce, should play its due role in this regard, and there is a need to increase both economic and commercial activities on both sides.

FPCCI & GIZ signed MoU setup to RBH at FPCCI

Jam & German Minister for Economic Cooperation witness ceremony

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI and Ms. Maria Jose Poddey, Country Director, GIZ Pakistan, have signed the MoU to establish Responsible Business Helpdesk (RBH) at FPCCI in the esteemed presence of Mr. Jam Kamal

support of German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for its substantial contribution to Pakistan's economic development. The RBH platform, supported by BMZ, is instrumental in helping textile sector of Pakistan to adapt to the new EU regulations, ensuring that Pakistani exporters meet international standards of human and environmental responsibility. Mr. Jam Kamal Khan, Honorable Federal Minister for Commerce, Pakistan, elaborated that the government of Pakistan is committed to promote international best practices and human rights standards in Pakistan to enable swift growth in Pakistani exports.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a virtual meeting with Dr. Adnan Chihwan, Group CEO of Dubai Islamic Bank to discuss Pakistan economic trajectory and explore potential avenues for increased investment in the country.



LAHORE (APP): Recent rains have left positive impact on paddy and sugarcane crops while cotton and vegetables growers must follow the Agriculture Department's guidelines to protect their crops from negative effects of rains. A spokesman for the Agriculture Department said here on Thursday that paddy crop had been cultivated on more than 6 million acres of land in Punjab. He said recent rains had left positive impact on rice crop. In Punjab sugarcane had been cultivated on more than 2 million acres of land.

Kundi highlights importance of funds transparency for good governance

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday highlighted the importance of ensuring transparent use of funds for good governance in the province. The Governor said this in a meeting with Nasiruddin Sarwar, the Accountant General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here at Governor House. During the meeting, Sarwar briefed the Governor on the performance of his office. The discussions focused on financial matters, emphasizing the correct and transparent use of public funds. The audit systems for public sector universities and provincial institutions

were also discussed. Governor Kundi on this occasion said that transparent use of funds for good governance in the province is need of the hour for the uplift of all sectors. He acknowledged the significant role of the Accountant General's Office in maintaining transparency in the province's economic affairs. Meanwhile, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi in a meeting with a four-member delegation from the Naghman Ultralight Club and Sports Flying Club, led by pilot Qazi Tufail, included Qazi Sajjad, Azad Khan, and Babar Khan. During the meeting, Governor Kundi praised the club for its positive activities and expressed

that the club's promotion could attract global attention to the province. He acknowledged the club's efforts to continue its activities despite challenging conditions, noting that such initiatives could present Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a new and positive light to the international community. The Governor assured that every effort would be made to address and resolve the club's challenges. The delegation briefed the Governor on the club's history, explaining that it was established in 2009 and operated from the Peshawar University Botanical Garden in Azra Khel until 2012.



PESHAWAR: Accountant General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Naseeruddin Sarwar meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

No religion permits violence: Ramesh Singh

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora said on Thursday that no religion permitted violence. In his special message on the International Day Commemorating Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, he said there was no religion that encouraged violence against people of different beliefs. The minister condemned violence on the basis of religion and belief. He emphasised that people around the world, including Muslims, are being targeted due to their religion, with the rise in Islamophobia being a prime example. For decades, Muslims in Kashmir and Palestine have been subjected to violence based on their beliefs. Ramesh Arora highlighted that Pakistan gives equal respect to followers of all religions and beliefs.

Constable martyred, dacoit killed in police encounter

FAISALABAD (APP): A police constable was martyred while a dacoit was killed and his accomplice managed to escape after an encounter in the area of Thikriwala police station. Police spokesman Talish Abbas Jutt said here on Thursday that eagle squad of Thikriwala police station witnessed a suspect motorcycle carrying two persons after noon and signalled them to stop near Godawara Chowk Jhang Road but the motorcyclists opened fire which caused serious injuries to the constable Abid Ali.

Governor Punjab calls on Karbala Governor in Iraq

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on Thursday called on his counterpart in Karbala Engr. Naseef Al-Khattabi during his visit to Iraq. According to the information shared by the Punjab Governor's media cell here, both the dignitaries discussed matters of mutual interest, provision of facilities to Pakistani pilgrims and promotion of bilateral relations in the fields of trade, culture and education during the meeting. Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan said that Pakistan and Iraq have deep brotherly relations due to common religion and culture. He said that Pakistan and Iraq are determined to increase relations in every field, especially trade. He said that there are many opportunities to increase bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Iraq in the fields of trade, tourism, culture and education. Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan also invited Karbala Governor Engr. Naseef Al-Khattabi to visit Pakistan. Karbala Governor Engr. Naseef Al-Khattabi said that both countries enjoy fraternal relations. He reiterated his determination to take the trade, tourism and cultural relations between Pakistan and Iraq to new heights. The Governor Karbala presented a commemorative shield to the Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on Thursday called on his counterpart in Karbala Engr. Naseef Al-Khattabi during his visit to Iraq.

SACM directs to expedite work on Jehangira-Swabi highway

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Industries, Commerce, and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher has directed the acceleration of the pace of construction work on the expansion project of Swabi-Jehangira highway here on Thursday. The project is being executed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority (PKHA). ensure smooth traffic flow and minimize the risk of accidents. He issued these directives while chairing a meeting to review the progress of construction work on the expansion project of the Jehangira-Swabi highway here on Thursday. The project is being executed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority (PKHA).



KARACHI: Paramedical staff prepare an isolation ward set up as a preventative measure at a hospital, following Pakistan's health ministry has confirmed a case of m.pox in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, in the Provincial Capital.

KP govt, Save the Children International inaugurate new girls model school in Swat

PESHAWAR (APP): The Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Khan Tarakai and Muhammad Khuram Gondal, Country Director, Save the Children International officially inaugurated the newly constructed Government Girls Model School in Karira Jambal, Swat on Thursday. The school was developed through a collaborative effort between Save the Children International (SCI) and the Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP), in partnership with the Elementary and Secondary Education Department KP and the District Education Office (Female), Swat.

AIOU extends admission date for BS program

FAISALABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University has extended the date for admission to BS programme till September 5. Regional Director Dr Bashir Ahmad Samim said here on Thursday that the university had taken a decision to facilitate students seeking admission to BS programme (face to face) in autumn semester. Earlier, the last date for admissions was set at August 20. The admissions to BS program (face to face) are being granted in the following subjects: Botany, Chemistry (evening), Environmental Sciences, Bio-Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Health and Physical Education, Instructional Design and Technology, Human Nutrition and Diets, Physics (Data Science Mines), Computer Science, Information Technology, Microbiology and Statistics.

LDA, TEPA & MCL seal 70 properties in operation

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA), Traffic Enforcement II sealed over 70 properties. The TEPA Enforcement Wing conducted operations on Faisal Town Main Boulevard, Abu Al Sufhani Road, PIA Road, Shadiwal to Khokhar Chowk, and in Johar Town. The sealed properties included well-known brands, tire shops, showrooms, private offices, private schools, shops, and food outlets. Additionally, private banks, restaurants, clinics, bakeries, coffee shops, and other properties were also sealed during the operation.

11 dead, 1319 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 11 people were killed and 1,319 injured in 1,242 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 560 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 759 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed 756 drivers, 42 underage drivers, 154 pedestrians.

International News

Putin accuses Ukraine of trying to strike Russia's Kursk nuclear power plant

Kursk nuclear plant is one of Russia's top atomic power stations

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin on Thursday accused Ukraine of trying to strike Russia's Kursk nuclear power plant in an overnight attack and said Moscow had informed the U.N. nuclear safety watchdog about the situation. Putin, who did not provide further details about the incident or provide documentary evidence to back up his assertion, made the comments at a meeting of senior officials. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine whose lightning incursion into Kursk, the biggest into Russia by a foreign power since World War Two, saw thousands of Ukrainian troops punch through Russia's western border on Aug. 6, apparently catching Moscow by surprise. The Kursk plant is one of Russia's top nuclear power stations. It supplies about half of the electricity used in the Black Earth region of southern Russia. It is located on the Seym River near the town of Kurchatov, named after Soviet nuclear physicist Igor Kurchatov, in Russia's western region of Kursk. Ukrainian forces launched a cross-border incursion in the Kursk region on Aug. 6. The plant has four Soviet graphite-moderated RBMK-1000 reactors - the same design as those at the Chernobyl nuclear plant which in 1986, when part of the Soviet Union,

became the scene of the world's worst nuclear disaster. Reactor Number 1, which dates from 1976, was shut down at the Kursk plant in 2021 to operate in non-generation mode. Reactor Number 2, which dates from 1979, was shut down in 2024. Reactor Number 3, from 1983, and Reactor Number 4, from 1985, are both operational. Construction of Kursk-2, essentially new reactors of the VVER-TOI type, was begun in 2018. The two reactors are not operational yet. Alexei Smirnov, acting governor of the Kursk region, told Putin at the same meeting that the situation at the Kursk nuclear power station was stable.



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting on situation in Belgorod, Kursk and Bryansk regions following an incursion of Ukrainian troops in the course of Russia-Ukraine conflict, via video link at the Novo-Ogaryovo state residence outside Moscow, Russia.

Ukraine attacks Moscow in one of largest ever drone strikes on Russian capital

MOSCOW: Ukraine attacked Moscow on Wednesday with at least 11 drones that were shot down by air defences in what Russian officials called one of the biggest drone strikes on the capital since the war in Ukraine began in February 2022. The war, largely a grinding artillery and drone battle across the fields, forests and villages of eastern Ukraine, escalated on Aug. 6 when Ukraine sent thousands of soldiers over the border into Russia's western Kursk region. For months, Ukraine has also fought an increasingly damaging drone war against the refineries and airfields of Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter, though major drone attacks on the Moscow region - with a population of over 21 million - have been rarer. Russia's defence ministry said its air defences destroyed a total of 45 drones over Russian territory, including 11 over the Moscow region, 23 over the border region of Bryansk, six over the Belgorod region, three over the Kaluga region and two over the Kursk region. Some of the drones were shot down over the city of Podolsk. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyannin said. The city in the Moscow region is some 38 km (24 miles) south of the Kremlin. "This is one of the largest attempts to attack Moscow using drones ever," Sobyannin said on the Telegram messaging app in the early hours of Wednesday.

Iran lawmakers approve new president's cabinet

TEHRAN: Iran's conservative-dominated parliament on Wednesday approved reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's proposed cabinet, which includes one woman and a foreign minister open to dialogue with the West. Lawmakers voted in favour of all 19 ministers chosen by Pezeshkian—who was inaugurated in July after his predecessor Ebrahim Raisi died in a helicopter crash—during a session broadcast on state television. In a speech in parliament ahead of the vote, Pezeshkian said he initially "had ideal candidates on my mind". "But when I saw that there was no mutual agreement on them, I backed down," said Pezeshkian, who later held his first sessions with the newly approved cabinet. "Because agreement was more important to me than ideal (candidates)," he added, vowing "to move forward with unity". Wednesday's vote was the first time in 23 years that Iran's parliament granted confidence to all ministers proposed by a president since the term of reformist Mohammad Khatami, according to the reformist daily Etemad. Following the vote, Pezeshkian posted a photo of himself on social media platform X alongside Iran's conservative parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and chief justice Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, with a caption reading "consensus for Iran". "The parliament will be with the government on the way to solving the problems of the country," Ghalibaf wrote on social media platform X after the vote.

Kenya police offer reward for escaped serial killer suspect

NAIROBI: Kenyan police offered a cash reward on Thursday for information leading to the arrest of a suspected serial killer who escaped from a Nairobi police cell. Police launched a manhunt on Tuesday after Collins Jumaisi, who is accused of murdering and dismembering dozens of women, broke out of a police station in an upmarket area of the Kenyan capital along with 12 Eritreans. Five officers appeared in court on Wednesday suspected of aiding Jumaisi's escape and have been freed on a 200,000 Kenyan shilling (\$1,500) bond, despite prosecutors seeking an order to keep them in custody for 14 days.

Biden speaks with Netanyahu as US prods Israel and Hamas to come to agreement on cease-fire deal

BUENOS AIRES: President Joe Biden spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday as the United States presses Israel and Hamas to agree to a "bridging proposal" that could lead to a cease-fire in the war in Gaza. Biden "stressed the urgency of bringing the ceasefire and hostage release deal to closure," the White House said in a statement. Hamas and Israel have signaled that challenges remain amid significant differences over the presence of Israeli troops in two strategic corridors in Gaza and other issues, dimming Biden's hopes that a deal can soon be reached. Vice President Kamala Harris, who is in Chicago this week to accept her party's nomination at the Democratic National Convention, also joined the call.

At least 24 killed as Congolese boat overturns

BENI: At least 24 people died after an overloaded boat capsized on a river in Congo's Mai-Ndombe province, and the death toll is expected to rise as many passengers are missing, a local official said on Wednesday. The boat carrying about 250 to 300 passengers overturned on Sunday night after it hit tree trunks underwater, Kutu territory administrator Jacques Nzenza told Reuters. Overloading was the main cause of the accident, he said.

15 killed in blast at pharmaceuticals factory in India

HYDERABAD: At least 15 people were killed in an explosion on Wednesday at a pharmaceuticals manufacturing plant in southern India's Andhra Pradesh state, a district government official said. "Death toll as of now is 15 and is likely to go up. Nearly 40 people have been injured. Rescue operations under way," District Superintendent of Police M Deepika said. The fire broke out in the afternoon at privately held Escientia Advanced Sciences' 40-acre manufacturing unit that was operational since 2019 in the state's Anapalli district, according to district collector Vijaya Krishnan. "The injured have been shifted to nearby hospitals...it appears that there could have been a blast at the chemical reactor," Krishnan's office said, adding that the blast occurred during lunch time at the unit. Escientia did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The state government has ordered an inquiry into the incident.

Australia greenlights world's 'largest' solar hub

SYDNEY: Australia approved on Wednesday plans for a massive solar and battery farm that would export energy to Singapore, a project billed as the "largest solar precinct in the world". Authorities announced environmental approvals for SunCable's US \$24 billion project in Australia's remote north that is slated to power three million homes.

Democratic convention ends Thursday with the party's new standard bearer, Kamala Harris

CHICAGO: Vice President Kamala Harris closes out the Democratic National Convention Thursday night when she accepts her party's historic presidential nomination and seizes one of her few remaining opportunities to appeal to an audience of millions. Harris will lay out her vision for the country and prosecute her case against Republican Donald Trump, capping a whirlwind month that began when President Joe Biden ended his reelection bid and endorsed her to replace him atop the Democratic ticket. Harris has three objectives for her speech, according to a campaign official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive speech preparations. She'll share her background rising from a middle-class family to protect others as a prosecutor, contrast her "optimistic" vision with Trump's "dark" agenda and evoke a sense of patriotism, the official said. Harris spoke briefly to the convention on Monday, when she thanked Biden and celebrated his record as president, and again on Tuesday, when the beginning of her rally in Milwaukee was streamed into the convention hall after Democrats reaffirmed their nomination of her with a state-by-state roll call. Harris will be the first Black woman and the first person of South Asian descent to accept a major party's presidential nomination. She'll speak a day after Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, her choice for running mate, thanked the packed Chicago arena for "bringing the joy" to the election. "We're all here tonight for one beautiful, simple, reason: We love this country," Walz said as thousands of delegates hoisted vertical placards reading "Coach Walz" in red, white and blue.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met the German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ms. Svenja Schulze, at the Prime Minister's House, in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan desires to revive partnership with Germany back to its glorious past: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday met with German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Svenja Schulze here wherein he expressed Pakistan's strong desire to revive its partnership with Germany back to its glorious past.

In the meeting, the prime minister appreciated Germany's longstanding support for Pakistan's socioeconomic development, according to a PM Office press release.

He said that Pakistan and Germany had a history of mutually beneficial commercial and economic ties

and lauded Germany's role in Pakistan's industrial development.

Prime Minister Shehbaz highlighted Pakistan's commitment to sustainable development, climate change mitigation, and economic growth while sharing his government's priorities including structural reforms for the country's economic revival.

Minister Schulze conveyed the greetings of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to the prime minister and reaffirmed Germany's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Pakistan, particularly in trade, investment, and development cooperation.

She also shared that

Germany was keen to increase its support for Pakistan's renewable energy sector and climate resilience initiatives.

The two sides discussed ways to further enhance bilateral economic cooperation, including increased trade, investment, IT and technology transfer as well as export of skilled labor. They also exchanged views on regional and global issues, including the situation in Gaza and the Ukraine conflict.

Minister Schulze also extended an invitation to the prime minister on behalf of Chancellor Olaf Scholz to attend the Hamburg Sustainability Conference in October.

ECC accords conditional approval to 0.1m sugar exports

Approves Rs. 1951.995m for payment of security charges—Reko Diq Project to Frontier Corps Balochistan (South) and Rs. 20 billion as a special allocation for Operation Azm-e-Istehkam

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet on Thursday gave conditional approval to the export of an additional 0.100 million metric tons of sugar, the summary for which was submitted by the Ministry of Industries and Production.

According to press release issued by finance ministry, the ECC put condition that in view of procedural delays encountered during export of sugar, the period allowed for export of sugar from the date of allocation of quota by respective Cane Commissioner should be extended from forty-five (45) days to sixty (60) days.

In addition, it said, export proceeds should be received in advance in case of Afghanistan only through banking channel however, export proceeds in case of LC may be allowed within a period of 60 days of opening of LC for export of sugar to other destinations.

It said, the benchmark for retail price of sugar may be delinked from the permission to export sugar as retail price is not directly under the control of sugar mills.

The condition of revoking of export quota in case of non-payment of dues of the growers from proceeds of export of sugar should be applicable only to the non-compliant mills rather than PMSA as a whole, it added.

Moreover, the ECC decided to monitor the market situation on a monthly basis and review its decision as per emerging needs, and instructed the Sugar Advisory Board to develop a comprehensive sugar policy within two months to address the sector's challenges and ensure sustainable growth.

Meanwhile, the ECC also considered and approved the following Technical Supplementary Grants including Rs. 276.250 million in favor of the Ministry of Interior to

HQ Frontier Corps KP (N) TSG for Project Implementation Letters (PILs).

It also approved Rs. 1951.995 million on account of payment of security charges — Reko Diq Project to Frontier Corps Balochistan (South) and Rs. 20 billion as a special allocation for Operation Azm-e-Istehkam during CFY 2024-25.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Minister for Industries & Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain; Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan; Minister for Privatization, Abdul Aleem Khan; Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry; Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahmad Khan Cheema; Minister for Petroleum, Mussadiq Masood Malik; Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Khan Leghari; Dy Chairman Planning Commission, Federal Secretaries, and other senior officials of the relevant ministries.

Pakistan urges 'new thinking' to effectively prevent conflicts, build peace

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for "new thinking" to shape effective approaches to prevent conflicts, resolving disputes—such as Kashmir & Palestine—and building peace in conflict-hit countries.

"What is required is a comprehensive and integrated strategy which offers regional and international support to national efforts for conflict prevention and dispute resolution", Ambassador Munir Akram told the UN Security Council which held a high-level debate centred on preventing conflict and building and sustaining peace.

Such a strategy, the Pakistani envoy said, must include: economic and financial support to the States in distress — to create employment and generate trust and hope; capacity-building, to enable governments to provide the basic services needed by

local populations. He also called for an end to external exploitation, which fuels violence and terrorism; good faith efforts at resolution of conflicts — at the local and regional levels; regional and international support for security and counter-terrorism operations; and a review of ill-considered sanctions that mostly punish the poor.

The meeting - convened by Sierra Leone, the Security Council president for August — was held against the backdrop of a rise in conflict globally.

"The root causes of these conflicts range from the legacies of colonialism, internal struggles for scarce food, water and pastures, external competition for precious national resources and interventions designed to suppress the struggle of peoples to reclaim their own political and economic destinies.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presenting a memento to Chairperson Arab Monterey Fund Dr. Fahad M AlTurki at the inaugural ceremony of Buna-Raast Connectivity Project Implementation Phase.

AJK PM says

Ideology of accession to Pak most important spiritual ideology for Kashmiris

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the ideology of accession to Pakistan is the most important spiritual ideology for him and the entire population of Jammu and Kashmir state.

"Whoever will try to sabotage it then the law will take its course," the PM stated.

PM Anwar ul Haq

said he had inherited this ideology from his father and would pass it on to the next generation.

"Our parents, us, and our future generations have always advocated for this ideology and we will continue to do so in the future until it is translated into reality," Anwar expressed these words while talking to various public representative delegations here late on Wednesday.

PNS HUNAIN visits Jeddah, participates in bilateral exercise

ISLAMABAD (APP): The newly commissioned Pakistan Navy Ship HUNAIN, during maiden voyage from Romania to Pakistan, visited Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and participated in bilateral exercise with Ship of Royal Saudi Naval Forces.

Upon arrival at Jeddah port, the ship was received by senior officials of Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) and officials of Pakistan Embassy, a Pakistan Navy

news release on Thursday said.

During stay at port, Commanding Officer PNS HUNAIN called on RSNF Commander Rear Admiral Mansoor Bin Saood Al Jayyad and Commander King Faisal Naval Base Rear Admiral Saleh Bin Abdullah Al-Amri. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation between both the navies were discussed.



QUETTA: Students exhibiting their skills obtained in 18 months technical training program, under Balochistan Education Support Program II in collaboration with UNICEF and European Union.

Women parliamentary caucus to meet in Quetta on 26th August

Independent Report QUETTA: The women parliamentary caucus Balochistan is scheduled to meet at 03:00 PM on August 26 in the committee room of the provincial assembly. This was announced in an official notification issued here by the special secretary (Legislation) on Thursday.

According to the notification, the amendments in the rules and regulations of the women parliamentary caucus would be considered in the meeting. It may be mentioned here that the Deputy

Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola was elected as chairperson of the women parliamentary caucus Balochistan.

Member Provincial Assembly, Ms. Shahida Rauf was elected as vice chairperson of the caucus with Ms. Farah Azeem Shah as its General Secretary. Other office bearers and members of the women parliamentary caucus are included: Ms. Salma Bibi, Ms. Hadiya Nawaz, Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi, Ms. Safia, Ms. Umme Kalsoom, Ms. Shahnaz Umrani.

IDSP holds Youth Skills event in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): IDSP University for Community Development on Thursday organized an event, International Youth Skills Day, in Quetta.

The purpose of the event was to empower young people with skills for a better tomorrow.

In this regard, IDSP University for Community Development involves various educational institutions and skilled workers. This event is part of the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) project "Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience".

The Chief Guests included Commissioner

Quetta Humza Shafiq, Principal of Poly Technical College guests Prof. Jamil, Al-Hamd University Quetta's Urwa Javed, DG BTEVTA Quetta Tariq Mengal, DG NAVTTC Hassan Bukhsh Magsi, and Dr. Qurat Ayn Bakhtyari, Founding Director of IDSP. In addition, students and skills workers highly appreciate the role of IDSP for organizing such events.

The guests and participants visited different stalls and also appreciated entrepreneurs and skills workers for their efforts to introduce creative approaches in their small start-ups.

PM greets 5-year-old Sufiyan on setting Guinness world record

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday extended congratulations to five-year-old Sufiyan Mehsud from Dera Ismail Khan on setting Guinness world record. Sufiyan Mehsud has made his parents and the country proud by achieving this remarkable feat at a tender age, the prime minister said in a message.

He praised Sufiyan's exceptional talent, saying that such gifted children are a guarantee of a bright future.

Ahsan terms Pak students at Harvard University as pride of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of 10 Pakistani students enrolled in the MBA program at Harvard University met with Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday.

The students, who have experience working with top companies in Pakistan and abroad, were briefed on the ministry's affairs by Member Social Sector Rafiullah Kakar. He informed the students that the ministry was a key center for all development-related planning and initiatives in the country.

The minister asked the students that they were the future stars of Pakistan, and universities like Harvard were always on the lookout for future leaders. He said that the doors of the public sector in Pakistan were always open to young people like them.

Ahsan Iqbal shared his own political journey, from his time at the University of Pennsylvania's Business School in 1983 to his election as a member of the National Assembly in 1993.

He highlighted key policies he had been involved in, including the first IT policy in 1998, the Overseas Scholarship Scheme, and the launch of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in 2013.

The minister stressed that stability and continuity in policies are crucial for the country's development, citing the need for a five-year development plan under the 5Es framework.

He acknowledged the current economic challenges facing the country, including a debt crisis, but expressed optimism about Pakistan's potential, saying,

Punjab govt could not end problem with two-month relief: Hafiz

LAHORE (INP): Hafiz Naeem has said that Punjab government could not diffuse the problem with two months relief in electricity bills. Talking to media in Lahore, the Jamaat Islami chief said, "You have to make the people fool with this charity."

He demanded permanent relief to people in electricity bills. JI chief also demanded forensic audit of the IPPs. He said that August 28 will see an extremely successful protest strike. "The 'Tajir Dost Scheme' has been a scheme to destroy traders," he said. He said Jamaat Islami also wants expansion in the tax net. "There is corruption in the FBR," he further said.

Hafiz Naeem said that promised relief amount has been lower than the capacity payment to the IPPs of the people close to the Sharif family.



QUETTA: A delegation led by district President GTA Zhub Maulana Mashood Shah Akhuzada meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

BFA cracks down on adulterated milk and substandard food items

Independent Report QUETTA: The Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) has launched a crackdown on those involved in supplying adulterated milk and other substandard food items, as well as those operating without licenses.

On the directives of Director General BFA, Atiqullah Khan, the authority's operation teams have imposed fines on over 50 centers in Quetta, Chaman, Chaghi, and Turbat for violating the laws. A large quantity of adulterated milk and other expired and banned products has been confiscated

and disposed of.

In Quetta, two milk suppliers involved in supplying adulterated milk on Qambrani Road were seized and eight maunds of milk were confiscated and disposed of. Tests revealed water, dry powder, and natural nutrition deficiencies in the milk samples.

In Chaman, special teams were sent after reports of a cholera outbreak, where water and food samples were collected from the affected areas and sent to the laboratory for analysis. During an inspection in Chaman market, fines were imposed on 18 food centers.

Loralai Administration evacuates 21 primary schools, starts educational activities

QUETTA (APP): The District Administration Loralai has evacuated 21 primary schools from the possession of local people during the ongoing drive to retrieve the public buildings established in the area. The Deputy Commissioner Mehran Baloch presiding over a monthly meeting of the District Education Group was briefed by the District Education Officer regarding the efforts taken for the promotion of education in the district.

District Education Officer said that around 17 closed government boys primary schools have been functional and educational activities have been started in them, besides 18 teach-

ers have been suspended for continuous absences so far, according to a news release. He added that as many as 4 closed girls' primary schools have been functional to utilize the public buildings for the promotion of education in the area and the salaries of four teachers have been deducted over absent from their duties.

The DEO said that 18 more schools have been reopened with the support of BRSP and resumed the learning process to ensure free education to out-of-school children.

The education department has found 14 teachers absent from their duties and their salaries will be deducted.

Cabinet 'okays' privatization of Petroleum division depts

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal cabinet has approved the privatization of two departments under the Petroleum Division. According to sources, the cabinet has given the green signal for the privatization of the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation and the Saindak Metals Limited (SML). As part of the privatization process, the Petroleum Division's department, ENAR Petrotech Services Pvt Ltd will be dissolved.

7 die in rains incidents in KP: PDMA

PESHAWAR (APP): At least seven persons died in rains related incidents during last 24 hours in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to Provincial Disasters Management Authority, these people had expired in different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Two sisters namely Saima and Naima daughters of Bakhtullah died at Domail Bannu when roof of a house collapsed.

Similarly, one person each expired at Tank, Mohmand and Dera Ismail Khan while two in Manshehra.

FC continues rescue, relief operation in flood-hit areas

QUETTA (INP): Frontier Corps Balochistan continues its massive rescue and relief operation in areas of the province which has been adversely affected due to floods caused by monsoon rains.

The flashfloods caused heavy damages to properties resulting in displacement of the residents of the affected areas.

In district Dera Bugti, Subhatpur, Sui, Dera Allah Yar, and nearby areas, a large

number of residents remained stranded and without shelter.

The Frontier Corps continues rescue and relief operations in the flood-hit areas besides organizing a free medical camp for flood victims, providing them with essential medical care.

It also provided tents and ration to the affected families in Sui and Dera Bugti besides distributing free ration packages to needy families, ensuring their access to basic necessities.

Dacoit cuts off elderly woman's ears in Gwadar

GWADAR (INP): In a horrific incident, a dacoit cut off ears of an elderly woman in the Surbandar area of Gwadar, Balochistan.

According to police, the woman was wearing gold earring when the robber attacked her and cut off her ears, taking the earrings with him.

The police have arrested the robber and recovered the severed ears, gold earrings, and a knife from his possession. The elderly woman is currently in a critical condition and under treatment at hospital whereas the robber has also confessed to the crime.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding implementation on reforms on the directives of Chief Minister