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dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

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KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses business delegates from the People's Republic of China.

Pak-China relations transforming into enhanced investment, economic ties: PM

KARACHI (APP): The Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif, emphasizing the transformation of friendly relations between China and Pakistan into enhanced investment, economic and trade ties, said that the next phase of CPEC will mainly involve business to business arrangements particularly in industrial sector.

He expressed the views while addressing the representatives of international companies doing business in Pakistan including China here on Friday. Governor and Chief Minister of Sindh, Federal Ministers, prominent businessmen and senior officers were also present on this occasion.

The PM said "Pakistan and China are two iron brothers and now we have to convert these relations of brotherhood and friendship into enhanced investment, economic and trade relations particularly in the fields of agriculture, information technology, mines, minerals and infrastructure."

Being an agrarian economy with over 60% rural population Pakistan need to further strengthen and augment its agricultural produce, he said and informed that Pakistani agricultural exports increased by \$ 3 billion in the last

financial year while we have fixed a target of additional 7 b for the current fiscal year.

Terming it as a quantum leap that required vigorous efforts along with adoption of modern technology and techniques and best practices, PM Shehbaz said that China could be our best partner in achieving this target of boosting agricultural exports and value addition in exports.

Referring to his recent visit of China the PM said that fascinated by wonderful technology and educational culture in Chinese educational institutions he decided to send 1000 Pakistani boys and girls for advance training in China in Agriculture. That program was almost finalized and now these students would go to China for refresher courses, he added.

Encouraging the Chinese businessmen to enter into business cooperation agreement with Pakistani counterparts the PM said that next phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will mainly consist of business-to-business arrangements and joint ventures in industry particularly in textile, agriculture production and then export of these products to different countries.

Govt accepts JI demands to give relief in electricity prices. Tarar

JI's sit-in achieved its targets, claims Hafiz Naeem

RAWALPINDI (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Thursday night reiterated the government's firm resolve to provide relief to people by reducing electricity prices.

He said that the final round of talks with the Jamaat-e-Islami remained fruitful with the government accepting certain demands of JI.

He said that the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had already directed the government's negotiating team to accede to the JI's demands which were aimed at providing relief to the people.

Addressing the protesters at the conclusion of

the 5th and final round of bilateral negotiations with the JI, the minister endorsed the agreement announced by the JI leadership.

He highlighted that government was giving the subsidy of Rs 50 billion in electricity prices, and the three months relief to the consumers using up to 200 units.

He said the government would fully act upon the agreements and the committees formed in that regard would regularly meet to monitor its implementation.

The minister also condemned in the strongest terms the brutalities being committed by the Israeli forces in Gaza.

"The UN must bring Israel to justice for war crimes in Gaza", he added.

INP adds: Jamaat-e-Islami emir Hafiz Naeem Rehman said that they have achieved the targets through its historical sit-in staged in Rawalpindi against the exorbitant electricity bills. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Friday, he said that the JI gave some time to the government to reconsider its policies pertaining to the Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

"We have not called off our sit-in. We just put it on hold for some days and gave time to the government," JI emir said.

Pakistan being pushed into constitutional crises: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday criticised Supreme Court's verdict on reserved seats.

Addressing on the floor of the National Assembly, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari claimed Pakistan is being pushed into constitutional crisis.

Referring to a recent ruling of the SC in SIC reserved seats case, Bilawal said "a verdict of the court, mobilized the 'dead' party".

He also asked the opposition leader, did he or the premier snatch PTI's bat symbol? It was revoked by the court citing 'rigging' in the inter-party election.

The PPP leader lamented that 'hate politics' in on the rise in Pa-

kistan, which is unprecedented in the history of the country.

People are passing through the worst economic crisis, but we [politicians] are unable to provide them relief, he added.

He also extended heartfelt congratulations to the entire Pakistani nation on Arshad Nadeem's gold medal-winning performance at the Paris Olympics 2024.

It is to be noted that Arshad Nadeem ended the country's 32-year medal drought in the Olympics after bagging a gold medal with the longest throw of 92.97 meters in the javelin final at the Paris Olympics 2024. Arshad Nadeem became the first-ever individual gold medalist in the Olympics for Pakistan.

FO spokesperson rubbishes Israeli media's baseless reports targeting Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Friday rubbished as "baseless" the reports published in the Israeli media, alleging any commitment by Pakistan to send nukes to support Iran.

At her weekly press briefing, the spokesperson responding to a query, rejected a Jerusalem Post's report of August 6 which alleged that "if the conflict between Iran and Israel escalates, Pakistan plans to

supply Iran with Shaheen-III medium-range ballistic missiles."

"Such reports are patently false. Before paying any attention to such reports, it is important to reflect on the source behind such baseless reports and the malicious agenda behind them," the spokesperson remarked. She said, "This is a critical time in the Middle East. We, therefore, urge all parties, including the media, not to indulge in peddling of fake news."

PM reiterates determination for complete eradication of polio from Pakistan

KARACHI (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday reiterated the determination for the complete eradication of polio from the country with the joint efforts of the federal, provincial governments and Gilgit-Baltistan and the Azad Jammu and Kashmir governments.

The prime minister said this while presiding over an important review meeting on anti-polio during his visit to Karachi. Gates Foundation Chairman Bill Gates and Global Development President Dr. Chris Elias participated in the meeting through the video link.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, four provincial governments, Gilgit-Baltistan and the Azad Jammu and Kashmir governments committed to complete eradication of polio from the country. All federal units also agreed to joint efforts for polio eradication.

While talking to the participants of the meeting, the prime minister reiterated the determination for the complete eradication of polio. He thanked the Bill Gates Foundation for its extraordinary support and assistance to the health care system in Pakistan, especially polio prevention.

The prime minister also thanked the other partners of the government regarding anti-polio.

Meets COAS Pakistan holds significant place in Muslim world: Imam Masjid-i-Nabawi

COAS welcomed the dignitary and highlighted that visit by Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi to Pakistan is a matter of honour for the people of Pakistan.

RAWALPINDI (Online): Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi, Dr. Salah bin Mohammad Al-Budair called on Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir in Rawalpindi Friday.



According to ISPR, during the meeting, matters of mutual interest were discussed.

The COAS welcomed the dignitary and highlighted that visit by Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi to Pakistan is a matter of honour for the people of Pakistan.

Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi said Pakistan has a significant place in the Muslim world and it is playing its vital role for peace and stability in the region.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over Pak-Saudi relations. At the end Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi prayed for the peace, stability and unity of Muslim Ummah.

Tarar says: Victory of Arshad Nadeem in Olympics to inspire youngsters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that victory of athlete Arshad Nadeem in Paris Olympics will inspire youngsters to step forward in the world of sports.

In his congratulatory message, the minister said that Arshad Nadeem has proved with his hard work, dedication and ability that Pakistani players were second to none. "You have created history by winning gold medal in Paris Olympics," he said adding that Arshad Nadeem's success was a beacon for every Pakistani youth.

NDMA warns of potential GLOF threat in KP, Gilgit

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued a critical advisory, warning of a potential Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) threat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan.

According to the advisory, the combination of high temperatures and current weather conditions has heightened the risk of GLOF, which could result in flash flooding and landslides in several regions, private news channel reported.

Pak Armed Forces, CJCS felicitate Arshad Nadeem

RAWALPINDI (INP): Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR) Department of Pakistan Army congratulated the nation including Arshad Nadeem for winning the first gold medal for Pakistan after 40 years in the Paris Olympics.

According to ISPR, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) and Chiefs of Pakistan Army including Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Sidhu, and Naval Chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf congratulated the nation on the victory of Arshad Nadeem for winning the first gold medal for Pakistan in Olympics after 40 years.

The ISPR stated that Arshad Nadeem made history by becoming the first Pakistani athlete to win an individual gold medal. Pakistan's spectacular success in the Olympics is the result of Arshad's unwavering dedica-



tion.

In its statement, the ISPR added that the success in the Olympics is proof of Arshad Nadeem's tireless work, perseverance, and exemplary work.

In the men's javelin throw event final at the Paris Olympics, the eyes of the whole nation were on Arshad Nadeem, who was Pakistan's only hope of getting a medal in the Olympics after 32 years.

Govt committed to bringing comprehensive reforms in power sector: Awais

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman National Task Force and Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Friday said the government is committed to bring comprehensive reforms in the power sector to enhance its efficiency.

Talking to the media after chairing the meeting of National Task Force on Implementation of Structural Reforms in the Power Sector, the minister said that the Task Force reviewed the stock of all Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and their generation capacity. The Task Force also discussed various issues confronted by the energy sector of the country, he added.

He said that the National Task Force strongly objected to propaganda



RAWALPINDI: Chief (emir) of the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JI) Hafiz Naeem Ur Rehman, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, and Liaqat Baloch exchanging view on stage in sit-protest, after final round of negotiations between the government and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) concluded successfully.

Naqvi assures Saudi envoy of crackdown on professional begging mafia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi visited the Saudi Arabian Embassy in the Diplomatic Enclave and met with Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Ahmed Al-Malki here on Friday.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and ways to promote Pakistan-Saudi relations were discussed in detail.

Interior Minister assured the Saudi Ambassador of taking robust action against professional beggars traveling to Saudi Arabia. He stated that the Federal Investigation Agency

(FIA) has been directed to crack down against the mafia across the country involved in sending beggars to Saudi Arabia.

He said that this mafia is tarnishing Pakistan's image abroad.

He highlighted that the people of Pakistan have great reverence and respect for Saudi Arabia. He said that Saudi Arabia has always stood by Pakistan in difficult times.

The Saudi Ambassador said that both countries have brotherly relations.

PM felicitates Prof Yunus on swearing in as Bangladesh's interim gov head

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday felicitated Professor Muhammad Yunus as he took the oath of office of Chief Advisor of Bangladesh's interim government.

Heartiest felicitations to Professor Muhammad Yunus on his swearing-in as Chief Advisor of the Government of Bangladesh," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline.

Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi graces Parliament with significant visit, receives warm welcome

Opp Leader, members welcome Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi with great homage

ISLAMABAD (APP): Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi, Sheikh Salah bin Mohammad Al-Budair on Friday made a significant visit to the Parliament House along with his delegation. The delegation was warmly received by National Assembly (NA) Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq who expressed his deep honor at their presence.

Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah was also in attendance during the occasion. The NA session began with a recitation from the Holy Quran by Imam Al-Budair, setting a spiritually uplifting tone for the proceedings. He, along with

his delegation, observed the assembly's proceedings.

In his welcome address, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq extended heartfelt greetings to Imam Al-Budair and his delegation, emphasizing the pride and spiritual satisfaction that their presence brought to the assembly. "The presence of the Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi in our midst is a great honor and a source of spiritual solace for us," remarked Speaker Ayaz Sadiq. He further added that all members of the assembly felt a deep sense of joy and happiness to have Imam Al-Budair among them. Meanwhile

Leader of the Opposition, Omar Ayub Khan on Friday along with members of the National Assembly accorded a warm welcome to Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi (PBUH) Sheikh Dr Salah Bin Muhammad Al-Budair by paying great tributes and homage to the dignitary.

Taking floor at opening of fifth meeting of eighth session of the National Assembly at the Parliament House, the Opposition Leader said the chief guest, Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi (PBUH) was the unique honour of being the Imam as he led the prayers.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, along with other Parliamentarians present gift to Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi (S.A.W) Sheikh Dr Salah Mohammad MAI-Bdeer at Parliament House, in the Federal Capital.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Political paradox

What happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object? It is a question political observers in Pakistan have grappled with over the past two-and-a-half years.

On the one hand, there's the PTI; seemingly unstoppable, despite all efforts to impede its march. On the other, there is the establishment; unmoved despite the many challenges it has encountered. The stalemate created by these two actors' inability to reach a settlement has upended the country and destabilised the economy.

It cannot hold forever, which is why recent remarks by PTI founder Imran Khan have aroused feverish speculation. Will they, won't they? The concern is palpable, even though both sides still seem unwilling to compromise. The needle is stuck on May 9, with one side demanding an unconditional apology, and the other unwilling to give one without ifs and buts. Who will make the first move? Much is on the line.

Mr Khan has recently suggested that he is ready to offer an apology if the state can prove its position on May 9. This 'softening' of his stance is being seen as a major development. He insists, however, that the allegations against his party be investigated by an independent commission first. Perhaps the accusation that the events of that day were a 'premeditated conspiracy' do indeed need to be probed, but Mr Khan surely agrees that it was his party that was out in the streets on May 9; participating in, if not precipitating, the violence that occurred that day? If he believes that what happened was wrong, he should at least apologise for the protests turning violent and the damage to public properties that was caused. All else may be left to a commission to resolve. At the same time, the security establishment, too, must relent, mainly because its insistence on treating the protests as 'terrorism' and a 'conspiracy against the state' is unlikely to yield positive outcomes or help the nation move forward.

Protests can turn violent, especially if those participating feel they have a right to be angry. The way Mr Khan was manhandled by dozens of Rangers personnel on that same day and the circumstances of his arrest from the Islamabad High Court cannot be ignored. They provide necessary context for understanding why the protests broke out.

What happened next was unqualifiedly wrong, but the state, too, should reflect on its mistakes. It must turn over all evidence to prosecutors and let those accused of May 9-related crimes be tried in ordinary courts. It would be within its rights to demand punishments in proportion to their crimes.

The attention of Pakistan's leadership needs to be focused on policies, not events. The future of millions is at stake. For their sake, the nation must move on now.

Deep-sea mining

Jamil Ahmad

Mining in the deep sea has turned into a hot topic in the discourse on controlling planet-warming gases in the atmosphere.

To steadily transition away from fossil fuels, low-carbon technologies will require uninterrupted supplies of large quantities of critical minerals, or 'battery minerals' — cobalt, nickel, copper, and manganese. Scientific evidence suggests that small rocks, or 'nodules', on the seabed, usually at a depth of four to six kilometres, contain large amounts of critical minerals.

Expansion in the photovoltaic industry and the recent growth in electric vehicles has increased demand. While terrestrial mining is largely meeting the current market demand, future demand, price volatility and supply chain concerns have put options for deep-sea mining in the spotlight.

The International Energy Agency's Critical Minerals Market Review 2023 notes that the energy sector requirement was the main factor behind the 'tripling in overall demand for lithium, a 70pc jump in demand for cobalt, and a 40pc rise in demand for nickel'. The IEA reported a 60pc increase in the sale of electric cars in 2022, exceeding 10 million units. In 2023, the number neared 14m and is expected to rise further, pushing up the demand for battery minerals and causing a rush to the bottom of the sea.

After a steep price rise in 2021 and 2022, the prices of lithium, nickel, cobalt and graphite declined in 2023, according to IEA's Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2024. Meanwhile, some countries, appear to be preparing for deep-sea mining in their jurisdictions.

Several others want to wait till more evidence is gathered on its impact on marine ecosystems and on economies dependent on terrestrial mining.

For areas beyond national jurisdictions, the absence of rules and regulations makes it riskier for marine biodiversity and ecosystems. The International Seabed Authority is working on preparing ground rules for deep seabed exploitation.

Environmental groups have voiced concerns that rushing to dive deep for extracting minerals would have repercussions for the marine environment and marine life as it would degrade one of the remaining ecosystems that has so far stayed largely secure from human intervention.

We face the disastrous consequences of extreme weather events, biodiversity loss and pollution, linked to health problems, economic losses and increase in poverty and inequality. Can the world afford to open a new front against nature? Enfeebled by human-induced environmental challenges and climate change, the planet is already in a fragile state. It cannot withstand another anthropogenic onslaught, this time on its seabed.

Available scientific data and information is insufficient to conclude that scraping the bottom of the sea for minerals will not harm ecosystems. Or that it will be economically beneficial compared to options for terrestrial mining.

A UNEP briefing paper notes the "paucity of data to support a detailed understanding of ecological relationships and impacts associated with deep-sea mining". The paper, Harmful marine extractions, points out the "current scientific consensus" that "deep-sea

mining will be highly damaging to ocean ecosystems" as, at present, no robust, precautionary approach exists to safeguard the ocean against its potential ecological impacts. The fishing industry and large coastal communities in developing countries dependent on fishing could be negatively affected too.

Planet Tracker, a UK think tank, has questioned the economic viability of industrial seabed mining. According to its report, How to lose half a trillion, the value loss of activity for the ocean floor and terrestrial mining could be between \$30 billion to \$132 billion globally.

This scientific uncertainty has led governments, scientists, environmentalists, and the private sector to call for a moratorium on deep-sea mining until the ecological consequences are better understood. In an Issues Note, UNEP has pointed out that the "environmental, social, and economic impacts of exploiting the deep seabed are uncertain and potentially grave". It has called for "a comprehensive analysis" to address the potential impact of deep-sea mining on marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

The UN Convention on Migratory Species has urged governments not to support deep-sea mining until robust scientific data is obtained that such activities won't harm "migratory species, their prey and their ecosystems".

The implications of digging the seabed need to be analysed and understood, given the potential for grave risks. Sustainable consumption and production and circularity of critical minerals is one option to manage the demand, protect jobs and reduce the environmental footprint of terrestrial mining. -- Courtesy Dawn

Story of a hari

Zubeida Mustafa

Pakistan: A Hard Country, by Anatole Lieven, was published in 2011. Thirteen years later, Pakistan is a 'harder' country still. But not everyone here is aware that the hardships, like our wealth, are not spread evenly. We tend to analyse our economic problems in financial terms. But hardship also has a human face and confronts psychosocial challenges, which the better off fail to notice.

Look at the agricultural sector. It is one of the most lucrative, contributing 22.9 per cent to Pakistan's GDP. It provides livelihood to the highest number of people, accounting for 37.4pc of the labour force (Pakistan Economic Survey 2023-24). Every man who tills the soil is helped by his family. But the women are not counted and are reduced to being invisible.

The hardship begins from day one, when a deal is struck between the landowner and hari (farmer). It is a brazenly unequal deal. The landowners in Pakistan are probably one of the most privileged classes, who have special benefits and advantages.

We are told that the landowners were assured at the time of Partition that their holdings would not be touched. Hence, no land reforms were contemplated in the first decade, unlike India. It was in 1959 and then in 1972 that reforms were announced, but in practical terms they made no impact as they were circumvented by wealthy families who retained their land. Now, the concept of land reforms has received an honourable burial, with the Federal Shariat Court having

pronounced it un-Islamic in 1989. Additionally, the landowners also enjoy immense political powers, irrespective of who is at the helm. Treating the hari with contempt, the landlords have safeguarded their wealth. For instance, in northern Sindh, most deals are done on a crop-sharing basis. It means the hari has to till the land and share the crops harvested equally with the landowner. The caveat lies in the conditions imposed. The hari has to pay for all the inputs, such as seed, fertilisers of two types, pesticides, tractor and thresher charges, seed planter, etc. It is estimated that if the haris were spared this burden, their income would double. Rough calculations put a hari's income for an acre of land that he tills at Rs50,000 per annum. The haris receive half the crop harvested. They store some for their own consumption and sell the rest for cash. Needless to say, they are exploited mercilessly by the middle men.

The haris get no relief from the government, which is dominated by the landowning class. Children in the rural areas are denied the benefits of good education and healthcare. Census 2023 tells us that 61pc of the country's population lives in the rural areas, but anecdotal evidence suggests that schools are not located in the same ratio. More schools function in the towns and cities, where fewer people live. This is certain that the children of the haris do not get the education that empowers them to resist the oppression heaped on them.

In this ocean of misery, there are some islands of compassion tempered with dignity

and self-esteem. One of these that emerged about three years ago is the Tractor Project set up by the Ali Hasan Mangi Memorial Trust in Kheiro Dero (District Larkana). It is dedicated to a hari called Abid Husain, who suffered from chronic liver disease. In spite of his health disadvantage, Abid's was a smiling face of dignity and courage. He was always at the forefront when collective action was the need of the hour.

At one time, a small bridge over a nullah collapsed, causing a lot of hardship to the farmers who had used it to transport goods and crops. Despite repeated reminders, the authorities did not respond. Hence, Abid mobilised the haris to provide free labour. The Trust paid for the material, and the bridge was repaired. It was Abid who came up with the suggestion that the Trust should acquire a tractor to loan it to the haris at a low rate. Thus, their cost of inputs would be considerably reduced. Now the Trust has two tractors and the farmers are benefiting. Those who are allowed to avail this facility by their landlords manage to save a substantial amount.

It is time our landowners, who are hardly taxed, opened their eyes to the poverty around them. Is it too much to ask them to create a fund in line with corporate social responsibility, as the business sector has done? It would mean a turnaround in their attitudes towards the people who generate the wealth they possess. But of most importance is the fact that the face of poverty should be fringed with dignity and self-respect. What the tillers of the land are looking for are their rights and not charity. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM Sharif vows to extend utmost support to exporters

KARACHI (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that the government was determined to extend utmost support to exporters and producers to facilitate them in serving the country with full capacity.

The Premier was addressing as chief guest at the inauguration ceremony of the Food and Agriculture Expo-2024 (FoodAg24) here at the Expo Centre.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with others performed the digital inauguration of the event.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the last years export of rice and other Agri items was commendable and the ministers, administrative secretaries and all those who contributed in it deserve appreciation.

But this is not enough, because Pakistan got huge potential and this is high time to serve together with our full capacity, he added.

The Prime Minister called for the need to value addition to our produce and said for that we have to take appropriate steps like adaptation of latest technologies and more research and development. He also called for the need of comprehensive planning and effective implementation of the policies to achieve targets.

He said that ever since coming into power, the present government, many steps have been taken for growth of agriculture sector and referred the project to solarise 28,000 tube wells in Balochistan to provide the farmers with cheap electricity.

Shehbaz Sharif said that Pakistan will send 1,000 agricultural graduate to China to get higher education and training in agriculture and food sector.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed confidence that "nothing is impossible, if we all put our best efforts".

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also congratulated the Pakistani Athlete Arshad Nadeem for winning Gold medal and setting new Olympic record in javelin throw in the Paris Olympic-2024 and said that this is the victory for the whole country and we all should celebrate.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with other dignitaries presented awards to top three exporters including rice, fruit and vegetable and meat sectors.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presents a souvenir to the Minister of Trade of Türkiye Omar Bolat, at the 2nd International Food & Agriculture Exhibition, in the Provincial Capital.

JS Bank wins leading Digital Bank Award

ISLAMABAD (APP): JS Bank, one of the fastest growing banks in Pakistan, has been awarded the Leading Digital Bank accolade at the CXO Elevate 2024 Awards.

In addition, JS Global, a subsidiary of JS Bank, has been recognized with the Digital Investment Transformation Award. These prestigious recognitions highlight JS Bank's and JS Global's significant roles in transforming the financial sector through innovative digital solutions, said a news release.

JS Bank has been at

the forefront of digital banking innovation, implementing state-of-the-art technologies to enhance customer experience and streamline banking processes. From pioneering digital account management to launching advanced mobile banking applications, JS Bank is committed to providing seamless, secure, and user-friendly financial services. Its investments in digital infrastructure and technology have set new benchmarks in the industry, making banking more accessible and efficient for millions of customers.

IRSA releases 502,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 502,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 549,700 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tabela Dam was 1540.00 feet and was 142.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 322,100 cusecs and 294,400 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1208.35 feet, which was 160.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.

Gold rates up by Rs.1,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,000 and was traded at Rs.256,500 in the local market on Friday against its sale at Rs.255,500 the previous day. Likewise, the price of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.857 to Rs.219,907 from Rs.219,050 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.20,582 from Rs.219,050, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

FM highlights positive economic developments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Friday highlighted recent positive developments in economic landscape, including increased foreign exchange reserves, decreased inflation, and enhanced tax collection.

During a meeting with Charge d'affaires of the Embassy of People's Republic of China, Shi Yuanqiang and other officials of the Embassy, the minister outlined significant reforms in the energy sector, state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and ongoing privatization efforts.

Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan

Leghari Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Power, Muhammad Ali and Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik also attended the meeting.

While emphasizing a focus on export-led growth, the minister expressed Pakistan's commitment to attracting increased foreign direct investment (FDI), according to a press release issued by finance ministry.

Recalled his recent visit to China, Aurangzeb said he had extremely useful discussions with the Minister for Finance and other officials on proposals for enhancing economic cooperation between the two countries.

Eyes on \$5bn bilateral trade Turkiye's CG invites multi sectoral delegation: Saquib

Independent Report KARACHI: Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has apprised the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan that H. E. Mr. Cemal Sangu, Consul

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, reiterated that both sides have agreed that they should take tangible steps to realize the trade potential — whereas, Pakistan stands to gain tremendous foreign



earnings through exports of value-added textiles; leather goods; processed foods; IT & IT-enabled services; sports goods and surgical equipment.

Mr. Asif Sakhi, VP FPCCI, reiterated that Türkiye has world-class expertise in manufacturing and engineering products; specifically, electric vehicles (EVs).

PSX holds gong ceremony to mark listing of big bird foods Ltd

Independent Report KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) held a gong ceremony to mark the listing of Big Bird Foods Limited (BBFL). Big Bird Foods was established in September 2011 as a poultry

Mahmood Ali Shah Bukhari, CEO KTrade Securities Limited; Mr. Omar Salah Ahmed, MD Corporate Finance, KTrade Securities Limited and Mr. Danish Elahi, CEO Elahi Group of Companies and Shareholder of Big Bird



processing unit to provide quality chicken products in national and international markets.

Present at the gong ceremony were Dr. Mohammad Mustafa Kamal, CEO, Big Bird Foods Limited; Mr.

Foods Limited. KTrade Securities were the exclusive financial advisory and arranger for this listing. The guests were welcomed by the MD & CEO PSX, Mr. Farrukh H. Khan and senior management of PSX.

SBP injects Rs3.174 trillion into market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs3,174.35 billion in the market on Friday through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO). According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted an Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on August 09, 2024, for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted 30 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs3,084.35 billion.

The central bank received 13 bids for 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs732.2 billion at the rate of return ranging between 19.57 to 19.60 percent while 19 bids were received for the 28-day tenor offering an amount of Rs2,542.25 billion at the rate of return ranging between 19.55 to 19.61%. The SBP accepted all 13 quotes for a 7-day tenor amounting to Rs550 billion at 19.57% rate of return while 17 quotes for 28-day tenor amounting to Rs2,534.35 billion.

Short-term inflation up by 0.30 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.30 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on August 08, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 322.54 points as compared to 321.56 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 17.96 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.46 per cent and went down to 310.83 points from last week's 309.40 points.

Kundi terms justice crucial for development of society

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, on Friday emphasized that social justice was crucial for the development of any society. He said that if justice was not delivered promptly, public trust in the justice system erodes. He urged the lawyers to play a significant role in ensuring swift and affordable justice. The Governor also highlighted his party's consistent support for lawyers and noted that many prominent positions in the country had been filled by lawyers. The Governor said these remarks during a meeting with a delegation from the Association of International Lawyers, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter at the Governor House Peshawar.

The delegation, led by Association President Waqar Khan Advocate, included Vice President Fiza Nizami, General Secretary Shahid Aziz, Advocate Hashmat Sadozai, Advocate Javed Iqbal Marwat and other officials and cabinet members from various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The delegation congratulated the Governor on assuming his office and presented him a bouquet. They informed the Governor about their organization's mission to uphold judicial independence, rule of law, and human rights. The Association of International Lawyers is also working globally for the welfare of lawyers and resolving their issues. The delegation shared that the Association had established Human Rights Committees in various districts, leading to legal assistance for families and the resolution of several cases. They are also working on child protection and other human rights issues, they told. The female lawyers in the delegation suggested to the Governor that there should be government-sponsored scholarships and professional development training programs for female lawyers both domestically and internationally.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi is called on by International Lawyers KP Chapter delegation at Governor House.

AJK Govt unveils ambitious socio-economic, Tourism plan

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): The Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Friday formulated an integrated plan aimed at the holistic development of the socio-economic and tourism sectors in the region. According to official sources, the primary focus of the plan is to promote adventure tourism in AJK, with the aim of transforming the region into a major tourism hub in South Asia. To this end, the government plans to organize a nationwide tourism conference in Mirpur in the near future, inviting renowned global tourism organizations. The sources further revealed that the government is determined to improve the living standards of the common people and accelerate the pace of ongoing development projects in the liberated area. Towards this end, the government has directed the relevant authorities to identify the problems faced by the common people and devise prompt solutions. To boost technical education in AJK, the government has also decided to establish a Higher Technical Education Board in the near future. Additionally, the plan includes setting up Artisan Schools in Mirpur and Muzaffarabad to produce skilled manpower for the cottage industry.

The government is also taking steps to establish district-level Chambers of Commerce and Industry across AJK to promote trade and commerce activities. Moreover, the plan involves expediting the development of projects such as the Export Processing Zone and Industrial Estates in Mirpur, the region's major industrial and business hub. Recognizing the importance of engaging the overseas Kashmiri community, the AJK government has decided to invite them to participate in various developmental and educational activities as well as the business and industrial sectors.

Climate change cell to be established in health department

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Minister of Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah had announced the establishment of a Climate Change Cell in the Health Department to address health-related issues in the context of climate change. Climate change has severe impacts on health, with natural disasters like floods affecting health first, said Syed Qasim Ali Shah in a statement. Diseases like malaria, dengue, and leishmaniasis have emerged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to climate change. He said that recent

monsoon floods have led to a significant increase in malaria cases in southern districts. Floods contaminate drinking water sources, leading to waterborne diseases. Skin diseases, waterborne diseases, and vector-borne diseases are all consequences of climate change. The minister said that extreme heat and cold waves are affecting children, the elderly, and women. Climate change is affecting healthcare centers, staff, and the public, making it the biggest challenge to public health.



KARACHI: Relatives of Atif Khan are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of police and demanding justice for him, at Karachi press club.

Pervaiz Ashraf greets Arshad Nadeem on historic Olympic gold medal win

LAHORE (APP): Former Speaker of the National Assembly and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Central Punjab President Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has extended his heartfelt congratulations to national hero Arshad Nadeem for securing the gold medal in the javelin throw at the Olympics. In a statement issued on Friday, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf lauded Arshad Nadeem's historic achievement, noting that this victory marks the first individual Olympic gold medal for Pakistan. He emphasized that Nadeem's triumph has not only made history but has also brought immense pride to the entire nation on the global stage. Highlighting the significance of the accomplishment, Ashraf mentioned that Arshad Nadeem shattered a 114-year-old record in the Olympic javelin throw event. He remarked that Nadeem's name will be forever etched in golden letters in the annals of both Olympic and Pakistani sports history.

At least seven persons were killed and 1344 injured in 1234 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 582 people with serious injuries were shifted to hospitals, while 762 victims with minor injuries were treated at the site by rescue medical teams, thus reducing the burden on hospitals. Furthermore, the analysis showed that 700 drivers, 63 underage drivers, 161 pedestrians, and 490 passengers were among the victims.

7 die, 1344 injured in 1234 road accidents in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least seven persons were killed and 1344 injured in 1234 road accidents in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 582 people with serious injuries were shifted to hospitals, while 762 victims with minor injuries were treated at the site by rescue medical teams, thus reducing the burden on hospitals. Furthermore, the analysis showed that 700 drivers, 63 underage drivers, 161 pedestrians, and 490 passengers were among the victims.

ANF seizes 81 kg drugs in four operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting four operations managed to recover 81 kg drugs and arrested six accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He said, 12 kg opium and 21.6 kg hashish were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Kala Shah Kaku Toll Plaza Sheikhupura and an accused was arrested.

Ramesh Arora says: Minorities Day to be observed with grandeur

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora has said that for the first time, the Punjab government will celebrate Minorities Day with full grandeur on August 11 (Sunday) to acknowledge their contribution towards the development of the country. He was addressing a gathering of Christian community during his visit to the residence of Pastor Shaukat Ashiq in the Chuhang area of Lahore. A large number of people from Christian community warmly welcomed him upon arrival and flower petals were showered from rooftops. On this occasion, the representatives of Christian community expressed their gratitude to the minister for presenting a historic budget for minorities and expressed hope that during his tenure, the sense of deprivation among minorities would be effectively addressed.

Pregnant woman strangulated to death in Shikarpur

Independent Report
SHIKARPUR: Tragedy struck in Shikarpur city when a pregnant woman was reportedly killed by strangulation over a minor dispute. The incident occurred on Friday in the jurisdiction of Lakh-Gate police station. According to initial reports, Surahiya Abro, wife of Kashif Abro, was found dead in her house located in the Plaza Cinema area.

Minister says: Punjab to purchase 3,000 new buses in transport overhaul

ATTOCK (APP): Punjab Transport Minister, Bilal Akbar Khan on Friday announced a major upgrade to the province's transport system, vowing the purchase of 3,000 new buses to improve public transportation. During a visit to the Attock General Bus Stand, Minister Bilal Khan emphasized the government's commitment to providing quality travel experiences for passengers. He directed officials to enforce axle-load regulations, prohibit LPG cylinders in public transport and implement measures to reduce road accidents. Highlighting the government's broader efforts to improve public services, Minister Khan mentioned initiatives like providing free solar systems to households with electricity consumption below 200 units and offering subsidized tractors to farmers.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Khan talking to media persons on the eve of inaugural ceremony of 100th Pakistan Lifestyle Furniture Expo.

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International News

Russia declares an emergency in Kursk, under attack by Ukraine. 12 killed in Russian strike on mall

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russia declared a "federal-level" emergency in the Kursk region following a large-scale incursion from Ukraine and sent reinforcements there on Friday, four days after hundreds of Ukrainian troops poured across the border in what appeared to be Kyiv's biggest attack on Russian soil since the war began. Meanwhile, a Russian plane-launched missile slammed into a Ukrainian shopping mall in the middle of the day, killing at least 12 people and wounding 44 others, authorities said. The mall in Kostiantynivka, in the eastern Donetsk region, is located in the town's residential area. Thick black smoke rose above it after the strike. "This is another targeted attack on a crowded place, another act of terror by the Russians," Donetsk regional head Vadym Filashkin said in a Telegram

post. It was the second major strike on the town in almost a year. Last September, a Russian missile hit an outdoor market there, killing 17. Russia's Defense Ministry said that reinforcements were on their way to the Kursk region to counter Ukraine's daring raid. Russia is deploying multiple rocket launchers, towed artillery guns, tanks transported on trailers and heavy tracked vehicles, the RIA-Novosti news agency said, citing the Defense Ministry. Little reliable information about the surprise Ukrainian operation has emerged, and its strategic aims are unclear. Ukrainian officials have refused to comment specifically about the incursion, which is taking place about 500 kilometers (320 miles) southwest of Moscow. But a top adviser to Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said

Thursday that border region attacks will cause Russia to "start to realize that the war is slowly creeping inside of Russian territory." Mykhailo Podolyak also suggested that the operation would improve Kyiv's hand in the event of negotiations with Moscow. Mathieu Boulegue, a defense analyst at the Chatham House think tank in London, said the Ukrainians appear to have a clear goal in mind, even if they're not saying what it is. "Such a coordinated ground force movement responds to a clear military objective, yet unknown, that requires extreme operational security," Boulegue told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. At the same time, the raid spooks the Russian public and delivers a slap in the face to Russian President Vladimir Putin, offering Ukraine "a great PR coup," he said.



A view shows a supermarket heavily damaged in a Russian military strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kostiantynivka, Donetsk region, Ukraine.

ABC News says Harris, Trump have agreed to presidential debate on Sept 10

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: ABC News says that both Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and his Democratic counterpart, Kamala Harris, have agreed to meet in a debate on Sept. 10. The network's announcement on Thursday came shortly after Trump told a news conference that he had agreed to three debates with Harris in September on separate networks. Trump is rejoining the ABC debate days after posting on his social media network that he would not appear on the network, citing a lawsuit he has filed. His decision sets up a highly anticipated moment in an election where the first debate led to a massive change in the race — with Democratic President Joe Biden ending his reelection bid and endorsing Harris. "I think it's very important to have debates," Trump said Thursday. "I look forward to the debates because I think we have to set the record straight." On the social media site X later on Thursday, Harris wrote that "I hear that Donald Trump has fully committed to debating me on September 10. I look forward to it."

UN warns IS Afghanistan branch growing in strength

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: A UN counter-terrorism official warned on Thursday that the Afghanistan branch of the militant Islamic State group (IS) poses the greatest external terrorist threat to Europe as it boosts its organisational strength. "ISIL-K has improved its financial and logistical capabilities in the past six months, including by tapping into Afghan and Central Asian diasporas for support," Vladimir Voronkov, undersecretary-general for counter-terrorism, said.

Israel revokes diplomatic status of Norway's envoys to Palestinian Authority

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM/WASHINGTON: Israel said on Thursday it was revoking the diplomatic status of Norway's envoys to the Palestinian Authority accusing Oslo of "anti-Israel behaviour" during the Gaza crisis and drawing a formal protest. Norway — a key facilitator in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, particularly in the secret negotiations that led to the Oslo Accords of the 1990s — swiftly summoned the Israeli ambassador to lodge a formal protest.

Israel vows to eliminate new Hamas leader as war enters 11th month

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel vowed to eliminate new Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar, the alleged mastermind of the Oct 7 attack, whose appointment further inflamed regional tensions as the Gaza war entered its 11th month on Wednesday. The naming of Sinwar to lead the Palestinian group came as Israel braced for potential Iranian retaliation over the killing of his predecessor Ismail Haniyeh last week in Tehran. Speaking at a military base on Wednesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel was "determined" to defend itself. "We are prepared both defensively and offensively," he told new recruits. Army chief Lieutenant General Herzl Halevi vowed to "find him (Sinwar), attack him" and force Hamas to find another leader.

UK, Egypt issue alerts for Iran, Lebanon airspace as risks of military conflict rise

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain and Egypt asked their airlines on Wednesday to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace amid growing fears of a possible broader conflict in the region after the killing of senior members of militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah. Britain's advisory to its airlines to avoid Lebanon's airspace came hours after Egypt instructed all of its airlines to avoid Iran's airspace for three hours in the early morning on Thursday. Many airlines globally are revising their schedules to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace while also calling off flights to Israel and Lebanon. Flights through conflict zones became a prominent industry safety issue a decade ago after Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was shot

Bodies of 34 Rohingya refugees found after boat sinking off Bangladesh

Monitoring Desk
COX'S BAZAR: The bodies of 34 Rohingya refugees, who fled Myanmar only to drown when their overcrowded boat sank while crossing a river to Bangladesh, have been recovered, a top local government official said on Thursday. Other refugees fleeing the bitter conflict described grim scenes of "bloodshed" as thousands tried to escape. The boat sank on Tuesday, when the bodies of 10 people — including young children — were initially recovered. But more have since washed ashore, taking the total killed to 34. Police said the group had fled their villages in Myanmar's Rakhine state and their small craft sank in the Naf River, near Bangladesh's Shahpari Island. Adnan Chowdhury, the government administrator of Bangladesh's Teknaf border town, said the boat was carrying Rohingya from Myanmar. Local councillor Abdus Salam said the bodies were buried. "The Rohingya people were fleeing with their lives from Myanmar," he said. At least 1,000 Rohingya have fled the war in Myanmar's Rakhine state to Bangladesh in the past few weeks, Chowdhury said. Clashes have rocked Rakhine since the Arakan Army (AA) attacked junta forces in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since a military coup in 2021. Abdul Kalam, 35, a Rohingya refugee, arrived on a different boat on Wednesday after fleeing the Rakhine town of Maungdaw and said thousands were trying to escape. "Arakan Army were killing us... they want to kick us out of Rakhine," he said.

down over Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board. US-based United Airlines said on Wednesday its flights to Tel Aviv, which were paused on July 31 due to security concerns, remained suspended. "We continue to closely monitor the situation and will focus on the safety of our customers and crews as we decide when to resume service," the airline said. Its rival Delta Air Lines has raised its flights between New York and Tel Aviv through Aug. 31. British carriers are not flying to Lebanon currently, according to flight tracking website Flightradar24. Singapore Airlines stopped flying through Iranian airspace last Friday and is using alternative routes, saying safety is its top priority. Similarly, Egyptian airlines have already been avoiding Iran's airspace.

Afghan Taliban chief asks public workers to attend mosque

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Afghan government employees must attend mosque five times a day or face punishment, Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada said on Thursday in his latest edict. Since the 2021 Taliban takeover, Akhundzada has overseen sweeping restrictions on society — shutting women and girls out of modern education, ordering male chaperones for females and effectively banning music. "The officials of the ministries and institutions of the (Taliban government) are obliged by Sharia to pray in congregation at their fixed times," said the order signed by Akhundzada. It added that employees who miss a prayer "without a reasonable excuse" should receive a

Somalia's cabinet approves bill for universal suffrage

Monitoring Desk
MOGADISHU: Somalia's cabinet approved a bill on Thursday that, if confirmed by parliament, will revert the country's election system to universal suffrage for the first time in decades, ending a process of indirect voting, the government's spokesperson said. Amid widespread insecurity caused by an Islamist insurgency and weak state structures, in recent years lawmakers voted for the president, while clan heads and elders elected lawmakers in both the federal government and regional states. The country had initially been scheduled to move to direct voting in 2020, but protracted squabbles among politicians and persisting insecurity across the country forced the government to retain the indirect ballot.

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Welcomes Imam Masjid-e-Nabwi NA Speaker commends his presence as matter of great pride, spiritual peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker, National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday cordially welcomed the Imam of Masjid-e-Nabawi (PBUH), Sheikh Dr Salah Bin Muhammad Al Budair at the Parliament House with the delegation accompanied by the Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf Bin Saeed Al Malaki.

The fifth meeting of the 8th session of the National Assembly commenced with the calming voice of Imam Sheikh Dr Salah Al Budair who recited the glorious verses of the Holy Quran advocating the commandments of Allah Almighty for the Muslims to keep unity intact among all their ranks to seek the blessings of their Lord, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly Syed Mir Ghulam Mustafa Shah was also present on this occasion.

The Speaker National Assembly, before the proceedings, announced that the Imam of Masjid-e-Nabawi was present in the House. "The National Assembly warmly welcomes His Excellency, the Imam and his presence is a moment of great pride and spiritual peace for us."

Imam Sheikh Dr Salah

Bin Muhammad Al-Budair along with his delegation witnessed the proceedings of the National Assembly.

On the occasion, the Speaker said the Masjid-e-Nabawi has a special status in the hearts of all Muslim nations. "The House desires to benefit from your knowledge and teachings. May Almighty Allah bless all of us to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet PBUH," Ayaz Sadiq said.

He also appreciated the Ambassador of KSA for being a staunch ambassador of Pakistan in the Kingdom.

The Speaker National Assembly also congratulated Arshad Nadeem on winning a gold medal in the javelin throw event of Paris Olympics 2024.

"Arshad Nadeem is a talented and distinguished athlete. Arshad Nadeem has won a gold medal by demonstrating hard work, acing skills and struggle. Arshad Nadeem's services for the promotion of javelin throw in Pakistan are commendable. Arshad Nadeem has made Pakistan famous all over the world by throwing the longest throw in the history of the Olympics javelin throw," Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said.

The whole nation is proud of Arshad Nadeem,

he said after winning the gold medal in the javelin throw final and brought glory to the country and the nation. "Arshad Nadeem has created a new history in the sport of Olympics. He is an example for the youth of the nation that he has achieved the impossible through extreme hard work and struggle," he added.

On the occasion, Minister for Defence, and Defence Production and Aviation, Khawaja Muhammad Asif said the Imam of Masjid-e-Nabawi's presence in the House was a moment of great pride and honour. He also appreciated the Saudi Ambassador for his services and role as an ambassador of Pakistan in the Kingdom.

He also felicitated Athlete Arshad Nadeem for winning a gold medal and making the country proud. "Arshad Nadeem in Paris has raised the head of the nation with pride and honour as after three decades' hiatus he brought a medal in Olympics for the country," he said.

The minister said the national athletes used to prepare for games in great neglect and dilapidation without the patronage of the government and resources.



ISLAMABAD: Imam Masjid Al-Nabwi (S.A.W) Sheikh Dr. Salah Mohammad M Al-Budair is delivering Namaz-e-Juma prayers in the Faisal Masjid.

Pak to host two-day int'l APFFD forum on 'Gender Empowerment & Green Economy': Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Friday announced that Pakistan would host the two-day international Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (APFFD) on 'Gender Empowerment and Green Economy' that would convene regional female parliamentarians from 22 states.

Addressing a curtain-raiser press conference regarding a two-day meeting of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

(APFFD) on 'Gender Empowerment and Green Economy' starting from Monday (August 11th), she said Pakistan would hold an international population and climate change conference under the auspices of the APFFD standing committee on Gender Empowerment.

Romina Khurshid Alam said that 22 states' female parliamentarians' as delegates would convene to discuss the impacts of climate change on women and their role in the green economy. She added that these parliamentarians would gather to share personal experiences, and

knowledge, and mull over regional solutions for the challenges like population and climate change that have posed formidable threats to human security in the region.

In 1982, she said Pakistan was the founding member of this forum, whereas in the 1994 APFFD Conference, the then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had actively participated in the global moot.

The PM's aide underlined that Pakistan has a great opportunity to host the APFFD two-day international conference from August 12-13.

Scope of BISP to be expanded on President's directives: Rubina Khalid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid announced that the scope of the BISP is being expanded as per the instructions of President Asif Ali Zardari.

She stated that the transparency of the BISP has been recognized by international organizations, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and that 9.3 million deserving families are benefiting from the program.

"Our aim is for women to receive their money with dignity and respect, without any deductions," she added. These remarks were made by Senator Rubina Khalid while speaking to media representatives during her visit to Mardan.

She mentioned that BISP has introduced a new banking system to facilitate the payment of funds to deserving women.

Under this system, the services of six banks are being procured to minimize human intervention, ensuring that beneficiaries receive their full amount, she added.

During her visit to the BISP District Office in Mardan and the Takhtbhai Office, Senator Rubina Khalid interacted directly with deserving women, listened to their concerns, and reviewed the registration process.

She directed the staff to guide elderly women with dignity and respect. She also instructed the women to visit the office to collect their money only after receiving a message from 8171.

Senator Rubina Khalid planted a sapling under the Benazir Plantation Campaign in the lawn of the District Office in Mardan and prayed for the prosperity of the country.

Addressing a public gathering at Gulli Bagh, Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized that the BISP provides educational stipends to the children of deserving families under the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif Program, with more scholarships allocated for girls' education. Under Benazir Nathonuma, pregnant women and infants are provided with cash grants and nutritious food.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam addressing a curtain-raiser press conference.

Minister urges Opposition to support govt's initiatives; stresses media to portray Pak positive image

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Friday urged upon the opposition to join hands with the government to create a conducive environment for economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction as by working together Pakistan can overcome the hurdles of inflation and poverty.

Talking to a private news channel, he made a fervent appeal to the opposition parties to put aside their political differences and join hands with the government to tackle the pressing issues of inflation and economic stagnation.

Sheikh emphasized that the current economic challenges facing the country require a collective effort and a unified approach to overcome.

He urged the opposition to support the

government's initiatives aimed at stimulating economic growth, creating jobs, and reducing poverty.

Ahmad Sheikh stressed that the government is committed to taking all necessary measures to address the economic challenges, but the support and cooperation of the opposition are crucial in this regard.

Sheikh's appeal for unity and cooperation is a testament to the government's commitment to putting the interests of the country above political considerations.

Minister for Maritime Affairs also urged the media to play a positive role in portraying Pakistan's true face to the world, adding, the media has a significant influence on shaping public opinion and creating perceptions about the country.



ISLAMABAD: Police personals try to stop activists of Sunni Ulema Council during protest in favor of their demands at Aabpara in the Federal Capital.

ASEAN, Pakistan ties continue to flourish, in mutual respect, shared goals: Chairman ACI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, ASEAN Committee Islamabad (ACI) High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to Pakistan, Pg Kamal Bashah has said the partnership between ASEAN and Pakistan is rich in history and continues to flourish, grounded in mutual respect and shared goals.

Since its establishment on 8th August 1967, ASEAN has been a cornerstone of regional stability and growth, Chairman ACI said. Chairman, ASEAN Committee Islamabad (ACI) High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to Pakistan, Pg Kamal Bashah said this while addressing the 57th anniversary of 'ASEAN Day'.

The envoy said this year's theme, "ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience," is particularly timely and significant as we try to navigate ourselves within the complexities of this modern world.

The ambassador from different ASEAN countries in Islamabad including, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Ambassador of Philippines to Pakistan, Maria Agnes M. Cervantes, the Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Pham Anh Tuan, the Ambassador of Myanmar to Pakistan, Wunna Han the Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma and the Charge d'Affaires of Thailand, Kamolwan Sriposol also present of the occasion.

Meanwhile, Chairman, ASEAN Committee Islamabad (ACI) said, "We take pride in our progress towards the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, which encompasses political-security, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions". He said that this vision underscores our cooperation in

critical areas such as defence, counterterrorism, peacekeeping, economic integration, climate action, and disaster risk reduction.

He said that with a combined population of over 690 million people and a combined GDP surpassing USD \$3.6 trillion, ASEAN has emerged as one of the significant political and economic players on the global stage. Chairman ACI said the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to be known, is a regional organization which currently comprises the ten member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. "We have also recently been welcoming Timor-Leste to be our ASEAN member as they have now been conducting their intensified efforts in implementing the roadmap criteria towards their full membership."

Naqvi directs to make Murree from Faizabad to Serena a model road

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited and inspected the Murree Road from Faizabad to Serena Chowk, directed the construction of a model road from Faizabad to Serena Chowk which is one of the main entry point of Islamabad and sought a plan regarding its upgradation.

He directed to remove all encroachments and to develop parks and green belts on both sides of the said road. He further said that the patchwork and carpeting of the road should be

completed on priority basis. He emphasized that Faizabad Interchange is the main entry point of Islamabad and it is in dire need of upgradation.

He added that the road lights installed on Murree Road should be made fully functional. He directed Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa to take measures towards the facilitation of the citizens in their travelling. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa and CDA members were also present on this occasion.

CDA chief for reforms in Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman CDA, Mohammad Ali Randhawa, on Friday emphasized the need for bringing reforms and modernization to the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI), enhancing its efficiency and service delivery to citizens.

During a meeting, the CDA chief stressed for strengthening administrative structure, increasing revenue, and enhancing service delivery through technology at MCI.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in a meeting with Imam Masjid Al-Nabwi (S.A.W) Sheikh Dr. Salah Mohammad M Al-Budair at Parliament House.

PDMA Sindh prepares for fresh monsoon spell, urges public to remain vigilant: DG

ISLAMABAD (APP): With a new spell of monsoon rains expected to hit country from today till August 12, the Director General of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh Syed Salman Shah Friday urged farmers and the general public to remain vigilant and take necessary precautions. Talking to PTV news channel, he has assured that timely early warnings and advisories will be provided to all stakeholders to minimize the impact of the heavy rains.

As the province braces for another round of torrential downpours, the PDMA's warning has sounded a alarm for residents to take extra caution and stay alert to avoid any potential disasters.

"The warnings have been issued to farmers to take extra care of their crops, particularly those in low-lying areas, and to take measures to protect their livestock," he added.

"We have also alerted the irrigation department to ensure that all necessary measures are in place to prevent breaches in canals and watercourses, and to minimize the risk of flooding in urban and rural areas," he added.

"We request people to avoid traveling to flood-prone areas, and to stay away from nullahs and watercourses."

Excise deptt introduces new rules for vehicle registration

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Excise & Taxation (E&T) department Islamabad has been made significant changes in the rules of vehicle registration and number plates in the Federal Capital, affecting fees and penalties for non-compliance.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the E&T department has introduced new regulations regarding vehicle registration and number plates. The registration of vehicles with non-standard number plates will now be canceled. While, vehicle owners will need to pay a re-registration fee to comply with the new standards. For vehicles with engines up to 1,000 cc, the re-registration fee is set at Rs 5,000. While, vehicles with engine sizes between 1,000 cc to 2,000 cc will also incur a re-registration fee.

IHC orders for recovering two missing brothers of social media activist

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has ordered for recovering two missing brothers of social media activist Azhar Mashwani and presenting them before it besides adjourning the hearing of the petition till August 13. Justice Miangul Hassan remarked "it is correct you people are at receiving end in what situation prevails at present. A day before Prime Minister (PM) has said the country should run according to Shariat. Then they should run these matters as per Shariat too. We will see the reply on next hearing. Otherwise my earlier orders are there too. We will see after reply on next hearing. Otherwise we will call Attorney General (AG)."

He gave these remarks during hearing of petition seeking recovery of two missing brothers of Azhar Mashwani on Friday.

Professor Mazhar ul Hassan and Professor Zahoore Hassan brothers of Azhar Mashwani are missing since June 6.

The lawyers Babar Awan and Aamna Ali appeared in the court on behalf of father of two missing brothers.

Justice Miangul Hassan inquired that it is in news papers today. Is he arrested. Counsel Babar Awan told the court petitioner is not arrested but he is father of two missing brothers. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked it is correct that he is some one else who has been arrested. Counsel Babar Awan told Azhar Mashwani is social media activist. Earlier he was lifted too. Two professors were lifted on June 6 while Rauf Hassan and Barrister Gohar were arrested too.

Kashmir dispute remains a global challenge; Experts urge urgent UN intervention

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Kashmir dispute continues to pose a significant challenge on the international stage, with the United Nations once again emphasizing the need for a resolution in line with the UN Charter and relevant Security Council resolutions.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the long-standing UN position on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute was reaffirmed by Farhan Aziz Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, during a recent briefing. Responding to a journalist's query about the UN's perceived silence on the atrocities committed since the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, Haq reiterated the UN's call for a solution consistent with international law.

Experts on the Kashmir conflict are calling for urgent UN intervention to uphold the principle of self-determination, enshrined in the UN Charter, as a fundamental step toward resolving the dispute. They express serious concerns over India's actions in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, stating that they undermine the UN's authority and effectiveness.



A group of interns of College Pro-Educational consultancy visiting Senate Museum at Parliament House, Islamabad.

NHA announces complimentary M-Tag facility nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Highway Authority (NHA) has announced that the M-Tag facility will be available at no cost to citizens nationwide until August 15, 2024.

It is important to note that, in the near future, only vehicles equipped with M-Tags will be permitted to operate on motorways. The NHA encouraged the public to take advantage of this opportunity and requested them to obtain their

M-Tags free of charge as soon as possible, said a press release issued by the NHA on Friday.

In the initial phase of implementation, M-Tags will be mandatory for the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway (M-11) starting

August 16, 2024. Gradually, M-Tag will be mandatory for the vehicles plying on any of the motorways.

The NHA authorities highlighted that the M-Tag system not only saves time but also reduced costs for travelers. Additionally, this system ensured that public funds are handled through transparent digital transactions.

In order to facilitate ease of access, the NHA has established multiple options for recharging M-Tags, including Customer Care Services, drive-through booths, and service areas, where payments can be made via credit/debit cards, EasyPaisa, and JazzCash.

AIOU gears up celebrations of independence day

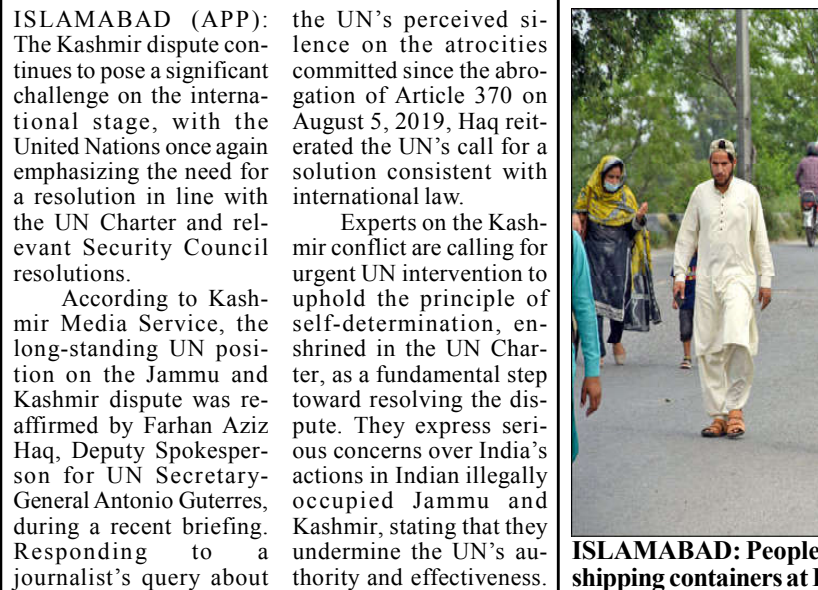
ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has completed its preparations for the nation's Independence Day celebrations.

According to the AIOU, following the guidance of Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, the campus has been decorated with national flags and illuminated buildings, creating a festive atmosphere. Visitors, including families and youth, have been flocking to the university in the evenings to enjoy the decorations, sparking patriotic enthusiasm.

It is worth mentioning that Allama Iqbal Open University regularly celebrates Independence Day with great enthusiasm every year.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, had instructed that this year, we should celebrate Independence Day in such a way that it becomes an example for educational institutions across the country.

AIOU is among the first institutions to finalize its preparations, setting a high standard for other educational institutions.



ISLAMABAD: People are facing difficulties due to roads block with heavy shipping containers at Islamabad Highway, in the Federal Capital.