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Moody's raises Pakistan's ratings to CAA2, reflecting better outlook

Upgrade reflects improving macroeconomic conditions and moderately better liquidity, says rating agency; PM Shehbaz lauds Moody's credit rating upgrade for Pakistan; commends economic team's efforts

ISLAMABAD (Online): Global rating agency Moody's has upgraded Pakistan's local and foreign currency issuer and senior unsecured debt ratings to Caa2 from Caa3. According to the one of the top international rating agencies, the upgrade to Caa2 reflects Pakistan's improving macroeconomic conditions and moderately better government liquidity and external positions, from very weak levels.

It noted that concurrently, the outlook for Pakistan is changed to positive from stable.

Accordingly, Pakistan's default risk has reduced to a level consistent with a Caa2 rating. There is now greater certainty on Pakistan's sources of external financing, following the

sovereign's staff-level agreement with the IMF on 12 July 2024 for a 37-month Extended Fund Facility of seven billion dollars. The rating agency expected the IMF will approve the Extended Fund Facility in the next few weeks, noting that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have about doubled since June 2023.

It highlighted that the positive outlook reflected a balance of risks skewed to the upside. It captures the possibility that the government is able to further lower its government liquidity and external vulnerability risks, and achieve a better fiscal position than we currently expect, supported by the IMF programme.

Besides, sustained reform implementation, including revenue-raising measures, can increase the government revenue base and improve Pakistan's debt affordability.

A record of completing IMF reviews on a timely manner would also allow Pakistan to continually unlock financing from official partners, sufficient to meet its external debt obligations and support further rebuilding of its foreign exchange reserves.

APP adds: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed his satisfaction with Global rating agency Moody's recent upgrade of Pakistan's credit rating and attributed the achievement to the hard work of the economic team and the blessings of the Almighty.

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BADIN: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah inspects the Karo Ghunghro Outfall Drain during a site visit where he receives a detailed briefing from Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro.

Sindh CM inspects rain emergency measures during his Sujawal visit

SUJAWAL (INP): Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has said that the monsoon weather system after Bangladesh and India, has reached Sindh.

Sindh's CM Shah was talking to media at Sujawal-Thatto Bridge on Wednesday during his visit of Sujawal district to monitor arrangements to tackle the rain emergency situation.

Murad Ali Shah said that Tharparkar receiving heavy rainfall for last two

days. "Karachi, Thatto, Sujawal, Badin, Umakot, Sanghar and Shaheed Benazirabad have more threat of the stormy weather system," chief minister said. "Continuous heavy rainfall makes the rainwater drainage a difficult challenge," he added.

Sindh's CM said that his government building 2.1 million housing units for around 12 million people affected in 2022 heavy rainfall and flooding.

"We have completed two lac houses, while six lac homes have been under construction," he said.

Sindh's chief minister after Karachi and Thatto reached Sujawal to be received by provincial minister Muhammad Ali Malkani and others.

He visited different areas with provincial cabinet members and also inspected the water flow at Dolah Darya Khan Bridge over the Indus River.

President for improving cricket infrastructure, training facilities in Sindh

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday emphasized the need to improve cricket infrastructure and training facilities in Sindh province to nurture and promote the province's cricket talent.

The president called for exploring the possibility of joint ventures in the cricket sector to develop state-of-the-art stadiums, besides providing modern coaching and mentoring opportunities to Sindh's youth.

The president expressed these views while talking to a delegation of Sindh Premier League (SPL), led by Chairman SPL Malik Aslam, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Department of Sindh, Jalaluddin Mahar, Vice Chairman SPL, Major General Zahid Mehmood, President SPL, Arif Malik, CEO SPL, Chaudhary Shahzad Akhtar, and senior government officials attended the

meeting. During the meeting, the president said that the SPL was providing a great platform to showcase Sindh's cricket talent. He urged the need to devise a comprehensive long-term roadmap to promote cricket in the province.

"Promoting sports and cricket leagues in Pakistan will not only enhance sports tourism but will also boost economic activities," he remarked.

The delegation briefed the president about the role of SPL in uncovering and promoting Sindh's cricketer talent and improving cricket infrastructure. The delegation also highlighted the achievements of SPL's inaugural season and shared future plans for establishing a high-performance centre in Karachi, aimed at training young talent, particularly from rural and underrepresented areas of Sindh.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Sindh Premier League (SPL) presenting the SPL shirt to President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Edu minister launches 2022-23 report on girls education

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education, Hassan Saqlain, Director General of the Pakistan Institute of Education, Dr. Muhammad Shahid Saroya; Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood; Executive Director of Pakistan Alliance for Girls' Education, Fajr; and representatives from other stakeholders also participated.

According to the report, nationwide, 28% of educational institutions are exclusively for girls, 31% are co-educational, and 41% are for boys. The report also proposes concrete measures to address the challenges identified.

The report, prepared by the PIE was unveiled during a ceremony held at the auditorium of Allama Iqbal Open University. The ceremony was attended by the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui addressing Launching of Report on Girls' Education in Pakistan and announcement of Statistics and Trends for 2022-23 at AIOU Auditorium.

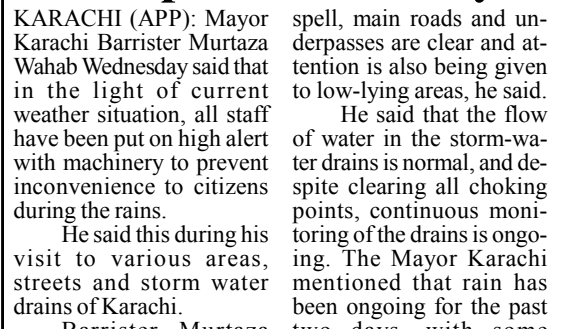
Staff put on high-alert with machinery in view of rain prediction: Mayor

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab Wednesday said that in the light of current weather situation, all staff have been put on high alert with machinery to prevent inconvenience to citizens during the rains.

He said this during his visit to various areas, streets and storm water drains of Karachi.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that due to a powerful rain system entering the city, there has been a continuation of light to heavy rain in various areas.

He said that teams of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) were working around the clock on water drainage at locations where water has accumulated due to continuous rain, and all relevant staff was present on the roads. Despite of continuous rain



spell, main roads and underpasses are clear and attention is also being given to low-lying areas, he said.

He said that the flow of water in the storm-water drains is normal, and despite clearing all choking points, continuous monitoring of the drains is ongoing. The Mayor Karachi mentioned that rain has been ongoing for the past two days, with some places experiencing heavy rainfall. Consequently, the KMC team has been continuously working on water drainage, especially using de-watering pumps in areas where water accumulation is significant due to the rain. He added that during the rains, he personally inspected the storm-water drains with the municipal staff and was very pleased with the hard work of the entire team.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding economic growth and investment.

Sindh Law Minister inaugurates new bar room at Bar Council in Karachi

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Home and Law Minister Zia Ul Hassan Lanjar inaugurated the New Bar Room at Sindh Bar Council today, where he was warmly welcomed by the Bar members. Speaking on the occasion, Sindh Law Minister said that the land allocation requests for Karachi Bar and Sindh High Court Bar have been approved, whereas another recommendation would be made to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, President Asif Ali Zardari, and Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah for payment of land allotment fees. The Sindh Law Minister acknowledged the lawyers' community struggle and announced that the arms licenses also approved for the lawyers'

self-defense at their longstanding demand. "The lawyers played a crucial role in reshaping and restoring the democracy in Pakistan," added Law Minister. Sindh Law Minister praised the Karachi Bar's strength and resilience, citing their proactive and most effective role during the judges restoration movement in recent times. The Law Minister said that the lawyers should keep political affiliations aside, as their primary allegiance is and should be with the Bar, adding that serious efforts are being made to provide plots to all Karachi Bar members. The Karachi Bar President Amir Vardich presented a Shield and the Turban to the Law Minister Lanjar as a token of respect and the appreciation.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Moina Naqvi in a meeting with the UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwate.

PDMA Sindh prepares for monsoon spell, urges public to take necessary precautions: DG

KARACHI (APP): Director General (DG) Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh, Syed Salman Shah Wednesday urged the public to stay informed through official channels and adhere to safety precautions during current heavy rainfall as a new spell of monsoon is expected to hit southern Sindh from the night of August 29. The downpour is likely to affect areas near Karachi and Badin, bringing much-needed relief from the sweltering heat, but also posing a risk of flash flooding and urban flooding in low-lying areas, he said while talking to a Private news channel.

He said that the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh is reviewing arrangements and taking significant steps to manage the ongoing rainfall in the province.

In a bid to mitigate the impact of the heavy downpour, the PDMA is providing dewatering pumps to various district administrations and municipal corporations. This move aims to expedite the drainage of accumulated water and prevent urban flooding. Additionally, the PDMA is working closely with district authorities to identify vulnerable areas and take proactive measures to protect lives and property, he added.

Bilawal Bhutto, Asefa condole death of Raza Rabbani's sister

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Member National Assembly Asefa Bhutto Zardari arrived at the residence of Senator Raza Rabbani and offered condolences over the death of Rabbani's sister.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Asefa Bhutto Zardari recited Fateha for the elevation of the deceased and prayed for the patience of the bereaved family. PPP Sindh President Nisar Khuuro and General Secretary Waqar Mehdi were also present on the occasion and offered Fateha.

PTI founder files plea for implementation on IHC verdict

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI)'s founder on Wednesday filed miscellaneous application to Islamabad High Court (IHC) seeking implementation on verdict regarding meetings with his lawyers and party leaders.

PTI founder filed the petition through his lawyer Barrister Ali Zafar and prayed for the court to issue order for implementation on decision dated February 26, and also sought report from Adiala Jail's administration. The petitioner has named secretary interior ministry, chief commissioner and Superintendent Adiala Jail as respondent in the plea.

Funeral prayer in absentia of civilians, martyred soldiers of Balochistan incident offered at Governor House

KARACHI (APP): Funeral prayer in absentia of the martyred soldiers and civilians of Balochistan incident offered at the Sindh Governor's House here on Wednesday.

Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori while addressing a press conference at the Governor House, said that the recent incident in Balochistan is being orchestrated by foreign elements, said a statement issued by a spokes-

person of the Governor House.

The Governor Sindh emphasized that those trying to disrupt peace in Balochistan are miscreants, and called for strict action against those attempting to destroy the peace.

In his discussions with business leaders, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori was assured of their commitment to Pakistan's development.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori along with Chairman Karachi Premier League Moez bin Zahid addressing a Press conference.

ITCN Asia Exhibition Held at Expo Centre Karachi

Independent Report
KARACHI: The ITCN Asia Exhibition was successfully held at the Expo Centre Karachi on August 28, 2024.

The event was graced by the presence of Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Mahar, the Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Sports, Youth Affairs, and Anti-Corruption, who attended as the chief guest. High-level delegations from various countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Thailand, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Morocco, participated in the event.

The international conference featured discussions on food security, agricultural development, and the potential of modernizing Pakistan's agricultural

sector through emerging technologies. After the conference, Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Mahar visited the exhibition of agricultural products at the Expo Centre, where he was briefed about various agricultural products and technologies on display at different stalls. During a conversation with journalists, Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Mahar emphasized the importance of food security as a critical challenge faced by many developing nations. He expressed that the international conference provided valuable insights and assured that the Sindh government, along with the Agriculture Department, is committed to collaborating on enhancing the agricultural sector.

Internet slowdown likely to continue till Oct: PTA

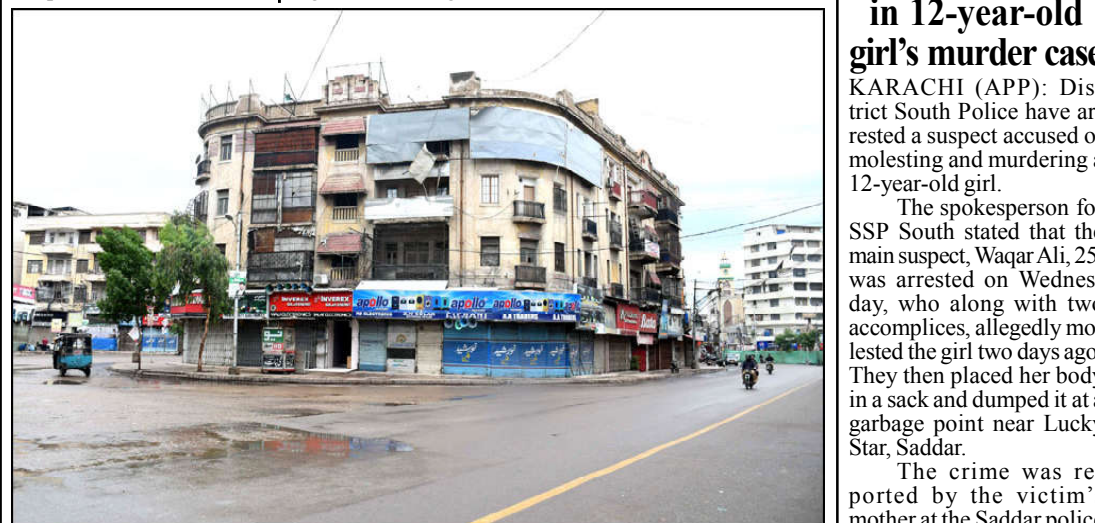
ISLAMABAD (INP): The ongoing internet disruption across the country is likely to continue for over a month as the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Wednesday said the submarine cable, which caused degradation of the services, was expected to repair by early October. The internet disruptions faced strong criticism from netizens and information technology (IT) sector, attributing the prevailing internet slowdown and limited connectivity to the purported testing of an internet firewall to rein in social media, which is equipped with filters to block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience.

Karachi police arrest suspect in 12-year-old girl's murder case

KARACHI (APP): District South Police have arrested a suspect accused of molesting and murdering a 12-year-old girl.

The spokesperson for SSP South stated that the main suspect, Waqar Ali, 25, was arrested on Wednesday, who along with two accomplices, allegedly molested the girl two days ago. They then placed her body in a sack and dumped it at a garbage point near Lucky Star, Saddar.

The crime was reported by the victim's mother at the Saddar police station, leading to a search operation.



KARACHI: Pakistani shopkeepers close their businesses during strike against inflation in Karachi.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

A new vision

After the shocking cycle of violence that began on Sunday night in Balochistan, the state is trying to formulate a response to the beleaguered province's military problem.

Addressing a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, the prime minister vowed to crack down on terrorism, insisting there was "no room for weakness". In a related development, the interior minister dashed to Quetta, and while reiterating his support for the Balochistan chief minister, he observed that the entire national leadership was "working towards a solution" to address the province's issues.

Past administrations have made similar resolves, using both carrots and sticks to 'fix' Balochistan. Yet, as the recent attacks have shown, the separatist threat has grown in lethality and reach, and a fresh approach is needed to bring peace to this tortured land.

The state's prime responsibility is to stop further violence in Balochistan and ensure that the lives of its people are secure. While the security forces pursue terrorists, it must be ensured that no innocent people are hauled up in the dragnet, and that there are no human rights violations during counterterrorism operations. If innocent people are penalised, the terrorists' narrative will only be strengthened.

Furthermore, the recent violence indicates an intelligence failure of significant proportions. Terrorists massacred bus passengers based on their ethnicity, while also attacking installations of security forces. And, this was not an assault in a limited area; the insurgents struck at multiple locations in the province. In fact, the sophistication of the attacks point to a high level of coordination and planning, possibly aided by hostile foreign forces. A full investigation, therefore, is required to unearth how terrorists were able to go on the rampage, causing such high loss of life.

As this paper has pointed out, the state's response must go beyond kinetic measures. The prime minister said on Tuesday that talks could be held with those who "acknowledged Pakistan's Constitution and flag", but there could be no dialogue with terrorists.

Perhaps the administration can start with promising to ensure that the people of Balochistan have the protections guaranteed by the Constitution. Much of what ails the province is the result of denial of fundamental rights to Balochistan's people, and lack of holistic development — health, education, economic opportunities — reaching its people. Correcting course would require engagement with the province's genuine representatives, who are often crowded out by pro-establishment "influentials" on the province's political stage.

On the other hand, Baloch nationalist leaders should also condemn killings based on ethnicity, as such barbaric behaviour cannot be condoned. Ultimately, the rulers should realise that if people are not allowed to secure their rights — in Balochistan and other areas — through the peaceful democratic process, then the doors for rebellion and violence will be flung wide open.

Taliban on steroids

Mahir Ali

The inspired but abortive effort a century ago by a king and his feminist queen to thrust Afghanistan into their vision of modernity offers a stark contrast with the proclivities of that nation's present rulers, whose mediaeval inclinations are crudely reflected in last week's codification of an ostensibly faith-based but effectively barbaric 'moral code'.

Amir Amanullah — whose ascent to the Kabul throne in 1919 was followed by strategic success in the third Anglo-Afghan war (the Rawalpindi peace treaty in August that year removed British influence over the conduct of Afghanistan's foreign affairs, and established the Durand Line) — and Queen Soraya embarked on a reform programme that focused, among other things, on education (the literacy rate was about two per cent at the time), not least for girls, land reform, lifting the veil, and shaving off beards.

The Taliban last week formalised the denial of education to girls, reinforcing the invisibility of women — who can neither be seen nor heard (their voices apparently trigger irresistible impulses among the Taliban fraternity) without attracting penalties — and specifying the size of beards that men are obliged to sprout. With the partial exception of Iran, given its absurd and occasionally lethal obsession with the nitty-gritty of hijabs, hardly any other Muslim nation goes to the kind of lengths that the Taliban aspire to.

That, too, doesn't escape their notice. Spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid lately advised fellow components of the ummah to "take inspiration" from the Taliban's "Sharia-based systems". Perhaps the only Muslim

nation at risk of doing so is Pakistan. After all, the Taliban in their original incarnation were spawned some 30 years ago by a grotesque ménage-à-trois emerging from Saudi-funded and U S - a p p r o v e d madrasahs along Pakistan's north-western periphery some 30 years ago, and their initial conquest of an Afghanistan further torn apart following the Soviet withdrawal by the interecine tussles for power among the mujahideen — who had chiefly been backed by the same three nations — was aided and abetted by what are nowadays euphemistically referred to as 'the agencies' and guided to some extent by the fanatical former ISI chief Hamid Gul.

Small wonder, then, that many Afghan exiles blame Pakistan for the resurgence and second coming of the Taliban. But even supporters of the present dispensation are ill-disposed towards their neighbour. A New York Times report about the celebrations marking the third anniversary of the 2021 takeover quoted a young man keen "to continue the jihad" as saying, "I want to go to Palestine", but he is contradicted by an even younger Taliban who proclaims: "No, it's Pakistan's turn. Our first enemy is Pakistan..."

The blowback has, of course, already been occurring for a couple of decades — and direct Taliban intervention might not be required if the likes of extremists in Pakistan have their way.

Shock and horror, rather than surprise, have been common reactions to Afghanistan's newly codified morality laws, which give vast leeway in terms of implementation to the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. Who, though, would have dared to go as far as the supreme leader of

the Taliban, Hibatullah Akhundzada, in proclaiming earlier this year, "You may call it a violation of women's rights when we publicly stone or flog them for committing adultery... [but] you represent Satan?"

There's no mention, of course, of the male offenders. Likewise, the latest injunctions against singing, reciting or speaking loudly in public is restricted to women. The sheer obscenity of such rules has inevitably riled the various agencies that were still engaged with Afghanistan to some degree. Interestingly, though, an aid worker anonymously contributed an article to The Guardian this month, arguing that aid must keep flowing so that she and her colleagues can keep aiding women who are desperately in need of assistance amid a veritable epidemic of mental health challenges.

Amanullah's broadly well-intentioned but ill-designed reforms in the early 20th century faced a backlash in Khost in 1924, and steady rural resistance that led to his abdication and exile five years later. Subsequent attempts at transcending the status quo, from the Saur 'revolution' in 1978 to the mis-guided Soviet and American occupations, failed to shift the dial — with Pakistan playing a retrograde role, in alliance with the US in the 1980s and, later, on the strength of its own aspirations to 'strategic depth'.

The consequences cannot be disguised. Afghan women bear the brunt of the retrogressive revival, tragically, but men unaligned with the Taliban are not spared either. Pakistan, meanwhile, has been reaping the whirlwind for many years, yet there could be worse to come. — Courtesy Dawn

Predicate offences

Rashid Javid Rana

Investigations of predicate offences can be more complex than solving mystery puzzles. Predicate offences are camouflaged in the darkness of a criminal environment. For example, tax evasion can be considered a predicate offence as its unlawful profits can lead to money laundering and the financing of terrorism (ML/FT).

Terrorism plays havoc with human lives and economies. It is a complex phenomenon whose roots are embedded in the political, religious, and economic interests of certain mafias. Each time the state tries to clip its wings through kinetic measures, terrorism manages to regroup them, as demonstrated in its recent resurgence, which, apart from harming law and order and the economy, has fractured the country's international image.

Terrorist organisations operate in a very systematic fashion, covertly conducting their operations through money laundering and financing terrorist activities by taking advantage of the absence of a legal framework that could round up, investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of heinous activities. In an increasingly interconnected world, the harm done by these criminal groups is global, affecting the integrity and stability of the entire region and beyond.

UNSC Resolutions 1617, 2253, and 2368 have made it binding on UN member states to comply with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force, which was founded by the G7 countries and given the mandate to set standards to protect the global financial system from money laundering and terrorist financing.

The FATF has classified 21 offences as predicate offences. These include terrorism, murder, arms trafficking, tax fraud, racketeering, kidnapping, extortion, smuggling, counterfeiting, forgery, bribery, etc. Each crime, when investigated thoroughly, would prove to be merely the tip of the ML/FT iceberg.

When Pakistan was put on the 'grey list', the FATF required it to ban militant groups and freeze their bank accounts. It proved a blessing in disguise for Pakistan, as it provided an enabling environment to the state to enhance its anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism efforts, with the help of key institutions, including the FBR, SECP, FIA, State Bank, the ministries of finance and foreign affairs, and the security intelligence agencies.

In turn, their efforts were boosted by legislation such as the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2010, and the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 2017, as well as the establishment of the National Counter-Terrorism Authority and the Directorate General of Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions, and a National Action Plan, which, together, helped Pakistan to eventually get off the 'grey list'.

Though the law-enforcement agencies have been empowered through statutes to take kinetic measures to address the issue, the judicial system, which is typically defined as the 'criminal justice system', lacks the tools to enable effective financial investigations and prosecutions of predicate offences. The very low conviction rate points to the mild deterrence effect of the justice system, especially against terror-financing activities —

this factor itself constitutes several missing pieces of the mystery puzzle. Well-coordinated and determined efforts are required to fulfil international commitments to ensuring effective investigations and prosecutions of predicate offences.

Investigation/prosecution agencies including NAB, FIA, ANF, the Directorate General of Intelligence and Investigation — Inland Revenue, Customs, FBR and the provincial CTDs should conduct joint investigations and have swift data-sharing protocols under the umbrella of the Financial Monitoring Unit. Stronger inter-agency cooperation and specialised trainings of law enforcers, civil servants and judges could improve the rate of convictions.

A strategic approach to the issue must include non-kinetic measures, such as revisiting ideological motivations by promoting the rule of law, democracy, tolerance, and inclusivity. The administration of fiscal justice and poverty alleviation through social protection programmes, education and social awareness through the media, as well as the documentation of the economy, is the cornerstone of this roadmap.

Last but not least, religious scholars must be engaged to communicate how sabotage is frowned upon by religion, while technical skills studies must be introduced in the madrasahs. While we have to create a just and equitable environment for progress and prosperity by addressing ethnic tensions, separatist sentiments, and religious extremism through sustained dialogue with the relevant stakeholder, we must also put in extra effort to resolve domestic and regional political disputes. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Commerce minister pledges support for leather, footwear Industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Wednesday held a meeting with the Pakistan Leather and Footwear Council, marking what he described as the first time a federal minister has actively engaged with this sector's council.

The minister emphasized that the primary goal of the meeting was to restructure, strengthen, and revitalize the council, ensuring it becomes a more active and effective body, said a press release issued here.

During the meeting,

Minister Khan underscored the critical role that sectoral councils can play in policy formulation. By maintaining close contact with industry leaders, listening to their concerns, and working collaboratively on a forward-looking strategy, these councils can greatly influence the future direction of the industry.

"The government is fully committed to instilling confidence in our local industry and providing robust support," Khan assured the council members. He highlighted the

need to capitalize on "low-hanging fruits"— immediate opportunities that can be seized with minimal effort—and reiterated that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is dedicated to supporting the industry and exporters by offering all possible incentives. Khan further assured the council that both he and the Ministry of Commerce, supported by an energetic and vibrant team, are fully available to the council and are eager to receive its recommendations and proposals. Chaudhry Zulfiqar Hayat, Chairman

of the Pakistan Leather and Footwear Council, appreciated Minister Khan's vision and intervention, stating that the business community and the industry are encouraged by the minister's commitment to empowering these councils. "For the first time, we feel that a minister is genuinely thinking about empowering these councils," Hayat remarked.

Minister Khan also conveyed to the Prime Minister that these councils are the only platforms providing a true representation.



ISLAMABAD: Mirza Ikhtiar Baig MNA/Convener in a group photo with H.E. Mohamed Karmoun Ambassador of Morocco, Additional Secretary Africa MOFA Hamid Asghar Khan, DG Africa MOFA Husnain Yousuf, Secretary Africa Ministry of Commerce Muhammad Arifullah and Participants of Friendship Group (PFG) in a meeting at Parliament House.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Dr. Mehmet Paçacı, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb at Finance Division.

KP governor stresses joint efforts for economic development, prosperity

LAHORE (APP): Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said on Wednesday that Pakistan is a country rich in potential and resources and urged all segments to work together for the country's development and prosperity.

He expressed these views during his visit to Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, where LCCI President Kashif Anwar presented the address of welcome and highlighted various issues

including industry, economy, Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and tourism etc. Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Executive Committee Member Fareeha Younus and other distinguished members were also present.

The KP governor said the situation in Punjab was relatively better while KP was suffering from 16 to 18 hours of load-shedding, adding that after Tarbela no major dams have been constructed. He suggested that if KP, which produced

the cheapest electricity, was given even half of its production, the province's load-shedding issue could be solved.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that running businesses has become exceedingly difficult.

The industry is grappling with challenges such as currency depreciation, rising tariffs for electricity, gas and fuel, high-interest rates, and numerous other issues that are escalating the cost of doing business.

PM Coordinator appeal traders to join tax net

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister Rana Ehsan Afzal on Wednesday appealed the traders to join the tax system and share their genuine concerns which create a conducive environment for traders to comply with tax regulations and contribute to the country's economic development.

Talking to a private news channel, Afzal urged traders to come forward and register themselves under the tax net, promising that the government would provide

necessary support and facilitation.

He also warned that failure to comply with tax regulations would result in consequences, but emphasized that the government's preference was to work together with traders to achieve mutual goals. The Coordinator's appeal comes at a time when the government is facing significant revenue shortfalls. By bringing more traders into the tax net, the government hopes to increase revenue collection and allocate resources more effectively.

German delegation visits PSGMEA

SIALKOT (APP): A German delegation on Wednesday visited the Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PSGMEA) and discussed trade issues.

The delegation was included Bettina Muller, Project Director, SEQUA, Christian von Mitzlaff, Supply Chain Due Diligence Consultant, Sarim Mehmood, Sector Expert/Consultant and Dr Michael Aretz, Managing Director VFI e.V German Importers. Chairman PSGMEA Muhammad Arshad Latif Butt, Vice Chairman Zarrar

Ahmed Dodhi, Secretary General Mohsin Masood and other members welcomed the guests.

Arshad Latif Butt said: "We look forward to learn how we can collaborate to enhance sustainable practices within our supply chains, ensuring that Pakistani products continue to meet the highest standards."

He said that Sialkot is famous all over the world for making footballs and footballs made in Sialkot are also used in Germany.

Pakistan, Turkiye vow to expand bilateral trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Terming the signing of the Trade in Goods Agreement 2022 as a significant step towards achieving the bilateral trade target of USD 5 billion, Pakistan and Turkiye here on Wednesday underscored the need for enhancing the trade and investment portfolio through more Government-to-Government (G2G) and Business-to-Business (B2B) arrangements.

According to press release issued by finance ministry, Ambassador of the

Republic of Paçaci paid a farewell courtesy call on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The meeting underscored the deep-rooted and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Turkiye, founded on shared faith, history, and cultural affinities. The finance expressed appreciation for the outgoing Ambassador's contributions to strengthening bilateral relations and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to

continue deepening its partnership with Turkiye across various sectors, including trade, investment, technical cooperation, and more.

The Minister also highlighted the progress made during the recent visit of the Turkish trade delegation to Pakistan, led by Trade Minister of Turkiye, Prof. Dr. Omer Bolat which helped in exploring new avenues for cooperation in sectors such as energy, agriculture, infrastructure, and technology.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where three ships, Maersk Denver, Lydia and Tivoli Park carrying Container, Mogas and Chemicals, berthed at Container Terminal, FOTCO Terminal and Engro Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile two more ships, Estia and IVS Trader carrying Gas oil and Coal are arrived at outer anchorage port during last 24 hours. A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships.

SCCI, CS KP to establish close-liaison for issues resolution

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) President Fuad Ishaq and Chief Secretary (CS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry on Wednesday decided to establish liaison between SCCI and secretary office for promptly resolve business community issues.

The decision was made during a meeting presided over by SCCI President Fuad Ishaq on the occasion of Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry's visit to the chamber. Leader of the Businessman Forum former senator Ilyas Ahmed Bilour especially participated in the meeting. Fuad Ishaq apprised the meeting about reservations of the business community over the implementation of two percent tax on exports by the provincial government, obstacles in mutual trade, transit trade, taxes through various provincial departments/authorities.

Governor Kundi visits Data Ganj Bakhsh shrine

LAHORE (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday visited Lahore for a two-day and paid a visit to the shrine of the renowned Sufi saint, Data Ganj Bakhsh.

At the shrine, Governor Faisal Kundi offered a floral tribute and prayed for the security and stability of the country. He emphasized the importance of fostering interfaith and inter-sect harmony in Pakistan.

Governor Kundi remarked, "It is crucial to promote interfaith and inter-sect unity. To achieve this, we must follow the teachings of Syed Ali Bin Osman Al-Hajveri (Data Ganj Bakhsh)."

He further stressed that for improving the peace situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it is essential to abandon intolerance and violence. The Governor highlighted the significant role of the Sufi tradition in

promoting peace and tolerance. He also announced the initiation of conferences and seminars in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to promote the teachings of Allama Muhammad Iqbal and other Sufi saints, aiming to spread their messages of peace and unity. Governor Kundi's visit underscores his commitment to enhancing peace and harmony in the province through the teachings of historical and spiritual leaders.



LAHORE: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi offering dua at the shrine of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh Ali Hajveri.

Maryam has become role model for other provinces: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari said on Wednesday that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had become a role model for the other provinces.

She said in a statement that Maryam Nawaz's mission is to make Punjab prosperous, peaceful and developed province. On the other hand, she added, former ruling party had nothing to offer to the nation except for lies, propaganda, and accusations. She added that Maryam Nawaz, following in her father's footsteps, is setting records in public service. After electric bikes, "Apna Ghar Apni Chhat," relief in electricity bills, and the "Himmat Card" are commendable projects by the Punjab

chief minister, she added. The minister said the people of Punjab were being provided with basic facilities at their doorsteps. She said, "I can proudly say that the projects initiated by my chief minister have been followed by Sindh and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The leadership of the Pakistan Muslim League-N will eliminate the politics of division and hatred."

The people of Pakistan have seen the ugly faces of those who spread chaos and discord. Those who spread despair were disgraced before and will be humiliated again, the minister said and added that those who prayed for Pakistan's bankruptcy were now begging for forgiveness.



PESHAWAR: Activates of Transport Employees Union hold protest outside Provincial Assembly.

CM Assistant says: KP govt to boost technical education, skill development

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government is set to enhance technical education and skill development to reduce unemployment and empower youth.

Abdul Karim Tordher, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister said that KP government already allocated Rs 4 billion allocation for these efforts.

Key initiatives include loans of up to half million for certified youth through the Akhuwat Foundation and a new loan scheme

under the Social Welfare sector. The government will focus on sustainable technical and vocational education and training, strengthening links between institutes and industries, and improving institutions in backward areas, along with offering short-term soft skills courses.

He chaired a meeting with the heads of government polytechnic institutes to discuss the development and standardization of diploma courses and to address the challenges faced by these institutions.

Jacobabad police crack down on crime

JACOBABAD: SSP Jacobabad Syed Salim Shah's strict directives yield results: Successful police operations lead to the arrest of absconding and wanted criminals, including active culprits.

Secret information leads to the arrest of a wanted suspect in a murder case during a checking operation. Stolen motorcycle recovered and returned to its rightful owner after verification. Miranpur Barro Police Station: SHO Miranpur Barro, SIP Muhammad Nawaz Brohi, along with his staff, conducted a successful operation, arresting wanted suspect Muhammad Jan s/o Hazaar Khan Bhattiani Beladi, involved in a murder case. Legal action was taken.

CM launches internship program for youth's bright future

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has launched the 'Chief Minister Internship Program' for bright future of the youth.

Youth aged between 18 to 25 years can register for the internship program at www.cmip.punjab.gov.pk. The selected interns will get placement opportunities in prominent private sector institutions.

The CM said "We want to guide youth to the path of financial independence in a dignified manner. Young people! step up, bright future awaits you."

The CM said that 6,000 internships spanning over six months duration will be offered in Phase-I, and the interns will receive a monthly stipend of Rs 25,000 doing their internship period. In the Chief Minister Internship Program, preference will be given to graduates who have completed their degrees in the last two years, she informed.

CM grieved over loss of lives

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed a deep sense of sorrow and grief over the loss of human lives due to electrocution and collapse of roofs during torrential rains.

The chief minister expressed her heartfelt sympathies and condolence with the bereaved families. The CM directed to provide best medical treatment facilities to the injured persons due to collapse of roofs.

3 development schemes worth Rs 1.48bn approved

LAHORE (APP): At the 22nd meeting of the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP), chaired by Chairman P&D Board Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan, three development schemes worth Rs 1.48bn were approved on Wednesday.

The approved schemes include Provision of Stand-By Pumping Water Supply Scheme, Murree, at a cost of Rs 717.387 million, Rehabilitation of Donga Gali Water Supply Scheme, Murree, at a cost of Rs 766.733 million and Feasibility Study for Installation of Chairlift/Cable Car System at Kotli Sattian, District Murree, at a cost of Rs 1 million.

'Clean Punjab' task to be completed on priority basis: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq on Wednesday said that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif wanted to see Punjab clean in every aspect. The goals of "Suthra (clean) Punjab", set by the chief minister are very clear which will definitely be achieved.

He was addressing a video link meeting of chief executive officers (CEOs) of waste management companies.

Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmad Mian, Special Secretary Asia Gul and Additional Secretary Maria Tariq also attended.

During the meeting, CEOs of eight waste management companies updated the provincial minister regarding outsourcing.

The minister expressed his satisfaction over the progress made so far in the solid waste outsourcing process pledging that according to the timeline, the selection of the contractor will be completed at the tehsil level.

"All legal requirements are being fulfilled before the new system becomes functional", he said.



LAHORE: Punjab Ministers for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazeer talking to media persons at General Hospital Lahore.

Ministers promise quality public healthcare, open plantation campaign

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir reaffirmed the government's commitment to public healthcare, asserting that the government hospitals were consistently providing care to patients, even in the most challenging circumstances. They made these remarks during the inauguration of a plantation campaign at Lahore General Hospital (LGH) on Wednesday.

Rafique highlighted the hospital's capacity, stating that more than 2.3 million patients receive treatment at Lahore General Hospital annually, with 12,000 to 13,000 patients being treated daily in the Outpatient Department (OPD) and Emergency. He announced plans to submit a request for a new campus for Post Graduate Medical College to Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, emphasizing the ongoing dedication of the medical community to public service.

International News

Starmer, Scholz seek reset in British-EU ties with bilateral treaty

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Britain and Germany's leaders agreed in Berlin on Wednesday to work on an ambitious treaty covering issues from defence to trade that would be part of a reset of British relations with the European Union.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer's trip to the EU's top powers, Germany and France, aims to help Britain move beyond the previous Conservative government's fractious relations with European allies. Starmer, who took office last month, has put improved ties at the heart of his efforts to boost Britain's economic growth.

He billed the new co-operation treaty as a "once-in-a-generation chance to deliver for working people in Britain and in Germany" as it would deepen collaboration in sci-

ence, technology, business and culture while increasing trade.

Starmer said that growth was his government's "number one mission".

"And what we understand clearly is that building relationships with our partners here in Germany and across Europe is vital to achieving it," he said.

Starmer, addressing a press conference alongside German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, said a reset would not mean reversing Britain's 2020 exit from the EU under the Conservatives, or re-entering the bloc's single market or customs union.

"But it does mean a closer relationship on several fronts, including the economy, including defence, including exchanges," he said.

Scholz said Germany

wanted to take this outstretched hand.

"The United Kingdom has always been an indispensable part of solving the big issues that affect the whole of Europe," he said. "This has not changed since it left the EU."

In a joint declaration, Britain and Germany said they hoped to sign the co-operation treaty at government consultations "by early next year".

Defence ministers were also working on a new defence agreement, they said, which would follow the signing of a joint defence declaration in July.

Stephen Hunsaker, a trade researcher at the UK in a Changing Europe think tank, said however that any efforts to properly improve trade would risk encroaching on EU rules and could only happen at the periphery.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer shake hands during a press conference in Berlin, Germany.

Top Chinese, US officials optimistic about Beijing talks

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and China's top diplomat Wang Yi said they were hoping for productive talks as they met in Beijing on Tuesday. After arriving at the Chinese capital, the top US diplomat said that he looked forward to "a very productive round of conversations" with foreign minister Wang. "We'll delve into a wide range of issues, including issues on which we agree and those issues... where there are still differences that we need to manage effectively and substantively," he said.

Wang told Sullivan he was keen for "substantive" and "constructive" talks during his visit, the first to China by a US national security adviser since 2016.

He also said he wanted the two sides to "help China-US relations move forward towards the San Francisco vision".

Russian bomb kills Ukrainian family of four in the east, say Ukraine prosecutors

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: A Russian bomb killed a Ukrainian family of four on Wednesday in a small village in the eastern Donetsk region, the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's office said. The prosecutors said the guided aerial bomb hit a private house and killed both parents and their 24-year-old daughter and 17-year-old son in the village of Izmilivka. A picture posted by the prosecutors' office on the Telegram messaging app showed what it said was the destroyed house with its roof.

Israel launches a large-scale military operation in the occupied West Bank, killing 9 Palestinians

Monitoring Desk
AL-FARAA REFUGEE CAMP: Israel launched a large-scale military operation in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, where its forces killed at least nine Palestinians and sealed off the volatile city of Jenin, according to Palestinian officials.

Israel has carried out near-daily raids across the West Bank since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Gaza triggered the ongoing war.

Israel says it is rooting out militants to prevent attacks on its citizens, while Palestinians in the West Bank fear it intends to broaden the war and forcibly displace them.

Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, an Israeli military spokesman, said that "large forces" had entered the volatile city of Jenin, which has long been a militant stronghold, as well as Tulkarem and the Al-Faraa refugee camp dating back to the 1948 Mideast war, all in the northern West Bank.

He said the nine dead were all militants, including three killed in an airstrike in Tulkarem and another four in an airstrike in Al-Faraa.

Japan scrambles jets against China plane that breached airspace

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japan's defence ministry said it had scrambled jets against a Chinese reconnaissance aircraft that had briefly breached its airspace on Monday morning.

The aircraft was identified as a Y-9 reconnaissance plane that flew over the Danjo Islands to the west of the southern island of Kyushu between around 11:29 a.m. and 11:31 a.m.

Bangladesh lifts ban on local Jamaat-i-Islami party

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Bangladesh's caretaker government revoked a ban on the country's main Islamic party and its affiliated groups on Wednesday, saying it has not found evidence of their involvement in "terrorist activities".

Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government had banned the Jamaat-i-Islami party under an anti-terrorism law, blaming it for stoking deadly violence during student-led protests that turned into an uprising against Hasina, forcing her to resign and flee to India on Aug 5.

A gazette notification on Wednesday by the caretaker government that re-

Ukraine's Zelenskiy to present plan to Biden to end war with Russia

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Tuesday that the war with Russia would eventually end in dialogue, but that Kyiv had to be in a strong position and that he would present a plan to US President Joe Biden and his two potential successors.

The Ukrainian leader, addressing a news conference, said Kyiv's three-week-old incursion into Russia's Kursk region was part of that plan, but that it also comprised other steps on the economic and diplomatic fronts.

"The main point of this plan is to force Russia to end the war. And I want that very much - (that it would be) fair for Ukraine," he told reporters in Kyiv of the war launched by Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

He did not elaborate further on the next steps, but said he would also discuss the plan with Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris and probably also with Republican

US Elections: Harris and Walz kick off Georgia bus tour as Democrats' hopes rise

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Democratic US presidential candidate Kamala Harris and her running mate Tim Walz will campaign together on Wednesday in Georgia, a state that Democrats narrowly won in 2020 and could play a decisive role in this year's election.

The election race has dramatically changed since Harris became her party's candidate last month, and she hopes to galvanise Black voters who make up about one-third of Georgia's electorate and will be crucial in the effort to win there.

Harris and Walz will take a bus through southern Georgia, home to some of its largest Black populations and where the campaign has added

staff and opened field offices.

Before President Joe Biden dropped his reelection bid last month and endorsed Vice President Harris, polls showed Republican candidate Donald Trump with a clear lead in Georgia, and some Black voters were disillusioned with Democrats.

Since then, however, Harris has steadily gained ground in national polls and has been boosted by well over \$500 million in donations.

The latest polls compiled by FiveThirtyEight show Harris just behind Trump, 46.0 per cent to 46.6pc in Georgia, compared to about a five-point lead for Trump before Harris entered.

Afghanistan's Taliban government bans 'violent' mixed martial arts

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Afghanistan's Taliban government has banned mixed martial arts (MMA), believing it to be un-Islamic, its sports authority said in a statement on Wednesday.

The order was passed down by Afghanistan's morality police in the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue, and the Prevention of Vice after an investigation into the sport's compliance with Islamic law, or sharia, the statement and local media said.

"It was found that the sport is problematic with respect to sharia and it has many aspects which are contradictory to the teachings of Islam," the Taliban government sports authority said in a statement sent to AFP.

Political parties unite to reaffirm unwavering support for CPEC

Pakistan-China Institute hosts multi-party moot, pledges commitment to strengthen Pak-China ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), headed by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, successfully organised a unique event under its 'Friends of Silk Road' series, which brought together leaders of eight political parties on one platform to reaffirm support for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Leaders belonging to parties from Government and Opposition, PML-N, PPP, PTI, MQM, BAP, NP, NDM and JUI-F, from all provinces, were represented. They discussed the results of the recently-concluded 3rd Plenum of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and its impact on China and its foreign relations, a news release said.

Chairman Pakistan-China Institute, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed emphasised the pivotal role of the CPC in China's ongoing journey of reform and modernization, adding CPC is the world's biggest political party with 100 million members and longest-serving political party, which has transformed China. Citing figures of China's phenomenal

progress since the 1979 Reform & Opening Up, he said then China had per capita income of \$ 157 while now it's \$ 12,000, then China's GDP was \$ 150 billion, now it's \$ 18 trillion. And Fortune 500 now counts China with 142, largest number of companies. Senator Mushahid Hussain listed 5 reasons for the China Success Story in such a short time: Quality of Leadership, Ability to do Course Correction, Continuity of Policy, Learning from others, and Peaceful Foreign Policy.

Senator Sherry Rehman noted that the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee will have far-reaching impacts not only on China but also on the world. "China has played a crucial role in the development of the Global South, and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has created numerous investment opportunities in Pakistan," Senator Rehman stated.

She praised China's Global Security Initiative, calling it a commendable effort that will ensure peace and stability globally. Additionally, she high-

lighted China's role in clean energy development under CPEC as a significant contribution to sustainable development in Pakistan and the region.

Saadia Khaqan Abbasi commended China's leadership in technological advancement, human development, and labour productivity. "The focus on security and development is a unique selling point of China", she added.

Leader of Opposition, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Senator Shibli Faraz emphasised China's development story as a role model for the world and highlighted the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as having the potential for shared development and prosperity across the globe. "CPEC stands as a beacon of hope for Pakistanis, symbolizing the transformative impact of our strong bilateral relationship," he added.

Senator Faraz also congratulated the Pakistan-China Institute for hosting this important timely event and lauded the role of Senator Mushahid in promoting the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Mr. Qaisar Ahmed Sheikh was chief guest in the special event program organized by Pak-China Institute in COMSTECH Auditorium.

Sherry Rehman lauds China's 'Global Meteoric Rise', 'All-Weather Friendship' with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson, Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday underscored China's meteoric rise as a "global power", a power that not only influences the world but also profoundly shapes the mindset of nations, particularly in the Global South.

She was speaking at the "Friends of Silk Road-3rd Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC" organized by Pakistan-China Institute. Senator Rehman highlighted the significance of the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC, under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, emphasizing its

crucial role in shaping global history, a news release said.

She reflected on the deep-rooted and historic relationship between the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the CPC, nurtured by the visionary leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, and Asif Ali Zardari. "The PPP has the oldest relationship with CPC, curated and nurtured by our leadership," she stated.

Discussing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Senator Rehman lauded China's commitment to the project, calling it a "spectacular opportunity" that has propelled Pakistan onto a his-

toric pathway of development.

Senator Rehman emphasized the environmental aspects of the project, particularly the Green CPEC Initiative, which aims to decarbonize and green Pakistan's future.

She noted, "The CPC's Third Plenum placed a premium on pushing green development through carbon reduction, pollution reduction, and improvement of environmental governance systems."

Highlighting the Karot Hydropower Project as an example of this vision, Senator Rehman pointed out its significant environmental and economic contributions.

UN urged to play role in stopping cross-border TTP attacks in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held a meeting with the UN delegation led by UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwate.

The high-level delegation included UN Resident Coordinator Mohamed Yahya, Fady El Meouchy, Special Assistant to the DSRSG, and Head of the UN mission in Afghanistan Malik Ceesay.

The minister welcomed the UN delegation at the Ministry of Interior.

The UN Special Representative for Afghanistan strongly condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that terrorism is a global issue and Pakistan is the most affected country by it.

He highlighted that Pakistan's security forces, police, and people have rendered unparalleled sacrifices in the war against

terrorism.

He also informed the delegation about the involvement of banned TTP in the terrorist attacks in Pakistan. He stated that banned TTP is using Afghan soil for these attacks, which must be stopped. He said that Pakistan is desirous of peace and stability in Afghanistan and is providing all possible support in this regard.

Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for decades, adding, that the phase-wise repatriation of illegal foreigners has already started.

He stated that no action is being taken against individuals holding legal documents, adding that no one can be allowed to stay in Pakistan without a visa or other illegal documents.

He said that the second phase of the repatriation of Afghan refugees will be started soon.

Commissioner imposes ban on cutting of trees, its transportation

SUKKUR (APP): Divisional Commissioner Sukkur, Fayaz Hussain Abbasi has imposed a 90-days ban on tree cutting and its transportation within the limits of Sukkur district on the recommendation of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sukkur.

According to handouts issued here on Wednesday, the Commissioner Sukkur has imposed ban on tree cutting and its transportation for 90 days, under Section 144 of the CrPC. The Divisional Commissioner Sukkur has directed the district administration and forest department to strictly enforce the ban.

Shafqat Shah condemns terrorist attack in Kalat

SUKKUR (APP): Senior politician and social development leader, Advocate Syed Shafqat Ali Shah, has strongly condemned a terrorist attack in Kalat.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, Shah paid rich tribute to the sacrifices of levies, police, and innocent civilians in fighting the menace of terrorism. He also offered sincere condolences and expressed her heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved families.

Elderly couple killed, daughter injured in roof collapse

KARACHI (INP): An elderly couple was killed and their daughter critically injured when dilapidated roof of a house collapsed due to heavy rain here Tuesday-Wednesday midnight.

According to details, as the heavy rain lashed the area, roof of a house located in Afgan Basti near Northern Bypass Karachi came down when the residents were sleeping.

The incident took place between 2 am to 3 am at night but rescue activities were started in the morning.

The incident resulted in death of 73-year-old Arz Muhammad and his 67-year-old wife Agha Gul while their daughter Shukriya 24, was seriously injured who was shifted to hospital.

Interpol nabs attempted murder suspect at Karachi airport

KARACHI (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency's National Central Bureau (FIANCB) Interpol has arrested a suspect wanted in serious crimes upon his arrival at Karachi Airport from Amman.

According to an FIA spokesperson, the accused, Usman Sikandar, was wanted by the Punjab Police in connection with an attempted murder case registered in 2022. He also faced charges in a separate case at Sadar Pasrur police station, Sialkot.

Sindh CM inspects housing project for flood victims in Tando Muhammad Khan

Independent Report
TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah visited the housing construction sites in Tando Muhammad Khan district today, where work is underway under the Sindh People's Housing for Flood-Affectedes (SPHF) programme. He was accompanied by Provincial Ministers Saeed Ghani and Nasir Shah, along with other relevant officials.

Launched in November 2022, the SPHF programme aims to rebuild

2.1 million homes across the province, providing relief to millions displaced by the catastrophic floods of 2022. The programme marks a significant step towards restoring normalcy and enhancing the lives of those impacted by the floods.

During the visit, Jaleelullah Khokhar, District Project Officer of the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), briefed the Chief Minister on the resilient houses being built with the support of the Government of Sindh.

Important meeting held in Mirpur Khas regarding rain emergency

Independent Report
MIRPUR KHAS: An important meeting was held today at the Commissioner Complex in Mirpur Khas to discuss the emergency situation caused by heavy rainfall. The meeting was chaired by Provincial Minister and Focal Person for Rain Emergency, Mir Tariq Ali Khan Talpur.

The meeting was attended by Provincial Advisor Janid Baloch, Commissioner Mirpur Khas Faisal Ahmed Aqili, Deputy Commissioner Mirpur Khas Rashid Masood Khan, SSP Mirpur Khas Asad Ali Chaudhry, Mayor of Mirpur Khas Abdul Rauf Ghori, and officers from various district de-

partments. Deputy Commissioner Rashid Masood Khan briefed the Provincial Minister and Focal Person Mir Tariq Ali Khan Talpur on the preparations being made to deal with the rain emergency.

The Minister emphasized the need for immediate drainage of water from urban and rural areas and ensuring public safety. Instructions were issued for the immediate establishment of medical camps and rescue operations to provide maximum relief to the public.

The Minister directed the removal of obstacles from natural waterways to restore drainage.



ISLAMABAD: Employees of PWD scuffle with the police during a sit-in protest (Dharna) in favor of their demands at Srinagar Highway in the Federal Capital.

Commissioner visits various areas of Daur, review drainage of rainwater

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division, Syed Muhammad Sajjad Hyder, visited various areas and cities of Daur on Wednesday to review the drainage of rainwater.

He also chaired a meeting at the Assistant Commissioner's office in Daur regarding rainwater drainage.

On this occasion, Commissioner Syed Muhammad Sajjad Hyder directed the officers of the Town Committee Daur to ensure immediate drainage of rainwater, keeping in view the start of the rainy season.

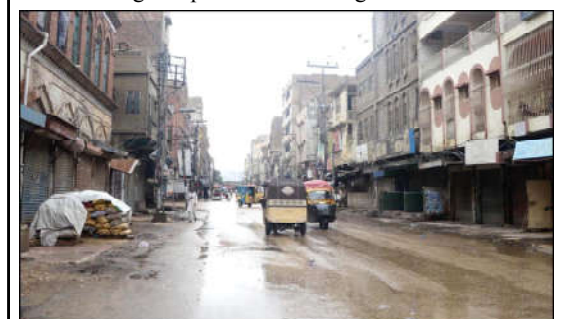
He also ordered the activation of all machinery and ensuring the presence

of staff so that citizens can be saved from inconvenience.

The Commissioner directed the XEN LBOD to establish checkpoints on the embankments of the canals and appoint staff for surveillance, as well as take immediate measures to strengthen the weak points of the canal embankments.

The Commissioner directed the Assistant Commissioner Daur to monitor all disposals, machinery, and rainwater drainage work.

On the occasion, Assistant Commissioner Daur Hassan Zafar, LBO, and Town Officer briefed the Commissioner on rainwater drainage.



HYDERABAD: A view of closed shops due to shatter down strike call by traders in city. A nationwide strike is being observed by traders across Pakistan to protest the recent hike in electricity bills and the imposition of new taxes.

TRC, NED university hold "Cluster Conference on Climate Change"

KARACHI (APP): The Teachers Resource Center (TRC) in collaboration with NED University of Engineering and Technology Karachi organized a Cluster conference themed "Urgent Need for Climate Change Awareness - Role of Youth Leaders for Local and Sustainable Climate Actions". A large number of participants including students, faculty, and climate change experts from national and international organizations participated in the conference. Speakers Ahmed Shabar Founder & CEO of GarbageCan, Dr. Samina Qaidwai, Romana Hussain, Razina Bilgrami, Masood Lohar, Yasir Hussain and Shah Rukh Nadeem addressed the participants and said it was a matter of pleasure to hold such a conference on climate change in the current situa-

tion. We all have seen how much hot weather was experienced in Karachi in the past months, this was a sign of climate change.

The whole world including Pakistan is currently in the grip of climate change. There is an urgent need to take effective and sustainable measures to avoid the effects of climate change.

In this regard, the cluster conference of TRC and especially the inclusion of youth in it is an important step as they are the builders of the future and they have to take the reins of this country. Over time, future generations will play an important role in addressing climate change issue. The Teacher Resource Center's development of a curriculum on climate change education for classes 1 to 10 is a great service.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan being briefed by Chairman National Highway Authority in the departmental briefing of National Highway Authority.

Conference on "Strengthening Local Governance Policy Design & Delivery in Sindh" held

KARACHI (APP): The Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI) Pakistan in collaboration with Sindh Agricultural and Forestry Workers Coordination Organization (SAFWCO) and Sindh Local Government Department organized a provincial conference on "Strengthening the Local Governance Policy Design and Delivery in Sindh" here on Wednesday.

The Conference was participated by over 150 participants, including parliamentarians, government officials, local elected representatives, civil society leaders, sector experts and community influential and discussed and proposed solutions for improving local government service delivery functions in Sindh. The provincial confer-

ence, part of the Strengthening Leadership Within Union Council (LUC) Project, led by DAI Pakistan, focused on enhancing policy design and delivery mechanisms for local governance in Sindh in collaboration with SAFWCO. The conference was graced by Provincial Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani who appreciated the efforts made by DAI and SAFWCO and expressed that the project objectives are aligned with government priorities. Saeed Ghani mentioned the latest reforms/action taken by the government to improve local government in Sindh and appreciated that DAI and SAFWCO have presented a scalable model of local governance based on their work in Khairpur.

DC for drainage rainwater

HYDERABAD (APP): The residents of Mizamal Town, Nawabshah, met with Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad, Shahrar Gul Memon, and brought up the issue of drainage of rainwater.

On the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner, a crane machine was provided in Mizamal Town, which is being used to stop the rainwater from accumulating. Additionally, the process of draining water is also underway through the dewatering machine.

The residents of the area informed that due to the lack of a drainage system in Mizamal Town, rainwater was entering homes.

Municipal staff to continue serve citizens on roads during rainfall: Arslan

SUKKUR (APP): Spokesperson to Sindh Government and Mayor Sukkur Barrister Arslan Sheikh on Wednesday said that the government was fully aware of its responsibilities during the rain and had taken measures at every level.

Barrister Arslan directed the district administration officials to ensure the protection of lives and properties of people during rains. He appealed to citizens to avoid unnecessary outings during the rainy season and to stay away from electricity poles and other electronic installations to prevent any potential accidents.

SFA busts a factory making oil from animal corpses, offal

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Food Authority, in an operation in Korangi on Wednesday, busted a factory making unhealthy oil from animal corpses and offal and recovered 21400 liters of oil harmful for human consumption. The DG Food Authority Muzammil Halepoto, in a statement issued here, informed that the SFA team led by ADG Bilawal Abro conducted a grand operation against the oil factory located in Korangi Industrial Area. The team recovered the organs, skins and offal of dead animals at the site which were being used to make oil, the DG stated adding that the team demolished the production units and drained off about 21400 liters of oil.

SSC-II and HSC-II result announced

Independent Report
KARACHI: The Universities and Boards Department Government of Sindh please to announce the schedule for the results of the Secondary School Certificate SSC-II and Higher Secondary School Certificate HSC-II examinations for the year 2024, in order to ensure uniformity and timely dissemination of examination results, all Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education across Sindh have been directed to announce the results of HSC-II examination on 15th September 2024. This directives issued under the guidance of the Honorable Minister for Universities and Boards Department. The result of SSC-II examination will be announced by the respective boards on the following dates.

August 2024, BISE, Shaheed Benazirabad 26th August 2024 (result announced)

BISE Sukkur 7th August 2024 (result announced)

BISE Hyderabad 5th September 2024,

BISE Mirpur Khas 5th September 2024, Boards of Secondary Education (BSE) Karachi, General Group 30th August 2024,

Science group 15th September 2024,

The Boards are working diligently to adhere to this schedule and all necessary preparation are being finalized to issue that the result are announced on time.

Students, parents and guardians are encouraged to stay in touch with their respective Boards for any updates or further information regarding the results.

BISE, Larkana 29th



HYDERABAD: Vehicles passing through rain water accumulated at Kotri Road after heavy rain in the city.



KARACHI: Citizens traveling while sitting on the roofs of buses due to the lack of transport in the city during strike, in the Provincial Capital.

SAU launches training program to equip youth for future leadership

HYDERABAD (APP): The Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam Dr. Fateh Mari, emphasized the importance of keeping youth informed about global changes, advancements, and issues. He stressed the need to develop leadership qualities among the youth.

He made these remarks during the opening ceremony of a three-day training program titled "Developing Skills for Future Leadership" at the university's A.M. Sheikh Auditorium. Dr. Mari highlighted that youth need to prepare themselves as future leaders and address economic, developmental, research and geographical challenges.

Renowned social reformer and motivational speaker Atiq Raja stated that young people need to reconstruct their thinking to gain comprehensive experience in leadership in a

rapidly changing world. He stressed that a thorough rethinking process was vital for equipping the next generation to lead effectively in a rapidly evolving environment. He encouraged self-assessment to stay aligned with technological advancements and innovative thinking.

Director of University Advancement and Financial Assistance Dr. Muhammad Ismail Kumbhar described that the workshop was designed to empower youth for success in both their communities and professional spheres. The comprehensive training will cover leadership skill development, enhanced communication, emotional intelligence, problem-solving, critical thinking and organizational behaviour, setting the stage for future leaders to excel in a competitive world.