

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vd XXV No. 344, Safar 02, 1446 AH Wednesday August 07, 2024 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

Bill barring independents from joining parties passed by Senate

Amendments to Elections Act 2017 as per Constitution, NA rules of business: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (INP): After the National Assembly, the Senate of Pakistan also passed a bill barring independent legislators from joining a party after a stipulated time. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Senator Talal Chaudhry presented a private bill 'The Elections (Second Amendment) Act, 2024' amid protest by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The bill is perceived by political analysts and legal experts as an attempt by the government to avert the July 12 verdict of the Supreme Court, declaring the PTI eligible for reserved seats.

According to the bill, lawmakers cannot change the party after joining one

within three days of winning the election. Furthermore, reserved seats cannot be allotted to a party, that did not win a single seat in the election.

"Provided that if a candidate, before seeking allotment of a prescribed symbol, has not filed a declaration before the returning officer about his affiliation with a particular political party by submitting a party certificate from the political party confirming that he is that party's candidate, he shall be deemed to be considered as an independent candidate and not a candidate of any political party," the bill's text read. Speaking on the occasion, Law Minister Azam Nazeer

Tarar said that the authority to legislate rests with Parliament. "A group of 17 individuals cannot be allowed to legislate," he added.

The law minister also criticised the previous PTL-led government, saying that they passed 51 bills in a single day during their tenure, and now they question others' legislative efforts. "Everyone knows how legislation was done during PTL's tenure," Azam Nazeer Tarar added. Federal Minister for Law and Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday brushed aside the Opposition's accusations of amending the Elections Act

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, Provincial Ministers, MPAs and other high ups inaugurate Quetta to Jeddah special Umrh Flight.

Nation stands with forces to maintain durable peace in country: Khair Azad

QUETTA (APP): Peace Ambassador Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khair Azad on Tuesday said that the entire Pakistani nation stands with Pakistan's forces and security agencies in order to maintain durable peace in the country.

He said that our beloved country Pakistan is the blessing of Allah Almighty, the protection of which is the common responsibility of all of us.

He expressed these views while addressing at "Pakistan Conference of Islamic Scholars and Stability" regarding the National Unity, Inter-ethnic Harmony, Respect for Humanity, Violence-Free Society and Message of Pakistan held in the provincial capi-

tal Quetta with the special efforts of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti.

The conference was presided over by Khateeb and Imam Badshahhi Masjid Lahore, Chairman of the Central Sighting of the Crescent Committee of Pakistan.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Religious Affairs and Awqaf Balochistan Muhammad Ishaq Jamali, Allama Zubair Ahmad Zaheer, Maulana Muhammad Tayyab Qureshi, Mufti Muhammad Ramzan Sialvi, Allama Mir Asif Akbar Qadri, Pir Ali Raza Bukhari, Maulana Maqsood Ahmad

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain addressing to the Paigham-e-Hajj Conference organized by Pakistan Ulama Council and International Organization of Harmin Sharifain.

Interior minister assures foolproof security for Chinese citizens

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday assured foolproof security for Chinese citizens and staff working on projects in Pakistan.

A high-level meeting between Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and a Chinese business delegation, led by Consul General Zhao Shirin, focused on improving safety measures for Chinese citizens and staff in Pakistan.

The meeting, attended by top officials from law enforcement agencies, discussed suggestions from Chinese businessmen to enhance security protocols. Naqvi assured the

implementation of feasible suggestions, prioritizing the safety of Chinese citizens.

He announced that online visas for Chinese citizens would be available from August 14, facilitating their business travels to Pakistan. The meeting aimed to review and refine Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the convenience of Chinese citizens. Consul General Zhao Shirin expressed optimism about the meeting's outcome, highlighting the "ideal relations" between Pakistan and China. The meeting was also attended by senior officials from Punjab, including the Inspector General of Police and the Interior Secretary.

Salik for collective efforts to foster unity, tolerance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Tuesday urged the nation to come together in unity, putting aside differences, to drive the country's development and secure a brighter future for the next generation.

Addressing the Paigham-e-Hajj Conference here, he highlighted the nation's divisions along sectarian and provincial lines and urged the people to put aside hatred and respect differing opinions to achieve the goal of peace and progress.

Salik shared his experience of overseeing the Hajj operation and acknowledged initial challenges.

Govt bans use of prefixes like 'Hafiz', 'Mufti' for TTP militants

ISLAMABAD (INP): The government has now made it binding on its departments and the law-enforcement agencies (LEAs) not to use prefixes like 'Hafiz' or 'Mufti' before any Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militant's name.

In a letter, the Ministry of Interior has said that since the TTP militants have already been declared 'Khawarij', so, therefore, the same word should be used for each and every militant in each and every document and references.

The letter has also been sent to the chief secretaries of all four provinces of the country.



ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari. Deputy Speaker National Assembly Ghulam Mustafa Shah is also present.

Chief Minister Balochistan meets President: Asif Ali Zardari assures CM of every possible guidance & support to meet expectations of masses

"Balochistan is close to our heart, desires province is moved ahead and living standard of common men is raised"

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti called on the President, Asif Ali Zardari in Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad on Tuesday.

Also present in the meeting was Deputy Speaker National Assembly, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah.

During the course of meeting, overall political, economic and law and order situation of the country particularly Balochistan was discussed. Besides, the matters about ongoing development projects were also discussed.

The Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti informed the President about the economic development of the province as

well as about the development projects initiated by the government for welfare of the masses and uplift of the province.

He said that steps are being taken for making the healthcare and social welfare compatible with the needs of people.

The Chief Minister said that the officers of Balochistan government have prepared review report and comprehensive recommendations after visiting Sindh to make the health institutions functional under the Public Private Partnership on the pattern of Sindh. He said that the viable approved development projects have been included in the provincial budget. This is aimed at benefiting the people from the development

projects, he added.

The Chief Minister thanked the President for extending support to include the province's projects of public interests in the federal development programmer.

He said that the people of Balochistan pay tributes to the President for his endeavors for development of the province.

Speaking on the occasion, the President Zardari said that he had worked with sincerity and heart to bring Balochistan in the mainstream development and would continue to do so in future. The president said that Balochistan is close to our heart and it is our desire that the province may move ahead and living standard of the common men is raised.



LAHORE: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi in a group photo with delegation of Chinese businessmen led by Consul General Zhao Shirin.

Qazi family donates 31,680 sq ft land to govt for environmental centre

QUETTA (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and his family have donated around seven kanals of land adjacent to the Quaid-e-Azam Residency in Ziarat for the establishment of an environmental centre.

The Qazi family, on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day, announced to donate their 31,680 sq ft land for the benefit of the people.

In a letter sent to the Balochistan government and signed by CJP Qazi Faez Isa and Qazi Azmat Isa on Tuesday, the family donated the land adjacent to the Quaid-e-Azam Residency at Ziarat to be used for an environmental centre.

The Qazi family decided to give their land to the nation on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day.

The channel reported that the donated land, lo-

cated next to the Quaid-e-Azam Residency, will be used for the environmental centre, and for this purpose, a formal donation letter has been written to the Balochistan government.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa was born in Quetta on October 26, 1959, to Qazi Muhammad Isa and Begum Saida Isa.

His paternal grandfather, Qazi Jalaluddin, was a Hazara of the Sunni sect belonging to the Sheikh Ali tribe and was a judge in Kandahar who was forced to flee Afghanistan at the end of the 19th century, in protest against the persecution of Hazaras during the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan.

Jalaluddin settled in Pishin, in Baluchistan, in what was then British India, and served as the prime minister of the princely state of Kalat.

DPM Dar arrives KSA to attend OIC extraordinary meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday arrived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to participate in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Executive Committee.

At the Madinah airport, the deputy prime minister was received by Saudi Arabia Ambassador Ahmad Farooq and Director General of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Madinah Branch Ibrahim bin Muhammad Saeed Alsobhi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted on X account.

Internet disrupted as fiber optic cable set on fire in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): The internet services affected in several cities including Islamabad and Peshawar on Tuesday after fiber optic cable set on fire in the federal capital.

The cable was set ablaze passing on the bridge of Ninth Avenue connecting I-8 and I-9.

The incident has undermined internet services in a number of cities including Islamabad, Peshawar, Murree and Abbottabad.

Earlier it was reported that some gas pipeline has caught fire on the bridge.

Governor Balochistan inaugurates PIA direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah

Sheikh Jaffar Mandokhail says long-standing demand & desire of people of the province met with regard to launch of direct flight from Quetta to Saudi Arabia

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail inaugurated the direct flights of national flag carrier airlines, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) from Quetta to Saudi Arabia (Jeddah), here on Tuesday.

The maiden flight of the PIA left Quetta International Airport for the holy land carrying some Umrh pilgrims and other passengers.

The Governor Balochistan saw them off at the Airport. Present on the occasion were the Provincial Ministers Mir Ali Madad Jatak, Mir Saleem

Khosa, Ms. Rahila Hameed Durrani, MPA Zarak Khan Mandokhail, General Manager PIA Balochistan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan Miankhalil, Station Manager, A M Dummar, besides other senior officials of the PIA, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and other government high ups. Addressing the ceremony, Governor appreciated the launch of Quetta-Jeddah direct flight and said that the initiative of federal government and PIA regarding launch of the flight is commendable under leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif.



Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar arrives in Saudi Arabia. He was received by Ambassador of Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Ahmad Farooq and Director General of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Madinah Branch Ibrahim bin Muhammad Saeed Alsobhi at Madinah Airport.

Parliament holds authority to enact laws: Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that Parliament is the supreme institution and it holds the authority to enact laws.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly on Tuesday, he said "We respect all institutions, but they have the mandate to interpret the constitution and not to rewrite."

He expressed concern that interference from one institution into another would weaken the democracy. He said that democracy is far superior to dictatorship and that the respect and constitutional sanctity of the parliament must not be compromised.

He stressed the importance of continuing the democratic journey, acknowledging that while democracy has its shortcomings, these are present even in developed democracies like the UK and the US.



NUSHKI: A view of road which is closed due on 5th consecutive day due to protest of Baloch Yekjehti Committee at Qalam Kitab Chowk.

PTI to challenge election law amend in SC: Gohar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Opposition party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has announced to challenge the Election Act amendment law in the Supreme Court.

Speaking at the floor of the National Assembly PTI's chairman Barrister Gohar said, "Shehbaz Sharif should consult with Sheikh Hasina about the modus operandi and passage of fleeing from country," PTI leader sarcastically said.

"Did you see large crowds of people yesterday, it will teach a lesson to the government, you will face the same fate as Hasina Wajid," PTI chairman said. "If you won't give due place to a political

party, the space will be filled by someone else," he said. The PTI founder's ideology has spread into the people, he added.

It is to be mentioned here that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) lawmaker Bilal Azhar Kiyani presented the bill in the NA, proposing amendments to the Elections Act 2017 in order to bar lawmakers from changing their party affiliation at a later stage. The opposition protested against passage of the legislation and torn copies of the agenda of the house.

The legislation follows after SC allotted reserved seats to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in a verdict.

Govt to resolve labour issues: Minister Faisal

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Labor and Human Resources Faisal Ayub Khokhar stated that the Punjab government is committed to addressing labor issues.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting with the directors of PESSI in head office on Tuesday. Vice Commissioner PESSI Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Kharral, DG PESSI Azhar Minhas and field Directors were present on this occasion.

The minister ensured that all medical and financial benefits, which are the workers' rightful entitlements, are provided

promptly. He said that Punjab Employees Social Security Institution's field directors had shown tremendous performance, under the supervision of Commissioner PESSI, Nadia Saqib, in last financial year as they had collected historical recovery of contribution after four-teen years.

Faisal Ayub Khokhar directed all directors to enhance the target of workers' contribution and to register new workers so that no worker could be deprived of the entitled benefits. He also said that it is his foremost desire to ensure the provision of

medical and financial benefits to all laborers for which all officers should work as a team and no negligence will be tolerated in this regard.

He also announced to formulate special teams for random checking of field staff and said that proper media campaign would be initiated in the province to create awareness among the stakeholders about benefits of registration to workers. He further said that he himself would visit chamber of Commerce offices across the Punjab and will listen the problems faced by factory owners and workers.

Record number of 9.3m tourists visited KP from May 1 to July 31

PESHAWAR (APP): A record number of 9.3 million tourists have visited scenic sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the period starting from May 1, 2024 to July 31, reflecting a large number of people in the province.

This cheering disclosure was made during a meeting on tourism held under the chairmanship of Zahid Chan Zeb, Advisor to Chief Minister on Tourism and Culture.

The meeting was also attended by Secretary Tourism Department and Director Generals of Tourism Authorities, said a press statement issued here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, Zahid Chan Zeb was informed that record number of tourists have visited KP in this summer season.

This growth in number of visitors is also because of tourism promotional activities being organized by all the authorities

in Tourism Department KP, the meeting was told.

Speaking on the occasion, Advisor to KP CM on Tourism, Zahid Chan appreciated the efforts of Tourism department in attracting a large number of people to the province.

He also informed the participants of the meeting that cultural activities would soon be resumed in Nishtar Hall Peshawar.

He asked stakeholders in Adventure Tourism to get themselves registered on early basis with Tourism Services Wing.

Instructions were also issued to all Tourism Authorities to ensure enforcement of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government Rest Houses and Tourism Properties (Development, Management and Regulation) Act 2020.

CM Advisor also directed all Tourism Authorities to upload data on KP Tourism website and mobile app.

KPTMA calls for abolition of ACD on raw material

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textile Mills Association (KPTMA) has called for the abolition of additional customs duty (ACD) on the raw material of the textile to harmonize the tariff structure and grant exemption to critical raw materials.

In separate letters on Tuesday, the Chairman, KPTMA Muhammad Kamran Shah has called for the abolition of the additional customs duty of 2% imposed on the import of Acrylic Tow, Viscose Staple Fibre, Polyester Staple Fibre, Flax, raw or retted, Polyester (Textured Yarn), Elastomeric Yarn (spandex yarn) and others (Lyocell & PVA Yarn) as per the finance budget 2024 since the government has granted exemption for cotton and other man-made fibres.

Commissioner Dera for timely completion of development projects

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Syed Abdul Jabbar Shah on Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to utilize all available resources for timely completion of development schemes across the division by ensuring quality of work.

He issued these directions while presiding over a meeting held at his office to review the progress over development projects which was attended by Deputy Commissioner Dera Ms Sarah Rehman and Additional Deputy Commissioner Syed Gulam Abbas besides officers of different departments including C&W, Dera Development Authority (DDA), Planning and Development, Local Government, Education, Monitoring and Evaluation, Public Health Engineering and other.

During the meeting, a detailed briefing on ADP and other ongoing development schemes was given by the departments concerned. It was told that work was underway on 273 ADP schemes in the division. The construction of flyovers in Dera Ismail Khan will be started soon. Similarly, various schemes of Public Health Engineering were also underway related to clean drinking water, drainage and treatment plants.

been cleared of encroachments.

The operations were conducted on both sides of Murree Road and temporary encroachments were removed while 20 truckloads of goods were seized which would not be returned to the encroachers, the Commissioner was briefed.

Engineer Aamir Khattak was further informed that a FIR is being registered in New Town Police Station on resistance of the encroachment mafia in front of Rabi Center.

The Commissioner said that the operation is being intensified and would be started in other areas.

The main reason for the failure of the anti-encroachment operation so far is its lack of continuity, he added.

The Commissioner informed, "We will make surprise visits to different markets to assess the situation."

16th Food Agri Livestock Asia 2024 Exhibition from Aug 9

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Food Authority (PFA) in collaboration with Ecommerce Pvt Limited and Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) will hold a three-day 16th Food Agri Livestock Asia 2024 & Plastic Packaging Exhibition Paper Print Asia 2024 Exhibition here at Expo Centre from August 9 to 11, 2024.

PCJCCI President Moazzam Ghurki told media here Tuesday that the event will feature over 350 international and local participants, showcasing the latest in food processing, packaging, ingredients, machinery, and technology. Exhibitors and visitors will be coming from more than 11 countries including China, Turkey, Iran, Thailand, Malaysia, Russia, Belarus, UAE, Qatar and more.

Dr. Khursheed Nizam, President E-commerce Gateway Pvt Ltd, said that business community must join us for this premier gathering of industry leaders, professionals, and key stakeholders and to explore innovations, trends, and new products, and seize the opportunity for networking, business development, and knowledge exchange.

Uzair Nizam, President of Food Agri Livestock Asia exhibition, said that they were committed to promoting trade and industry through high-quality exhibitions, conferences and activities.

The PFA Director General said that Punjab Food Authority has always made all efforts to ensure the safety and quality of food products in the region, enhancing standards and protecting public health.

Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General PCJCCI, said that the exhibition is being held in international standard and has additional events for the three days: The event will additionally have a three-day black box Saloniere Competition featuring renowned culinary chefs from around the world including UK, Egypt, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka, Europe, and more. In addition, the event will have a three-day Future Food Tech Summit / conference. A three-day Mango Festival celebrating the king of fruits will also be held at the event. The stakeholders should join to drive innovation, foster partnerships, and propel the industry towards sustainable growth.

Nation stands with...

Continued from page 1
Tahidi, Maulana Hussain Ahmed, Allama Athar Hussain Mashhadi, Muhammad Rashid Turabi, Qari Rafiuddin Sialvi, Syed Anwarul Hassan Shah, Qari Wasimullah Amin, Maulana Anwarul Haqqani, Qari Shahabuddin Mufti Qari Mehruallah, Mufti Muhammad Rozi Khan Badezai, Dr Attaur Rehman, Maulana Anwarul Haqqani, Allama Bashir Mousavi, Mufti Muhammad Yousuf Kashmiri and other Ulemas.

Addressing at the conference, Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad said that today in Balochistan, the scholars and an eminent scholars from the country were gathered with message of unity and love to the nation.

He said that promotion of national unity, unity, consensus and the message of Pakistan in the country was the most important need of the hour.

Today, the entire nation, the scholars of Pakistan, are standing by the side of their brave armed forces for the development



LARKANA: Sindh Minister for Industries and Commerce, Focal Person Rain Emergency for Larkana, Jam Ikramullah Dharejo presides over the meeting regarding rains of monsoon season, at Deputy Commissioner office in Larkana.

Departments asked to ensure implementation of CM's Awami agenda

KURRAM (APP): Deputy Commissioner Javed Ullah Mahsud has directed all the departments to ensure complete implementation of chief minister's Awami Agenda program to ensure development and extend relief to citizens.

In this regard, he said the departments should make effective measures to ensure completion of their tasks within the stipulated deadlines. He gave these instructions during a meeting held in the district conference room. Officials from all departments of the district participated in the meeting. The DC directed each department to submit an implementation report after completing their assigned tasks within the deadline.

The Deputy Commissioner made it clear that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was personally monitoring the program, and administrative secretaries have also been tasked with monitoring their respective departments. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that available resources should be utilized immediately, and a comprehensive report on the required resources should be prepared and submitted for resolution at the relevant forum. He further stated that the monitoring and implementation of the Chief Minister's program at the district level has been assigned to the respective district commissioners, and no negligence would be tolerated.

LDA's Rs96.16b budget approved

LAHORE (APP): The governing body on Tuesday approved the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 worth Rs 96.16 billion.

The meeting held here at LDA office was chaired by LDA Vice Chairman Mian Marghoob Ahmed and Provincial Assembly Members Hassan Riaz, Naem Safdar, Sultan Ahmed Bajwa, Technical Member Abdul Hannan, and Akbar Sheikh.

LDA Director General Tahir Farooq briefed the governing body members on the meeting's agenda.

The body approved the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, with a total allocation of Rs96.16 billion for LDA and its subsidiary agencies.

Bill barring independents...

Continued from page 1
2017 against the law and clarified that the amendments were carried out as per the Constitution and the National Assembly Rules of Business.

Speaking in response to Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), Member National Assembly (MNA) Barrister Gohar Khan's accusations at the point of order during the fourth meeting of the eighth National Assembly session here, the Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister underscored that the amendments introduced in the Elections Act 2017 were as per the Constitutional scheme entailed in the Article 51 and 106 and the legal framework adopted by this House, after 102 meetings, with consensus in 2017.

Tarar said the Opposition member had alleged that the Election Act (Second Amendment) Bill 2024 was not being sent to the Law and Justice standing committee of the Lower House of the Parliament.

"As per rules and business, it is allocated to the standing committee of Parliamentary Affairs where SIC's MNA Ali Muhammad Khan and others deliberated on the matter. The amendment is as per the constitution and within the rules of business and code of conduct of the National Assembly," the Minister maintained.

Earlier, Barrister Gohar Khan of SIC said the resolution on Kashmir has been unanimously approved by the House and the Opposition had accorded its full support for the Resolution to express solidarity with Shaheed Palestinian Leader Ismail Haniyeh. The Opposition also supported the treasury benches on other critical international and regional junctures, he added.

Earlier in the day, the National Assembly also passed the bill moved by PML-N's lawmaker Bilal Azhar Kiyani who presented the bill as a private member. After passage from

the Senate, the bill will be enacted soon after assent by President Asif Ali Zardari. Legal expert Abid Zuberi, commenting on the move, said that after the Supreme Court's decision over reserved seats in favour of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf PTI and Sunni Ittehad Council, the government intends to amend the law to override the court's decision.

He said the amendment in the law will be for the future. "If the law flouts the constitution, it could be challenged in the court", he said. It is pertinent to mention here that the legislation was done after the decision of the Supreme Court's decision declaring the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) eligible for reserved seats. A 13-member bench of the top court, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, ruled that the PTI is eligible for the allocation of reserved seats, dealing a major setback to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ruling coalition.



HYDERABAD: A large numbers of people are enjoying bath to beat the heat of scorching sun during a hot day of summer season and prolong electricity load shedding, at Indus River in Hyderabad.

British High Commission at forefront of floods response in Chitral

ISLAMABAD (APP): The British High Commission has been amongst the earliest organisations to provide relief interventions, following devastating floods in Chitral.

Between 29 July and August 3, Chitral suffered severe damages from torrential rains, flash floods and glacial lake outburst floods. 14 drinking water supply schemes, 15 jeppable bridges, 55 irrigation channels, 9 link roads, 3 schools building, protection walls (4,000 feet), and 20 local shops have been fully/partially damaged, a news release said.

The British High Commission used their existing presence in Chitral to respond to immediate needs through their partners, Concern Worldwide and the Agha Khan Foundation. They are supporting emergency relief and restoration of infrastructure and livelihoods.

So far, the UK has funded essential items like kitchen sets, hygiene kits, water storage containers and more for around 300 families. Partners continue to work on immediate restoration of damaged drinking water systems, the restoration of essential irrigation channels, and debris removal to re-enable access and livelihoods, UK support is expected to benefit over 20,000 people in Chitral. The UK are also considering on longer-term

recovery plans for affected areas, in close coordination with government counterparts and humanitarian partners.

Chargé d'Affaires of the British High Commission, Andrew Dalgleish said: "The recent floods in Chitral are devastating. Lives and livelihoods have been destroyed. The UK is here to support Pakistan. These floods are a stark reminder that there is much more to be done to improve Pakistan's climate resilience."

Floods have already led to 141 deaths, 266 injuries and damage to over 1,000 houses in Pakistan this year. Climate change is a priority for the UK Government. During the devastating floods of 2022, the UK helped over 2.3 million people, dedicating a total of £39 million in UK aid. The British public mobilised, and raised £41.5m as part of the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal. Support included emergency cash assistance, shelter kits, nutritional support, learning kits and infrastructure repair.

The UK's focus is on improving Pakistan's climate resilience long-term, rather than purely responding to disasters. The UK has already helped 1.5 million people improve their resilience to extreme climate events, and aims to support a further 3 million people in the next 4-5 years.



QUETTA: MPA Mir Liaquat Ali Lehri awarding shield to participants during seminar on Youth for Climate Action organized by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPFA), held in Quetta.

Free legal aid provided to needy prisoners across Punjab

LAHORE (APP): On the instructions on Chief Minister Punjab, the Home Department has taken a wonderful initiative and free legal aid has been provided to needy prisoners across Punjab.

According to a spokesman for the Home Department, now no prisoner in Punjab will be deprived of the facility of a lawyer due to lack of resources. The spokesperson confirmed that Free Legal Aid Committees have been established in all 43 jails of Punjab. The committees have been formed in collaboration with the Punjab Bar Council and District Bar Associations. Poor prisoners, who cannot afford a lawyer to pursue their cases, will receive free legal aid through the committees. Deserving prisoners

will have to apply to their respective superintendent of jails who will be coordinating with the lawyer concerned for legal assistance.

The spokesperson said that a total of 447 lawyers have been included in the Free Legal Aid Committees across Punjab. Forty-five lawyers in Lahore Division, 90 in Gujranwala Division and 70 lawyers in Rawalpindi Division have been included in the Free Legal Aid Committees. Similarly, 47 lawyers in Faisalabad division, 45 in Multan division and 24 lawyers in Sargodha division are included in the committees. 55 lawyers in Bahawalpur division, 55 in Sahiwal division and 16 lawyers in DG Khan have been included in the committees.

CANCELLATION
The Office N.I.T No. EE/(ROADS)/2252-54/ dated:01-07-2024. Published in leading Newspaper dated: 02-07-2024 under PRQ No.06/01-7-2024 and also uploaded in BPPRA website. Which scheduled to be issued/ opened on: 19-07-2024.
Due to non-availability of funds, the following tenders are hereby cancelled till further advertisement.

Executive Engineer (Roads)
CW, PP&H Department District
Surab
PRQ No.471/06-08-2024
www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gov @dpr_gov @dpr_balochistan

RE-TENDER NOTICE
Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required. The Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Kharan invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following work for the Year 2024-25 based on Composite schedule of rates 2023, who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the bidding documents Tender Fee Rs.1000/- and Bid Security 4%

S.No	Name of Works	E/Cost
1	CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION BUNDAT U/C TOMULK, TOOTAZAI, MISKAHN-E-KALAT, JAMAK JANGAL NOROZ KALAT ULMARK CHAR KOHAN DISTRICT KHARAN PSDP No.2813(2024-25) TSE-242508513183	200,000,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules-2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Eligibility Criteria can be seen in bidding documents. Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 4% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the undersigned 1,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 22 August, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 22 August, 2024 till 09:00 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the undersigned at 10:00 AM Address: Near DIG Police house, main Quetta road Kharan Phone no: 0847510933 Fax no: 0847510933 Email: irrigationdivisionkharan@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
IRRIGATION DIVISION KHARAN.
PRQ No.469/06-08-2024
www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gov @dpr_gov @dpr_balochistan

Govt takes steps to improve educational facilities as per modern requirements: Khalid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui Tuesday said that the government is taking all possible measures to transform the education system by improving infrastructure, enhancing facilities and focusing on skill-based education.

He was speaking as a chief guest at the 37th Medal and Prize Distribution Ceremony of the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (FBISE). The ceremony was arranged at the Islamabad Model College for Boys, H-9/4 and attended by officials of FBISE and the Ministry of Education and Professional Training. Speaking on the occasion, the federal minister stated that the purpose of arranging this ceremony was to motivate the students to further excel in their educational endeavours and achieve success.

Khalid Maqbool termed youth as the biggest

wealth of Pakistan and said, "We are blessed to have the biggest chunk of the population which is comprised of youth who can play a pivotal role in the development of the country if equipped with the modern education". Highlighting the importance of educated women in society, the minister said that educated women can play an instrumental role in the progress of the country. "As women advance in every field, the possibilities of change will be significant", he said.

The countries which have resources and issues like Pakistan are progressing, Khalid Maqbool said while emphasizing equipping our youth with education and skills as per modern-day requirements.

He said, "We all together will write the destiny of Pakistan with the power of education". The federal minister said that due to technological advancements, one billion people in different jobs will become irrelevant in the future.



ISLAMABAD: Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi addressing to the Paigham e Hajj Conference organized by Pakistan Ulama Council and International Organization of Harmain Sharifain.

BISP to collaborate with BE&OE for its beneficiaries' abroad employment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) will engage with the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BE&OE) to facilitate its beneficiaries' abroad employment.

In this regard, the Chairperson of the BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid held a meeting with the Director General of the BE&OE, Muhammad Tayyab on Tuesday. The meeting focused on a collaborative initiative to provide overseas employment opportunities to BISP beneficiaries or their family members through quality skill training. Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized the importance of launching a poverty graduation program that equips BISP beneficiaries with the skills needed to secure livelihoods.

"We aim to identify demand-driven trades to ensure our beneficiaries can access employment opportunities abroad," she stated. Highlighting the critical role

of quality training, she mentioned that BISP trainees would receive comprehensive training, including fundamental English, basic manners, hygiene fundamentals and work ethics.

Muhammad Tayyab expressed the Bureau's commitment to supporting BISP in this initiative. "As a regulatory body, the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment will assist the BISP team in identifying trades such as home care workers, hospitality staff, receptionists, nurses, and more." "We will facilitate their training process through internationally recognized training institutes in Pakistan and ensure these individuals are placed in countries with high demand for these skills," he said.

To expedite the collaboration, Senator Rubina Khalid directed BISP officials to organize another meeting with officials from the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment and the National Vocational



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery is being used for the construction of a new road at Chak Shahzad during development work in the Federal Capital.

NUST Internship Programme for Intl Students concludes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Geared towards fostering global diversity, achieving mutual growth through cultural exchange and opening doors to opportunities for all, NUST Internship Programme for International Students (NIPIS-24) has finally drawn to a close after providing a learning opportunity to the participants from various countries.

This year, as many as 15 interns came all the way from Egypt, Ireland, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom to benefit from the month-long internship.

Entailing a 360 learning opportunity, NIPIS '24 delivered a sublime internship experience to international participants, advancing their academic competence, reinforcing their professional skills, and simultaneously offering insights into the rich cultural heritage and exposure to the

natural beauty of Pakistan. NUST Placement Office made special arrangements for technical trainings of the international interns, placing them in various NUST schools specialising in Engineering and IT, Applied Biosciences and Social Sciences. The participants engaged in various research projects and attended industry-specific trainings.

The programme also facilitated industrial visits to S&P Global, PepsiCo and Pak Steel Re-rolling Mills. Pro-Rector Research, Innovation & Commercialisation (RIC-NUST), Dr Rizwan Riaz, graced the closing ceremony with his presence and distributed certificates among the interns.

Speaking to the interns, he said that they are now part of the NUST family, and put an accent on warmly greeting them again.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar chairing second meeting of the Committee to give recommendations for Independent Drug Pricing Body.

Political ownership, economic integration amid rule of law in merged districts critical to stem TTP resurgence

ISLAMABAD (APP): The experts at the book launch event of Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on Tuesday underscored the need to ensure political ownership and economic integration amid rule of law in the newly merged tribal districts of ex-FATA to stem Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) resurgence.

The IPRI hosted the book launch of "Recrudescence of TTP Violence - Its causes and possible remedies" which is the first of its kind research-based publication that probed the phenomenon of TTP and its recurrence in the tribal districts through ground-based surveys and interviews of local stakeholders hailing from different walks of life which were co-authored by IPRI Research Team under the leadership of Director, Research, IPRI, Dr Raashid Walid Janjua.

In his opening re-

marks, President IPRI, Ambassador, Dr Raza Muhammad said Pakistan is facing continued violence and terrorism due to its partnership in the war on terror. This book started eight months back peer headed by Dr Raashid Walid Janjua involved interviews and surveys on the ground for quality evidence through stakeholder and community engagement, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Research, IPRI, Dr Raashid Walid Janjua explained that recrudescence meant the thing that was coming up again and again but this rise of TTP bedevilled Pakistan.

The book, he said had identified three main causes of TTP resurgence mainly the vacuum created in the absence of administration, police and judiciary. However, these tribal territories were being managed under the FC laws, traditions, Masharans or Malaks

(tribal leaders), sharia law and Muftians (religious scholars), he added.

He noted that practically constitutional merger had taken place but financially it did not happen, whereas lack of long-term vision and consistent policies about security integration and development of merged districts, lack of livelihoods, infrastructure development and economic integration of merged districts with other parts of the country paved the way for TTP filling in the vacuum in merged districts.

He mentioned that some 86 coalmines in Darra Adam Khel had brought a decline in illicit arms sales which was the mainstay of that community to only a 10% share of the total income of that area that helped extend complete livelihood opportunities to the local populace and curbed any possibility of terrorism resurgence.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Syed Ali Zafar, chairman senate standing committee on information and broadcasting presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Fire erupts in plaza; quick response by fire brigade

ISLAMABAD (APP): A sudden fire erupted in a plaza in Sector I-9, Islamabad, sparking a swift response from the fire brigade.

According to the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, the fire broke out in a plaza located in Sector I-9.

The blaze started in a private bank within the building, prompting immediate action from rescue teams.

The fire brigade quickly reached the scene and managed to bring the flames under control.

Efforts to cool the area are currently ongoing to prevent any re-ignition. The cause of the fire has not yet been ascertained.

NA offers Fateha for Mumtaz Mustafa

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly on Tuesday offered Fateha for the departed souls of Member National Assembly (MNA) Mumtaz Mustafa and 10 family members due to rainwater in Darra Adam Khel.

The House also offered Fateha for Pir Munawar Badsha. On the request of Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) lawmaker Ali Muhammad Khan led the Fateha.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed souls in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved families to bear the loss with equanimity.

Empowering women with knowledge, financial resources key to community based disaster resilience: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister (PM) on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam emphasized the importance of promoting gender equality and ensuring active participation of women and girls in all stages of disaster risk reduction (DRR).

She stated that this is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of DRR strategies and for contributing to resilient communities in disaster-prone countries like Pakistan.

Addressing as chief guest here on Tuesday at a national dialogue on 'Role of Women and Girls in Disaster Risk Reduction', the

PM's climate aide highlighted that women, particularly those from rural or marginalised communities, hold invaluable local knowledge about environmental conditions, traditional practices and risk management. However, she said that their leadership in these areas not only can help improve disaster management strategies but also fosters a more comprehensive understanding of community needs and vulnerabilities.

The day-long event was organised by the National Disaster Management Authority, the Ministry of Climate Change

and Environmental Coordination in collaboration with international partner organizations involved in disaster risk reduction activities in the country.

The PM's Coordinator told the participants of the event that as the world grapples with increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters, it has become clear that women and girls are not just beneficiaries but pivotal players in DRR. She said that their unique contributions are essential for building resilient communities and ensuring effective disaster preparedness and response.

APHC expresses gratitude to Pakistan for solidarity with Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has extended its heartfelt thanks to the government and people of Pakistan for their unwavering solidarity with the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir on the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir, observed on August 5.

APHC spokesperson Advocate Abdul Rasheed Minhas in a statement issued in Srinagar said, Pakistan's support has significantly boosted the morale of the Kashmiri people. Minhas emphasized that Pakistan has consistently played the role of a true benefactor by standing with Kashmiris through every ordeal. By commemorating the day, Islamabad has sent a clear message to the international community, particularly India, that the entire Pakistani nation stands

in solidarity with the Kashmiri people in their freedom movement. The struggle for self-determination will continue unabated until its achievement.

The APHC spokesman said that the BJP and RSS-led Indian government aims to revive a pre-Islamic Hindu civilization in Kashmir, eradicating its Muslim character. By settling non-locals in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, he added, India seeks to alter the territory's Muslim-majority status. Meanwhile, illegally detained Hurriyat leader Maulvi Bashir Ahmad Irfani also expressed his gratitude to the Pakistani government and people for their support. He highlighted the significance of August 5 as a painful day in Kashmir's history, marking the illegal revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

CDA to increase fees for industrial plots' change of trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) Board on Tuesday decided to increase the fees for the change of trade for industrial plots.

The 10th meeting of the CDA Board, chaired by Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, gave approval to increase the fees for the sub-division and amalgamation of industrial plots.

It is pertinent to mention that these fees have not been increased since 2005.

Furthermore, instructions were given to compile a list of industrial plots that are being used contrary to the allocated trade without CDA's approval.

The meeting also decided to hire a consultant under PPRA Rule (42F) for the establishment of a Safari Park in Islamabad.

Kayani says: Candidates without party affiliation certificates to be classified as independent

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (N)'s Bilal Azhar Kayani stated that under the new amendment bill, candidates who fail to submit their party affiliation certificate before obtaining the election symbol will be considered independent.

Speaking to the media after the National Assembly passed the Election Act Amendment Bill by a majority vote on Tuesday, he said the bill stipulates that candidates failing to declare party affiliation before the returning officer will be considered independents, with the amendment retroactively effective from the Election Act 2017.

Under the new amendment bill, parties failing to submit candidate lists for reserved seats within the stipulated time will be ineligible for those seats. "If the list of candidates for reserved seats is not submitted within the prescribed period, no political party shall be entitled to the reserved seats," he added. The newly passed Election Act Amendment Bill 2024 restricts independent candidates from joining any political party after a specified period post-election. The bill also stipulates that candidates who fail to submit an affidavit of party affiliation to the returning officer will be considered independent.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), met with Muhammad Tayyab, Director General of the Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment, at BISP HQs.

Zimbabwean envoy gets briefing on upcoming Safari Park in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Tuesday briefed the Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Pakistan Titus M.J. Abu Bastu on the upcoming Safari Park project in Islamabad, expected to boost tourism in the city.

During the meeting, the CDA chairman told the Ambassador that the park will initially house 2,000 animals, with a total capacity of over 5,000. He invited Zimbabwe to contribute to the project by exporting animals from their country.

Both the dignitaries

discussed issues of mutual interest and explored potential areas of collaboration between the two nations.

The envoy Abu Bastu commended Chairman Randhawa's efforts to beautify Islamabad, particularly highlighting the solid waste management initiatives.

The ambassador expressed keen interest in learning from Pakistan's experiences in this sector. Furthermore, Bastu proposed relocating the Zimbabwean embassy to the diplomatic enclave, to which Chairman Randhawa assured a swift resolution by the Foreign Office.

ICT admin launches major push to ban polythene bags

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has stepped up efforts to curb plastic pollution and decided to initiate major crackdowns to stop the use of polythene bags in the Federal Capital.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, eight teams have been formed to enforce a ban on plastic bags across the city. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon has announced a robust plan to reduce the use of plastic bags in the city. And ICT administration teams to

take action against the use of these bags in various areas. These teams would operate under the supervision of the city's Assistant Commissioners, the spokesman added. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the collective responsibility of all citizens to help eliminate polythene bags.

He stated that the widespread use of plastic bags contributes significantly to environmental pollution. Deputy Commissioner urged residents to support the district administration's efforts in this crackdown on plastic bags.



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Capital Development Authority (CDA) busy in demolishing illegal occupied area on a green belt from a local hotel during Anti-encroachment operation in the Federal Capital.

Two more Palestinian students to pursue studies at University of Faisalabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Two more Palestinian students including Amir S F Rasas and Sultan Nasser Mahfouz Barakah have arrived at University of Faisalabad to pursue their studies under COMSTECH Fellowship Program. The students will pursue their fully funded Bachelor's degree program at University of Faisalabad under the COMSTECH Fellowship/Scholarship Program for Palestine.

This program is part of a larger initiative by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Standing Committee for Science and Technology (COMSTECH) which aims

to provide 5000 free fellowships to Palestinian students in collaboration with the Association of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan (APSUP) and COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence member universities.

According to the COMSTECH, the program was initially launched in June 2021 with 500 fellowships, but the number was increased to 5000 in April 2024 to support Palestinian students affected by recent circumstances in Gaza.

A significant number of Palestinian students are expected to arrive in Pakistan in the near future under this program.



ISLAMABAD: NDMA Held One-Day National Dialogue on Role of Women & Girls in Disaster Risk Reduction. APP/TZD/FHA

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Wednesday August 07, 2024

Pending cases

With Pakistan's justice system now a regular feature of the news cycle, some of its inner weaknesses are also receiving more attention. It should be seen as a positive development that may help catalyse the resolution of some long-standing issues. For example, the Supreme Court has recently raised fresh concerns regarding frivolous, vexatious and speculative legislation amidst a growing backlog of pending cases stuck in the justice system, which have now crossed 2.2m. "Such litigation must be rooted out and strongly discouraged," Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah remarked, while hearing a case involving a property dispute. Before dismissing the suit, he proposed imposing financial costs on litigants who waste the court's time. If implemented widely and as proposed, this may prove a good step in a country where the law is often used as a mechanism for prolonging disputes instead of resolving them.

Unfortunately, there is currently no means of expeditiously "rooting out" cases that may be frivolous, vexatious or speculative, which is why the introduction of penalties may seem like the only solution. However, with recent developments in technology, it may be possible to develop AI-based tools that can help flag problematic cases based on their history. It seems worth pointing out that the judiciary has, in recent years, adopted several technological innovations like e-courts and the digitisation of court procedures and documents with the aim of reducing the case backlog.

Combining stricter penalties for filing frivolous cases with innovative, technology-assisted strategies may help clear the pile-up more quickly than expected. Meanwhile, the superior judiciary should also consider in-house workshops to help judges better identify situations where litigants may not be acting in good faith and encourage the enforcement of penalties consistently and across the board. A set of guidelines may prove helpful in this regard. As the aphorism goes, justice delayed is justice denied. But ordinary people who get caught up in court cases are not only deprived of timely justice, they are also forced to undergo immense emotional and financial stress throughout the litigation process. This is why a holistic and concerted approach to reducing the case backlog is necessary if the public's dwindling faith in the justice system is to be restored. Reconfiguring the system to dispense justice in more efficient ways will also have a positive impact on the economic milieu because investors cannot make business decisions in environments where disputes may not be settled for years.

Lastly, to limit the growing pendency of cases, the Supreme Court should also address the practice of seeking and giving adjournments on frivolous grounds. Costs and penalties should be imposed consistently on the responsible parties if proceedings are postponed for any reason other than the most unavoidable circumstances.

Umair Javed

Depending on who delivers it, eulogies of Pakistan's democracy tend to focus on a short-lived period of about a decade (or a decade and a half) after 2007 when power through elections, rather than through the gun, appeared to be a realistic possibility. Yet this recollection of history glosses over the actual lives of people in the country's western peripheries — Balochistan and the ex-Fata region.

The Baloch Yakjehti Committee's protest in the last week, its underlying causes such as missing persons and resource inequities, and the overall way in which the state conducts itself in the region shed sharp light on how political experiences of the last two decades diverge so markedly within the core and peripheral areas of the same country.

Any transparent review of the period since the mid-2000s will reveal a straightforward fact: political elites engaged in national politics have repeatedly struck an informal bargain with the military establishment that guarantees short-lived comfort of rule along

the Indus and its tributaries, while giving up decision-making control in the western peripheries.

To be clear, the bargain has not been struck as equals, nor has it always remained uncontested. The lopsided nature of the state — with a powerful establishment as the baseline condition — means that mainstream politicians negotiate from a position of weakness. In many cases, they have no option but to cede control to the security apparatus, especially given restive border conditions, regional wars, and militancy.

It is also true that sporadic efforts were made to resolve grievances, through devolution and aid packages under the PPP government, greater space initially being given to moderate Baloch nationalist forces under the PML-N, and a package of citizenship reforms for the ex-Fata districts under the PTI.

Yet such efforts have frequently been undermined or aborted under establishment stress, or through the working of shadowy politics and backroom machinations, such as the creation of breakaway factions, new parties, and provincial gov-

ernment turnovers. The end result is a retreat to home base (Peshawar valley, Punjab, and Sindh), leaving behind vice-regal militarised rule under which security considerations outweigh basic questions of representation and development.

This failure is visible in how popular movements from the peripheries are treated by the mainstream. In the last two decades, there have been several organic upsurges, through Baloch civil society groups fighting missing persons cases (such as the BYC), the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement, and the movement for resource rights in Gwadar.

These movements represent popular discontent at militarisation, violence, and the absence of development. Yet they have seen coercion and repression in response, with state-led harassment of leaders, frequent abductions, and long incarcerations. The list of excuses given for such a response are almost always the same — foreign funding, threat of militancy, 'inimical designs', secessionist undertones etc.

Yet no one questions why, after seven decades of statehood, insecurity re-

mains so high in these particular areas. No one in any decision-making role pays attention to the fact that, year after year, local citizens offer support to movements that challenge the imposition of a security state. No one looks at abysmal turnouts for general elections and the complete lack of electoral legitimacy given to state-backed or approved candidates.

In the past week, Baloch women have showed tremendous resolve against daunting odds to stage protests on the missing persons issue. It remains perhaps the most striking display of women's political agency in a country long stifled by patriarchal norms around public space and restrictions on female political participation.

Rather than reflecting on this urgency and popularity, the state is responding using the only script it knows — repression in the hope that the issue will go away. In lockstep, the civilian face of the ruling regime, in the province or the centre, brings out practised indifference. Even mainstream opposition forces remain silent. The core-periphery bargain is still intact.

What those in the political mainstream fail to see is that the bargain doesn't keep the logic of militarised control and repression confined to the peripheries. The last two or so years are worthy examples of how the same processes make their way to the core.

Backdoor machinations triggered a fall in the PTI's government, and no amount of considerable deference and collusion for nearly three years could prevent it. Unlawful cases, abductions, and illegal incarcerations are now common against opposition activists. Internet and mobile phone blockades as well as media blackouts are used with considerable frequency. Those used to the erstwhile comfort of big cities, especially in Punjab, now admit that 'what was only done in Balochistan is now being done to us'.

This is perhaps the single biggest failure of mainstream political parties in Pakistan over the past two decades. When in government, rather than providing popular movements that challenge inequity and repression with the space they need to be heard, they have consistently

outsourced decision-making to the military. And when in opposition, rather than broadening their support base and making common cause with other groups fighting authoritarian excess, they look the other way in the hope that they don't get painted with the same brush.

One assumes naively that the past seven decades provide sufficient evidence that suppression of popular movements and denial of political rights only drags on conflict and generates further insecurity. But it is a lesson the state and its political elites seem unwilling to learn.

The consequences of such ignorance are now apparent in perpetual insecurity and restive conditions not just in the laboratories of militarised rule, but in the Pakistani heartland as well. This latest phase of protest can be quelled temporarily by repression and administrative control. It may be explained away by press conferences that point in all directions but inwards. But the corrosion of increased militarisation in one place will eat away at the political fabric everywhere. -- Courtesy Dawn

A matter of life and debt

Maleeha Lodhi

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb acknowledged last week that Pakistan was seeking debt relief from China and other bilateral lenders to plug a financing gap in order to seal a loan deal with the IMF. In a press conference he said Pakistan was engaged with China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE for debt rescheduling of around \$12 billion. Longer repayment periods are being sought for loans of \$4bn from China, \$5bn from Saudi Arabia and \$3bn from the UAE, which the country had secured for a year and now wants to delay repaying.

Having returned after talks in China, the finance minister did not say if Beijing had agreed and responded to questions on this by asserting that discussions were "very constructive". The board meeting of the Fund on the bailout package is likely later this month. The minister made it clear that "between now and the IMF board meeting we have to ensure confirmation of external financing from friendly bilateral partners". Subsequently in remarks released

to the media, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif told the cabinet he had written a letter to the Chinese government requesting 'debt reprofiling' for Pakistan.

Although external support is essential in view of heavily indebted Pakistan's urgent financing needs, the government should have gone about it more thoughtfully. This is so for several reasons. The most significant is that when such debt relief is sought from, say, China, a creditor of many countries in the Global South, it is best to do it discreetly and away from the glare of publicity. This is important so as not to place a friendly bilateral lender in an awkward position, not least because this has implications for its loans to other countries. Although the finance minister apparently made these comments in response to questions, it would have been prudent to have refrained from public comment when talks are in progress. The time to do that is when talks produce an outcome.

In any case seeking external support is necessary but not sufficient to fix the economy. It is a fire-

fighting response that should be accompanied by and be part of the country's own longer-term economic plan that involves resolving well-known, long-standing structural problems. But a visionless government has yet to frame or produce such a plan. Its economic strategy rests on little more than meeting the IMF's conditionalities and securing debt rescheduling from bilateral donors. That is not an economic plan. This despite the government's claims it is evolving a home-grown one — that too under the stewardship of some British economist. This reflects the prime minister's fetish for foreign advisers and consultants, and his lack of confidence in the country's vast pool of distinguished economists.

A credible plan should address the country's weak macroeconomic fundamentals, which persist and make any recovery fragile and unsustainable. Unless structural issues are addressed, the country will not escape from the vicious circle of anaemic growth, high deficits, heavy borrowing, growing indebtedness and soaring inflation.

Failure to tackle them will make another crisis inevitable, need another bailout (the country is already in its 24th Fund programme) and yet more financial support from friendly countries, fatigued by Pakistan's repeated requests. IMF programmes aim to stabilise the economy and create the conditions for economic recovery. But policies to grow the economy, promote investment and build business confidence are for the country to evolve, own and implement through a process of wide-ranging structural reforms.

Indeed, if the country is seen to be undertaking major reforms it would make it easier to achieve the short-term goal of securing external support to tide over immediate financing difficulties. When other countries see Pakistan is doing what it can to help itself, they will be all the more willing to accede to its financing requests. Absent serious efforts at self-help bilateral lenders, however friendly, will think twice especially as the 'beggar bowl' approach will be perceived to have become an unshakable habit. In his previous ten-

ure, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif publicly acknowledged that even friendly countries look at Pakistan as a country always 'begging for money'. More recently, he claimed during an overseas visit that he had broken the begging bowl and the era of asking others for money is over. But that assertion flies in the face of reality.

The main thrust of his government's economic policy is still to mobilise external resources from either multilateral or bilateral lenders. This increasingly puts the finance ministry in the lead to deal with the country's key foreign relationships. It also means that the main thrust — or core goal — of foreign policy today has become trying to secure funds from friendly countries. This ignores or eclipses the country's other foreign policy goals and interests. In fact, the lack of attention given to foreign policy beyond asking 'friends' for money and clumsy, ad hoc responses to international developments has become a distinguishing trait of this government. This isn't only because the country has a part-time foreign minister, uninterested in

foreign policy. It is also because the government has failed to acknowledge that in a rapidly changing and intensely competitive world it needs to focus on how to more effectively pursue Pakistan's foreign policy interests.

This required in the first instance a broad review of the country's foreign policy given the changing international environment, shifts in global geopolitics and strategic realignments taking place in the Middle East and beyond. That would have helped adjust policy to changing dynamics and reshaped diplomatic strategy to more efficiently pursue national goals. Such a review could also have involved a frank conversation between civilian and military officials on critical areas of foreign policy being handled by Rawalpindi. This may have improved civil-military coordination in these areas and offered an opportunity to government leaders to persuade the military leadership to see the foreign ministry as the country's first line of defence and competent to handle issues on which it has been excluded in recent years.

Lahore's challenge

Sana Khosa | Sadaf Mahmood

Lahore and the monsoons have a strange relationship. When the sweltering summer months approach, the anticipation of barseet brings respite to the residents. However, the relief comes with its own set of challenges — pluvial/urban flooding caused by an overwhelmed drainage system and the absence of natural areas for rainwater absorption. While the smoggy winter exposes how uninhabitable Lahore has become with its excessive vehicular traffic and lack of carbon sinks, the monsoon months highlight the flaws of its urban planning and development trajectory.

Despite record rainfall, human casualties, power outages, and the flooding of houses and hospitals, Lahore has seen little improvement in flood resilience and urban planning over the years. Instead, there is a concerning trend of diminishing green cover, reduced rainwater sponginess, and unplanned development, leading to rapid concretisation. Presently, Lahore is 60 per cent concretised, putting it in a precarious spot, with dangerously high temperatures and an anaemic drainage system.

Flooding induced by intense rains is attributed largely to 'climate change', a term we now comfortably use to externalise floods in our policy and governance circles. This approach is referred to as 'climate reductionism'. Quite simply, we blame most of the flooding havoc on climate change and extrapolate our governance failures on this wider phenomenon that we cannot tame. By continuing this narrative, we absolve ourselves of full responsibility to address the underlying factors that inten-

sify pluvial flooding.

The first step is to internalise urban flooding and avoid the climate reductionist narrative. This requires altering the quick-fix approach to managing floods in Lahore. The typical script starts with the Met office and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority announcing the threat of intense rains. Warning signals go out to critical departments/teams tasked with declodging the drains. Some act promptly, others sluggishly. The rains wreak havoc, flooding low-lying concrete areas that have poor absorption capacity. Climate change is blamed for the unprecedented rains that our Wasa (Water and Sanitation Authority) warriors and Rescue 1122 rangers must fight well. This reactive approach is neither systematic nor mitigative.

Internalising urban flooding primarily requires the government and planners to agree on how the city should proceed with development and expansion that is not ecologically damaging and does not reduce the natural drainage capacity. Sadly, once the 'city of gardens', Lahore is now the 'city of concrete'. Presently, it stretches over 1,770 square kilometres, housing some 14 million people.

In the last two decades alone, the city has lost half of its urban green spaces due to expansion and the development of new housing schemes and infrastructure, without making any substantive effort towards increasing its abysmal 5pc green cover. This figure calls for a 'greening emergency' — green restorative efforts such as developing urban forests, incentivising green rooftops in concretised areas for rainwater absorption, creating rain gardens to recharge diminishing groundwater, and using

permeable pavements. An all-hands-on-the-deck approach to make Lahore spongier is necessary.

Another step is to ensure that the municipal tasks of drainage system maintenance and carrying out improvements are performed throughout the year, and not only in high-alert periods. According to the Lahore Development Authority (LDA), the city's increasing built-up area causes massive surface water run-off during a torrential downpour. This run-off picks up solid waste-pollution and deposits sediment into the main drains choking the already compromised system.

According to a senior Wasa official, most of the decline in drainage capacity is due to the public's lack of awareness regarding solid waste management. Cleaning drives are costly, and Wasa is too underfunded to take on the task.

Recent discussions with LDA, Wasa officials, and senior DHA developers have revealed critical issues, including the lack of integrated development, shared understanding, and uniform regulations that have led to ecological problems such as reduction in urban forest cover, poor drainage management, and inefficient use of land and water resources.

To make Lahore sustainable, we must embrace integrated urban development where all developing entities including DHA (covering 10 to 12pc of the land) must agree on restoring the city's ecological well-being. Let's not pin our hopes on the Ravi Urban Development Authority to transform our city, nor be lured by the promised tax-free IT city that will somehow save it from ecological doom. Our problems are deeper and require a truly collaborative approach. -- Courtesy Dawn

Huma Yusuf

Pakistan's human rights battles are now playing out across its digital landscape. The X ban drags on, fantasies of data localisation persist, and talk of further social media regulation is circulating. The state says it is indigenising internet infrastructure and better securing the nation. Digital and human rights activists are bracing for more censorship and targeted surveillance. In all scenarios, there is a risk that digital developments exacerbate gender inequality.

This is the key warning of a new report from Amnesty International on Gender and Human Rights in a Digital Age. The wider deployment of technology — whether for good or evil — brings with it risks of what Amnesty refers to as tech-facilitated gender-based violence. Both Pakistan's authoritarianism and activists should ensure that digital deployments do not exacerbate gender discrimination in our country.

Talk of tech is by default optimistic, and marginalised groups have overall benefited from digital technology, whether through finding online communities of like-minded souls or accessing information and services previously denied to them. The greatest threat to this digital empowerment remains access: Pakistan's digital gender gap is severe, with 26 per cent of women accessing the internet as compared to 47pc of men.

While internet infrastructure is often posited as the solution to access gaps, the Amnesty report emphasises that the persistence of patriarchal structures in the digital realm means that discrimination endures even where infrastructure becomes available. One reason for

Digital gender gap

this is the datafication of our lives. To exist in the 21st century, you need a data profile. And this profile is born from digital identity cards, online credit histories, e-bills to physical addresses, and yes, unfettered internet access. These are all things routinely denied to marginalised groups, particularly women, in the offline world. Any new digital regulation that prioritises security considerations over inclusion would be doing a disservice to the Pakistani people.

Data collection is also inherently discriminatory. The approach is often rooted in existing structural inequality, rendering marginalised groups invisible online as well. The Amnesty report points to digital identity systems as a key example of this. Think of our own national identity cards that require identification in the context of patriarchal family structures. Nadra is specifically called out in the report for deciding in 2023 to temporarily suspend the option for individuals to identify as 'X' in the gender category, leaving many transgender people without digital identification and so without access to other social services.

Of course, with more inclusive data profiles comes a greater need for data protection and privacy. For marginalised groups, datafication also means enhanced vulnerability. Such groups may go online to access information or services that are sensitive or stigmatised (for example, information about reproductive health). The ability to freely access and share information and services without fear of surveillance should be respected as a core human right.

There is also a gendered aspect to the economic opportunities that digitisation offers.

The Pakistani debate on technology has become entirely securitised. But digital access is also about finding jobs in the gig economy, availing the benefits of digital entrepreneurship and ensuring that contract workers are fairly compensated by non-transparent algorithms. In all these arenas, women are at higher risk of reduced access to opportunity, discriminatory wages and oppressive workplace surveillance. Indeed, Amnesty argues that tech-facilitated gender discrimination is likely to worsen gender poverty worldwide.

Once online, women are also more vulnerable to online harassment. In a 2022 HRCP report thinking the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, Farieha Aziz highlights how Peca has failed to protect women. Not only has the law failed to deter against online harassment, it has also, she argues, exacerbated patriarchal oppression through its implementation. She documents how women who have sought justice under Peca have, instead, been subjected to additional offline harassment and intimidation by FIA officials, humiliation by lawyers, and retaliatory defamation charges. Such gender-based harassment should be the real security concern.

Sadly, women will also increasingly bear the brunt of state efforts to control the digital realm.

This will be due to a vicious cycle in which women will turn to feminist activism or political protest to defend their rights, and then find those rights further trampled through digital surveillance and censorship. Pakistani women have it hard enough; digital technology should not set them back further. -- Courtesy Dawn

No room for violence in any sect or religion: Kundi

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that Islam is a religion of peace, love and tolerance and there is no room for violence in any sect or religion. In fact, Hajj is the message of unity, peace and security of Islam.

He expressed these views while addressing the Message of Hajj Conference 2024 held here on Tuesday in collaboration with the Pakistan Ulema Council and the International Tazim-e-Haramain

Sharifain Council. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Overseas Pakistanis Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki, Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council and General Secretary of International Tahafuz-e-Haramain Maulana Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Deputy Ambassador of Palestine, Special Representative of Jordanian Embassy and a large number of scholars of different schools of thought participated.

Addressing the conference, the Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said that peace, brotherhood, tolerance, inter-religious harmony are the teachings of Hajj, and we have to play an effective role in promoting inter-religious harmony for the development and prosperity of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

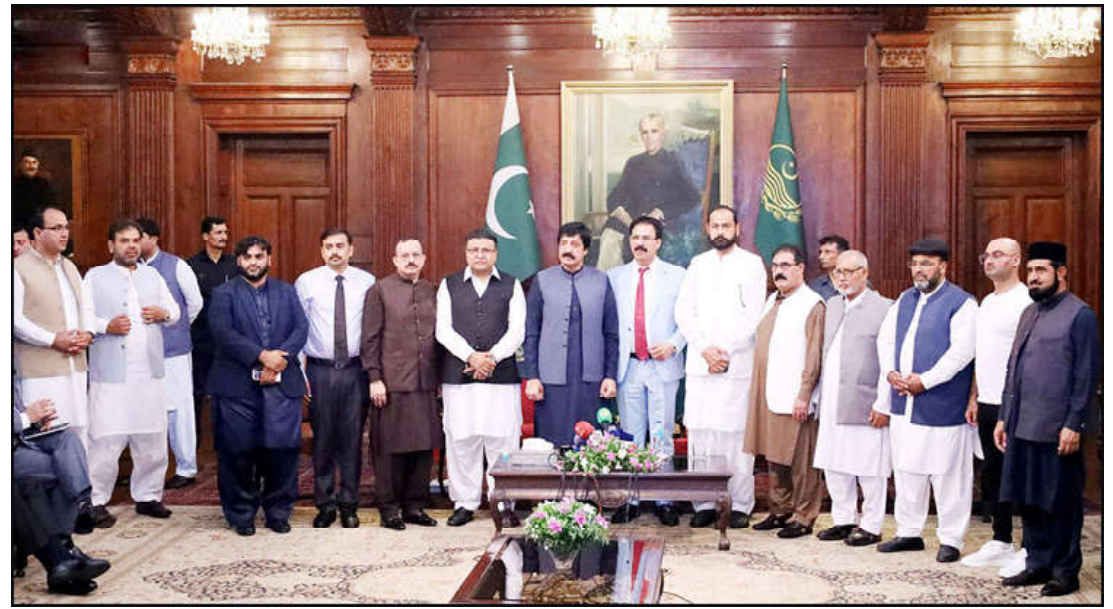
He said that Governor House Peshawar role in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is dedicated to playing a leadership role in this regard. He said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia

have excellent and strong relations, adding the Saudi government has provided facilities to pilgrims under the Road to Makkah program is an example.

He said that at a time when Pakistan is facing difficulties, the government and people of Saudi Arabia stand with Pakistan.

He said that the services of Saudi Arabia for Muslim countries and the Islamic world are not hidden from anyone.

He said that Hajj is such an organized and purposeful grand gathering which



LAHORE: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with delegation of Overseas Pakistani Investors of various European Countries led by Pakistan Business Forum Chairman Sardar Zahoor Iqbal.



KARACHI: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto presides over the meeting of spokesmen of Sindh Government.

Minister for providing better traveling facilities to masses

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Provincial Minister for Transport Punjab Bilal Akbar Khan chaired a high-level meeting at the Commissioner's Office in Bahawalpur. The meeting was attended by Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Malik Zaheer Iqbal Chahar, MPA Mian Shoaib Awaisi, Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jappa, District Police Officer Bahawalpur Asad Sarfaraz Khan, Additional Commissioner Aftab Hussain, Additional Deputy Commissioner

Revenue Ameer Taimoor, Assistant Commissioner General Malik Muhammad Akhtar, Chief Officer Municipal Corporation Bahawalpur Mian Azhar Javed, and Secretary RTA Arooj Fatima, among other officials.

Addressing the meeting, the Provincial Minister remarked that providing excellent travel facilities across the province is among the top priorities of the Chief Minister of Punjab. He emphasized the need for effective measures to prevent traffic accidents

and reiterated the strict enforcement of the ban on LPG cylinders in public transport.

The Provincial Minister for Transport announced that 3,000 new buses would be purchased this year to improve public transport throughout the province. He directed that the implementation of Axle Load Management should be ensured and that efforts should be made to improve bus stands in Bahawalpur further. He insisted on enforcing a reduction in public transport fares under all circumstances.

Transport system of entire province to be upgraded: Minister

LODHRAN (APP): Punjab Minister for Transport, Bilal Akbar Khan on Tuesday said the transport system of the entire province would be improved and upgraded as per directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

He expressed these views during visit to the main bus stand located in the center of the city and under construction vehicle stand.

He further said that public transport was not allowed to come on the roads without fitness certificate.

The minister informed that digital fitness system was being brought for the fitness of public transport for public safety under which fitness certificates and vehicle number plates will be attached together with QR code.

He said that the fitness of the vehicle will be checked through the QR code. He said that vehicles emitting smoke will not be allowed on the roads to prevent environmental pollution.

He further said that reduction in fares was also being ensured after reduction in the prices of petroleum products.

The provincial minister urged the passengers to get their complaints registered by dialing the helpline in case of extra fare collection.

He said that public transport will not be allowed to run on LPG and public transport and not without a route permit.

The provincial minister said that the Punjab government was trying hard to provide facilities to the people.

He said that serving the masses was top priority of the Punjab government.

The Minister also checked the ticket counter, bus sheds, water coolers installed for supplying cold drinking water and compound washrooms for the convenience of passengers at the bus stand.

Provincial Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan also reviewed in detail all the facilities provided to the passengers at the stand.

He directed the district administration to ensure the provision of best facilities to the passengers. On this occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Syeda Amna Maududi and Additional Deputy Commissioner General Muhammad Asad

Punjab takes lead to facilitate students: CM

CM also directs Home dept to provide free legal aid to poor prisoners

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has affirmed that Punjab will continue to lead in providing facilities to students, such as the E-Bike Project.

In a statement on Tuesday, the CM highlighted the provision of both e-bikes and petrol bikes to students across Punjab under the Chief Minister's Youth Initiative. She noted that these measures will save time and ease travel, ultimately enhancing students' academic performance.

The CM directed the

authorities concerned to fix minimum monthly installment in the e-bike project to facilitate students. She said e-bike battery insurance and warranty is also given for the students in the scheme, adding that Punjab also wants to move to electric transport like the world. The condition of parental guarantee has been waived off for the students who are deprived of the shadow of their parents, she informed.

CM Maryam Nawaz said that solarized charging stations will be established in colleges and universities

for charging the e-bikes, adding that along with the bikes, helmet and kite protection rods will also be given. She added e-bikes will reduce smog and environmental pollution.

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that poor prisoners who cannot afford lawyers to defend their cases in courts will get free legal aid.

While lauding Punjab Home Department on starting a remarkable initiative to help needy prisoners by providing them free legal aid in jails across Punjab, she added

Baldia official killed

KHANEWAL (APP): An official of map plan branch of Khanewal Baldia was shot at and killed by unknown accused in civil lines area of the city on Tuesday. Rescue 1122 spokesman said that Zafar Gujjar was on way to Baldia office from Hakeem Abad when some accused opened fire at him leaving him severely injured. Rescuers shifted him to DHQ hospital Khanewal but he could not survive.



KARACHI: Director FIA Sindh Nouman Siddique meeting with Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori.

Sindh Govt decides to move bus stands out of city with free shuttle service

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Government has decided to move all bus stands outside of the Metropolis and provide free shuttle service to the passengers.

This was announced by senior Minister for Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon while addressing the meeting of Transport department officers on Tuesday.

Sharjeel said a free shuttle service will be available for passengers from the old bus stands to the Bus terminal from August 14.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the citizens of Karachi were facing hardships due to heavy vehicles, which also increases pressure on the roads. All bus stands are

being shifted outside the city, and more modern facilities would be provided to passengers at the Karachi Bus Terminal, he added.

Memon instructed that efforts should be made to ensure that the citizens and travelers of Karachi do not face any inconvenience.

He said that measures should be taken to ensure that transporters were not harmed and that passengers can also benefit. A police check post is being established at the Karachi Bus Terminal to ensure the safety of passengers, he added.

Secretary Transport Asad Zaman, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, Karachi Police Chief Javed Alam Odho, DIG Traffic Ahmed Nawaz Cheema and others participated in the meeting.

According to the police, the incident occurred while the deceased was attempting to cross the railway tracks. The victim identified as Kuram Deen, who was a resident of Mian Chanun, succumbed to his injuries at the scene.

The authorities have handed over the body to the family members for burial.

The police are investigating the matter further to ascertain the exact circumstances leading to the tragic death.



LAHORE: World Bank Country Director Najy Benhassine meeting with Senior Punjab Minister Marriyum Aurangzaib.

PWPA Chairperson says: Zero tolerance for honour killing in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Women Protection Authority (PWPA) Chairperson Hina Parvez Butt has said that there is no pardon for killings in the name of honour.

She was talking to the family and children of victim of honour killing in Chakwal on Tuesday. The Chairperson visited the deceased family on the directive of the Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Offering the government's assurance of complete justice, she said that measures are being taken to prevent such incidents in the future. A suspect has been apprehended in Chakwal for the murder of a mother of two, and the

Punjab government will take responsibility for the upbringing of these children. Hina Parvez Butt further disclosed that her first case in Multan involved the tragic death of Saniya Zahra. Recent developments have revealed that it was not a suicide but a murder. Saniya's husband, Ali Raza, has been found guilty of murdering his wife and staging it as a suicide. The Punjab Forensic Science Agency in Lahore matched the DNA evidence, and a forensic team is now heading to Multan for further investigation. This case, of a highly sensitive nature, was solved with the advanced resources of the police.

Punjab, World Bank forge historic agreement for development

LAHORE (APP): Under the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Punjab government has reached a historic agreement with the World Bank.

The World Bank has expressed its support for a public-private partnership with the Punjab government, aimed at poverty reduction, economic and social development, environmental improvement, and smog eradication.

This agreement was discussed in a meeting chaired by Senior Provincial Minister Maryam Aurangzeb and attended by ministers from the education, health, industry, agriculture, local government, and irrigation departments.

During the meeting,

terms were finalized in discussions with a high-level World Bank delegation led by Country Director Najy Benhassine. The delegation explored areas of cooperation and reviewed various possibilities.

Maryam Aurangzeb remarked that the 'Country Framework' is the World Bank's international program that collaborates with partner countries or provincial governments to achieve rapid development in various sectors, including agriculture, health, and education.

The objective of participating in this special program for 2024-2027 is to accelerate overall development, covering sectors like agriculture, health, education, IT, youth employment, and skills development.

Governor lauds FIA's role in crime prevention

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori praised the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for its significant role in crime prevention, particularly in combating cyber crimes.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the Director, FIA Sindh, Nauman Siddiqui, at the Governor House on Tuesday. He emphasized the importance of acquiring modern technology to tackle these issues, viewing it as a positive step.

During the meeting, they discussed a range of topics, including the prevention of cyber crimes, the curbing of illegal activities and anti-corruption measures. The Governor Sindh highlighted that preventing illegal activities was essential for economic prosperity.

Minister visits Nawaz Sharif Cardiology Hospital

SARGODHA (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawja Imran Nazir on Tuesday reviewed under construction Nawaz Sharif Cardiology Hospital Sargodha.

The XEN building briefed the minister and said the project at a cost of Rs 19 billion was underway with a rapid pace.

On this occasion, the minister said the chief minister Punjab would inaugurate the hospital after its construction.

Meanwhile, he also visited the under construction TB hospital in Mula Bakhsh hospital.

Over 9m tourists turn to KP in last 3 months: CM's aide

PESHAWAR (APP): Authority Shabir Khan, DG Special Purposes Kalash Development Authority Minhasuddin, DC Swat and DG Upper Swat Development Authority Shahzad Khan, DG Kumrat Valley Development Authority and other relevant authorities participated in the meeting. The Tourism and Culture Advisor said that witnessing a record number of tourists arrivals at different hill stations just in three months was the proof of the overwhelming confidence in the government of KP and tourism authorities.

Zahid Chanzab clearly directed that all tourism authorities should ensure the arrangements for various tourism and cultural activities in the province in order to further promote tourism in the province. He revealed that cultural activities will be started soon at Nishtar Hall, Peshawar.

PESHAWAR (APP): Zahid Chanzab, Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Tourism, Culture, Archeology and Museums, has said that more than 9 million tourists have turned to different tourist spots of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the last three months. He directed that all tourism authorities should ensure provision of all possible facilities to tourists in the province.

He was chairing a joint meeting of all Tourism Authorities of khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the conference room of KPCTA in Peshawar here on Tuesday. Secretary Tourism and Culture Muhammad Bakhtiar Khan, Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority Tashfeen Haider, DG Galyat Development Authority Sharukh Khan, DG Kaghan Development

Minister reviews progress on CM Skill Devt Program

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain chaired a meeting in which the progress on the Chief Minister Skill Development Program was reviewed here at TEVTA Secretariat on Tuesday.

During the briefing, it was told that the first phase of the programme is nearing completion while the admissions for the second phase are going on. The classes for the second session will start from September 1.



KARACHI: A view of accumulated sewerage water on a road at north Karachi area after the monsoon rains, in the Provincial Capital.



KARACHI: Sindh Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah presides over the meeting.

Aurangzeb for effective climate change projects with active private sector's participation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb Tuesday stressed the need for effective projects to address climate change challenges, advocating for active participation and financing from the private sector.

Addressing the "Climate Action for Pakistan" event organized by Acumen Pakistan, he highlighted that climate change was an international issue impacting many regions globally.

He noted that Pakistan was among the countries most affected by climate change and in 2022 floods, it suffered massive destruction and incurred

losses estimated at \$30 billion.

Aurangzeb mentioned that at the Geneva conference, various countries, bilateral and multilateral partners, and international organizations pledged over \$9 billion in assistance for Pakistan.

However, the country did not receive the promised funds. The finance minister stressed that the private sector played a crucial role in climate financing and should assume leadership in this area. He also indicated that there would be discussions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) management board regarding climate financing, expressing confidence that the IMF's

Board of Directors would approve the staff-level agreement by the end of the month. Aurangzeb assured that Pakistan's economy was on a path to stability, with ongoing reforms aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth and development.

He emphasized the need for expanding the tax system, improving transparency, implementing energy sector reforms and enhancing governance.

"The current government is taking necessary measures in these areas," he informed.

"Pakistan requires increased resources to accommodate its growing population," he noted.



ISLAMABAD: A KOPIA delegation, led by the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan, Park Ki Jun, met with Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain.

FAO urged to provide guidance to mitigate climate change impact on agriculture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday urged the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to provide guidance on minimizing the impact of climate change on the local agriculture sector and its development.

During a meeting with FAO's Country Representative in Pakistan, Florence Rolle, the minister emphasized that continued innovation in the agriculture sector is essential for enhancing agricultural output and achieving sustainable economic development in the country.

The FAO's Country Representative also met with the Federal Minister to discuss agricultural sector development, ongoing projects, and future collaborations aimed

at improving the local agriculture and livestock sectors.

The minister highlighted that the government had launched various programs to support farming communities and noted the need to enhance farmers' capacities for modern crops.

Speaking at the meeting, FAO's Country Representative in Pakistan, Florence Rolle, affirmed the organization's commitment to advancing the agricultural sector in Pakistan. She stated that the FAO will work together with stakeholders to build the capacity of farmers and researchers. Efforts are also underway to mitigate the impacts of climate change on agriculture, with the FAO determined to support Pakistan in developing its livestock sector to boost rural economies.



HYDERABAD: A labourer pushing hand cart loaded with bangles at Hali Road to deliver on shop in a local market.

Govt plans crop zoning to optimize water usage, Senate Informed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research on Tuesday informed the senate that the government is considering to create zones for different crops for better water management.

Responding to a question during a question hour session in the senate the minister said that the government is taking different measures for the minimum utilization of water for different crops keeping in view the water shortages. He said the crop of sugarcane consumes much water therefore it should not be cultivated in burden however the government has not issued

any circular for the stoppage of sugarcane cultivation in specific areas.

He said that the crop of sugarcane is in surplus therefore no one should panic about scarcity of sugar. He said that the agriculture sector in Pakistan is actively engaged in various projects aimed at enhancing water conservation and efficiency in water usage.

He said that the "National Water Policy 2018" and "National Climate Change Policy 2021" advocate for the promotion of less water-intensive varieties of major crops as part of efforts to conserve water.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Aon Abbas, chairman senate standing committee on industries and production presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament Lodges.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Huawei headed by Ethan Sun, CEO Huawei Pakistan called on Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal to discuss progress of the company's digitization initiatives in Pakistan.

TAD implementation causes sluggishness in Pak-Afghan bilateral trade-PAJCCI

PESHAWAR (APP): The condition of Temporary Admission Documentation (TAD) for admission of trucks at Pak-Afghan border has caused sluggishness in the bilateral trade, creating long queues of goods laden heavy vehicles on both sides of the border.

This was said by Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI).

In a press statement issued here on Tuesday, Zia Sarhadi said earlier

drivers of goods carrier trucks were issued Temporary Card (Route Pass) with expiry date of July 31, 2024. Whereas Pakistan authorities had set a deadline of July 15, 2024 from Afghan truck drivers to obtain TAD.

In the meanwhile, the Afghan authorities also asked Pakistan government not to allow any Afghan truck driver to cross Torkhem border without showing TAD from August 1, Zia shared.

If in case the Afghan driver does not possess

TAD, he should be allowed on the condition of showing his passport and valid visa.

Following request from Taliban government, Pakistan authorities started implementation of TAD condition for passage of Afghan trucks carrying bilateral trade, he continued.

Whereas on Afghanistan side, the same practice was started and drivers carrying goods from Pakistan to Afghanistan were asked to show valid visa and passport.

Governor SBP launches NIBAF Pakistan

KARACHI (APP): Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Jameel Ahmad, emphasizing the importance of developing skills and setting high standards for the financial sector, on Tuesday stressed for strategic approach to transform banking and financial training landscape in the country.

He was addressing the audience at the launch ceremony of NIBAF Pakistan; a new entity formed by the merger of the National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF) and the Institute of Bankers Pakistan (IBP).

The SBP Governor

stated that NIBAF Pakistan will leverage the combined expertise of NIBAF and IBP to offer a wide range of training programs, certifications, qualifications and assessment services tailored to meet the requirements of the financial industry.

Jameel Ahmed, appreciating the hard work of the team involved in the merger, highlighted the improved efficiency and new opportunities anticipated to be created from the merger. He also shared his vision of making NIBAF Pakistan a leading institute for learning and development.

PSX turns bullish, gains 106 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 106.85 points, a positive change of 0.14 percent, closing at 77,191.34 points against 77,084.49 points on the last working day.

A total of 600,896,301 shares were traded during the day as compared to 501,191,841 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 17,127 billion against Rs 21,057 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 443 companies transacted their shares in the stock market.



SARGODHA: A youngster purchasing national flags and other items from vendor in a local market in connection with upcoming Independence Day celebration.

Mobilink Bank introduces affordable E-bike loans for a greener future

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dedicated to promoting positive environmental change, Mobilink Bank has recently announced the launch of E-Bike loans.

This initiative, aimed at empowering individuals with accessible and eco-friendly transportation options, was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with PakZon Electric Motors (Pvt) Ltd., Pakistan's leading electric bike manufacturer said a news release.

Through this offer, the Bank is extending exclusive benefits to all its customers, including a 6% discount on E-bikes purchased through PakZon dealerships, three complimentary checkups at PakZon 3S dealerships, and a one-year battery warranty for two, three and

four-wheelers.

These benefits are designed to make E-bike ownership more affordable and convenient.

Mobilink Bank is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and digital services to nearly 160 million customers in six dynamic markets that are home to 7% of the world's population.

Mobilink Bank's E-Bike Loan is a strategic expansion of its retail lending portfolio, marking a foray into the growing green financing sector. By offering hassle-free financing solutions, the Bank drives sustainable transportation adoption and enables individuals, particularly women, to make informed choices about their mobility needs.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Eight ships, TSS Amber, Dimitris-Y, San Diego Bridge, MSC Antonia, Singapore Bulker, Rakan-5, Leader and Clipper Eris scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, Rice, Gas oil and Chemicals, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Grain Terminal, FOTCO Oil Terminals and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile four more ships, Solar Catie, Khairpur, Jag Padma and Jipiro Neftis Palm oil, Mogas and Chemicals are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

Twelve ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, MSC Antonia, San Diego Bridge, Dimitris-Y, Clipper Eris and IVS North Berwick left the port on today morning while two more ships, TSS Amber and Corona are expected to sail on same day.

Cargo volume of 159,532 tonnes, comprising 94,137 tonnes imports cargo and 65,395 tonnes export cargo carried in 5,747 Containers (2,725 TEUs Imports & 3,022 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Seven ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships,

Ahsan commends Huawei's collaboration to build 'Digital Future' for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level delegation from Huawei Pakistan met with Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday to discuss the company's latest digitization initiatives in the country.

The delegation comprised the company's CEO Ethan Sun, Director Subsidiary Board and Deputy CEO Ahmed Bilal Masood and Vice CEO Yushaoning, a news release said.

During the meeting, the delegation provided updates on their progress in implementing various projects, including the development of Islamabad as a model smart city, as proposed by the Minister in a previous meeting.

The emphasis was on the importance of digital infrastructure in driving the new age economy.

The discussion also

centered on digitizing education infrastructure, improving access to smart devices for underprivileged students, and establishing smart classrooms as a priority area under ongoing education reforms.

Huawei officials highlighted their online Learning Management System, which enables students across Pakistan to access new ICT courses.

Furthermore, the meeting touched on the need for e-government initiatives to achieve a paperless government.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal commended Huawei's digital transformation plans, stating, "A robust digital ecosystem of learning, innovation, and efficiency is crucial for Pakistan to meet 21st-century digital demands. Huawei's collaboration in building a digital future for Pakistan is indeed commendable."

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ms. Florence Rolle, Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Pakistan called on Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Florence Rolle, Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Pakistan called on Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research.

OICCI members injected \$22b in Pak in past 10 years

ISLAMABAD (APP): Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), the representative body for the top 210 foreign investors in Pakistan has invested \$22b in Pakistan in past 10 years.

"Over the past 10 years, from 2013 to 2023, Pakistan received a net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) of \$19.8 billion, said a news release.

During the same period, OICCI members contributed \$22.6 billion, showcasing a significant commitment to the country's economic development. This robust

investment underscores the confidence foreign investors have in Pakistan's long-term potential.

In 2023, the 139 OICCI member companies reported assets amounting to \$29.6 trillion, capital expenditure of \$482 billion, government levies of \$2.4 trillion, and gross revenue of \$10.4 trillion.

Despite the challenges faced by the country, OICCI members have shown more confidence than other foreign investors over the last decade, as reflected in the investment figures and economic contributions.

LCCI urges govt to promptly address taxpayers' issues

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has expressed deep concerns regarding the steep charges imposed for electronic compliance as stipulated under SRO 428(I)/2024.

According to the LCCI spokesman here Tuesday told media here Tuesday that in a letter to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that these charges would be placing more burden on the business community.

The LCCI President said that the business community in Pakistan is facing severe economic challenges including inflation, rupee devaluation, high energy costs and high interest rate. Kashif Anwar conveyed deep concerns regarding the exorbitant charges quoted by the sole license holder for integrating electronic invoicing systems with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) as mandated by SRO 428(I)/2024 dated March 22, 2024.



LAHORE: President All Pakistan Markazi Anjum Tajran Haji Naveed Tahir addressing a press conference at press club.

Senate body addresses critical issues in power sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Power emphasized the importance of resolving the issues with Independent Power Producers (IPPs), which have become a significant burden for the nation.

The meeting presided over by Senator Mohsin Aziz was held on Tuesday in Parliament House, highlighted that the primary problem is overpricing, making

electricity unaffordable for the average person.

The chairman suggested that ministry officials conduct a comparative analysis of electricity tariffs in neighboring and regional countries. He also pointed out the need to consider factors such as heat efficiency, evacuation responsibility, capacity charges, and the performance of underutilized plants.

Israeli air strikes at schools, hospital in Gaza kill 44 more

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: Israeli strikes hit two schools and a hospital in Gaza, killing more than 40 Palestinians and leaving dozens of others injured, the Palestinian official news agency said. Israel has struck at least 172 "designated shelters", mostly schools, housing thousands of displaced families in past over 10 months, the Hamas-run government media office said, while the Israeli military claimed it struck a Hamas military compound "embedded in the schools". Footage circulated on Palestinian media showed bodies scattered inside the yard of one of two blast-wrecked schools as residents rushed to carry casualties, including children, and loaded them into ambulance vehicles that took them to at least two nearby hospitals.

As an Israeli air strike hit a hospital in central Gaza, health officials said at least 44 Palestinians were killed on Sunday. The Palestinian official news agency Wafa and Hamas media said dozens were wounded in addition to the 25 fatalities in the schools of Hassan Salama and Al-Nasser, which housed Palestinian displaced families. They said the strike destroyed several structures inside the facilities. The Israeli military accused Hamas of operating from within civilian property, though Hamas denies using civilian institutions for military purposes. Earlier in the day, an Israeli strike inside the Al-Aqsa Hospital compound started a fire, and wounded at least 18 people as well as killing five, medical au-



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attends a ceremonial event to mark the delivery of new tactical ballistic missiles to his country's troops at an undisclosed location in North Korea.

North Korea's Kim oversees delivery of new tactical ballistic missile launchers

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the delivery of 250 new tactical ballistic missile launchers to front-line troops, state media KCNA reported on Monday, which Seoul said could be used to threaten South Korea. The launchers have been described by state media as a modern tactical attack weapon personally designed by Kim and ready to be transferred to Korean People's Army units on the border with the South. North Korea said it test-fired a new tactical bal-

listic missile last month. "We believe (the missile launchers) are intended to be used in various ways, such as attack or threaten South Korea," Lee Sung-joon, spokesperson for South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a media briefing, noting deployment near the border would mean the range was not long. Photographs released by KCNA showed rows of launchers lined up besides red banners that called for victory under floodlights at the event held at night and attended by Kim.

Ukraine finally deploying F-16 fighter jets, says Zelenskiy

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukrainian pilots have started flying F-16s for operations within the nation, President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Sunday, confirming the long-awaited arrival of the U.S.-made fighter jets more than 20 months since Russia's invasion. The Ukrainian leader announced the use of F-16s, which Kyiv has long lobbied for, as he met military pilots at an air base flanked by two of the jets with two more flying overhead.

Two migrants die after rescue at sea

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy's coastguard said on Sunday two migrants died after they were rescued along with more than 30 others in the Mediterranean off the eastern coast of Sicily. The coastguard said it received a distress call late Saturday from a boat located about 17 miles southeast of Syracuse carrying Syrian, Egyptian and Bangladeshi migrants.

Search and rescue operations began after the coastguard dispatched a patrol boat and plane to the area, but "the occupants of the vessel ended up in the water as the patrol boat approached," it said in a statement.

Jordan FM holds talks in Iran as Middle East tensions soar

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi held talks Sunday during a rare visit to Iran, as fears of an escalation between Tehran and Israel grew following the killing of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh. The political head of Palestinian group Hamas was killed early on Wednesday in Tehran, where he had attended the inauguration of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian. Iran and the Hamas, which Tehran supports, vowed to retaliate and

blamed the strike on Israel, which has declined to comment. ISNA news agency said Safadi "met and held consultations with" acting foreign minister Ali Bagheri after landing in Tehran. Jordan's top diplomat then met Pezeshkian, who said Haniyeh's killing was a "grave" and "brazen" act by Israel and vowed anew to avenge his death, the official news agency IRNA reported. Earlier, IRNA said Safadi would "exchange views with Iranian officials on regional and international issues" during his visit.



A demonstrator holds up a poster of assassinated Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh during a protest to show solidarity with Palestinian prisoners, outside the United Nations offices in Sanaa, Yemen.

New poll shows Kamala strengthening against Trump

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A new poll confirmed on Sunday that Kamala Harris — set to name her vice presidential pick imminently — has drawn level with Donald Trump, transforming a White House race that the Republican had been increasingly confident he was going to win. As the Nov 5 election rapidly approaches, Harris has erased the growing lead that Trump was building before President Joe Biden dropped his reelection bid. According to the CBS News/YouGov poll released on Sunday, Harris has a one percent advantage on Trump nationwide — compared to Trump's previous five point edge on Biden. In the swing states that decide the Electoral

College contest in US elections, Harris and Trump — who shocked the world with his 2016 presidential victory but was beaten by Biden in 2020 — are equal. These are considered good numbers for a Democratic candidate who parachuted into the race only last month, when Biden bowed to mounting concerns over his mental acuity and ability at 81 years old to serve a second term. But Harris, who is Biden's vice president and the first Black and South Asian woman ever in the role, is in a sprint to define herself to voters before Trump does. A big moment in that process will be when Harris announces her choice for running mate in a historic bid to become America's first female president.

Australia raises terror threat level, citing 'extreme ideologies'

Monitoring Desk
CANBERRA (INP): Australia on Monday raised its terrorism threat level to "probable", with the country's top intelligence official citing a homegrown rise in "extreme ideologies". Intelligence chief Mike Burgess said there was no indication of an imminent attack, but there was an increased threat of violence in the next 12 months. "Australia's security environment is degrading, is more volatile and more unpredictable," Burgess told reporters. "You've heard me say many times that espionage and foreign interference are our principal security concerns... intelligence suggests that is no longer accurate."

German engineering helps amputees walk again

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Double amputee Vitaliy Saiko, a veteran of the war in Ukraine, compares the artificial limbs made for him by a Berlin-based prosthetics specialist to a sports car. "This is individual work. It's like making a Lamborghini, it's assembled according to the client's order," Saiko said. The 42-year-old is among the first patients to be fitted for new prostheses in Germany with the help of an initiative to bring better care to Ukrainian amputees. Russia's invasion has killed thousands and left many more with life-changing injuries. The World Health Organisation said in May that more than 20,000 amputations had been carried out there since February 2022.



Demonstrators clash with police officers during an anti-immigration protest, in Rotherham, Britain.

US terms Middle East moves 'defensive'

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States is deploying additional military might in the Middle East as a defensive measure with a goal of de-escalating tensions in the region, a White House official said on Sunday. Regional tensions have increased following the assassination on Wednesday of Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas, in the Iranian capital Tehran a day after an Israeli strike in the Lebanese capital Beirut killed Fuad Shukur, a senior military commander from

Sialkot consumer court fines UAE airline on poor service

Monitoring Desk
GUJRAT: A consumer court in Sialkot has imposed a fine of Rs100,000 on a UAE-based international airline on charges of poor services to a client. A woman passenger of Sialkot Fatima Saba had alleged in her petition filed with the district consumer court that she had booked a ticket for Istanbul (Turkiye) from Faisalabad and the flight was scheduled to take off on April 17, 2024. However when she reached the airport, she came to know that the flight had been cancelled but the airline neither gave her prior notice about the cancellation nor the flight was rescheduled whereas her ticket was also not refunded. The petitioner also produced all the necessary documentary evidence of her claim and court heard the petition in accordance with the law. Consumer court presiding officer Gulzar Ahmed Khalid announced the decision in the case and ordered a fine of Rs100,000 on the airline. The court verdict said the airline was also bound to refund the sum of Rs1,67,305 to the consumer that were paid by her to purchase the ticket as well as the airline would have to pay Rs50,000 fee of the lawyer and Rs15,000 amount of miscellaneous expenditures to the consumer.

Nigerian protests fizzle out after deadly police crackdown

Monitoring Desk
LAGOS: Protests in Nigeria over the soaring cost of living ebbed on Monday, with only a few hundred people turning out in major cities following a deadly crackdown by security forces since the demonstrations began last week. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets in the capital Abuja, Lagos and other big cities during the protests against economic hardship and crime, which started on Thursday and were meant to continue until Aug. 10. Amnesty International said at least 13 people have been killed in clashes with police since the start of the protests, which were dubbed

"#10DaysOfRage". Police put the death toll at seven, saying some of the fatalities were caused by accidents and an explosive device. A tough police response and a call for a protest pause by President Bola Tinubu appeared to have dampened the demonstrations, which came weeks after data showed annual inflation hit a 28-year high of 34.19% in June. In the commercial hub of Lagos, where demonstrations have been largely peaceful, about 100 people gathered at the protest venue singing and chanting "We are hungry". In Abuja, there were no signs of protests at the main stadium where protesters have been gathering since Thursday.

UK PM Starmer vows 'swift criminal sanctions' for far-right rioters

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday vowed "swift criminal sanctions" following an emergency meeting on the far-right riots that broke out across England last week over the murder of three children. The prime minister met with ministers and police chiefs, including Scotland Yard boss Mark Rowley, to discuss how to quell the violence that first broke out in Southport, northwest England, on Tuesday. Over the weekend, several police officers were injured and scores of people were arrested as mobs throwing bricks and flares clashed with officers, burnt and looted shops, and smashed the windows of cars and homes. As part of a "number of actions" to come out of Monday's meeting, the

government will "ramp up criminal justice" to ensure that "sanctions are swift", Starmer told the media. He also said a "standing army" of specially-trained police officers was ready to be deployed to support local forces where any further riots break out. "My focus is on making sure that we stop this disorder," he added. "Whatever the apparent motivation, this is not protest, it is pure violence and we will not tolerate attacks on mosques or our Muslim communities," Starmer said. "The full force of law will be visited on all those who are identified as having taken part." Clashes erupted in Southport a day after three young girls were killed and five more children critically injured during a knife attack at a Taylor Swift-themed dance class.

Philippines, Germany commit to reaching defence pact this year

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: The Philippines and Germany on Sunday committed to signing a defence cooperation arrangement this year, vowing to uphold international rules-based order in the region as tensions flare over disputed areas of the South China Sea. China and the Philippines have traded accusations in recent months over clashes in the South China Sea, including charges China intentionally rammed Manila's navy boats, seriously injuring a Filipino sailor. Beijing has disputed this, saying its actions were lawful and professional. German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius and his Philippine counterpart Gilberto Teodoro committed to establishing long-term relations between their armed forces to expand training and bilateral exchanges, explore opportunities to expand bilateral armaments cooperation and engage in joint projects. The meeting in Manila was the first such visit by a German defence minister, as their countries mark 70 years of diplomatic relations. China claims sovereignty over most of the South China Sea, including areas claimed as exclusive economic zones by Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague said Beijing's claims had no legal basis. China rejects that decision. "This ruling remains valid, without any exceptions," said Pistorius. "It is our obligation to strengthen the maritime border and we are living up to it." China's foreign affairs ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Teodoro said the Philippines, seeking to modernise its military to boost external defence.

tion and engage in joint projects. The meeting in Manila was the first such visit by a German defence minister, as their countries mark 70 years of diplomatic relations. China claims sovereignty over most of the South China Sea, including areas claimed as exclusive economic zones by Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague said Beijing's claims had no legal basis. China rejects that decision. "This ruling remains valid, without any exceptions," said Pistorius. "It is our obligation to strengthen the maritime border and we are living up to it." China's foreign affairs ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Teodoro said the Philippines, seeking to modernise its military to boost external defence.

Kamala Harris to announce vice president pick before battleground states tour

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Vice President Kamala Harris is expected to announce her running mate by Tuesday after conducting interviews with top contenders at her Washington, D.C., residence over the weekend, two sources with knowledge of the matter said. Harris' decision could be announced at any time ahead of her first public appearance with the vice presidential nominee on Tuesday in Philadelphia, before they start a cross-country tour across several battleground states likely to decide the election, the sources said. Harris closed out her search by interviewing three top candidates - Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, U.S. Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona and Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro - at

her Naval Observatory residence in Washington on Sunday, the sources said. The vice president met with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg for 90 minutes on Friday and was also meeting candidates virtually, the sources said. Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear and Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker were the other candidates in contention for the job. Harris' search for a running mate began in earnest just two weeks ago, shortly after President Joe Biden withdrew from the race and endorsed her to replace him. The choice of a running mate was one of the most consequential decisions of Harris' political career, as she hastily pulls together a campaign to challenge Donald Trump in the Nov. 5 election.

Sudan's government denies famine exists in Darfur's Zamzam camp

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Sudan on Sunday denied the existence of famine in North Darfur's Zamzam camp for internally displaced people, while an aid group said there was a risk of a severe shortage of special food designed to treat malnourished children in the camp. On Thursday, a global food monitor found that famine, confirmed when acute malnutrition and mortality criteria are met, was present in the Zamzam camp and likely to persist there at least until October. Experts and UN officials say a famine classification could trigger a UN Security Council resolution empowering agencies to deliver relief across borders to the most needy, yet Sudanese officials have said that a famine declaration could be a pretext for international intervention in the country. More than 15 months of war in Sudan between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have created the world's biggest internal displacement crisis and left 25 million people — or half the

population — in urgent need of humanitarian aid. Aid agency Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said earlier this year that a child died every two hours in the camp, which holds half a million people. On Sunday it said in a post on X: "Our teams only have enough therapeutic food to treat malnourished children in Zamzam camp, Sudan, for another two weeks." But Sudan's Federal Humanitarian Aid Commission, a governmental body, said on Sunday that talk of famine was inaccurate and conditions were "not consistent" with those that must be met to declare famine. The Sudanese government blamed the RSF for imposing what it said was a blockade on al-Fashir, capital of North Darfur, that led to shortages in food and aid. Al-Fashir is the only significant holdout from the RSF across Darfur. The RSF on Friday declared "full solidarity" with victims of the famine and repeated an offer to work with the United Nations to facilitate delivery of aid.



People gather in front of a makeshift memorial, which was erected following head of Russia's Wagner mercenary group Yevgeny Prigozhin and group commander Dmitry Utkin's death in 2023, during a commemoration ceremony held to pay tribute to Wagner fighters, who were recently killed in Mali by northern Tuareg rebels, in central Moscow, Russia.

Ahsan Iqbal reviews road, rail connectivity projects with Central Asia, Europe

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday chaired a review meeting of the projects related to road and rail connectivity with Central Asian and European countries.

Among others, the meeting was attended by the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Planning, members of the Planning Commission, and senior officials from the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Railways.

During the meeting, officials from the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Communications presented their strategic connectivity plans.

The minister underscored the importance of establishing a comprehensive roadmap for collaboration with Central Asian states.

"Pakistan is located at a strategic location & can become a hub of regional connectivity following a multi-model transparent strategy. We must provide efficient and reliable trade corridors for taking full advantage of our location," he said.

Ahsan Iqbal directed the ministries concerned to finalize their plans, addressing any missing links in the connectivity with Central Asian states.

He stressed that all proposals should be feasible and thoroughly prepared, adding "We need to ensure that our proposals are actionable and ready for implementation."

The meeting concluded with a consensus on expediting the finalization of the connectivity plans to enhance regional cooperation and economic integration with Central Asia.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal chairing a meeting to review the road and rail connectivity plans with Central Asian States and Europe.

World court's recent verdict on Palestinians' rights applies to Kashmir as well: Munir

NEW YORK (APP): Highlighting the similarities of the situations in occupied Palestine and Indian-occupied Kashmir, Pakistan's UN Ambassador Munir Akram told the meeting, which marked the fifth anniversary of India's annexation of Jammu and Kashmir. "Pakistan will seek the application of these conclusions of the ICJ in the case of Palestine as well as in the case of occupied Jammu and Kashmir," he said at the gathering jointly organized by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN and the Consulate General of Pakistan in New York.

A large number of people including Permanent Representative of Türkiye, Ambassador Ahmet Yıldız, diplomats belonging to the OIC Contact Group on Kashmir, members of Kashmiri diaspora community, and youth and students attended the event.

Apart from Ambassador Akram, among those who addressed the event were Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, Secretary General of World Kashmir Awareness Forum, Abdelhamid Siyam, senior Palestinian journalist and professor, Ambassador Hameed Ajibaiye Opeleyeru, Permanent Observer of the OIC Mission to the UN, Senator Lt. General (rtd) Abdul Qayyum, former chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Defence Production.

At the outset, Consul General Aamer Ahmed Atozai welcomed the distinguished speakers and guests for making time to express unflinching solidarity with the oppressed people in Indian Occupied Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the main conclusions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Palestine apply not only to the Israeli-occupied Palestinian Territory but have become part of international law and also apply to Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

"The UN also has an obligation 'not to recognize' the illegal situation and to 'consider further action' to put an end to the illegal presence of the occupying power," Ambassador Akram told the meeting, which marked the fifth anniversary of India's annexation of Jammu and Kashmir. "Pakistan will seek the application of these conclusions of the ICJ in the case of Palestine as well as in the case of occupied Jammu and Kashmir," he said at the gathering jointly organized by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN and the Consulate General of Pakistan in New York.

A large number of people including Permanent Representative of Türkiye, Ambassador Ahmet Yıldız, diplomats belonging to the OIC Contact Group on Kashmir, members of Kashmiri diaspora community, and youth and students attended the event.

Senate body seek updates on budget recommendations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue on Tuesday sought updates on the budget recommendations made by the Senate finance Committee.

The committee was briefed in detail about number of recommendations fully implemented, partially implemented and rejected.

The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue convened at the Parliament House, chaired by Senator Saleem Mandiwala. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb also attended the meeting.

The meeting addressed several agenda items including budget recommendations, FBR Policy board nomination, and status of Officer on Special Duty (OSD), tax exemptions for institutions and import of hydrocarbon solvent.

The chairman expressed concerns over lists of officers reportedly being sent to OSD by the Prime Minister's office, stressing that such actions require evidence. The FBR reiterated that officers are not sent to OSD without substantiated evidence or disciplinary proceedings.

The chairman noted that the FBR chairman has decided to take early retirement and suspended several officers, and an in-camera meeting will be arranged to address grievances.

The committee resolved to dispose of several government bills, including "The Deposit Protection Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2024."



QUETTA: Former Vice Chancellor BUITEMS and Brigadier (retd) Saba Khan meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Chairman WAPDA, World Bank team review construction progress on Tarbela 5th Extension Project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman WAPDA, Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) accompanied by a World Bank team headed by Advisor Masood Ahmed and Task Team Leader Gautam Gunjan on Tuesday visited Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project and reviewed construction progress on key components. After detailed visit of the various sites, the Chairman also presided over a progress review meeting at the Project Office, said a press release.

The Project Management briefed the Chairman and the World Bank team about the progress achieved so far on seven key sites of the Project, which included intake, tunnel, penstock and outlet, power house, tail race culvert, tail race canal and switchyard.

Resource deployment, timelines and implementation plan for completion of the Project were also discussed during the meeting. It was briefed that electricity generation from the Project is likely to commence in 2025-26.

Addressing the meeting, the Chairman emphasized upon timely completion of the Project to cope with the increasing demand of energy in the country through green, clean and most affordable electricity. He urged the Consultants and the Contractors to maximize their efforts so that the Project could be completed by 2025-26.



RAWALPINDI: Chief (emir) of the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JI) Hafiz Naem ur Rehman talking with media persons during sit-in protest outside Liaqat Bagh at Murree road in the city.

Shehbaz to meet Hasina-like situation if fails to rein in IPPs: Hafiz Naem

RAWALPINDI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami chief Hafiz Naemur Rehman Tuesday reiterated his party's resolve to stand firm on demand to cut power tariffs.

Addressing the participants of the Rawalpindi sit-in he urged Prime Minister Shehbaz-led government to deliver to avert Bangladesh premier Hasina Wajid-like situation.

He added: "You can't rein in IPPs. So, listen, Shehbaz Sharif, your situation will also be like Hasina Wajid! 'Hasina Wajid got a helicopter, but you will not get a plane. That is why I am saying give us our right.'"

According to Bangladesh media, Hasina with her sister fled the country in a helicopter to India after stepping down as the premier in the face of overwhelming protests.

The JI chief stressed: "We are adamant. We are not quitting the sit-in. Don't think we got tired! You are mistaken." He added: "The government has been gimmicking over the matter but to no avail. 'If you want to drive big vehicles, drive with your vehicles and pay for fuel.'"

He said that the government wasn't taking any steps instead only making announcements despite our multiple calls.

PDMA writes to Commissioners to enforce Section 144 at picnic points & areas in Monsoon

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has asked the Commissioners of all eight divisions of the province to enforce Section 144 at the picnic points and areas during the Monsoon season.

In an official letter issued to the Divisional Commissioners by the Director Planning and Coordination, PDMA, it was stated that in areas where the picnic points are situated must be declared as prohibited areas by putting obstacles and the people should not be allowed to enter there for the purpose till the situation comes into normalcy.

This is necessary to avoid any human loss, mentioned in the official letter issued by the Director PDMA to the divisional Commissioners.

It was also stated that the control rooms must be established in all the districts which would remain operational keeping in view the alarming situation which may arise any time due to monsoon season.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman WAPDA, Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) accompanied by a World Bank team in a group photo during his visit to Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project and reviewed construction progress on key components.

CSO's coalition calls for greater data transparency to achieve sustainable population growth

QUETTA (APP): CSO's coalition calls for greater data transparency to achieve sustainable population growth. The Coalition of Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) on Population has stressed the need for implementing of the key Council of Common Interests (CCI) decisions on the use of data, to maintain progress towards reducing the population growth rate, lowering fertility, and increasing the contraceptive prevalence rate as included in National Action Plan on population.

A statement issued by the Population Council said the Coalition on Tuesday stressed that both public and private data must be integrated to effectively measure progress on the implementation.

Policies and initiatives related to population planning must be targeted to ensure inclusivity, leaving no one behind. To achieve this, it is imperative that data collected by both public and private organizations be disaggregated by gender, age, socio-economic status, and geographical location.

The coalition emphasized the need for integrating diverse data sources to influence policies and programs so that academics and researchers can analyze the data and transform it into meaningful information. This call to action was discussed in a CSO's Coalition meeting attended by representatives of 25 civil society organizations working in the fields of family planning, health, population, environment, education, women empowerment, and rural development.

During the meeting, it was highlighted that Pakistan ranks 137 out of 166 countries in the SDG's ranking.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Mir Hussain Bakhsh Umrani meeting with Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola.

CDS organizes seminar to bring together policymakers, experts

QUETTA (APP): The Centre for Development and Stability (CDS), a think tank, in collaboration with Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBK) Quetta, Balochistan conducted seminar titled "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality with a Focus on Regional Connectivity, Innovation, and Security in Balochistan."

The seminar was held at Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University Quetta, Balochistan. The attendees of this seminar include guest speakers, faculty members, students and other guests from various fields.

The aim of this seminar was to bring together policymakers, experts, scholars, local youth representatives, and other stakeholders to exchange ideas and insights related to the economic, social, environmental, and geopolitical impacts of CPEC.

Another important aspect of this seminar was to assess the potential role of CPEC in various sectors for promoting growth and development in Balochistan. This seminar was intended to explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation, sustainable development, and inclusive growth in the next phase of CPEC, specifically in Balochistan.

Esteemed guest speakers delivered their presentations and insights on the theme, enlightening the participants about the potential role of CPEC in various sectors for promoting growth and development in Balochistan and shed light on the opportunities for enhanced cooperation, sustainable development, and inclusive growth in the next phase of CPEC, with China, specifically in Balochistan.



QUETTA: Balochistan Adviser Labour and Manpower, Baba Ghulam Rasool Imrani addresses to participants during seminar on Youth for Climate Action organized by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), held in Quetta.

PM greets athlete Arshad on Olympic javelin throw final qualification

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday congratulated Pakistani athlete Arshad Nadeem on qualifying for the final round of the javelin throw events at the 2024 Olympics.

He lauded Arshad Nadeem's outstanding performance, stating he has won the admiration of the entire nation through his exceptional work and relentless dedication.

The prime minister wished Arshad Nadeem success in the 2024 Olympics and praised his contributions for promoting the javelin throw.

He highlighted that Arshad Nadeem's hard work and dedication served as an inspiration for the youth and recalled the meeting with Arshad Nadeem at the PM House in March 2024.



KARACHI: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a group photo with Sindh Chief Minister after meeting at Bilawal House.

Minister C&W directs to keep heavy machinery ready to tackle any emergency

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Communication and Works, Mir Saleem Khosa has stated that there is a key role of heavy machinery in improvement of infrastructure as such it must be ready to tackle any emergent situation.

The Minister was speaking on occasion of the visit to different sections of the E and M Workshop Division of the department here on Tuesday.

The Secretary C&W Department Lal Jan Jaffar, Chief Engineer E and M, Mehrullah Jozezi and others were also present on the occasion.

The Minister and Secretary C&W went round of different sections of the workshop.

He was also briefed about the overall working of the department and its E and M Division.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary C&W said that there is a key role of the department in development of the infrastructure. In this role, the role of heavy machinery of the department has the backbone status.

The Minister directed to keep the heavy machinery ready in every kind of situation.

He said that it is our top priority to resolve the issues of department on priority basis. The Secretary C&W directed to keep the out of order machinery in Workshop in order.



QUETTA: CEO Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund Nadir Gul Baraich addressing the workshop on consultative event of Green Skills for sustainable Balochistan held at Boy Scouts.

Pakistan could thrive, if youth are equipped with modern skills: CM advisor

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan's Chief Minister's Advisor for Labor and Manpower, Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani, said on Tuesdays that Pakistan could thrive, if the youth are guided correctly and equipped with modern skills. "For the country's development and prosperity, it is essential to make the youth skilled so that they can contribute to society's overall progress and earn a respectable livelihood. He expressed these views while addressing an event organized by the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) in collaboration with Prime Minister Youth Program as part of the Paigham-e-Pakistan initiatives to mark the independence day of Pakistan.

The event was also attended by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) CEO Nadir Gul Baraich, officials from NAVTTC, Youth Affairs Department, Women Development, and others.

Balochistan's Chief Minister advisor referring to the vision of Balochistan's Chief Minister, said some 30,000 youth from Balochistan will be trained and sent abroad.

Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani emphasized the dire need for equipping Balochistan's youth with latest skills. To compete with the world, it is necessary to align with modern demands and make the youth skilled, he remarked.

He said that the world has advanced significantly in terms of skills and expertise, with modern countries continually adapting. In contrast, we are still trying to progress on old patterns.

To compete globally, we must equip our youth with skills, providing them with a good standard and position in society. He mentioned that thanks to the efforts of Balochistan's Chief Minister, the provincial government will train 30,000 youth and send them abroad, which is a significant positive development. He noted that unemployment is currently the biggest issue in the province, leading to the youth's disappointment. Under the Chief Minister's leadership, all possible steps are being taken to eradicate unemployment and poverty.