

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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PM Shahbaz reaffirms focus on Balochistan's progress, welfare

Chagai Mineral Corridor being developed to maximize the use of Balochistan's mineral reserves; A railway line would be constructed from Chagai to Gwadar to facilitate access to the mineral reserves of Chagai and surrounding areas for Gwadar port

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated on Wednesday that the development and prosperity of the people of Balochistan was a key priority for the incumbent government.

In a meeting with former Senate Chairman and Balochistan Assembly Member Sadiq Sanjrani, the prime minister discussed various issues related to the Balochistan province.

The prime minister announced that the Chagai Mineral Corridor was being developed to maximize the use of Balochistan's mineral reserves, and several additional projects were under consideration for the corridor, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

A railway line would be constructed from Chagai to Gwadar to facilitate access to the mineral reserves of Chagai and surrounding areas for Gwadar port. Additionally, a grid station was being established in Chagai to enhance the electricity supply system, and measures were being taken to ensure a continuous water supply in the area, said the prime minister.

Sanjrani updated the prime minister on the Nokkundi Master Plan strategy for the development of Nokkundi city.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the federal government had allocated a historic development bud-

get in the current fiscal year, for the promotion of Information Technology and Telecom sectors.

He said the incumbent government was prioritizing steps for increasing country's IT export.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a four-member delegation of GSM Association, led by its Asia Pacific head Julian Gorman, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for IT and Telecom Shaza Khawaja Fatima, Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority Major General (retired) Hafeezur Rehman and other relevant senior officials.



ISLAMABAD: Former Chairman Senate and Member of Balochistan Assembly Sadiq Sanjrani calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

People sitting abroad in name of "Azad Balochistan" have nothing to do with rights of Balochistan: Zia

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has categorically stated that the people who are sitting abroad on the name of "Azad Balochistan" have nothing to do with rights of the province.

In an official statement issued here on Wednesday, the Provincial Minister Home said that the people living in Europe for supporting the foreign agenda are playing the fire and blood bath in the province.

Mir Ziaullah Langove said that some so-called Baloch leaders are leading prosperous life together with their children after getting the European citizenship.

He said that our people are being enticed through social media while sitting

abroad. These so-called leaders should face the circumstances after coming to Balochistan instead of using social media "X".

He asked these people not to make attempt to spoil the circumstances of the province, who are otherwise leading life full of enjoyment.

The Provincial Minister stressed that the people of Balochistan have to make decision not that they would not be misguided by those living in Europe.

He said that those appeasing the enemy countries have nothing to do with the development and prosperity of the country especially Balochistan.

He pointed out that the innocent people of Balochistan are being provoked on lawlessness through false propaganda on social media.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani and Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran cutting cake during a ceremony in connection with Independence Day at Children Academy.

Raheela emphasizes importance of freedom

Independent Report
QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Education Rahila Hamid Khan Durrani highlighted the significance of appreciating freedom and remembering the sacrifices made to achieve it. Speaking at a ceremony organized by the Children's Academy Trust Quetta to mark Independence Day, she emphasized that the creation of Pakistan was not only in the name of Kalma but also involved Allah's will.

Minister Durrani expressed her delight at the students' awareness of the history of independence and the sacrifices made to achieve it. She reminded them that entire villages and families were destroyed,

and trains full of corpses were received. Innocent children were brutally martyred in front of their parents, and parents were martyred in front of their children.

The ceremony was attended by special guests, including Director General of Public Relations Muhammad Noor Khetran, Vice Chairman of Children's Academy Muhammad Asif, Secretary General Abdul Ghaffar Langah, and a large number of students and teachers from various schools. Minister Durrani's speech emphasized the need to value freedom and remember the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for it, as well as their families.

Dr. Malik meets CM Balochistan to discuss provincial situation

Independent Report
QUETTA: Former Chief Minister of Balochistan and National Party leader Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch met with Chief Minister Mir Saifur Khan Bugti to discuss the current situation in the province. Dr. Malik emphasized the need for peaceful resolution of issues through dialogue and negotiations with the Baloch Unity Committee's sit-in and protesters.

Another polio case reported

Independent Report
QUETTA: Another polio case has been reported on Wednesday in Killa Abdullah district of Balochistan increasing the tally of cases to 10 in the province.

The Health Department sources confirmed the fresh polio case has been reported from Killa Abdullah area where the virus was detected in 11-month-old boy child.

It may be mentioned here that it is the fifth case of polio reported from Killa Abdullah district during the current year.

Other cases of polio has been reported from Quetta, Dera Bugti, Chaman, Zhob and Jhal Magsi districts of the province.

Needless to mention here is that the Focal Person of Prime Minister for Polio Eradication, Ms. Ayesha Farooq had expressed concern about reporting of the polio cases in Balochistan.

During her recent visit to Quetta, the PM's Focal Person had announced to run special anti-polio campaign in the province during next three months.

Rashid Langrial appointed new FBR Chairman

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government on Wednesday appointed Rashid Mahmood Langrial, from the Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), as the new chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, the BPS-21 officer "is transferred and posted as Chairman, Federal Board of Revenue, under Section 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973, with immediate effect."



QUETTA: President National Party Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Saifur Khan Bugti.

Imran ready to tender conditional apology over May 9 mayhem

PTI founder's apology linked to alleged involvement of his party protesters that can be ascertained via CCTV footage

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Imran Khan, the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has offered a conditional apology for the widespread protests and violence that occurred on May 9, 2023.

He called for the release of CCTV footage to verify the involvement of PTI members in the incidents.

"If any PTI members are found guilty of participating in the events of May 9, I will apologise, expel them from the party, and ensure they face punishment," Imran stated

during an informal conversation with journalists.

He emphasised that accountability must be applied universally, questioning why only the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) is held in high regard.

"I was dragged by the Rangers, yet there seems to be no respect for Pakistan's most popular figure, both nationally and internationally. Don't I deserve an apology as well?" he remarked, referring to his own treatment during the protests.

The statement reflects ongoing tensions

between the PTI and state authorities, as the PTI founder continues to challenge the official narrative surrounding the May 9 incidents.

The call for transparency and accountability is expected to stir further political debate in Pakistan.

Earlier, Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, Director-General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), reaffirmed the military's unwavering stance on the violent protests of May 9.

He reiterated that those involved in the riots must be held accountable.



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehri briefing Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail during his visit to Bolan University of Medical & Health Sciences.

Governor visits Bolan University of Medical & Health Sciences, maintains: New history to be written by producing around 2,000 medical experts annually from 1st Medical University of province

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that introducing BS programmes in nursing, medical laboratory, dental and surgery and other sectors by the first Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences (BUMHS) is a revolutionary initiative.

He said that new history would be written by producing around 2,000 medical experts annually from first Medical University of Balochistan.

He said that we would be able soon to produce thousands of medical ex-

perts and community health organizations in the health sector at the national level.

He said that the success of BS programmes is a proof of the resolve of the educational standard, most modern facilities and experienced medical faculty of the BUMHS. The Governor was speaking on occasion of the visit to BUMHS here on Wednesday.

Also present on the occasion were the Vice Chancellor of BUMHS, Professor Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehri and Principal Secretary to Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai.

The Governor was briefed about the overall performance and future course of action of the Medical University.

He said that a visionary administrator or politician can provide strong base to any higher educational institution through the vision compatible with the vast and modern requirements.

Then these institutions promote preventive methods, creative capabilities and critical thinking, he mentioned adding that the good institutions put positive impacts on the overall healthcare system.

Imran Khan visits Media Academy, gets briefing on issues: Serious steps to be taken for resolving issues of media persons, assures Secretary Information

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Secretary Information Department, Imran Khan has stated that it is included in the priorities of government to make the means of communication compatible with the requirements of present era. He assured that serious steps would be taken to resolve the issues being faced by the media persons in province.

The Secretary Information was speaking on occasion of the visit to Media Academy here on Wednesday. The Director General Public Relations Balochistan, Muhammad Noor Khetran was also accompanied the Secretary Information.

The President Quetta Press Club, Abdul Khaliq Rind and office bearers of the cabinet welcomed them.

The President of Quetta Press Club briefed them about the Quetta Press Club, Media Academy, classes and other sections. He also informed the Secretary Information about functioning of the Media Academy and the future projects.

The Secretary Information gave patient hearing to the issues associated with the Press Club and newspaper industry.



QUETTA: Secretary Information Imran Khan and Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran visiting studio during their visit to Media Academy.

President emphasizes upon discouraging fake news, disinformation

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday underlined the need for discouraging the spread of fake news and disinformation by promoting a culture of fact-checking and verifying information.

He said the media should uphold the highest standards of journalism and play its role in promoting tolerance, unity and ethical values in the society.

The president expressed these views while talking to Chairman Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) Muhammad Saleem who called on him and presented PEMRA Report 2021-23, at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Talking to chairman PEMRA, the president said that modern communication technologies had opened up new challenges and the

media was required to play a responsible and constructive role in shaping the public opinion.

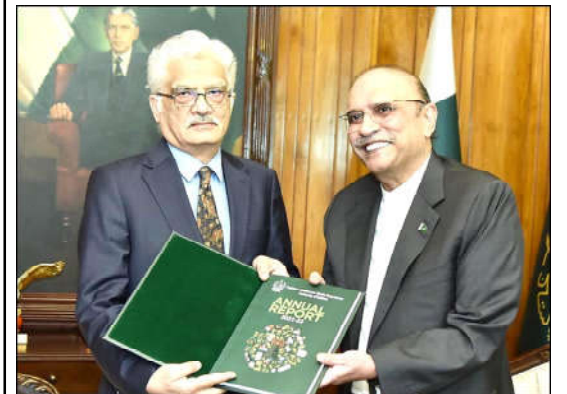
A code of conduct regarding the spread of misinformation and propaganda should be observed, he further stressed.

President Zardari also stressed upon the need of improving capacity of PEMRA by adopting modern tools and technologies and building a pool of talented human resources.

He opined that the media should also raise awareness about socio-economic issues, besides promoting a soft image of the country.

The chairman PEMRA briefed the president about the role and performance of PEMRA in the regulation and development of the media landscape of the country.

The president affirmed his support to further strengthen PEMRA.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) Muhammad Saleem, presented PEMRA Report 2021-23 to President Asif Ali Zardari, at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Armed forces pay rich tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider)

Independent Report

RAWALPINDI: The Armed Forces of Pakistan, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the Services Chiefs pay a solemn and heartfelt tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, recipient of the prestigious Nishan-e-Haider, on the occasion of his 66th martyrdom anniversary today.

Major Tufail Muhammad, the second recipient of the esteemed Nishan-e-Haider, valiantly laid down his life in 1958 while fearlessly engaging the enemy in the Lakshampur sector of East Pakistan. Despite fatal injuries, he resolutely completed his mission, exemplifying unparalleled bravery, unwavering resolve, and un-



remiting dedication to duty.

The martyrdom anniversary of Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed serves as a poignant reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices and selfless devotion of the Pakistan Armed Forces in defending the motherland. We honor the memory of these gallant sons of the soil who have made the ultimate sacrifice to safeguard our nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presenting shield to Base Commander PAF Quetta Air Commodore Shahid Afzaal.

15 die, 33 injured in rain related mishaps during last two months in Balochistan, reports PDMA

Independent Report

QUETTA: At least 15 persons died while 33 injured in different mishaps during the monsoon rains hit various parts of Balochistan.

This was disclosed in an official report shared by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) the other day.

According to the report, two deaths each were reported from Dera Bugti, Khuzdar, Barkhan, Loralai with 25 injured only in Dera Bugti since June 7, 2024.

One death each has also been reported from Kechhi, Kech, Musakhail. As per the report, in

all 93 houses were completely damaged while 180 were partially damaged during the rains.

The torrential rains also caused damages to the standing crops cultivated on 372 acres in different parts of the province.

Besides, 36 kilometer length roads were also affected due to the heavy rains and flashflood in different areas. In addition to this, four bridges were also partially damaged during the rains.

Meanwhile, the PDMA report suggested that 82 cattle were also perished due to the lightning in Lasbela district.

Deputy PM calls for durable, unconditional ceasefire in Gaza

JEDDAH (Agencies): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar has called for preventing further escalation of tensions and violence in the Middle East and facilitating complete, durable and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza.

In his remarks on the extraordinary Open-Ended Meeting of OIC Executive Committee in Jeddah today, he said that if the Israeli leadership continues to subvert the legally binding demand for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, the entire OIC membership would take several collective measures in response, including imposition of trade and oil sanctions.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister said that the control of the Rafah crossing should be handed back to Egypt in order to enhance the provision of humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered Palestinians in Gaza and meet their needs for food, medicines, energy and other essential supplies.

Ishaq Dar demanded the earliest withdrawal of Israel from Gaza and the commencement of its reconstruction, as envisaged in the plan approved by the Security Council.

He stressed the need to rapidly secure Palestine's admission as a full member of the United Nation and urgently commence the political and diplomatic process to establish the two State solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders with Al Quds Al Sharif as its capital.

He said that in order to initiate the establishment of an international judicial mechanism, which would seek "restitution, damages and satisfaction" from Israel for its crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide in Gaza and hold accountable those responsible for these crimes.

Highlighting the war crimes of Israel, he said that 40,000 innocent Palestinians, mostly children and women, have been mercilessly martyred by Israel.

He said that extremist Israeli leaders want to prolong and expand the war to ensure their own political survival, perpetuate Israeli occupation and prevent a two state solution.

Commenting on the tragic assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Ishaq Dar said that no amount of words is enough to condemn this horrendous act.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of GSM Association calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr Faisal Karim Kundi, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

ECP files review petition against reserved seats verdict

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday moved a review petition to the Supreme Court against the reserved seats verdict regarding the reserved seats.

It has been said in the petition that the Commission has not misinterpreted any legal and judicial decision, and prayed the top court to review its verdict dated July 12.

The review petition stated that the ECP has performed its responsibility according to the Constitution and law and has not misinterpreted any legal or judicial decision. The Supreme Court's decision

has been implemented in letter and spirit, it added.

The ECP said that it is a constitutional right to file a review of a court decision, adding that the court cannot interfere in Article 218 of the Constitution.

It said that on misinterpretation of the Constitution, the matter should be remanded back to the constitutional body. The decision has been implemented to the extent of 39 members of the PTI, it said.

It should be mentioned that the Supreme Court in its judgment had ordered to give the reserved seats to the PTI while giving a decision on the appeal filed by the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC).

AC Duki seals 2 clinics on selling illegal drugs in crackdown

QUETTA (APP): On the directive of Deputy Commissioner Duki Kaleemullah Kakar, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Zahoor Ahmed Baloch on Wednesday started crackdown against quack doctors and sealed two clinics for selling illegal drugs.

In response to the public complaints, AC Duki, Zahoor Ahmed Baloch, District Health Officer Dr. Muhammad Rafiq Baloch and Tehsilard Sardar Abdul Razaq Dummer inspected various clinics, medical stores and laboratories.

The AC warned the medical store owners to provide necessary documents and renew their certificates in given time.

He also sealed two clinics for poor sanitation and selling illegal drugs during operation.

He said that the administration would continue to monitor and take strict action against violators to protect public health.

Neglect of duty: Two hospital staff suspended in Duki

DUKI: Deputy Commissioner Kaleemullah Kakar took swift action against the negligence of hospital staff in Duki, suspending two paramedical employees for refusing to treat an injured child.

The child was brought to the hospital with an injured foot, but the staff refused to dress the wound. The child's father was forced to purchase the necessary medical supplies from a private store, yet the hospital staff still failed to provide treatment.

Upon learning of the incident, DC Kakar immediately suspended Amir Mahmood and Deen Muhammad, two paramedical staff members, and ordered an inquiry into the matter. The DC warned that negligence, carelessness, and absenteeism will not be tolerated and strict action will be taken against those responsible.

This incident highlights the need for greater accountability and attention to patient care in public healthcare facilities.

Serious steps... Continued on page 2

He asked the office bearers of Press Club to prepare their comprehensive suggestions so as to put them before the government.

He assured that he would speak to the Chief Minister for resolving the issues of journalists.

He said that the media persons would be provided relief to the media persons martyred and injured in line of duties while effectively using the journalists welfare fund.

Besides, the Chief Minister would be requested especially to provide facilities in the Media Academy so as to launch classes in the Media Academy and impart best training to the students of journalism.

PTI challenges Election Act (Amend. Bill) 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Wednesday moved a petition in the Supreme Court of Pakistan challenging the Election Act Amendment Bill 2024.

The petition has been moved by PTI's Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan which requested the top court to annul the recent amendments.

The petition is moved under Article 184/3 of the constitution through the lawyer Salman Akram Raja. The Federation and Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) have been named as

respondents in the case.

The PTI has adopted the stance that the amendments should be declared as unconstitutional and illegal, and the ECP should be immediately stopped from allotting reserved seats to other political parties.

It prayed the court to order allotment of reserved seats for women and non-Muslims to PTI as it was the right of petitioner political party after the judgment dated July 12, adding that the party has submitted the lists of candidates to the ECP.

Cultural evening organized by Balochistan Culture Deptt to celebrate Independence Day

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan Culture Department organized a cultural evening at a local hotel to celebrate Independence Day. The event was attended by Secretary Culture and Tourism, Archaeology, Balochistan, Noor Muhammad Jogezi, Secretary Secondary Education, Saleh Nasser, Director Culture, Manzoor Ahmed, Deputy Director, Dawood Train, and DG Khana-e-

Farhang, Abu al-Hassan.

The program featured renowned singers from the province, who performed beautiful songs related to independence. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Secretary Noor Muhammad Jogezi, who appreciated the participants and guests for their presence. The cultural evening was a part of the celebrations to commemorate the 78th Independence Day of Pakistan.

Govt. to establish independent body to regulate drug prices

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government has taken a significant step towards regulating drug prices in the country. A committee formed to make recommendations for determining drug prices has proposed the establishment of an independent body to oversee the process.

The proposal was discussed in a meeting chaired by Minister of Law Azam Tariq, who emphasized the need for an independent and transparent approach to drug price regulation. The committee considered a proposal to form an independent body under the

supervision of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) to determine drug prices.

The meeting also discussed the separation of regulation and price determination as two distinct domains. Minister Tariq stressed the importance of ensuring representation from all provinces in the independent body. The proposal is aimed at addressing concerns over high drug prices in Pakistan and ensuring that essential medicines are available to citizens at affordable rates. The government is expected to take a final decision on the proposal in the coming weeks.

28th CNS Open Golf C'ship tees off at Karachi Golf Club

Independent Report

KARACHI: The Opening Ceremony and Media Brief of 28th Chief of the Naval Staff Open Golf Championship, scheduled from 08 Aug 24 to 11 Aug 24, was held at the picturesque Karachi Golf Club (KGC).

Commander Karachi, Rear Admiral Muhammad Saleem graced the occasion as Chief Guest and inaugurated the championship. During the media brief, Patron Pakistan Navy Golf (South), Cdre Rashid Mahmood Sheikh ap-

prised the audience on salients of championship and its conduct in various categories.

The Golf Championship will be played in Professionals, Senior Professionals, Junior Professionals, Amateurs, Seniors, Veterans, Ladies Juniors and Pro Amateurs categories. The media was also briefed on the awards and cash prizes in various categories of the championship. A special prize of 'Toyota Fortuner' will be awarded to the player scoring 'Hole in One'.

Planning minister inaugurates two PSDP projects on emerging technologies

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday inaugurated two projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) on Emerging Technologies.

The projects, named Common Criteria Pakistan and Quantum Communication, were launched in the presence of senior officials from the Ministries of Defense, Information Technology and Telecommunications, and Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, a news release said.

He appreciated the efforts of the team that made the projects a reality and expressed satisfaction over the self-sustainability models

of both projects in the longer term.

In his address during the inauguration ceremony, Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the technological advancements achieved since the establishment of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and the first IT policy of Pakistan under Vision 2010.

He noted the successful issuance of 3G and 4G licenses, the establishment of several National Centers including the National Centre for Artificial Intelligence, National Centre for Cyber Security, National Centre for Big Data and Cloud Computing, National Centre for Automation Robotics, and National Centre for Satellite and GIS Technology in previous

governments.

The minister emphasized that these centers have contributed to the country's progress by providing high-quality human resources, fostering startups, and enhancing scientific and technological skills. He highlighted the introduction of four new centers focusing on Nanotechnology, Quantum Computing, New Manufacturing Technologies, and Brand Development, underscoring the critical role of modern technology in national development.

Looking ahead, Ahsan Iqbal mentioned that in just twenty-four years, both Pakistan and its neighbouring country would celebrate their 100th Independence Day.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Ali Jattak, Mir Ziaullah Lango, Parliamentary Secretary Mir Asghar Ali Rind, Mir Barkat Ali Rind, Sanjay Kumar, MPA Asghar Tareen and MNA Mian Khan Bugti talking holding meeting.

Three Pakistani fishermen released from Yemeni prison after 16 years, return home

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: In a heartwarming reunion, three Pakistani fishermen who were imprisoned in Yemen for 16 years have returned home, thanks to the efforts of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Link Office in Muscat, Oman.

Saleem and Imam Bakhsh, both from Karachi, and Khudod from Gwadar,

were arrested in 2008 for illegally entering Yemen's territorial waters while fishing. They were released last night and have been reunited with their loved ones in Pakistan.

The FIA Link Office in Muscat, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Yemen, worked tirelessly to secure their re-

lease. The spokesperson for the FIA confirmed the news, highlighting the agency's commitment to helping Pakistani citizens in distress abroad. The return of the three fishermen marks a significant success for the FIA and its international partners, and is a testament to the power of collaboration and diplomacy in resolving complex cases.

ADC reviews arrangements for Independence Day celebrations

Independent Report

QUETTA: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Siraj Karim Baloch on Wednesday chaired a meeting to review preparations of the Independence Day programs on the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Lasbala Humira Baloch at DC office.

It was decided in the meeting that all government buildings across the district would be illuminated with lights, the national flag would be hoisted on the buildings.

Competitions of sports events would be organized at the district headquarters Uthal in connection of Independence Day.

No tourist company or individual allotted land in Neelum Valley

Ind Kashmir Desk

MUZAFFARABAD: The spokesperson for the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Forestry Department has clarified that no tourist company or individual has been allotted land in the Neelum Valley for tourism purposes. He stated that false and baseless reports are being spread on social media regarding the allocation of land.

The Forestry Department has not transferred any state land to any tourist company for tourism purposes this year. In 2022, 30 kanals of state land were transferred to defense institutions for public interest and national defense purposes, and in exchange, the Revenue Department gave 30 kanals of land to the Forestry Department. However, no land has been allotted to anyone for tourism purposes this year.

The spokesperson termed the propaganda in this regard as baseless and contrary to facts.

AC Sibi inaugurates monsoon plantation campaign

Independent Report

SIBI: Assistant Commissioner Sibi, Jarullah Kakar, launched the monsoon plantation campaign by planting saplings in the Assistant Commissioner's house and office. Speaking on the occasion, he announced that over 400 saplings will be planted in Levies check posts and police stations during the campaign.

Kakar emphasized that planting trees is a national duty and social responsibility, urging citizens to actively participate in the campaign and take care of the trees. He stressed the importance of collective efforts to make the plantation drive a success.



ISLAMABAD: Female football players of Highlanders WFC vs Hazara Quetta WFC teams in action during the National Women's Football Club Championship 2024 Final Round at Sports Complex.

Protest against false case against HRPF Central President in Sakrand

By Rajkumar

SAKRAND: A protest was held in front of the Sakrand Press Club against the registration of a false case against the Central President of the Human Rights Protection Forum (HRPF), Mehboob Chang, by SHO Kot Laloo Ghulam Abbas Kalhori.

Maghsi, Imam Bakhsh Sial, Manzoor Ali Jatoi, and Ziaur Rehman Khoso, alleged that the SHO had filed a false case against Mehboob Chang to harass him. They said that a month ago, the Central President had raised his voice against the police raid on the village of Rahmatullah Chang, where five women were abducted and mistreated.

Commissioner Zhob lays foundation stone of District Residential Complex

QUETTA (APP): Commissioner Zhob Division Mr. Tariqur Rehman laid the foundation stone of District Residential Complex (GOR Concept) Zhob District, (Phase-I) on Wednesday.

On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Zhob Mehboob Ahmed was also present.

This project will be executed by Communication & Work (C&W) Department.

Commissioner Zhob was briefed about the

project by departmental officers saying that the entire project is spread over 105 acres, and the current phase includes the construction of 7 villas at DC House Zoo. Further water supply scheme road and boundary wall are also part of the scheme. Commissioner Zhob then visited and inspected the ongoing construction work at CTD Complex Zhob. C&W staff briefed the various components of the project and briefed the issues.

NOTICES FOR INVITATION TENDER

The Chief Officer District Council Naseerabad, invites sealed percentage rate tender based on composite schedule of rate 2023, Government of Balochistan amended up-to date from interested contractor / firms for the work listed below: Earnest Money 60,000 & Time limit 30 June 2025 for each work.

Sl#	Name of Schemes	E/Amount
01	Provision of Solar Street Lights with Pole Chatter, Provision of Solar Langhar Khana Hindu Mandir Naseerabad District Naseerabad (Package-20) TSE-242508513963	30,00,000/-

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: (a) The bidder must have completed 03 assignments of similar nature of work in last 3 years. (b) Turnover of at least PKR.30 Hundred Thousands in last three years showing financial capacity of the firm. (c) Registration with relevant taxation departments. Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Call Deposit or Bank Guarantee of amount specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed. The Tender Fee 1,000 amounting deposited in the name of Chief Officer District Council Naseerabad in the shape of green challan form deposited in head 87653784 District Council Naseerabad in original must be accompanied along with technical proposal, upon payment (non refundable). (The NIT & Bidding Document can also be downloaded from www.bppra.org.pk Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 23-08-2024 during office hours on working days. Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 23-08-2024 till 10.00 AM at the office of the undersigned. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 11.00 AM. Address: Office Of The Chief Officer District Council Naseerabad UNDER FOLLOWING CONDITIONS BIDS WILL BE REJECTED: Conditionally, Electronic and Telegraphic Bids/Tenders. Bids not accompanied by bids security earnest money of 2% in shape of Call Deposit in favour of undersigned. Bids/Tender received after specified date and time. Black listed contractors/firms The procuring Agency (PA) reserves the right to cancel the bidding process at any time.

Chief Officer
District Council Naseerabad

AB No.155/07-08-2024
www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dpr.balochistan

TENDER NOTICE

Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The Assistant Director Local Govt Sibi invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates Tender Fee Rs.2000/- and Bid Security 2% for each work.

S.No	Name of Work's	E/Cost
1	HOME SOLAR SYSTEM IN KHAIRWAH, HUIO MAACHI, WAZEER MAACHI, SANWAL MAACHI, RAILO MIAN KHAN IN DISTRICT SIBI PSDP NO 3918TSE-242508514163	39,637,166
2	HOME SOLAR SYSTEM IN RAILO GULAB, BAILOO, SHAIKH MAHMUDANI, KUBAD BAGHDAR, ALLAH DINA BAGHDAR, KATBAR SHARIF IN DISTRICT SIBI PSDP NO 3876.TSE-242508514143	39,637,166
3	HOME SOLAR SYSTEM IN WAZEERA, GOTH SAIFULLAH DOMKI, DARGAH MIR HASSAN, MUSATALANI, GULLA WERH, TALLI MUHALLAH SULEMANZAI IN DISTRICT SIBI PSDP NO 3849. TSE-242508514123	39,637,166
4	HOME SOLAR SYSTEM IN TUNIA, NIHAL MACHI, GOTH HAL SHAH, GOTH ABDOOL REHMAN MACHI, KHANO, GOTH PEERO IN DISTRICT SIBI PSDP NO 3847. TSE-242508512663	39,637,166

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Eligibility Criteria for bidders may be seen in the Bidding Documents Bidding Procedure: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure (TSE-242508514163, TSE-242508514143, TSE-242508514123, TSE-242508512663) Tender Documents: The Bidding document can be downloaded from www.bppra.gov.pk (free of cost) and the same can also be obtained from the office of the under-signed upon payment of prescribed tender fee. Last Date and Time of Bid Submission 23 August, 2024 at 11:00 AM and will be opened on same day at 12:00 PM. Address: Sibi Phone no: 0811220000 Email: ahmednawazashan@gmail.com

PRQ No.486/07-08-2024
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
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Efforts afoot to empower youth, provide maximum relief to people: Mashhood

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Wednesday said that Pakistan's economy improved under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and the PML-N-led coalition government was making all-out efforts to provide relief to the people.

Addressing a press conference, Rana said the government had reduced the inflation rate and will succeed in overcoming the financial problems soon. He said that the signing of multi-billion-dollar investment projects with China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE and others will create numerous job opportunities for youth in Pakistan. The Chairman reiterated his pledge that the government was committed to empowering youth through several revolutionary initiatives and was taking crucial steps for the betterment of

the youth. He added that technical training will be directly provided to two hundred thousand and indirectly to six to eight hundred thousand youth this year under various skill development programmes as there was a great demand for a skilled workforce abroad. Giving details of the successful maiden visit of the Commonwealth secretary-general Rt Patricia Scotland to Pakistan, Mashhood said that several agreements and memoran-

dums of understanding were signed. He said that signing free training of Pakistani youth in the top eight streams of Artificial Intelligence in collaboration with Commonwealth Forum and Intel Corporation would create numerous jobs and earning opportunities for Pakistan which would be formally launched by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on International Day of Youth on August 12.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting regarding establishment of Safari Park.



ISLAMABAD: Additional secretary (Asia Pacific) MoFA, Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Chairman ASEAN Committee (ACI) and High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam, Col. (Retd) Pengiran Haji Kamal Bashah Bin Pengiran Haji Ahmed and others cutting the cake during celebration of the 57th Asian Day at ISSI on the occasion of Roundtable Discussion titled "Pakistan and ASEAN: A growing Partnership, in the Federal Capital."

Director PDMA Punjab assures prompt action on rain emergencies, damaged buildings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Hamidullah Malik Wednesday assured that all relevant departments, divisional, and district administrations are maintaining close coordination to effectively address emergency situations arising from rain incidents and reconstruction of damaged buildings that pose a danger to the public. Talking to PTV news channel, he said with a proactive approach, the authorities are working together to mitigate the impact of rain-related disasters and ensuring the safety

of citizens. The PDMA has already alerted all rescue services, including machinery and personnel from Rescue 1122, to be ready for deployment, adding, the authority has urged citizens to exercise caution and stay away from electric poles and hanging wires, as well as avoid dirty and dilapidated buildings during the monsoon season. PDMA Director Hamidullah Malik emphasized the importance of timely measures to protect human lives, stating that 24-hour monitoring is being conducted in both provincial and district control

rooms. Malik encouraged collaboration with other PDMA institutions, stressing that a unified approach is crucial in mitigating the impact of rain-related disasters. Replying a query, he assured that the authority is fully prepared to respond to any situation, with all necessary resources and personnel on standby. In addition to its emergency response efforts, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has also taken proactive measures to mitigate the impact of heavy rainfall on high-risk buildings and urban flooding.

MoU signed to introduce foreign language training in ICT Schools

ISLAMABAD (APP): A landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on Wednesday between the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE), National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTEC), and National University of Modern Languages (NUML). This agreement paves the way for introducing foreign language training in selected schools of Islamabad. The signing ceremony was graced by Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training, Dr.

Khalid Maqbool, Rector NUML and Secretary Federal Directorate of Education. As per the MoU, Six-month foreign language course will be imparted to the students of FDE and certificates will be given upon the completion of courses. The selected schools in Islamabad will participate in the language courses. This collaboration between FDE, NAVTEC, and NUML aims to equip students with foreign language skills, enhancing their global prospects and fostering cultural understanding.

Safi flays India's use of pellet guns in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ghulam Mohammad Safi, convener of All Parties Hurriyat Conference-AJK chapter, has strongly condemned India's use of pellet guns in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), stating that it was prohibited globally and violated international laws. Addressing a cultural, organized by Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) in connection with Kashmir, Safi emphasized, "Thousands of children have lost their sight due to pellet gun injuries and that India's actions have crossed all limits of oppression." He questioned India's motives, saying, "It knows Kashmiri children do not support India and instead want to sacrifice themselves for Pakistan."



ISLAMABAD: Students boarding pink bus on her way at a road in the Federal Capital, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training notified 10 routes for the 'Pink Bus Service' - a fleet of 20 buses to facilitate female students, teachers and other women commuting from rural to urban areas.

Dr Abbas warns Severe penalties for plastic bag ban violators, exposes hidden dangers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director of the Laboratory and National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) at the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak EPA), Ministry of Climate Change Dr. Zaigham Abbas emphasized public for reducing plastic use to promote a healthier ecosystem and issued a stern warning to those violating the ban on single-use plastic bags in Islamabad. Dr. Zaigham Abbas talking in a Radio Pakistan's program sounded the alarm

that plastic addiction is pushing us to the brink of ecological disaster where we must declare a war on plastic waste and need to take immediate action to reduce its use, and safeguard our environment. "Our planet's future depends on it, he said, adding, "Let us join forces to prevent a catastrophe and create a sustainable future for Pakistan. Dr. Zaigham Abbas said that he had launched a massive public awareness campaign to educate citizens about the devastating impact of polythene bags on our environment.

Powerful blast reported near police vehicle at Warsak Road

ISLAMABAD (APP): A powerful explosion has been reported near a police vehicle on Warsak Road Peshawar on Wednesday afternoon. According to SP Arshad Khan, rescue and relief teams have been dispatched to the site following the report. No information on casualties has been confirmed yet, he added. Security forces and law enforcement agencies are also arriving at the location.

Naqvi approves grant of 200-acres for Zoo, Safari park project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday approved a grand project of 200-acres of international standard zoo and a safari park in Islamabad, set to house 5,000 animals and birds from around the world. He said that it would be a grand project to establish Pakistan's first international standard zoo and safari park in Islamabad where 200-acre facility will be home to 5,000 animals and birds, with 2,000 to be introduced in the first phase.

The minister directed the registration of the zoo and safari park with the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and instructed officials to finalize all matters related to the project swiftly. The foundation stone of the project is expected to be laid down in October. The project, reviewed in a meeting chaired by Minister Naqvi at the CDA headquarters, aims to increase tourism in Islamabad and provide world-class recreational facilities to citizens. Chairman CDA Mohammad Ali Randhawa briefed the meeting on the project's details.

This development marks a significant step towards enhancing Islamabad's recreational infrastructure and promoting tourism in the capital city.

Pakistan embassy observes Youm-e-Istehsal in Ottawa

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan High Commission in Ottawa and its three Consulates in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver observed "Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir" to commemorate the fifth anniversary of India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 05, 2019. On this day India's BJP-RSS government emerged the special constitutional status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) by revoking Article 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution, a press release issued on Wednesday said. Photographic exhibitions were organized to express solidarity with Kashmiris in the face of Indian atrocities which were attended by a large number of audience. Additionally, a

documentary illustrating the crimes committed in IIOJK, was unveiled, granting attendees a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by the Kashmiris. In a video message on this occasion, the Acting High Commissioner Faisal Kakar said, "the illegal and unilateral actions of Modi government have opened a new chapter in the tortured history of the occupied territory. The gross and systematic human rights violations committed with impunity by 9 lac Indian occupation forces have escalated since 2019."

Kakar reiterated, "India is trying to consolidate the occupation and impose what it ominously refers as 'Final Solution' to the occupied territory through a mix of legal, administrative,

NCC Education UK, IBCC join hands to enhance educational standards in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): NCC Education UK and the Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC) Pakistan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on enhancing educational standards in Pakistan. The MoU was signed in Manchester, UK, marking a significant step towards strengthening educational ties and supporting the strategic goals of Pakistan's educational regulatory frameworks.

This partnership aims to empower Pakistani students by enhancing their skills and knowledge through the NCC Education Level 3 International Foundation Diploma for Higher Education Studies. In addition, the agreement includes provisions for technical assistance and ex-

pert consultation to support the initiatives of Pakistani regulatory authorities. The collaboration will also involve training delegations from local educational boards in Pakistan to raise the quality standards of local education, as well as adopting best practices in educational methodologies and regulatory frameworks.

Dr. Ghulam Ali Mallah, Executive Director of IBCC Pakistan in this important initiative. This partnership will allow us to share our expertise and resources to help elevate the educational standards in Pakistan. We are committed to supporting IBCC in its mission to enhance educational opportunities and foster academic excellence for Pakistani students. Together, we aim to create pathways for students to achieve their academic and career aspirations."

us in adopting global best practices in educational standards and methodologies. We are committed to raising the bar for education in Pakistan, and this partnership is a testament to that commitment. Prof. Peter Ford, Chairman of NCC Education, added: "We are thrilled to collaborate with IBCC Pakistan in this important initiative. This partnership will allow us to share our expertise and resources to help elevate the educational standards in Pakistan. We are committed to supporting IBCC in its mission to enhance educational opportunities and foster academic excellence for Pakistani students. Together, we aim to create pathways for students to achieve their academic and career aspirations."



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan Engr Amir Muqam chairing a meeting regarding Gilgit Baltistan.

Resolving GB's issues federal govt's top priority: Engr Amir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Engr. Amir Muqam, on Wednesday said addressing the issues of Gilgit-Baltistan was a top priority for the federal government and assured to apply their resources to advance growth and well-being in the region. Minister Muqam chairing a high-level meeting at the Gilgit-Baltistan Council highlighted the region's vast potential to emerge as a premier global tourist destination. Additionally, he pointed out the

area's rich mineral resources and hydropower capabilities, vowing to harness these assets for regional development. Amir Muqam assured that issues faced by Gilgit-Baltistan's traders would be resolved amicably in accordance with existing rules and laws, and that all stakeholders would be kept informed and involved. The Federal Minister also promised that the federal government would provide substantial relief to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. He announced that the issue of wheat provision had been addressed, with a sub-

sidy on wheat now in place. The meeting was attended by Secretary Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, Joint Secretary of the Gilgit-Baltistan Council, and representatives from the GB Importers and Exporters Association and GB Chambers. Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Abrar Ahmad Mirza, Home Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan, Secretary Law GB, and a representative from the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) also participated in the meeting virtually.

OWFDs providing services 24/7 at all Airports to Overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) had established One Window Facilitation Desks (OWFDs) at all International Airports of the country and providing the services to Overseas Pakistanis. An official source told APP here on Wednesday, he said that OWFDs are located at each terminal (International arrival/departure) for the assistance of overseas Pakistani passenger's round the clock. Courteous and trained officials deputized at OWFDs to ensure provision of high quality of facilitation and assistance to overseas Pakistanis. Existing infrastructure at OWFDs has been upgraded. Besides additional facilities, the service delivery at facilitation counters at various airports has also been improved with added staff/services. To a questioned he said that OWFDs providing various services includ-

ing necessary assistance to the overseas Pakistanis at the time of arrival and departure. Coordination among the various agencies/departments functioning at the airport to ensure smooth arrival and departure of overseas Pakistani passengers. Special assistance to overseas Pakistanis who are physically challenged, senior citizen and passengers not maintaining good health. Assistance in lost and found baggage and for improvement in services/complaints at airports, these counters are contacted. Necessary guidance is also provided to overseas Pakistanis for their connecting flights and travel advisory for their destinations within Pakistan. He said that information material about OPF and its projects/schemes at all international arrival/departure lounges.

NUST awards high performing researchers, innovators

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) conferred the Best Researcher and Innovator Awards (BRAIA) upon the high-performing researchers and innovators on Wednesday. The distinguished awardees demonstrated exceptional capabilities in securing national and international funding, conducting cutting-edge research, producing high-quality publications, and creating impactful inventions during the academic year 2022-23. Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui graced the event as chief guest and presented cash prizes and certificates to 80 awardees in 108 different categories. Speaking to the Award holders and faculty members as chief guest, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said it was a moment of celebration and triumph for NUST. Lauding the leadership role of NUST in nurturing the best minds, addressing socio-economic challenges.

Trader delegation visits Traffic Headquarters; meets CTO Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a delegation of trade representatives from the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries met with Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad. The delegation appreciated the performance of

Virk about the traffic issues faced in commercial centers. The Chief Traffic Officer immediately issued directives to resolve the traders' issues. The delegation appreciated the performance of



Muhammad Sarfraz Virk at the Traffic Headquarters Faizabad.

ICT admin swiftly responds to rains, ensures smooth drainage

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration officials sprang into action during the recent rains, ensuring smooth drainage and monitoring potential flood zones. "Drainage work has been completed across various areas and roads in the Federal Capital," said the spokesman of ICT administration. During the rain, Assistant Commissioners and Magistrates were on the ground, overseeing the situation, he added. Teams from the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Metropolitan

Corporation Islamabad (MCI) also working diligently. They used dewatering pumps to clear water from different areas. On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, emphasized the strict monitoring of all drains to prevent any flooding. The ICT administration teams reached all low-lying areas, ensuring proper drainage. The DC informed that despite ongoing highway construction, the traffic flow had remained unaffected.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson BISP, meets Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development.

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Another overture

Along with criticising India for its flawed approach in held Kashmir to mark Youm-i-Istehsal on Monday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif used the occasion to make a fresh peace overture to New Delhi.

Aug 5 marks the date in 2019 when India revoked held Kashmir's special constitutional status, in effect annexing the territory despite its disputed status as per international consensus. The prime minister observed that a peaceful solution was required to settle the Kashmir question, while adding that "durable peace in South Asia" depended on the resolution of this 77-year-old dispute. Of course, settling the Kashmir issue at the negotiating table — with the participation of Pakistan, India and the Kashmiris — could set in motion the process of normalisation in the subcontinent, but only if New Delhi is interested in pursuing peace.

Unfortunately, there has been little indication that India is ready to mend fences with Pakistan. Instead, along with earlier lukewarm felicitations exchanged by both sides, India has been increasingly using the overplayed 'terrorism' card to stall any chances of dialogue with Pakistan. Last month, while attending an event to mark the Kargil conflict, Indian PM Narendra Modi used inflammatory language targeted at this country, accusing Pakistan of fomenting unrest in the region through proxy groups. If India continues to use such language, peace in the region will remain a remote possibility. But Mr Sharif has done the right thing by continuing to invite India to talk out all outstanding issues. India should take up this offer for an improved geopolitical atmosphere in the subcontinent.

While the resumption of direct peace talks anytime soon is unlikely, both states can start with confidence-building measures. For example, the respective high commissioners have been absent from both capitals since 2019, which is unprecedented during peacetime. Restoring both missions to their full diplomatic strength can be a starting point for rebuilding better ties. Moreover, backchannel dialogue can be initiated, even if the current focus of this engagement is 'talks about talks'.

Pakistan is due to host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Heads of Government meeting in October. India is also part of this multi-lateral body and should send a high-level delegation to the event. The point is that engagement is the only way that mistrust between Islamabad and Delhi can be overcome. India keeps playing the same tune, harping on about 'terrorism', but Pakistan also has significant evidence linking India to malign activities on its soil.

Therefore, both states can remain locked in this perpetual cycle of blame and retribution, or turn a new leaf and look to the future. While Mr Modi's ideological comrades in the Sangh will scowl at the very thought of peace with Pakistan, the Indian leadership should rise above parochialism and accept Islamabad's dialogue offer.

Zahid Hussain

People's power has toppled one more authoritarian regime. Another bloody day in Bangladesh ended in triumph for the uprising in that country. Defying a nationwide curfew, hundreds of thousands of people came out onto the streets, bringing an end to prime minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed's back-to-back 15-year rule. The military has now taken charge, putting in place an interim administration. But can this end the political turmoil that has shaken the South Asian nation? The situation continues to unfold.

It all started with protests by students against a controversial job quota system, which soon turned into a mass movement against a regime that, under Hasina Wajed, had secured a fourth straight term in office a few months ago through a controversial electoral exercise. The government had virtually established a one-party system, eliminating the opposition from the political scene. The enforcement of draconian laws had turned Bangladesh into an authoritarian state.

But student protests broke the fear. The use of coercive power by the administration to crush the demonstrations exacerbated the anger. Hundreds of protesters were killed by the security forces, turning the streets into battlegrounds. Bangladesh has not witnessed such violence in its over 50-year history as a state. The protests broke the myth of the Hasina Wajed government's invincibility.

Within weeks, it turned into a mass uprising, breaking the hold of an authoritarian regime. It united all kinds of opposition forces that had been suppressed by the state.

The events of the past weeks also exposed the fault lines in the system. It was an implosion waiting to happen. It just needed a trigger, which was provided by the student protests. The allocation of 30 per cent of government jobs to the families of 'freedom fighters' had been abolished following protests in 2018, but was restored this year. It was seen as a move to pack state institutions with Awami League loyalists.

It was not just the political repression and

worsening human rights situation, but also the rising cost of living and growing unemployment among the youth that fuelled the unrest. Not surprisingly, Gen Z has been at the vanguard of the movement that ultimately led Hasina Wajed to step down and flee the country.

Although Bangladesh has been one of the fastest-growing economies in the region over the past many years, the gap between the haves and have-nots has also widened there. Inflation, which touched double digits in recent months, has also fuelled discontent. All this sparked a powerful uprising against the regime.

Hasina Wajed entered politics after the assassination of her father and founder of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, in a military coup in 1975. She lived in exile in India for several years before returning to the country in 1981. She first became prime minister after her Awami League party swept the elections in 1996. But she lost the next election to her rival, Khaleda Zia. The two women dominated Bangladesh politics for several years.

Hasina won the 2008 elections, which took place after two years of a military-backed 'technocratic government'. This phase marked her authoritarian grip over power. She jailed her opponents, including her main rival, Khaleda Zia. Her government executed many opposition leaders after dubious trials for being 'collaborators' during Bangladesh's war of independence.

Her party won four successive elections, all marred by allegations of rigging. The last elections held in January this year were boycotted by the main opposition parties. It reportedly saw the lowest turnout of voters in the country's history. Human Rights Watch said the country's prisons were full of opposition activists arrested in a crackdown before the elections.

With virtually no presence of the opposition parties in parliament, it paved the way for a one-party system. The recent elections marked the beginning of the downfall of Hasina Wajed's rule. What happened in Dhaka this week, with angry mobs ransacking the former prime

minister's residence and destroying statues of Mujibur Rehman, was a manifestation of the public rage against authoritarianism. The spectacle of uncontrolled mobs ruling the streets in the absence of any leadership has been alarming.

Notwithstanding the destruction of the democratic process, Bangladesh saw unprecedented economic growth during her rule. From a basket case, Bangladesh emerged as a model for Third World countries. The country also fared well in human development indicators. Yet, the economic slowdown of recent months and spiralling inflation raised questions about medium- and long-term economic prospects, adding to the social and political unrest.

Hasina Wajed's rule saw Dhaka becoming very close to New Delhi. Her party's association with it goes back to India's role in the 1971 war. Hasina Wajed's exile in India after the assassination of her father also brought her closer to the Indian leadership. But her pro-Indian stance drew criticism from the opposition, particularly the

religious parties. In her ouster, New Delhi has lost a close regional ally.

The Bangladesh army, which has now taken control of the country, has a long history of coups. It had taken a back seat over the past 15 years or supported the Hasina Wajed government, but the current power vacuum pulled it into the role of arbiter. It will not be possible to impose military rule in the country now. It is highly doubtful that the people who fought against authoritarian rule by a political party will accept military dictatorship.

Another reason deterring a military takeover is the expected reaction from the international community, particularly the UN. Bangladesh is among the top contributors to UN peacekeeping forces. There's a clear indication that the country could lose that position in case of a military takeover. It is now becoming increasingly clear that the military will back an interim government comprising technocrats. However, it remains to be seen if such an arrangement can work in the highly volatile situation. -- Courtesy Dawn

Rafia Zakaria

With every year that passes, there are fewer and fewer people who remember a time before social media. In those bygone days, gossip was largely transmitted via people. Busybodies would dish the dirt on one family for the benefit of another, and spoils of speculation and wonder would be unraveled into tangled threads of truths and lies.

I mention this only because the human penchant for judging the lives of others and comparing them, consciously or subconsciously, with one's own has existed for just as long as humans have themselves.

It is precisely this human inclination for knowing about other people's lives that has made social media the wildfire it has become. In the span of a decade or so, our darker traits, such as bragging and making an open exhibition of our lives, have been turned by us into an industry. Suddenly, everyone — from a housewife in Lahore to a teenager in Toronto — has become a

curator of his or her own life and is addicted to sharing all the details.

In this sort of sharing, they reveal not only what they wish to show but also other information. Apps like Facebook and Instagram track not just what is visible to others, but also what is being watched, what is being commented on, what is shown only to a small circle, and what is being shown to everyone.

In this way, the human inclination to peer into the lives of others has been transformed into a business model, as all that data about what people do online can be mined to reveal far more about the person than what the individual himself knows.

In this way, hundreds of millions of people around the world have been converted to social media addicts. Many of them wake up each day and check social media accounts before they check on their children or their spouse or before they brush their teeth or wash their face. Even as social media gets older, and the

novelty of likes and dislikes wears off, people still tune in to see what is going on with friends, who is doing well or looking good, who is enjoying life, and who is silent (which, in the social media equation, simply suggests sadness).

In sum, social media has become a habit, and voyeurism, the act of peering into other people's lives, has become inextricably tied to our own daily routines. For those who are more ardently addicted, the value of an event or an act is assessed not in terms of the event but the attention it promises to garner on social media and the envy or admiration it may arouse in others.

Naturally, as social media has grown, so have appetites, and it isn't just enough to look at what your friend from college or your first cousin in Denmark is doing. Enter the professional content creators who have stepped in to fill the gap. Professional YouTubers and TikTokers now offer up their entire lives for public consumption. All of

them are slaves to the mighty algorithm, that can serve their videos about what they shopped for and what they bought or how they fought with a friend and then how they made up, to thousands of viewers. These content creators broadcast their intimate lives in the hope that their lives will be interesting enough for the YouTube algorithm to serve them to an ever-larger number of viewers.

Becoming a YouTube or TikTok creator appeals to Pakistanis. This is not only because we are by nature a voyeuristic society, given to gossip and judgement as a means of social control. It is also because YouTube and TikTok allow even Pakistani creators to monetise their accounts and get paid in US dollars. The current high exchange rates mean that even though the payouts per view are just a few cents, they add up to significant amounts in Pakistani currency. It is also unclear whether these creators report these amounts as income, and if they are being taxed as

heavily as someone earning through conventional means. In a nutshell, becoming a content creator is a fruitful get-rich-quick scheme in the Pakistani context.

Unsurprisingly, many Pakistani celebrities and their progeny have got into the act. Nearly all of them broadcast their lives on some form of social media and cross-pollinate and collaborate with each other to maximise their views. All of them provide viewers, particularly very committed ones, the opportunity to comment on their daily productions. Before long, these content creators — whether or not they are celebrities — realise that they are enslaved to the algorithm that promotes them and the viewers who sometimes approve of the content but often criticise them.

One routine occurrence on nearly every YouTube vlog is the nervous breakdown that content creators have when they realise that getting rich quick comes at the cost of losing one's privacy and throwing one's intimate life and its

content to the judgement of any viewer who cares to leave a comment. Then there are tears, allegations of unfairness, and the like.

Watching other people's lives is entertainment for those who watch this content. Being other people's entertainment is, understandably, not that entertaining. The whole equation is a chilling peek into the cerebral economies of the future, where humans are tempted to expose themselves and then left addicted to the number of views.

It is a strange and peculiar means of mind control, where both those that expose and those that judge appear to be unaware of their own status as puppets of algorithms. What begins as gossip and curiosity about the lives of others seeps slowly into controlling one's own life and the assessment of whether it is worthy or valuable. The next time you log into someone else's life to escape your own, it is worth mulling over the cost of participating in this economy of voyeurism.

Economy of voyeurism

Diplomacy deficit

Mahir Ali

Paeans to Joe Biden's diplomatic skills have been flowing since the fruition of a prisoner exchange between Russia and the West. The deal apparently took years to negotiate.

From a Western point of view, the consequences are commendable. It's easy to accept that the American journalist, a few other Westerners, and the small bunch of Russian dissidents who were liberated ought never to have been incarcerated.

But where do those diplomatic skills vanish when it comes to negotiating an end to the war of attrition between Russia and Ukraine? Sure, Vladimir Putin is the culprit insofar as he launched the war, and one could argue endlessly about the extent of US/Nato/EU provocation. But the point is to end the hostilities, and in this context the US has served more as a hindrance than a facilitator.

Its role in the Middle East follows an equally naked trajectory of near blind support for Israel and its actions, including assassinations, combined with blanket assurances of assistance to the Zionist regime. Israel's fatal attacks against Hamas' political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and Hezbollah commander Fuad Shkur in Beirut came shortly after a genocidal maniac called Benjamin Netanyahu received 58 standing ovations during the Israeli prime minister's address to the US Congress. Netanyahu spouted a stream of nonsense, such as condemning American agitators against his genocide — many of them young Jews — as agents of Iran.

The US, meanwhile, has deployed more warships to coordinate Israel's 'defence' in the event of attacks from Iran, Lebanon or elsewhere. This week,

the US Central Command chief visited Israel to discuss "joint preparations", and the US defence secretary, according to the Pentagon, "has ordered adjustments to US military posture designed to ... increase support for the defence of Israel".

It is precisely this kind of American posturing that condemns the world to endless strife while contributing to the coffers of the military-industrial complex. Israel has for ages demonstrated its proficiency as the most effective terrorist state anywhere on earth, yet has never featured on any list of sponsors of terrorism. Israel's crimes against humanity have stood out since 1948, yet it has got an easy pass from the self-ordained upholders of the global conscience, thanks in part to the abhorrent atrocities perpetrated against European Jews by the Nazi state.

There have been echoes of Nazism ever since, not least in Bangladesh in the run-up to its independence in 1971. Hasina Wajed's flight to India on Monday was a dramatic and welcome denouement, but it does not clarify what the future holds. It's not hard to justify the uprising against her authoritarian misrule, but reports of concomitant atrocities against Hindu communities are alarming, and the future of the Rohingya refugees from neighbouring Myanmar, that Bangladesh has reluctantly accommodated, rests in the balance.

Sudan's predicament is even worse. Unlike Bangladesh, it faces a repeat of both the Darfur genocide a couple of decades ago and the famine of 1984. A conflict between the Sudanese armed forces and the Rapid Support Forces — an outgrowth of the Janjaweed militia that terrorised Darfur — followed a falling out between the generals who

aborted their nation's drift towards democracy after the toppling of Omar al-Bashir in 2019.

That was a welcome development, but Sudan's descent into a deadly crisis should serve as a warning to Bangladesh — just as the Awami League's premature jubilation after the January elections should remind Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro that manipulation may not pay off, and that his threat to 'pulverise' his opponents on the streets (who include many former Chavistas) might seriously backfire. It is incredibly dumb for the US to recognise Maduro's opponent as the legitimate president, especially since this kind of absurdity came a cropper just a few years ago. But if Maduro is truly a disciple of Hugo Chávez, he should recognise that his time is up.

Far away in the UK, Keir Starmer has almost echoed Maduro in his threats against the 'far-right thugs' who have wreaked havoc across cities in England in the wake of the horrific attack on young girls in Southport. It was an outrage, but one that involved neither an 'illegal immigrant' nor a Muslim. That did not deter fascist elements from unleashing violence against libraries, mosques and asylum-seeker hotels. The law-and-order response from the new Labour government might stifle the symptoms, but appears to ignore its causes.

Almost a century ago, Antonio Gramsci announced from an Italian prison something along the lines of 'the old world is dying and the new world struggles to be born: now is the time of monsters'. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris shake hands with the monsters. Donald Trump is determined to be one himself. -- Courtesy Dawn

Eco-anxiety truths

Muhammad Hassan Dajana

Climate anxiety plagues minds and hearts globally, creating a silent, inner storm. The constant stream of news about approaching climate catastrophes fuels emotional turmoil. Questions — "what will happen to the world?", "how can we stop environmental degradation?" — haunt us but remain unanswered. Climate anxiety is a genuine and increasingly pervasive problem that impacts us at multiple levels.

According to psychologist Melanie Klein's paradigm, climate anxiety has two forms: first, depressive anxiety, involving loss, regret and dependency controlled by neurotic defences, and second, paranoid-schizoid anxiety, involving persecution and feelings of annihilation, fought by denial, projection and splitting.

Individuals often distance themselves from impending news either by emotionally shutting down or becoming engrossed in tasks to ignore broader societal contexts — responses can lead to demotivation, disengagement and subpar performance, accompanied by sadness and frustration. This turmoil intersects with mental health issues: depression, panic attacks and PTSD. Affective neuroscience highlights how fear of external threat and loss precipitates climate anxiety, evoking reactions similar to those experienced during the pandemic.

Climate anxiety affects individuals across demographics. Some time back, a global survey in *The Lancet* of 10,000 young people aged 16 to 25 years in 10 countries, revealed alarming figures: 59 per cent expressed extreme worry about climate change accompanied by

sadness, anxiety and powerlessness, and over 45pc said it impacted daily life and had raised existential questions about a warming planet.

Additionally, "extreme and slow-moving" weather events contribute to intimate partner violence, substance abuse and suicidal tendencies. Displacement, infrastructural breakdown, food insecurity and unemployment exacerbate mental health challenges. Vulnerable populations, including women and those with pre-existing mental illnesses, are particularly impacted.

In the US, around 10pc experience climate anxiety, 9pc feel uncontrollable worry, and 7pc report diminished pleasure due to global warming. Worry has steadily risen over the past two decades, with 27pc expressing significant concern.

According to Yale Sustainability 2023, the number of worried individuals has tripled in six years, highlighting a growing awareness of the issue. To understand the gravity of climate anxiety, we need to engage in conversations, listen to the quiver in voices, notice furrowed brows, and recognise that this emotional turmoil matters. Certain coping strategies are recommended:

a) Mindful breathing: deep breathing anchors one in the moment. The world may be at a difficult point but we cannot be productive if we are unhealthy.
b) Purposeful action: channel anxiety by reducing personal carbon emissions and supporting eco-friendly initiatives with environmental groups.
c) Support network: climate anxiety can be isolating. Communicating with friends, colleagues and others provides relief, sparks innovation and bol-

sters the commitment to make a difference.

d) Self-care: mental and emotional health is essential. Engage in stress-reducing activities, such as exercise, meditation and making time for nature.

e) Activism: join environmental organisations to support initiatives, donate to environmental causes and volunteer for habitat restoration.

f) Information: it is important to know about climate change with an understanding of science, policies and solutions for effective climate action.

g) Build resilience: strengthen coping mechanisms and skills to navigate stress. Resilience aids productive engagement and mitigates climate anxiety.

h) Limit online time: set a schedule for news consumption and avoid pseudo-fulfilment on social media.
i) Focus on the present: acknowledge future uncertainties and concentrate on actionable steps. Emphasise immediate actions and well-being over existential concerns.

While individual actions matter, systemic change is crucial to addressing climate change. Governments and politicians must develop laws and policies to mitigate the crisis. By supporting sustainable energy programmes, advocating for climate policies and holding officials accountable, we can make a greater impact.

Collaborating on individual and systemic levels is essential to combatting climate change, alleviating anxiety and building a sustainable future. This is vital not only for environmental sustainability but also for the protection of community mental health and resilience worldwide. -- Courtesy Dawn

Murad, WB team discuss projects of \$3.4bn, set timeline to expedite work

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and the World Bank high power team led by the Country Director Najy Benhassine reviewed the overall progress of World Bank-assisted 14 projects of \$3.4 billion and agreed to remove the bottleneck that exists and speed up the slow pace projects for their timely completion.

The review meeting was held at the CM House on Wednesday morning and was attended by Provincial Ministers Sharjeel Memon, Dr Azra Fazal, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Sardar Shah, Jam Khan Shoro, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, provincial secretaries and project director of the world bank-assisted projects. The World Bank team comprised Kamran Akbar, Murtaza Noorani,

Omar Riaz, Waleed Anwar, Uzma Sadaf, and others. The Karachi Mobility Project (KMP) aims to enhance mobility, accessibility, and safety along selected corridors in the city. It comprises the construction of two bridges (Jam Sadiq Bridges) for Yellow Line BRT corridors, the development and operation of the BRT Yellow Line System, and capacity building and technical assistance for the project.

Progress regarding the Jam Sadiq bridges, it was reported in the meeting that the concept design was finalized on August 6, mobilization has been completed, the test pile was cast on July 7, and load tests are scheduled to be conducted on August 12. As far as the development and operationalisation of a BRT system for Yellow

Line, the meeting was told that Financial bids opened in April 2024. The WB issued the required consent and now Contract Signing is expected to be held next week.

The Competitive and Livable City of Karachi (CLICK) project has been launched to improve urban management, service delivery and the business environment in the city and provide an immediate and effective response to an eligible crisis or emergency.

The meeting was told that the Geographic Information System (GIS) based Management Information System (MIS) MIS is being developed for property tax survey.

It was pointed out that the Technical Evaluation has been shared with the WB. The firm is planned to be on board by August 30, 2024.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah in meeting with National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nazir Ahmed discuss the progress of ongoing inquiries and investigations within the province, at CM House in Karachi.

MoU signed between Istanbul, Lahore medical universities

LAHORE (APP): A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for cooperation between the medical universities of Istanbul and Lahore on Wednesday.

Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique signed the MoU on behalf of the University of Health Sciences (UHS) Lahore during a meeting with faculty members from both UHS Lahore and Istanbul University of Health Sciences, Turkiye, according to a handout issued here on Wednesday.

The meeting was chaired by Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique, who attended directly from Istanbul University of Health Sciences. Kemalitan Aydin, a well-known Turkish politician, also

attended the meeting. During the event, the Vice-Chancellors of UHS Lahore and Istanbul University of Health Sciences briefed attendees on the educational facilities available at their respective institutions.

In his remarks, the health minister highlighted the close and fraternal relations between Pakistan and Turkiye, emphasizing the exemplary health system of Turkiye and the shared goals between the two countries. He mentioned the recent advancements in Punjab's healthcare system, including the launch of an air ambulance service and the establishment of the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer and Research Center in Lahore and the Nawaz Sharif Institute of

Cardiology in Sargodha. He noted the transparency in Punjab's health department and praised UHS Lahore for leading among the province's seven medical universities. He also mentioned Turkish interest in postgraduate programs at UHS.

Dr. Onor Guner, Secretary General of Istanbul University of Health Sciences, welcomed Khawaja Salman Rafique to Istanbul and praised the historical significance and research initiatives of the university. Vice-Chancellor of UHS Lahore, Professor Ahsan Waheed Rathor, spoke about the government's efforts to enhance the educational environment in medical schools and expressed respect for Turkish students.

Punjab governor announces cycles, kits for rally participants

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has announced new sports cycles and kits for the participants in the First Jashan-e-Azadi President Asif Ali Zardari Cycle Rally 2024.

Welcoming the cycle rally participants upon arrival at the Governor's House here on Wednesday, he warmly welcomed the cyclists and PPP workers from Kasur. He said that the doors of the Governor's House were open to all and sundry, adding that the rally is a celebration of the 69th birthday of President Asif Ali Zardari.

The governor, accompanied by PPP leader Haji Azizur Rehman Chan, said the rally also marks the 77th

Independence day of the country.

The First Jashan e Azadi President Asif Ali Zardari Cycle Rally started from city of the great Sufi poet Bullah Shah - Kasur and will culminate at Jinnah Sports Complex Islamabad on August 13 - a day before the 77th Independence Day of the country.

After night's rest at the Governor's House, the cycle cyclists will depart for Sheranwala Bagh, Gujranwala at 9 am on August 8 (Thursdays). The rally will pass through Lala Musa, Gujrat, Jhelum and Rawalpindi before reaching Islamabad.

Rally is led by Sabir Ali Kasuri (Coach) and Manager Sheikh Asim. The cyclists included Allah Ditta Bhatti (Captain).

8 dead, 1,276 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Arts Council, Alhamra, has again demonstrated its dedication to elevating Pakistani art globally, marking a significant milestone in its ongoing endeavors. The council's forthcoming participation in an international exhibition in Qatar exemplifies its commitment to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich cultural heritage internationally.

During an essential meeting, organised by the National Heritage and Culture Division, all arrangements for Pakistan's representation at the exhibition were finalized, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

Alhamra's Executive Director, Sarah Rashid, played a pivotal role in this meeting, providing detailed insights and updates to the attendees. In recognition of her leadership, the government has appointed Sarah Rashid as the focal person overseeing the preparations for the international exhibition.

Sarah Rashid expressed profound pride in Alhamra's role, stating, "It is a great honor for Alhamra to represent our nation on such a prestigious platform."

CM free Wi-Fi service starts in Nankana Sahib

LAHORE (APP): On special direction of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, "CM Maryam Nawaz Free Wi-Fi" service has been started in Nankana Sahib after Lahore and Kasur.

The Free Wi-Fi service is operational at five locations in Nankana Sahib in Phase-I. These locations include Masjid Chowk, Tehsil Mor Chowk, Kachhari Phatak, Railway Station.

The chief minister said that more than 25,000 citizens will benefit from the service in Nankana Sahib, adding that in four weeks, citizens of Nankana Sahib have used 250 GB of data from CM Maryam Nawaz Free Wi-Fi service.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said the use of free internet service by more than 5 million citizens in Lahore is a proof of its success. She directed the

authorities concerned to start free Wi-Fi service at 250 more places in Lahore.

Safe City Free Wi-Fi service is available for public at 10 locations in Kasur including DHQ Hospital, Women's College, New Bus Terminal, Railway Station, Model Bazar, DC Office, National Bank Chowk and other places, she said and directed the relevant authorities to start the service at 20 more points in Kasur. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that Safe Cities will soon be functional in Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala, adding that by the end of this year, Safe City Authority will be established in 18 cities. Women and students will also be able to get help in emergency situations from CM Maryam Nawaz Free Wi-Fi service, she mentioned.



RAWALPINDI: Workers are busy in draining accumulated rain water after heavy rain in Imam Bara road area, in morning hours in the city.

Alhamra achieves milestone with Intl exhibition in Qatar

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Arts Council, Alhamra, has again demonstrated its dedication to elevating Pakistani art globally, marking a significant milestone in its ongoing endeavors. The council's forthcoming participation in an international exhibition in Qatar exemplifies its commitment to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich cultural heritage internationally.

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LAHORE: A group photo of Governor Punjab Sardar Malik Salim Haider with athletes of President Asif Ali Zardari Sports Cycle Rally at Governor House.

Kamran for contribution of all for progress and prosperity of nation

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday said that we must all play our part to promote the progress and prosperity of our nation.

In this endeavor, we need to hold each other's hands and move forward together," he said while addressing a ceremony organized by the Noor Project.

The event was also attended by The Noor Project's founder Amjad Wattoo and honorary president Rear Admiral (retired) Faisal Shah.

Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori further stated, "I am deeply impressed by the tireless efforts of the Noor Project team. Their welfare initiatives are commendable." He highlighted that his notification as Governor

Sindh was issued on the blessed day of 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal, upon which he vowed to serve the people wholeheartedly.

"Alhamdulillah, today, fifty thousand young people are receiving IT training at the Governor House. These students are now capable of earning between \$300 to \$600 per month. He said that to date, we have distributed over six hundred thousand ration bags to the deserving. Under Governor's initiative we have distributed eight thousand free laptops among IT students of through balloting.

He said that we have also provided 3,500 motorbikes to victims of street crimes and offered non-refundable funds to individuals under the employment scheme for starting their businesses."

Two passengers killed in bus, truck collision in Bahawalpur

BHAWALPUR (APP): At least two innocent lives were lost and several others were left battered and bruised as the two vehicles crashed into each other with immense force at Jhangra Sharqi Interchange Bahawalpur on early Wednesday morning.

According to details, Rescue sources said that the accident occurred in Bahawalpur where a truck collided with a bus and took the lives of two people on the spot, a private news channel reported.

The rescue sources said that truck caught fire right after the accident however the rescue team arrived on the spot of the incident.

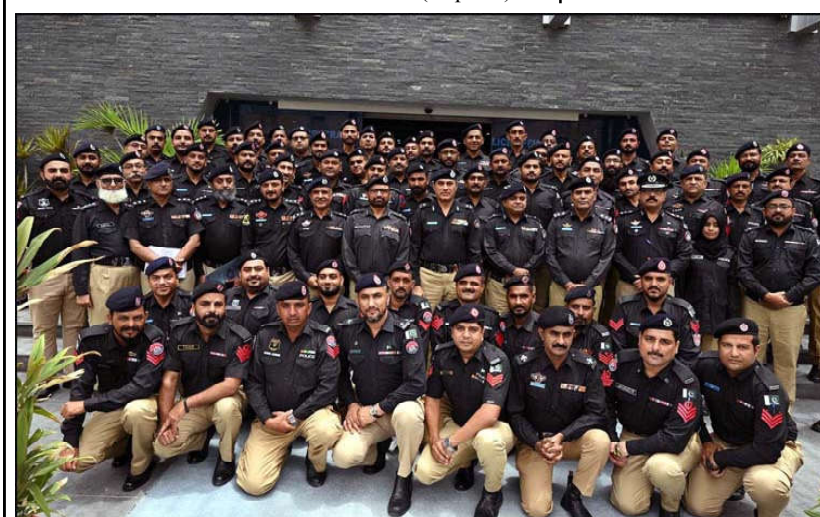
After the accident, rescue teams reached the spot where efforts have been underway to control the fire, rescue officials added.

Three killed in road accident

FAISALABAD (APP): Three car-riders were killed in a road traffic accident in the area of Chak Jhumra police station.

Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Wednesday that a speedy dumper truck hit a car and overturned on it near Sadaqat Textile Mills on Khurianwala-Jundwali Road late Tuesday night.

As a result, two car riders including Noman Maqbool (48) resident of Islamabad and an unknown man (35) received serious injuries and died on the spot whereas Rescue 1122 shifted another victim Yasir Shahzad (39) resident of Tehsil Fateh Jang Attock to Allied Hospital but in vain as he also expired.



KARACHI: Sindh Police Inspector General (IG), Ghulam Nabi Memon in group photo with police officials during certificate distribution ceremony organized for Accountant Course for Head Editors, at Central Police Office (CPO) in Karachi.

Minister discusses visioning exercise to promote tourism in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): The Department of Human Rights and Minorities Affairs (HR&MA), in collaboration with the World Bank, organised a visioning exercise aimed at enhancing economic growth through the promotion of tourism in Punjab. Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora emphasised the critical role of tourism in economic development during his address to the meeting. He highlighted the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, who, in her inaugural speech, declared religious minorities as the crown of her head. For the first time in history, a CM personally attended Easter celebrations in Maryamabad and initiated the Baisakhi festival by participating in the harvest. Minister Arora expressed hope that the advisory meeting would yield fruitful results given

the presence of key representatives from Punjab's major departments. He also underscored Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's desire for a well-defined five-year strategic plan to establish a clear roadmap.

Secretary of Human Rights Ali Bahadur Qazi emphasized the significance of visioning exercise, aiming to gather valuable insights from various representatives of Punjab's key institutions to formulate a cohesive strategy. Lead Consultant for Strategic Planning Syed Sajad Imran informed the participants that the collaboration with the WB underscores a commitment to globally recognising Punjab's tourism potential and leveraging the sector for sustainable economic development. The outcomes of the exercise would assist in creating actionable plans that align with the broader goals of the HR&MA.

2 children drown in rain drains

RAWALPINDI (APP): Flooding in drains due to heavy rain on Wednesday morning claimed two more lives. The incidents occurred in two different areas where search and rescue operations have been initiated by the District Emergency Service-Rescue 1122.

According to the details, an 8 year old child was crossing a floody street and slipped in deep water which swept him away, in Boston Khan Road. The CCTV footage shows two children trapped in water, trying to escape the heavy water flow.

Both the children tried to cross the water, during which one child drowned into the drain while the other survived.

In another tragic incident, a 5 years old girl drowned in an open drain near the Adyala Road area.

The spokesman Rescue 1122, Muhammad Usman informed APP that search and rescue operations were initiated in both areas immediately.



PESHAWAR: A view of BRT bus decorated with national flag for the celebrations of 77 Independence Day at Trans Peshawar Terminal.

Non completion of surface drain restoration project to be investigated: Minister

SUKKUR (APP): Sindh Minister for Agriculture, Anti-Corruption, Sports, Youth Affairs, Sardar Muhammad Bux Khan Mahar on Wednesday said that an investigation would be initiated into the non-completion of the multi-million rupee surface drain restoration project in Ghotki.

He emphasized the importance of finding a permanent solution by resuming work on the Dangar Canal and Biggo Canal. He assured that a

thorough investigation will be conducted regarding the delay in the surface drain restoration project.

During his visit to the district's government hospitals, the minister addressed the media, highlighting the critical issues of medicine shortages, inadequate staffing, and lack of facilities in the hospitals. He committed to coordinating with the Health Minister and the Health Department to ensure prompt provision of essential health services.



KARACHI: Leaders and activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking of electricity and petrol, nearby Governor House building in Karachi.

Agri scientists, policy makers urged for actively contributing in sector development

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, on Wednesday urged agriculture scientists and policymakers to actively contribute to the improvement of the local agriculture sector to ensure food safety and security in the country.

Speaking at the inauguration of the seed potato complex and the International Symposium on Seed Potato Production and Supply Chain, the minister highlighted that despite Pakistan's agricultural economy, the country continues to import food items.

The event was organized by the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) in collaboration with the Korean Program on International Agriculture (KOPIA). Its goal is to produce virus-free seed potatoes to enhance local crop yields and generate an exportable surplus.

The ceremony was attended by the Ambassador of Korea, senior officials from PARC, NARC, KOPIA, as well as representatives from national and international organizations, development partners, agricultural scientists, experts, private sector organizations, NGOs, and progressive farmers from across the country.

During his address, the minister emphasized the importance of fostering public-private partnerships to advance agricultural research and ensure its effective dissemination to farmers. This, he stated, is crucial for increasing per-acre yields of all major and minor crops to meet domestic needs.

The minister noted that potatoes are a significant cash crop in the country and the third-largest food crop, cultivated over 837,669 acres in various seasons and regions.

He explained that the establishment of an aeroponic greenhouse would enhance the quality of seed potatoes, support modern research, and ensure a steady supply of quality seeds to local farmers. Additionally, it would create and boost employment opportunities.

Rana Tanveer Hussain also mentioned that domestic production of potato seeds would help save foreign exchange and provide seeds at affordable prices to local farmers.

He emphasized that the government is committed to developing the agriculture sector and has initiated several projects to support its growth. He highlighted that both nations are collaborating on agricultural technology transfer projects, which will bolster local agricultural output and sector development.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb was called on by the Ambassador of Finland to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Hannu Ripatti.

PTA, NCSW, GSMA host workshop on bridging mobile gender gap

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) and Global System for Mobile Communication (GSMA) Action Collation for bridging the digital divide organized a one-day workshop titled "Bridging the Mobile Gender Gap".

The workshop featured participation from representatives of the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Ministry of Defense, Universal Services Fund, Ministry of Human Rights and other government and private entities said a news release issued here on Wednesday.

The workshop aimed to address the digital gender divide in Pakistan by bringing together government and civil society stakeholders to improve gender in ICTs. Key discussions focused on strategies to enhance women's access to mobile technology and digital services, emphasizing creating inclusive policies and fostering a supportive ecosystem. On this occasion, Chairman PTA, Maj. Gen. @ Hafeez Ur Rehman, said that this initiative is a vital step towards addressing the digital gender divide in Pakistan. He further added that this workshop marks the beginning of our collective journey towards a more inclusive and equitable digital future for all.

Tanveer seeks US market access to new agriculture products

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industries, Production and National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday stressed that new Pakistani agricultural products should be given access to the American market.

In a meeting with United States (US) Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome, he said that Pakistan values its partnership with the US and appreciated the US cooperation in the Research and Endowment Fund for the Agricultural University. He said the government wants to strengthen agricultural cooperation with the US, and technology transfer is needed to increase production.

Rupee sheds 05 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 05 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.73 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.68.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.2 and Rs 280.35 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 01 paise to close at Rs 304.41 against the last day's closing of Rs 304.42, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen also came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs 1.90, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.14 was witnessed in the exchange rate.

Federal Tax Ombudsman to establish a Help Desk at KATI

KARACHI (APP): Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, Wednesday, announced setting up a help desk at the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) to address the tax issues faced by industrialists.

The FTO, while addressing the industrialists and businessmen during his visit to KATI, said that the initiative was also aimed at increasing awareness among the public and business community about the services being offered by the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO).

Dr. Jah highlighted that the FTO is an independent authority mandated to resolve taxpayers' complaints within 60 days while the current average time for deciding on the lodged complaints was 38 days. Of the 550 appeals filed with the President- the only appellate authority for FTO- as many as 490 decisions by the FTO were upheld, he added.

During the year 2021, the FTO resolved refund complaints cumulatively amounting to Rs. 17.8 billion, he said adding that swift resolution of complaints from 800 individuals regarding sales tax on vehicles.



LAHORE: Members of Anjuman-e-Tajran Lahore are holding protest demonstration against withholding taxes and high inflated electricity bills, at Saddar Cantt in Lahore.



Federal Ministers, MNFS&R Rana Tanveer Hussain, Korean Ambassador to Pakistan, Park Ki Jun, Dr. Kwak Do-Yeon, DG NICS/RDA Korea, Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Dr. Cho Gyoung-Rae, Director KOPIA-Pakistan inaugurating Aeroponic Green Houses for seed production at NARC Islamabad.

Govt committed to Digital Pakistan Vision: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja Wednesday said that the present government is committed for the fulfillment of Digital Pakistan vision.

On the directives of the Prime of Pakistan, Ministry of IT & Telecom is taking steps for digital transformation in the country, she said this while delivering keynote address at Digital Nation Summit organised by GSMA in collaboration with Ministry of IT & Telecom.

She also emphasised the need of ending digital divide between rural and urban areas of the country.

Shaza Fatima said that under Prime Minister's vision of digitalization, the economy, governance and society are being digitalised.

She said that Telecom industry has important role in country's economic uplift.

She said that effective steps are being taken for boosting Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the country.

The Minister said that remarkable progress has been achieved with over 80 percent teledensity and over 190 million subscribers.

"Our broadband customers continue to grow", she added.

She said that the government is working on National IT Policy focused on ease of doing business and tax breaks to accelerate economic activity in this sector. She said that Pakistan's IT Exports saw record surge as it reached 3.223 billion dollars during FY 2023-24.

She said that there were great opportunities for youth in IT sector, as government is focused upon equipping youth with latest digital skills.

Tax deptt partners with ICT admin for market worker registration

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Income Tax Department is expanding its efforts to register all market workers in the Federal Capital, aiming to increase the tax net with support from the district administration. In a recent meeting with the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, officials from the Income Tax Department outlined plans to include all market workers in the tax system, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration.

This initiative seeks to bring a broader range of individuals, including street vendors and those selling vegetables and fruits, under the tax umbrella. The department emphasized the need for collaboration with the district administration to ensure the success of this effort. The district administration has pledged its support to help implement this tax registration drive.

SMBR visits Revenue Tower in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Punjab Nabeel Javed paid a surprise visit to under-construction four-story Revenue Tower at Farid Court House on Wednesday to review the construction work.

He said during his visit there would be no compromise on quality of material used in the new tower and issued orders for swift completion of the building's decoration and renovation.

The SMBR said all necessary facilities were being provided for clients in the Revenue Tower.



FAISALABAD: A group photo of participants with President, Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce Dr. Khurram Tariq and Director FIA Syed Shahid Hussain.

Railways asks all DS to accelerate efforts for retrieving occupied land

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways directed all the Divisional Superintendents (DS) to accelerate efforts for retrieving around 13,972 acres of land occupied illegally by private individuals and different government departments across the country.

"Around 5,809 acres were occupied in Punjab, 1,181 acres are under encroachment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 5,948 acres in Sindh and 1,034 acres land occupied in Balochistan," an official in the Ministry told APP. He said the category of land under illegal occupations included commercial, residential, agricultural, and various persons or departments. Giving details of the land, the official said that around 769 acres were commercial in all the provinces, 3,309 residential, 5,512 acres agricultural and 4382 were under encroachment of various persons or departments. The official said the department had also decided to accelerate its ongoing anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its land from different individuals, groups, and even business organizations that were using it for residential.

Gold rates dip by Rs. 500 per tola to Rs.255,500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased further by Rs.500 and was sold at Rs.255,500 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs. 256,000 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.429 to Rs.2,19,050 from Rs. 2,19,479 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.200,795 from Rs. 201,189, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively.

Awareness session on labour laws, welfare held

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in collaboration with the Punjab Labour Department, organized an awareness session on labour laws and Labor Welfare Measures here at LCCI on Wednesday.

The session was presided over by the LCCI President Kashif Anwar while Provincial Labor Minister Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar, Labor Secretary Muhammad Naeem Ghaus, Director General Labor Welfare Syeda Kulsom Haider, Vice Commissioner PESSI Zulfiqar Ali Khokhar and CEO Punjab Workers Welfare Fund Tahir Ilyas Cheema also spoke on the occasion.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that progress and prosperity of economy and industry mean development of the country. He acknowledged that the post-COVID economy has posed challenges such as climate change, floods and international inflation etc which have burdened the economy.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was report at the port where three ships, Saehan Jasper, Ginga Liger and Maran Gas Asclepius carrying Palm oil, Chemicals and LNG, berthed at Liquid Terminals, Engro Vopak and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a petroleum product carrier 'Leader' left the port on today morning while another chemicals carrier 'Ginga Liger'.

FM highlights initiatives to enhance economic growth, stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday again highlighted the initiatives aimed at enhancing economic stability and promoting long-term growth.

In a meeting with Ambassador of Finland to Pakistan, Hannu Ripatti, who called on him, the minister shared updates on Pakistan's economic performance, highlighting rise in tax collection, increased remittances, and foreign exchange reserves exceeding USD 9 billion.

He emphasized the positive evaluation from international credit rating agencies, which reflect the stability of Pakistan's economic environment, according to press release issued by Finance Ministry. The Minister also discussed the successful conclusion of the 9-month Standby Agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the recently finalized staff-level agreement for a 37-month IMF programme.

Additionally, the Minister outlined ongoing initiatives, including end-to-end digitization in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to broaden the tax base, reforms in the energy sector, restructuring of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and focus on export-led growth.

"These initiatives are aimed at enhancing economic stability and promote long-term growth," he said.

On the occasion, the Finnish Ambassador expressed his appreciation for Pakistan's economic reforms and noted the improved fiscal situation of Finnish companies operating in Pakistan.

The Minister thanked the Ambassador for Finland's continued support in the renewal of Pakistan's GSP Plus status, which benefits the country's export sector.

The meeting underscored the strong bilateral relations between Pakistan and Finland, and the shared commitment to fostering economic stability and growth.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressing Digital Nation Summit.

Jazz xlr8 partners with GSMA innovation fund to support high-potential startups

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, through its startup accelerator program 'xlr8', has partnered with the GSMA Innovation Fund to identify and support high-potential startups, especially in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), health, education, entertainment, and digital lifestyle.

This strategic collaboration aims to foster innovation and stimulate large-scale socio-economic and environmental impact said a news release. Under the partnership, Jazz's xlr8 program will support the GSMA Innovation Fund startups by providing Jazz expertise in digital platforms which are based on building and launching Pakistan's largest homegrown apps like SIMOSA and Tamasha, access to Jazz's 71 million users based on intelligent segmentation, specialized mentoring from Jazz domain experts, extensive digital growth & data analytics and platform architecture expertise.

Additionally, Jazz will offer technology development, B2B support, and access to 9 million farmers and 18 million SIMOSA app users. The GSMA, as an outreach partner, will recommend high-growth potential startups to Jazz xlr8 and continue supporting these startups in collaboration with Jazz for scalability and sustainability. While expressing his optimism about this collaboration, Aamer Ejaz, President Digital Platforms at Jazz, said, "We are thrilled to announce our partnership with GSMA, which aligns perfectly with our mutual goal of fostering innovation and supporting high-potential startups in Pakistan. This collaboration is also in sync with our new ServiceCo shift, where we are focused on strengthening the newly introduced strategic business units."



LAHORE: Members of Broilers trader's action committee hold a banner during protest in favor of their demands outside press club.

Three seafood processing companies cleared for exports to EU: Najmi

KARACHI (APP): Advisor to Chief Minister Sindh on Livestock and Fisheries, Syed Najmi Alam, Wednesday, said that three seafood processing companies of Pakistan have been cleared for exporting their products to European Union. The Advisor to CM was chairing a meeting regarding sanitation of Karachi Fish Harbor Authority that was attended by Secretary Livestock and Fisheries Dr. Kazim Hussain Jatoi, Director Karachi Fish Harbor Authority Syed Asim Karim and representative of Hangzhou Jimjiang Group Engineer Muhammad Khalid and others, said a statement issued here.

The government was making all out efforts for complete removal of ban imposed by European Union on export of fish and seafood from Pakistan. Syed Najmi Alam said adding that we are working on a pilot project in this regard under the directives of President Asif Ali Zardari. He said that three Pakistani companies engaged in processing and export of fish and other seafood have been cleared for exports to EU while the clearance process for another company was in the final process. The advisor expressed interest in entering into a contract with the Chinese company for cleaning of the fish harbor keeping in view its working experience with Sindh Solid Waste Management Board and availability of machinery and expertise in harbor cleaning works.

Tarar says: Parliament converted a rule into law to stop floor crossing as envisaged in Constitution

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Wednesday the Parliament was a supreme institution and through the Election (Amendment) Act it had converted a rule into a law to stop floor crossing as envisaged in the Constitution. Addressing a press conference here, he said that Bilal Azhar Kayani of Muslim League (Nawaz) had presented the Election Act Amendment Bill in the National Assembly whereas Senator Talal Chaudhry moved it in the Senate.

The minister said that the bill was passed by the National Assembly and the Senate by majority votes and became an act.

He maintained that the Constitution and law were clear regarding floor crossing and the new piece of legislation and fur-

ther elaborate the matter. According to the rules, he said an independent candidate had to join any party within three days after the announcement of official results of the elections.

The minister posed a question if a member's party could be changed after submitting an affidavit for joining a party.

He said that two Supreme Court judges had raised important points and questioned that even after 15 days, the detailed decision was not issued by the majority judges in the bench. Tarar said that the PTI-backed independents joined a party that did not exist in Parliament, how could that party get any seat as those seats were given on the basis of proportion. Moreover, he said under proportional representation rules, it was binding on each political

party to display its candidates lists for both women and minority seats.

He said one fails to fathom the logic and stance of the PTI leadership that they should not hold intra-party elections without any legal action or punishment on that account.

About the situation in Bangladesh, he said that the government and people of Pakistan stood with the people of that country. He appreciated the determination and resilience of the Bangladeshi people for standing up against the regime marred by corruption.

Tarar said in Pakistan, the PTI founder chairman had compared himself with Sheikh Mujeeb eulogizing his stance in 1971 which Pakistanis considered as against national interests. PTI leaders during television talk shows claimed that their leader was like Sheikh Mujeeb, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif planting a sapling to launch Monsoon Tree Plantation campaign.

Pakistani pilgrims to get major facility at entering Iraq: visa fees waived, special flights announced

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Iraqi Ambassador Hamid Abbas Lafta announced a slew of measures aimed at easing travel restrictions and enhancing convenience to facilitate Pakistani pilgrims traveling to Iraq for Arbaeen.

The landmark decisions were reached during a high-level meeting on Wednesday between the two sides who promised to make the journey smoother and more accessible for thousands of devotees.

Both sides agreed that Pakistani pilgrims traveling to Iraq for Arbaeen would no longer need to surrender their passports upon arrival. The meeting decided that the Pakistani pilgrims would be issued visas by the Iraqi Embassy, bypassing travel agents and the quota for Pakistan pilgrims would be increased.

It was also decided that special flights would be operating from Pakistan for Pakistani pilgrims while a new consulate will be opened in Karachi and both sides initiate a crackdown on agents charging excessive fees from pilgrims. The meeting also decided Visa waiver agreement on diplomatic and official passports while it was requested for the visa fee waiver for the ordinary pilgrims.

The decisions aim to provide equal facilities to Pakistani pilgrims, ensuring a hassle-free experience.

Mohsin Naqvi thanked the Iraqi counterparts for their cooperation, while Ambassador Lafta extended an invitation to visit Iraq.

In a swift follow-up, Naqvi secured approval from Federal Aviation Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif to allow Iraqi airlines to operate special flights, with Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) also set to announce its schedule soon. This development marks a significant improvement in travel arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims, promising a more convenient and accessible journey to Iraq.

Digitization of economy inevitable for national development: Ahsan

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday emphasized the crucial role of digital technology in driving economic growth, transparency and good governance. "Digitalization of the economy is inevitable for achieving the national development," he said while addressing the first National Digital Summit.

He highlighted the importance of leveraging technology to address pressing issues, promote transparency, and foster economic development.

He advocated for adopting digital technologies to enhance infrastructure, human resource development and digital literacy.

The minister stressed the significance of collaboration between educational institutions and the tech industry, saying it was essential for promoting professional and digital skills among youth.

He informed the gathering that the government was taking the required measures to promote digital skills among young people.

The minister also mentioned that the government was strengthening cyber-security to protect citizens, businesses and government institutions.

Furthermore, he said efforts were being made to promote digitalization in rural areas and ensure affordable internet access.

He emphasized the need for public-private investment in making technological advancements and encouraged startups, small and medium enterprises in this sector. He called for equipping 65 per cent of the youth population with modern skills and invited experts to share their innovative ideas to achieve the required results.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani and Provincial Advisor Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti.

OIC Ambassador vows to ensure Kashmir resolution under UN mandate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador Hameed Aji Baiye Opeleyeru, Permanent Observer of the OIC Mission to the United Nations, has reiterated the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) commitment to ensuring the resolution of the Kashmir dispute in line with international law and resolutions of the United Nations.

Speaking at an event marking the fifth anniversary of India's unilateral actions in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Opeleyeru said the OIC has adopted a plan of action to expedite the resolution of the crisis. Equally ominous is the fact that this crisis that has historically threatened peace, stability and security of South Asia.

Opeleyeru expressed solidarity with the people of Kashmir in their struggle for self-determination, emphasizing that the OIC recognizes their just and legitimate struggle. "There is no doubt that the United Nations has been seized of the question of Jammu and Kashmir since the Security Council Resolution 47 of 21 April 1948," he added.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Donald Armin Blome, Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan calls on Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain.

Thanks to Dr. Rubaba Special permission granted by PMDC to BMC students for double batch admissions

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan for Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, has successfully secured special permission for double batch admissions for medical students from Balochistan.

According to details, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi recently met with officials from the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), where she briefed them on the issues faced by medical students from Balochistan. The PMDC officials, acting on Dr. Buledi's recommendations, have withdrawn their previous decision and granted permission for four students to be admitted to medical colleges, along with special permission for double batch admissions from Balochistan for the next academic year. This means that students from Balochistan, who previously had to wait a year to get admission to medical colleges compared to students from the rest of the country, can now join medical colleges without waiting a year, alongside students from other parts of the country.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Ambassador of Iraq Hamid Abbas Lafta.

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 Jozezai 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: Relatives of Junaid Baloch and Mama Qadeer addressing a Press conference.

Celebrating Independence Day is a sign of a living nation: Abbas Ather

Independent Report
CHAMAN: Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Captain (R) Raja Abbas Ather, chaired a meeting of all district departments to discuss preparations for Independence Day celebrations on August 14. He emphasized the need for all departments to take necessary measures to ensure a successful celebration.

DC Chaman directed all department heads to decorate their offices with Pakistani flags and colorful bunting. He also stressed the importance of cleanliness and sanitation in the city, parks, and grounds, and instructed the Municipal Corporation to take all necessary measures to ensure a clean and tidy environment. Ather Abbas Raja emphasized that there would be no compromise on cleanliness on Independence Day and directed all department heads to ensure that their offices are clean and tidy.

The meeting was attended by all department heads and officials, who were instructed to make necessary arrangements for a successful celebration of Independence Day.



QUETTA: Secretary Finance Babar Khan presiding over a meeting regarding financial affairs of Balochistan Coastal Development Authority (BCDA) and Pasni Fish Harbour Authority (PFHA).

Independence Day to be celebrated with enthusiasm: Dr Ishaq

QUETTA (APP): Medical Superintendent of Provincial Sandmen Civil Hospital Quetta Dr. Ishaq Panzezi on Wednesday said that the 77th Independence Day would be celebrated with full enthusiasm and a national spirit.

Addressing a ceremony organized by a private university in the Children's Ward of the Civil Hospital regarding the celebration of Independence, he said that our forefathers had made great sacrifices for Pakistan, everyone, including the youth, should play a role in the safety and stability of the country.

Al-Hamad University Registrar, Urwa Javed, a large number of children and their parents also participated in the event.

MS Civil Hospital, Dr. Ishaq Panzezi said that on the occasion of Independence Day, the entire nation should unite and pledge to spread the teachings of peace, brotherhood, and love to and enlighten future generations about the sacrifices of their elders.

Addressing the ceremony, Registrar Al-Hamad University, Urwa Javed said that freedom was a great blessing and August 14 was a day of unity and agreement for the Pakistani nation, the whole nation was proud of this great blessing.



QUETTA: XEN Workshop Habibur Rehman briefed Provincial Minister C&W Mir Saleem Khosa and Secretary C&W Lal Jan Jaffar during their visit of E&M Workshop Division Quetta

August 8 tragedy; a black day for Balochistan: NP

Independent Report
QUETTA: The National Party has termed the August 8 tragedy as the blackest day in Balochistan's history, which has brought sorrow to every household in the province. The party spokesperson said that on that day, dozens of educated lawyers were martyred in a blast, which was a tragic incident.

The spokesperson criticized that despite the passage of time, those responsible for the worst act of terrorism have not been identified, which raises questions about the relevant institutions and courts. The spokesperson added that Balochistan has been suffering from worst terrorism for the last two decades, but instead of addressing the issue seriously, the real representatives of Balochistan have been marginalized, turning the province into a playground, which is yielding negative results day by day.

Early warning meteorological system operational at Gwadar Port

GWADAR (INP): Gwadar Environment Department (GED) operationalized an early warning meteorological system at Gwadar Port in collaboration with China Meteorological Administration (CMA) to help analyze and identify potential weather- and climate-related risks and hazards in Gwadar. "It aims at enabling early actions to save and protect lives, livelihoods and assets of people at risk," GED official told Gwadar Pro.

"In 2022, Balochistan and Gwadar suffered severe flooding, resulting in significant damage to lives, infrastructure, and livelihoods of the affected population. The estimated damage to Balochistan Province amounted to \$1.625 billion," he said. With the early warning system, Gwadar is better positioned to deal with frequent, extreme, and unpredictable climate-related hazards. The early warning system is made up of four elements: disaster risk knowledge, detection,



QUETTA: Secretary S&GAD Syed Faisal Ahmed presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for celebration of Independence Day