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Stresses unity to overcome national challenges

Unprecedented cooperation between govt, institutions to rid country of challenges: PM

Says collaboration between military establishment and government for Pakistan's benefit is a "role model" for future; Efforts are being made to bring relief to masses; hopes upcoming IMF programme to be country's last; Asks Ulema to play role in countering fake news

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that the coalition government and the national institutions were in an unprecedented harmony and cooperation to serve the better national interests and steer the country out of prevailing challenges.

The prime minister, addressing the Ulema-Mashaikh Conference here, said that the country never needed unity and national harmony more, and he had never seen such a level of cooperation between a political government and the institutions throughout his political career.

Appreciating the support extended by Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, also attending the moot, he said that such exemplary collaboration was a role model for the future.

He said that the challenges pervading the country necessitated learning

lessons from past weaknesses and mistakes and making sincere efforts to develop Pakistan as a country as was dreamt by the forefathers and sacrificed hundreds of thousands of lives during the Pakistan Movement.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said the nation,

which was about to celebrate its 77th Independence Day on August 14, was yet to find its destination, but the goal was achievable provided the dedicated efforts were made and the teachings of Quran and Sunnah were followed.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir NI (M) addressing the National Ulema & Mashaikh Conference.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti presiding over a meeting to review progress of development projects

COAS resolves to block attempts of creating chaos in Pakistan

No one has the courage to desecrate the glory of the Holy Prophet (SAW). If someone tries to create anarchy in Pakistan, by God, we will stand against him; Ulema, Mashaikh may play pivotal role for promotion of tolerance & unity in society: Army Chief

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Thursday urged the Ulema and Mashaikh (religious scholars) to work for promotion of tolerance and unity in the society in order to banish the tendency of extremism.

land as per the commandments of the Allah Almighty as it was the greatest crime to Allah on the land.

He said, "We do not consider those as Pakistanis, who do not follow Shariat and Constitution." The religious scholars should bring back moderation in the society and reject dissension, he added.

The western civilization and way of life was not

the nation's ideal, it should be proud of its own civilization, he said and mentioned the verses of Allama Dr Muhammad Iqbal's poetry that stated Muslim ummah has no comparison to the western nations as the followers of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) are a special nation.

The COAS noted that the Pakhtun brothers and the people of Khyber

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President Zardari for unity among Muslim countries to address challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has underlined the need for greater unity and cooperation among Muslim countries to overcome the challenges being faced by the Muslim Ummah.

He expressed these views while talking to the Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi, Dr Salah bin Mohammad M AlBdeer, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday.

Welcoming Dr Salah bin Mohammad M AlBdeer, the president said that Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) enjoyed excellent relations, based on common faith, history, and brotherhood.

He expressed satisfaction that relations between two brotherly countries were growing stronger, and reaffirmed Pakistan's com-

mitment to further boosting bilateral ties.

He urged the need for promoting cultural and people-to-people relations to bring the two brotherly countries further closer.

Reiterating Pakistan's support to KSA, the President said that KSA was a close friend and Pakistan would always stand with Saudi Arabia.

The Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi said that the leadership and people of KSA highly valued their relations with Pakistan. He stated that Pakistan and KSA enjoyed strong partnership and both countries should work together to address the challenges faced by the Islamic World.

He lauded the contributions of the Pakistani community towards the development of Saudi Arabia.

CM Bugti hints at ending deadlock with BYC

Government has always welcomed the protests held under the umbrella of the constitution. We are open to dialogue and respect the voices raised for their genuine demands; Lots of things have been matured and things have been moving in positive direction as 90 percent of BYC demands have been fulfilled; Deputy Commissioner Gwadar

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on Thursday hinted at ending deadlock with Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) and said there is a positive headway towards resolving the sit-in protest by BYC in Gwadar.

"It is too early to share the details of the headway in the dialogue process underway with the BYC. Soon the issue will be resolved for good," the CM Bugti remarked while talking to newsmen.

To a question, he reiterated that "The government has always welcomed the protests held under the umbrella of the constitution. We are open to dia-



logue and respect the voices raised for their genuine demands."

Soon after the protest, the leaders of various parties, including Haq Do Tehreek's Maulana Hidayatur Rehman, Hussain Vadera, Hussain Ashraf, parliamentarians,

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Zia pay homage to martyr lawyers on 8th death anniversary of Aug 8 tragedy

Says August 8 is such a tragedy pain of which would always be felt, asserts we would not leave war against terrorism unfinished; Sardar Khetran leadership and people determined to eliminate terrorism

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove and Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran have paid homage to the lawyers martyred in the tragic incident of terrorism occurred on August 8, 2016 in the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta.

In their separate messages issued on eve of the August 8 tragedy observed on Thursday, the Provincial Ministers prayed for the departed souls of the martyr lawyers.

The Provincial Minister for Home said that the August 8 tragedy was a nefarious conspiracy against the conscious and active segment of the society.

He said that August 8 is such a tragedy the pain of which would always be felt. He said that the lawyers martyred in the tragedy were the great asset of

law sector, and vacuum caused due to their death would not be filled for long.

The Provincial Minister for PHE said that the aim behind the August 8 tragedy was to destabilize the judicial system of the country.

He said that the talented lawyers were martyred in the incident, which caused huge vacuum in the legal sector.

Mir Ziaullah Langove said that the provincial government and security institutions have got important successes for bringing improvement in circum-

stances of the province. He said that our morale is high and we would not leave the war against terrorism unfinished.

Similarly, the Minister PHE said that the cowardly people had targeted the educated and conscious segment of the society. He said that lawyers are big pillar of our society, who are not scared of the terrorism.

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran also said that lawyers are involved in the war of elimination of terrorism with the power of constitution and law.



QUETTA: Former Speaker Balochistan Assembly Mir Jan Muhammad Khan Jamali meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Hanna Lake, Urak closed for visitors for four weeks in view of heavy rains

Independent Report

QUETTA: The local administration has closed the tourism places i.e., Hanna Lake and Urak for the visitors due to heavy monsoon rains in Quetta and anticipated flood.

In an official letter written by the Assistant Commissioner Sadar to Superintendent of Police (City), the Hanna Lake and Urak has been closed for the visitors for four weeks.

The Assistant Commissioner has requested SP City to ensure that no visitor is allowed to visit the places for the aforementioned period.

PTI founder claims govt has only two months, denies apologizing

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has asserted that the government has just two months left, dismissing claims that he has apologized.

In an informal conversation with journalists at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail during the hearing of the £190 million case, Khan predicted that the government's time is running out. He reiterated that the suggestion he has apologized is false, stating his focus is solely on Pakistan.

The PTI founder challenged the government to present evidence of PTI members' involvement in the May 9 incident if it exists. He vowed to seek an apology and impose penalties if proven true. He also mentioned plans to present witnesses in the Al-Qadir Trust case but declined to disclose their identities for fear of repercussions. Khan emphasized that he would not engage in any deals, despite the government's attempts to dismantle PTI and allegedly pressuring the military to act against his party.

Govt to scrap 1990s IPP contracts in major relief move

ISLAMABAD (INP): The government has decided to terminate the power purchase agreements (PPAs) with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) made in the 1990s, aiming to provide significant relief to consumers suffering from high electricity costs.

According to media reports, the federal government, under the leadership of Energy Minister Owais Leghari, has finalized a framework for this major policy shift. An official announcement is expected soon. In addition to terminating old IPP contracts, the government is reviewing agreements with other IPP companies. A new frame-

work is being developed for consumers using more than 201 units, with changes to the policy that currently maintains them in the same slab for six months. Special slabs are being considered for these high-usage consumers, with a potential rate of Rs. 26 per unit for those exceeding 201 units.

Minister Owais Leghari emphasized the importance of the energy sector for the economy and assured that reforms are underway, with coordination crucial for their implementation. The National Task Force is working on 20-point reforms to address the sector's issues swiftly and stabilize the economy.



QUETTA: Senator, Hamid Khan Advocate addresses during the condolence reference on the occasion of the Civil Hospital tragedy in which 73 people including 56 lawyers were killed, organized by Balochistan Bar Council held at High Court

Governor thanks PIA & CAA high ups on decreasing fare of special Umrah flights

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has thanked the high ups of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on decreasing Rs. 10,000 in the fares of Quetta to Jeddah special flights.

sacred air travel accessible and cheaper for many Umrah zayreen. As a result of this, they would be able to fulfill their spiritual obligations more easily, he added.

It may be mentioned here that the facilities of ATM, currency exchange and stretcher would also be available to the intending pilgrims of Hajj and Umrah besides other passengers at the Quetta international airport

NEPRA notifies Rs 2.56 per unit increase in FCA for June

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Thursday notified Rs 2.56 per unit increase in power tariff under monthly fuel cost adjustment mechanism for the month of June. In the petition, the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) on behalf of XWDISCOs had sought Rs 2.63 per unit increase in power tariff for June.

The CPPA-G maintained in its petition that the actual cost of electricity remained Rs 9.70 per unit against reference fuel charges of Rs 7.14 per unit for the said period.

The increase would be applicable to all the consumer categories except Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (EVCS) and lifetime consumers. It would be shown separately in the consumers' bills on the basis of units billed to the consumers in the month of June 2024.

Election Act Amendment Bill 2024 gets presidential assent amid legal wrangling

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari signed the 'controversial' Election Act Amendment Bill 2024 which becomes a law.

The gazette notification will be issued today (Thursday) as the bill has been sent to the Senate Secretariat.

The Senate passed the Election Act Amendment Bill by a majority vote despite protest by the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Aug 6.

As the session started with Yousuf Raza Gilani in the chair, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Talal Chaudhry presented the Election Act Amendment Bill. The opposition members stood on their seats and started protest.

The amendment provides that "a candidate who does not submit the party certificate before obtaining the election symbol will be considered an independent candidate. If the list of candidates for reserved seats is not submitted within the specified period, no political party will be entitled to those seats."

It also provides that any candidate's declaration of affiliation to a political party will be irrevocable.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan addressing Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners Conference

Punjab outsourcing 5,800 govt schools to boost quality: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark move to revamp the education sector, the Punjab government has announced to outsource the management of 5,800 government schools to private entities, aiming to significantly enhance the quality of education and tackle the long-standing issue of teacher shortages.

Talking to a private news channel, minister said this bold initiative will bring in much-needed expertise and resources to improve student outcomes, teacher training, and infrastructure development, ultimately benefiting millions of students across the province.

Minister emphasized that the outsourcing initiative is a crucial step towards achieving the government's vision of providing quality education to all students in Punjab, regardless of their background or socio-economic status.

"We want to encourage innovation, creativity, and expertise from various sectors to transform our education system," minister said.

The selected partners will be responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the schools, including curriculum development, teacher training, student assessments, and infrastructure maintenance. In return, they will receive funding and support from the government to ensure the success of the partnership, he mentioned.

The Minister also assured that the government will maintain strict monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that the partners meet the required standards and performance benchmarks, adding, we are committed to bring transparency and accountability in this initiative.

"By outsourcing schools to private individuals, NGOs, and organizations, the government aims to tap into their specialized expertise and resources to enhance the quality of education, he said, adding, these partners bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in areas such as curriculum development, teacher training, and education technology, which can help to modernize and improve the education system".

Private individuals and organizations can introduce innovative teaching methods, digital learning tools, and data-driven assessments to measure student progress, he said.

NGOs, with their focus on social development can provide critical support services such as counseling, mentorship, and extracurricular activities to foster holistic student development, he added.



QUETTA: Sardar Yaqoob Nassar, Provincial Ministers and MPAs meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti. A delegation led by Chairman Pakistan Engineering Council Ishaq Ahmed Qureshi meeting with Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Govt vows to restore peace in KP after deadly clashes

ISLAMABAD (APP): In the wake of tragic incidents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi met with Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to discuss the deteriorating law and order situation, agreeing on a joint strategy to tackle future conflicts and prevent external interference.

A high-level meeting between Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi and Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday focused on addressing the worsening public order situation in the province, particularly in the wake of deadly clashes

in Kuram.

Both leaders expressed deep concern over the loss of precious lives due to a land dispute and condemned elements that fueled tensions by giving the conflict a wrong color.

Naqvi assured full cooperation to restore peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, terming it the government's top priority.

He praised the efforts of local dignitaries, led by MNA Hameed Hussain, and security forces in bringing the situation under control. Naqvi acknowledged that external hands sabotaging peace efforts cannot be ignored.

Deputy PM Dar vows to enhance partnership with ASEAN

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan has reaffirmed its desire to enhancing its partnership with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in its quest for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region.

Ishaq Dar termed ASEAN as a model of regional integration and collective progress, demonstrating remarkable achievements in economic development, social cohesion, and diplomatic engagement.

He said that Pakistan holds in high regard the significant role ASEAN plays in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity within the Asia-Pacific region.

The foreign minister said that Pakistan's relations with ASEAN are underpinned by a shared commitment to principles of mutual respect, non-interference, and constructive engagement.

He said Pakistan have been an active partner in ASEAN's dialogue mechanisms and have sought to deepen our cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, education, culture, and people-to-people exchanges.

symbolises the enduring spirit of unity and cooperation among the Southeast Asian nations. It is a privilege to celebrate this milestone alongside our ASEAN friends.

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He said that Pakistan holds in high regard the significant role ASEAN plays in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity within the Asia-Pacific region.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Chairman Pakistan Engineering Council Ishaq Ahmed Qureshi meeting with Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

CM Bugti hints at ending...

Continued from page 1

fulfilled," Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Hamood-ur-Rehman said while talking to this scribe.

About the recent development, the DC disclosed that except Gwadar, the cellular network has fully been restored, coastal highway leading to Karachi from Gwadar is partially opened while people coming from other areas to Gwadar are being checked, quashment of the FIR has been notified.

other benefits across the country on a Balochistan domicile, the Government of Balochistan is digitizing all legal documents, including local and domicile certificates, he while talking to the media at the inauguration of the computerized arms license issuance center at the Deputy Commissioner's Office Quetta.

Additional Chief Secretary Zahid Saleem, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Imran Zarkoon and Deputy Commissioner Quetta Saad bin Asad accompanied the CM.

Asif sees opportunity for renewed ties with BD amid political shift

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Thursday described the recent political change in Bangladesh as a welcome development and an opportunity to start a new era of goodwill between the two nations.

Speaking to a private news channel, he emphasized the importance of working towards mending past tensions and fostering a positive relationship with Bangladesh.

He noted that India's influence was significant during the tenure of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, stating that it marked the end of an "Indian-backed government" in Bangladesh.

Speakers highlight benefits of mother's milk

QUETTA (APP): A seminar was held on Thursday on the benefits of mother's milk and its awareness under the auspices of Balochistan Nutrition Directorate and with the support of UNICEF here at a local hotel of Quetta.

Commenting on the event, nutrition specialists, senior doctors and other speakers said that the purpose of celebrating breastfeeding week every year is to highlight the benefits of breast milk in the society.



They said infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months for optimal health and growth. Linking breastfeeding to mother health, they said mother feed is not only for the child, but those mothers who feed their children themselves are protected from many diseases including breast cancer and obesity.

The speakers said that the Balochistan Nutrition Department is playing a key role in creating awareness about breastfeeding, but other members of the society also need to contribute in this work.

Imran Jatoi, nutrition specialist of UNICEF, also gave a detailed briefing on breastfeeding in the seminar. Director Nutrition Balochistan Naqem Zarkoon, Dr. Tahir Zehri, Dr. Attaullah Bizenjo, Dr. Habibullah Babar, Dr. Maryam Shoaib, Dr. Shaikat Baloch, Dr. Abid Panizai, Dr. Sami Gul, Sultan Tareen and other important personalities were present on this occasion.

Unprecedented cooperation...

Continued from page 1

He called for the efforts to wipe out Fitna al-Khawarij - a term referring to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan - which he said was involved in anti-Pakistan activities despite claiming to be a Pakistani. He also criticized the use of social media to spread lies and propaganda - particularly after 2018 - instead of appreciating the government's efforts for public services.

He said even the army soldiers, who sacrificed their lives to protect millions of other children from being orphaned, were being humiliated on social media.

and said that no force could obstruct the country's development if the nation was determined to achieve its goal.

Prime Minister Shehbaz told the gathering that the government was making all-out efforts to address the economic challenges and expected the upcoming IMF program to be the last one. At the same time, it had scrapped Rs50 billion to support the power consumers of the protected category consuming up to 200 units. But the consumers using 200-500 units of electricity were still under the burden, he added.

However, he assured the gathering that the coalition government and the COAS were in consultation to work out a comprehensive plan to ease the inflation-stricken people and the provinces would soon announce their respective plans in this regard.

He said the IMF Program was a compulsion to bring economic about stability, productive employment and reforms in the FBR and power sector.

Naseem Shah vows to give nation gift of Champions Trophy

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan fast bowler, Naseem Shah stressing the need of unity, solidarity in cricket team to deal with future challenges has vowed to give Pakistani nation gift of Champions Trophy.

Talking to media person at Islamabad Club ground on occasion of the training camp of Pakistan Shaheens, he said that he was back to cricket team after long and will put his all efforts to restore his form. He said, "It is honour for me to play for Pakistan Shaheens and it is best opportunity for me to return to international cricket."



QUETTA: Adviser to Chief Minister on Labour and Manpower Sardar Ghulam Rasool Umrani presenting the shield to Provincial Education Minister Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani at the end of the consultation workshop.

COAS resolves to block ...

Continued from page 1

Pakhtunkhwa had rendered great sacrifices in the war against terrorism and the Armed Forces along with the nation stand with them appreciating their efforts.

For more than 40 years, he said Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees, adding, "We are explaining to them not to oppose their neighbour, brotherly Islamic country and long time friend for the sake of subversive Kharijite (referring to TTP)."

He said the Kharijite were a great strife or fitnah in the society as Allama Iqbal said: "Education may be a fitna if it diviates you from Allah Almighty. Property, children, estates may also be temptation or strife if it diverse you from justice; and the sword for injustice will be a strife including the slogan of Takbeer."

He underscored that no power in the world could harm Pakistan because this country was built to last. "Millions of Asim Munir, millions of politicians and millions of scholars are sacrificed for Pakistan because the country is more important to us," he said. "If you want to know the importance of the state, ask Iraq, Syria and Libya," he added.

He queried that the inimical elements who used to claim that they had dumped the two nations theory into the Bay of Bengal, "where are they today?"

He said "We ask people to opt for peaceful protest for their demands."

The COAS speaking on extremism said, "Allah says that there is no compulsion in religion. Crime and smugglers mafia are supporting terrorism." The anarchy was spread

through social media, he added.

Speaking on the honorable Prophethood, the Army Chief said, "No one has the courage to desecrate the glory of the Holy Prophet (SAW). If someone tries to create anarchy in Pakistan, by God, we will stand against him."

The Army chief said, "Partition of Kashmir is an incomplete agenda of Indopak. My heart cries out over the atrocities in Palestine and Gaza. We should draw a lesson from Palestine that we have to protect ourselves and make Pakistan strong."

"The government is fulfilling its commitment regarding the agreement as 90 percent of protestors held under three MPO have been released while working is on to release the remaining within a day, he added.

It may be recalled that BYC demands include the release of all arrested participants of sit-ins, withdrawing of all cases, and registration of FIRs against those involved in the killing of BYC activists in Gwadar and Noshki.

The headway between government and BYC will help bring the life to normalcy in many cities, including the port city of Gwadar.

Meanwhile Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, on Thursday said the issuance of arms licenses in Quetta has been digitized under a one-window operation. To permanently address the complaints of obtaining jobs and

other benefits across the country on a Balochistan domicile, the Government of Balochistan is digitizing all legal documents, including local and domicile certificates, he while talking to the media at the inauguration of the computerized arms license issuance center at the Deputy Commissioner's Office Quetta.

Additional Chief Secretary Zahid Saleem, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Imran Zarkoon and Deputy Commissioner Quetta Saad bin Asad accompanied the CM.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti enquiring about health of a patient during his visit to Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (SMBZAN) Institute of Cardiology Quetta

PBBF announces Independence Day basketball C'ship schedule

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) has announced the schedule for the Independence Day Inter-Provincial Basketball Championship for Men and Women, set to commence on Saturday, August 10th, at the Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad. According to Ouj-e-Zahoor, the organizing secretary of the championship and the general secretary of the Federal Basketball Association (FBA), all arrangements have been completed for the successful five-day championship. The event is being organized under the supervision of the Federal Basketball Association in collaboration with the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB).

He further informed that this year is especially significant as it's the first time a Woman's Inter-Provincial Basketball Championship is being organized.

Six teams in both men's and women's events have been divided into two pools. In the men's event, Pool A includes Punjab, Sindh, and Islamabad (B), while Pool B comprises Balochistan, KP, and Islamabad (A). Similarly, in the women's event, Pool A includes Punjab, Balochistan, and Islamabad (B), and Pool B includes Islamabad (A), KP, and Sindh.



KARACHI: Women supporters of Pakistan Markazi Muslim League protest against inflation during rally in Karachi.

TENDER NOTICE

TSE-242508513323 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, Mastung 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%

S.No	Name of Works	E/Cost
1	CONST. OFFICE BUILDINGS OF TWO NOS OF UNION COUNCIL 11 AND 9 MASTUNG	20,400,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 14,280,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2 % 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 2,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 23 August, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 23 August, 2024 till 11:00 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 12:00 PM Address: Mastung Phone no: 1234567812 Email: nti@gmail.com

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR LOCAL GOVT, MASTUNG

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-242508513953 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. 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 Project Director Raising of Balochistan Constabulary 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%

S.No	Name of Works	E/Cost
1	Construction of Wing Headquarters at Dear Allah Yar (Naseerabad)	125,620,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 87,934,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-4 and above (Upto 200 million) In Relevant Category And Specialized Code is CE09(i) (Sewerage Works), CE09(ii) (Water Supply), CE10(i) (General Civil Engineering Works), EE11(vi) (General Electrical Works Only). Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 28 August, 2024 till 11:30 AM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 12:30 PM on EPPS System Address: Special Branch Building, first floor, Staff College Road, Quetta Phone no: 0819203267 Email: projectbalochistanconstabulary@gmail.com

Project Director Raising of Balochistan Constabulary

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Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi meets Chairman Senate; emphasizes joint efforts for regional peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Saudi delegation led by Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi Dr. Salah bin Mohammad Al-Budair on Thursday met with Senate Chairman Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani at the Parliament House during their visit to Pakistan.

Chairman Gilani highlighted the long-standing history of cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia across various sectors. He emphasized that the relations between the two countries are rooted in religious, cultural, and moral values. He further noted the significance of the Holy Mosques, particularly Makkah and Medina, as sacred sites for the Muslim Ummah.

Welcoming Imam Al-Budair to Pakistan, Chairman Gilani remarked that his presence in the country is a testament to the strong and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. He added that un-

der the leadership of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia has always been a sincere friend of Pakistan.

Chairman Gilani briefed the esteemed guest on the overall regional situation, also highlighting the issues of Kashmir and Palestine. He stressed that the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah are shared, and unity is the need of the hour to address them. He also underscored the importance of joint efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region and the world.

Chairman Gilani emphasized the importance of enhancing cooperation in the fields of religious education and research with Saudi Arabia. He expressed Pakistan's desire to engage in academic exchanges and initiate joint research projects with the Kingdom. He also called for accelerat-

ing the exchange of parliamentary delegations, noting that such exchanges would help bring the people of both nations closer.

Furthermore, Chairman Gilani stressed the need to further strengthen trade and economic relations between the two countries. He remarked that Dr. Salah bin Mohammad Al-Budair's visit would contribute to deepening the friendship and brotherhood between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Chairman Gilani reiterated Pakistan's commitment to working alongside Saudi Arabia to achieve shared goals and address common challenges. He also noted that the people of Pakistan hold a special place in their hearts for Masjid-e-Nabawi, which he described as a symbol of unity, peace, and devotion.

Chairman Gilani conveyed his best wishes for the leadership of Saudi Arabia.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi meets with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in Federal Capital.

Govt committed to make Pakistan polio-free: Additional DG EPI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Additional Director General Health Services EPI, Dr. Samra Khurram said on Thursday that the authorities are leaving no stone unturned in their quest to make Pakistan a polio-free country saying that a comprehensive review of the existing polio drive strategy is underway with experts.

In an exclusive interview with PTV news channel, she assured that the government's determination to end polio is evident in its proactive approach where every possible measure is being taken to enhance the efficacy of the

polio vaccination campaigns.

By leveraging the expertise of researchers and stakeholders, the government aims to plug the gaps in the system and ensure that no child is left unprotected against this debilitating disease, she added.

With renewed commitment and a robust strategy, Pakistan is poised to make a decisive push towards a polio-free future, she mentioned.

Dr. Samra Khurram also expressed her deep concern over the persistence of polio cases in Pakistan, despite the

government's efforts to eradicate the disease.

"It is a tragedy that children in Pakistan continue to fall prey to a disease that can be easily prevented with a vaccine that the government brings to people's doorsteps," she lamented.

She emphasized that the polio vaccine is a safe and effective way to protect children from the debilitating effects of polio. She urged parents to take responsibility for ensuring that their children receive the full course of vaccination, as prescribed by the government's vaccination schedule.

Talal dismisses PTI founder's apology offer as 'face-saving attempt'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Talal Chaudhry on Thursday fired back at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's offer to tender a conditional apology for the May 9 incidents, terming it a "face-saving tactic" that comes too little, too late.

Talking to a private news channel, Chaudhry slammed Khan's attempt to justify the violent clashes that erupted on May 9, which resulted in widespread property damage and injuries to several individuals.

The PML-N leader demanded an unconditional apology from Khan, holding him squarely responsible for the chaos and destruction unleashed by his party's supporters.

He said that the person who 'confessed' to the crime is now demanding evidence. Talal Chaudhry has revealed that Imran Khan's own family and party workers were at the forefront of the May 9 violence.

He said that the PTI 'desecrated' military installations, sensitive buildings, and even attacked our national TV station and Parliament House.

It is time for Imran Khan to take responsibility and apologize sincerely, without conditions. Anything less would be an insult to the nation, he stressed.

Replying a question, he vehemently demanded swift justice for the martyred and innocent civilians who lost their lives in the May 9 incidents. He emphasized that the nation will not tolerate any further delays in bringing the perpetrators to book. Chaudhry asserted that the government must take concrete steps to ensure that those responsible for the senseless violence are held accountable and punished accordingly.



ISLAMABAD: Islamic Scholars from Afghanistan and various universities from all over Pakistan posing group photo with Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Judge Supreme Court of Pakistan, at the Federal Judicial Academy.

'Khan advised to rethink his strategy, engage in meaningful dialogues', Senator Siddiqui

ISLAMABAD (APP): The parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in the Senate Senator Irfan Siddiqui Thursday urged Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Imran Khan to adopt a mature approach and appealed to Khan to seek constructive dialogue to address his grievances rather than resorting to immature political tactics.

Talking to a private news channel, Siddiqui emphasized that by engaging in dialogue, Khan can harness the collective wisdom of stakeholders and find solutions that benefit the

country as a whole.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui has urged Imran Khan to take a step towards reconciliation by accepting responsibility for the 9th May incident and apologizing to the nation for any harm caused.

Siddiqui emphasized that this gesture of goodwill is essential for creating a conducive environment for meaningful dialogues with the government.

Furthermore, Siddiqui advised Khan to refrain from criticizing the Army and other institutions, as such rhetoric only serves to further divide the nation.

Gilani pays tribute to Major Tufail on his 66th martyrdom anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani paid tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider) on his 66th martyrdom anniversary.

"Major Tufail Muhammad has sacrificed his life fighting bravely against the enemy in 1958," he said.

He said that Major Tufail Muhammad was awarded the highest military honor, Nishan-e-Haider, in recognition of his bravery and valor.

"The entire nation salutes Major Tufail Muhammad on his 66th martyrdom anniversary," he said, emphasizing that the sacrifices of the martyrs have allowed us to breathe freely.

"The nation takes pride in its brave sons," said Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani. "The sacrifices of the Pakistan armed forces for the motherland will never go in vain."

He said that the sacrifices of the martyrs teach us lessons of unity, brotherhood, and patriotism.

Yusuf Raza said that May Allah Almighty elevate the ranks of Shaheed Major Tufail Muhammad.

Chinese delegation keen to invest in Islamabad's development projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Chinese delegation in a meeting with Chairman CDA, Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Thursday expressed their keen interest to invest in development projects of Islamabad.

The meeting focused on exploring avenues for collaboration and investment in key sectors. During the briefing, the delegation expressed desire to invest in the project of transferring CDA offices and streetlights to solar energy.

This initiative aligns with country's goal of promoting renewable energy sources and reducing carbon emissions.

Muhammad Ali Randhawa welcomed global investors, particularly from China, to invest in Islamabad's development projects.

He assured the delegation that the Capital Development Authority (CDA) would extend full support to facilitate investments.

The meeting also discussed other upcoming projects of CDA, including the Silicon Valley and Four Tier Data projects for IT.

The delegation was briefed on the details of these projects, highlighting their potential for growth and investment.

CDA chairman for connecting cycle tracks to metro stations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Thursday emphasized the importance of connecting cycle tracks with metro and other bus stations in Islamabad.

The consultants from Asian Development Bank (ADB) gave a detailed briefing to Chairman CDA on proposed cycle tracks in Islamabad. The meeting was held via Zoom aimed at introducing an affordable and alternative mode of transportation and recreation in the Capital City. Chairman Randhawa stressed that the project should be developed according to international standards while being cost-effective.

Dastgir lauds PML-N for respecting state institutions, its belief in democratic norms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Khurram Dastgir on Thursday praised that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)'s respect for institutions is rooted in its belief in the importance of democratic norms and the rule of law.

Talking to a private news channel, Dastgir argued that this approach has allowed the party to maintain a positive relationship with the army and other institutions, even when they have been in opposition.

On the other hand he criticised that the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had set up precedent of taking U-turns and maligned the state institutions' image solely for his personal gains. Dastgir's scathing remarks exposed the PTI leader's alleged hypocrisy and self-serving agenda and argued that such flip-flopping has become a hallmark of the PTI's politics, undermining the trust of the people and the integrity of the political process. Dastgir urged the people to recognize this reality and reject the PTI's divisive and negative politics, which have hindered Pakistan's progress and stability.

New Centralized Complaint Management System to facilitate BISP beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): The new Centralized Complaint Management System developed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) will facilitate beneficiaries of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) to redress their complaints efficiently. This was shared during a meeting between Secretary BISP Amer Ali Ahmad with the technical team of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) here Thursday.

The ADB team presented a detailed briefing to Secretary BISP on the development of a new iGMS Centralized Complaint Management System.

During the briefing, the ADB team informed the Secretary that the newly developed system aimed to enhance the redressal process for BISP beneficiaries by generating a unique ID/Tracking number, allowing users to monitor and track the entire life cycle of their complaints. The Secretary BISP emphasized the importance of an efficient complaint reporting mechanism and suggested the introduction of a simple complaint form specifically for BISP beneficiaries. He stressed that this would make the system more accessible and user-friendly.

Info ministry organises quiz show among students to celebrate I-Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Islamabad organized a Quiz Show in commemoration of 78th Independence Day Celebrations of Pakistan here on Thursday at Information Service Academy.

A large number of students, teachers from different government schools of ICT and officials from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and Information Service Academy

had also participated in the quiz show.

Cash prizes were distributed among the winners and runner up students teams of the quiz show competition.

Executive Director General Information Service Academy Mr Arshad Munir distributed the cash prizes and appreciation certificates among runner up team of IMCB G/9-4 and the winner team of IMCG F/10-2.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying flags on roadside at Jinnah Super to mark the 78th Independence Day celebrations.

Parliament Lodges Phase-I expansion to be completed during current fiscal year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's special efforts have borne fruit as the expansion project of the Parliament Lodges is now nearing completion.

Upon assuming office, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq immediately ordered the swift completion of the project. Both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker held multiple meetings with the relevant institutions to ensure progress.

Taking strict notice of the increased costs of the project, the Speaker ordered that the project may

be completed as soon as possible with minimal expenses. He warned that further delays in construction and costs will not be tolerated.

Due to the Speaker's efforts, the required funds for the project's construction have been provided. He has also directed legal action against all relevant institutions in the event of further delays.

The delays have caused significant difficulties for the Members of Parliament, with many expressing their concerns on multiple occasions.

AIOU to host 37th AAOU int'l conference

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is set to host the 37th annual international conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) from October 15th to 17th, 2024.

According to the AIOU, this significant event will bring together over 100 vice-chancellors, rectors, and professors from leading open universities across Asia, alongside approximately 250 national education experts and researchers.

Members of AAOU's Executive Body and General Body will also participate in the conference, highlighting its importance in the field of open and distance learning (ODL).

The Vice-Chancellor of AIOU has appointed Dr. Zahid Majeed, Director of the Directorate of Academic Planning and Course Production, as the Conference Coordinator. Reflecting on the university's legacy, Dr. Majeed noted that AIOU successfully hosted the first AAOU conference in 1988 and the second in 2013.



ISLAMABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari offering Fateha during the condolence meeting over the sad demise of Nazir Dhoki, PPP Media Coordinator, at Sector I/10 in Islamabad.

Dr Shafqat says: Bangladeshis erode Modi's influence in Dhaka after defeat of Hindutva in India

ISLAMABAD (APP): Research fellow at Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and a specialist on South Asian Affairs, Dr Shafqat Munir on Thursday expressed the optimism that with the fall of Hasina Wajid led government in Bangladesh, a new power balance in South Asia would help strengthen Bangladesh-China-Pakistan regional initiative for peace, development and prosperity.

Talking about the recent uprising in Bangladesh in a SDTV programme, Dr Shafqat said that the Awami League's politics was based on hatred and divide policy without realizing the sentiments of three generations of Bangladesh as she could not maintain the heroism of her late father for long and with her largely pro-Indian stance, she keep distancing herself from a large number of people who disagreed with her politics of

ICT Admin prepares for Annual Urs of Imam Bari

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the annual Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Kazmi, known as Bari Imam, approaches, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration gears up to ensure a smooth event for the followers.

For this purpose, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, visited the shrine of Imam Bari Sarkar to oversee the preparations for the upcoming Urs, said the spokesman of ICT administration.

Accompanied by the Assistant Commissioner and senior officials from the Capital Development Authority (CDA), including the Director General of Building Control, Director of Sanitation, and officials from the Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA).



ISLAMABAD: Motorists facing difficulties due to damage service road along Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed Road after the heavy monsoon rain in the Federal Capital.

NDMA says: Flash Flooding in Chenab & Ravi adjoining Nullahs; heavy rains may trigger Urban Flooding

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)'s National Emergencies Operation Center anticipated that extremely heavy rainfall over upper catchments of Rivers Chenab, Ravi and Sutlej may cause an increase in water flows in these rivers.

Consequently, medium to High Level Flood flows is expected in River Chenab along with Nullahs of Rivers Chenab and Ravi

from August 10-13. Moreover, flows in River Sutlej are subject to releases from Indian Side likely to trigger flash flooding and land sliding in hilly and mountainous regions of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in next 24 to 48 hours, an NDMA news release said. "Heavy rains may cause urban flooding in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Lahore,

Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sargodha, Faisalabad, and other urban areas. Rain-wind / thundershowers with isolated very heavy falls expected in Kalat, Zhoib, Sibbi, Naseerabad, Khuzdar, Awaran and Barkhan. In KP, rain-wind / thundershowers with isolated very heavy falls expected in Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Galiyat, Haripur, Buner, Swabi, Nowshera, Mardan, Malakand, Mohmand.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistani students are protesting against the blocking of visa applicants of the Indian company BLS European countries Italy.

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Temporary relief

The government must have heaved a sigh of relief on securing commitments from allies China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE to roll over Pakistan's bilateral debt of \$12bn for yet another year.

This rekindles hopes of approval of the new \$7bn IMF bailout, crucial to shore up Pakistan's official international reserves and meet its foreign financing needs, by the lender's executive board later this month. These loans come up for a rollover at different times every year because we are unable to repay them due to a liquidity crunch. That these countries have apparently declined, or deferred, Pakistan's request to extend the maturity period of the loans to three to five years to provide greater predictability over the tenure of the IMF programme shows that even friendly nations are hesitant to bet on us over the long term.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, who broke the news on Tuesday, noted that our projected financial needs stood at around \$3-5bn for the next three years, and that these funds could be managed comfortably. According to him, the government had received offers from foreign commercial banks for concessional loans and had hired a Chinese adviser to launch the Panda bond to initially raise \$300m amid efforts to reprofile the Chinese energy debt of \$15bn for a longer period to ease pressure on the fragile external account.

Indeed, Pakistan's economy, which is characterised by a shrinking GDP, a balance-of-payments crisis and high inflation, has 'stabilised' in recent months thanks to the emergency loan of \$3bn from the Fund. However, its short- to medium-term outlook remains uncertain. The country needs nearly \$25bn annually to finance its large trade deficit and repay its foreign debt, while it has around \$9bn in its reserves.

The new IMF programme is expected to help consolidate this newfound stability but the quest for faster and sustainable economic growth will remain elusive for years even if we move in the right direction. Most of us, including the policymakers, believe that compliance with the IMF's tough conditions and its successful reviews constitute the much-needed structural reforms.

This, however, is misleading. Our deep-seated problems need tough and politically unpopular reforms beyond just securing a new bailout from the lender of last resort; the IMF loan will provide only temporary relief. The IMF is here to simply ensure that the country carries out its external financial commitments, because boosting economic growth or reforms in a client economy does not constitute the Fund's mandate as such. Some 20 years ago, Pakistan's economy was 18pc the size of India's; now that figure is only 9pc. This is in spite of five bailouts from the IMF during that period. This means we must look beyond the temporary support of bailouts to overcome our crisis.

S. Akbar Zaidi

In 2013, the World Bank indicated that Bangladesh could become the 'next China'. While the bank may have been focusing on the economic and demographic dividends which Bangladesh might have gained over other countries, in many ways the country replicated recipes of authoritarianism with far less panache than practised elsewhere.

Nevertheless, in the decade since that prescient view, Bangladesh has grown economically and socially far faster than other countries in South Asia, outpacing both India and Pakistan.

While the economic and social factors which led to the growing economic boom have been well documented, as is often the case, non-economic factors have usually been overlooked. Just as in 2004, with 'India Shining', the BJP government lost the elections, so too, in 2024, the apparent success of the Modi economic miracle did not translate into the 400-plus seats the BJP expected. Economic growth and per-

ceived prosperity without distributional concerns and inclusion delivers 'success' only so far.

The Bangladesh development model has been much discussed in academic and policy circles, and there is much to learn from it. The fact that Bangladesh was able to reduce its population growth rate after independence from 2.5 to one per cent today has meant that Bangladesh is now just the eighth most populated country. While in 1971, East Pakistan had a larger population than West Pakistan, today Pakistan has the dubious distinction of having one of the highest population growth rates — 2.55pc — in the world, making it the fifth most populated country. In the last many decades, while Pakistan's per capita income has shrunk, as has the economy, the country can proudly boast huge success in increasing its population.

One major reason for the success of the Bangladesh model has been the primary role appropriated by women in the social and economic sectors. With high literacy rates and an educated women's workforce, the conse-

quences have been twofold. One, as expected, once women enter the workforce and start earning their own income — and are not dependent on father, brother, son or husband — they begin to assert their agency as women and income earners. The ability to claim an income, while often lower compared to men's, allows women to emerge as independent individuals with economic and social power. With a large number of women, particularly educated ones, in the workforce, not only does the economy prosper but, more importantly, so do women.

Another factor related to women working means that women delay marrying since they are now earning and are possibly more independent, and hence put off having children. This is one reason, other than the active use and promotion of contraceptives, which has led to the lowering of the population in Bangladesh. Moreover, educated women — Bangladesh's female literacy rate is 76pc, Pakistan's just 48pc — especially those who are earning, choose spouses who may also be better educated

and financially better off. This has an impact on the upbringing of their children. One can add to this the fact that the now global microfinance revolution started with Grameen Bank, focusing almost exclusively on women and giving them the means and ability to earn independently. Women have been one of the core pillars of the economic boom in Bangladesh. The 'next China' argument arises also as Bangladesh became the world's second largest exporter of garments, due to many reasons, but importantly, because of an educated female labour force. Bangladesh exports are more than \$60 billion, of which readymade garments constitute \$44bn. The total exports of Pakistan, the fifth largest country in the world, are a mere \$32bn.

Two other aspects of the Bangladesh model are worth citing. One, after independence, Bangladesh chose to become a secular country constitutionally, albeit in practice the state and society have evolved differently. Nevertheless, a choice was made by the government. Even though secularism was removed

from the Bangladesh constitution by one military dictator, the supreme court declared it unconstitutional and illegal, restoring secularism as one of the pillars of the state. Second, after military coups and martial laws, elected parliaments marginalised the role of the military, making it subservient to the elected representatives.

In some ways, the success of the Bangladesh model also caused its own numerous contradictions, with the rise of the urbanising, educated middle classes not just content with unequal economic prosperity, but also demanding fairness and justice in citizenship and participation. Events like the Rana Plaza collapse, which killed 1,134 people, revealed many a problem with corrupt, Third World crony capitalism. The Shahbagh movement, machete attacks against secularists, and numerous other social responses to injustice have all been part of the Bangladesh model, although they are seldom highlighted. Also often overlooked is the authoritarian one-party state, a repressive apparatus without an opposition,

and with compliant state institutions stifling voices of dissent. No development model, whether of the Bangladeshi, Malaysian, or, especially, Chinese kind, idealised by so many, can be easily replicated; each has its specific conditions, and requires particular understanding and implementation. There is no blueprint which can be exported. And so is the case with revolution.

As many Pakistanis celebrate the dramatic revolution which took place in Bangladesh, as they must, and ask when this will happen to 'us' and when will 'our oppressors' be forced out, it is best to pause and consider the numerous contradictions which make every revolution different. Some have used the caricature of the Arab Spring to model revolution, forgetting that one dictator replaced another, or allowed another country to be parcelled out into mafias for warlords. This does not count as progress. We don't need to look far to understand that the re-emergence of the military in Bangladesh as the main arbitrator may not bode well for democratic politics. — Courtesy Dawn

The Bangladesh model**Paying the price**

Khurram Husain

Those without a memory can be excused if they think this is the first time a massive public controversy has arisen around the question of electricity, both its supply and price. But the clamour around electricity supply and pricing issues is actually very old, with perhaps the first major public issue arising in 1998.

Ironically, back then, too, it was about people's inability to understand the concept of 'capacity payments' in private power generation, and Nawaz Sharif's government launching a massive assault on all the independent power producers (IPPs) to force them into a settlement of some sort. In a sense, we have come full circle today, a quarter of a century later.

There is a simple reason why we keep going round and round in the same circle. The fact is that Pakistan is rapidly moving into a permanently high-cost energy environment. Domestic gas accounted for almost

half of the country's primary energy needs even as late as 2010, but the declining gas fields since then means Pakistan has to shift to imported LNG to plug the gap. And imported LNG is frightfully expensive in comparison to domestic gas.

According to projections in the Energy Outlook Report released in 2022, Pakistan's consumption of gas will continue to rise, but it will increasingly consist of imported LNG rather than domestic gas. "To meet the demand shortfall, almost three times more LNG will need to be acquired by 2030 compared to current importation quantities in the country," says the report. In 2020, something like three quarters of all gas consumption in the country was from domestic gas, the rest being imported. By 2030, it will have roughly inverted, with around 60 per cent of all gas being imported and the rest being domestic. This proportion will continue to fall unless a major gas

discovery is made, and the prospects of that are dim.

This is the fundamental, underlying reality at play, which is inexorably driving up energy prices in Pakistan year after year. More reliance on imported energy means more vulnerability to exchange rate fluctuations. Which means that our energy pricing begins to respond to other dysfunctions in the economy, such as devaluations driven by money printing to plug fiscal deficits.

A few weeks ago, I wrote an article referring to all this noise and fury around 'capacity charges' as a fight among billionaires; nothing that we common citizens have a stake in. I ended that article by saying the main driver of power pricing surge is devaluation, and invited readers to go check and find out for themselves.

One representative of these billionaires was kind enough to take up my invitation and ran some numbers of his own. The gentleman in

question is the chairman of the All Pakistan Textile Millowners Association, one of the country's largest and most powerful industry associations, and also the group that is leading the charge against the IPPs and their capacity charges.

Responding, he wrote that, in dollar terms, power tariffs rose by up to 60pc between 2019 and 2024. This, in his view, rebuts my argument that rupee devaluation, more than anything else, was driving power tariffs up. However, it isn't. Because what he did not say is how much tariffs rose in rupee terms in that same period.

I have done the numbers, and since I am just a humble columnist, let me just share with you my own bills. In July 2019, I was billed at the rate of Rs23.4 per unit. In July 2024, I was billed at Rs69 per unit.

Other things were broadly equal. Government charges, for example, were somewhere around 25pc of my bill

back in July 2019. They are around the same percentage today. And the full impact of the price hike announced mid-July had not yet been reflected in my bill, because all the units prior to the notification of the revised prices had been billed on the old tariff.

My math tells me to expect up to Rs80 per unit in the next bill. This is an increase of somewhere between 300 and 350pc, depending on the level of the next bill. Get my point?

The APTMA chair tells me that my bill rose 60pc in dollar terms between 2019 and 2024. I tell him that my bill rose by more than 300pc in rupee terms in the same time period. It is the fall in the value of the rupee that is driving power prices up, because in 2019 the rupee oscillated between 140 and 160 to a dollar, whereas in 2024 it stood at 280 to the dollar. And that is what has killed our energy bills more than anything else.

This is not going to

stop. As time passes, more and more of Pakistan's energy will have to reflect global market prices. The days of cheap domestic gas are over. Finished. The rest of us are being forced to accept this reality, and increasingly people are finding a way out by investing in solar panels. But a segment of our industrial elite refuses to acknowledge the permanence of high energy prices. This segment invested all their effort in the 2010s lobbying around gas supply and pricing.

Now they have turned their attention to lobbying for subsidised electricity. They will do everything they can to convince the state to pull their (and only their) energy prices down. One thing they will not do is innovate and learn to solve their own problems. Because let's be frank: they are not businessmen. They are professional lobbyists for an industry that ought to have died out many decades ago in Pakistan.

Heart drops

F.S. Aijazuddin

Readers and Leonardo da Vinci are owed an apology. The tableau at the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics that caused such offence was not a pastiche of Leonardo's iconic mural Last Supper.

The organisers have clarified that the tableau depicted a bacchanalian scene showing an assembly of Greek gods, led by Dionysus, the god of wine. The inspiration came from a painting — The Feast of the Gods — by the 17th-century Dutch artist Jan Harmensz van Bijlert.

Was there no symbol closer to France's reputation as the capital of wine than Greek gods and a Dutch painter?

Whatever other lessons the French have learned from the 2024 Olympics, one is that too many cooks can spoil a bouillon, even in France. The other, never to take decisions by committee, for didn't a wit warn that 'a camel is a horse designed by a committee'.

The Olympic events, spread over the last week in different venues, have confirmed France's administrative talents. The stunning gardens of Versailles palace could not have been a nobler backdrop for the riding competitions, a fusion of equestrian elegance and ineffable taste.

The 2024 Olympics will be remembered, though, for unexpected issues that emerged.

Gender, for one. For millennia, men and women were classed as opposites, compatible but uniquely separate. Being a hermaphrodite (the word comes from the fusion of the Greek deities Hermes and Aphrodite) put one in a no-man's or no-woman's land.

Parisians have for long tolerated the nightly infestation of its Bois de Boulogne gardens by provocative professionals from Brazil. The Olympic

organisers had no problem with gay divers like Greg Louganis (gold medalist, Los Angeles, 1984, Seoul, 1988) or Tom Daley (gold, Tokyo 2020), even when Daley spent his off-platform time knitting for his partner.

Two boxers — Imane Khelif of Algeria and Lin Yu-ting of Taiwan — were slammed by critics for competing as women, even though they had failed gender eligibility tests sometime in the past.

Will the IOC be forced to create a new category for trans people? They have already provided for national ambiguity by allowing refugees to compete as displaced nationals, and athletes from Russian and Belarusian to be admitted as Individual Neutral Athletes.

For some competitors, the use of technology has proved a bane. Photo-finishes are a tool of the past. Now, even turns in a swimming relay are scrutinised with shark-eyed precision. In the women's 200-metre individual swimming medley, Alex Walsh finished the backstroke and was going into the breaststroke. That millisecond turn was deemed illegal and Walsh (who would otherwise have won a bronze medal) forfeited her prize.

Similarly, the British medalist Luke Greenbank thought he had qualified in the 200m back-stroke heat for the semifinals. To his grief, he was disqualified because he was "completely underwater past the red 15-metre mark following a turn". They were no grou-nds for review. Replays could not be refuted. Understandably, he felt "absolutely gutted".

For every Olympic medal winner — whether gold, silver or bronze — there are hundreds of disappointed athletes who have spent years preparing for the event. As one athlete put it: "We have

ups and downs. Unfortunately, you can't pick the days they come on."

If one has to admit partiality in favour of any single contestant, it would have to be for the Serbian tennis ace Novak Djokovic.

Djokovic has won an all-time record of 24 Grand Slam titles. He achieved a triple Grand Slam by winning each of the four majors at least three times. "Djokovic is also the only man in tennis history to be the reigning champion of all four majors at once across three different surfaces."

In the recent Wimbledon men's final last month, a 37-year-old Djokovic lost to the 21-year-old Carlos Alcaraz. Djokovic had reached the age when men look forward to playing with un-born grandchildren. Critics wrote him off. But Djokovic craved an Olympic gold as the glittering capstone to a pyramid of hard, unrelenting endeavour.

On Sunday, the sun and the Serbian saints shone on Djokovic. In a tense duel, he secured his medal. Djokovic wept in victory; Alcaraz wept in defeat. Neither need feel shame: 'Les larmes sont les gouttes du coeur.' — tears are the drops of the heart.

By the time of future Olympics (Los Angeles, 2028, and Brisbane, 2032) the world will welcome a fresh crop of competitors. An increasing number will be black, representing traditionally white nations. The IOC should dispense with nationality and gender, and instead honour individuals.

We should applaud those who, despite a lifetime of commitment, never gained a medal, for many of them will no longer be athletes. They will have only memories of having been one. -- Courtesy Dawn

The voiceless

Syed Saadat

Whenever one reads news items, attributed to a 'source', about the IMF's recommendations to further tax salaried individuals, one always wonders why the Fund never singles out the tax exemptions given to military organisations like the FWO and NLC, or property tax exemptions given to residents of DHAs. One asks why the IMF is hell-bent on taxing salaried individuals, to the extent of pushing them into a state of chronic depression.

I got the answer to this question in a recent casual meeting with an official from the Fund itself. As per this source, the IMF never asks for the salaried class to be taxed; it only asks that tax revenues be increased. Connecting the dots leads one to the realisation that such news items are intentionally fed by the Government of Pakistan to shift the blame on the IMF for the weaknesses inherent in our system. The government lacks the power to tax the powerful sectors, and it all comes down to les misérables — the voiceless salaried class.

When, at a recent press conference, the finance minister was asked the reason for this, he replied that there was no magic wand and that nothing would change overnight. He said we would keep going back to square one unless the untaxed and undertaxed sectors of the economy were brought in the tax net.

This really sums up the fate of the nameless, faceless, voiceless salaried class for many years to come. It would take only one notification to tax the FWO; it would take only one notifica-

tion to remove the exemption of tax on 500 square-yard houses in DHA, it would take only one day to make the pension expenses of military personnel a part of the defence budget. But the problem is that a lot would be done overnight if the finance minister adopted this course.

Though I agree with the finance minister that salaried individuals are the easiest route to raising taxes, can he elaborate on any incentive, including amnesty schemes enjoyed by others, given to salaried individuals over the last couple of decades? Is there a scheme by the Government of Pakistan that gives individuals who cross a certain threshold in the amount of income tax deducted from their salary, privileges like getting preferential treatment at CMHs (they are the only reasonable hospitals in the public sector) or admission fee discounts for their children in public sector universities? The finance minister wants salaried individuals to make this sacrifice for the sake of the IMF deal but is not ready to introduce even a single small incentive for these individuals.

The middle and upper middle class, which is comprised mostly of salaried individuals in Pakistan, is the most unfortunate social class in the country. The poor have already given up on any ambition; this class, however, has ambitions and awareness as well. They know a lot and have too little. They are being decimated by government policies and don't have any mechanism through which to fight back.

You may add value to your individual skills to earn a better living but the government has the final say in your earn-

ings. It is better to be robbed by highway robbers, because at least you can complain about it and it is considered a crime by any court of law. Without getting into too many numbers, let's try to answer a very simple question: has the standard of living of a person earning Rs5 million per annum improved in the last five years, or has it deteriorated drastically? The answer is a no-brainer; the said individual is finding it tougher and tougher to make ends meet because he has to afford a certain lifestyle.

Also, it is pertinent to point out that the riches of an individual working in the private corporate sector or finance sector — like our finance minister, who was president and CEO at a bank until a few months ago — is not the result of government incentives or favours or powerful quarters but his own hard work and many sacrifices by his family in terms of time. The government unabashedly robs a sizable chunk of his earnings and does not provide any incentive whatsoever — not even access to a social media platform like X. Maybe, even unblocking X.com cannot be done overnight?

Lastly, a few weeks ago, the Salaried Class Alliance of Pakistan requested the Supreme Court's intervention in this unfair taxation through a suo motu notice. Truth be told, if your last resort is the Supreme Court in this country, then it is already a lost cause.

Salaried individuals in Pakistan are indeed an apt representation of the following line of Victor Hugo's Les Misérables: "It is nothing to die. It is frightful not to live." -- Courtesy Dawn

Murad targets SEF to bring 300,000 out-of-school children to schools

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has targeted the Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) to establish 300 MicroSchools, bring 300,000 out-of-school to schools, and hire over 600 women learning facilitators and for the purpose approved Rs 800 million. He gave these directives to the SEF while presiding over its board meeting here at CM House on Thursday. The meeting was attended by Minister Education Syed Sardar Shah, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Chairman P&D

Najam Shah, Secretary School Education Zahid Abbasi, Secretary Finance Fayaz Jatoi, MD Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) Kazi Kabir, board members -Qaisar Bengali, Dr Qazi Masood, Dr Mohammad Memon and others. The chief minister approved the expansion of the Accelerated Digital Learning (ADL) program with Teach the World Foundation. The ADL phase II would be for three years. Shah targeted the SEF MD Kazi Kabir to bring 300,000 out-of-school children back to school in

2025 by establishing 300 Digital Micro Schools. He also directed the MD SEF to engage over 600 Women Learning Facilitators to facilitate the teaching process. MD SEF told the CM that the cost of a student would come to Rs 2,200 in the next ADL Phase-II, therefore the CM approved Rs 800 million for SEF. MD SEF Kazi Kabir told the CM that there was a one million enrolment in 2734 schools, 35 Peoples Schools, 223 Centers and 125 Macroschools. 4452 students were being given scholarships. 804

scholarship holders have passed out. The CM directed the SEF to enhance outreach and access to every district. At present, the SEF has officers in six regions and 23 districts. He also said that by 2025-26 the SEF has to launch 1000 Digital classrooms and kick off Learn to Earn - Skill development so that passed-out children could earn their livelihood. Minister of Education Sardar Shah informed the Chief Minister that six public schools, which were previously without proper shelter and non-functional.



LAHORE: A delegation of International Lawyers Association UK Lahore Chapter led by President International Lawyers Association Ashiq Ali Rana in a group photo with Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah chairs a meeting of the Sindh Education Foundation Board, at CM House in Karachi.

Overseas Pakistanis rendering great services to the country: Governor

Independent Report
LAHORE: The delegation of International Lawyers Association UK Lahore Chapter led by President International Lawyers Association Ashiq Ali Rana called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. The delegation presented suggestions to Governor Punjab about overseas desk to solve the problems of Pakistanis living abroad, free legal aid for prisoners involved in minor crimes, training of law students in Punjab universities. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the overseas Pakistanis are rendering great services to

the country in terms of sending valuable foreign exchange. He added that their services are truly recognized. He said that the proposal to set up Overseas Desk in the Governor House is being seriously considered to solve the problems of Overseas Pakistanis. Governor Punjab appreciated the efforts and recommendations of International Lawyers Association Lahore Chapter for Overseas Pakistanis. Governor Punjab further said that it is commendable that Overseas Pakistanis have always helped their fellow countrymen in difficult times. President

International Lawyers Association, Ashiq Ali Rana, while briefing the Governor of Punjab, said that resolving the property disputes and taxation issues of Overseas Pakistanis are the priorities of their association. He further said that there is a need for training of young lawyers in law colleges and universities so that could succeed in professional life. The delegation presented a commemorative shield to the Governor of Punjab. The delegation also invited Governor Punjab to participate in the International Conference organized by International Lawyers Association in UK as Chief Guest.

Ambassador of Tajikistan calls on Governor Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir on Thursday called on Governor Kamran Khan Tessori and discussed bilateral relations, investment opportunities, exchange of delegation and other issues of mutual interest. Talking to Tajik Ambassador, the Governor said that Tajik investors can take advantage of investment opportunities in Sindh and, SIFC project is providing all possible support and assistance to the investors. The Tajik Ambassador said that Tajik

investors are interested in various sectors in Sindh province. He also lauded Governor Sindh's public welfare initiatives. Earlier, the Ambassador of Tajikistan along with Governor Sindh visited IT classes at Governor's House, Bell of Hope and other projects. The Ambassador of Tajikistan highly praised the IT courses and said that such modern programs can be used for capacity building of youth to empower them. He also planted a sapling while participating in the ongoing plantation campaign under the Sindh.

Craftmanship of KP women important for province identity: Kundi

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday emphasized the importance of introducing the craftmanship of women of this province on an international level to ensure their economic empowerment. Speaking at a meeting with a delegation from the Handicraft Association, including Chairperson Maryam Iqbal and Mahira Imad, the Governor highlighted the necessity of

global exposure for these crafts. Governor Kundi announced that a handicraft exhibition was scheduled to take place in Tajikistan in November. He directed the Chambers of Commerce to ensure representation for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's women at the event. He also stressed the need for providing digital skills and market exposure to women involved in handicrafts to ensure their efforts are rewarded.

The Governor noted that promoting the soft image of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa globally was crucial for the province's development and prosperity. He praised the delegation's efforts and accepted an invitation to attend an awards ceremony hosted by the Association. The delegation, in turn, commended the Governor for his initiatives and commitment to women's empowerment.



HYDERABAD: Sarwari Jamaat Head, Makhdoom Jameel-uz-Zaman cutting cake during 85th birth anniversary of late Makhdoom Amin Faheem held in Hyderabad

KP assembly approves salary increase for police personnel

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution to increase the salaries of police personnel in the province. Moved by JUI member Makhdoom Zada, the resolution highlighted the risks faced by police officers in combating terrorism and pointed out the disparity in salaries compared to those in Punjab and Islamabad. The resolution recommends aligning police salaries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with those in the neighboring regions. In addition to the police salary increase, MPA Ijaz Khan presented another resolution addressing public transportation concerns. He emphasized the

success of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system but noted the lack of adequate public transportation on other routes. The resolution calls for the provincial government to introduce new BRT routes on Kabir Road, Warsak Road, and Shah Alam Bridge to Naguman Road. During the session, some resolutions were presented without prior notice, leading to objections from government members who argued that such practices hinder informed decision-making. Speaker Babar Saleem Swati said that resolutions lacking advance notice might not be included in the proceedings unless deemed urgent after consulting the relevant minister.

ANF recovers 188 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 188 kg drugs and arrested six accused, said ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 800 grams ice was recovered from a Jeddah-bound passenger at Multan Airport. 52.8 kg opium and 61.2 kg hashish were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near North Bypass Peshawar and two accused were arrested during the operation. In third operation, 48 kg hashish was recovered from a parcel sent to Karachi from a courier office in Ring Road.

Minister for effective campaign to create zero-waste environment

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq on Thursday directed the waste management companies to conduct special campaigns to increase public awareness regarding zero-waste environment. During a video link meeting of the CEOs of waste management companies across the province held at the Civil Secretariat, the minister reviewed the plan for an efficient and sustainable sanitation system in the province. Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmad Mian, Additional Secretary Maria Tariq also

attended the meeting. The CEOs of the companies informed about progress made so far in their respective areas. Minister Zeeshan Rafiq said that it was the vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to implement a uniform sanitation system throughout Punjab. "A large proportion of the population resides in rural areas, so it is not possible to achieve sanitation targets by neglecting villages", he added. Zeeshan Rafiq said that sanitation challenges could be tackled through outsourcing system.

Mujtaba Shjua visits Municipal Corporation General Hospital

LAHORE (APP): On the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Punjab Finance Minister Mujtaba Shjuar-Rehman visited the Municipal Corporation General Hospital, Kot Khwaja Saeed, on Thursday. During the visit, he assessed the available medical facilities and reviewed the recent upgraded facilities at the hospital. The Minister inspected various departments, engaging with patients to inquire about the quality of care, the

presence of doctors, availability of medicines, and the behavior of the hospital staff. Addressing the hospital staff and the media, the Provincial Minister emphasized that the health sector remains a top priority for the Punjab government, with significant budget allocations directed toward health and education. He highlighted that the upgrade of hospitals across Punjab is currently underway and that within a year, the enhancement work at all hospitals.

18 killed, 1,323 injured in 1,189 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least 18 persons were killed and 1,323 injured in 1,189 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 579 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 744 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals. Furthermore, the analysis showed that 707 drivers, 43 underage drivers, 160 pedestrians, and 474 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes.

Minor girl drowns in canal

FAISALABAD (APP): A minor girl drowned in canal water in the area of Jaranwala Sadar police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Thursday that 3-year-old Eshal Fatima resident of Chak 635/8 was playing outside her house when she accidentally slipped and fell in a nearby canal in Chak 8 Bair Mor on Nankana Road. Receiving information, divers of Rescue 1122 rushed to the spot and fished out the girl.

Minister visits Taxila to review Himat Card registration

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Mal, Sohail Shaukat Butt, made a surprise visit to Thatta Khalil in Taxila to oversee the ongoing registration process for the Himat Card, a welfare initiative aimed at supporting individuals with disabilities on the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. According to a handout on Thursday, during the visit, Minister Butt thoroughly reviewed the registration procedures, receiving a comprehensive briefing from the Director of Social

CPO for foolproof security on Jashn-e-Azadi

FAISALABAD (APP): CPO Kamran Adil has directed foolproof security arrangements on Jashn-e-Azadi. Presiding over a meeting of police officers at police lines here on Thursday, he directed for taking strict security arrangements to control aerial firing, exhibition of weapons and wheele. He said that Jashn-e-Azadi would be celebrated with national zeal and zest but no one could be allowed to take law into their hands. He directed the police officers to formally launch an awareness campaign among the public in this regard.

Compensation for landmine victims referred to standing committee

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly discussed the issue of compensation and aid to victims of landmine blasts during its session presided over by Speaker Babar Saleem Swati here on Thursday. MPA Asif Khan presented a call attention notice, highlighting that despite the passage of 15 years, victims in Upper South Waziristan have not received compensation. He further stated that people whose houses were destroyed during military operations have also not been provided any

assistance, leaving many in severe distress. In response, Law Minister Aftab Alam mentioned that the Relief Department handles this matter and that financial aid is provided to the victims through a committee under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner. He emphasized the importance of this issue and the need for immediate resolution. Housing Minister Dr. Amjad termed the matter a humanitarian issue, noting that such incidents are occurring continuously across the country and need urgent attention.

MNA Tahira visits Nullah Lai to review water level

RAWALPINDI (APP): Member National Assembly (MNA) Tahira Aurangzeb along with Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Engineer Amir Khattak here on Thursday visited Gawalmandi and Pirwadhai areas to review water level in Nullah Lai. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema was also present. Tahira Aurangzeb and Engineer Amir Khattak inspected the water level

in Nullah Lai following heavy rain in twin cities, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Tahira Aurangzeb said, all possible steps were being taken by the Rawalpindi district administration to deal with any emergency and urban flooding. She further said that Nullah Lai was cleaned before start of Monsoon rains on the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Meeting discuss preparations to celebrate I-Day

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Abbottabad, Khalid Iqbal on Thursday chaired a meeting to discuss preparations being made for Independence Day August celebrations. The meeting was also attended by Town Municipal Administration, District Education Officers and officials of concerned departments. Chairing the meeting, DC issued special directives.

Division. The Himat Card initiative is designed to provide financial assistance to individuals with disabilities, who are unable to work, by granting them a quarterly stipend. Speaking to the media, Minister Butt praised Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz for her leadership and commitment to the underprivileged segments of society. He highlighted that the Himat Card is a significant step towards alleviating the financial burden on people with disabilities, noting that the stipend has been recently increased from Rs 7,500 to Rs 10,500 per quarter.

Central Public Park to be established over 84 kanals in FDA City

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) would establish a Central Public Park over 84 kanals of land in FDA City to facilitate the masses. Director General FDA Muhammad Asif Chaudhry while presiding over a meeting here on Thursday said that FDA has designated sites for 47 public parks in various blocks of the FDA City.

However, the Central Public Park would be established in Block A-7 and physical work has started on this project which would sprawling over 84 Kanals of land. He directed the PHA and FDA officers to make the Central Public Park most attractive for the general public by ensuring beautiful landscaping, water pond and other facilities.



RAWALPINDI: Children are playing in the rain water in Arya Mohalla after heavy rain.

Pakistan-Turkey agree to boost business activities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Turkey and Pakistan have agreed to boost up business activities and investment in various fields by enhancing mutual trade and promote economic activities.

It was decided in a Round Table Business Conference co chaired by Trade Minister of Turkey Professor Dr. Omer Bolat and Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan.

Deputy Trade Minister of Turkey Mustafa Tuzcu, He added that

Ambassador in Pakistan Mehmet Pacaci, Presidents of Chambers of Turkey were also accompanied while prominent business community figures from Pakistan joined this session.

Abdul Aleem Khan while addressing the Pakistan-Turkey Business Round Table Conference said that the brotherhood, mutual cooperation and friendly relations of Turkey and Pakistan span decades and these two countries have already entered into economic and joint business agreements.

He added that

Pakistan wants to promote bilateral investment and business ties in various fields with Turkey because it is prime time to increase the economic activities between Turkey and Pakistan.

Aleem Khan welcomed the interest of the business community from Turkey and said that it would benefit both countries and all possible support will be provided.

Turkish Minister of Commerce said that the economic and business relations and bilateral partnership between

Pakistan and Turkey are going to be in a new beginning as Turkey will also ensure all possible cooperation for Pakistan in all circumstances.

Turkish business leaders purposed that in various sectors including infrastructure bilateral investment can be increased.

Representatives of Pakistan's main commercial institutions welcomed Turkey's proposals and said that Turkey can develop better with its modern machinery and Pakistan with its raw materials.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with a delegation of Meezan Bank, led by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mr. Riyadh S.A.A Edrees.



QUETTA: A delegation led by PIA General Manager Passenger Sales Islamabad Muhammad Shafiq meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Govt committed to transform Pak into cashless economy: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja Thursday said that the present government was committed to transform Pakistan into cashless economy. She said that the government aimed to reduce reliance on physical currency and promote digital transactions through initiative like the SBP's RAAST instant payment system.

Speaking at a meeting of a high-level Committee on Promotion of Cashless Economy, Shaza Fatima said that digital payments have critical role in driving economic growth and efficiency, said a news release.

She said that steps were needed to accelerating digital financial inclusion and boosting economic growth.

The state minister also emphasized the importance of data integration and effective

change management. "While there is significant progress in digitalization across government agencies, we need to breakdown silos and create a unified data platform. This will enable better decision-making and improved service delivery," she stated.

A Committee on Promotion of Cashless Economy, under the chairmanship of Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik has been formed on the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, with Shaza Fatima Khawaja as its member. The Committee comprises key stakeholders from both public and private sectors, including the Ministry of IT, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Federal Board of Revenue, Controller General of Accounts, all provincial governments, Telecom Operators Association, Pakistan Banks Association.

Transition toward cashless society to drive financial inclusion: Irfan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The transition towards a cashless society can significantly impact Pakistan's economy by reducing the informal sector, improving tax compliance, and fostering financial inclusion.

Addressing the first-ever GSMA Digital Nations Summit, Chief Experience Officer at JazzCash, Ali Irfan, advocated for the public sector to lead by example by mandating organizations to prioritize digital payments and phase out cash transactions. To encourage digital payments, he suggested reducing taxes for both customers and merchants.

He also emphasized the need to digitize remittances by enabling mobile wallets to receive funds from around the globe.

The panel discussion featured Shoukat Bizinjo, Additional Director of Digital Financial Services at

the State Bank of Pakistan; Maleeha Bangash, Consultant of Digital Banking at IFC; and Clive Chai, Head of Partnerships for South Asia at Meta. The session was moderated by Sabahat Bokhari.

The panel discussed the need for policy interventions to support a cashless future, including incentivizing digital payments through reduced taxes on digital transactions, expanding the merchant base, and enabling RAAST QR payment acceptance points for merchants.

"Our shift from conventional banking to digital banking has been a two-decade journey that started in 2008 with the introduction of State Bank's Branchless Banking regulations," said Shoukat Bizinjo. "We now host 37 million RAAST accounts, which have been a key enabler in the instant payments ecosystem."

KP Govt, PESCO sign power acquisition contract

PESHAWAR (APP): The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has entered into an agreement on Thursday to sell the electricity generated from 2 hydro power projects of 12.8 megawatts built from its own resources with Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO).

In this regard, a ceremony was held in the Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO) House Peshawar regarding the sale of electricity generated by 10.2 MW of Jabori Hydro Power Plant in Mansehra District and 2.6 MW of Machai Hydro Power Plant in Mardan District to PESCO, in which Secretary Energy and Power Nisar Ahmad Khan, Chief Executive Officer (PEDO) Riaz Jan, CEO PESCO Engineer Akhtar Hameed, Chief Engineer Development Eng. Habibullah Shah, Project Director Jabori Eng. Mustafa Kamal and other senior officials participated.

FCCI welcomes appointment of Rashid as new FBR Chairman

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) President Dr. Khurram Tariq has welcomed the appointment of Rashid Mahmood Langrial as new Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and hoped that he would not only play a key role in enhancing revenue but also extend maximum facilitation to the taxpayer community.

In a statement here on Thursday, he said that documentation of the economy was imperative and Mr. Langrial should identify the sectors currently exempted from the taxes and take measures to bring them into the tax net. He said that extra requirements of revenue should be fulfilled from the new taxpayers. He also invited new chairman FBR to visit and interact with the business community of Faisalabad.

Tourism, Cuisines play vital role in connectivity among countries: Commerce Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday said that tourism and cuisine played a vital role in the relations and connectivity between the countries.

The minister said this while addressing a Cuisines exhibition organized by Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) in Karachi.

He said that foods were the main factor to closely connect the

peoples in different regions of the world and Asian, South African and Arabian cuisines were known all over the world.

Jam Kamal said that Malaysian foods were very famous in the world as their admirers were all over the world. He said that food and tourism brought different nations closer together. The Minister said that to invigorate the economy, tourism should be promoted in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan exchanging views with Khalil Hashmi, Ambassador in China during meeting held in Islamabad.

OICCI, UNDP to work for sustainable, inclusive Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan to advance the vision of a more sustainable and inclusive Pakistan.

This alliance is set to spearhead a series of initiatives focusing on gender equality, diversity, inclusion and social impact investments, reflecting both organizations' commitment to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), said a news release issued here Thursday.

During the MoU signing ceremony, OICCI CE/Secretary General, M. Abdul Aleem, expressed optimism about the partnership with UNDP, stating, "Together with UNDP, we are committed to leveraging our collective expertise to create

impactful research reports, advocacy campaigns, and knowledge-sharing events."

In his remarks, UNDP Pakistan Resident Representative Dr Samuel Rizk said, "The bankability of Pakistan is increasing, and this collaboration is a testament that businesses can be both profitable and socially responsible."

Over the past two years, the OICCI has been at the forefront of climate advocacy in Pakistan, organizing Pakistan Climate Conference in 2022 and 2023. Insights from these conferences and COP28 have been encapsulated in two comprehensive climate reports. These reports serve as vital resources for policymakers and businesses alike, charting a path towards a greener future. Additionally, the Chamber has consistently championed women's empowerment through its annual Women Empowerment Awards.



PESHAWAR: Members of Chromite union Association KPK are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking of electricity and petrol, at Peshawar press club.

Back feeding process of Suki Kinari hydropower station completed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Back feeding process of Suki Kinari Hydropower Station on Thursday successfully completed.

Located on the Kunhar River in Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in northwest Pakistan, SK Hydropower Station is a flagship project within the "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)" under China's Belt and Road Initiative, said a press release. It stands as the largest greenfield hydropower investment project by Chinese enterprises abroad and the most significant hydropower station

investment by Energy China. Suki Kinari Hydropower Station, an investment and construction project of China Energy Overseas Investment Co., Ltd. (Energy China, marked the official countdown to grid-connected power generation for the station.

HE Xiongfei, the Chairman and General Manager of SK Hydro (Private) Limited, commented on the Back Feeding process: "The Back Feeding is a critical test of the operational condition of the high-voltage equipment at the 500KV switching station of SK Hydropower Station.

Macroeconomic indicators on upward trajectory: FM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday emphasized that Pakistan's macroeconomic indicators were on an upward trajectory, leading to a growing public trust in the country's economic management. In a meeting with a delegation of Meezan Bank, led by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Riyadh S.A.A Edrees, the finance minister outlined the government's ongoing efforts in reforming the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), Federal Board of

Revenue (FBR), energy sector and privatization initiatives. According to press release issued by finance ministry, the delegation also included President and Chief Executive Officer, Irfan Siddiqui, Deputy CEO Syed Amir Ali, Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and senior officials from the Finance Ministry were also present in the meeting. The Minister reiterated the government's commitment to fostering investment and enhancing the ease of doing business in Pakistan. On the occasion, Riyadh Edrees highlighted the bank's

status as the largest bank in the Middle East, with over 17,000 employees in 1,000 branches all over Pakistan. They expressed their appreciation for the actions of the government, particularly its efforts in paying back dividends and facilitating an increase in remittances. These measures indicated that the country is moving in the right economic direction.

The meeting concluded with both parties expressing optimism about Pakistan's economic growth and the potential for continued collaboration to achieve mutual goals.

SBP, banks to remain closed on Wednesday

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and all the banks and financial institutions will remain closed on Wednesday, August 14, 2024 on the occasion of Independence Day of Pakistan.

The central bank, in a statement issued here on Thursday, announced, "The State Bank of Pakistan will remain closed on Wednesday, August 14, 2024 being public holiday on the occasion of 'Independence Day' as declared by the Government of Pakistan."

Subsequently, all the banks, Development Finance Institutions (FDI),

Chinese investors group meets Ch Shafay Hussain

LAHORE (APP): A big group of Chinese investors called on Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain in the committee room of the Punjab Investment Board.

In the meeting, it was agreed to cooperate in technical education, IT sector and electric business. The Chinese investor group expressed interest in setting up a plant of electric bikes in Punjab.

Provincial Minister Chaudhry Shafay Hussain while speaking on this occasion said that the government is serious in promoting electric vehicles to control environmental

pollution. The government is giving 10,000 electric bikes to students of universities and colleges. Chinese investor will set up a plant of electric bikes and government will provide all possible facilities.

Chaudhry Shafay Hussain said that the best industrial infrastructure exists in the industrial estates of Punjab. The investors in the special economic zones have special incentives and there are wide investment opportunities in the special economic zones, he said and added that the government will welcome Chinese investment.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in a group photo with the representative delegation of Tajran-e-Peshawar city at Governor House.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, MSC Positano, Jipro Neftis, Qi Lin Zuo, Al-Diab-II and Jin Rong carrying Container, Chemicals, Mogas, LPG and Coal, berthed at Container Terminals, Engro Vopak, Oil Terminal, Sui Southern Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile another edible oil carrier 'Rhine' is also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

Eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them Liquefied Natural Gas carrier 'Marangas Asclepius' left the port on today morning while another Liquefied Petroleum gas carrier 'Al-Diab-II' is expected to sail on same day afternoon.

Cargo volume of 118,456 tonnes, comprising 85,133 tonnes imports cargo and 33,323 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,250 Containers (1,740 TEUs Imports & 780 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Four ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, Maersk Cabo Verde and Milaha Qatar carrying Container and LNG.

PCCC begins evaluation of cotton varieties to provide quality seed to farmers

MULTAN (APP): Vice President, Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) Dr. Yusuf Zafar Thursday chaired first meeting of the variety evaluation committee to provide disease-free, high-quality, and high-yield seeds to farmers.

A total of 22 cotton varieties from public and private sectors were reviewed during the meeting held at Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Multan.

During the varieties meeting, the prescribed standards will be sent to the Punjab and Sindh Seed Councils for final approval. Dr. Yusuf Zafar said adding that the main objective of the Variety Evaluation Committee (VEC) is to ensure the effective and feasible provision of new cotton seeds through a transparent and unbiased process.

He added that VEC meetings will be held regularly to remove any obstacles in the supply of high-quality seeds.

The meeting was attended by numerous cotton breeders, agricultural scientists,

researchers, and experts from agricultural universities from both the public and private sectors. The purpose of the meeting was to improve the yield and quality of the cotton crop. Breeders from the private and public sectors presented detailed recommendations for their cotton varieties. The conditions necessary for seed approval, such as National Biosafety Committee (NBC) compliance, DNA fingerprinting, and written affidavits, were reviewed. Attention was also given to field data, spot data, and DUS (Distinctness, Uniformity, and Stability) criteria. The Biochemical Test (BCT) was also reviewed to comprehensively analyze the yield potential, disease resistance, and environmental impacts of the new cotton varieties.

Dr. Yusuf Zafar mentioned that a detailed analysis of the seeds' robustness and performance under different climatic conditions has been conducted. Additionally, the quality, length,



MULTAN: Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Fauad Hashim Rabbani addressing the members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry during his visit.

Haniyeh's killing risks 'wider' Middle East conflict, OIC warns

Monitoring Desk
JEDDAH: The heinous killing of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh risks tipping the Middle East into "wider conflict", the chair of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) told a meeting on Wednesday.

The comments from Gambian Foreign Minister Mamadou Tangara came as a senior Iranian official said during the meeting that the Islamic republic would need to defend itself from Israel, which it blames for Haniyeh's death last week in Tehran.

Iranian and Palestinian officials called for Wednesday's gathering of the 57-member OIC in the Saudi coastal city of Jeddah, saying the body needed to respond to the killing of the Hamas leader.

"This heinous act serves only to escalate the existing tensions potentially leading to a wider conflict that could involve the en-

tire region," said Tangara, whose country currently chairs the OIC.

Haniyeh's killing "will not quell the Palestinian cause but rather it amplifies it, underscoring the urgency for justice and human rights for the Palestinian people", he said. "The sovereignty and territorial integrity of nation states are fundamental principles underpinning the international order."

"Respecting these principles has profound implications and their violation equally carries significant consequences."

Israel has not commented on Haniyeh's death, which Iran has vowed to avenge.

"Currently, in the absence of any appropriate action by the (UN) Security Council against the aggressions and violations of the Israeli regime, the Islamic Republic of Iran has no choice but to use its inherent right to legitimate

defence against the aggressions of this regime," Ali Bagheri, Iran's acting foreign minister, told the OIC.

Hamas's Lebanese ally Hezbollah has also pledged to retaliate for Haniyeh's killing and that of its military commander Fuad Shukur in an Israeli strike in Beirut hours earlier.

Wednesday's meeting was far from the first time the bloc has weighed in on the conflict, which began with Hamas's October 7 raids in southern Israel.

That operation led to bombardment of Gaza by Israel and the deaths of almost 40,000 people, mostly civilians.

In addition to issuing regular statements condemning civilian deaths in Gaza, OIC leaders gathered with their counterparts from the Arab League in November for a summit that condemned Israeli forces' barbaric actions in Gaza.



Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus is pictured during a press briefing, as he arrives at the Hazarat Shahjalal International Airport, in Dhaka.

Bangladesh Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus takes charge of caretaker govt

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Bangladesh's Nobel Peace Prize-winning economist Muhammad Yunus was sworn in as the head of the country's caretaker government on Thursday, three days after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was forced to quit and flee the country following violent protests.

"I will uphold, support and protect the constitution," Yunus said during the swearing-in ceremony, adding that he would perform his duties "sincerely".

Yunus, 84, was recommended for the role by student protesters and re-

Saudi king allows cabinet to meet without him or crown prince

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's King Salman issued a royal decree that allows the cabinet to convene in the absence of both himself and the prime minister, his son Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, state media reported on Thursday.

The 88-year-old king of the world's biggest oil exporter, and a major US ally in the Middle East, received medical care for lung inflammation in May that prompted Prince Mohammed to later postpone an official visit to Japan due to the king's health.

Pilot, four Chinese nationals killed in Nepal chopper crash

Monitoring Desk
KATHMANDU: A helicopter crashed in central Nepal on Wednesday, killing all five people aboard including the pilot and four Chinese tourists.

Nepal has a woeful track record on aviation safety and the Himalayan republic has seen a spate of deadly light plane and helicopter crashes over the decades.

The Air Dynasty chopper was heading to Syabrubesi, a starting point for many trekking routes popular with tourists, from the capital Kathmandu.

US leaders call for calm in the Middle East, even as more American forces head to the region

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Calling for calm in the Middle East, top U.S. national security leaders said Tuesday that they and allies are directly pressing Israel, Iran and others to avoid escalating the conflict, even as the U.S. moved more troops to the region and threatened retaliation if American forces are attacked.

"It's urgent that everyone in the region take stock of the situation, understand the risk of miscalculation, and make decisions that will calm tensions, not exacerbate them," Secretary of State Antony Blinken

said at the close of a meeting with Australian leaders.

At the same time, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin noted the attack Monday on U.S. forces in Iraq by an Iranian-backed militia group, which injured seven personnel, and made it clear that the U.S. won't hesitate to respond. "Make no mistake, the United States will not tolerate attacks on our personnel in the region," Austin told reporters at a press conference after the meeting. "And we remain ready to deploy on short notice to meet the evolving threats to our security, our partners or our interests."



Security personnel search for the victims at the site of the helicopter crash on the outskirts of Kathmandu.

Turkey formally asks to join the genocide case against Israel at the UN court

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkey on Wednesday filed a request with a U.N. court to join South Africa's lawsuit accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza, the foreign minister said. Turkey's ambassador to the Netherlands, accompanied by a group of Turkish legislators, submitted a declaration of intervention to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

With the development, Turkey, one of the fiercest critics of Israel's actions in Gaza, becomes the latest nation seeking to participate in the case. Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Nicaragua and Libya have also asked to join the case, as have Palestinian officials. The court's decision on their requests is still pending.

"We have just submitted our application to the

Large 7.1 earthquake recorded off Japan: USGS

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: A 7.1 magnitude tremor struck off southern Japan on Thursday, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) said, with the local meteorological agency warning of tsunami striking coastal areas.

Initially, the USGS erroneously recorded two separate earthquakes, registering two tremors at 6.9 and 7.1 magnitude, respectively. The USGS acknowledged the error on its website, stating, "This event originally showed as two events in our event list. This error has been fixed. There was one event."

Tsunamis of up to one metre were expected to arrive or have arrived in some coastal areas in Kyushu and Shikoku islands, broadcaster NHK reported.



People gather against an anti-immigration protest in London.

UK anti-racism protesters take to streets after days of far-right unrest

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Thousands of anti-racism protesters took to the streets in several English cities on Wednesday to oppose days of far-right violence that have had UK police on high alert.

Nightly riots — during which mosques and migrant-related facilities have been attacked — have erupted across towns and cities in England and Northern Ireland fuelled by a wave of misinformation surrounding the murder of three children on July 29.

But on Wednesday evening, it was anti-racism and anti-fascist counter-protesters who were out in greater numbers, holding rallies in cities up and down England including London, Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, and Newcastle.

"Whose streets? Our streets!" chanted protesters at a few-thousand-strong gathering in Walthamstow, northeast London.

Shamima Begum loses bid to appeal removal of UK citizenship

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: A woman stripped of her British citizenship after leaving the country as a teenager to marry a fighter of the Islamic State (IS) group lost a bid on Wednesday to take her case to the UK's top court.

Shamima Begum, 24, had hoped to challenge an earlier ruling in which she lost an appeal against the removal of her citizenship. But UK Supreme Court justices said she could not appeal again following her defeat at the Court of Appeal in February.

The justices found that her proposed grounds for appeal "do not raise an arguable point of law".

Shamima, whose family is of Bangladeshi origin, was 15 years old when she left her east London home for Syria with two school friends in 2015. While there, she married an IS fighter and had three children, none of whom survived. She said she was left stateless in February 2019 when Britain's then-interior minister revoked her citizenship on national security grounds after she was found in a Syrian refugee camp. It means she has not been able to return to Britain from the camp in northern Syria. In February 2023, the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) upheld the removal of her citizenship.

Italy moves to improve jail conditions as inmate suicides surge

Monitoring Desk
ROME: The Italian parliament has approved a law to improve conditions in the country's overcrowded prisons amid a spike in suicides among inmates.

Chronic overcrowding and understaffing have combined with stifling summer heat to create prison conditions in which 65 inmates have taken their own lives so far this year, with the most recent suicide on Wednesday, compared with 70 in the whole of 2023.

Italy is not the only European Union country with a prison problem. With economies weak and budgets tight, penal systems often struggle for funding even as more and more

people find themselves incarcerated.

Jails in France, Greece, Romania and Cyprus all have more inmates than their official capacity, Eurostat data shows.

The Italian government's decree hires more prison personnel, allows inmates to make more phone calls, simplifies procedures for them to obtain early release and boosts community care facilities once they are outside.

It was passed in the Chamber of Deputies by 153 votes to 89 late on Wednesday. Justice Minister Carlo Nordio told reporters the aim of the legislation was "what we could call prison humanisation".

Israel kills 40 Palestinians in Gaza airstrikes amid fears of wider war

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli forces stepped up airstrikes across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, killing at least 40 people, Palestinian medics said, in further battle with Hamas-led militants as Israel braced for potential wider war in the region.

Israeli airstrikes hit a cluster of houses in central Gaza's Al-Bureij camp, killing at least 15 people, and the nearby Al-Nuseirat camp, killed four, medics said. Nuseirat and Bureij are among the densely populated enclaves' eight historic camps and seen by Israel as strongholds of armed militants. Israeli aircraft also bombed a house in the heart of Gaza City in the north, killing five Palestinians, while another airstrike in the southern city of Khan Younis killed one person and wounded others, according to medics.

Later on Thursday, 15

Russia says fighting continues in Ukrainian incursion into Kursk region

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russian troops are fighting Ukrainian forces in the Kursk region in the third day of one of the largest cross-border incursions of the war, the Russian Defense Ministry said Thursday.

A ministry statement said the Russian military and border guards have blocked Ukrainian forces from advancing deeper into Kursk region in southwest Russia and that the army is attacking Ukrainian combatants who are trying to advance on the area from Ukraine's Sumy region.

"Attempts by individual units to break through deep into the territory in the Kursk direction are being suppressed," the ministry said.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said that as of Wednesday, Ukrainian troops had advanced as much as 10 kilo-

Kenya police clear pockets of protesters in capital with tear gas

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: Police fired tear gas to clear pockets of anti-government demonstrators from the centre of Kenya's capital Nairobi on Thursday, as their protest movement sought to capitalize on earlier concessions and compel President William Ruto to resign. The "Nane Nane" march, meaning "eight eight" in reference to the date, follows weeks of similar pro-reform protests that saw Ruto scrap planned tax hikes and overhaul his cabinet.

The youth-led nationwide protests began peacefully in June before turning violent, and more than 50 people have been killed.

Shops were shut and streets left deserted after riot police set up road blocks and threw tear gas canisters to disperse handfuls of protesters across

British police prepared for far-right agitators

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Far-right demonstrations that had been anticipated by police in dozens of locations across Britain failed to materialize Wednesday as peaceful anti-racism protesters instead showed up in force.

Police had prepared for another night of violence at 100 locations following a week of rioting and disorder fueled by misinformation over a stabbing attack against young girls. Many businesses had boarded up windows and closed down in fear of what lay ahead.

Stand up to Racism and other groups had planned counter-protests in response, but in most places they reclaimed their streets with nothing to oppose.

In London, Bristol, Oxford, Liverpool and Birmingham, large, peaceful crowds gathered outside agencies and law firms specializing in immigration that had been listed by internet chat groups as possible targets of far-right activity.

In resounding choruses they chanted: "Whose streets? Our streets!"

It was a vast change from the chaos that has

Ukraine says Niger's move to cut relations is 'regrettable'

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's foreign ministry said on Thursday Niger's decision to cut diplomatic ties with Kyiv was "regrettable" and that Kyiv saw the move as based on groundless and untrue allegations.

Niger's junta said on Tuesday it was acting in solidarity with Mali which earlier broke off ties with Kyiv over remarks by a Ukrainian military intelligence official that it said showed Kyiv's support for rebels fighting in northern Mali. "It is regrettable that the authorities of Niger have decided to terminate diplomatic relations with Ukraine without conducting any investigation into the incident in Mali or providing any evidence as to

Hundreds of Bangladeshi Hindus try to cross into India

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Hundreds of Hindus in Bangladesh were gathered along the Indian border hoping to cross, security officials said on Thursday, days after a student-led uprising toppled then-prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

Some businesses and homes owned by Hindus were attacked following Hasina's ousting, and the group is seen by some in M u s l i m - m a j o r i t y Bangladesh as having been close to her.

"Several hundred Bangladeshi nationals, mostly Hindus, gathered at different points along India's border with Bangladesh," Amit Kumar Tyagi, India's Border Security Force (BSF) deputy inspector general, told AFP.



Spectators gather before a concert of Yaroslav Dronov, known by his stage name Shaman, held in protest against, what organizers called, the illegal blocking of Russian users' channels on the video-streaming platform YouTube, near the U.S. embassy in Moscow, Russia.

Orders stern action against those elements involved CM expresses anguish over illegal trawling in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed anguish over the illegal trawling in the province and ordered to take stern action against those involved in the illegal fishing process.

The Chief Minister was presiding over high level meeting about preparations of the national meeting of Inter-Provincial Coordination here on Thursday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included: the Advisor to Chief Minister for Labour and Manpower, Sardar Ghulam Rasool Umrani, Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries, Mir Barkat Rind, Parliamentary Secretary

IPC, Ms. Mina Majeed Baloch, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Fisheries, Javed Anwar Shahwani.

Addressing the meeting, the Chief Minister expressed anger over the illegal trawling in the province. He regretfully pointed out that our own people are involved in illegal trawling.

He said that what was done in the past by the previous government, we have to stop that devastation. He said that our national resources and coast are damaging due to the illegal trawling.

He noted with concern that our resources were looted ruthlessly. He asserted that the future of new generations is being

destroyed just for the short time financial benefit.

He said that different institutions are established for prevention of the illegal trawling, but their performance is not satisfactory.

He said that the fisheries department has emerged as major department for last eight to ten years in the province. But no solid mechanism was introduced for prevention of the illegal trawling in the province, which strengthened the mafia. However, action would be taken against those involved in plundering of the resources, adding he asserted.

He issued standing directives to introduce modern monitoring system for prevention of the illegal trawling.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb exchanging views with Prof. Dr. Omer Bolat, Trade Minister of Türkiye during meeting held in Islamabad.

PDMA on high alert, protecting citizens with round-the-clock monitoring: Director

QUETTA (APP): Director of Planning and Coordination at the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) in Balochistan Naveed Ahmad Sheikh assured on Thursday that his team is closely monitoring the monsoon rain situation 24/7 hours and conducting assessments of crop damaged to compensate affected farmers.

Talking to PTV news channel, he said that PDMA is identifying and establishing safe places to accommodate people affected by the heavy downpour, adding, with PDMA's proactive measures, those impacted by the rains can expect timely support and relief mitigating the suffering and financial losses caused by the natural disaster.

The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) in Balochistan has been taking proactive measures to ensure public safety amidst the monsoon

rains, he said, adding, in addition to monitoring the situation and assessing crop damage, PDMA has been issuing regular weather advisories and updates to keep the public informed.

Furthermore, in light of the hazardous weather conditions, PDMA has notified Section 144 to restrict tourist activities, prioritizing the safety of visitors, he added.

This precautionary measure aims to prevent accidents and minimize risks associated with traveling during the monsoon season, he mentioned.

Naveed Ahmad Sheikh also revealed that the authority is engaged in a mul-

titude of activities to mitigate the impact of the monsoon rains, besides issuing weather advisories and restricting tourist activities, PDMA is conducting comprehensive surveys to assess damages to buildings and infrastructure.

The authority is also collaborating closely with dedicated officials from the Pakistan Army, volunteers, and the National Highway Authority (NHA) to provide timely assistance to citizens affected by the monsoon, he added.

Through these coordinated efforts, PDMA aims to ensure a swift and effective response to emergencies, providing relief and support to those in need, Director said.

By working together with various stakeholders, PDMA is demonstrating its commitment to protecting the well-being and safety of the people of Balochistan during this challenging time, he concluded.

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over high level meeting about preparations of the national meeting of Inter-Provincial Coordination

US Ambassador calls on Muqam to discuss Afghan refugees' issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): United States Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Armin Blome on Thursday called on Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engr. Amir Muqam and discussed the matters related to the welfare of Afghan refugees, rehabilitation, and bilateral cooperation. During the meeting here, the minister expressed his gratitude for the long-standing cooperation of US with Pakistan. He said that Pakistan was combating successful war against terrorism and also rendered countless sacrifices in terms of human lives and economic losses.

He said that more than 70,000 lives had been lost due to terrorism in Pakistan since 2001 and more than \$150 billion in economic losses. Amir Muqam urged the international commu-

Chief PPP visits Dhoki's residence

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited the residence of his Chief Media Coordinator, late Nazir Hussain Dhoki to condole with the family.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari offered Fatiha for his Chief Media Coordinator and prayed for strength and fortitude for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with equanimity, said a news release.

Chairman PPP said that the Bhutto family has strong links with the Dhoki family for three generations. Nazir Dhoki also worked with Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and his demise is a great tragedy for the party.

PTI founder urged to hold talks with politicians

ISLAMABAD (INP): PML-N Senator Irfan Siddiqui, a close aide to party supreme Nawaz Sharif, has urged PTI founder and former Prime Minister Imran Khan to hold talks with politicians.

In an interview, the PMLN Senator expressed his thoughts on the May 9 riots, saying that the PTI leadership should first realize their wrongdoings before seeking forgiveness.

Senator Siddiqui questioned the PTI claim of innocence, asking if their workers were not involved in the May 9 riots then who were those 16 people who died during protests. He accused the PTI of taking an incorrect stance and trying to shift the blame.

The senator also criticized the PTI's approach to politics, stating that they are going in the wrong direction.

He recalled the 2014 dharna (sit-in) and how PTI leaders had claimed that they would not negotiate with "thieves and dacoits".

Senator Siddiqui emphasized that political issues are resolved through dialogue and negotiation.

Power Division Consumers to get 77 paisa relief in tariff in August

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Power Division on Thursday said that the consumers would get 77 paisa relief in tariff in the billing month of August as compared to July.

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) issued notification into fuel adjustment cost (FCA) for June, the statement said.

The FCA for July was Rs 3.33 per unit, it further said. The FCA for August would further reduce to Rs 2.56 per unit in the billing month of August, it said.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani being briefed about installation of early warning system in wake of flood water

CM Bugti vows to provide medical facilities to people

Approves construction of odern wards, solarization & bus service for SMBZAN Institute of Cardiology

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has accorded approval to the construction of modern wards of paediatrics as well as solarization and bus service for the Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (SMBZAN) Institute of Cardiology Quetta. The Chief Minister issued directives to finalize the PC-I and other necessary matters in this regard. The Chief Minister issued these directives while chairing the third meeting of the governing body of the Institute of Cardiology as its chairman here on Thursday.

The meeting discussed different administrative matters of the SMBZAN Institute of Cardiology and accorded approval to certain important decisions. He expressed satisfaction over the overall performance of the Institute and assured that the provincial government would extend every possible support and assistance for provision of quality medical treatment to the poor patients. The Chief Minister said that we are determined to provide quality health services to the masses without interruption by making these part of essential services. He directed to the administration of the Institution to formulate the sustainable projects for next 15 to 30 years besides the important projects of immediate nature.



QUETTA: Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA), Meena Majeed Baloch addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

The way Bangladeshi PM expelled from politics, country is wrong: Fawad

RAWALPINDI (Online): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has termed as wrong the way Prime Minister (PM) Bangladesh has been expelled from power and country.

"It happened too much wrong the way PM Bangladesh was expelled from power and country. But when people are pushed to wall then the situation deteriorates. Peace in politics is inevitable to solidify economy in Pakistan. It can become possible only if founder of PTI Imran Khan is set free, he said in his brief talk with media men after his appearance in anti corruption court Rawalpindi Thursday.

Government and establishment should give positive response to what PTI founder Imran Khan is talking about and making efforts persistently to lower temperature in politics, he added. Because what change has come in the attitude of Imran Khan and PTI, it is necessary to take it positive. Otherwise Bangladesh situation is before all of us.

The way a PM was expelled from power and country, it should not have happened so, he observed. A vacuum has created in the country due to her ouster. Bangladesh is in grip of violence and riots. There is no such leadership therein which could bring normalcy by controlling the situation, he added.

Tranquility in politics is possible only if former chairman PTI is kept included in the politics, he urged.

First Women's K2 Expedition conquers world's 2nd-highest peak

ISLAMABAD (APP): The First Women's K2 Expedition Team has made history by successfully summiting K2, the world's second-highest peak at 8,611 meters.

According to a private news channel, the expedition was led by the renowned mountaineer Sirbaz Khan, with the team braving harsh weather conditions to achieve their goal.

Despite the challenges, the climbers remained determined, showcasing their resolve and commitment.

The team dedicated their success to the Pakistan Army and the people of Pakistan. The Chief Minister said that we are determined to provide quality health services to the masses without interruption by making these part of essential services. He directed to the administration of the Institution to formulate the sustainable projects for next 15 to 30 years besides the important projects of immediate nature.

"This landmark achievement was accomplished under the support and guidance of the Pakistan Army," said Sirbaz.

Sultana Niaz, a team member from Shamshal in Gilgit-Baltistan, shared her elation at hoisting the national flag atop K2 and thanked the Pakistan Army for their vital support.

LHC questions govt's disparate treatment with PTI and JI

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday criticized the government for its disparate treatment with political parties, specifically pointing out differences in its approach towards Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI).

During a hearing on PTI's request for permission to hold a rally in Lahore, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi questioned the government's policy on political activities, highlighting the differing attitudes towards PTI and JI, which was currently holding a protest. The Punjab government's lawyer explained that applications for rallies from PTI and two other parties were rejected, while JI is conducting activities without permission. The lawyer admitted to lacking information on any actions taken against JI and noted that political party behavior must be considered.

Will work day and night for interests of the people, say Jam, Zehri

It has become inevitable to bring change thru no-confidence motion in municipal corporation Hub, joint candidates will be brought forward

Independent Report
HUB: An important meeting was held between Federal Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Provincial Advisor for Industries and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri in Hub.

In the meeting, there was a discussion on other political and social issues, including the agreement to adopt a common plan of action for the problems faced by the hub city.

Meanwhile, Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan arrived at the residence of Mir Ali Hassan Zehri in Hub. Councilors and other leaders of Jam Group and Peoples Party were also present on this occasion.

Both the leaders agreed that the elements occupying the Hub for the last forty years neglected the Hub in terms of development even with basic fa-

cilities. Deprived due to which this area remained backward instead of developing. We have to work united to end this backwardness and put Hub on the path of development and prosperity.

On this occasion, regional problems of the Hub were also considered including consultation for in-house change in the Municipal Corporation Hub and agreed to make joint efforts for their lasting solution.

Speaking to the media in Komal City Hub along with Federal Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Provincial Advisor for Industries and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that in the past periods, there was criminal negligence at the level of municipalities, which turned the Hub into ruins and the citizens of Hub had to bear the brunt of it.



HUB: Federal Minister for Trade and leader of PML-N Jam Kamal Khan addressing a Press conference at residence of Provincial Advisor Mir Ali Hassan Zehri

Engineers play key role in dev. of country: Governor

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that there is key role of engineers and engineering sector in the development and construction of country and nation especially providing strong bases to the basic infrastructure.

The Governor said that he realizes the challenges during the sustainable development what our engineers are currently facing to the extent of Balochistan.

He said that we would find solution to those issues right from the developing technologies to the complex regulatory environment.

The Governor was speaking to the 16-member delegation of the United who called on him under leadership of Chairman, Ishfaq Ahmed Qureshi here on Thursday.

Also present on the occasion were the Vice Chairman of Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) Syed Nafayat Raza and Vice Chairman PEC Balochistan, Shahabuddin Sheikh.

The members of delegation apprised the Governor about the issues and hardships being faced by the engineers.

He gave patient hearing to their issues and assured his every possible cooperation to resolve the same.



QUETTA: DG NADRA Muhammad Kashi Iqbal meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti

New Toshakhana reference: IHC sends case file to CJ for deciding to fix it for hearing in available bench

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while ordering to club miscellaneous petitions seeking court's order to declare arrest of PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi illegal in new Toshakhana reference has sent case file to Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamir Farooq.

A two members bench of IHC sent the case file to CJ IHC on Thursday. The court remarked the petitions be clubbed by CJ IHC and fixed for hearing before available bench.

The petition seeking court's orders for declaring the arrest of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi against the law in new Toshakhana reference came up for hearing in IHC.

A two members bench of IHC comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb

and Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard the case Thursday.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked according to NAB report Imran Khan said come what may he will not join investigation. It is not acceptable that accused says he will not cooperate in investigation.

The counsel Suleman Safdar said the matter of physical remand will come later. Let us see conduct of NAB first. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked your petition of similar nature is already pending hearing.

Suleman Safdar said the hearing of this petition has been fixed in October which is far away yet.

Justice Miangul Hassan inquired was the next date of hearing given in open court.



ZIARAT: View of destruction after heavy downpour of monsoon season, in Ziarat.