

# Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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Authorities are dependent on government, need to increase own resources:

## Seeds of hatred sowed in minds of youth to keep them away from state through social media under pre-planned conspiracy: CM

CM and Balochistan cabinet honour Israrullah Khan Kakar on his election as President of Oxford University Students Union; says hard working and talented youngsters like Israrullah are asset of country

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that the seeds of hatred were sowed in minds of youth to keep them away from the state through social media under the pre-planned conspiracy. He said that the state

would remove their sense of deprivations by embracing them. He stressed that there is need to implement the Balochistan Youth Policy 2024 in real terms so as to guide the youngsters in right direction and they get opportunities of progress and move ahead. The Chief Minister stated so while chairing the 5th meeting of

Balochistan cabinet held here on Friday.

During the course of meeting, certain important decisions were made on the agenda points of different departments.

While addressing the meeting, Chief Minister issued orders for return of the loans of the private banks payable against the food department at the earliest.

He said that we can't pay the exchequer of poor public on account of the interest. He regretfully pointed out that Rs. 2 million are being paid as interest daily while Rs. 60 million are paid monthly on this account. This is sheer cruelty and as such this practice must be stopped, he added.

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over meeting of Provincial Cabinet



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

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

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

RAWALPINDI (APP): The minister endorsed the agreement announced by the JI leadership. He highlighted that government was giving the subsidy of Rs 50 billion in electricity prices, and the three months relief to the consumers using up to 200 units.

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

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

Addressing the protestors at the conclusion of the 5th and final round of bilateral negotiations with the JI,

the minister endorsed the agreement announced by the JI leadership.

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

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

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

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

Interior Minister

## Calls him nation's pride Governor, CM greet Arshad on winning gold medal in Olympics

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has congratulated the Pakistani athlete Arshad Naeem on winning gold medal in the Paris Olympics.

In their separate felicitation messages issued here on late Thursday night, the Governor and Chief Minister said that the courageous and talented youngster Arshad Naeem is pride of Pakistani nation.

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti said that the longest Javelin throw in the Olympics final is a commendable honour. With this, he set an excellent Olympics record, the Chief Minister added.

He said that there's no dearth of talented youth in the country.

The Chief Minister also expressed best wishes for more successes in future.



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

## Gwadar & Balochistan are inseparable part of Pakistan, no one can separate them from us, asserts Zia Langove

Provincial Minister Home says developed Gwadar can put Balochistan and Pakistan on track of development and prosperity; hate & disturbance would push province in more darknesses

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has categorically stated that Gwadar and Balochistan which can't be separated from us.

He said that the developed Gwadar can put Balochistan and Pakistan on track of development and prosperity. While hate and disturbances would push province in more darknesses.

In an official statement issued here on Friday, the Provincial Minister for Home urged the people of Balochistan to reject terror-

ism by making education their mission as it (education) is the ornament through which the darknesses of ignorance can be evaded.

He stressed that people of Balochistan should play their role for serving the province and country utilizing their capabilities.

He also stressed that every segment of the society including doctors, lawyers, teachers and others have to contribute in development of the province while presenting best services.

He urged the parents to pray their wholehearted role

Continued on page 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

Both sides expressed satisfaction over Pak-Saudi relations.

At the end Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi prayed for the peace, stability and unity of Muslim Ummah.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Muneer exchanging views with Dr. Salah bin Mohammad Al-Budair, Imam Masjid-i-Nabawi (PBUH) during meeting held at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

## Governor directs NADRA to improve present methodology by benefitting from modern scientific inventions & new IT

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has directed to the high ups of NADRA to create easiness and improve the present methodology by benefitting from the modern scientific inventions and new information technology.

He also directed to start double shifts in the NADRA offices in big cities and run mobile vans for the remote areas of the province. Our actual objec-

ive is to serve the people better at their doorstep for we are making efforts and formulating public friendly policies.

The Governor was speaking during the briefing on performance and future plan of the NADRA in Governor's House on Friday.

Also present in the briefing were Director General NADRA, Kashif Iqbal and Principal Secretary to

## Mehmood Achakzai says Israeli PM should be held accountable for war crimes

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should be held accountable for war crimes.

Pashuankhwa Milli Awami Party Chairman and Movement for the Protection of the Constitution of Pakistan leader, and member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Mahmood Khan Achakzai, while welcoming the Imam of the Prophet's Mosque and his delegation including Saudi Arabia ambassador to Pakistan in the gallery of the National Assembly, said that the Muslim Ummah might be weak militarily but is not so hapless, as there are fifty seven Muslim states and an abundance of resources. "What we lack is unity," he regretted. "They should be united and take Netanyahu, a war criminal and murderer of children and women, to the International Court of Justice," Achakzai said.

"There should be a [Nuremberg]-like special tribunal for this purpose," he added.



QUETTA: DG NADRA Muhammad Kashif Iqbal briefed Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail about NADRA

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

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

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

The PM said "Pakistan and China are two iron brothers and now we have to convert these relations of brotherhood and friendship into enhanced investment,

economic and trade relations particularly in the fields of agriculture, information technology, mines, minerals and infrastructure."

Being an agrarian economy with over 60 % rural population Pakistan need to further strengthen and augment its agricultural produce, he said and informed that Pakistani agricultural exports increased by \$ 3 billion in the last financial year while we have fixed a target of additional 7 b for the current fiscal year.

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

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

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

## PM felicitates Prof Yunus on swearing in as Bangladesh's interim gov't head

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday felicitated Professor Muhammad Yunus as he took the oath of office of Chief Advisor of Bangladesh's interim government. Heartiest felicitations to Professor Muhammad Yunus on his swearing-in as Chief Advisor of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

He wished Professor Yunus great success in guiding Bangladesh towards a harmonious and prosperous future.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that he looked forward to working with him to deepen cooperation between Pakistan and Bangladesh in the days ahead.

## CM calls on Governor; agree to stay in constant contact for interest of province

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti met with Governor Balochistan Jafar Khan Mandokhail at the Governor House here on Friday.

During the course of meeting, issues of mutual interest including ongoing development projects in the province, important

political and administrative issues were discussed

The changes taking place in the region, ensuring good governance in the province and benefiting the people from development projects were also discussed

Both leaders were agreed to consult each other and stay in constant contact for the best interest of the province.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti meeting with Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## Pak Armed Forces, CJCS felicitate Arshad Nadeem

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

According to ISPR, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) and Chiefs of Pakistan Army including Chief of Army Staff General Asim Muneer, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Sidhu, and Naval Chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf congratulated the



nation on the victory of Arshad Nadeem for winning the first gold medal for Pakistan in Olympics after 40 years.

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

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

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

## FO spokesperson rubbishes Israeli media's baseless reports targeting Pakistan

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

At her weekly press briefing, the spokesperson responding to a query, rejected a Jerusalem Post's report of August 6 which alleged that "if the conflict between Iran and Israel escalates, Pakistan plans to supply Iran with Shaheen-III medium-range ballistic missiles."

"Such reports are patently false. Before paying any attention to such reports, it is important to reflect on the source behind such baseless reports and the malicious agenda behind them," the spokesperson remarked.

She said, "This is a critical time in the Middle East. We, therefore, urge all parties, including the media, not to indulge in peddling of fake news."



ISLAMABAD: A high level delegation of leading Turkish businessmen led by Turkiye's Minister for Customs & Trade H.E. Mr Omer Bolat called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

### ISSI holds seminar on China's GCI

ISLAMABAD (PR): The China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSIC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organised a seminar on Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), a key pillar in President Xi Jinping's vision for a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind. The seminar featured distinguished speakers from Pakistan and China who highlighted the significance of the GCI in fostering global peace, cooperation, and mutual respect and dialogue among civilizations.

Director General ISSI, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, stated that President Xi's three successive initiatives – namely Global Development Initiative (GDI), Global Security Initiative (GSI), and Global Civilization Initiative (GCI) – represented an alternative vision for global governance and human progress. Inspired by Chinese wisdom and principles of peaceful coexistence, the GCI, introduced by President Xi Jinping in March 2023, focuses on respect for diversity, mutual learning, innovation, and people-to-people exchanges. These initiatives aim to foster lasting peace, stability, and development, with Pakistan being an early supporter.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood reiterated the significance of cultural integration and social bonding for global progress, and quoted President Xi Jinping as saying "A single flower does not make spring, while one hundred flowers in full bloom bring

### Pakistan rejects Indian statements of involvement in Bangladesh developments

ISLAMABAD (Online): Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has rejected all statements emanating from India accusing Pakistan of any kind of involvement in recent developments that took place in Bangladesh.

Answering a question at her weekly media briefing in Islamabad today, the Spokesperson said these statements depict India's disturbing obsession with Pakistan. She said Indian political ledgers and their media have a habit of blaming Pakistan for their failures in domestic and foreign policy.

The Spokesperson said Pakistan and Bangladesh have positive relations which are continued to grow over the last several years.

She said the government and people of Pakistan have expressed their support and solidarity with the people of Bangladesh and we sincerely hope for a peaceful and swift return to normalcy.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said we are confident that the resilient spirit and unity of the Bangladeshi people will lead them towards a harmonious future.

Replying to another question, the Spokesperson said Pakistan's High Commissioner attended the inauguration ceremony of new Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

### Arshad Nadeem awarded Olympics gold medal

PARIS: Pakistan's star athlete Arshad Nadeem was awarded his gold medal for his record-breaking performance in javelin throw final at Paris Olympics.

The Pakistani thrower on Thursday saw his javelin sail past the "OR" boxes in the infield, hitting 92.97m, a new Olympic record taking down the old mark from Beijing 2008.

The gold medal was awarded to him at a ceremony held at Champions Park near Eiffel Tower where medals were also distributed among the winners of the 13th day of Olympics.

Arshad Nadeem also became the first individual Olympic gold medalist from Pakistan. Arshad Nadeem broke the previous Olympic record of 90.57 - set in 2008 Beijing Olympics by Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen.

## Dar emphasizes importance of economic diplomacy for Pakistan's growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Friday stressed the need to reorient the country's diplomatic initiatives from conventional diplomacy to economic diplomacy to ensure that Pakistan's development agenda was also advanced.

"The conventional diplomatic times are over. Along with the conventional diplomacy, we will have to focus more on economic diplomacy," the Deputy PM said while addressing the passing ceremony of the 43rd passing out specialized diplomatic course here at the Foreign Services Academy.

He said the basic purpose of foreign diplomacy was not only to safeguard national interests but also to help in stimulating economic growth by transforming the potential of the country's geo-strategic position into a geo-economic one.

Deputy PM Dar said Pakistan was at the cross road and at a very important location in the world. However, he said unfortunately "we failed to streamline and benefit from our location which the Almighty has blessed us". He emphasized the need for young diplomats to be equipped with the necessary skill set to promote trade and investment, tourism and opportunities to explore the workforce.

"Today's diplomats should not only be experts in international law and politics alone but also economic diplomacy", he remarked.

He also asked the young diplomats to work hard in their careers for the development of the country saying that to compete with the world, they should no longer engage in luxuries. "I am confident you will take this country forward on the road of prosperity, peace and stability," he said.

He also assured his full support to upgrade the infrastructure and improve the academy's working.

The deputy prime minister pointed out that Pakistan had great potential in terms of workforce, resources and economy.

He recalled that Pakistan in 2013, was declared a globally macroeconomic unstable country, a country that was on the verge of default. "It was projected that Pakistan will take at least a decade plus to come out of the quagmire it was facing by 2013", he said.

However, he said what happened in the next 3-4 years reflected the resilience of the country, its economy and its people. In three and half years, he said Pakistan reached a level where it was recognized as the 24th biggest global economy.

"Pakistan's economic indicators were the best, and probably still not matched in any era," he said adding that the country witnessed the lowest CPI inflation at 3.6% food inflation at 2%, over 6% economic growth, the best stock market in South Asia and 6th best in the world.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti inaugurating Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign by planting a sapling

### Naqvi assures Saudi envoy of crackdown on professional begging mafia

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

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

Interior Minister assured the Saudi Ambassador of taking robust action against professional beggars traveling to Saudi Arabia.

He stated that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has been directed to crack down against the mafia across the country involved in sending beggars to Saudi Arabia.

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

He highlighted that the people of Pakistan have great reverence and respect for Saudi Arabia.

He said that Saudi Arabia has always stood by Pakistan in difficult times.

The Saudi Ambassador said that both countries have brotherly relations.

### Seeds of hatred sowed in minds of...

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The Chief Minister vowed to increase professional capability of police and levies for restoration of peace in the province. As responsibility of both the forces is same, therefore, the restoration of peace should be the basic target through better coordination irrespective of the difference of area.

He said that we would not go against the law. The Chief Minister stressed that the autonomous authorities have to increase their own resources instead of depending on the government. For how long, the public exchequer would continue to be spent on such authorities, he quipped.

He said that basically, the objective behind establishment of the authorities is to increase the resources, but unfortunately, the authorities become dependent on the government and depend on the government instead of generating their resources.

He said that if the non-development expenditures continue to rise then the government would not have the resources for basic facilities of education, health and water supply.

Earlier, the President of students Union in Oxford University London, Israrullah Khan Kakar was invited before the proceedings of the cabinet meeting as the honorary guest.

The cabinet extended congratulations to Israr Kakar on his election as President of the Oxford University students Union and paid tributes to him.

The Chief Minister on the occasion said that the hard working and talented youngsters like Israrullah Khan are asset of our country.

He mentioned that Israrullah Khan has the honour to be elected as President of the Oxford University students Union after Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. He said that the provincial government would support all such talented youngsters.

Israrullah Khan Kakar on the occasion thanked the Chief Minister and members of the cabinet and said that it is an honour for him to come in the important decision making forum.

He appreciated the services of Chief Minister for development of education in the province.

He exhorted the students and youth of the province to work harder and harder to achieve their goals in life.

### GB Chief Minister assures rehabilitation of flood-affected areas

Independent Report  
SKARDU: Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister, Haji Gulbar Khan, met with Provincial Minister for Finance, Engineer Muhammad Ismail, and Chairman Muhammad Ibrahim, in Skardu. The meeting discussed the damages caused by recent rains and floods in the Mashabrum area.

The Chief Minister assured that instructions have been given to relevant departments for the rehabilitation of flood-affected areas in Gilgit-Baltistan. He emphasized that all possible assistance will be provided to the affected people, and emergency work is underway to restore damaged roads and infrastructure.

According to details GB Chief Minister meets with Provincial Minister for Finance and Chairman in Skardu

Discussion on damages caused by recent rains and floods in Mashabrum area Chief Minister assures rehabilitation of flood-affected areas

Emergency work underway to restore damaged roads and infrastructure - All possible assistance to be provided to affected people

He said that the violence and disturbance would push the province in more darknesses. He said that the violence and hate destroys any society.

He said that the people of Balochistan have always played leading role in development and prosperity of country and the youth of province would reign the country and nation in future.

He regretfully pointed out that it is desire of the enemy country i.e., India that the people of Gwadar remain backward and Gwadar may not progress.

He said that India is provoking our people against us through negative propaganda just to stop Balochistan from development. He said that some of our people wants to harm the country on provocation of the enemy.

However, the enemies of Pakistan and Balochistan would never succeed in their nefarious designs.

### Governor directs NADRA to...

Continued from page 1

the Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor said that it is a new start to introduce online application system by NADRA.

The basic objective of this is to increase access and facilities for the common men to all necessary documents, he said.

He said that we can reduce rush of the people in the NADRA offices considerably by improving the existing procedures and benefiting from the new information technology.

He urged all the deputy commissioners, local government representatives,



QUETTA: A delegation led by Muhammad Ramzan Achakzai meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti

### Gwadar & Balochistan are...

Continued from page 1

Mohsin Naqvi on the occasion said that the JJ's demands would be fulfilled as the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has given the go ahead to the government team to access the same.

He appreciated the JJ worker for remaining peaceful and staging a disciplined protest without creating problems for others.

Earlier, JJ leader Liaqat Baloch, announced that the two sides had inked an after successful negotiations. He lauded the patience and tolerance shown by the government team during all rounds of talks.

Later, JJ Chief Hafiz Naeem announced that they would end the sit-in tomorrow.

Online adds: The details of accord reached between government and JJ have come to open.

The agreement was signed on the range of problems including reduction in electricity tariff, tax on salaries class and reduction in prices of food items.

Under the agreement tax ratio on salaries class will be curtailed to every possible extent by enhancing revenue.

Electricity bills and taxes will be curtailed forthwith. Effective tax system will be evolved for imposition of tax on big landlords and land holders.

Committee will be constituted for addressing the problems of traders and exporters. IPPs agreements will be completely reviewed.

It was further said in the agreement task force will be established on the matter of IPPs to complete the work within one month. The payment of electricity bills for the month of August will be deferred for 15 days. The payment of capacity bills will be linked to reduction

### Govt accepts JJ demands....

in per unit electricity.

The representatives of WAPDA, chairman, Auditor General of Pakistan and FPCCI will be included in the committee.

The points of government task force are part of the agreement.

Forensic audit of K-Electric will be got conducted. The vehicles being used at government level will be limited to 1300 CC.

Government will reduce the tax on food items.

The talks between government and JJ concluded successfully on night between Thursday and Friday.

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

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

He urged the government to cut its expenditures in order to avoid the JJ's sit-in in future.

Hafiz Naeem added that the JJ gave awareness to the people over the issues of exorbitant electricity bills and IPPs.

"The joint committee of JJ and government will review the electricity bills within a month," he said.

Earlier, the government and JJ had reached an agreement pertaining to relief for the masses in electricity bills, reduction in taxes for the salaried class and reviewing the IPPs contracts.



QUETTA: Traffic police car lifter lifts vehicle parked in no parking area causing obstacle in smooth flow of traffic jam, at Court road in Quetta.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Executive Engineer Public Health Engineering Division Kachhi invited the sealed percentage tender based on composite Schedule of Rates 2023 Government of Balochistan along with tender Fee and item rates from interested Contractors/Firms for the work mentioned below:-

TSR.No.	S.N	Name of Work	E/CoSt	Qty	Time limit	T/Fee
242508515843	i)	CONSTRUCTION OF WSS SARDARZADA TAWAKAL KOLPUR (PSDP NO 5468).	6,718 M	1 No	30-06-2025	1500
242508515863	ii)	D/D OF BORE 500FT	1,289 M	1 Job	30-06-2025	1000
242508515873	iii)	P/L/J OF PVC PIPE 3" DIA 2000RFT	11,877 M	1 Set	30-06-2025	2000
242508515903	i)	CONSTRUCTION OF WSS AT KILLI ASIM ABAD MOHAMIN ABAD DASHT (PSDP NO 5886).	6,718 M	1 No	30-06-2025	1500
242508515913	ii)	D/D OF BORE 500FT	1,289 M	1 Job	30-06-2025	1000
242508515923	iii)	P/L/J OF PVC PIPE 3" DIA 3000RFT	11,877 M	1 Set	30-06-2025	2000

The procurement shall be carried out per Balochistan Public Procurement rules, 2014. Eligibility:- The Authorized Dealer must have valid registration with tax authorities i.e. (NTN, GST & BRA (Original) valid PEC certificate registration (Original) with Pakistan Engineering Council in relevant category and discipline with renewal for the year 2024-25, where applicable including three years work experience and bank (Turnover) The Bidder must have completed three assignments of similar nature and the same above value work in the last two years in hand. 10% Security Deposit should be submitted by Contractor/firm in case of rate offered below 10% of the total cost. In case of failure, Bid may be rejected at any STAGE. In case of contractor / firm they should have valid dealership certificate of manufacturers. The pipes may be tested at site/lab on firm's cost. The Manufacturers will provide tax paid certificates. The Joint venture is not allowed. The firm authorized representative will be allowed having original CNIC and authorization letter/Deed must be provided on Judicial Stamp paper Of Rupees 100 attested by the Notary public Or first Class Magistrate. The tender fee should be deposited in the head of account PHE Tender Fee through Green Challan in National Bank of Pakistan Dhadar only. Terms & Condition. (A) under following condition bid will be rejected. (i) Conditional & telephonic bid / tenders. (ii) bid not accompanied by a bid security of required amount of bid (iii) bid Submitted after specified date & time. (iv) blacklisted firms / contractors. (v) Original firm or authority letter mention against each work and original CNIC, Stamp with letter Head. (B) Bid validity period 90 days. METHOD OF PROCUREMENT: Single Stage, One envelope procedure. BID SECURITY: 2% of total bid Value in the shape of CDR must be submitted in Favor of EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE Division Kachhi from Scheduled Bank. BIDDING / TENDER DOCUMENTS ISSUANCE: The Contractor/Firm should download NIT and Bidding Document by self From: WWW.BPPRA.ORG.PK SUBMISSION: The last date for submission is 28-08-2024 at 12:00 PM. OPENING: The tender will be opened on 28-08-2024 at 01:00 PM. Place of issuance, submission inquiries, and opening will be: ADDRESS: Office of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Kachhi at Dhadar E-Mail: xenphe000@gmail.com Other terms and conditions are attached to tender documents. NOTE: It may be noted that no pay order will be accepted/entertained and the firm's complete title/name should be written on the call deposit. All the terms & conditions/sites of the work can be seen in office hours of the undersign. under sign have reserve rights to reject all any bid with any condition. The Tender form/Documents will be download BPPRA web site.

Executive Engineer  
Public Health Engineering  
Division Kachhi at Dhadar

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

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

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

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

Bin Muhammad Al-Budair along with his delegation witnessed the proceedings of the National Assembly. On the occasion, the Speaker said the Masjid-e-Nabawi has a special status in the hearts of all Muslim nations. "The House desires to benefit from your knowledge and teachings. May Almighty Allah bless all of us to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet PBUH," Ayaz Sadiq said.

He also appreciated the Ambassador of KSA for being a staunch ambassador of Pakistan in the Kingdom. The Speaker National Assembly also congratulated Arshad Nadeem on winning a gold medal in the javelin throw event of Paris Olympics 2024.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Addressing a curtain-raiser press conference regarding a two-day meeting of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (APFFD) on 'Gender Empowerment and Green Economy' starting from Monday (August 11th), she said Pakistan would hold an international population and climate change conference under the auspices of the APFFD standing committee on Gender Empowerment.

Romina Khurshid Alam said that 22 states' female parliamentarians' as delegates would convene to discuss the impacts of climate change on women and their role in the green economy. She added that these parliamentarians would gather to share personal experiences, and knowledge, and mull over regional solutions for the challenges like population and climate change that have posed formidable threats to human security in the region.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

Meanwhile, Chairman, ASEAN Committee Islamabad (ACI) said, "We take pride in our progress towards the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, which encompasses political-security, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions". He said that this vision underscores our cooperation in critical areas such as defence, counterterrorism, peacekeeping, economic integration, climate action, and disaster risk reduction.

He said that with a combined population of over 690 million people and a combined GDP surpassing USD \$3.6 trillion, ASEAN has emerged as one of the significant political and economic players on the global stage. Chairman ACI said the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to be known, is a regional organization which currently comprises the ten member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

"We have also recently been welcoming Timor-Leste to be our ASEAN member as they have now been conducting their intensified efforts in implementing the roadmap criteria towards their full membership."

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

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

He directed to remove all encroachments and to develop parks and green belts on both sides of the said road. He further said that the patchwork and carpeting of the road should be completed on priority basis. He emphasized that Faizabad Interchange is the main entry point of Islamabad and it is in dire need of upgradation.

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



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

## Minister urges Opposition to support gov't initiatives; stresses media to portray Pak positive image

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

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

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

He urged the opposition to support the government's initiatives aimed at stimulating economic growth, creating jobs, and reducing poverty.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Excise dept introduces new rules for vehicle registration

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

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

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

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

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

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

## IHC orders for recovering two missing brothers of social media activist

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

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

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

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

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



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

## NHA announces complimentary M-Tag facility nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): August 16, 2024. The National Highway Authority (NHA) has announced that the M-Tag facility will be available at no cost to citizens nationwide until August 15, 2024.

It is important to note that, in the near future, only vehicles equipped with M-Tags will be permitted to operate on motorways. The NHA encouraged the public to take advantage of this opportunity and requested them to obtain their M-Tags free of charge as soon as possible, said a press release issued by the NHA on Friday.

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

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

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

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



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

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**  
Saturday August 10, 2024

**Political paradox**

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

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

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

Mr Khan has recently suggested that he is ready to offer an apology if the state can prove its position on May 9. This 'softening' of his stance is being seen as a major development. He insists, however, that the allegations against his party be investigated by an independent commission first. Perhaps the accusation that the events of that day were a 'premeditated conspiracy' do indeed need to be probed, but Mr Khan surely agrees that it was his party that was out in the streets on May 9; participating in, if not precipitating, the violence that occurred that day?

If he believes that what happened was wrong, he should at least apologise for the protests turning violent and the damage to public properties that was caused. All else may be left to a commission to resolve.

At the same time, the security establishment, too, must relent, mainly because its insistence on treating the protests as 'terrorism' and a 'conspiracy against the state' is unlikely to yield positive outcomes or help the nation move forward.

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

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

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

Zafar Masud |  
Sayem Ali

The World Bank's International Debt Report 2023 highlights that surging interest rates and external shocks have intensified debt vulnerabilities in all developing countries.

In the past three years alone, there have been sovereign defaults in 10 developing countries — greater than the number recorded in all of the previous two decades. The report warns that about 60 per cent of low-income countries are at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it.

In a recent WTO panel discussion in Geneva on "Mainstreaming trade: the way out of debt crises for developing countries", it was argued that trade competitiveness and productivity are prerequisites for better debt management.

While the reduction of debt through trade (and FDI) is a long-drawn process, it's the only sustainable path to growth and poverty reduction.

According to the World Bank, a one per cent increase in FDI as a share of GDP leads to a 0.38pc

increase in economic growth. South Korea is an example of how implementation of trade liberalisation and comprehensive industrial policies has led to a war-ravaged state in the 1960s graduating to a high-income country in the 2000s.

The starting point in achieving trade competitiveness is striking a balance between promoting exports (export bias) and protecting domestic interests (import substitution). The success of the Asean economies and China in moving from protectionism to trade liberalisation has led to a significant increase in incomes and a reduction in poverty over the last three decades.

Pakistan has experimented with trade liberalisation; however, there has been a complete shift back to protectionism since 2008, with a rise in customs duty and additional taxes (regulatory duties).

The tariffs collected at the import stage constitute around 48pc of Pakistan's total tax in 2022. Pakistan's weighted average mean tariff of 12.7pc is the highest amongst the top 70 export-

ing countries in the world. In comparison, the weighted average tariff of the top 70 exporting nations is 2.7pc.

The South Asian average is 5.9pc, the Asean average is 2.5pc, China is 3.8pc and India 5.8pc. Pakistan has the second highest effective protection for domestic producers of final consumption goods in the world, as intermediate inputs and raw materials typically have much lower tariffs than consumer goods.

As a result, Pakistan has been unable to develop a strong export base and has fallen behind regional economies in terms of per capita growth. Even today, more than 50pc of its exports rely on only four markets — the US, EU, China and Afghanistan.

The country has been losing competitiveness in international markets and finds it harder to sell its exports within its traditional markets. About 70pc of Pakistan's exports continue to be low-tech; the country is unable to diversify its commodities and markets, with textiles and clothing (about 5pc to world trade) accounting for around 58pc of our total exports.

Pakistan's loss of competitiveness is evident from the fact that its export-to-GDP ratio was only 8.4pc in 2023, whereas in India it was 19pc and in Bangladesh 15pc. A recent World Bank report highlights that between 1991-2021, labour productivity in Pakistan lagged behind other countries, rising only from about \$3,200 to \$4,700, a multiple of 0.5, compared to Vietnam, where it shot up from \$1,200 to \$6,000, a multiple of five.

The country has also tried selected liberalisation through free trade agreements with selected countries. However, this has not led to any incremental increase in exports, and, in fact, has led to the widening of the trade deficit.

Pakistan has distorted trade relations with its neighbours. The World Bank suggests that a 10pc reduction in trade barriers within South Asia could lead to a 31pc increase in regional trade.

A study by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute suggests that a 1pc increase in trade openness leads to a 0.8pc decrease in the risk

of interstate armed conflict. The World Bank estimates that Pakistan's exports could increase by a staggering 80pc, or about \$25 billion, if trade with India reached its full potential.

According to the State Bank, about 45pc of Pakistan's imports could be imported from India at a lower cost than the rest of the world, with average savings estimated between 0.3pc to 0.7pc of GDP per annum, whereas, about 70pc of the items exported from Pakistan have unit values less or equal to the Indian imports' unit values, indicating a scope to enhance exports to 1.9pc of GDP.

While we strongly advocate the removal of trade barriers, any policy changes must be done gradually to allow domestic firms time to position themselves to benefit from the reduction in trade barriers.

Apart from tariff rationalisation, there's also a need to build trade infrastructure and improve trade facilitation. The World Bank estimates that a 1pc reduction in the cost of trade leads to a 0.7pc increase in trade volumes.

We also need to re-vamp the fiscal and monetary incentives to exporters, introducing targeted and time-bound incentives that are linked to performance. The access to these incentives should not be limited to only traditional export industries.

These reforms have become critical to enhancing exports, attracting long-term foreign investment, and getting Pakistan out of debt distress. Vietnam launched the Doi Moi reforms in 1986, moving away from a 'centralised planned economy' to a global manufacturing and export hub, sustaining a growth rate of 7pc over the last three decades. Poverty rates fell from 40pc in the 1980s to less than 5pc in 2022.

Pakistan needs a new, home-grown economic plan. The current structure of the economy distorts the allocation of resources, stifling productivity growth. The new growth plan must focus on integrating Pakistan with the global economy by removing the anti-export bias and protectionist policies. -- Courtesy Dawn

**FAQs about universal health coverage**

Zafar Mirza

Despite a simple-sounding concept, universal health coverage (UHC) is often misunderstood and misinterpreted at all levels, including among policymakers.

UHC is a national commitment under the Sustainable Development Agenda. Many countries, including Pakistan, have incorporated it in their national health policies and strategies. It is a simple concept without being simplistic, and is possible even in poor countries.

SDG-3 states: "To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages." Target 3.8 under this goal reads: "Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all." The deadline is 2030.

I have written on UHC in several of my articles in these pages, including "The need for UHC literacy" (Nov 19, 2021). There are, however, some frequently asked questions about UHC which I would like to clarify.

1. What is UHC? Under UHC, all people and communities can use the pro-

motive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services they need, which are of effective quality. It also ensures that the use of these services does not expose the user to financial hardship.

2. Can a country achieve UHC? There is no absolutism in UHC; it is a progressive universalism based on the right to health. It is never fully achieved but we can always advance towards it. Depending on their political choices, financial commitment and continuity, countries can progressively move towards UHC, provided there is a correct roadmap.

3. What is the correct roadmap for UHC in low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs)? UHC is a five-lane road. To start with, we need to be on the right road, which is equivalent to a clear policy vision. First, to select a minimum set of health services, which must be available to every citizen.

Second, strengthen qPHC (quality primary healthcare) because this is where the bulk of health service coverage can be provided. Third, prioritise those most in need and protect them from financial hardship in healthcare. Fourth, ensure

the quality of healthcare.

Fifth, monitor and report progress for any course correction and ensure continued advancement and expansion. Poor countries need UHC more because of unmet healthcare needs and their negative implications for human capability and national economic development.

4. Whose responsibility is it to develop the UHC roadmap and how? It is the government's responsibility to construct this road and define the essential/minimum package of health services (EPHS), which is commensurate with the national burden of disease, and to finance its provision. The entire healthcare system must be aligned with the goal of reliable provision of this package to all people.

A robust and aligned health system to ensure EPHS provision includes good health governance, enhanced financing, a well-trained health workforce, reliable health information, availability of essential medicines, diagnostics etc, and digitisation of the healthcare system, with a focus on qPHC. Additional financing can be mobilised through fiscal prioritisation and innovative financing, instead of giving the excuse of lack of fiscal space. Looping

in the private sector as a partner and continuously monitoring progress are essential conditions.

5. What minimum package and which health services? Backed by more than 25 years of health services research by World Bank and other agencies, there is now a better understanding about which are the essential and minimum services that a government must provide to its people to protect them from diseases and health risks, and effectively treat them through early diagnosis.

A nine-volume study was published in 2017 covering all major groups of diseases, including infectious, non-communicable, mother and child health, mental health, cancers, surgery etc. It is called Disease Control Priorities, third edition (DCP-3). Thousands of health services were reviewed for their relevance to the global burden of disease and cost-effectiveness and eventually a package of 218 essential health services was proposed for L&MICs that should be provided through government financing. Of these, 104 services are of highest priority, which is the minimum that all governments must provide. This is

the model which L&MICs are urged to follow by developing their own national package of health services.

6. Are we talking only about curative health services? No, the DCP-3 package consist of preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative health services. The integrated delivery of these services are at five levels of healthcare: community, first-level PHC facility, first-level hospital, tertiary-level hospital and population level (for instance, media campaigns on health education), can ensure an essential or minimum level of UHC.

Up to 90 per cent of these services can be provided at the first three levels and only 10pc of patients with advanced problems should be referred to tertiary-level hospitals. This is why qPHC and district-level healthcare are so important.

7. Has Pakistan developed these health services packages? Yes, it is the first country to follow DCP-3 guidance and has developed a National Essential Package of Health Services after robust efforts spanning three years. It was launched in October 2022 and contains 88 highest-priority health services which must be pro-

vided at the qPHC level and first-level hospitals. All provinces have also developed their own EPHS. These packages have been costing.

8. What about financial protection? Most L&MICs, like Pakistan, have mixed health systems and many patients go to the private health sector where they should be financially protected for the provision of EPHS by GPs through, for example, a government-financed health insurance system, like Pakistan's Sehat Suluhat programme, which is currently limited to hospitalisation.

9. How to ensure quality in healthcare? By developing a national quality policy for healthcare, developing quality standards, training health professionals on compliance with these standards and by monitoring adherence.

10. Can UHC be monitored? Yes, through reliable collection of data on 14 proxy health services and health system indicators and calculating the UHC Service Coverage Index, which ranges from one to 100. Pakistan's SCI in 2022 was 52.7. The 2030 target is to achieve an SCI of 80. All resources mentioned in this article are available online.

**Deep-sea mining**

Jamil Ahmad

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This scientific uncertainty has led governments, scientists, environmentalists, and the private sector to call for a moratorium on deep-sea mining until the ecological consequences are better understood. In an Issues Note, UNEP has pointed out that the "environmental, social, and economic impacts of exploiting the deep seabed are uncertain and potentially grave". It has called for "a comprehensive analysis" to address the potential impact of deep-sea mining on marine and terrestrial ecosystems. The UN Convention on Migratory Species has urged governments not to support deep-seabed mining until robust scientific data is obtained that such activities won't harm "migratory species, their prey and their ecosystems".

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

**Story of a hari**

Zubeida Mustafa

Pakistan: A Hard Country, by Anatole Lieven, was published in 2011.

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

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

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

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

1989. Additionally, the landowners also enjoy immense political powers, irrespective of who is at the helm.

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

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

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

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

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

## Kundi terms justice crucial for development of society

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

Iqbal Marwat and other officials and cabinet members from various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The delegation congratulated the Governor on assuming his office and presented him a bouquet. They informed the Governor about their organization's mission to uphold judicial independence, rule of law, and human rights. The Association of International Lawyers is also working globally for the welfare of lawyers and resolving their issues. The delegation shared that the Association had established Human Rights Committees in various districts, leading to legal assistance for families and the resolution of several cases. They are also working on child protection and other human rights issues, they told. The female lawyers in the delegation suggested to the Governor that there should be government-sponsored scholarships and professional

development training programs for female lawyers both domestically and internationally. In response, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi praised the Association's role and underscored the critical importance of lawyers in the swift delivery of justice. He acknowledged that lawyers act as a bridge between the public and the judiciary, significantly contributing to the rule of law and democratic values. Regarding universities, the Governor noted that the provincial government has allocated only 3 billion rupees for 34 universities, leading to financial difficulties. He mentioned initiatives to start free IT classes at each university and vocational training in collaboration with NEVTEC. He concluded by emphasizing the need for collective efforts to advance the province's development and prosperity and distributed certificates to the Association's officials.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah.

## AJK Govt unveils ambitious socio-economic, Tourism plan

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): The Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Friday formulated an integrated plan aimed at the holistic development of the socio-economic and tourism sectors in the region. According to official sources, the primary focus of the plan is to promote adventure tourism in AJK, with the aim of transforming the region into a major tourism hub in South Asia. To this end, the government plans to organize a nationwide tourism conference in Mirpur in the near future, inviting renowned global tourism organizations. The sources further revealed that the

government is determined to improve the living standards of the common people and accelerate the pace of ongoing development projects in the liberated area. Towards this end, the government has directed the relevant authorities to identify the problems faced by the common people and devise prompt solutions. To boost technical education in AJK, the government has also decided to establish a Higher Technical Education Board in the near future. Additionally, the plan includes setting up Artisan Schools in Mirpur and Muzaffarabad to produce skilled manpower for the cottage industry. The government is also taking steps to establish district-level Chambers of Commerce and Industry across AJK to promote trade and commerce activities. Moreover, the plan involves expediting the development of projects such as the Export Processing Zone and Industrial Estates in Mirpur, the region's major industrial and business hub. Recognizing the importance of engaging the overseas Kashmiri community, the AJK government has decided to invite them to participate in various developmental and educational activities as well as the business and industrial sectors.

## PM, CM Sindh discuss current political situation, administrative issues

KARACHI (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah discussed the current political situation and administrative issues on Friday. Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif during his day-long visit to Karachi. The current political and administrative issues came under discussion during the meeting, the PM office press release said. Earlier, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif arrived on a day-long visit to Karachi and attended an inaugural ceremony of the international FoodAg-24 Exhibition held here at the Expo Centre. The prime minister also addressed the ceremony and held meetings with foreign delegates present there.



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

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

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



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

## Climate change cell to be established in health department

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

waterborne diseases. Skin diseases, waterborne diseases, and vector-borne diseases are all consequences of climate change. The minister said that extreme heat and cold waves are affecting children, the elderly, and women. Climate change is affecting healthcare centers, staff, and the public, making it the biggest challenge to public health. Qasim Ali Shah said that to address these challenges, the Climate Change Cell will be established soon, after completing technical consultations. All actions, projects, and initiatives of the Health Department will be revised considering climate change.

## Maryam greets Arshad Nadeem, announces Rs 100m as reward

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced a reward of Rs 100 million for the Olympic javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem while congratulating him on winning a gold medal for Pakistan in the Paris Olympics, that has won hearts of millions of Pakistanis. She also announced the construction of a sports city in his hometown of Mian Channu, named after Olympian Arshad Nadeem. The CM paid tribute to Arshad Nadeem and his coaching staff for breaking the 118-year-old record in javelin throw and winning gold medal for Pakistan after 40 years. "If you believe in yourself, success is guaranteed. Victory is a beautiful thing, to win you have to lose yourself", she added.

## Ramesh Arora says: Minorities Day to be observed with grandeur

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora has said that for the first time, the Punjab government will celebrate Minorities Day with full grandeur on August 11 (Sunday) to acknowledge their contribution towards the development of the country. He was addressing a gathering of Christian community during his visit to the residence of Pastor Shaikat Ashiq in the Chuhang area of Lahore. A large number of people from Christian community warmly welcomed him upon arrival and flower

petals were showered from rooftops. On this occasion, the representatives of Christian community expressed their gratitude to the minister for presenting a historic budget for minorities and expressed hope that during his tenure, the sense of deprivation among minorities would be effectively addressed. Referring to the Chief Minister of Punjab's initiatives, Ramesh Singh Arora told them that historic work is being done for minorities in the history of province for their welfare and development.

## CMMurad invites Arshad to visit Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday telephoned Arshad Nadeem in Paris and invited him to visit Karachi. He congratulated Arshad Nadeem on his historic achievement, according to a Spokesman for the Chief Minister Sindh. In his conversation, the CM lauded the world record of javelin throw. Murad said that Arshad Nadeem had made the nation proud. Syed Murad Ali Shah invited Arshad Nadeem to visit Karachi. He said that the people of Sindh were eager to meet in Karachi.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora addressing the National Minorities Day ceremony organized by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ).

## Pervaiz Ashraf greets Arshad Nadeem on historic Olympic gold medal win

LAHORE (APP): Former Speaker of the National Assembly and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Central Punjab President Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has extended his heartfelt congratulations to national hero Arshad Nadeem for securing the gold medal in the javelin throw at the Olympics. In a statement issued on Friday, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf lauded Arshad Nadeem's historic achievement, noting that this victory marks the first individual Olympic gold medal for Pakistan. He emphasized that Nadeem's triumph has not only made history but has also

brought immense pride to the entire nation on the global stage. Highlighting the significance of the accomplishment, Ashraf mentioned that Arshad Nadeem shattered a 114-year-old record in the Olympic javelin throw event. He remarked that Nadeem's name will be forever etched in golden letters in the annals of both Olympic and Pakistani sports history. "Due to his hard work, dedication, and consistency, Olympian Arshad Nadeem has become a role model for Pakistani youth," said Ashraf.

## 7 die, 134 injured in 1234 road accidents in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least seven persons were killed and 1344 injured in 1234 road accident in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 582 people with serious injuries were shifted to hospitals, while 762 victims with minor injuries were treated at the site by rescue medical teams, thus reducing the burden on hospitals. Furthermore, the analysis showed those 700 drivers, 63 underage drivers, 161 pedestrians, and 490 passengers were among the victims. The statistics show that 261 accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 288 persons placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by Faisalabad 86 in with 84 victims and at third Multan with 73 accidents and 73 victims.

## ANF seizes 81 kg drugs in four operations

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



ISLAMABAD: Provincial Minister Energy & Planning & Development Department Syed Nasir Hussain Shah addressing a press conference in the Federal Capital.

## Minister reviews Himat Card registration process in Murree

RAWALPINDI (APP): On the instructions of CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz, Provincial Minister for Social Welfare Sohail Shaikat Butt visited Murree to review the Himat Card registration process, on Friday. The minister visited Trait, Sambli Tajal and Ghora Galli where he inquired about the registration of Himat Card from the disabled persons. Talking on the occasion, Sohail Shaikat said that CM Maryam Nawaz was the voice of the oppressed class. "According to the directions of the Punjab Chief Minister, the process of Himat card registration has spread to the Union Council level" he said adding that the government would take additional steps for the welfare of special persons in accordance with the vision of the chief minister.

The provincial minister said that 400,000 disabled persons, 150,000 were those who cannot write. "Himat card is going to be launched for the welfare of people with disabilities" he said. Sohail informed that monthly financial assistance of 10,500 rupees would be available to persons with disabilities through Himat card, after the completion of the record compiling. He told that he was visiting various Himat card registration points of Punjab in order to maintain the standard of transparency. Sohail informed that the registration for Himat Card registration can be done during office hours at Social Welfare Department offices, and also through helpline 1312. "People are not only satisfied with the transparency of himat card registration.

## Justice Abid to take oath as acting CJ LHC today

LAHORE (APP): Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh will take the oath as acting chief justice of the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Saturday. According to an LHC press release, the oath-taking ceremony will be held in the LHC Judges' Lounge at 9:00 a.m., where Justice Shahid Karim will administer the oath to the acting chief justice. The judges working at the LHC Principal Seat will attend the ceremony. It is pertinent to mention that LHC Chief Justice Miss Aalia Neelum is on a foreign visit.



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

## Passing out parade of PCG recruits held

KARACHI (APP): A passing out parade of Batch 44 recruits of Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG) was held here at the Coast Guards Training Center Korangi on Friday. Director General Pakistan Coast Guards Brigadier Ghulam Abbas was the chief guest at the ceremony. The officers of civil and armed forces, local dignitaries and people from different walks of life and families of passed out recruits attended the ceremony in large numbers. According to press release issued by the PCG's media wing, recruit Babar Ali stood first position and was awarded with honorary trophy by the Director General PCG, while Recruit Ishaq and Muhammad Nadeem received medals on securing second and third position respectively. Addressing the ceremony, Director General PCG Brigadier Ghulam Abbas extended felicitations to the passed out recruits and said PCG is considered as an important and prestigious force of the country which is simultaneously deployed on sea and land and is performing duties in the two provinces of Sindh and Balochistan which makes it different from other Civil Armed Forces (CAFs). Pakistan Coast Guards always performed very well against anti-national elements, especially drug and human traffickers, Brigadier Ghulam Abbas said and added that during the last one year, a large quantity of narcotics worth \$ 236 million in the international market was seized besides confiscating illegal goods of over Rs 1475 million.



KARACHI: Rangers and Police officials carried out the combing search operation against criminals as security has been tightened in city, at Old Golimar area in Karachi.

## PDWP approves seven development schemes

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) approved seven development schemes worth than Rs 11 billion, here on Friday. The 15th meeting of Provincial Development Working Party F.Y 2024-25 was held under the Chairmanship of Chairman P&D Board Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan in which development schemes of roads sector approved with an estimated cost of Rs 11775.832 million. The approved schemes included Rehabilitation of PD Khan, Choa Saidan Shah from Chakwal to Choa Bypass Length 32.25 Km (31.70 Km), District Chakwal at the cost of Rs 2398.755 million; Rehabilitation of Jhang Gojra Road at the cost of Rs 1532.852 million; New Road from Dari Mero Ladan to Ghous Abad along Link No.1 Length=30.40 km at the cost of Rs 633.986 million; Construction of New Roads & Repair of Roads in UCs 57 to 68 Tehsil Kamalia and UCs 69 to 85, Tehsil Pir Mahal.

## PM Sharif vows to extend utmost support to exporters

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

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

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

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the last years export of rice and

other Agri items was commendable and the ministers, administrative secretaries and all those who contributed in it deserve appreciation.

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

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

policies to achieve targets.

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

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

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

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also

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

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

Speaking on the occasion, Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal said that the support of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for the agriculture sector.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates the 2nd International Food & Agriculture Exhibition.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with Charge D'affaires Mr. Shi Yuanqiang and other officials of the Embassy of People's Republic of China.

## FM highlights positive economic developments

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

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

Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Power, Muhammad Ali and Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Ali

Pervaiz Malik also attended the meeting.

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

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

Aurangzeb also underscored the strong bilateral relationship between the two nations.

Minister of Power Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari said that the government greatly appreciates the Chinese investment in the energy sector of Pakistan.

## SBP injects Rs3.174 trillion into market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs3,174.35 billion in the market on Friday through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO).

According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted an Open Market Purchase (Injection) on August 09, 2024, for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted 30 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs3,084.35 billion.

The central bank received 13 bids for 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs732.2 billion at the rate of return ranging between 19.57 to 19.60 percent while 19 bids were received for the 28-day tenor offering an amount of Rs2,542.25 billion at the rate of return ranging between 19.55 to 19.61 percent. The SBP accepted all 13 quotes for a 7-day tenor amounting to Rs550 billion at 19.57 percent rate of return while 17 quotes for 28-day tenor amounting to Rs2,534.35 billion were accepted at 19.57 percent rate of return. Meanwhile, the central bank also conducted Shariah Compliant Mudarabah-based Open Market Operations for 7-day and 28-day tenors and injected Rs90 billion in the market.

## PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 695 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Friday, gaining 695.36 more points, a positive change of 0.89 percent, closing at 78,569.59 points against 77,874.22 points on the last working day.

A total of 420,405,980 shares were traded during the day as compared to 493,090,983 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 20,720 billion against Rs 25,846 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 446 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 226 of them recorded gains and 156 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 64 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 64,781,765 shares at Rs 6.64 per share.

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

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

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



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

Present at the gong ceremony were Dr. Mohammad Mustafa Kamal, CEO, Big Bird Foods Limited; Mr. Mahmood Ali Shah Bukhari, CEO KTrade Securities Limited; Mr. Omar Salah Ahmed, MD Corporate Finance, KTrade Securities Limited and Mr. Danish Elahi, CEO Elahi Group of Companies and Shareholder of Big Bird

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

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

Independent Report KARACHI: Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has apprised the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan that H. E. Mr. Cemal Sangu, Consul General of Turkiye in Karachi, has invited a multi-sectoral business delegation from the apex platform of FPCCI to explore the avenues for trade and economic

foods; IT & IT-enabled services; sports goods and surgical equipment.

Mr. Asif Sakhi, VP FPCCI, reiterated that Turkiye has world-class expertise in manufacturing and engineering products; specifically, electric vehicles (EVs); renewable energy (RE); avionics & drones; robotics & machine learning; artificial intelligence (AI); space sciences and agriculture & food technologies. Pakistan

## Short-term inflation up by 0.30 percent

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

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

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption

should go for industrial collaborations with Turkiye through offering its land coupled with a huge pool of young but cheap labor, he added.

Mian Zahid Hussain, Chairman of FPCCI's Policy Advisory Board (FPCCI-PAB), maintained that Pak - Turkiye Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) is a very positive development as Pakistan achieved a bilateral trade surplus of over \$100 million in 2023.

group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 17.96 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.46 per cent and went down to 310.83 points from last week's 309.40 points.

The SPI for the lowest consumption groups of Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.40 percent, 0.34 percent, 0.32 and 0.27 percent respectively.

## Pakistan determined to bolster economic ties with Turkiye: Jam

KARACHI (APP): The Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, highlighting the vast potential of trade and investment in agriculture sector, on Friday, said that Pakistan was determined to bolster economic relations and bilateral trade with the brotherly country of Turkiye.

He was speaking at a breakfast meeting hosted here Friday in honor of the Turkish delegation led by Turkiye Minister for Trade Prof. Dr. Omer Bolat, arrived in Pakistan to participate in Food Ag Expo 2024. Turkiye's Deputy Trade Minister Mustafa Tuzcu, President TOBB Riffat Hisarciklioglu, President DIEK Nail Olpak and representatives of business, industry and investment bodies were included in the delegation.

Council General of Turkiye in Karachi Cemal Sangu, Ambassador of Pakistan in Turkiye Dr Yousuf Junaid, Chief Executive Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Zubair Motiwala,

representatives of FPCCI, KCCI and other trade bodies as well as other officials also attended the meeting.

The commerce minister highlighted the vast potential of trade and investment in agriculture, food and agri-products in Pakistan and said that bilateral trade and investment opportunities were showcased in the FoodAg Expo 2024.

Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy close and cordial relations and leadership of both the brotherly countries was determined to further strengthen bilateral trade and economic ties with a futurist approach for progress and prosperity of people of both the countries who were bound together in historical, cultural, religious and economic relations, he noted.

The incumbent government under the vibrant and ambitious leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is focusing on enhancing volume of trade with current trade partners and

exploring opportunities in the new markets, he said adding that government was encouraging and facilitating business to business contacts and exchange of delegation with B2B sectoral approaches for identifying the potential of trade.

The commerce minister while referring to recent business interaction and agreements with public sector entities and private companies from Saudi Arabia, UAE, China and Azerbaijan, said that Pakistan has good business relations with USA and EU countries while more opportunities could be explored along with Turkiye through trilateral arrangements.

The Turkish Trade Minister Omer Bolat expressing keen interest in bolstering economic and trade relations with Pakistan in various sectors said that a delegation comprising representatives of business, industry, exporters and investors was here to explore opportunities through B2B meetings.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, meeting with H.E. Prof. Dr. Omer Bolat Minister of Trade of the Republic of Turkiye along his delegation.

## JS Bank wins leading Digital Bank Award

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

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

JS Bank has been at

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

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The three top trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 64,781,765 shares at Rs 6.64 per share.

## IRSA releases 502,200 cusecs water

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

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

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1208.35 feet, which was 160.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 29,800 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively.

cooperation. The two countries have an evident bilateral trade potential of \$5 billion; but, at present, we are only at \$1 billion per year, he added.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, reiterated that both sides have agreed that we should take tangible steps to realize the trade potential - whereas, Pakistan stands to gain tremendous foreign earnings through exports of value-added textiles; leather goods; processed

## Huawei launches "Train The Trainer" initiative for 300,000 students in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Huawei has designed an extensive training program to empower 300,000 students across the nation. Huawei marked a significant milestone in Pakistan's journey on Friday, towards digital excellence with the Huawei Train The Trainer (TTT) Certificate Distribution Ceremony. This initiative is a crucial part of Pakistan's broader digital transformation efforts, aiming to elevate ICT education and skills nationwide. The TTT program, a collaborative endeavor between Huawei and various ICT academies

## Over 6.138 million tons of meat to be produced in FY 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has set a target to produce about 6.138 million tons of meat during the current financial year (2024-25) to fulfill the local requirements as well as for exporting.

The meat output during the last financial year was recorded at 4.35 million metric tons, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research.

Talking to APP here on Friday, he said that beef output targets during the period under review were fixed at 2.719 million

across Pakistan, is designed to address the growing need for advanced ICT skills. By focusing on training trainers who will then educate students, the program creates a multiplier effect that significantly enhances the quality of ICT education.

This approach ensures that trainers are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills in ICT technologies, which they will pass on to students, thus directly impacting the next generation of IT professionals. The program's structure is meticulously designed to ensure that trainers are well-prepared to deliver high-quality education.

metric tons and meat at 835,000 metric tons respectively.

During the last financial year over 1.973 metric tons of beef were locally produced against the set targets of 2.630 million metric tons, whereas mutton production was recorded at 613,000 tons against the set targets of 817,000 tons, he added.

During the current financial year poultry production targets were fixed at 2.583 million metric tons as against the output of 1.772 million.



QUETTA: A delegation of Pakistan Engineering Council led by Syed Qadir Shah meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

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

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Russia declared a "federal-level" emergency in the Kursk region following a large-scale incursion from Ukraine and sent reinforcements there on Friday, four days after hundreds of Ukrainian troops poured across the border in what appeared to be Kyiv's biggest attack on Russian soil since the war began.

Meanwhile, a Russian plane-launched missile slammed into a Ukrainian shopping mall in the middle of the day, killing at least 12 people and wounding 44 others, authorities said.

The mall in Kostiantynivka, in the eastern Donetsk region, is located in the town's residential area. Thick black smoke rose above it after the strike.

"This is another targeted attack on a crowded place, another act of terror by the Russians," Donetsk regional head Vadym Filashkin said in a Telegram

post. It was the second major strike on the town in almost a year. Last September, a Russian missile hit an outdoor market there, killing 17.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that reinforcements were on their way to the Kursk region to counter Ukraine's daring raid. Russia is deploying multiple rocket launchers, towed artillery guns, tanks transported on trailers and heavy tracked vehicles, the RIA-Novosti news agency said, citing the Defense Ministry.

Little reliable information about the surprise Ukrainian operation has emerged, and its strategic aims are unclear. Ukrainian officials have refused to comment specifically about the incursion, which is taking place about 500 kilometers (320 miles) southwest of Moscow. But a top adviser to Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said

Thursday that border region attacks will cause Russia to "start to realize that the war is slowly creeping inside of Russian territory." Mykhailo Podolyak also suggested that the operation would improve Kyiv's hand in the event of negotiations with Moscow.

Mathieu Boulegue, a defense analyst at the Chatham House think tank in London, said the Ukrainians appear to have a clear goal in mind, even if they're not saying what it is.

"Such a coordinated ground force movement responds to a clear military objective, yet unknown, that requires extreme operational security," Boulegue told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

At the same time, the raid spooks the Russian public and delivers a slap in the face to Russian President Vladimir Putin, offering Ukraine "a great PR coup," he said.



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

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

**Monitoring Desk**

WASHINGTON: ABC News says that both Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and his Democratic counterpart, Kamala Harris, have agreed to meet in a debate on Sept. 10.

The network's announcement on Thursday came shortly after Trump told a news conference that he had agreed to three debates with Harris in September on separate networks.

Trump is rejoining the ABC debate days after posting on his social media network that he would not appear on the network, cit-

ing a lawsuit he has filed. His decision sets up a highly anticipated moment in an election where the first debate led to a massive change in the race — with Democratic President Joe Biden ending his reelection bid and endorsing Harris.

"I think it's very important to have debates," Trump said Thursday. "I look forward to the debates because I think we have to set the record straight."

On the social media site X later on Thursday, Harris wrote that "I hear that Donald Trump has fully committed to debating me on September 10. I look forward to it."

## UN warns IS Afghanistan branch growing in strength

**Monitoring Desk**

UNITED NATIONS: A UN counter-terrorism official warned on Thursday that the Afghanistan branch of the militant Islamic State group (IS) poses the greatest external terrorist threat to Europe as it boosts its organisational strength.

"ISIL-K has improved its financial and logistical capabilities in the past six months, including by tapping into Afghan and Central Asian diasporas for support," Vladimir Voronkov, undersecretary-general for counter-terrorism, said.

ISIL-K, or IS-K, is an acronym for the group's branch in Afghanistan, known as Islamic State Khorasan Province.

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

**Monitoring Desk**

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

Israel's advisory to its airlines to avoid Lebanon's airspace came hours after Egypt instructed all of its airlines to avoid Iran's airspace for three hours in the early morning on Thursday.

Many airlines globally are revising their schedules to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace while also calling off flights to Israel and Lebanon.

Flights through conflict zones became a prominent industry safety issue a decade ago after Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was shot down over Ukraine, kill-

## Bodies of 34 Rohingya refugees found after boat sinking off Bangladesh

**Monitoring Desk**

COX'S BAZAR: The bodies of 34 Rohingya refugees, who fled Myanmar only to drown when their overcrowded boat sank while crossing a river to Bangladesh, have been recovered, a top local government official said on Thursday.

Other refugees fleeing the bitter conflict described grim scenes of "bloodshed" as thousands tried to escape. The boat sank on Tuesday, when the bodies of 10 people — including young children — were initially recovered. But more have since washed ashore, taking the total killed to 34.

Police said the group had fled their villages in Myanmar's Rakhine state and their small craft sank in the Naf River, near Bangladesh's Shahpari Island. Adnan Chowdhury, the government administrator of Bangladesh's Teknaf

border town, said the boat was carrying Rohingya from Myanmar. Local councillor Abdus Salam said the bodies were being buried.

"The Rohingya people were fleeing with their lives from Myanmar," he said. At least 1,000 Rohingya have fled the war in Myanmar's Rakhine state to Bangladesh in the past few weeks, Chowdhury said.

Clashes have rocked Rakhine since the Arakan Army (AA) attacked junta forces in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since a military coup in 2021.

Abdul Kalam, 35, a Rohingya refugee, arrived on a different boat on Wednesday after fleeing the Rakhine town of Maungdaw and said thousands were trying to escape. "Arakan Army were killing us... they want to kick us out of Rakhine," he said.

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

**Monitoring Desk**

LONDON: Britain and Egypt asked their airlines on Wednesday to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace amid growing fears of a possible broader conflict in the region after the killing of senior members of militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah.

Britain's advisory to its airlines to avoid Lebanon's airspace came hours after Egypt instructed all of its airlines to avoid Iran's airspace for three hours in the early morning on Thursday.

Many airlines globally are revising their schedules to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace while also calling off flights to Israel and Lebanon.

Flights through conflict zones became a prominent industry safety issue a decade ago after Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was shot down over Ukraine, kill-

ing all 298 people on board.

US-based United Airlines said on Wednesday its flights to Tel Aviv, which were paused on July 31 due to security concerns, remained suspended. "We continue to closely monitor the situation and will focus on the safety of our customers and crews as we decide when to resume service," the airline said.

Its rival Delta Air Lines has paused its flights between New York and Tel Aviv through Aug. 31.

British carriers are not flying to Lebanon currently, according to flight tracking website FlightRadar24.

Singapore Airlines stopped flying through Iranian airspace last Friday and is using alternative routes, saying safety is its top priority.

Similarly, Egyptian airlines have already been avoiding Iran's airspace.

## Afghan Taliban chief asks public workers to attend mosque

**Monitoring Desk**

KABUL: Afghan government employees must attend mosque five times a day or face punishment, Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada said on Thursday in his latest edict.

Since the 2021 Taliban takeover, Akhundzada has overseen sweeping restrictions on society — shutting women and girls out of modern education, ordering male chaperones for females and effectively banning music.

"The officials of the ministries and institutions of the (Taliban government) are obliged by Sharia to pray in congregation at their fixed times," said the order signed by Akhundzada.

It added that employees who miss a prayer "without a reasonable excuse" should receive a

warning, and if they repeat the transgression "the relevant official is obliged to appropriately punish him".

A Taliban government spokesman did not respond to a query asking what the punishment would entail. It was not immediately clear how the order for employees to attend prayer during non-work hours would be policed.

Akhundzada directs the government from his hideout in southern Kandahar, the spiritual heartland of the Taliban movement which first ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001.

He rarely appears in public and when he does, bodyguards prohibit spectators from taking photographs or video of the man who has led the Taliban since 2016.

## 2024 'very likely' to be hottest on record: EU

**Monitoring Desk**

PARIS: It is "increasingly likely" 2024 will be the hottest year on record, despite July ending a 13-month streak of monthly temperature records, the EU's climate monitor said on Thursday.

The Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said last month was the second warmest on record books going back to 1940, only slightly cooler than July 2023.

Between June 2023 and June 2024, each month eclipsed its own temperature record for the time of year. "The streak of record-breaking months has come to an end, but only by a whisker," said Samantha Burgess, deputy director of C3S.

Last month the global average temperature was 16.91 degrees Celsius, only 0.04C below July 2023, according to C3S's monthly bulletin. But "the overall context hasn't changed, our climate continues to warm," said Burgess.

"Is he from the CIA?" another wrote. "Look at the year and you can't help but be sceptical," chimed in a third.

global greenhouse gas emissions reach net zero," she said.

From January to July global temperatures were 0.70C above the 1991-2020 average. This anomaly would need to drop significantly over the rest of this year for 2024 not to be hotter than 2023 — "making it increasingly likely that 2024 is going to be the warmest year on record," said C3S.

July 2024 was 1.48C warmer than the estimated average temperatures for the month during the period 1850-1900, before the world started to rapidly burn fossil fuels. This has translated into punishing heat for hundreds of millions of people. The Earth experienced its two hottest days on record with global average temperatures at a virtual tie on July 22 and 23 reaching 17.6C, C3S said.

Meanwhile, the World Meteorological Organisation said extreme heat hit hundreds of millions of people throughout July, with a domino effect felt right across society.



Displaced Palestinians leave eastern Khan Yunis to head west after the Israeli army issued a fresh evacuation order.

## G7 ambassadors to miss Nagasaki atomic bomb memorial over Israel's exclusion

**Monitoring Desk**

TOKYO: Nagasaki's mayor said he would stick to a decision to exclude Israel's ambassador from Friday's event to mark the city's atomic bombing, though senior diplomats of the United States and other Group of Seven nations said the snub would keep them away.

Their absence could embarrass Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, set to attend the annual event, which typically draws less attention than one held in Hiroshima three days earlier to mark the first-ever use of nuclear weapons.

"It's not that we haven't issued an invitation to the Israeli ambassador for political reasons, but rather, we want to conduct the ceremony smoothly in

a calm and solemn atmosphere," said Nagasaki's mayor, Shiro Suzuki.

"There has been no change in that judgment," he added, but did not elaborate.

The exclusion puts Israel on a list of uninvited countries that includes Russia and Belarus, although its ambassador, Gilad Cohen, attended this year's ceremony in Hiroshima.

The Nagasaki mayor's snub comes as Israel continues to fight Hamas forces in Gaza, a conflict that has reduced much of the heavily populated strip to ruins and killed more than 39,600 Palestinians, according to Gaza health ministry figures that do not distinguish between combatants and civilians.

## Tunisian president replaces prime minister

**Monitoring Desk**

TUNIS: Tunisian President Kais Saied sacked his prime minister Ahmed Hachami without explanation on Wednesday and replaced him with social affairs minister Kamel Madouri, according to a statement from his office.

Hachami took office on August 1 last year, replacing Najla Bouden, who was also dismissed without an official reason by Saied.

His replacement Madouri had only taken on the social affairs portfolio in May.

In a social media post from his office, Saied is shown shaking hands with Madouri with a brief statement saying only that the president had "decided to assign him to head the government, succeeding Mr. Ahmed Hachami".

## Somalia's cabinet approves bill for universal suffrage

**Monitoring Desk**

MOGADISHU: Somalia's cabinet approved a bill on Thursday that, if confirmed by parliament, will revert the country's election system to universal suffrage for the first time in decades, ending a process of indirect voting, the government's spokesperson said.

Amid widespread insecurity caused by an Islamist insurgency and weak state structures, in recent years lawmakers voted for the president, while clan heads and elders elected lawmakers in both the federal government and regional states. The country had initially been scheduled to move to direct voting in 2020, but protracted squabbles among politicians and persisting insecurity across the country forced the government to retain the indirect ballot.

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

**Monitoring Desk**

JERUSALEM: Israel vowed to eliminate new Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar, the alleged mastermind of the Oct 7 attack, whose appointment further inflamed regional tensions as the Gaza war entered its 11th month on Wednesday.

The naming of Sinwar to lead the Palestinian group came as Israel braced for potential Iranian retaliation over the killing of his predecessor Ismail Haniyeh last week in Tehran.

Speaking at a military base on Wednesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel was

"determined" to defend itself. "We are prepared both defensively and offensively," he told new recruits.

Army chief Lieutenant General Herzi Halevi vowed to "find him (Sinwar), attack him" and force Hamas to find another leader. Sinwar - Hamas's leader in Gaza since 2017 - has not been seen since the Oct 7 attack, which was the deadliest in Israel's history. A senior Hamas official told AFP that the selection of Sinwar sent a message that the organisation "continues its path of resistance".



Demonstrators toss a rubbish bin during an anti-immigration protest in Rotherham.

## Navalny's wife says he should have been part of historic prisoner swap

**Monitoring Desk**

LONDON: Alexei Navalny's wife Yulia said on Thursday that she felt both joy and bitterness over a Cold War-style prisoner swap that saw the release of leading Russian dissidents last week, nearly six months after he died in an Arctic penal colony.

Yulia Navalnaya said her husband, had he lived, was meant to be part of the deal in which Russia handed over the dissidents, along

with US and German nationals, in return for convicted Russian assassin Vadim Krasikov and other Russians held in Western jails.

Navalny's supporters said shortly after he died on Feb 16 that he was on the point of being exchanged for Krasikov, a member of Russia's FSB security service who was serving a life sentence in Germany for murdering a former Chechen fighter.

## Fearing Israeli strikes, residents flee south Beirut Hezbollah stronghold

**Monitoring Desk**

BEIRUT: Batoul and her family have been scrambling to secure housing outside Beirut's southern suburbs where an Israeli strike killed a senior Hezbollah commander last week, but spiking demand has sent prices soaring. Many in the southern suburbs — a packed residential area known as Dahiyeh which is also a Hezbollah bastion — have been trying to leave, fearing full-blown war between the Iran-backed group and Israel in the wake of the commander's killing.

"We are with the resistance (Hezbollah) to death," said Batoul, a 29-year-old journalist, declining to give her last name as the matter is sensitive.

"But it's normal to be scared... and look for a safe haven," she told AFP.

Iran and its regional allies have vowed revenge for the killing, blamed on Israel, of Hamas's political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran last week, just hours after the Israeli strike in Beirut's southern suburbs killed Hezbollah's top military commander Fuad Shukur. Hezbollah has traded nearly daily fire with Israeli forces in support of ally Hamas since the Palestinian militant group's October 7 attack on Israel triggered war in Gaza.

After the twin killings, fears have mounted of an all-out war, with foreign airlines suspending Beirut flights and countries urging their nationals to leave.

## Polls cast doubt on Labour's handling of riots in Britain

**Monitoring Desk**

LONDON: With far-right protests planned for Wednesday and thousands of riot police deployed across Britain to deal with the threat of riots, a survey on the British public's views on the riots and the response from Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his government shows widespread disapproval for their handling of the situation.

Published by YouGov, the survey shows that the British public overwhelmingly condemns the riots and holds mixed views on the broader protests. However, Labour under Starmer faces significant criticism for its handling of the crisis.

The survey reveals that the vast majority of

Britons oppose the riots. An overwhelming 85pc of respondents denounce the violent unrest, with 7pc expressing support. Even the broader peaceful protests only garner support from one-third of the population (34pc), while over half (54pc) are against them. This opposition is widespread across all voter groups, with even Reform UK voters, the most supportive group, showing only 21pc approval for the riots.

Only 8pc of Britons resonate with the rioters' views. Moreover, the public firmly believes that the rioters do not represent the majority, with 76pc asserting they do not reflect the views of most Britons.



A Philippine Coast Guard boat passes by a Vietnamese Coast Guard ship during a joint maritime exercise between the Philippine Coast Guard and Vietnamese Coast Guard, in the waters of Bataan province, Philippines.

## PM reiterates determination for complete eradication of polio from Pakistan

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

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

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

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

The prime minister also thanked the other partners of the government regarding anti-polio. He said that a whole-of-government approach has been adopted to eradicate polio. He further said, "we are doing our best to eradicate this deadly virus by 2025".

The prime minister directed that all the resources of the state should be utilized for the complete elimination of polio from the country. He directed that multiple doses of vaccine should be given to every child in Pakistan.

He emphasized that provision of the polio vaccine should be ensured to every child in areas where

there are security challenges.

The prime minister said that with the dedication of frontline workers, the determination of the Government of Pakistan and the support of partners, Pakistan has made significant progress against polio. The emergence of new polio cases is worrisome, but with the support of provincial governments and partners, polio will be defeated.

Chairman of the Gates Foundation, Bill Gates while appreciating the government's anti-polio initiatives, expressed satisfaction over the increase in the rate of children receiving anti-polio vaccine drops in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that it is gratifying that the government of Pakistan has planned to give inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) to 4 million children.

The meeting was briefed on the anti-polio strategy.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a review meeting regarding Pakistan polio eradication program.

## Bugti inaugurates monsoon tree plantation drive: Measures for tackling issue of climate change included in priorities of Govt, says CM

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that measures are being taken to cope with the challenges of climate change as these are included in the provincial government's priorities.

The Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the inauguration of monsoon tree plantation campaign at the CM's secretariat on Friday.

The Provincial Ministers Ali Madad Jatak, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani and other high ups were also present. The Chief Minister stressed the need to make the monsoon tree plantation campaign successful. In this regard, he urged the members of provincial assembly to play their wholehearted role for promotion of tree plantation in their respective areas. He said that at the time when Balochistan is facing

the unexpected rains and flood situation due to the climate change, therefore, tree plantation is necessary for remaining safe from the effects of climate change.

This is why, we are taking steps for tackling the challenge of climate change in the province.

Earlier, the Chief Minister and Provincial Ministers inaugurated the monsoon tree plantation campaign by planting saplings of Quetta pine.

## Govt brings Kisan Card to benefit farmers in Balochistan: Secretary

QUETTA (APP): Provincial Secretary Agriculture Muhammad Dawood Bazai on Friday said that the Balochistan government was bringing Kisan Card which would benefit farmers across the province.

He said this while discussing the performance of the department on the occasion of his visit to Musakhail.

Director General Agriculture Balochistan Muhammad Nadeem Irshad, Director Information Agriculture

Balochistan Abdul Karim Jafar, Dr. Habibullah Shah, Zamindaran Union District Musakhail President Nooruddin Khan, Maulvi Sarfrazuddin, Malik Abdullah, Sardar Asad and others were also present on this occasion. President of Zamindars Musakhail Nooruddin Khan briefed the Secretary about the problems being faced by farmers.

He said that the soil of Musakhail district was suitable for all kinds of crops and trees.



QUETTA: MPA Engr. Zamrak Khan Achakzai talking with Provincial Minister Mir Sadiq Umrani

## Rubaba terms BYP major milestone for youth development and welfare

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The provincial cabinet of Balochistan has proudly approved the Balochistan Youth Policy 2024, marking a significant milestone in the development and welfare of the youth.

This policy includes comprehensive recommendations aimed at providing growth opportunities across various sectors for young people, with a special focus on the welfare of young women and transgender individuals, stated the Advisor to CM Balochistan for Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi.

In an official statement issued here on Friday, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi

stated that this policy will prove to be instrumental in offering opportunities for youth in every field of life in Balochistan. She emphasized the government's commitment to ensuring that the youth of Balochistan are fully prepared to face future challenges. Through this policy, the government aims to assist young people in realizing their dreams.

She further mentioned that the provincial government developed this policy after extensive consultation, incorporating the views of all relevant stakeholders. The policy ensures the inclusion and development of youth in educational, social, economic, and other sectors.

## BTTN Chief congratulates Arshad

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN)'s Chief Retired Brigadier Agha Ahmed Gul on Friday congratulated Arshad Nadeem on winning gold medal in Paris Olympics.

In his statement issued here, he said Arshad Nadeem has proved that there was no shortage of talent in the Pakistani nation. He said that national hero Arshad Nadeem has won Pakistan's first individual gold medal in Olympic Games Paris 2024 by breaking the record in javelin throw. His victory, which has set a new Olympic record, it should be celebrated as a national victory and we all would embrace him as a national hero, every nation needs heroes like Arshad. He paid tributes to Arshad for making the nation proud and said that throwing more than 90 meters twice in the final competition has also become the only record.



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

## WB study urges Balochistan to harness renewable energy potential for electricity

ISLAMABAD (INP): The World Bank study on Balochistan's Renewable Energy Development has highlighted the province's vast potential to harness variable renewable energy (VRE) sources and create a surplus of electricity.

This surplus electricity could be exported to other provinces within Pakistan or to international markets, reducing Balochistan's reliance on power imports.

The study has suggested that the existing import connection lines can be used to stabilize the grid, allowing for the exchange of electricity with other countries at competitive prices and optimizing the annual

supply mix.

In the short term (by 2028), the study has noted that while a consistent surplus of VRE supply may not be available for continuous export, there could be seasonal opportunities for reverse power flow through the soon-to-be-available CASA1000 high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line to Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic, and potentially Kazakhstan).

The Central Asia Regional Electricity Market (CAREM) in this region has experienced an electricity deficit during the winter, with growing demand. The study indicates that the

GW-scale opportunity presented by Balochistan's VRE surplus could be of interest to the countries in Central Asia to help meet their seasonal electricity demand deficit.

Balochistan has an immense, largely untapped potential for cost-effective solar and wind power generation. The province's Photovoltaic (PV) power potential ranges from 2,000 to 2,500 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>, placing it among the world's most resource-rich regions for solar energy. Remarkably, PV power in Balochistan can achieve up to 35% grid utilization, and its energy supply profile aligns well with the local demand profile.

## President, PM extend greetings as javelin thrower Arshad wins gold medal in Olympics

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday congratulated javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem as he secured a gold medal for Pakistan at the 2024 Paris Olympics, ending the country's 32-year wait for an Olympic medal.

Arshad Nadeem won the gold medal in the men's javelin beating defending champion Neeraj Chopra of India to clinch Pakistan's first Olympic Athletic medal in Paris Olympics 2024, besides breaking the

previous Olympic record with a 92.97-metre massive throw.

"You are a pride of the whole nation," both the president and prime minister said in their separately issued statements.

"Arshad Nadeem's victory is the victory of the whole nation. Setting a fabulous Olympic world record is a great achievement. You have made us proud by winning the gold medal in a great contest of the Olympics and bringing fame to Pakistan," President Zardari stated.

## SC seeks reply from govt on shifting MHP to interior ministry

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has sought reply from government on shifting Margalla Hills National Park (MHP) to interior ministry besides summoning details of housing project established on Margalla Hills.

Attorney General (AG) assured the court for sacking Rana Saeed and bringing the matter of shifting of National Park to the notice of Prime Minister (PM).



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Asfandyar Kakar and MPA Syed Zafar Ali Agha meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti

## DC warns tandoor owners to adhere to official price list

**Tandoor owners have appealed to the government to review the official price list**

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Lieutenant (R) Saad bin Asad, has warned tandoor owners to adhere to the official price list, otherwise, strict action will be taken against them. "We will not tolerate any violation of the price list," he said. "Tandoor owners must display the official price list at their

shops, and anyone found overcharging will be arrested and jailed." The Deputy Commissioner also directed the Assistant Commissioners and Magistrates to conduct daily raids on tandoors and submit reports. "We will monitor the situation closely, and any negligence will be unacceptable," he added.

Meanwhile tandoor owners have appealed to the government to review the official price list, saying it is unrealistic and will lead to losses for them.

"We understand the need to control prices, but the current price list is too low," said a tandoor owner. "We request the government to reconsider the prices and find a mutually acceptable solution."

## CPEC to open ways of prosperity for the entire region; experts conclude

QUETTA (APP): A seminar was held at a local resort in Quetta, organized by the Centre for Development and Stability (CDS), where tribal elders, local youth representatives, and notable figures of Balochistan shared their valuable insights on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The seminar focused on "Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality with a Focus on Regional Connectivity, Innovation, and Security in Balochistan."

During the seminar, an interactive session was held

where all participants agreed that CPEC is a guarantor of development and prosperity in Balochistan. They expressed their willingness to protect Chinese initiatives in the region, including the construction of an international airport in Gwadar and clean drinking water projects. A detailed discussion was held on the significance of projects planned for the second phase of CPEC in Gwadar, such as renewable energy initiatives, which were deemed pivotal for the prosperity of Balochistan and Pakistan.

All participants appreciated CPEC and agreed that those who oppose its smooth completion and plot conspiracies to sabotage it are traitors and enemies of Pakistan. They emphasized that these individuals are spreading misinformation and polluting the minds of people of all ages to hinder Balochistan's progress and stability. Director General of CDS, Dr. Irfan Ashraf, and Patron-in-Chief of CDS Brig @ Asif Haroon Raja discussed and highlighted the benefits of CPEC for Balochistan, stat-

ing that it has opened up ways of prosperity for the region. They noted that the development of Gwadar Port, with an investment amounting to billions of rupees, along with the establishment of a major international airport and clean drinking water projects in the region, signifies a pivotal transformation in Balochistan's infrastructure. Dr. Ashraf also mentioned that Chinese companies have committed substantial resources, worth millions of dollars, towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over 13th meeting of Board of Directors of Balochistan Public Procurement Regularity Authority (BPPRA)

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

**Opp Leader, members welcome Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi with great homage; Pakistan, Saudi Arabia can play global role on Kashmir and Palestine: Fazl**

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

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

In his welcome address, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq extended heartfelt greetings to Imam Al-Budair and his delegation, emphasizing the pride and spiritual satisfaction that their presence brought to

the assembly. "The presence of the Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi in our midst is a great honor and a source of spiritual solace for us," remarked Speaker Ayaz Sadiq. He further added that all members of the assembly felt a deep sense of joy and happiness to have Imam Al-Budair among them. Meanwhile Leader of the Opposition, Omar Ayub Khan on Friday along with members of the National Assembly accorded a warm welcome to Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi (PBUH) Sheikh Dr Salah Bin Muhammad Al-Budair by paying great tributes and homage to the dignity.

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



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Saydal Khan Nassar meeting with Chairman NADRA.

## Labourers representatives to be taken on board in decision making of public welfare: CM

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that the provincial government is taking steps for welfare of the labourers in Balochistan.

He said that some 400 children of the labourers would be imparted education in the higher educational institutions of the country.

Besides, the representatives of labourers would be involved in the decision making to be made for public welfare.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the delega-

tion of representatives of labourers who called on him here at the CM Secretariat on Friday.

The members of delegation led by Muhammad Ramzan Achakzai apprised the Chief Minister about the issues being faced by the labourers.

Also present in the meeting was the Advisor to Chief Minister for Labour and Manpower, Sardar Ghulam Rasool Umrani.

The Chief Minister gave patient hearing to the issues of labourers and assured that steps would be taken to resolve their issues.

## Digital Gender inclusion strategy PTA, MoITT formally commenced implementation

ISLAMABAD (APP): With the inaugural meeting of the Steering Committee on Digital Gender Inclusion, the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) in collaboration with Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has formally commenced the implementation of the Digital Gender inclusion strategy to significantly reduce digital gender divide within next three years.

The meeting was chaired by Minister of State for IT & Telecommunication (MoITT) Shaza Fatima

Khawaja and convened by Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Major General @ Hafeez Ur Rehman, said a news release issued here on Friday. During the meeting, Shaza Fatima Khawaja emphasized the government's commitment to advancing Pakistan's Digital Gender Inclusion Strategy and highlighted the need for collective action to bridge the digital gender gap. Chairman of PTA Maj. Gen @ Hafeez Ur Rehman underscored PTA's role in coordinating efforts and ensuring effective implementation through collaboration.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail inaugurating Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign 2024

## Magsi terms completion of Naulong Dam a significant milestone

QUETTA (APP): Former Senator Barrister Nawabzada Saifullah Magsi on Friday said that the completion of the Naulong Dam, with the support of the federal government, will be a significant milestone for the development of the green belt of the Balochistan.

Naulong dam will promote the growth of agriculture and livestock in Jhal Magsi, bringing 47,000 acres of land under cultivation and generating electricity for the area.

He expressed these views while speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Naulong Integrated Wa-

ter Resource Development Project organized by the Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP).

Dr. Shah Nawaz from BRSP, Project Director Yusuf Magsi, irrigation expert Mr. Allen Clark, and others were also present on the occasion.

He praised the federal government's efforts for initiating such public-friendly projects.

During the briefing on the project, the former senator was informed that the Naulong Dam spans 3,716 acres with a command area of 47,000 acres and will generate 4.4 megawatts of electricity under hydroelectric power generation.