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Independence Day celebrates with great enthusiasm in Balochistan:

## Govt. has to work against proxies of separatist movements & RAW, asserts Chief Minister

Mir Sarfraz Bugti says banned outfit involved in killing of DC Panjgur Zakir Baloch; there is issue of missing persons, but 80 percent issue has been resolved, ready to sit with all concerned to resolve remaining 20 percent issue; anyone can do politics remaining within framework of Constitution; thankful to Deputy PM and Speaker NA for becoming part of Ind. Day celebrations

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that government has to work against the proxies of separatist movements and Indian notorious secret agency "RAW", and anyone can't be allowed to act as their proxies.

The Chief Minister said that everyone has the right to do politics, but it should be done remaining in the framework of constitution of the country.

He said that we have solid intelligence report and evidences that the banned organization is involved in the killing of Deputy Commissioner Panjgur, Zakir Baloch.

He said that "yes there is the issue of missing persons, but 80 percent of the same has been resolved while we are ready to sit with the concerned to resolve the remaining 20 percent."

These views were expressed by the Chief Minister while addressing a hurriedly called press conference at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Thursday morning.



He was flanked by the spokesman, Government of Balochistan, Shahid Rind.

The Chief Minister on the occasion strongly condemned the killing of Deputy Commissioner Panjgur in the terrorist attack in Mastung area and

said that we have intelligence reports that the banned organization is involved in the incident of killing of Deputy Commissioner Panjgur Zakir Baloch in Mastung. In the incident, the Chairman Panjgur council, Abdul Malik Baloch was also injured, adding he mentioned. He said that all such incidents are being done against the state under an organized conspiracy.

He said that we are going to attribute the Government College Hoshab to the

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RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir interacts with retired officers of Pakistan Army during a graceful reception in honor of Pakistan Army veterans on the eve of 77th Independence Day of Pakistan held in Rawalpindi.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing the ceremony of distribution of certificates of admission and scholarships the children of the registered labourers under the arrangements of Workers Welfare Board

### Admission certificates & scholarships distributed among 400 children of labourers:

## Children of labourers have full right of acquiring education in any higher institution, says CM

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has stated that the children of labourers have full right of acquiring education in any educational institution of the country.

The Chief Minister said that it has been his endeavour that children of labourers don't become labourer.

The Chief Minister was addressing the ceremony of distribution of

certificates of admission in Islamabad's best institutions and scholarships distribution among 400 children of the registered labourers under the arrangements of Workers Welfare Board here on Thursday.

The Provincial Ministers Mir Asim Kurd, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Advisor to Chief Minister for Labour and Manpower, Sardar Ghulam Rasool Umrani, Member National

Continued on page 2

## President, PM praise security forces

### Seven terrorists killed, five injured in Kurram IBO

RAWALPINDI (APP): Seven terrorists were eliminated while five got injured during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted by the security forces in Kurram district on Thursday on the reported presence of Khawarij (TTP ter-

rorists). During conduct of the operation, the Army troops effectively engaged the Khawarij's location, as result of which, seven Khawarij of Fitna Al Khawarij were sent to hell.

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RAWALPINDI: A large quantity of weapons, ammunition and explosives were recovered after security forces conducted an intelligence based operation in Kurram District on reported presence of Khawarij.

## GoB declares DC Zakir Baloch as martyr

Renames Govt Boys College, Hoshab as Shaheed Zakir Baloch Govt Boys College

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has declared former Deputy Commissioner Panjgur, Zakir Baloch, as a martyr.

According to a notification issued by the Home and Tribal Affairs Department of Balochistan, the Home Department has exercised its powers under Section 17 of the Balochistan Civil Servants and Employees Benefits and Death Compensation Policy 2020 and declared Zakir Baloch (BCS/BS-18), former Deputy Commis-

sioner Panjgur, as a "martyr". This notification is issued in recognition of Zakir Baloch's ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

The Government of Balochistan has renamed the Government Boys College, Hoshab as the "Shaheed Zakir Baloch Government Boys College, Hoshab Turbat with immediate effect, on Thursday.

According to the spokesman, Government of Balochistan, the martyr Deputy Commissioner Panjgur Zakir Baloch embraced martyrdom during duty.

## PM calls for vigilance against flooding in Punjab's urban, Chenab river areas

### ISLAMABAD (APP):

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif directed the NDMA, PDMA, and other relevant agencies to remain on high alert to address the potential severe flooding in areas near the Chenab River and urban flooding caused by heavy rains in Punjab.

According to a statement from the PM Office Media, the prime minister indicated that he was personally monitoring the anticipated heavy monsoon spell until August 25.

He had directed National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMAs), rescue and relief agencies, civil defense, and district administrations to be prepared to protect residents in the Chenab River catchment area and cities at risk of flooding due to heavy rains.

## Dar expresses commitment to achieve economic stability

ISLAMABAD (Online): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar has said that the government is striving to achieve economic stability, making Pakistani economy among the strongest economies of the world.

He was addressing a ceremony in connection with Urs of Hazrat Syed Abdul Latif Kazmi popularly known as Bari Imam in Islamabad.

Ishaq Dar said prudent economic measure are being taken to transform Pakistan into a robust economic power and expressed the optimism that the country would be soon included in G20 club as a rapid economic change is on the horizons.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail enquiring about health of injured of Wednesday's bomb blasts at Trauma Center

## PML-N decides to fully support establishment

LAHORE (INP) - Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif directed the party leaders to be very careful while issuing statements on Faiz Hameed case.

Chairing a high-level party meeting in Model Town Lahore, Nawaz Sharif said that all party leaders should refrain from giving emotional statements. It was also decided to fully support the government and the establishment.

During the meeting, the situation arising after the arrest of Gen @ Faiz Hameed was debated.

During the meeting, the

report of the legal team on the proposed constitutional amendment regarding the extension of the tenure of the judges was discussed. Moreover, a proposal to ban public demonstrations in Islamabad and Punjab for law and order was also considered.

PM Shehbaz Sharif briefed the participants of the meeting on the role of Parliament in ending the political and judicial crisis.

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar told the participants about the latest situation on the country's economy and negotiations with the IMF.

## Governor visits Trauma Centre; inquire about health of blasts' injured

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail visited the Trauma Center adjacent to the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta on Thursday.

During the visit, the Governor inquired about health of the persons injured in different blasts occurred in Quetta.

He announced to fix artificial hand to a person whose hand was lost in the

explosion in China market. He also announced to give him government job to the injured person.

The Governor appreciated the timely steps taken for treatment of the injured persons by the Medical Superintendent of Sandeman Hospital Dr Ishaq Panezai and the Managing Director of Trauma Center Dr Arab Kamran Kast.

He also prayed for early recovery of the injured persons.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Shahab Ali meeting with Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langoo

## PTI founder says Gen (Retd) Bajwa removed Gen (Retd) Faiz to seek extension in his service

Arrest of Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed internal matter of army: Imran

RAWALPINDI (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan has said Gen (Retd) Faiz is our asset who was wasted.

Gen (Retd) Bajwa removed Gen (Retd) Faiz for extension in his service despite being forbidden by me, If Gen (Retd) Faiz is behind May 9 then it should be investigated, he said this while talking to media men on the occasion of hearing of Al-Qadir Trust reference in Adiala jail Thursday.

He held it is good army is conducting internal accountability. If it is carrying out accountability then

it should be done in respect of all.

He held "Khawaja Asif has said Gen (Retd) Faiz is directly linked to May 9 incidents. In fact all the matter started from my arrest. Why it is not being investigated. If Gen (Retd) Faiz is behind May 9 then investigations should be made in this regard.

He added May 9 in fact was part of London plan. Wherever fire has erupted the CCTV footages of these areas are missing, our CCTV footages be brought

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## COAS warns of attempts to create rift between public and armed forces

Pays tribute to Army veterans for dedication, instrumental role in shaping nation's history

### RAWALPINDI (APP):

Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir has paid heartfelt tribute to the contributions of the retired personnel, lauding their dedication and instrumental role in shaping the nation's history.

The COAS hosted a graceful reception in honor of Pakistan Army veterans on the occasion of Independence Day.

The event brought together a multitude of retired army officers and soldiers, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS paid heartfelt tribute to the contributions of the retired personnel, lauding their dedication and instrumental role in shaping the nation's history. He emphasized the paramount importance of unity and resilience in the face of challenges, urging veterans to continue playing a vital role in Pakistan's progress and development.

The COAS also cautioned against the insidious threat of fake news and propaganda being perpetrated by inimical elements to weaken the bond between the people of Paki-

stan and the Armed Forces. He reassured that the unwavering support of the nation, including the veterans would foil all such futile efforts.

The veterans expressed faith and confidence in the leadership of the Pakistan Army, pledging their support in combating both internal and external security challenges.

The event served as a testament to the unbreakable bond between the Pakistan Army and its veterans, united in their commitment to the nation's prosperity and security.

## Three more retired Army officers taken into military custody: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): In connection with the Field General Court Martial (FGCM) proceedings of Lt General @ Faiz Hameed, three retired officers were also in military custody for their actions prejudicial to military discipline.

Further investigations of certain retired officers and their accomplices for fomenting instability at the behest of and in collusion with vested political interests, are continuing, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said on Thursday.

## Govt unveils five-year economic plan to ensure stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has prepared a five year economic plan to provide relief to people and ensure economic growth.

This was stated by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar while talking to media in Lahore.

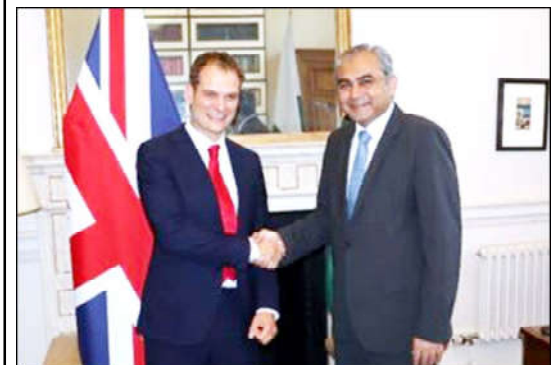
He said Prime Minister will present his five-year economic plan to the nation during his address.

Information Minister said government is striving to achieve economic and political stability in the country.

He said government will provide relief to the people in electricity bills.

Attaullah Tarar welcomed the process of self-accountability by institutions, stating that it should be adopted by every institution.

He also criticised a political party and its leader for attacking the country's integrity.



Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi meeting with British Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Hamish Falconer in London.

## Pakistan, UK agree to continue counter-terrorism cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi met with British Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Middle East, Afghanistan and Pakistan) Hamish Falconer in London and discussed matters of mutual interest, including the promotion of Pakistan-UK bilateral relations.

The British Under-Secretary of State extended felicitations to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and the people of Pakistan on the occasion of Independence Day, said a press release.

During the meeting regional peace & stability and

combating the scourge of terrorism were also discussed. Both ministers emphasized the need to increase mutual cooperation for peace and stability.

The minister stated that the second phase of repatriation of the Afghan refugees to their homeland would start soon.

He said that Pakistan was the most affected country by terrorism, while it's security forces have made unprecedented sacrifices in the war against terrorism and added that terrorism was a global issue, and many countries face this challenge in various forms.

## President Zardari approves Sitara-i-Imtiaz for Dr. Rubaba

### Independent Report.

QUETTA: The Government of Pakistan has announced the nomination of Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan on Women Development, for the prestigious Sitara-i-Imtiaz, one of the country's highest civil awards.

The award will be conferred upon her in a grand ceremony on September 13. The President of Pakistan has approved Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi's nomination from Balochistan, following which the federal government has issued an official gazette notification. Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi is the only woman from Balochistan to be honored with this award this year, recognizing her outstanding contributions and tireless efforts for the advancement of women's rights in the province. Throughout her career, Dr. Buledi has played a significant role in improving health, education, and women's rights in the under-



developed regions of Balochistan. She has introduced several key projects aimed at the welfare of the public and has worked diligently to empower women both socially and economically. In her remarks, Dr. Buledi expressed that this nomination is a great honor for her, dedicating it to the people of her province. She reaffirmed her commitment to continue serving and working for the welfare of the people of Balochistan.

The Sitara-i-Imtiaz is one of Pakistan's highest civil award, given to individuals who have rendered exceptional services to the country.



## Climate change ministry, BISP joins hands to boost country's forest cover

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam on Thursday said that engaging communities in tree plantation is vital for effective forest conservation and management, because their well-being is often intricately linked with the health of the forests they depend on, according to press statement issued here from the climate change & environmental coordination ministry. The PM's climate aide said further that since local communities often have traditional knowledge and practices that contribute to sustainable forest management, they can play an effective role in enforcing conservation, managing natural resources and protecting biodiversity.

"In fact, community-based forest management practices in many Asian countries have shown that communities, when strengthened with knowledge and ownership of resources act as the frontline defenders of forests against illegal activities like logging, poaching and land grabbing. Besides, they can also help monitor and report illegal activities and advocate for forest protection," PM's climate aide highlighted.

Given the effectiveness of community-based forest management in forest protection and conservation, the climate change & environmental coordination's Upscaling Green Pakistan Programme (UGPP) has launched an ambitious tree plantation campaign in collaboration with the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) across all provinces, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan to enhance tree cover in the country. Underlining the overarching aim of the partnership between the ministry and BISP, the PM's climate change coordinator Romina Khurshid said that partnership would aim to utilise large-scale nationwide network of the BISP financial aid beneficiaries and engage them in various tree plantation activities across the country. "Such a large-scale involvement of the BISP beneficiaries in the tree plantation activities would help foster environmental stewardship and contribute to a greener Pakistan. Below is an overview of the activities and plans in each province," Ms Alam hoped. She also said that a large number of women beneficiaries and their families were also pro-actively engaged in various tree plantation activities on the Plant for Pakistan day, which was celebrated on the 77th Independence Day of Pakistan across the country.



ISLAMABAD: Minorities Alliance Pakistan Chairman Akmal Bhatti addressing a press conference

## Secretary announces initiative to reward public's green contributions in Punjab

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to combat climate change and control smog, Punjab Secretary for Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Raja Jahangir Anwar Thursday unveiled a comprehensive plan to accelerate the "Plant for Pakistan" campaign, where a novel initiative to reward the public's green contributions is being launched.

The initiative aims to recognize and encourage individuals, communities, and organizations to make efforts to plant trees, reduce pollution, and adopt eco-friendly habits, thereby contributing to a cleaner, greener, and healthier environment in Punjab, he said while talking to a Private news channel.

He explained that the government will make "green investments" in sectors severely impacted by climate change, supporting their transition to more sustainable practices, adding, furthermore climate change education will be integrated into school curricula to raise awareness and promote climate literacy among students.

In a unique move, the government will also offer an honorarium to individuals who contribute to environmental conservation by planting trees and recycling waste, encouraging community-led initiatives and fostering a culture of sustainability, he mentioned.

By offering a monetary reward to individuals who plant trees and recycle waste, the government aims to create a culture of environmental responsibility, where citizens are motivated to contribute to the country's ecological well-being, he highlighted.

This honorarium scheme will not only encourage individuals to adopt eco-friendly practices but also inspire a sense of pride and civic duty, as people become actively engaged in preserving Pakistan's natural resources for future generations, he said.

As a result, the initiative has the potential to spark a grassroots movement, driving meaningful change and fostering a sustainable future for the country, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Metro Bus Service celebrated Independence Day with great pomp and show in the twin cities.

## Committee constituted to probe abduction of an alleged foreign national

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Thursday made notable progress in a troubling case involving abduction and sexual assault. The incident was first reported when a woman was found on Wednesday, abandoned with her hands and feet bound within the Aabpara police station limits.

According to a police spokesperson, the woman who initially identified herself as Farwa and asserted that she was a Belgian citizen who had arrived in Pakistan in January 2024, has now been confirmed as Farwa Kayani, Daughter of Sultan Farid Kayani age 44 years a resident of Rawalpindi. Despite her claims of foreign nationality, the Belgian Embassy has denied any record of her entry into the country. This discrepancy has raised significant doubts about her alleged foreign identity.

The investigation into her case is being spearheaded by a special committee led by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Arsalan Shahzaib. The committee is delving into the motives behind Farwa Kayani's claim of foreign nationality and the nature of the allegations she made. Farwa Kayani, whose age was earlier said to be 28 years old, has been receiving medical treatment at Polyclinic Hospital after being discovered in a state of distress on Street No. 33, G6/1, Saddar Road.

According to the police spokesperson, there is currently no evidence supporting her claim of being a foreigner, and her statements have been marked by several inconsistencies.

## ICT admin set to regulate restaurant open spaces

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration is taking steps to ensure that restaurants operating in open-air spaces do so within a regulated framework, addressing the concerns of citizens.

In a significant meeting led by the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad, representatives from the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) and Capital Development Authority (CDA) discussed the growing issue of restaurants using open-air spaces.

The meeting focused on creating a code of conduct to manage these spaces effectively.



ISLAMABAD: Motorcyclists take shelter under a bridge at Zero Point during heavy rain in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (MoFEPT) held an important event to launch two key reports on education technology and foundational learning, and to shine a light on its reforms in assessment and teacher education.

## Jaranwala tragedy is a black mark on the face of Pakistani society, MAP

ISLAMABAD (Online): "Failure to Provide Justice to the Victims of Jaranwala Even After a Year is a Government Failure," says Akmal Bhatti, Chairman Minorities Alliance Pakistan (MAP).

"The Jaranwala tragedy is a black mark on the face of Pakistani society. The fact that the victims have not yet received justice is a mockery of the claims made by government and police officials. 99% of the accused in the Jaranwala incident are free, mocking the government and the helplessness of Christians. The investigative officers and their committees have failed to fulfill their constitutional role, and at present, only 11 individuals are behind bars."

On the solemn occasion of the one-year remembrance of the Jaranwala incident, Minorities Alliance Pakistan (MAP) held a press conference to honor the victims of the tragic violence that struck the Christian community on August 16, 2023, in which nearly 10,000 people were breaking the crosses on every church and cemetery across approximately a 10-kilometer area in and around Jaranwala, demolishing and looting homes. Twenty-six churches were set on fire, burning thousands of copies of the Holy Bible.

Around 250 families were left homeless, and thousands fled the city, fearing for their lives.

However, all the attackers, including their ringleaders and the influential local leaders of their groups, were released.

The investigation was flawed, with only 303 people being sent to judicial lockup. Hundreds were arrested initially to appease the Christian community, but they were later released. Of the 303 individuals who were jailed, only 11 remain behind bars, while the rest are free due to poor investigation, negligence, and discriminatory behavior.

## PMDC to issue digital license certificates

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj has directed the council's IT team to develop and implement e-certificates for license renewals and Good Standing Certificates.

These certificates previously took days to process can now be issued much faster, ensuring that doctors experience minimal disruption. Under the new system, the issuance time for license renewals is expected to be reduced to 6-7 days, while Good Standing Certificates will be processed within just 1-2 days, he said.

Additionally, the enhanced digital infrastructure will allow the PM&DC to efficiently handle up to 300-400 applications per day, further increasing operational efficiency.

In a statement, he said that the council is committed to provide a more efficient and user-friendly experience for medical and dental practitioners.

He said that this innovative move will modernize the PM&DC's registration processes by introducing a fully digital system for the issuance of these essential documents.

He said that by transitioning to e-certification, the PM&DC aims to drastically reduce processing times, making it quicker and more convenient for practitioners to obtain their renewal licenses and Good Standing Certificates.



ISLAMABAD: Former member of Pakistan Engineering Council Governing Body Engineer Zahoor Sarwar addressing a press conference at NPC.

## Combating tuberculosis requires preventive treatment, public awareness: Expert

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Provincial TB Control Program Officer, Syed Saleem Hasan Kazmi Thursday emphasized the importance of preventive treatment and awareness in combating Tuberculosis (TB) and highlighted that it is the second most common cause of death among infectious diseases globally which claiming million of lives annually. Talking to a private news channel, Syed Saleem Hasan Kazmi explained that Pakistan ranks fifth among 22 countries severely affected by Tuberculosis (TB), adding, this alarming ranking highlights the urgent need for effective measures to combat the spread of TB in Pakistan.

TB is a major public health concern in Pakistan, with a high burden of cases and deaths attributed to the disease, he said, adding the country's fifth position among the 22 highly TB-affected countries underscores the need for sustained efforts to control and eliminate TB.

Kazmi emphasized that TB is a curable disease, but it requires prompt diagnosis and treatment. He stressed the importance of awareness and education in preventing the spread of TB, as well as the need for increased access to quality healthcare services for early detection and treatment.

The officer's remarks came as a wake-up call for the government, healthcare professionals, and the general public to join hands in combating TB. By working together, Pakistan can hope to reduce the incidence of TB and improve the health and well-being of its citizens.

## MOU signed for provision of better health facilities to cops

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, efforts are ongoing to provide the best facilities and discounted medical services to Islamabad Police officers and their families.

In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between Islamabad Police and the private organization Nayab Labs and Diagnostic Center.

On behalf of Islamabad Police the agreement was signed by SP Police Shuhada families will receive a 40% discount on lab tests and 25% on radiological tests.

To avail the discounted tests, all officers and their families will use service and family medical cards.

IGP Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said that the best medical facilities are being provided to the serving officers of Islamabad Police, as well as the families of martyrs and officers who passed away during service.

Such measures are boosting the morale of police officers and helping to provide their families with the best medical facilities. Further steps are being taken for the welfare of police officers. He added that police officers often suffer from various illnesses due to law and order duties and other tough responsibilities, and they faced difficulties in getting the best medical treatment.



Headquarters Qaiser Niaz Gilani and Nayab Labs and Diagnostic Center Medical Director Dr. Nawab Zaheer Ud Din Shaikh.

Under the agreement, Islamabad Police officers and their families will receive a 35% discount on lab tests and 20% on radiological tests, while Islamabad

## ICT admin crackdown on overpricing vendors

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a decisive move to ensure fair pricing, Islamabad's district administration has launched a crackdown on vendors overcharging customers in local markets and registered cases against the 12 violators.

The Islamabad District Administration has intensified its efforts to tackle overpricing by local vendors, said the spokesman of ICT administration.

In a recent operation led by Assistant Commissioner Pothohar, Aneeq Anwar, 12 traders were arrested for not adhering to the official price list in the vegetable market. The accused shopkeepers were found charging customers more than the rates prescribed by the government.

During the inspection, it was discovered that many vendors had failed to display the official rate list, which is a mandatory requirement. The absence of this price list led to customers being charged higher rates, prompting immediate action from the authorities.

Assistant Commissioner Anwar emphasized that all shopkeepers must prominently display the official price list to avoid legal consequences. The District Commissioner has appealed to the public to report any vendor who fails to display the rate list or charges more than the official prices. This action was part of a broader effort to regulate prices and protect consumers from unfair practices in the market.

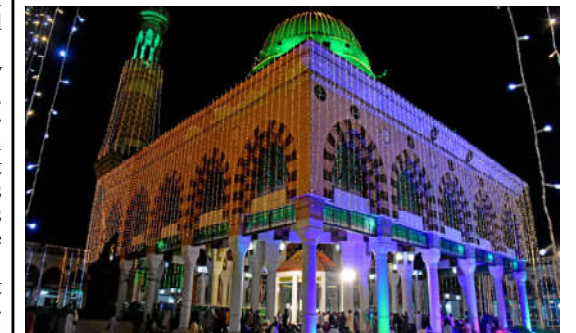
## Monsoon rains expected across most parts of country till August 18

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) anticipated more rains, wind and thundershower with isolated heavy rains in various regions of Pakistan until August 18th.

According to the forecast, more rain was expected in catchment areas of Neelum and Jhelum rivers in Azad Kashmir, while districts Barkhan, Bolan, Hamai, Jaffarabad, Kohlu, Musakhel, Nasirabad, Sherani, Sibi, and Zhoob of Balochistan and the Mirpur Khas Division, Dadu, Jacobabad, Khairpur, Larkana, Mithi, Matari, Sanghar, and Sukkur of Sindh, a news release said.

The rainfall may cause flooding in various urban areas and increase water flow in streams and nullah, particularly in the Neelum and Jhelum rivers in AJ&K.

Hilly areas may experience landslides, mudflows and flash flooding.



ISLAMABAD: Annual Urs of Hazrat Syed Abdul Latif Kazmi alias Bari Imam Sarkar kicked off in Federal Capital. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar already directed extraordinary security arrangements on the occasion of Urs and asked administration and Capital Development Authority to provide shuttle service to the pilgrims.

## ICAMEA hosts webinar on "Interim Afghan Government three years in Power"

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) hosted a webinar on "Interim Afghan Government, Three Years in Power" at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) here Thursday. The webinar was moderated by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. Speakers included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI, Sardar Ahmad Shaakeb, Charge d' Affaires/Minister Counselor, Afghanistan Embassy, Islamabad; Ambassador Ayaz Wazir, Former Pakistani Diplomat; Dr. Mandana Tishehyar, President of the Iranian Peace Studies Scientific Association; Dr. Ye Haijin, Director, Center for South Asia Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing; Dr. Zamaraveva Natalia Alekseevna, Senior Researcher Center for the Study of the Near and Middle East, Russia; Adam Weinstein, Deputy Director of the Middle East Program at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, Washington D.C, a news release said. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood stated that while the Taliban had consolidated power over the past three years, significant concerns persist regarding their governance, respect for human rights and women's rights and counter-terrorism measures. He acknowledged the positive developments such as improved security and certain economic indicators like increased revenue and exports, but noted that these were overshadowed by ongoing challenges in other domains.

Friday August 16, 2024

**Throttling connectivity**

The five stages of internet governance in Pakistan seem to be as follows: curb, deny, double down, reluctantly admit, and repeat. By now, nearly every smartphone user in Pakistan has experienced interruptions to WhatsApp, the Meta-owned messaging app that has become indispensable to billions of people the world over.

According to DownDetector, a website that tracks internet disruptions, thousands of Pakistani users have reported outages and interruptions in connectivity over the past week. Most reports have been about trouble with calls and messages, including voice notes, multimedia content and downloading problems over mobile data. This means that everything, from important legal documents to the customary 'Jashn-i-Azadi Mubarak' messages, is getting lost in the ether as cellular providers, undoubtedly at the behest of the authorities, continue to throttle connectivity.

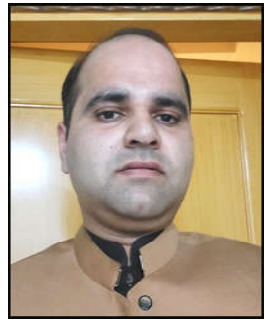
We know why this is happening — because of the need to clamp down on so-called digital terrorism; the state has already made its intentions quite clear with its treatment of the social media platform X. The latter served as a virtual town hall where people could debate, argue, protest and mobilise in support of various worthy causes.

This made it liable to be deemed a threat to national security. And yet, ministers and government departments continue to use X for official communications through virtual private networks. Now the authorities seem to have decided that WhatsApp has replaced X as the new staging ground for dissent and are tightening the noose, with little to no regard for the social and economic disruptions this will cause.

The authorities may have genuine concerns with the platform, including its use to share misinformation and disseminate propaganda against the state and its institutions. It is also true that some smear campaigns against important personages, including recent claims regarding two judges of the Islamabad High Court, have been fuelled by their circulation via the messaging app. However, curbs are never a solution.

As with X, those who wish to use it can always connect via a VPN. Experts say there is no real way to completely block access to a particular piece of content without disrupting the whole pipeline. One need only think about how people currently use WhatsApp: businesses share quotations, shipping invoices and pay orders with their clients; doctors are sent medical records and queries over WhatsApp, lawyers need to be kept abreast of court dates and legal documentation. These are just some examples of how irreplaceable the app has become for people from all walks of life.

While Pakistan grapples with its many economic woes, this connectivity crisis threatens to sap whatever economic potential is left in the services industry. Given our earlier failed experiments at banning YouTube and Facebook, it is about time we learned not to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

**Muhammad Umer**

The importance of formal education is multifaceted, extending beyond individual development to influence societal progress, economic prosperity, and the overall well-being of communities and nations.

Recognizing and investing in education is fundamental for building a sustainable, inclusive, and equitable future. Understanding the importance of the foremost society building the community elders of Jungle Pir Alizai, Killa Abdullah marked a remarkable contribution in strengthening the educational institutes. Killa Piralizai-Piralizai is a village located in District Killa Abdullah of Balochistan. It is located 60 km to the northwest of provincial capital

Quetta and is about 2.26 km from the main Quetta-Chaman Highway.

Government. Boys High School Piralizai District Kill Abdullah, established in 1919, holds a significant place in promotion of the education in the area. This institution has not just educated generations but has sculpted the future of our district. Starting as a humble primary school, it blossomed into a thriving middle school for 33 years and later evolved into a distinguished high school, a status it has proudly held for the past 35 years.

A monumental event unfolded the last Sunday — the grand celebration of Government High School Piralizai's centennial anniversary. A momentous occasion that not only marked a hundred years of educational legacy but also showcased the relentless dedication of the school's staff and the spirited participation of former students. As an alumna of this esteemed institution, I had the privilege of being part of this historic event, a memory I shall forever cherish. As we gather to honor a rich legacy of education and community, let us embark on a nostalgic journey through the annals of

history, cherishing the milestones, memories, and unwavering spirit that have defined our institution over the past century.

This centennial celebration is not merely a reflection of the years gone by, but a testament to the enduring commitment to excellence that has shaped generations and left an indelible mark on the fabric of our school's story. Join us in commemorating a century of knowledge, growth, and the enduring bonds that unite us as one cherished school community. Esteemed guests from all walks of life, alumni, faculty, and

students in all large number attended the momentous occasion that transcends time — the grand celebrations of century-old school.

It wasn't just a gathering of distinguished alumni; it was a union of political leaders, tribal elders, and former and current students, together, they joined hands to pay homage to the institution that had profoundly influenced numerous lives throughout the past century.

The impact of Government Boys High School Piralizai extends far beyond its classrooms. Its alumni, comprising the majority of

teachers in District Kill Abdullah, have not only excelled in their careers but have also become the backbone of our community. Hundreds of its students later graduated have ventured into fields like Engineering, Medical, Media, and Banking, are truly shaping the landscape of our society.

What truly sets this school apart is its remarkable journey towards co-education, a trailblazing concept in our province. For over 15 years, this school has championed the idea of boys and girls learning side by side, defying societal norms and fostering an environment of equality and progress. This forward-thinking approach has empowered approximately 70% of our women, enabling them to receive education and actively engage in various sectors of life such as politics, education, and healthcare alongside their male counterparts.

From the very beginning, the zeal and passion of the school's teachers, headmaster particularly the loving teacher Mr. Main Zahid, and the relentless dedication of Mr. Asif, a revered teacher, were evident of the grand celebration of Government High School Piralizai centennial anniversary. Mr. Asif, in particular, undertook a monumental task — he meticulously recorded the school's history in the form of a book. This book covered many interviews with former students of GBHS-Piralizai. It told the stories of a large number of teachers and students, many of whom now hold important positions in the government and public sectors.

Reading the book, I was profoundly touched by the lives and experiences of three of our beloved teachers, which I feel compelled to highlight here — Late Master Abdul Aziz, Master Shah Wali, and Chaudhary Abdul Karim. The book also highlighted the early struggles of Malak Ayub Khan, grandfather of Malak Farid Khan, the chief of Piralizai, whose efforts laid the foundation for our school during the British era.

Chaudhary Abdul Karim, in his role as the headmaster, led this institution to remarkable achievements throughout Baluchistan. Master Shah Wali, a revered science teacher, was not only an educator but also admired for his wisdom and kindness. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, he led the

Janbaz force, a group of 900 trained tribal personnel, to safeguard the tribal regions near the Afghanistan border from Soviet forces.

During the recent gathering, communities from all corners of the district are united to honor the enduring success of our school. Distinguished speakers, including Malak Farid Khan, Engr. Zamarak Khan (former Minister), Haji Wali Mohammad, Author & tribal leader Divisional Director (Education), DEOs, DDEOs, and other respected figures, praised the institution's rich history and its revered teachers.

Lastly among the spirited participation in the grand celebration of Government High School Piralizai's centennial anniversary. Everyone has acknowledged the efforts of the Head Master Mr. Attaullah, Senior teacher Mr. Main Zahid — whose hard work, coupled with the love and sincerity he poured into his tasks and the relentless efforts of Mr. Asif whose book amazingly showed our history. He worked really hard and made it exciting. It felt like the old times and all the intelligent things people knew back then came alive for us.

**Century of educational excellence and success****Pakistan moves to white list the unpaid VPNs**

By Aiman Khattak

During a recent meeting of the Senate's Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Chairman, Maj Gen (Retd) Hafeez-ur-Rehman announced a significant policy change that the PTA will begin whitelisting virtual private networks (VPNs). Once this policy is in place, only selected VPNs will be operational in Pakistan, while all others will be blocked.

Rehman explained that the primary reason for this move is to control the surge in VPN usage among local internet users, which has spiked drastically in 2024. Many see this increase as a direct consequence of banning social media platform, X (formerly Twitter) since 19 February 2019. According to Top 10 VPN, an independent VPN review website, the demand for proxy networks surged by 131% on February 19, just two days after the X ban was implemented.

To begin with, this is not the first time the Pa-

kistani government has attempted to regulate VPN usage. In 2022, PTA had requested public and private sector organizations, foreign missions, and freelancers to register their VPNs to avoid service disruptions. PTA had passed VPN regulations even earlier in 2010, though enforcement has been inconsistent.

The current announcement of VPN whitelisting policy by the government has sparked a heated debate, with critics raising concerns about potential violations of freedom of expression and its negative impact on the country's IT sector. It is, however, equally important to understand the potential risks these apps pose to individual privacy and security, and the economic impact that they carry. As of now, around 132 million Pakistanis are using social media for business, yet these platforms are not taxed, posing a significant challenge to the country's economy.

Though both paid and unpaid versions of VPNs carry risks of compromising private data, free VPNs carry a greater

potential to do so. One major concern is the lack of robust security measures, as many free VPN providers do not have the resources to develop and maintain strong security protocols. This leaves users susceptible to cyber threats like malware, hacking, and phishing attacks. Moreover, free VPN services often rely on logging and selling users' data to third-party advertisers as a means of generating revenue. Misconfigured VPNs can become a target for hackers who exploit vulnerabilities to gain access to user data. Once compromised, these VPNs can be used to spy on users and steal sensitive information.

Additionally, VPNs were designed primarily as a security and privacy tool. Unfortunately, some people use them to hide criminal activities. For example, hackers use them to conceal their identity when launching social engineering or malware attacks. While some people use VPNs to download illegal torrents or for encrypting conversations to plan terrorist attacks.

Given these risks Pa-

kistan is also trying to take some concrete steps to regulate the VPN usage. As According to the Global VPN Adoption Index, Pakistan ranks 19 out of 86 countries where VPN usage is high. At least 27,622,389 VPN downloads were made in the country, an over 50% increase from 2022 when the number of downloads stood at 17,345,605 which is the clear indication of an alarming situation.

Moreover, Pakistan is not alone in its efforts to regulate VPN usage. According to reports, China leads the world in blocking VPN access, with about 73% of all attempts to access VPN providers being blocked. Iran and several Gulf Arab countries follow closely behind. Russia, North Korea, Iraq, the UAE, and Turkey have also implemented strict measures to restrict VPN usage, imposing significant penalties for violating VPN restrictions.

In other countries, stricter bans on tools like VPNs are being enforced. Has this led to economic collapse? Not at all! In fact, their economies are thriving and are well pro-

tected from the external cyber threats. Nevertheless, in Pakistan, there is a tendency to oppose such regulations. Individuals do not raise objections when VPN usage is restricted in locations like KSA or UAE. In these countries, freedom of expression is not jeopardized as their governments prioritize security and stability. It is solely in Pakistan where there is a demand for the liberty to make offensive remarks under the pretext of free speech.

However, the rationale behind Pakistan's selective approach towards VPNs is the aim of keeping Pakistani internet users safe while also avoiding undue harm to the growth of IT sector. As the chairman of the PTA has stated that: "A complete ban on VPNs could have severe consequences for Pakistan's technology industry, potentially causing the collapse of businesses that rely on VPNs for their operations. Hence it is implementing selective ban on the free and unsafe VPN servers." Therefore, it is important to understand

the underlying purpose behind the steps being taken in Pakistan, and to lend support to policies and measures that are intended to benefit the country and its technological development.

Furthermore, implementing a VPN whitelist can enhance digital safety by lowering the risk of cyber threats like cyber terrorism and cybercrime, while also ensuring trustworthy information flow and protecting cultural values. This restriction can also support economic growth by boosting local businesses and media, aiding law enforcement efforts, and combating cybercrime.

Additionally, it can help regulate online content to align with national values and cultural norms, fostering a more orderly and lawful society while nurturing domestic industries and promoting economic development. The writer is a graduate of Peace and Conflict Studies and a free-lance columnist. She can be reached at khattakaiman2@gmail.com

**The lone ranger**

F.S. Aijazuddin

It took our solitary Olympic gold medalist Arshad Nadeem to remind us of the old adage: Success has many fathers but Failure is an orphan.

No matter how many awards, honours, cash prizes and plots may be bestowed upon him, it is clear that Arshad's achievement in Paris was singularly his own. His trusty javelin soared into the skies and landed at 92.97 metres, and then to show that this second throw was not a fluke, on its final flight it landed a metre short — at 91.79m.

Arshad's portly coach Salman Iqbal Butt watched from the stands, recalling when, as a teenager at Aitchison College in 1977, he threw a javelin and set a collegiate record of 50.69m.

The public has opened its hearts to Arshad. Governments (federal and provincial) have opened their coffers to him, but not their private purses. They are personally as ungenerous as Lord Chesterfield once was to Samuel Johnson when he begged his lordship for patronage to support his project — the first English dictionary. It took Johnson seven years to complete his magnum opus. Chesterfield then condescended to offer an endorsement.

In February 1755, Johnson sent a letter to Chesterfield that has served as a warning to tight-fisted patrons: "Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot en-

joy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it."

Hopefully, all the gratuitous patronage being showered on Arshad will shake the government out of its lethargy and schools out of their unconscionable neglect of sports as an integral part of education. Famously, Lord Wellington attributed his success on the battlefield to his school: "The battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton." A grateful nation rewarded Wellington with both an estate in Hampshire and a fortune of £400,000.

Many would contend that the World Cup 1992 was won on the playing fields of Aitchison College. No one could have imagined that the captain (an Aitchisonian), who held that trophy aloft in March 1992 at Melbourne and then in processions across the country, would watch Arshad Nadeem's triumph from a cell in Adiala jail. Sic transit gloria.

For those of us armchair enthusiasts who forfeited sleep to watch the Paris Olympics, it became clear that few of the major countries sported their own nationals. The Chinese and the Japanese did. Others were populated with hyphenated Africans. One commentator even went so far as to compliment one sprinter for being the first African from the African continent to win a gold medal. Hadn't anyone briefed him that all of us homo sapiens originated in Africa?

Over the centuries, the mobile migrated. Some were exported as slaves, a few repatriated by the US to populate the new nation of Liberia. Some fought desperately to avoid deportation by Rishi Sunak's government to Rwanda. Mil-

lions remained to fight for liberation from their colonialist masters. The best among them today compete for their adopted countries in the Olympics.

Soon, the IOC will have to drop national groupings in favour of individual participation. With so many blacks in the US, British, French, and German teams, speculators may parrot Lady Susan Hussey's tactless question of a Black Briton: "But where do you really come from, where do your people come from?"

After his winning javelin throw, Arshad Nadeem prostrated himself in a sajdah and then draped himself in our flag. No one needed to ask Arshad where he came from. He was a humble Muslim, and a proud Pakistani son of a justifiably proud Pakistani mother from Mian Channu.

The British novelist E.M. Forster had once observed that "I am sure that if the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars." The mothers of both Arshad Nadeem and his Indian rival (and friend) Neeraj Chopra made moving statements 'adopting' the success of each other's son. Social media hummed with their messages and with images of Arshad and Neeraj, clothed in their national flags, shaking hands on the podium.

It is unlikely that PMs Modi and Shehbaz Sharif will bring Arshad and Neeraj to the Wagah border where the four can shake hands. The next best thing would be for their two mothers to be brought there to embrace across the white line. It would be better than our two countries aiming nuclear javelins at each other. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Fixing the IPPs**

Tasneem Noorani

Visiting Islamabad with my grandchildren, I decided to introduce them to our very impressive Islamabad Sports Complex. Getting there, we found that the Asian Junior Individual Squash Championship was going on. It was a delight to see scores of kids, both boys and girls, from the age of 10 onwards, from 12 different countries competing hard. I felt proud that Pakistan was hosting such a lovely event with international-level infrastructure. But my pride was shattered when I asked a parent of a Malaysian kid what all they had done in Islamabad. Nothing, he said, because we are confined to our guest house and not allowed to move around because of security concerns.

Each time I've travelled to Islamabad of late, I find a new roadblock or security barrier. Twenty years ago, on official visits to Kabul, I would be struck by the number of security barriers there. Back in relaxed Islamabad, one could understand why Afghans wanted to come to Pakistan. We seem to be fast headed in a similar direction, where the flow of migration may be reversed. Why are we in such a fatal dive?

Economy is the more obvious reason; however, that's not the cause but the result of misgovernance, which is a consequence of a fluid governance structure. This, in turn, is due to the establishment's arbitrary and unchecked brute power. Even if we look at just the last 25 years — and not the previous 50, which were no different — we see army chiefs either imposing martial law, or when the cost-benefit of taking over directly turns adverse, manoeuvring and strategising for a tenure

extension. Politicians, parties and the Constitution were used as pawns to achieve the ultimate objective of an extension.

Without delving further into that argument, as it is dangerous territory, one can say that even if the establishment calls the shots we could have still stayed the course had we possessed a sturdy local bodies system. I say this after watching Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speak at a joint session of the US Congress. The way the Congress men and women stood up 53 times during his 50-minute speech to give him a standing ovation was ridiculous. They must have clapped for 30 minutes out of the 50.

The managers of our rent-a-crowd jalsas could learn something from the Congress representatives. It seems that those present were under watch and had to show their loyalty and how grateful they were to Netanyahu for massacring innocent women and children. This joint session was a crass demonstration of how effectively the Zionist establishment controls the most powerful country in the world. But despite this helplessness of the US politicians before the establishment, much like in our case, their country runs smoothly.

This, in my view, is due to the fact that their state governments are powerful, effective and independent of the centre, and most civic services, including law and order and the criminal justice system, work smoothly. So the American public would not be unduly bothered if President Joe Biden naps during meetings because their law and order, criminal justice system, electricity and gas bills, etc, are not affected.

A strong local government system with manageable-sized prov-

inces would do wonders for this country, despite the unending shenanigans of the centre, for which there is little hope of betterment.

In addition to our dysfunctional local bodies and disproportionate federating units, there is the issue of mega corruption, where the scale of corrupt gains is beyond the comprehension of the common man. Take the case of setting up independent power producers (IPPs), where decision-making politicians have been claiming it as their contribution to national progress.

The fact is that their decisions, based on unmitigated greed and political point-scoring, has landed the country with a permanent hole in the bucket, hemorrhaging Rs2 trillion every year, which equals defence spending and is almost 25 per cent of the government's revenue. How could it be anything but greed when four power houses receive Rs10 billion monthly, without producing a unit of electricity? How could it be anything but greed if a power plant based on imported coal were set up 1,000 kilometres away from the port? How could it be anything but greed if more and more power houses were established to take the installed capacity to 44,000 MW when the transmission capacity is only 22,000 MW?

Those who are corrupt have no fear of being prosecuted nor of the recovery of their illegal gains; the government, on the contrary, is in a fix as to how to stop the bleeding in the face of agreements being appealable before the trigger-happy International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. I wonder if the experience gained by the powers that be in fixing a political party could be used to fix the IPPs? -- Courtesy Dawn

## Sindh cabinet approves Rs 10 bn for Nulla affectees, Rs12bn for Hub Canal

KARACHI (APP): Sindh cabinet has approved Rs10 billion for the resettlement of the affectees of three Nullahs of Karachi, Rs 12.72 billion for the construction of Hub Canal, Rs 200 million for Jamila Pumping station overhauling, the establishment of the Electric Power Regulatory Authority and allotted land for a lying railway line from Thar Coal Filed to Chhor town.

The decisions were taken in a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at CM House on Thursday.

According to CM House statement, cabinet also allotted land for Solar Parks, initiated people's Information Technology program for youth.

The local Govt Minister Saeed Ghani told the cabinet that there were 6932 affectees of Gujjar Nullah, Mahmoodabad Nullah and Orangi Nulla who needed to be resettled. The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has submitted its proposals.

The PEC evaluated the per-house cost at Rs. 1,450,000. In addition to this, the PEC also advised providing funds for construction to the affectees as per the schedule:

Rs. 500,000 on commencement of work; Rs. 500,000 on completion of masonry work up to the roof level. Rs. 450,000 on completion of the grey structure for finishing work.

The cabinet, keeping in view the recommendation of the local Govt department, approved Rs. 10,065 billion as a grant-in-aid for the construction of houses (80 sq yard). The cost per house evaluated by PEC is Rs. 1,450,000.

The cabinet also accorded approval of the tentative amount for remaining affectees for Rs. 1,450,000 per house of 80 sq yard. However, the final list will be provided by the local person through a verification process as directed by the Supreme Court.

The cabinet directed the local govt dept to forward the Revised PC-I of Rs. 4,621.494 million for internal development (i.e. essential infrastructure).



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a Provincial Cabinet meeting, held at CM House in Karachi.

## Governor KP emphasizes support for youth affected by terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Thursday stressed the importance of providing benefits to the war on terror affected youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the Prime Minister's Youth Program.

The Governor said this during a ceremony at the Prime Minister's Secretariat, where squash player Norina Shams from Dir was awarded a sponsorship by the Zakori Group.

The event was attended by Prime Minister's Advisor on Youth Affairs Rana Mashhood, NEVTEC Chairperson Gulmina Bilal Ahmad, Zakori Group Chairman Ayub Zakori, Bilour Group Director Sherbaz Bilour, Deputy

Secretary of Sports Qasim Khattak, and other officials.

Governor Kundi expressed appreciation for the support extended to Norina Shams and urged similar backing for other talented youth from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He criticized the provincial government for neglecting sports and highlighted that many young people are making significant achievements in sports through their own efforts.

He emphasized that the Governor's House is dedicated to encouraging talented youth and is working to promote educational and recreational activities as a means to protect the province from terrorism and extremism.

For the first time in the history of the Governor's House, conferences on Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Pashto famous poet Khushal Khan Khattak, as well as interfaith harmony, have been organized.

Governor Kundi called on the federal government to ensure that 50 percent of social welfare funds are allocated to sports and youth welfare.

He also urged institutions and affluent individuals across the country to support and encourage talented youth from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Rana Mashhood, Advisor to the Prime Minister, affirmed the government's commitment to making Khyber Pakhtunkhwa a priority under Governor Kundi's leadership.

## KP CM inaugurates model design, online application for solarization scheme

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Amin Khan Gandapur inaugurated the Model Design and Online Application System for the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Solarization Scheme on Thursday.

In addition to the initial plans, the Chief Minister announced an expansion of the scheme to 130,000 households, with 30,000 exclusively from the Merged Districts. This ambitious project will provide complete 2kV solar systems to underprivileged households across the province, significantly enhancing energy access for those most in need.

The solarization scheme is part of the provincial government's broader efforts to address energy needs in communities where access to electricity remains a challenge, particularly in backward and remote areas.

By prioritizing the most vulnerable populations, the scheme aims to reduce the energy burden on families, enhance living standards, and promote the use of clean energy solutions.

Earlier, Chief Minister Gandapur chaired a high-level meeting to review the technical and financial modalities of the scheme. Technical experts briefed attendees on the specifications of the solar machinery, its estimated cost, and the methods for installation. The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister on Finance Muzammil Aslam, Additional Chief Secretary for Planning & Development Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah, and officers from relevant departments.

Chief Minister Gandapur directed the concerned authorities to prioritize the solarization efforts in areas.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industry and Commerce, Chaudhry Shafay Hussain called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

## Punjab Governor says: Boosting trade & business activities indispensable for the country's stability

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industry and Commerce, Chaudhry Shafay Hussain called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, investment and promotion of technical education in Punjab were discussed. The Provincial Minister informed the Governor of Punjab about the steps taken for the promotion of investment and technical education in the province. Speaking on this occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider said that boosting trade and business activities is indispensable for the country's stability. He said that significant investment initiatives have been taken in Punjab due to which foreign investors including Overseas Pakistanis are also showing keen interest. He said that everyone should play a role to take the country on the path of development. Governor Punjab further said that the future of Pakistan hinges on the promotion of technical education. He said that the up-gradation of TEVTA institutions would improve the quality of technical education. Governor Punjab also inquired after the health of Muslim League President, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain on this occasion. Provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain said that TEVTA's institutions are being upgraded under a phased programme.

## 16 dead, 2126 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 16 people were killed while 2126 others injured in 1898 road accidents in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Of whom, 932 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 1194 victims with minor injuries were treated on the spot by Rescue Medical Teams.

Analysis show those 1115 drivers, 162 underage drivers, 235 pedestrians, and 792 passengers were among the victims of road accidents.

Statistics show that 426 road accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 519 people placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by Faisalabad 134 in with 132 victims and at third Multan with 125 road accidents and 138 victims.

According to the data, 1873 motorbikes, 62 auto-rickshaws, 160 motorcars, 19 vans.



FAISALABAD: Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora holding a press conference along with CPO Kamran Adil in Operations Complex at Police Lines.

## Senior minister reviews CM's vision 'Pollution-Free Punjab'

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb Thursday presided over a progress review meeting on four important sectors in which a high-level delegation from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office participated.

A briefing was given on the progress of matters pertaining to air quality, school education, population and health issues. The meeting was told that fine would be imposed by identifying smoke-emitting bikes through Safe City cameras. Smog level increases in the month of May due to burning crop residue.

The target is to bring the Air Quality Index from 100 PM to 70 PM by 2028. 1800 new bikes are registered in Lahore every day and motorcycles are the biggest cause of air pollution. Motorcycles generate more than 75 percent of transport pollution.

Effective legislation and enforcement on the environment will make it possible to achieve the smog reduction target.

Marriyum Aurangzeb ordered to carry out implementation of the plan for establishing at least 100 VICS stations in Lahore at the earliest. Steps were considered for ensuring a better quality index in Lahore.

The senior provincial minister said that on the direction of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif, electric bikes, vehicles and buses are being introduced to deal with environmental pollution.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health and Chairman Standing Committee for Disaster Management Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the high level meeting at PDMA Head Office.

## Official land worth millions retrieved

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): District administration retrieved official land worth millions of rupees after demolishing dozens of commercial properties were constructed illegally on it.

Official source said the woman Tehsildar, Mah Roush, launched the operation against the illegal occupation at Adda Pathan Hotel on direction of DC Kot Addu. Over 60 canal land was retrieved with about 40 commercial shops and houses were razed on the spot.

## Governor, Arshad visit Mazar e Quaid to pay homage to father of nation

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori along with Olympian Arshad Nadeem visited the mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on Thursday where they paid their respects and offered Fateha.

Governor Tessori and Good Medalist Arshad Nadeem also laid wreaths at the mausoleum and penned their comments in the visitor's book.

Later on, Governor and the Olympian Arshad Nadeem also talked to media and said they visited Mazar-e-Quaid to pay homage to the father of the nation.

Arshad Nadeem who won Gold Medal for Pakistan in Paris Olympics is on a visit to Karachi and he also participated Independence Day celebrations organized at Sindh Governor House on the night of August 14.

## WASA signs MoU with KOICA to cope with urban flooding

MULTAN (APP): WASA signed a MoU with Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) for mega projects to cope with urban flooding, MD WASA Khalid Raza told APP.

Following the agreement, Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA) would receive aid worth \$10 billion to initiate the projects here in different parts of the district to resolve underlying matter of urban flooding.

MoU of Record of Discussion was signed in Lahore amid presence of Special Secretary Housing Punjab, DG MDA and Country Director of KOICA. Under the agreement, a master plan would be chalked out to save the district and adjacent places from urban flooding, said the DG.

## If some one goes missing responsibility lies with state to trace: SHC

KARACHI (Online): Sindh High Court (SHC) has remarked during the hearing of missing persons case that if some one has gone missing on one's own even then it is responsibility of state to search him.

Petitions on recovery of over 10 missing persons including retired officer of FIA came up for hearing before justice Naimatullah Phulpoto of SHC Thursday.

Counsel for petitioner, state counsel and police authorities appeared in the court.

The court while expressing resentment over traditional proceedings of police regarding recovery of missing persons remarked stereotype reports are filed in the court through copy paste. When steps have not been taken for recovery of missing persons then what is need of writing.

Justice Naimatullah Phulpoto inquired was compensation paid to family members of the missing citizen Arsalan.

The state counsel said the enforced disappearance of Arsalan has not been determined so far.

The court remarked when compensation is not to be paid then why it is written in the report.

In another missing person case police officer replied Haider went missing on his own from Boot Baisan. No institution has taken him to custody.

The court remarked if some one has gone missing on his own even then it is responsibility of state to search him.

## CM condoles martyrdom of four security personnel in SW

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur has expressed deep sorrow and heartfelt condolences over the martyrdom of four security personnel in South Waziristan.

In his message, the Chief Minister conveyed his sympathies to the families of the martyrs and prayed for the highest ranks of the martyrs in Jannah, as well as strength and patience for the bereaved families.

"The bravery and courage displayed by our security forces are unparalleled, and it is because of their sacrifices that the nation celebrated Independence Day in a peaceful environment. The entire nation pays tribute to their sacrifices," said the Chief Minister.

## FIA arrests 3 suspects in Hundi case

LAHORE (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested three suspects involved in a Hundi case from the provincial capital on Thursday.

According to an FIA spokesman, Corporate Crime Circle Lahore Zone arrested two suspects, Muhammad Usman and Muhammad Aftab, while conducting operations in Bara Market, Rs 3,090,000 in cash, check books and other documents were seized from the accused.

The spokesman said that another accused was arrested in Shah Alam market here, Rs 3 million in cash, Hundi receipts and mobile phone were recovered from accused namely Rizwan Arshad.

Cases have been registered against the accused. Further investigation is underway.

## Two 'dacoits' killed in shootout

FAISALABAD (APP): Two alleged dacoits were killed in a shootout with Balochni police on Thursday.

The accused were identified as Atif alias Atti and Shoaib alias Shabi. Atti was wanted in 28 cases while Shoaib in 14. They had become a symbol of terror in the area.

According to police sources, four suspected persons were riding two motorcycles when a police team signaled them to stop near Maal Chak Takia Wala sain nullah, but they opened fire on a police party.



LAHORE: School teachers welcome the students on the opening day after Summer Vacation as Students arrive to attend their first day of school.

## Punjab minister stresses awareness on rains, flood risks at local level

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister and Chairman Cabinet Committee for Disaster Management Khawaja Salman Rafique emphasized the need to raise awareness among citizens regarding the risks of rains and floods at the local level. Presiding over a Cabinet Committee meeting at the PDMA Head Office here on Thursday, he urged the district administrations and revenue officers to disseminate critical information through mosques and other community channels.

The meeting, which reviewed action plans related to river erosion prevention schemes, also discussed a 6-point agenda. DG PDMA Irfan Ali Kathia provided a detailed briefing on the agenda items. Among the approvals granted during the meeting were the construction and repair of the Walawala safety dam in Kasur and a project to mitigate erosion of the Chenab River in Hafizabad's Bhawan Fazil area. In addition, significant steps have been taken by PDMA to address flood risks in the Rajanpur.



LAHORE: Members of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Cell are holding protest demonstration against Indian Forces and Government aggression and express their solidarity to Kashmiri people, as they are marking Independence Day of India as Black Day is being observed across Pakistan, at Lahore press club.

## Health Minister formally inaugurates f-IPV campaign across Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Pechuho officially inaugurated the fractional Inactivated Polio Vaccine (f-IPV) campaign in 85 Union Councils (UCs) of Karachi on Thursday, urging parents to vaccinate their children without hesitation.

"Vaccines save lives and prevent children from permanent disability. It's crucial to get your children vaccinated with both the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) drops and f-IPV during this special drive starting today," Dr. Azra emphasized during the launch event at a dispensary in the Sultanabad area of the city.

Accompanied by Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Coordinator Irshad Sodhar, Rotary International Trustee Aziz Memon, and other officials from the EOC Sindh and the health department, Dr. Azra called on community leaders to support vaccinators in reaching as many children under five years old as possible.

Running from August 15 to 25, 2024, the f-IPV campaign targets high-risk areas across Karachi, aiming to vaccinate approximately 1,037,000 children aged four months to five years with f-IPV injections using innovative, painless jet injector technology. Additionally, OPV drops will be administered to 1.1 million children under the age of five.

"This campaign is pivotal in our fight against polio, a disease that continues to pose a significant threat, particularly in densely populated urban areas," Dr. Azra stated, highlighting the importance of combining f-IPV and OPV to enhance immunity

## Senate body on IT discusses issue of recent internet disruptions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunications Thursday discussed the issue of recent internet disruptions across the country causing real-time hindrances for individuals running e-commerce businesses.

Senator Palwasha Muhammad Zai Khan chaired the meeting.

Secretary for the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Aisha Humera Chaudhry, explained that there is no issue with broadband connections; however, mobile operators using mobile data are facing disruptions.

The PTA is assessing the issue, and the ministry will be in a better position to provide an overview once the assessment is completed in two weeks.

The committee addressed the complaint of MNA Ali Jaan Mazari regarding poor internet service in Kashmir.

He said that internet services have been crawling for the last four months, and despite several requests, no action has been taken so far.

PTA officials highlighted that there are around 156 sites of three major service providers in the area and that internet services are mostly down due to unannounced load shedding.

However, the PTA is assessing the issue and will submit its report in the next 15 days.

The committee also directed the PTA to submit its quarterly survey report at the next meeting.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja, State Minister for IT, while informing the committee said that the proposal was moved

forward by the Establishment Division and that the ministry will brief the committee on the matter in the upcoming week.

The committee deliberated on the Bill titled "The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2023." Senator Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan, the bill's mover, said that the primary purpose of the bill is to protect the data of citizens because, as of now, there is no law in place for this purpose.

Officials of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications informed that the ministry has consulted with over 100 local and international stakeholders and is working on a final draft to address the grievances of stakeholders.

The draft will be completed in the next fifteen days, they added.



Senator Palwasha Muhammad Zai Khan, chairperson Senate Standing Committee in Information Technology and Telecommunication presiding over a meeting of the Committee at Ministry of Information Telecommunication in Islamabad.

## NA body constitutes sub-committee to revive PSM

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly (NA) Standing Committee on Industries and Production on Thursday constituted a sub-committee to address the financial and administrative challenges faced by Pakistan Steel Mill (PSM), prioritizing the concerns of its employees.

The committee was met under the chairmanship of Member National Assembly (MNA) Syed Hafeez ud Din, said a news release.

The Terms of Reference (ToRs) and composition of the Sub-Committee are as follows: "To address the financial and administrative issues, particularly those related to employees and the operations of Pakistan Steel Mills."

The sub-committee's membership includes Convener Ms. Naz Baloch, along with Abdul Hakeem

Baloch, Muhammad Arshad Sahi, and Dr. Mahesh Kumar Malani as its members.

Earlier, the Minister for Industries and Production provided an extensive briefing on the status of Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM).

He said that PSM has a total landholding of 19,000 acres, of which 4,008 acres remain unutilized, while 305 acres have unfortunately been illegally encroached.

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of PSM also informed the committee that over the years, the federal government invested a substantial Rs. 170 billion into PSM to keep it operational.

The committee, after reviewing the detailed briefing from both the Ministry and PSM representatives, expressed its determination to ensure that PSM continues to function and contributes to the national economy.



PESHAWAR: A worker busy in knitting charpoly a traditional bed on his workplace at Dabgari bazaar.

## Cattle farming stressed to reduce poverty in country

SARGODHA (APP): About 69 per cent of rural population in Sargodha division is directly linked to the livestock sector and its promotion on scientific grounds could help reduce poverty on a large scale, say experts.

According to official statistics, livestock has over 18pc share in gross domestic product (GDP) of the country, and the sector could improve living standards of people. Pakistan is ranked fifth among the milk producing country. Production of milk and meat could be enhanced significantly by working on animal genetics. The best semen quality could play a vital role in improving animal health, milk and meat production, believe agriculturists, adding that it could also help generate maximum income for farmers as well as the country's economy.

At the national level, about 12 million people are rearing cattle. According to the animal census and

Economic Survey Report, there are 59.9 million big animals in the country. Similarly, the country has 88.09 million small animals (goats). As per the last Economic Survey Report, the production of milk increased from 64,599 million tonnes to 74,584 million tonnes.

Apart from this, district Sargodha owned 5,711,224 big animals (buffaloes, cows), 3,882,689 small animals (goats, sheep) and 1,873,916 rural poultry. Besides this, the farmers also rear 1919 camels, said sources in the Livestock Department. In rural areas, it is easy to rear animals because of the cultural environment, easy access to infrastructure and nutrition. In rural communities, the role of women farmers in cattle rearing is highly important. Without women farmers' participation, the livestock sector could not be managed properly, said livestock Official.

## Registration of 1m farmers for Kisan Card to be met by 31<sup>st</sup>

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo has said that registration target of one million farmers for Kisan Card will be achieved by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

According to official sources here, the secretary said that till now more than 600,000 farmers had registered themselves for the cards.

He said the provision of Kisan Card would start from September 1<sup>st</sup> and it would be provided from the nearest branches of Bank of Punjab.

From October 15, fertilizer, pesticides and seeds could be purchased from Kisan Card, he added.

He directed the relevant officers to speed up registration process of dealers for purchasing pesticides, seeds and fertilizer by using Kisan Card.

Agriculture department officers, representatives of Bank of Punjab and others attended the meeting.

## Rupee remains unchanged against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Thursday remained unchanged against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.70.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.30 and Rs 280.40 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by Rs 2.35 to close at Rs 306.87 against the last day's closing of Rs 304.52, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came up by 01 paisa and closed at Rs1.89, whereas an increase of Rs 1.25 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs358.08 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 356.83. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham remained unchanged to close at Rs 75.87 and the Saudi Riyal increased by 04 paisa and stood at Rs74.27.



ISLAMABAD: ederal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb presiding over a meeting of Economic Coordination Committee (ECC).

## PCJCCI wants CPEC turned into a 'green' initiative

LAHORE (APP): President Pakistan-China Joint Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) Moazzam Ghurki said on Thursday that 'Green' is the future of humanity on planet, which has already been affected by severe climate change.

Speaking at a think tank session held at the PCJCCI, he said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) should be turned into a model green Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to protect and preserve the natural environment in the region. "Hopefully, it will preserve the environment as well as accelerate pace of green technologies and production of green energies channels in the ongoing projects of the CPEC in the country," Ghurki said and added "Intensified plantation,

development/support of natural forestation, bee's honey hatcheries/production and last but not the least green tourism activities would play a pivotal role in this connection." Senior Vice President PCJCCI Fang Yulong said that China was one of the main drivers of green technologies, hub of alternative energies and biggest investor of renewables in the world having resources and appropriate expertise to assist Pakistan to maintain an ideal equilibrium between industrialisation and green environment in the future.

He said that the government of Pakistan had already launched an ambitious protected areas initiative under the umbrella programme 'Clean Green Pakistan' aiming to expand the country's protected area from 13 per cent.



ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Business Forum Mehboob Ur Rehman called on e Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan.

## BoR, FBR decide to modernise tax recovery system

LAHORE (APP): In a strategic meeting on tax audit conducted under the chairmanship of Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Punjab Nabeel Javed, it was decided to integrate and automate the tax recovery systems of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and the Punjab Board of Revenue (BoR).

The meeting was attended by Member Taxes Zaman Wattoo, Regional Commissioner Withholding Tax (RTO) Bilal Hussain, Dr. Imran Javed and other officials from both institutions.

The SMBR stressed the urgent need for a synchronised and automated system to modernise tax recovery procedures between the FBR and the BoR Punjab. He highlighted the importance of digitalizing the audit processes of PLRA (Punjab Land Records Authority) and

FBR to reduce the chances of tax evasion.

It was also proposed that a joint committee be formed between the FBR and the BoR to compile comprehensive data of taxpayers. The committee will work towards eliminating irregularities in agricultural tax, income tax, withholding tax, and capital gains tax through a digital system. Furthermore, the meeting discussed sharing taxpayer data between the FBR and the BoR to enhance agricultural and income tax collection. The proposal to link the tax recovery system with NADRA was also considered. Under this system, tax payments on land would be monitored through the taxpayers' CNIC, and property registries would only be processed after ensuring the full payment of applicable taxes, significantly reducing tax evasion.

## Options International deposits Rs 6 mln penalty into national treasury

ISLAMABAD (APP): Following the Supreme Court of Pakistan dismissed its appeal, M/s Options International deposited Rs 6 million penalty under Section 40(8) of the Competition Act 2010 into national treasury.

This Supreme Court decision marks the end of a comprehensive legal battle that began with a formal complaint from STARBUCKS leading to an investigation and enforcement action by the

Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), said a press.

In June 2024, the Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) dismissed Options International's appeal, increasing the primary penalty from Rs 5 million to Rs 6 million and prohibiting the company from illegally using the Starbucks brand name and logo. M/s Options International has filed an appeal to the Supreme Court of Pakistan against the CAT's order.

## STZA establishes four new special technology zones worth Rs 30 bln

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA) announced the establishment of four new Special Technology Zones (STZs), focusing on business process outsourcing, information technology, high-tech production, research and development, tech skill development, and knowledge products.

The decision has been taken in line with the vision of the Prime Minister and the Federal Government to enable job creation for the youth and prioritise the technology sector.

According to news release, these four new zones consists of 1.4 million Sqft high-quality tech infrastructure and 130 acres of land available for

exclusive use of the technology companies.

An investment of Rs. 30 billion has already been made in developing the specialised tech infrastructure by the zone developers while more than Rs 150 billion investment is expected in next 2-4 years by local and foreign technology companies.

The 4 new zones will have the capacity to house more than 50,000 professionals with an export potential exceeding US\$ 350 million annually.

The newly designated zones included the NUST Special Technology Zone and Tech7 Special Technology Zone in Islamabad, Mindbridge Special Technology Zone in Lahore, and Capital Smart

Technology Zone in Rawalpindi.

These zones are notified strategically to foster innovation, drive economic growth, enhance technology exports and position Pakistan as a key player in the global technology arena.

The accelerated roll-out of STZs are in-line with the economic pillars of SIFC and will increase the technology related local and foreign direct investment in the country.

In addition to the 12 existing zones, which are home to over 15,000+ technology professionals, the newly notified zones will offer state-of-the-art facilities, cutting-edge infrastructure, and high-speed internet connectivity, ensuring that

## Gold rates dip by Rs.300 to Rs257,400 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed a decrease of Rs.300 on Thursday and was traded at Rs257,400 against its sale at 257,700 on the last trading day in the local market. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs256 to Rs. 220,680 from Rs. 220,936, whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat decreased to Rs202,290 from Rs202,525, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively. Prices of gold in the international market decreased by \$4 to \$2,454.

## ADM Group to invest \$250mln in Pakistan's electric vehicle sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): ADM Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Yasir Bhambhani on Thursday said that the ADM Group was keen to invest an amount of \$250 million in Pakistan for the manufacturing of electric vehicles to provide ecological-friendly automobiles to local consumers.

In a meeting with Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, he said the first phase of the project charging network station would be established, followed by the manufacturing of electric vehicles in the second phase. He said the

electric vehicles will have a range of 300 kilometres on a single charge.

The minister said the government is ready to facilitate direct foreign investment in the country, and the Ministry of Industries and Production is committed to collaborating closely with all relevant stakeholders to ensure a smooth process. He emphasized the importance of focusing on green energy, adding that electric vehicles have become a reality.

Rana Tanveer highlighted the benefits of electric vehicles, including their lower cost compared to traditional vehicles and fuel savings.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani presides over the 59th meeting of Punjab Seed Council. Punjab Secretary Agriculture Iftikhar Ali Saho is also present.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely Semer, MSC Positano and APL Southampton scheduled to load/offload Furnace oil and Containers, berthed at Oil Terminal and Container Terminal respectively on Wednesday. Meanwhile five more ships MSC Brasilia, Navig8 Gallantry, Saga, Al-Jabriya and Wisteria carrying Containers, Palm oil, Palm Kernel and Mogas also arrived at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim during the same day.

A total of seven ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, APL Southampton, MSC Positano, Kashi and LT Beryl are expected to sail on today afternoon.

Cargo throughput during last 24 hours stood at 144,394 comprising 98,624 tonnes imports cargo and 45,770 tonnes export cargo including containerized cargo carried in 6,147 Containers (4,624 TEUs imports and 1,523 TEUs export) was handled at the Port.

There are 06 ships at outer anchorage of the port, out of them three ships, MAC Brasilia VII,

## ECC okays continuation of PM Relief Package

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Thursday approved continuation of the Prime Minister's Relief Package for the fiscal year 2024-25 through Utility Stores Corporation (USC) with revised price and subsidy.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the cabinet committee meeting, according to press release issued by the finance ministry.

The proposal to continue the package was presented by the

Industries & Production Division.

Furthermore, the ECC approved the request of Ministry of Industries & Production to declare Warehousing and Logistic Sector as an industry, it added.

Among others the meeting was attended by Minister for Industries & Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain; Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan; Minister for Privatization, Abdul Aleem Khan, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Federal Secretaries, and other senior officials of the relevant ministries.

## Minister orders making Punjab Seed Council active

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Minister Ashiq Hussain Kirmani Thursday ordered for making the Punjab Seed Council (PSC) active and independent.

Presiding over the 59th meeting of the council here, he said that the PSC should have a power to approve its own seed varieties and for spot checking. Kirmani ordered to take on board seed companies, representatives of Association and Punjab Agriculture Commission, high officials of Federal Ministry of Food and Security and Variety Evaluation Cell, Rice, Wheat and Cotton observers for preparing seed approval. He further said that until approval of applicable proposals by experts the agenda related to revival of sub committee

of Punjab Seed Council should be considered postponed. Under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz the Punjab government was determined for preparing quality and authentic seed for farmers besides increasing per acre production of crops, he said and added that government was also focusing end availability of fake and adulterated seeds.

He said that there was a need to bring improvement in mechanism related to approval of new seed. The minister said, "Private sector plays main role in seed business." Punjab Agriculture Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo, Punjab Seed Corporation Managing Director Shan ul Haq and others attended the meeting.



KARACHI: IPO-Pakistan Chairperson, Ambassador (r) Farukh Amil, leads delegation at 2nd International Food & Agriculture Exhibition.

## Turkiye will continue to increase pressure on Israel, Erdogan tells Palestinian leader Abbas

### Monitoring Desk

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Wednesday that Türkiye will continue to support the Palestinian cause and push the international community to increase pressure on Israel, his office said.

The two leaders discussed recent developments and the steps to be taken for a lasting ceasefire and peace in Gaza, Erdogan's office said in a post on X.

Erdogan condemned Israel's war in Gaza, the statement said, accusing some Western countries of remaining silent and continuing to support Israel.

Erdogan also told Abbas that all countries, especially in the Muslim world, should step up efforts to ensure an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian aid to Palestinians.

Abbas is set to address an extraordinary session of Türkiye's parliament on Thursday. Israel's assault on Gaza started after the Palestinian Islamist militant group Hamas attacked Israel on Oct 7.

Türkiye has denounced the war and has halted all trade with Israel. It submitted a request to join South Africa's case at the International Court of Justice accusing Israel

of genocide.

Türkiye's invitation to Abbas came after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the US Congress on Jul 25, which Ankara has condemned.

"We will show that Mr Abbas has the right to speak in our parliament just as Netanyahu has the right to speak in the US Congress," Erdogan told members of his ruling AK Party on Wednesday before meeting Abbas.

Erdogan, who has been a staunch supporter of Hamas, said Turkey had also planned to invite the political leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, who was assassinated in Tehran.



A charity kitchen worker hands out food to Palestinians, amid a hunger crisis in the northern Gaza Strip.

## Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman fears for his life

### Monitoring Desk

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has expressed concerns about the possibility of being assassinated.

According to Politico magazine, Prince Mohammed bin Salman told US Congress members that there was a risk of an attempt on his life.

He indicated that his efforts to restore Saudi-Israeli relations and cooperation with the US have put his life in danger.

At one point, he referenced the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who was killed fol-

lowing the Camp David Accords with Israel.

Prince Mohammed bin Salman also informed US lawmakers that any potential agreement with Israel should include a genuine path to establishing a Palestinian state, especially amidst rising Arab anger against Israel.

It may be noted that in February, Saudi Arabia informed the US that it would not establish diplomatic relations with Israel until a Palestinian state was established within the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

## Lebanon says two killed in Israeli strikes

### Monitoring Desk

BEIRUT: Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli strikes killed two people in the country's south on Wednesday, with Hezbollah announcing the deaths of two of its fighters, the latest cross-border violence amid fears of a full-blown regional war.

Hezbollah has traded near daily fire with the Israeli army since the Palestinian militant group Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack on Israel triggered the Gaza war.

## Israel approves new settlement on Unesco site

### Monitoring Desk

JERUSALEM: Israel has approved a new settlement on a Unesco World Heritage Site near Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank, its far-right finance minister said on Wednesday.

Bezalel Smotrich, who also heads civil affairs at the defence ministry, said his office had "completed its work and published a plan for the new Nahal Heletz settlement in Gush Etzion", a bloc of settlements south of Jerusalem.

All of Israel's settlements in the West Bank, occupied since 1967, are considered illegal under international law, regardless of whether they have Israeli planning permission.

## Qatar to host high-stakes Gaza truce talks

### Monitoring Desk

DOHA: Qatar will host Gaza ceasefire talks on Thursday, sources close to the negotiations said, seeking a so-far elusive agreement that the United States hopes would stop Iranian retaliation against Israel and avert a wider conflict.

US, Qatari and Egyptian mediators have invited Israel and Hamas for negotiations aimed at ending fighting that the health ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip says has claimed

nearly 40,000 lives in the Palestinian territory.

Hamas said it would not take part in a new round of Gaza ceasefire talks, but an official briefed on the talks said mediators expected to consult with the Palestinian group afterwards.

The office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the heads of Israel's Mossad spy agency and Shin Bet secret service would go to Doha.



South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and his wife Kim Keon-Hee wave national flags during the celebration of the 79th National Liberation Day at Sejong Center for the Performing Arts in Seoul, South Korea.

## UN expert panel sent to Venezuela blasts lack of transparency in presidential elections

### Monitoring Desk

MIAMI: A panel of experts from the United Nations said Venezuela's recent presidential elections lacked "basic transparency and integrity," adding an important voice to those who have cast doubt on President Nicolás Maduro's claim he won the contest.

A four-member team sent by U.N. Secretary General António Guterres was in Caracas for over a month in the run up to the July 28 election, one of the few independent outside observers invited by Maduro's government.

While the U.N. group praised the logistic organization of the voting, it harshly criticized the National Electoral Council, or CNE, for flouting local rules and announcing Maduro the winner without tabulated

results from each of the 30,000 polling booths nationwide, something it said "had no precedent in contemporary democratic elections." "This had a negative impact on confidence in the outcome announced by the CNE among a large part of the Venezuelan electorate," the U.N. experts said in a statement late Tuesday.

The U.N. statement follows criticism by another invited observer, the Atlanta-based Carter Center, which said it could not verify the CNE's results. Venezuela's foreign minister has blasted the Carter Center, accusing it of lying and serving as a tool of U.S. "imperialism."

"This suggests a key transparency safeguard may be available, as intended, with respect to any officially released results."

## Ilhan Omar wins Democratic nomination, boosts US House liberals

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: Firebrand US Representative Ilhan Omar clinched the Democratic Party nomination for a fourth term on Tuesday, in a victory for progressives after losses in party primaries by two fellow members of the group nicknamed "The Squad."

Omar defeated former Minneapolis city council member Don Samuels in Minnesota's 5th District Democratic primary. With 216 of 217 precincts reporting results, Omar was leading Samuels 56.2%-42.9%, according to Minnesota Secretary of State Tallies. At the end of a spirited campaign, Samuels acknowledged Omar's victory in a telephone interview.

## Columbia University president resigns in wake of campus protests over Gaza war

### Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: Columbia University President Minouche Shafik resigned on Wednesday, nearly four months after the university's handling of campus protests over Israel's war in Gaza drew criticism from pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian sides alike.

Shafik, who cited the toll the campus turmoil took on her family, becomes the third president of an Ivy League university to step down in the wake of campus protests over Gaza.

She said she made the announcement now so new leadership could be in place before the new term begins on Sept. 3, when student protesters have vowed to resume protests.



Pheu Thai Party's leader and Prime Minister candidate Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Thailand's caretaker Deputy Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and coalition party representatives react after a press conference on the announcement of prime ministerial candidate ahead of a pivotal parliamentary vote on a new prime minister, in Bangkok, Thailand

## 39 candidates are approved for Sri Lanka's presidential election, the highest number ever

### Monitoring Desk

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's elections commission on Thursday accepted applications from a record 39 candidates to run in next month's presidential election, which will decide the course of the country's financial reforms to survive an unprecedented economic crisis.

The commission received 39 applications and all were accepted, its head, R.M.A.L. Rathnayake, announced. More than 17 million people are eligible to vote in the Sept. 21 election.

Thirty-five candidates contested the last presidential election in 2019.

The election is seen as a referendum on difficult economic reforms initiated by current President Ranil Wickremesinghe. The reforms have improved key economic figures, but their effects have yet to reach many ordinary people.

## Meth found in sweets given by New Zealand charity

### Monitoring Desk

WELLINGTON: Pineapple sweets dished out by a New Zealand charity have tested positive for potentially lethal amounts of methamphetamine, police said on Wednesday, sparking an urgent race to remove them from the streets.

A child, a teenager and a charity worker have already been taken to hospital after they tasted the candies. Although none are seriously ill, police have launched a criminal investigation and are now trying to track down up to 400 other people who may have received the sweets.

"We need to round these up as quickly as we can," said Detective Inspector Glenn Baldwin, adding that 16 of the sweets had been found so far. Police suggested the drugs might have been packaged inside the distinctive yellow "Rinda" wrapping by traffickers or dealers to evade detection.

They are then believed to have been donated to anti-poverty charity the Auckland City Mission, which inadvertently distributed them via a food bank. "Drug importation is complex, and organised criminal groups use a range of measures and techniques to try and evade enforcement agencies, not only in New Zealand, but around the world," Baldwin said.

## Black box shows Brazil plane crashed 1 minute after pilots sensed trouble, local media says

### Monitoring Desk

SAO PAULO: Authorities investigating the Brazilian plane crash that killed all 62 on board last week now have the full transcript of the "black box" but its content did not immediately explain the cause of the accident, local TV station Globo said on Wednesday.

The transcript from the cockpit voice recorder shows the pilot and copilot noticed a steep loss of altitude about one minute before the crash, TV Globo reported in its main newscast Jornal Nacional on Wednesday evening, citing unnamed people working on the investigation.

TV Globo did not release the audio nor the transcript. According to TV Globo, the transcript cov-

ers about two hours of audio recording, including a question from the copilot to the pilot about what was going on, and saying the plane needed "more power" to be stabilized.

The plane, an ATR-72 turboprop from local airline Voepass, was bound for Sao Paulo from Cascavel, in the southern state of Parana, and crashed at around 1:30 pm (1630 GMT) in the town of Vinhedo, some 80 km (50 miles) northwest of Sao Paulo. The crash killed all aboard but no one on the ground was hurt. Video shared on social media right after the accident showed the ATR-72 aircraft spinning out of control as it plunged down behind a cluster of trees near houses, followed by a large plume of black smoke.

## US approves \$20 billion weapons package for Israel

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden's administration approved more than \$20 billion in new weapons sales to Israel, brushing aside pressure from rights activists to stop arms deliveries over the death toll in Gaza.

The sale comes as Biden has pressed Israel and Hamas to reach a ceasefire after 10 months of bloodshed, although the weapons would take years to reach Israel.

In a notification to Congress, the State Department said it had approved a sale of 50 F-15 fighter jets to Israel for \$18.82 billion.

Israel will also buy nearly 33,000 tank cartridges, up to 50,000 explosive mortar cartridges and new military cargo vehicles.

The F-15 aircraft, which will begin to be delivered in 2029, will upgrade Israel's current fleet and include radar and secure communications equipment.

"The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to US national interests to assist Israel to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense capability," the State Department said in its notice on the F-15s, which are made by Boeing.

On the tank cartridges, the United States said the sale "will improve Israel's capability to meet current and future enemy threats, strengthen its homeland defense and serve as a deterrent to regional threats."

The US Congress can block weapons sales, but such a process is difficult.

## Ukrainian President Zelenskyy says Kyiv troops have full control of the Russian town of Sudzha

### Monitoring Desk

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Thursday that the country's troops have full control of the Russian town of Sudzha in the Kursk region in their incursion into Russian territory.

The town, the largest that Ukraine has reportedly seized so far, had a prewar population of around 5,000 people. It holds a measuring station for Russian natural gas that flows through Ukrainian pipelines to Europe.

Natural gas flows from West Siberian gas fields through pipes that pass through Sudzha and cross the Ukrainian border into Ukraine's system.

Zelenskyy said a Ukrainian military commander's office is being set up in Sudzha. He didn't elaborate on the details or the functions of the office.

The claim couldn't be independently verified.

Russia did not immediately respond to Zelenskyy's statement, but its defense ministry said earlier Thursday that Russian forces had blocked attempts to take several other communities.

There was no indication of any disruption of the gas flow through Sudzha, which accounts for about 3% of Europe's imports.

Satellite images analyzed by The Associated Press on Thursday show that a Ukrainian drone attack on Russian air bases damaged at least two hangars and other areas.

Images taken Wednesday by Planet Labs PBC show that two hangars at Borisoglebsk Air Base had been struck, with a field of debris around both. It was not immediately clear what purpose the hangars served. There also appeared to be potential damage to two fighter aircraft at the base.

## Bangladesh mob beats suspected supporters of ex-PM Hasina after rally call

### Monitoring Desk

DHAKA: A mob wielding bamboo rods and plastic pipes beat several suspected supporters of Sheikh Hasina on Thursday, vowing to quash a rumoured rally for the ousted Bangladesh premier outside her childhood home.

Hasina, 76, fled by helicopter last week to neighbouring India, where she remains, as student-led protests flooded Dhaka's streets in a dramatic end to her iron-fisted 15-year rule.

Thursday is the anniversary of the 1975 assassination of her father, independence hero Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, during a military coup — a date her government had declared a national holiday.

Previous years saw huge rallies around Bangladesh to mark the occasion, but the students who toppled Hasina were eager to ensure supporters of her Awami League party did not have a chance to regroup. "Fugitive and dictator Sheikh Hasina has ordered her goons and militia forces to come to the site so they can produce a counter-revolution," Imraul Hasan Kayes, 26, told AFP.

"We are here to guard our revolution so that it doesn't slip out of our hands."

With no police in sight, hundreds of students on Thursday patrolled the street leading into Hasina's old family home where her father and many of her relatives were gunned down nearly 50 years ago.

The landmark was until recently a museum to her father, but it was torched and vandalised by a mob hours after her fall.

Several people the crowd suspected of being Awami League supporters were thrashed with sticks, while others were forcibly escorted away.

In her first public statement since her abrupt departure, Hasina had this week asked supporters to "pray for the salvation of all souls by offering floral garlands and praying" outside the landmark.

## Kolkata doctor case: Protests escalate in India over gruesome rape of doctor

### Monitoring Desk

MUMBAI: Thousands of women marched across several Indian cities overnight and Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for strict punishment for crimes against women, as outrage and protests against the gruesome rape and murder of a doctor escalated.

Holding candles and posters that said "reclaim the night", women held marches across cities, including the eastern Indian city of Kolkata, where the rape and murder of a trainee doctor last week has triggered protests by fellow medics, demanding better and safer working conditions. Many government hospitals in cities across India suspended all services except emergency departments earlier this week, as junior doctors sat outside in protest, demanding justice for the victim.

The 31-year-old doctor was found dead on Fri-

day. Police said she had been raped and murdered and a police volunteer was subsequently arrested in connection with the crime.

"As a society, we have to think about the atrocities being committed against our mothers, daughters and sisters. There is outrage against this in the country. I can feel this outrage," Modi said in an address to the nation on its 78th Independence Day on Thursday. The rape has revived memories of a similar case in New Delhi in 2012, when a gang of men raped and severely injured a 23-year-old student in a moving Delhi bus, leading eventually to her death.

"This horrific incident has once again reminded us that women disproportionately bear the weight of ensuring their own safety," Bollywood actor Alia Bhatt said in a post on her Instagram page, which has more than 85 million followers.



Protesters escort two suspected Awami League supporters after beating them in front of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Museum in Dhaka.

## Meeting with Dy Prime Minister & Speaker NA: We believe in responsibility, transparency & accountability in coalition Govt like political life, says Governor

Jaffar Mandokhail says both coalition partners are equal stakeholders in coalition govt. and complaints and reservations of both of to be removed through transparent process

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that our diversity in coalition government is our strength and we believe in responsibility, transparency and accountability in the coalition government like our political life.

He said that we are making such sincere efforts to ensure good governance and bring economic and political stability in the province on the basis of which has been laid on the democracy, following the rights, mutual respect, trust and cooperation.

The Governor said that both the coalition partners (PML-N and PPP) are equal stakeholders in the coalition government and

the complaints and reservations of both of the parties would be removed through transparent process.

The Governor was speaking during the meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq here the other day. Also present in the meeting were Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan and Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Shah.

According to an official hand out issued here on Thursday, the Governor Balochistan was patronizing the parliamentarians belonging to PML-N.

The Governor mentioned that some there can

be some complaints and reservations of any coalition party or parliamentarian in the politics and government. But today, the central leadership has assured both the parties that their reservations and complaints would be removed through transparent manner.

The Governor appreciated the assurance made by the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti about removing the reservations of representatives of PML-N regarding development projects.

He said that both the coalition partners would prove that they are equal partners and stakeholders in the government and both would continue to work for public interest.



TURBAT: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti offering Fataha and condoling with Kunar Baloch father of Shaheed DC Panjgoor Zakir Baloch over his death

## CM condoles death of martyr Zakir Baloch with family: Blood of Zakir Baloch shed for serving Balochistan & people, sacrifice can't be forgotten

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that blood of Deputy Commissioner Panjgur Zakir Baloch was shed for serving the province and its people and as such his sacrifice could not be forgotten.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the father Kunar Baloch and family of martyr Deputy Commissioner Panjgur Zakir Baloch during his visit to Turbat on Thursday. He especially visited Turbat to express condolence over the killing

of Zakir Baloch and offered fataha for the departed soul.

Also accompanied by him were the Provincial Minister for Planning and Development, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi and Member Provincial Assembly, Ms. Meena Majeed Baloch.

Also present on the occasion were the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Professor Mansoor Baloch, his father Ali Muhammad Shahil and other relatives besides father of Zakir Baloch, Kunar Baloch, Commissioner Makran, Dawood Khilji, Deputy Commissioner

Keck, Ismail Ibrahim and other high ups.

Speaking to the family of Zakir Baloch, Chief Minister said that he (Zakir Baloch) was a very capable officer of the provincial government.

He said that the sacrifice of Zakir Baloch is because of light for the country. He said that those rendering sacrifice of their lives for the country and nation are our heroes. Earlier, upon arrival in Turbat, Deputy Commissioner Keck and other high ups welcomed the Chief Minister.



GWADAR: MPA Maulana Hidayatur Rehman addressing a Press conference

## CM applauds services of Commissioner Quetta for holding successful mega events of 77th Jashne Azadi

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has applauded the services of Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafaqat for arranging the successful mega events on occasion of the 77th Independence Day celebrations.

In a commendation certificate on Thursday, the Chief Minister paid tributes to the Commissioner and his team on holding the successful mega events.

He said that it was

very challenging task keeping in view the present situation of law and order. However, the hard work and sense of responsibility demonstrated by your (Commissioner) team under your command was exemplary and praiseworthy. The Chief Minister expressed the hope that the Commissioner and his team would continue to work with the same resolve and dedication.

He also expressed best wishes for his (Commissioner)'s future endeavours.

## AJK PM terms India's independence day as 'black day'

### Independent AJK Desk

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq has said that Kashmiris have proved by observing India's Independence Day as 'Black Day' that they reject India's illegal occupation of occupied Kashmir. In a special statement, he said that Pakistan, Azad Kashmir, and Kashmiris living around the world staged protests and made the world believe

that India has illegally occupied Kashmir, and its 1.5 million army is involved in serious human rights violations in occupied Kashmir. He added that through its unilateral actions on August 5, 2019, India wants to change the demographics of occupied Kashmir by issuing domicile certificates to hundreds of thousands of non-state subjects, thereby trying to turn the Kashmiri people into a minority in their own region.



QUETTA: Sardar Mukhtar Tareen and Syed Imran Agha meeting with Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran



ISLAMABAD: People of Jammu and Kashmir observed Black day on the occasion of Indian Independence day in the Federal Capital.

## 'Ring leader' must now face the music for his misadventures: Tarar

### LAHORE (APP): Minister

for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage on Thursday said swift and rigorous accountability of the 'ring leader of anarchist group' was long-overdue, for his misadventures to sabotage the national interests.

Addressing a news conference, he said that "Irrefutable and glaring" evidence came forth after an investigation of the former spy chief Faiz Hameed that showed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder was the real mastermind of the conspiracy against the country.

The May 9 arson attacks on the sensitive installations and writing of a letter to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by the PTI leadership for sabotaging the agreement, were the clear indications of the conspiracy, he added.

The minister said the whole nation witnessed the misadventures of the 'group of anarchists', hell

bent upon creating chaos and instability.

He welcomed and lauded the decision of the institution to hold its former ISI chief accountable under its self-accountability initiative which ought to be followed by all institutions. He referred to the press release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations that indicated that three retired officers had also been taken to the custody after the investigation of former spy chief Faiz Hameed. The political instability and chaos was apparently created on the behest of the PTI founder, he added. He said the conspiracy was handiwork of the PTI leader, for fomenting instability in the country.

Tarar said that it seemed that Faiz Hameed was somehow involved in the politics as he worked to foil the no-confidence motion against the PTI founder. Nobody would be allowed to harm the national interests for some vested

interests, he added.

He said the current investigation might lead to the arrest of more individuals who were involved in anti-state activities.

The minister wondered that now the PTI founder had distanced himself from those conspiracies despite his direct messages from the jail to carry out the negative motives. He said efforts were underway to prevent chaos and bring political and economic stability under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The prime minister, while delivering his speech on the occasion of August 14, had announced the launch of home-grown economic reform programme for the next five years which was bound to progress, he added.

Tarar said the government had stabilized the rupee, and did reduce petrol and electricity prices through prudent economic policies.



QUETTA: Chairman Public Accounts Committee Asghar Ali Tareen presiding over a meeting regarding audit paras of P&D Department

## Protecting Pakistan is obligatory for all patriotic Pakistanis: Amir Muqam

### By M. Ilyass Khan

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs and President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam, said that Pakistan was freed by our elders after many sacrifices, and it is obligatory for all patriotic Pakistanis to protect the country.

He expressed these views while addressing large public gatherings at the Pakistan Muslim League (N) Secretariat in Peshawar and Mardan Sher Garh on the occasion of Independence Day. On this occasion, Federal Minister

Engineer Amir Muqam also cut the Independence Day cake.

While addressing the ceremony in Peshawar, Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam said that the purpose of Independence Day celebrations is to express love for our dear Pakistan.

During the Pakistan Movement, hundreds of thousands of people were martyred, and many women were treated inhumanely. It is the result of their great sacrifices that we are living in an independent country today and have all the rights and facilities available to us.

## Japan offers funding three projects related to climate change

### ISLAMABAD (Online): A

meeting of Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Population and Development, held in Islamabad with the co-operation of Special Investment Facilitation Council, has issued Islamabad Declaration. According to this declaration, the Japanese Minister of State offered funding three projects related to Pakistan's climate change. The Japanese Minister of State also assured to help Pakistan in getting funding from the World Bank to deal with disasters due to climate change.

The Forum of Asian Parliamentarians on Population and Development expressed willingness.



QUETTA: A delegation of World Bank meeting with Secretary C&W Lal Jan Jaffar

## Historic rally led by Mir Ali Hassan Zehri marks Independence Day in Balochistan

### Independent Report

HUB: On the momentous occasion of the 77th Independence Day, a record-breaking rally was held in the Hub district of Balochistan, led by Meer Ali Hassan Zehri, The Translator to President Asif Ali Zardari on Balochistan Affairs, President of the District Hub PPP, and Minister of Industries and Commerce. The rally was a testament to the unwavering spirit of the people of Balochistan, who gathered in large numbers to commemorate the sacrifices of the nation's heroes who laid down their lives for their homeland.

Under the leadership of Meer Ali Hassan Zehri, the rally moved through the streets of Hub district, paying tribute to the martyrs who fought for the country's freedom. The Minister emphasized that no power can suppress the people of Balochistan from celebrating their independence, and that any attempts to create unrest will be met with resistance from the

patriotic people of Pakistan.

Meer Ali Hassan Zehri also highlighted the crucial role of women empowerment in nation-building, stressing that women's participation is essential for the development of the country. He reminded the audience of the importance of educating children, who are future of Pakistan.

The rally was attended by a large number of people from various walks of life, including political, social, and religious leaders. The event was a demonstration of unity and resolve, with the participants expressing their confidence in the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who have always brought about revolution and progress.

Under the leadership of Meer Ali Hassan Zehri, the rally concluded with a message of hope and optimism, with the people of Balochistan looking forward to a prosperous, peaceful, and developed future.

## Terrorists' attack on police post repulsed in DG Khan

### DERA GHAZI KHAN

(APP): Punjab police successfully repulsed an attack by terrorists at an inter-provincial post in Dera Ghazi Khan, police said on Thursday.

Around 50-60 terrorists attacked Likhani police post at the Punjab-KP boundary in DG Khan from all four directions.

However, police managed to identify their presence by thermal image cameras and attacked the terrorists by machine guns and mortar guns forcing them to retreat. Regional Police Officer DG Khan Captain (Retired) Sajjad Hassan Khan led the operation. IGP Dr. Usman Anwar said that Elite Force and Quick Reaction Force (QRF) back up teams immediately rushed to the check post while DPO Dera Ghazi Khan Syed Ali, leading elite force teams, reached Triman post from where he supervised the operation against terrorists.

## FO tightens visa rules amid rise in political asylum claims by parliament staff

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Foreign Office has introduced stricter guidelines on the issuance of visa notes and note verbales for the Senate and National Assembly Secretariats after the growing trend of Parliament employees and officers seeking political asylum abroad.

Following the approval of Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, the Foreign Office immediately implemented these new guidelines. Foreign Secretary Cyrus Sajjad Qazi communicated the changes through an official letter addressed to the Secretaries of the Senate and National Assembly, outlining the revised procedures.

The letter specifies that the facility of issuing note verbales for private visits to holders of diplomatic and official passports has been discontinued. Additionally, the issuance of letters of introduction for

visa purposes to the families of officers from the National Assembly and Senate Secretariats has been banned.

For private passport holders accompanying members of Parliament on official and private visits, a new requirement mandates an affidavit to ensure that the visa-seeking individual will not seek asylum in the destination country. Furthermore, an undertaking must be provided, confirming that the Foreign Office's introduction letter will not be misused.

The guidelines also state that letters of introduction will no longer be issued to family members of officers from the National Assembly and Senate Secretariats. Diplomatic and official passport holders will now only receive note verbales for official visits after a formal request from the Senate or National Assembly Secretariat.



QUETTA: Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia Muhammad Khalid Jamali meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## We gained country as result of sacrifices of our ancestors: Jamali

### QUETTA (APP): Former

Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Jan Muhammad Khan Jamali on Thursday said that we got this country as a result of the great sacrifices of our ancestors.

Talking to APP regarding 77th Independence Day, he said that its protection and development was now our responsibility, we have to forget all our sub-group and group differences and rise above all kinds of prejudices and work in the form of a united nation.

At present, the country is facing internal and external challenges and the monster of terrorism, anti-national forces want to weaken and destabilize Pakistan by spreading unrest, but by establishing complete unity and agreement

in our ranks, we can defeat the evil intentions of the enemies, he said.

He said that we could make Pakistan a great Islamic state.

On the occasion of Independence Day, we should also pay homage to our martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the defense and peace of the country since the creation of Pakistan, he said.

He said that if we still could not learn from the past and play our part in the development of our country, the future generations would never forgive us. We pray for the development of our country and province and the prosperity of the people that Allah Almighty always keeps our country green and happy, he said.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti playing hockey on eve of final match of 77th Jashn-e-Azadi Inter Schools Hockey Tournament

## Customs House Gaddani celebrates Independence Day

### Independent Report

GADDANI: The Customs House Gaddani celebrated the 77th Independence Day of Pakistan with great enthusiasm. The ceremony began with the hoisting of the national flag, followed by a cake-cutting ceremony.

Customs Opraor Syed Suleman Bukhari, Inspectors Sarajul Abidin, Ali Abbas, Sahil Ahmed, Abdul Hamid Khan, and other officials participated in the event. They expressed their commitment to the country's development and prosperity, saying, "Our beloved country is the re-

sult of the sacrifices of our forefathers, and we are determined to play our role in its progress and prosperity."

The officials also emphasized the importance of individual and collective efforts for the country's development, saying, "As Pakistanis, it is our responsibility to contribute to the country's growth and prosperity."

The ceremony concluded with a message of peace and harmony, with the officials vowing to work together to make Pakistan a haven of peace.

## Fisheries Department apprehends a trawler involved in illegal fishing

### Independent Report

ORMAARA: The Fisheries Department Ormaara has successfully apprehended a trawler involved in illegal fishing in the Ormaara marine limits.

The trawler, Al-Haseeb 21252-B, was caught by the Fisheries Department team led by Assistant Director Fisheries Ormaara, Bashir Ahmed Kakar, under the supervision of Assistant Director Fisheries Ormaara, Aslam Askani.

taken into custody, and further legal action has been initiated under the Fisheries Act.

Assistant Director Fisheries Ormaara, Bashir Ahmed Kakar, warned that no one will be allowed to recklessly destroy marine life. He stated that action will be taken against those involved in illegal fishing.

The Fisheries Department has vowed to continue its crackdown on illegal fishing in the Ormaara marine limits.