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LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a review meeting on Track and Trace System

Fast-paced work in progress on second phase of CPEC: PM

Says no compromise on security of Chinese workers

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday said that work was progressing fast on the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and there was positive momentum on further promotion of cooperation with China in different fields during visit of Chinese experts to Pakistan. The prime minister was speaking during a meeting here with a seven member delegation of journalists who returned from an official visit to China undertaken on the invitation

of government institution China Public Diplomacy Association. He said that China was sincere friend which helped Pakistan on every difficult occasion. He urged that all stakeholders should rise above politics to work together on the national development projects like China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The PM said whenever Allah Almighty gave him an opportunity to serve the country, he pledged to himself to fo-

cus all his energies on progress of the country. He said he was thankful to the Chinese leadership and people on the exemplary hospitality shown during his recent visit to China. He told that he himself was monitoring the progress on the memorandums of understanding and agreements after the visit to China. The prime minister assured that Pakistan was ensuring all steps for the security of Chinese nationals in Pakistan. There is no place for politics of any kind on relations with a close friend like China, he remarked. Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar was present in the meeting. The delegation of journalists included Salman Ghani of Dunya News, Amir Mir, Shiraz Hussain of Hum News, Khizar Hayat of Daily Jang, Khalid Hasnain from Dawn News, Azam Malik of Geo News and Matiur Rehman of Pakistan Television.

Dissenting note raises important points regarding reserved seats: Atta Tarar

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar said that two honourable judges of the Supreme Court had raised important points in their dissenting note regarding reserved seats. Addressing a press conference here, he said that on the issue of reserved seat a party was provided relief which was not a petitioner. He said that two honourable judges of the Supreme Court, Justice Aminuddin Khan and Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan, have issued detailed dissenting notes and it said that after the passage of 15 days a detailed verdict of the case had not come. He said,

"Usually a detailed verdict comes within 15 days after a decision is announced." Attaulah Tarar said that some articles of the Constitution were related to reserved seats, adding that in the reserved seats case, a decision had been given not in line with these articles. He further said that it was also mentioned in the dissenting note of two honourable judges of the Supreme Court that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had not been a party to this case and to provide it a relief the court had to travel beyond the jurisdiction conferred by Articles 175 and 185 of the Constitution and would also have to suspend Article 51, 63, 106 of the Constitution.



The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was not a petitioner but their 81 members had been provided relief, he said and added that those who had come after being elected on reserved seats and taken oaths of their membership were removed. He said that it was a reality that if members of

Sunni Ittehad Council would sit with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf then this would be violation of Article 62(1) (f). He said that the two honourable judges in their dissenting note said that it was a proved reality that Sunni Ittehad Council had not taken part in general elections as a political party while the chairman of Sunni Ittehad Council had also contested election in an independent capacity. A party which has no existence in the parliament how it could be given reserved seats, he questioned. Attaulah Tarar said that it was mentioned in the Constitution of Sunni Ittehad Council that no minority member could join it,

so it could not get minority seats as well. The Information minister said that a due procedure was followed for electing members on reserved seats. He further said that PML-N and PPP had filed a review petition on the Supreme Court's reserved seats verdict but it had not been fixed for hearing till now. He said that two honourable judges of the Supreme Court had raised constitutional and legal points in their dissenting note and added that these points were a big question mark on the legal framework and needed to be answered.



ISLAMABAD: To observe "Youm-e-Istehsal", banners and panaflexes displayed against Indian Government's decision of revocation of the special status of disputed territory of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK).

India's actions demonstrate disregard for int'l law in IIOJK: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari said India's actions since 5 August 2019 demonstrated complete disregard for international law, the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, and the UN Security Council resolutions regarding Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). In a message on Youm-e-Istehsal on 5th August 2024, he said, "Today marks the completion of five years of India's latest campaign to consolidate its illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. On this day, five years ago, India took a number of unilateral and unlawful steps in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) to undermine its internationally recognised disputed status."

Since 5 August 2019, he said India has embarked upon a ceaseless campaign to alter the demographic structure and political landscape of IIOJK. Issuing domicile certificates to outsiders, registering temporary residents in the voters' lists, gerrymandering assembly constituencies, and modifying land and property ownership laws are some of the key features of this campaign. All these measures are in blatant violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions and international law, including the 4th Geneva Convention, he observed. "The continued presence of hundreds of thousands of Indian troops has turned IIOJK into one of the most heavily militarized zones in the world.

The gross human rights violations in IIOJK have been documented extensively and condemned globally. The mistreatment of Kashmiri journalists and human rights defenders has further revealed India's willingness to go to any lengths to silence dissenting voices. India would not succeed in suppressing the just struggle of the people of IIOJK through domestic legislation and judicial verdicts," he added. For the past seven decades, the President said the Kashmiris had waited for the United Nations to fulfil its solemn commitments. "It is crucial that the international community urges India to end its human rights violations in IIOJK and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions."



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Engineer Amir Muqam along with All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leadership addressing a press conference at PID Media Center.

Amir Muqam calls Int'l community to play its role to address Kashmir issue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engr Amir Muqam has appealed to the international community and Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) to play their vital role in addressing the longstanding Kashmir valley issue of the region. Addressing a press conference here on Sunday, the minister said the Kashmir dispute should be resolved through the resolution of the United Nations as without a solution

to this issue there is no peace and development in the region. He said that the incumbent government was highlighting the Kashmir issue at all appropriate platforms of the globe effectively. The minister underlined that since August 5, 2019, to date in the last five years around 900 people have been killed, more than 2500 freedom fighters injured and many widows have been arrested by Indian forces. India is claiming the largest democratic state of

the world but violating the human rights and suppressing the self-determination rights of Kashmiris, he added. Amir Muqam asked all parliamentary parties to participate in the walk from Radio Pakistan to D Chowk in Islamabad on the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir on August 5. He said on August 5, 2019, the special status of Jammu and Kashmir was repealed by the Modi regime which will complete five years on August 5. He said that every year, Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir is also being observed this year. Protest walks and demonstrations have been announced against this illegal move of the Modi government in Pakistan as well as around the world, he said. Amir Muqam appealed to all parliamentary parties to participate in the walk so that a clear message could be sent to India that the government and people of Pakistan are united on the Kashmir dispute.

PM directs economic team to speed up transformation of FBR

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday set a target for his economic team to speed up the process of transformation of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). He was chairing a review meeting on Track and Trace System of FBR. The total digitization and restructuring of FBR according to modern standards was part of the transformation plan. He delegated responsibility to Minister of State for Finance to oversee the transformation project of FBR. The prime minister was presented a detailed report regarding the track and trace system and on progress of digitization of FBR. He directed immediate action against the persons responsible for deficiency and irregularities regarding the track and trace system. He directed immediate implementation of steps for taking action against the officials negligent in upgrading the system. The prime minister said that reforms in FBR were necessary to improve the tax system of Pakistan, adding, "We will work day and night to save every penny of the poor people of Pakistan." Shehbaz Sharif said that digitization of FBR was main priority of the government and no disruption was acceptable in this regard. Federal ministers Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Minister of State Ali Pervaiz Malik, Coordinator of Prime Minister Ihsan Afzal and high level officials attended the meeting.

Armed Forces pay tribute to valiant personnel of Pakistan Police

RAWALPINDI (Online): On the occasion of Youm-e-Shuhada Police, the Armed Forces of Pakistan pay solemn tribute to the valiant personnel of the Pakistan Police who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Their unwavering dedication, unrelenting courage, and selfless sacrifice will be perpetually remembered and honored. Today, the Armed Forces, comprising officers and men, salute the memory of our fallen heroes who have protected the nation with their sweat and blood. Their noble and selfless service has ensured the safety and security of our communities, and their legacy continues to inspire and motivate us. We stand in solidarity with their families and reaffirm our commitment to supporting them in every possible manner. To demonstrate our solidarity with the Shuhada of Police, army officers and troops participated in various events organized by the local police at numerous locations across the country. Youm-e-Shuhada Police serves as a poignant reminder of the immense sacrifices made by our police in the pursuit of peace, justice, and security. The Armed Forces of Pakistan reiterate their unwavering commitment to the noble cause of defending the motherland, alongside the Police and other law enforcement agencies,



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding FBR Track & Trace System and FBR Transformation.

President Zardari summons Senate session today

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has summoned a session of the Senate on Monday, August 5, at 5:00 pm. The President has called the Senate session under Article 54(1) of the Constitution. This move comes as a significant development in the country's political landscape, and it is expected that important legislative business will be transacted during the session.

PPP calls for NA dissolution, fresh elections amid political tensions

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has urged the federal government to dissolve the National Assembly and hold new elections amidst growing political tensions. This advice came from PPP Secretary General Nayyar Hussain Bukhari, who emphasized the need for a fresh mandate if the government feels threatened. In an interview with a private television channel, Bukhari stated, "If the government perceives a threat, it should dissolve the assembly and initiate new elections." He suggested that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif should send an advisory to President Asif Ali Zardari to dissolve the assembly and pave the way for elections. Bukhari expressed concerns about the government's reluctance to

communicate its issues with the PPP. "PPP is ready to strengthen the government in Parliament, but it should deliver something meaningful. President Zardari has repeatedly stated his willingness to mediate discussions and play a constructive role, but there must be a willingness to engage in dialogue," Bukhari said. He cautioned that any derailment of the political system could harm the country. The PPP leader also reflected on the party's acceptance of the election results, despite having reservations. "We accepted the election results with reservations. If we hadn't supported the PML-N, would the parliament and the Chief Executive's office be functioning today?" he questioned, underscoring the PPP's role in stabilizing the government.

Police Martyrs' Day Tributes paid to 62 martyrs of Islamabad Police

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a grand ceremony was held at the Police Community Center, Police Lines Headquarters, to honor the 62 martyrs of the Islamabad Police. Secretary Interior Captain @ Muhammad Khurram Agha attended the ceremony as the chief guest, a public relations officer said. He said that the chief guest visited the martyrs' memorial, placed a flower wreath and offered prayers for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks. On this occasion, a smartly turned-out contingent of police officers presented a guard of honor. DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, DIG Security Muhammad Jawad Tariq, SSPs, all zonal SPs, DSPs and other police officers,

along with the families of the martyred policemen, children, representatives from the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and members of civil society participated in the ceremony. The chief guest along with senior police officers met the families of the martyrs and distributed gifts to the children of the martyrs. During the ceremony tributes were paid to the Islamabad Police martyrs for their eternal sacrifices for the country and the nation. Documentaries and videos featuring the police martyrs were also shown to the participants. Addressing the ceremony, the chief guest stated that the Islamabad Police martyrs sacrificed their lives while performing their duty to protect the nation.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Interior Captain @ Muhammad Khurram Agha attending the grand ceremony held at the Police Community Center, Police Lines Headquarters, to honor the 62 martyrs of the Islamabad Police

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Balochistan tumult

As the stalemate between the state and the Baloch Yakjehti Committee continues, life in many parts of Balochistan remains paralysed. Negotiations have failed to end the impasse, and the protesters have refused to call off the weeklong BYC sit-in in Gwadar. The apparent bone of contention is the BYC's demand that all detained protesters be freed, and cases against them withdrawn. There seemed to be some progress made on Friday as the government announced that talks with the BYC had been successful. But following clashes in Noshki, it appears that matters are back to square one.

Though the immediate aim of the state should be to peacefully end the protest and listen to the BYC's demands so that life in Balochistan returns to normal, a longer-term strategy is required to ensure that the province's people are not frequently compelled to take to the streets because the state refuses to acknowledge their grievances. Sadly, successive governments have failed to earnestly address the actual problem in Balochistan, dealing with it as a law-and-order issue, and refusing to see the underlying political and socioeconomic factors fuelling widespread discontent in the province. Today, it is Mahrang Baloch who has managed to unite wide cross-sections of Baloch society under the BYC banner, with women at the forefront of the protests. Before her, it was the Haq Do Tehreek and various campaigns for the release of Baloch missing persons that raised the same issues the BYC is highlighting. Has the state bothered to look into the issues beyond superficial talk of enemies stirring up trouble in the province? Hostile foreign elements may well be involved in fuelling militancy, but when the state refuses to engage with peaceful citizens demanding their rights, it pushes more and more people into the embrace of extreme elements.

Those who wield power must listen to Balochistan's aggrieved voices with compassion, and work to solve the province's burning issues, chief amongst which are the missing persons and socioeconomic disparity. Speaking at a press conference on Friday not directly related to the BYC sit-in, the federal law minister announced a financial package for families of the missing persons. He said it should not be viewed as compensation, but as 'support'. The announcement of state financial support to the families of the missing should serve as a symbolic gesture, and temporary relief. The actual issue remains to be tackled: bringing to an end the deplorable practice of enforced disappearances. Coming back to the protests, if the same colonial methods are employed to stifle the province's voices, it will have a detrimental effect on national harmony. The state must begin the process of healing by acknowledging past mistakes, and promising to start afresh in Balochistan.

The TLP challenge

Muhammad Amir Rana

The state has initiated another crackdown against the leadership of the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) after the group incited violence against Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa. The government's strong response was necessary in this situation. It remains to be seen how effective it will be and whether the government remains firm in its decision.

The TLP's threats to the judiciary are not new; neither has it spared the top military brass in the past in its hatemongering. One of its founders, Pir Afzal Qadri, had threatened the judges of the Supreme Court and incited soldiers to stand against generals if Aasia Bibi (accused of blasphemy but later acquitted) was not hanged publicly. He made this statement in the presence of Khadim Rizvi, the co-founder of the group, in 2018. Rizvi had used similarly strong language against the judiciary and military leadership, besides igniting religious bigotry.

The state institutions acted swiftly after the TLP leadership's statements became louder. The group's top leadership, including Rizvi and Qadri and thousands of its workers, were arrested. Later, Qadri backtracked from his statements and quit the TLP. Hundreds of TLP workers issued disclaimers and disassociated themselves from the group. It looked like the state had decided to crush the TLP completely.

Just a few months later, Rizvi was granted bail by the Lahore High Court and released from jail. He did not take a break and restarted his hate campaign. He secured over two million votes in the 2018 elections. Many political analysts had linked his release with the election, but the biggest challenge was the TLP's rise and its hate-filled campaigns.

Initially, the PTI government took a soft stance on the TLP, but it was becoming a challenge for the state after the death of Rizvi. His son Saad built up further momentum, and

marched on Islamabad in April 2021 to demand the expulsion of the French ambassador from the country. TLP zealots killed several policemen, Saad Rizvi was arrested and the party banned.

The situation took another turn when the TLP launched a nationwide protest for the release of its leader. The protests became violent, forcing the government to release all TLP leaders and workers. Later, in November 2021, even the demand to lift the ban on the party was accepted.

The state has yet to adopt a straightforward approach to dealing with the TLP. Since the TLP's inception, it has accepted all its demands, including controversial ones, to convince its leadership to end their protest. However, the state used such agreements only to find a temporary solution to end the protests; this, eventually, strengthened the group.

Arrests, crackdowns, and criminal charges are not new in the TLP's case. The question is: why does the state compromise after taking decisive action against the group? Why is it tolerating a group, which is responsible for vandalism, the killing of innocent citizens and security officials, damaging property, blotting the country's international image, and being a source of extremism? The state's attitude is making it strong and one of the indications of this has been its growing vote bank.

Successive governments have not shown the will or capacity to deal with the group. At a recent press conference, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal condemned the TLP leader's remarks against the chief justice. They showed the same resolve for the rule of law as the PTI government had. The latter eventually surrendered to the group's demands.

Ahsan Iqbal has himself been a victim of TLP hatemongering and faced an assassination attempt by one of the group's supporters in 2018, while Khawaja Asif's hometown Sialkot has been mentioned by the

international press because of the tragic incident of mob lynching of Sri Lankan citizen Priyantha Kumara on false allegations of blasphemy in 2021.

The statement issued by both ministers would test the government's resolve, especially considering that the law-enforcement agencies are afraid of the TLP's street power and capacity to incite mass violence. The establishment sees each radical group's potential through a political lens, which prevents it from taking decisive action against such groups. Such radical groups remain an integral part of the political engineering designs of the establishment. Before the TLP, several banned groups, including the Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan, Jamaatud Dawaa, and many other extremist outfits, were used for political purposes.

Internal and external pressures and the changing security dynamic have forced the establishment to find new religious actors for political manoeuvres.

The TLP will have utility for the state until a new actor replaces it. It cannot be predicted what the future tool will look like, but this group itself has caused a lot of damage and is considered a major source of extremism in the country.

It knows the establishment's weakness and exploits it. During its last sit-in at its favourite spot at the juncture of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi at Faizabad, ostensibly showing solidarity with Palestine though perhaps also to counter the PTI's jubilation after the Supreme Court's decision on the reserved seats, it was expected that the TLP would use the opportunity for other ends.

In 2021, when the government banned the outfit, the interior minister at that time, Sheikh Rashid, and the religious affairs minister, Noorul Haq Qadri, said that the group had engaged in terrorism, actions prejudicial to national peace and security, and efforts to create anarchy by intimidating the public.

'Not Pakistan'

Muna Khan

Nothing gets me into a tizzy faster than hearing some iteration of 'this is not Pakistan'. And inevitably, women and/or young men attempting to smash the patriarchy are the source of someone's outrage. Those shocked by whatever new thing 'is not Pakistan' are in denial, stuck in a notion that the XYZ period in the country was better. They are unable to move on and believe that folks living their lives as they wish threaten the country's identity, its sanctity.

I have experienced the 'not Pakistan' brigade, especially as a journalist, reporting or commissioning stories that pushed boundaries. For example, in the early 2000s, when I was editing a mid-weekly magazine at Dawn, some of our stories caught their ire. To name a few: a fortnightly column called 'Single Women over Thirty (SWOT)', a cover story on dating over the decades, and Dr Riffat Hasan's critique of Farhat Hashmi and Asma Jahangir. Stories of honour killing, sexual assault, blasphemy did not elicit the same outrage. I suppose we accepted this as the norm.

We were inundated with feedback after an advertisement of a sanitary pad was printed on the back of the magazine. It was not a one-off ad so the complaints sort of grew as readers saw the ad every week. We received versions of 'this is no longer a family magazine' emails and calls; even colleagues were surprised about the ad's prominent placement. My editor (the late and great) Tahir Mirza too received such calls but he always took it in his stride. People need time to accept change, he'd say.

When sanitary pad advertisements migrated to TV, you heard some iteration of 'Kya behudgi hai yeh' (what is this obscenity). The ads were not coy like the family planning ones where two roses represented contraceptives. This was before such ads were banned altogether in 2016 to prevent exposure of such material to inquisitive children. Two steps forward, 200 steps back.

The point is not to recall all the complaints I've faced and witnessed but to demonstrate how people's resistance is not to change but to progress, especially when it comes to women and young people. The 'this is not Pakistan' brigade knows about menstruation, contraceptives, honour crimes, rape and so forth but they do not want it seen in the paper, on screens etc. They do not want us to tell stories of ground realities as we see fit.

This brigade has found a new target: Asim Abbasi's Barzakh, a drama released on YouTube which has among its many themes, one about same-sex relationship. Detractors all over social media will have you believe this is enough to destroy the country's existence. At the time of writing we are five episodes in of a beautifully shot story that also — and not exclusively — sheds light on the situation of the LGBT community in this country. How do you deny someone's existence?

Abbasi is no stranger to the 'this is not us' brigade. His earlier drama, Churails, released on an Indian streaming platform, was about a group of diverse women who come together to form a detective agency to find cheating husbands. Essentially, the story was

about the injustices faced by women. It was briefly banned in Pakistan after a scene from the show went viral on social media in which a character admitted to physical intimacy to get ahead in her career. The fury was that it promoted vulgarity. Just like Barzakh does, they say.

People exercising consent is vulgar but committing violence against them is not.

If all this is not Pakistan, what then is the country's reality? I do not have the answer but I know it cannot be a singular story centred around an ideological identity that teaches hatred for others; that issues ghaddari certificates freely, that cares not for the most marginalised in this country.

I'll leave you with a message I received a fortnight ago on X from a person who has since asked I not share their name because they fear someone, somewhere may recognise their identity. They asked me to write about them and their friends, university students who will soon graduate, struggling to find purpose. They have no one to guide them about career opportunities; their teachers also want to leave the country. Some of them cannot leave because they do not have the money needed to give to agents who can get them visas or take them via the illegal route. They will take on whatever job they can find to care for their families because their parents cannot make ends meet anymore. They know this means giving up whatever dreams they have.

"Write about so many people like us who bought into a dream about a new Pakistan but are living in a nightmare."

Commerce News

Pakistani, Chinese experts discuss enhanced economic growth, connectivity

LAHORE (APP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Acting President Zaki Aijaz emphasized that industrial cooperation was crucial at this time and expressed hope that it could be shifted to Pakistan.

He stressed that by learning from China, Pakistan can develop strategies to overcome economic challenges and achieve sustainable growth. He expressed these views while meeting with a high-level Chinese delegation comprising experts from diverse fields

here on Sunday. The Chinese delegation visit aiming at providing invaluable insights into the Chinese economic model, emphasizing lessons that Pakistan can leverage for its own growth. Welcoming the delegation Zaki Aijaz emphasizing that China and Pakistan were eternal friends, with a friendship that knew no bounds, he said that industrial cooperation was crucial at this time and expressed hope that it could be shifted to Pakistan.

Zaki believes that joint ventures and cooperation would create a win-win

situation. He said the delegation's visit was highly reassuring, and expressed hope that it would be both useful and productive for Pakistan.

He anticipated that it would enhance bilateral arrangements in areas such as industry, agriculture, economic zones, and help increase Pakistan's capacity to produce agricultural items in high demand in China.

During the event, the Chinese delegation engaged in meaningful discussions with representatives from Pakistani industrialists.

FTO orders advisors to address complaints within 60 days

LAHORE (APP): Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Dr Asif Mahmood Jah has directed all advisors nationwide to address complaints of aggrieved taxpayers within 60 days of their filing. Speaking here on Sunday to an awareness session with various sectors of business community, he said the direction aims to ensure prompt and efficient handling of grievances, providing timely relief to taxpayers. The directive underscores the government's commitment to delivering justice at the doorstep of aggrieved taxpayers, enhancing trust and transparency in the tax administration system.

By setting a strict 60-day deadline, he said it will expedite the process, preventing unnecessary delays that could burden taxpayers and undermine their confidence. This measure is part of broader efforts to streamline tax-related procedures, making the system more responsive and accessible. The emphasis on the quick redress reflects a recognition of the challenges taxpayers face and a commitment to addressing their concerns with urgency and fairness. Dr Waqar Ch Arain Advisor to FTO speaking on the occasion said that FTO always attached great importance to business community.



LAHORE: Tailors preparing mosquito nets in a factory to prevent dengue mosquito-borne diseases from the water of monsoon rains.

Online market place vital to increase carpet exports, reduce delays: Ejaz

LAHORE (INP): Chairman Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Ejazur Rehman has called for the establishment of a dedicated business-to-business e-commerce portal to bolster Pakistan's carpet exports and enhance its global competitiveness.

He emphasized the urgent need for a comprehensive online platform that showcases Pakistani manufacturers, exporters, and international buyers, facilitating seamless and efficient trade operations and this initiative aims to bridge the gap with rival nations like India, streamlining business processes and eliminating delays.

The CTI Chairman expressed these views while addressing a consultative meeting with well-known manufacturers and exporters of handmade carpets here on Sunday. The participants also addressed the industry's challenges and the need for training skilled workers in line with modern demands, sparking a productive discussion on how to enhance the sector's competitiveness.



RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Islamabad Tax Bar Association President Fazal Sheikh Advocate presenting Shield to Chief Guest Malik Jawad Khalid, President of the Bar Association.

Skilled workforce key to economic growth: PFC

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mian Kashif Ashfaq has said that trained skilled manpower on modern scientific lines is crucial for success and sustainable economic growth. Speaking at a seminar on "Role of Skilled Manpower in Economic Growth" here on Sunday, he said that world moves rapidly towards an economic based economy, the importance of a workforce equipped with advanced skills and scientific knowledge cannot be

overstated. In Pakistan, fostering such talent is vital for economic development as it enhances the competitive edge, allowing it to innovate and improve efficiency in various industries.

He said it supports the development of new technologies and industries, thereby diversifying the economy and reducing dependency on traditional sectors. He said we are confronting huge scarcity of skilled manpower in all sectors and technical colleges and institutes are lacking capacity to enroll required

number of students meeting ever increasing demand of industrial sectors.

He said, a skilled workforce contributes to higher productivity and quality in manufacturing and services, leading to increased exports and foreign investment. This, in turn, generates job opportunities, reduces unemployment, and improves living standards. He said skilled professionals in manufacturing, engineering, and information technology and other sectors are essential for addressing the socio-economic challenges.

Machinery imports surge 46.27% in one year

ISLAMABAD (APP): The imports of the overall machinery group experienced a substantial increase of 46.27 per cent during the last fiscal year compared to the 2022-23 period, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

The surge in machinery imports is poised to enhance productivity and technological advancement across key sectors, driving economic growth and infrastructure development.

The total imports of the machinery group during the last year stood at \$8,500.628 billion against the imports of \$5,811.517 billion recorded in 2022-

23. The import of agriculture sector machinery and equipment surged by 122.85 per cent from \$40.972 million to \$91.307 million; office machinery including data processing equipment 35.31 per cent from \$339.428 million to \$459.288 million; construction and mining machinery 11.16 per cent from \$ 84.730 million to \$ 94.187; electrical machinery and apparatus 95.67 per cent from \$1,673.820 million to \$3,275.127 million; telecom related equipment 147.36 per cent from \$956.696 million to \$2,366.500 million.

Strictly follow safety measures during rainy season: GEPCO

SIALKOT (APP): Superintendent Engineer (SE) Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO) Sialkot Sardar Jamsheed Khan has appealed to the citizens to strictly follow safety measures during rainy season. Talking to APP, the SE said an awareness campaign had been started for citizens to take precautionary measures during the rainy season. The campaign was launched through media, social media and other public communication platforms.

Monthly inflation hits 8-month high due to new taxation measures: APBF

LAHORE (INP): All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) has observed that during the previous month of July, the monthly inflation rate has reached an eight-month high due to direct and indirect taxes of Rs1.8 trillion in the budget of current fiscal year (2024-25). President APBF, Syed Maaz Mahmood said that the pace of inflation rose 2.3% compared to the preceding month, in the wake of higher prices of food and energy despite recent cut in the prices of petroleum products, as essential commodities have still not seen a decline in prices, leaving trade and industry frustrated.

The reading shows higher inflationary pressures as the monthly index normally stands around 1%. The impact was more pronounced in cities where the new tax measures hit the consumers hard. The monthly food inflation in July came in at 4.5% in urban localities.

Chairman Ibrahim APBF Qureshi said that the government has imposed a record Rs1.8 trillion in new taxes in the new budget for winning a \$7 billion bailout package from the International Monetary Fund. Taxes have been slapped on the salaried persons and the consumable goods used mostly by all segments of society, irrespective of their income levels.



SIALKOT: A large number of people purchasing traditional food item "pakoras" from vendor during heavy in the city.

Sargodha University, NRSF sign MoU for establishing Special Technology Park

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Rural Support Program (NRSF) and the University of Sargodha have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing a Special Technology Park in Sargodha. The MoU was signed by Dr. Rashid Bajwa, CEO of NRSF, and Professor Dr. Qaiser Abbas, Vice Chancellor of Sargodha University, during the second "Future of Education" conference organized by the University of Sargodha at Nathia Gali.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by notable figures, including former Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, and Vice Chancellors of various universities, faculty heads, NRSF Regional General Manager Sargodha Ghulam Rasool, NRSF Senior Program Manager Tahir Waqar, Chief Business Development Officer Ahran Anjum, former Secretary Saleem Ranjha, and several other distinguished personalities.

Governor appreciates overseas Pakistanis' role in charity projects

RAWALPINDI (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan on Sunday underscored the role of overseas Pakistanis in the development of the country.

He said that the hearts of Pakistanis abroad are full of love for their countrymen. "Overseas philanthropists also contribute to charitable works by sending valuable foreign exchange which is appreciable," he added.

The governor stated this while talking to a delegation comprising overseas Pakistanis who met him at Punjab House Islamabad under the leadership of Zumar Khan (Hilal Imtiaz) Chairman of

Pakistan Sweet Home. According to DPR Rawalpindi, the chairman briefed the governor about a new project of Pakistan Sweet Homes named Fatimat Al-Zahra Hospital (Chakri Rajar).

Governor Punjab highlighted that overseas Pakistanis have helped Pakistan in every difficult hour.

"With the support of philanthropists, the new project of Overseas Pakistan Sweet Home is an exemplary contribution of social responsibility in the society," he said adding that the charitable contributions by overseas Pakistanis should be encouraged.

Governor Punjab underlined the need to estab-

lish more such hospitals for poor and needy people in Attock and other remote areas.

The newly elected chairman of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation, Syed Qamar Raza and overseas Pakistanis from Norway, Holland and Italy were also among the visiting delegation.

In a separate statement, the governor paid tribute to the police martyrs on the occasion of Police Martyrs Day and said that the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace in the country are our pride. He also expressed his solidarity with the families of the martyrs.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with delegation of overseas Pakistanis led by the leader of Pakistan People's Party and Chairman Pakistan Sweet Home, Zamard Khan (Hilal Imtiaz).

CM pays tribute to police martyrs

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in her message on Police Martyrs Day, said that August 4 can never be forgotten as this day reminds us of martyrs sacrifices.

"A nation turns out successful which pays tribute to their martyrs. We will never compromise on the respect of the martyrs," she said.

The Chief Minister said, "I salute the great sacrifices of all our martyrs. The Martyrs Day is a day to pay homage to the great sacrifices of the brave sons of the land. The martyrs will always remain alive in our hearts."

She added the immortal sacrifices of the police martyrs are a precious asset which can never be forgotten, adding that the Punjab government every second stands with the family members of the martyrs and will remain so.

"The police force is rendering commendable duties in every area including the Kacha area. The Punjab government is utilising all possible resources for the welfare of the martyrs families. We will fully accomplish our duty to look after and provide service to the family of every martyr. We take pride in the glorious achievements of our martyrs and their sacrifices will be remembered for long," she added.

7 dead, 1,240 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least seven people were killed and 1,240 others injured in 1,184 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 550 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 690 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by rescue medical teams.

The data analysis showed that 711 drivers, 51 underage drivers, 125 pedestrians, and 411 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. The statistics showed that 258 accidents were reported in Lahore.

Punjab transport minister lauds district administration for monsoon measures

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister Punjab for Transport, Bilal Akbar Khan on Sunday lauded the measures taken by the district administration regarding monsoon rains.

"In the light of the directions of the Punjab government, the Rawalpindi district administration has made the best arrangements for the cleaning and drainage in view of the monsoon rains", he said during his visit to the nullah Lai.

According to the details, the minister along with Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema made a detailed visit to Nullah Lai, Gawalmandi and reviewed

the arrangements made by the administration. The provincial minister was briefed regarding the measures taken by the administration.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that all possible safety arrangements are complete. The situation is under control with timely cleaning of drains, he added.

He said that all the concerned departments are alert. He further said that officials of the concerned departments have been deployed in Naula Lai and nearby low-lying areas.

It is worth mentioning that the meteorological department has forecast more than normal rains this year.



MULTAN: Provincial Parliamentary Leader, MPA Syed Ali Haider Gilani addressing a press conference at Press Club.

PPP urges provincial govt to reconsider decision of relocating two wards of Nishtar Hospital

MULTAN (APP): Provincial Parliamentary Leader of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Syed Ali Haider Gilani accompanied by other local leaders, urged government to reconsider its decision of abolishing Neurosurgery and Orthopedic Wards from Nishtar Hospital to Nishtar Hospital phase-II by keeping in view the public facilities.

Addressing a press conference here Sunday, Syed Ali Haider Gilani said that a notification has come out to shift two major sectors of the Punjab government, Neurosurgery and Orthopedics, to Nishtar-II,

from Nishtar Hospital. He said that the locals would face problems due to relocation these two major departments from main Nishtar Hospitals to outside branch. He said that the Punjab government was requested to reconsider the decision to transfer the departments. He said that the people of South Punjab have given heavy mandate to Gilani family from the platform of the Pakistan People's Party adding that his family had always put political affiliations above all else and made practical efforts for the development of South Punjab.

We're indebted to martyrs sacrifices for peace in country: PA speaker

LAHORE (APP): Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan said on Sunday "we are indebted to those people who sacrificed their lives for peace in the country".

Speaking at the Police Martyrs' Day ceremony, Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan said the assembly belongs to the heirs of those martyrs. "When Captain Ahmed Mubeen was martyred, I was the spokesperson for

the government. But I have not forgotten the martyrs and their families till today," he added. Malik Ahmad said "I have no words to describe the sacrifices offered by families of martyrs. We are indebted to those martyrs who sacrificed their lives for peace". He said "we are giving free education to children of martyrs up to E.Sc. we will bring more privileges for police martyrs in consultation with the chief minister of Punjab,

Police Martyrs' Day observed across Punjab

LAHORE (APP): The Police Martyrs Day was observed across country on Sunday. Candles were lit in memory of police martyrs, across the province in which tribute was paid to those who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the nation.

Miscellaneous events were held at the different places including martyrs memorials, public service delivery centers and at police lines.

According to a spokesperson for the Punjab Police, the Police Martyrs Day observations were started officially by lighting candles in the memory of the police martyrs. A large number of families, civil society and citizens participated. August 4 is marked as Police Martyrs Day across the country including Punjab.

Regarding Martyrs Police Day, IGP Punjab Dr Usman Anwar said in his message that the eternal sacrifices of police martyrs would always be remembered. He said martyred policemen were figures of courage and bravery and loyalty to the country.

No ban on private practice of doctors in evening hours: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Imran Nazir has announced that the Health Department has not imposed any ban on private practice of doctors. In a statement issued on Sunday, he clarified that the department had instructed hospital heads to allow private practice during evening hours within government hospitals, aimed at providing better convenience to patients.

The minister emphasised that the initiative would ensure that patients receive top-notch medical facilities during evening hours as doctors engage in private practice. This policy is part of the Health Department's broader effort to enhance health system in the province. He highlighted the successful implementation of evening private practices at the Punjab Institute of Cardiology in Lahore and the Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology, suggesting this model could be expanded.

Stepbrother kills two siblings in Kabirwala

KABIRWALA (APP): A stepbrother killed his two brothers following a dispute over a marriage proposal in Kabirwala, a private news channel and police reported on Sunday.

According to reports, Munir Ahmed, the accused, fatally shot one brother and stabbed the other in the Kabirwala area of Punjab.

The victims were identified as Qaiser Abbas and Nasir Abbas. The police arrived at the scene and arrested the suspect.



GILGIT: Inspector General of Police Gilgit-Baltistan Afzal Mehmood Butt and Force Commander GB Kashif Khalil offering fatiha after laying floral wreath on Yadgar-e-Shuhda on the occasion of Police Martyr's Day at CPO.

International News

At least 73 killed as clashes rock Bangladesh, curfew imposed

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: At least 73 people were killed and hundreds injured in clashes in Bangladesh on Sunday, as police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse tens of thousands of protesters calling for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to resign.

The government declared an indefinite nationwide curfew starting at 6 p.m. (1200 GMT) on Sunday, the first time it has taken such a step during the current protests that began last month. It also announced a three-day general holiday starting from Monday.

The unrest, which has prompted the government to shut down internet services, is Hasina's biggest test in her 20-year regime after she won a fourth straight term in elections that were boycotted by the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

Critics of Hasina, along with human rights groups, have accused her government of using excessive force against protesters, a charge she and her ministers deny.

Demonstrators blocked major highways on Sunday as student protesters launched a non-cooperation program to press for the government's resignation, and violence spread nationwide.

"Those who are protesting on the streets right now are not students, but terrorists who are out to destabilise the nation," Hasina said after a national security panel meeting, attended by the chiefs of the army, navy, air force, police and other agencies.

"I appeal to our countrymen to suppress these terrorists with a strong hand."

Police stations and ruling party offices were targeted as violence rocked

the country of 170 million people.

Twelve policemen were beaten to death in the north-western district of Sirajganj, police official Bijoy Bosak said.

At least eight people, including two students and a ruling party leader, were killed and dozens injured amid fierce clashes in several places in the capital, Dhaka, police and witnesses said.

Two construction workers were killed on their way to work and 30 injured in the central district of Munsiganj, during a three-way clash of protesters, police and ruling party activists, witnesses said.

"They were brought dead to the hospital with bullet wounds," said Abu Hena Mohammad Jamal, the superintendent of the district hospital.

Police said they had not fired any live bullets.



Objects set on fire as demonstrators with sticks occupy the street during a protest demanding the stepping down of Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, following quota reform protests by students, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Biden voices hope Iran will stand down but is uncertain

Monitoring Desk
WILMINGTON: US President Joe Biden expressed hope Iran would stand down despite its threat to avenge the assassination of Hamas' leader in Tehran, as fears mounted that Israel's war against Palestinians in Gaza could escalate into a wider Middle East conflict.

Regional tensions have soared following the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas' top leader, on Wednesday, a day after an Israeli strike in Beirut killed Fuad Shukur, a senior military commander from the Lebanese group.

Hezbollah, which like Hamas is backed by Iran. Iran and Hamas have blamed Israel for Haniyeh's killing, and they, together with Hezbollah, have vowed revenge. Israel has not claimed or denied responsibility.

Asked by reporters whether Iran would stand down, Biden said on Saturday in response to a shouted question, "I hope so. I don't know."

Seeking to bolster defenses in the Middle East in response to threats from Israel's foes, the Pentagon said on Friday it would deploy additional fighter jets and Navy warships to the region.

Extreme heat breaks records in China

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Swaths of eastern China baked under a scorching heat wave on Saturday, with temperatures in some areas reaching record highs, weather authorities said.

China is enduring a summer of extreme weather, with unseasonable heat searing parts of the north and east while torrential rains have triggered floods and landslides in central and southern regions. The country is the world's largest emitter of the greenhouse gases that scientists say drive global warming and make extreme weather more frequent and intense.

Fears of wider conflict grow after Hamas chief Haniyeh's killing

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Middle East tensions soared on Saturday as Iran and its allies readied their response to the assassination of Hamas' political leader, blamed on Israel, spurring fears of a regional war. Israel's ally the United States said it would move warships and fighter jets to the region, while Western governments have called on their citizens to leave Lebanon — where the powerful Hezbollah movement is based — and airlines cancelled flights.

The killing earlier this week of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, hours after the Israeli assassination of Hezbollah's military chief in Beirut, has triggered vows of vengeance from Iran and the "axis of resistance".

Groups from Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria have already been drawn into the nearly 10-month

conflict between Israel and Hamas. Iran said on Saturday it expects Hezbollah to hit deeper inside Israel and to no longer be confined to military targets. With such talk growing, the Pentagon said it was bolstering its military presence in the Middle East to protect US personnel and defend Israel. An aircraft carrier strike group led by the USS Abraham Lincoln will replace one led by the USS Theodore Roosevelt, the Pentagon said. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin also ordered additional ballistic missile defence-capable cruisers and destroyers to the Middle East and areas under United States European Command, as well as a new fighter squadron to the Middle East.

In Beirut, 20-year-old student Diana Abu Aasel said she feared "something bad will happen to my family and friends".

Blinken speaks with UK, French counterparts to 'de-escalate' rising Mideast tensions

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with his British and French counterparts via telephone on Saturday about the need to de-escalate rising tensions in the Middle East and prevent further escalation of the ongoing conflict.

Blinken and British Foreign Secretary David Lammy reaffirmed the need to "de-escalate rising tensions in the Middle East and prevent the conflict from spreading," said State Department spokesman Matthew Miller.

They stressed the importance of finalising a Gaza ceasefire hostage and prisoner swap deal "as soon as possible," it said.

Blinken also spoke with French Foreign Minister Stephane Sejourne about achieving a Gaza ceasefire deal as well as the "importance of preventing

further escalation of conflict in the Middle East and the challenges posed by threats from Iran."

The calls came as tensions are running high in the region after Iran vowed "severe punishment" for Israel for the assassination of Hamas' political chief Ismail Haniyeh in the Iranian capital of Tehran.

The assassination of Haniyeh was "designed and executed" by Israel with support from the US, using a short-range projectile, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said on Saturday.

The US said on Friday it would deploy additional fighter jets and navy warships to the Middle East.

Haniyeh was assassinated early on Wednesday at his residence in Tehran in an attack that Iranian officials blamed on Israel. Haniyeh's bodyguard was also killed.



UMMALFAHEM: Arab-Israelis and left-wing activists lift flags of Palestine and placards to protest Israel's aggression in Gaza.

North Korea says Russia's Putin offered humanitarian aid over flood damage

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Russian President Vladimir Putin has offered humanitarian aid to North Korea, which has been hit by heavy rainfalls and floods, Pyongyang's state media KCNA said on Sunday. Relations between the two countries have grown closer, and Putin made the

offer in a message to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un delivered on Saturday via the Russian embassy in Pyongyang. The Russian leader's message expressed sympathy and support. Putin displayed "his willingness to provide immediate humanitarian support for the recovery from the flood damage.

France and Italy urge citizens to leave Lebanon due to security risks

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: France and Italy on Sunday urged their citizens in Lebanon to leave the country due to the risk of military escalation in the Middle East, their foreign ministries said. Tensions have soared following the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, leader of Palestinian group Hamas, in Tehran on Wednesday, a day after an Israeli strike in Beirut killed Fuad Shukur, a top military commander from Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

In two separate travel advisories, the French foreign ministry recommended citizens residing in Iran to temporarily leave the country given the risk of its airspace being closed. The ministry had urged citizens travelling in Iran to leave on Friday.

The airstrike hit a

Five more killed in Israeli strikes at hospital, Gaza officials say

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: An Israeli airstrike hit a tent inside a hospital compound in central Gaza, killing at least five people, bringing the total of Palestinians killed on Sunday to 19, Gaza health officials said, after another round of talks ended without result.

The airstrike hit a

tent area inside the Al-Aqsa Hospital compound, starting a fire, wounding at least 18 people in addition to the five killed, medical authorities said.

The Israeli military said it struck a fighter who "conducted terror activities" and that secondary explosions were identified, indicating the presence of weaponry in the area.

VCs of AJK Universities demand financial aid to prevent collapse

ISLAMABAD (APP): An urgent meeting of the Vice Chancellors (VCs) of all five public sector universities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) was held here to discuss the severe financial crisis facing these institutions, specifically concerning the payment of salaries and pensions to university staff and pensioners.

The VCs conveyed their concerns and the potential repercussions of the financial crisis to the President of AJK who is the Chancellor of the universities following the meeting, said a press release.

Participants in this meeting included Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, Vice Chancellor of

the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Muzaffarabad; Brigadier Prof. Dr. Muhammad Younis Javed, Vice Chancellor of Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST); Prof. Dr. Abdul Hameed, Vice Chancellor of Women University Bagh; Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zakria Zakir, Vice Chancellor of the University of Poonch; and Prof. Dr. Rahmat Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor of the University of Kotli.

The VCs highlighted that they have repeatedly informed all relevant forums and authorities about the financial crisis over the years through written and verbal communication, but

no positive development has occurred. Consequently, the crisis has intensified, leaving the universities with no resources to pay salaries and pensions.

The main reasons for this crisis include the lack of increase in funding from the Higher Education Commission (HEC) since 2017, low student fees in public sector universities, the introduction of BS degree programs in colleges, resulting in decreased university enrollments, and HEC's discontinuation of private degree programs. Simultaneously, salaries and pensions have increased by 135% over the past seven years, rendering the univer-

sities unable to manage payments within their current financial resources.

The VCs have made continuous efforts to resolve the financial issues, including meetings with the President of AJK/Chancellor of the universities and the Chairman of the Higher Education Commission. As a result, the President expressed concerns in a letter to the Prime Minister of AJK on June 7, 2024, warning that the absence of financial support from the AJK government could lead to potential unemployment of faculty and staff and affect over 30,000 students enrolled in higher education programs.



ISLAMABAD: Posters and flags displayed on different roads of the Federal Capital, urge people to mark the Youm-e-Istehsal (Exploitation Day), Jammu Kashmir falling on 5th August.



ISLAMABAD: Posters and flags displayed on different roads of the Federal Capital, urge people to mark the Youm-e-Istehsal

Kiyani urges opposition to shun differences, unite for public interest

ISLAMABAD (APP): Convener of the National Parliamentary Task Force Bilal Azhar Kiyani Sunday urged the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership to abandon its polarizing tactics and believed that Pakistan's political leadership can pool their expertise to devise a comprehensive solution to this pressing public problem.

Talking to a private news channel, Kiyani argued that PTI can play a constructive role in building national consensus and fostering a more inclusive political environment in the country, adding, the government was fully aware of the gravity of the situation and was working tirelessly to provide relief to the masses.

Kiyani reiterated that the government was taking a multi-pronged approach to address the issue, including negotiations with traders, measures to enhance productivity, and initiatives

to promote economic growth.

He also appealed to the opposition parties to put aside their political differences and join hands with the government to tackle the challenge of inflation, which, he said, was a national issue that required a collective response. By working together, Kiyani emphasized, Pakistan could overcome the current economic difficulties and emerge stronger and more resilient.

Replying to a query, he pointed out that Khan's policies had no continuity, and his decisions were often driven by personal whims rather than a coherent vision for the country.

"Pakistan needs leaders who can provide stability and consistency, not those who change their stance with the wind," Kiyani asserted, dismissing Khan's overtures for talks as nothing more than a publicity stunt.

NHA staff active on all national highways for construction, repair

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the special directives of Chairman National Highway Authority (NHA) Shahrar Sultan, the NHA staff was active on all national highways affected by stormy rains, floods and landslides for construction, repair and to deal with all kinds of situations in a timely manner.

The NHA staff was on high alert with necessary machinery for restoration of national highways to facilitate the commuters, said a press release on Sunday.

The restoration work on Mahandri bridge located on Naran N-15, Mansehra National Highway was underway on emergency basis as bridge affected by the flood relay, while the path for pedestrians had already been restored at Mahandri Bazar.

Education ministry renovated Margalla College

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a remarkable feat of collaborative governance, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has renovated and refurbished the abandoned hostel at Margalla College Islamabad in just three months.

According to the Education Ministry, GIK University will now manage the facility from Monday, offering high-impact IT courses, training programs for students, and fostering a culture of innovation and excellence.

IRSA releases 462,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 462,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 53,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1533.00 feet and was 135.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 331,000 cusecs and 275,500 cusecs respectively.

TLP leader condemns India's actions in Kashmir, advocates for Jihad as the solution

Ind: Kashmir Desk

MUZAFFARABAD: Amir of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Azad Kashmir, Allama Abdul Ghafoor Tabani, expressed strong condemnation of India's attempts to suppress the Kashmiri freedom movement. In a conversation with journalists, he stated that India has endangered itself by revoking Articles 370 and 35A. He emphasized that the Kashmiri people made their decision about their future through the July 19, 1947, resolution for accession to Pakistan. Despite India's continuous efforts to isolate Pakistan globally, these attempts have been unsuccessful.

Allama Tabani asserted that Tehreek-e-Labbaik will raise the voice of Kashmiris on every platform. He declared that jihad is the only solution for the liberation of Kashmir, asserting that without it, the dream of Kashmir's freedom cannot be realized. Under the leadership of Allama Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi, the

movement vows to avenge the injustices faced by oppressed Muslims in Kashmir, Burma, and Palestine.

He condemned Narendra Modi, calling him the world's biggest terrorist, and accused India of being a murderer of Muslims, stating that Muslims are not safe in India. Allama Tabani suggested that the current situation in India is precarious due to Modi and his BJP, predicting that they cannot maintain India's existence on the world stage.

Despite the brutal oppression by the Indian government, the resistance movement in Kashmir remains strong. He highlighted that on August 5, 2019, India blatantly violated UN resolutions and international laws by abrogating Article 370, thus stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status and imposing a military siege. This day is remembered as one of the darkest in the history of occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Sultan terms August 5 as the darkest day in the Kashmir's history

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, while terming August 5 as the darkest day in the Kashmir's history, has said that India's apartheid regime's move to strip the region of its special status was a brazen violation of the UNSC resolutions.

In his video message released on the eve of Youm e Istehsal, the president said that the main motive behind the revocation of Article 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution was to change the political and constitutional status of the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"India has been committing state terrorism against the people of Occupied Jammu and Kash-

mir since a long time, however, the level of brutality and state repression has intensified significantly after August 5, 2019", he said.

He, however, maintained that despite using all means of oppression and suppression Indian government has failed in its attempt to break the Kashmiris' political resolve.

"India wants to annex Occupied Kashmir forcibly, but the Kashmiri people have time and again refused to be a part of India", Barrister Chaudhry said. "The Kashmiri people want to determine their future in the light of the United Nations resolutions, which clearly recognize their inalienable right to self-determination", he said.

CDA Chairman takes notice of fish mortality in Rawal Dam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Commissioner and Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, took notice after media reports of increased fish mortality in Rawal Dam.

A team led by Member Environment and Administration, Talat Gondal, was dispatched to the dam to investigate the matter.

The team, accompanied by officials from the Environment Protection Department, collected water samples from the dam, which have been sent to the Environment Protection Department, Punjab Fisheries

Department, and Fisheries Research Institute of NARC, Islamabad, for analysis. The departments are expected to submit their reports within two days.

Preliminary observations suggest that the fish mortality occurred in the last week of July, and the dead fish have since been removed. The situation has improved, and the CDA has initiated the process to address the issue permanently. An expression of interest has been invited for the installation of a sewerage treatment plant upstream to prevent water contamination.

Bani Gala police teams arrested 290 accused during last six months

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza had assigned special tasks to the zonal SPs and Police teams to arrest those involved in heinous crime and recover the looted items. In this regard, Islamabad Police Bani Gala police station teams arrested 290 outlaws including 41 gang members during the last six months involved in a series of criminal activities, a public relations Officer said.

He said that the Bani Gala police teams also recovered looted items worth Rs 23 million including valuables, vehicles, motor-

cycles, mobile phones, laptops, while drugs, liquor and weapons with ammunition were also recovered from their possession.

Police teams also arrested accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons and recovered 10,545 gram hashish, 12,654 gram heroin, 1082 gram Ice, 55 liters of liquor, while police teams recovered 25 pistols, 02 Kalashnikov and 04 rifles along with ammunition from their possession.

Moreover, investigation on 203 was also completed and their challan were submitted in the relevant courts.

Additionally, Bani Gala police team also arrested 148 abscorder and target offenders.

Ahsan Iqbal stresses boosting exports to overcome economic challenges

LAHORE (INP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has emphasized that increasing exports is the only way out for Pakistan to achieve economic growth.

Addressing the 28th Textile Asia International Trade Fair 2024, organised by Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PRGMEA) at Expo Centre Lahore on Saturday, he said Pakistan had vast resources and potential but there was a need to focus on productivity, quality, and innovation to enhance

competitiveness, profitability, and economic development.

The planning minister mentioned that approximately 550 companies from seven countries were participated in the expo, adding that trade fairs and expos like this was a tool to boost exports of any country. He stated that boosting exports was essential for economic development, as it would not only strengthen the Pakistani Rupee but also contribute to national prosperity. He asserted that enhancing exports was crucial for Pakistan to escape its

debt burden and improve economic condition.

Ahsan Iqbal criticised opposition for focusing on protests rather than offering constructive solutions to the country's issues. He underscored the need for unity among all stakeholders to overcome political differences and achieve progress.

Addressing the current economic difficulties, he described the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme as a temporary solution, referring to it as a "bitter pill" that Pakistan must eventually move beyond.

Media urged to raise awareness about ending child labour

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Labor Organization (ILO) is committed to eliminate child labour, to provide safe and healthy childhood to children across the world, said ILO official Munawar Sultana here Sunday. She said while much progress has been made in reducing child labour over the years, recent years have seen global trends reverse.

Amir Muqam slams Imran for obstructing progress

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam said that they are not protesters, but workers, and our government has put the country on the path of progress under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif. On the other hand, Imran Khan is using every dirty trick to stop the country's progress.

Addressing a press conference at the Pakistan Muslim League (N) provincial secretariat in Peshawar, Amir Muqam said that PTI has not done any work in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while the federal government's people-friendly policies and excellent performance have won the hearts of the people. He added that Imran Khan is busy conspiring against Pakistan's progress like Pakistan's enemies. Amir Muqam thanked the people for their support and said that our government is a coalition government with allied parties.

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KARACHI: Activists of Pakistan Sunni Tehreek raise slogan outside the Karachi Press Club

Civil society activists demand special child protection centers in ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): Civil society activists here have demanded the government to ensure child protection and open special centers in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

Talking to APP, child rights activist and former NCRC member Dr Rubina Fareed said that it was very crucial to facilitate children and protect them.

Psychologist Dr Bashir Ahmad highlighted that child abuse has created psychological issues pro-

tection centers of higher quality can significantly benefit children, for instance, by supporting better social and academic performance, she added.

Children out of home growth in cases involving multiple risk factors, including cases where children faced risks both inside and outside the home, or simply risks outside the home.

He further added that domestic abuse was combined with other factors,

particularly emotional abuse and parental mental health (complex domestic abuse/risks at home).

There were complexities related to parental mental health, which often involved domestic abuse and substance misuse.

There were concerns relating to family members other than the child or parent (concerns about another person), which tended to co-exist with other risks, including domestic abuse.

Why did India feel the need for the unlawful actions on August 5, 2019?

By Muhammad Hanif, Information Officer

On August 5th, Kashmiris in Pakistan and around the world commemorate "Exploitation Day" each year. Today, large demonstrations and rallies are being held across Pakistan and globally in support of Kashmiris and against Indian exploitation. The government and people of Azad Kashmir are also actively protesting today. The aim of these protests, rallies, and speeches by Kashmiris and Pakistanis is to make it clear to the world that Kashmiris categorically reject India's oppressive and unconstitutional actions. They urge the international community to exert effective pressure on India to retract

its unconstitutional, illegal, and inhumane measures taken on August 5, 2019.

Five years ago, on August 5, 2019, India illegally and unconstitutionally abrogated the special status of occupied Kashmir. This oppressive and unjust act was an attempt to usurp the rights granted to the oppressed Kashmiris under Article 370 and Article 35A of the Indian Constitution. Article 370 accorded special status to the occupied state of Kashmir, while Article 35A specified the definition of permanent residents and who could own property in Kashmir. In other words, these articles meant that occupied Kashmir was an autonomous state, where only permanent residents could buy property, and non-lo-

cals had no ownership rights. The population and demographics of Kashmir could not be altered under these articles.

However, on August 5, 2019, India unilaterally abrogated these articles through sheer force and unlawful means. This action was a blatant exploitation of the fundamental rights of the oppressed and besieged Kashmiris, initiating yet another chapter of their exploitation. Through this step, India not only tried to strip Kashmiris of their fundamental rights but also violated their basic human rights.

The question arises: why did the Modi government feel the need to abrogate these articles, which had been a part of the Indian Constitution since the beginning?

Under the sinister plan of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), these articles were abolished with the objective of stripping Kashmiris of their basic state rights and resettling non-state Hindu residents in the occupied territory. This was aimed at increasing the number of Hindus and reducing the Muslim majority to a minority. Following the unjust abolition of these articles, the Modi government began resettling non-state individuals from India in occupied Kashmir. These people, instead of legitimately purchasing properties, have been seizing lands and orchards through coercion and force, with the help of the Indian government and RSS goons. They forcibly

transfer these properties to their names under the guise of 'purchases' or official documents. Moreover, these non-state individuals are being given government jobs in the occupied state without merit, displacing Kashmiris and rendering them unemployed.

Despite over seven decades and numerous UN resolutions, India continues its oppression and brutality against the innocent and defenseless Kashmiris, while the so-called human rights defenders remain silent. Astonishingly, five years ago, on this very day, India brazenly deprived Kashmiris of their fundamental constitutional rights, leading to a systematic genocide of the Kashmiri people.



ISLAMABAD: Summer vacations are over, students getting ready for school, purchasing new bags and books.