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Three BLA terrorists involved in killing of DC Panjgur killed in Mastung IBO

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces on Tuesday killed three Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) terrorists and killed as many during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted on the night of August 18th and 19th in Mastung District. During conduct of the operation, after an intense fire exchange, the three BLA terrorists were killed while three of them got injured, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. These terrorists were involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area and were also responsible for shahadat (martyrdom) of Deputy Commissioner of Panjgur, Zakir Ali, on August 12th.

"Today's operation has avenged the heinous act and has brought the perpetrators to justice. Security forces of Pakistan in step with the Nation, remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan," the ISPR said. Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday paid tribute to the security forces for carrying out a successful intelligence-based operation in Mastung to eliminate the killers of Deputy Commissioner of Panjgur, Zakir Ali. The president appreciated the professional expertise of the Pakistan Army for carrying out an effective anti-terror operation.

Pakistan, Netherlands strengthen ties with focus on human trafficking, cricket cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi welcomed the Ambassador of



the Netherlands, Henny de Vries, on Tuesday at the Ministry of Interior to discuss issues of mutual interest.

The meeting focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation across various sectors, with a special emphasis on combating human trafficking and strengthening cricket ties between the two nations.

Naqvi emphasized Pakistan's commitment to deepening relations with the Netherlands, particularly in areas such as human trafficking prevention, where he highlighted the importance of collective international action.

"Human smugglers are a powerful mafia, and no country can tackle them alone," Naqvi remarked. The discussion also covered the upcoming visit of an Italian team to Pakistan, aimed at furthering these collaborative efforts. Additionally, both sides agreed on the need to bolster support for Afghan refugees, with Pakistan reiterating its long-standing commitment to hosting displaced populations.

Ahsan urges swift completion of CPEC Phase-II corridor concept papers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Tuesday chaired a review meeting on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, stressing the urgency of preparing concept papers for five new corridors proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in August 2023.

"The concept papers for all CPEC Phase-II projects should be completed as soon as possible, aligning with these five new corridors," he said while chairing a review meeting on CPEC projects in Islamabad on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awais Manzoor Sumra, secretaries of relevant ministries, heads of institutions, and senior officials.

Ahsan Iqbal reiterated that all Working Groups (WGs) have been directed to expedite the preparation of these concept papers. Ahsan Iqbal informed the meeting that Pakistan and China have agreed to initiate work on these five corridors, which were aligned with Pakistan's 5Es framework (Export, Energy, Equity, E-Pakistan and Environment) for its economic development. Elaborating the five new initiatives, he said that under the Livelihood Corridor provision of the best amenities to the people and creating employment opportunities were included.

Under the Innovation Corridor, the minister said new projects would be initiated through modern technology and imparting information technology skills to the youth. "While the CPEC would be used to promote connectivity and establish more friendly relations with Central Asian states under the Open Regional Cooperation."

The Regional Connectivity Corridor will utilize CPEC to foster relations and promote connectivity with Central Asian states under the Open Regional Cooperation framework.

Ahsan Iqbal expressed confidence that comprehensive documents on these five corridors would be finalized by the end of August and presented during the visit of China's Prime Minister to Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan while speaking at the meeting of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Communications.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

Instead of politicking, provinces should copy Punjab's electricity bills' relief: PM

Federal Cabinet greenlights skills development initiative for enhanced training

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that instead of politicking, the provincial governments should follow the Punjab government's course of providing relief to electricity consumers, scraping a chunk from the trillions of rupees transferred to them under the National Finance Commission.

The prime minister, chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet, said that the Punjab government had spared Rs 45 billion out of its own development budget to provide Rs14 per unit relief to the electricity consumers utilising 200 to 500 units for a two-month period. "This is the right of the people. The federal government has zero contribution to this relief package. Other provinces should also do the same."

He told the cabinet members that almost 60% of the NFC funds went to the provinces. The federal government had to face immense challenges in the form of the payment of loans and interests on foreign-funded projects that benefited the whole of the country. He told the meeting that the federal government had

also allocated Rs50 billion to provide a three-month relief to domestic consumers using up to 200 units of electricity which constituted around 86% of the total domestic consumers. Besides, he said, in partnership with the Balochistan government, 28,000 tube wells would be solarised in the province costing Rs 70 billion, out of which Rs55 billion would be borne by the federal government. This would benefit 28,000 farmers besides addressing the issue of power theft, he added. The prime minister said that the federal government, in consultation with the provincial governments, was working on long-term measures to stabilise the economy and boost the country's trade and exports.

He said the federal government would take all such measures after taking the

Ayaz Sadiq meets President of Belarus, reaffirms strengthening of ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday said that both Pakistan and Belarus enjoy cordial ties based upon shared interests. He expressed resolve to further strengthen ties between both nations.

The Speaker said, "Pakistan has a vast potential of investment in the energy, trade and agriculture sectors". He expressed these views during his meeting with the President of the Republic of Belarus Mr. Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, Belarus, said a press release was issued here.

The Speaker said that Pakistan-Belarus bilateral relations are characterized by mutual respect and trust. He underscored that Pakistan-Belarus ties would further expand by collaboration in economic, industrial, and agriculture sectors. Furthermore, he emphasized to deepen parliamentary contacts between both nations.

The President of Belarus Mr. Alexander Lukashenko stated that Belarus attaches great importance to its close ties with Pakistan.

He also expressed the desire to further expand bilateral cooperation with Pakistan.

Three terrorists killed in exchange of fire with security forces

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (INP): Three terrorists were killed in an exchange of fire between security forces and militants here at Saggi Bridge in the limits of Daraban Police station.

According to police, the CTD along with other law enforcement agencies received information about the presence of some terrorists at Saggi Bridge in Daraban Tehsil, who were looting the citizens. The teams of CTD and other law enforcement agencies immediately reached the spot where an exchange of fire was held between the security forces and the terrorists. Resultantly, three terrorists were killed.

PEEF to support higher education of underprivileged students: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the government had established the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund to support children from low-income families to obtain higher education.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Israr Khan Kakar, the newly elected President of Oxford Union of UK's Oxford University, said that a 20% quota had been allocated for the youth of Balochistan under the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund.

Prime Minister Shehbaz warmly welcomed Israr Kakar at the PM House, appreciated him for bringing fame to Pakistan, and viewed that talented youth like him could guarantee a bright future for Pakistan.

He lauded Kakar for contesting and winning the Oxford Union election as a manifestation of his steadfastness and firm resolve. He expressed the hope that Pakistani youth like Israr Kakar would continue to bring laurels to Pakistan.

"Winning scholarship throughout the academic career and then his election as president of a great body like Oxford Union by a youngster coming from a backward area of Balochistan is a matter of pride," the prime minister remarked.

JUI-F chief rules out any alliance to oust government

DERA ISMAEL KHAN (INP): Regretting that the party's experience of entering into alliances with other parties in the recent past was not a good one, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief and veteran politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Tuesday that the party would launch an anti-government movement on its own. Talking to newsmen at his residence in Dera Ismael Khan, he said that neither the party wanted to embarrass others nor get embarrassed itself. "However, there could be alliances with other parties on any issue," Fazl explained.

"Not only will we play the role of an opposition inside the parliament but also outside the parliament," he said, and added, "This is for the first time in the country's history that the establishment has taken its internal matters seriously." However, he added, the

Pakistan conducts training launch of ballistic missile Shaheen-II: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan on Tuesday conducted successful training launch of surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II.

The training launch was aimed at training of troops, validating various technical parameters and performance evaluation of different sub-systems incorporated for improved accuracy and enhanced survivability, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

"Today's training launch was witnessed by senior officers from Strategic Plans Division, Army Strategic Forces Command, scientists and engineers of strategic organizations," it said.

Director General Strategic Plans Division appreciated the technical prowess, dedication and commitment of scientists who contributed towards this landmark



achievement. President, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Services Chiefs congratulated the scientists and engineers on this achievement.

Gold medalist Arshad Nadeem calls on CJCSC

RAWALPINDI: Arshad Nadeem, record-holder Olympic, called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), General Sahir Shamshad Mirza here on Tuesday at Joint Staff Headquarters.

The Chairman CJSC lauded Arshad Nadeem's efforts for securing Pakistan's first-ever Gold Medal in a singles' event and setting up of a new Olympic record, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said.

General Sahir Shamshad Mirza also appreciated the



diligence and devotion of Arshad Nadeem in achieving a momentous milestone in Pakistan's sport history and wished him the very best for his future endeavours.

Tarar doubts PTI to get approval for Islamabad rally on August 22

ISLAMABAD (INP): In response to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) announcement to hold a powershow in Islamabad, Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar said that he did not believe the party would be given permission.

Speaking to a private TV channel, the federal minister said, "Considering their track record, I don't think they will be allowed to rally in the federal capital." Meanwhile, PTI leader Sher Afzal Marwat has expressed determination of his party in this regard, saying they would hold rally on Thursday, rain or shine.

Adviser to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on Information Barister Muhammad Ali Saif on Sunday said PTI founding chairman Imran Khan had "decided" to hold a powershow in Islamabad on August 22, after a protracted struggle to hold a rally in the city. Saif had reassured that the party would try to avoid any violation of the law on their part.

Dar reaffirms commitment to CICA's vision of sustainable security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to CICA's vision

Dar emphasized the need for conflict prevention; addressing the root causes of endemic disputes, according to a press release issued by Foreign Office.



of sustainable security in Asia and highlighted the need for enduring peace and development in the region.

Talking to Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, who is currently on a visit to Pakistan, Dar highlighted the need for addressing the root causes of persistent disputes, and seeking sustainable solutions for enduring peace and development in the CICA region.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Digital doublespeak

The state minister for IT continues to waffle. On Sunday, Shaza Fatima Khawaja was back on TV screens, categorically denying her government's responsibility for the anaemic internet speeds being experienced by millions of users across the country.

The frequent, unannounced degradations in internet connectivity, widely suspected to be a consequence of the opaque firewall technology being secretly implemented by the state, was, in fact, due to more people using VPNs to access the internet, the minister claimed.

"I can say under oath that the government neither shut down nor slowed down the internet," Ms Khawaja insisted. Claiming that the issue has now been resolved, the minister then said a meeting had been set up with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority this week to "ensure that users in the country do not face similar problems again". But if the issue was simply more people using VPNs, why was there a need to get the PTA involved?

It is precisely because of this opacity around the new system that is being rolled out that the masses have remained deeply suspicious of the government's words and actions. Despite the significant disruptions that have already been caused, there is still very little that is known about what exactly the authorities are hoping to achieve, what the timeline for its rollout will be, and what ordinary users can expect once the new 'web management' system has been implemented in full.

Consider X, which has remained inaccessible in Pakistan for the better part of this year despite no good reason being provided by the authorities. In fact, the government itself does not seem to believe in the ban on X, as everyone from the prime minister to state ministries has apparently been using VPNs to continue to access and post on the platform. When the state itself has double standards about these restrictions, how does it expect the people to respect them?

This is the main reason why VPNs have suddenly become so mainstream. Once the purview of those attempting to bypass censorship or access morally repugnant services, they are now being adopted by ordinary users as well. Now, even those who simply want to share a multimedia message on WhatsApp or would like to find out what the world is talking about on popular social media platforms must use a VPN to tunnel through to the global internet. Therefore, while the government may blame VPNs for slowing down the internet, it should acknowledge that its own policies have pushed people down this path. The people deserve more than clueless representatives gaslighting them for suffering poor internet connectivity. At the very least, there needs to be much greater transparency about what is being done to the internet, especially since it is being done without the public's input.

Street protests

Dr Niaz Murtaza

The amazing ease with which street protests in Bangladesh and earlier Sri Lanka toppled hated regimes has left many Pakistanis envious as to why we can't do the same. But we were perhaps the first regional state to do so twice — angry protests in 1969, oddly most intense in the very cities that gained most from his elitist progress, toppled Ayub Khan's regime and in 1977 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's. Protests weakened Ziaul Haq and Pervez Musharraf to cause their fall later.

The Carnegie Global Protest Tracker lists over 700 street protests in 147 states since 2017. Street protests now rival armed struggles as the main way of opposing and toppling regimes. These global and our own events raise the issue of what street protests achieve. Nearly two-thirds of the 700-plus protests led to no policy or regime change; about half lasted a week or less and attracted less than 10,000 people. Those that led to some policy changes were usually spearheaded by organised entities with a clear agenda. Spontaneous protests led by unorganised groups fizzle out, without lasting change.

Less than 10 toppled regimes — and the media labels them as revolution. But the iconic revolutions in Russia, France and China had three outcomes: people's power (armed or street) toppled long-ruling, autocratic regimes; more crucially there was a change in the political or economic ideological system from an elitist to a pro-masses one, for example, from capitalism to communism or monarchy to one-party rule/ democracy; the old order of the army underpinning autocracy

too collapsed. However, even those street protests that topple regimes usually don't lead to the other two outcomes. Iran's revolution didn't lead to a pro-masses system. Some states, such as those that witnessed the Arab Spring, fell into chaos (Libya and Yemen) while Egypt soon reverted to autocracy. Thus, street protests can at best topple autocrats but don't ensure good governance. That only emerges if those leading the protests can convert themselves into sustainable social or political movements with strong egalitarian agendas and management capacities. Revolutions or protests may act as the sledgehammer that breaks the mighty rock of autocracy. But to craft the rock pieces into refined good governance structures, societies need the chisels of social movements.

This will also be the challenge for students in Bangladesh, which had sustained economic stability and growth but not equity under Hasina Wajed. Do they have a clear agenda to do better than her? It is instructive to note that they initially started with the single-point agenda of job quotas, which Hasina had scrapped but the courts reinstated. So, in starting to protest, they oddly had little focus on her autocratic actions, including rigging in polls and a crackdown on the media and opposition. Gradually, they expanded their agenda but their future vision is still unclear.

So, while Hasina met her rightful end, the country faces future risks. The Awami League was the centre-left grassroots party, which became autocratic over time while Khaleda Zia's party is a right-wing entity sans a grassroots presence and was cre-

ated by an army general. With the Awami League in disarray, more right-wing politics could surge, unless the students quickly provide a liberal alternative, which is a tough ask.

Why do street protests no longer emerge to topple our inept regimes even though they are worse than the Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan ones? There are many reasons. The earlier toppling of multiple autocrats via protests didn't deliver able rule. So, there is fatigue and dejection. Also, the state crushes pro-r-essive social movements and encourages reactionary ideas and groups that divert focus from egalitarian ideas. Finally, there is the veiled and evo-ling nature of our autocracy which doesn't let anger build against one regime or face. Our civilians last four to five years; even the real establishment autocrats retire after three to six years at the top. This allows them to pin blame on past villains. So, the case against retired Lt-Gen Faiz Hameed is being depicted as a one-off, while the reality is that he had the backing of top individuals.

Such autocracy is the root cause of our key problems. But one-off street protests will not help demolish such shadowy, shifting autocracy. We need strong and sustained social movements that use protests as just one tool. The rise of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee under the brave lead of Mahrang Baloch is progress in this regard as it has emerged from and addresses the survival issues of most marginalised groups. Similar grassroots groups in other regions coordinating with each other are our best hope for egalitarian rule. -- Courtesy Dawn

The Taliban concern

Touqir Hussain

Regardless of who has ruled Afghanistan, it has always been a problem neighbour. The Pakistani establishment may have thought the problem would be solved with the Afghan Taliban's return to power but it has worsened. Afghanistan has become both a critical foreign policy challenge and a serious domestic policy concern.

There are many issues between the Taliban's Afghanistan and Pakistan but the main point of contention is Kabul's harbouring of the TTP, whose acts of terrorism against Chinese nationals and projects are hurting Pakistan's most important relationship. Their alleged nexus with Baloch insurgents and extremist groups in former Fata threaten Pakistan's internal security and its already fragile development prospects.

Diplomacy, economic pressure, military action, and threats of isolation have not moved the Taliban to act against the TTP. Their advice to Pakistan to talk to the Taliban who, in time, TTP is an attempt to deflect pressure from themselves. They know from their own experience that such groups do not believe in talks, unless held on their terms.

There are complex reasons for their lack of action. There are ideological links between the Taliban and TTP as well as historical reasons. Even during the Raj, Afghanistan offered protection to any Pakhtun fleeing Pakhtun-majority areas in the subcontinent.

The Taliban lack both the political will and capacity to act against the TTP. They are worried about domestic threats and fissures within their own ranks. The TTP reportedly enjoy strategic affinity with the Islamic State-Khorasan and could merge with it if threatened

by the Taliban, taking disaffected Taliban members with them.

The Taliban may even benefit from the TTP's presence in Afghanistan. They treat them and other militant groups operating from Afghan soil as allies to meet potential external aggression and obtain concessions — recognition, commercial ties, etc — from regional countries. The group is the Taliban's leverage against Pakistan and Washington.

Did our security establishment miss something? They failed to see how much Afghanistan, and indeed Pakistan, changed — following the overthrow of the monarchy in 1973 — because of the Soviet invasion, America's two Afghan wars and the war on terrorism, and Pakistan's strategic ambitions. And how Pakistan's jihadist currents mingled with the militant groups and transnational terrorist networks produced by these wars and the global Islamist revival. All this led to the creation of the Taliban who, in time, became the flagship of the extremist network in the region.

As an insurgent group, the Taliban's dependency on Pakistan gave Islamabad false hope that they would remain compliant even as a government. It may have worked the first time but Pakistan incurred reputational and diplomatic damage for questionable benefits. Much has changed since.

The Afghanistan of 2021 was not the same as when the Taliban first came to power. The Taliban have greater internal challenges now and more international acceptance, and thus different priorities. Nor is it the same Pakistan, which is struggling on multiple fronts. This has necessitated a different approach by the Taliban

towards Pakistan and the region. Thanks to their shrewd diplomacy, countries, including India and Iran who opposed the Taliban the first time, have been anxious to connect with them this time. The Taliban have been successfully cultivating a network of allies including China.

The Taliban won't act against the TTP. Pakistan itself will have to do it. Kinetic measures are necessary but not enough. They should be an adjunct to political action that must be taken to address the grievance of disaffected groups among the Pakhtun and Baloch communities. The TTP needs to be politically isolated from these communities, which can only be done by addressing their grievances via increased socioeconomic opportunities, reduced political marginalisation, and better governance.

Pakistan's body politic has been hollowed out by decades of authoritarian rule and deformed democracy, leading to a weakened institutional architecture. With institutions crumbling, the rule of law and social stability have been degraded and are preyed upon by extremist forces. But the state is lacking in political will, moral authority, and effective instruments of law and order, resulting in the strengthening of the extremist infrastructure.

A weakened Pakistan will enhance the Taliban's leverage by exposing the country to instability and extremist influences. Pakistan's struggle with the Taliban's Afghanistan must begin at home. Pakistan has been fighting terrorism but not the groups or extremist societal attitudes that inspire it. That must change. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

IFAD strengthens partnership with Pakistan for food security

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is reaffirming its commitment to collaborate with Pakistan in reducing rural poverty and improving food security.

This comes as the country faces ongoing challenges from climate change, impacting its agricultural sector, said in IFAD press release issued here.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is determined to continue its partnership with Pakistan, focusing on reducing rural poverty and enhancing food security.

Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha, IFAD's new country director for Pakistan, highlighted this commitment during her recent introduction to Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi.

Da Rocha emphasized that the collaboration between IFAD and Pakistan has been strong for over 40 years, with both parties working together on inclusive rural development.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan meets with the Sectoral Council, urging comprehensive reforms to boost Pakistan's Gems and Jewelry industry.

Commerce minister emphasizes reform, growth in Pakistan's gems, Jewelry Sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Tuesday emphasized on reform and growth in Pakistan's gems and jewelry Sector for sustainable growth in country's economy.

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan reaffirmed the government's commitment to revitalizing Pakistan's gems and jewelry industry during a key meeting with the Sectoral Council for Gems and Jewelry, said a press release issued here.

The meeting, which gathered virtually, senior officials from the public and private sectors, focused on enhancing the sector's export potential and aligning with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision to make this billion-dollar industry a cornerstone of Pakistan's economy.

Minister Jam Kamal highlighted the Prime Minister's active engagement with the sector, noting that PM Shehbaz Sharif has personally convened three to four meetings over the past few months to address the industry's challenges and opportunities.

The Minister underscored the government's dedication to this sector, emphasizing that the policy-making process must be driven by input from private sector stakeholders to ensure its success.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the Council, Salman Hanif, pinpointed regulatory barriers, particularly amendments to SRO 760, as critical hurdles impeding the industry's growth.

Hanif argued for the regularization of the sector to unlock its full potential. He stressed that without addressing these regulatory challenges,

Ignite – NICAT Pakistan hosts Asia-Pacific's first Meta Llama Pitchathon

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Incubation Center for Aerospace Technologies (NICAT), in partnership with Meta, the Ministry of IT & Telecommunication, and Ignite National Technology Fund, hosted the first-ever Meta Llama Pitchathon in the Asia-Pacific region.

This groundbreaking event highlighted the tremendous potential of artificial intelligence (AI) by applying Meta's cutting-edge Llama 2 and Llama 3 models, said a news release.

On the occasion, Minister of State for IT & Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said, "This Pitchathon is a testament to Pakistan's growing capabilities in AI and technological innovation. The government is dedicated to creating an environment that nurtures talent and encourages the development of cutting-edge solutions that address both local and global challenges. Events like these are crucial in our journey to position Pakistan as a leader in the global digital economy."



RAWALPINDI: Workers busy in making wooden items on their workplace at Banni chowk area in the city.

PR to outsource more trains through transparent bidding process

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has planned to outsource the commercial management of additional trains to private entities under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model through a transparent and competitive bidding process.

The basic purpose of outsourcing the trains is to provide better facilities to the passengers and generate more revenue for the department, official sources in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

The department initially invited tenders for this outsourcing initiative, but only three companies participated, offering bids below the benchmarked amount, they added.

As a result, they said Pakistan Railways deemed it unfeasible to proceed with these firms under the rules and regulations set by the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA). Consequently, the department plans to re-advertise the tenders soon.

They said a committee within Pakistan Railways observed that the bids submitted in the initial tender process were lacking in both technical and financial aspects, which would have resulted in a lack of competitiveness.



HYDERABAD: Members of Anjuman-e-Tajran Chicken Market are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Tower Market in Hyderabad.

LCCI, UPTIB sign MoU to boost economic cooperation

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the UK-Pakistan Trade & Investment Board (UPTIB) have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen economic ties between the business communities of Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The agreement marks a significant step towards enhancing trade, investment, and economic collaboration between the two countries.

The MoU was signed by LCCI President Kashif Anwar and CEO-Pakistan of UPTIB Tajammal Hussain at the LCCI premises in Lahore.

In his address, Kashif Anwar expressed his optimism about the partnership,

stating, "This MoU is a significant milestone in our efforts to enhance bilateral trade relations with the United Kingdom. By facilitating mutual economic cooperation, we are opening doors for business communities to explore new opportunities and strengthen existing ties. The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry is committed to support our members in every possible way to achieve sustainable economic growth."

The partnership aims to foster mutual economic cooperation, promote business opportunities and facilitate trade in goods and services among the members of both organizations. Under the terms of the agreement,

ICCI President presents Rs1 m cheque to Arshad Nadeem

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Tuesday presented a cheque of Rs1 million to Arshad Nadeem, Pakistan's javelin superstar.

Addressing the ceremony held at ICCI on Tuesday, Arshad Nadeem attributed his success to hard work and dedication, stating that there was a long journey behind his achievement.

He vowed to maintain his performance in upcoming events.

SCCI chief inaugurates Facilitation Desk for provision of grant to SMEs

PESHAWAR (APP): Fuad Ishaq, president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Tuesday inaugurated a Facilitation Desk for provision of a grant to small and medium scale businesses and industries announced by International Organization of Migration.

The initiative aims to facilitate business community regarding availing of a cash grant of International Organization of Migration (IOM) for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), said in a statement here.

It is mentioned here that the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a UN body, has announced a cash grant for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through their Enterprise Development Fund (EDF).

This grant is for business expansion, boosting productivity and especially creating jobs.

President of the WCCI Peshawar Azra Jamshed, members, women entrepreneurs, members of the business community and others were present on the occasion.

Fuad Ishaq, President

KP gets first practicing specialists in diagnosis of Autism

PESHAWAR (APP): In a commendable development, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa got first practicing specialists in diagnosis of Autism, a complex neuro-developmental disorder among children, registering constant surge in the province during the last few years. Ms. Rutaba Arif and M. Kashif Khan both serving as Speech Language Pathologist and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapist, respectively at Center for Excellence for Special Children with Autism in Peshawar have qualified as 'Practicing ADOS-2 Specialists'.

"The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-Second Edition (ADOS-2) is a standardized assessment tool that helps in diagnoses of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in children and adults," apprises Rutaba Arif. Talking with APP, Rutaba informed that Ados-2 is designed to obtain information in the areas of communication, reciprocal social interactions, restricted and repetitive behaviors associated with a diagnosis of ASD. "It can only be used by ados-2 certified clinicians," she added.

Due to lack of ADOS-2 Specialists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, parents had to take their children to Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore for diagnosis of autism that was very difficult exercise due to physical stress and financial burden as well.

After qualifying as ADOS-2 Specialists, both Rutaba and Kashif can provide diagnosis services to the autism patients in Peshawar. It merits an insertion that Autism is an overlooked neuro developmental disorder among children and is on rise in the country with very scanty cure options.

According to rough estimates by experts in curing autism, there are around 500,000 number of autistic children in Pakistan and 150,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In most parts of the country, autism patients are in dire need of treatment from qualified therapists in diagnosis and treatment. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there is an institute in the name of Center for Excellence for Special Children with Autism in Peshawar having the capacity of providing rehabilitation.

Isolation Ward and PCR Lab established at PHQ Hospital Gilgit to tackle Monkeypox

GILGIT (APP): On the orders of Secretary Health Gilgit-Baltistan, Dildar Malik, an isolation ward and PCR lab have been established at PHQ Hospital Gilgit to tackle the expected cases of monkeypox.

According to a statement released by the spokesperson of the Health Department Gilgit-Baltistan, Secretary Health GB visited PHQ Hospital Gilgit on Tuesday. On this occasion, Secretary Health

said that such "monkeypox isolation wards" are being established in all RHQ hospitals, Shaheed Syed Rahman Hospital and DHQ hospitals. The task will be completed by tomorrow evening.

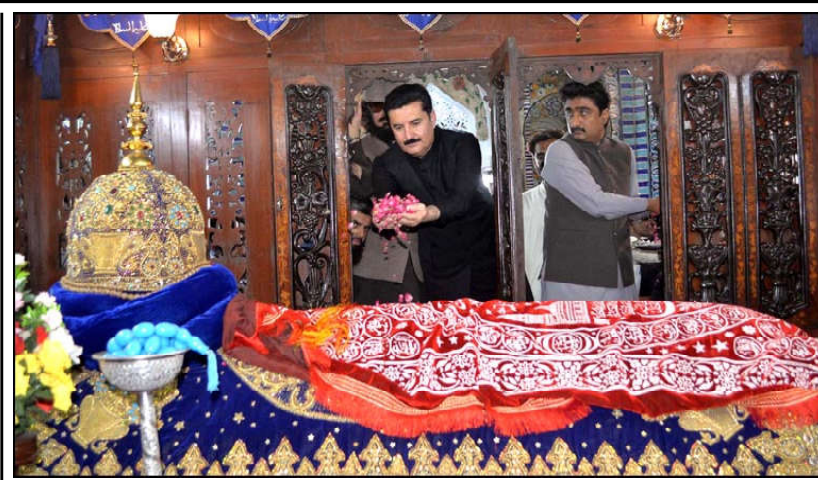
Secretary Health said that no stone will be left unturned to prevent the spread of monkeypox in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Screening centers will also be established at airports and bus stands in Gilgit-Baltistan.

ANF seizes over 10 kg drugs; arrests a drug dealer

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an operation in Sialkot managed to recover over 10 kg drugs, weapons and arrested a drug dealer, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that in a joint operation conducted in Tehsil Daska, Sialkot by ANF and Punjab Police, 10.2 kg drugs, two motorcycles and weapons were recovered.



HYDERABAD: Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi lays floral wreath on the shrine of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai on the concluding day of 281th urs celebrations.

Hearing of money laundering case against Pervaiz Elahi others adjourned till Sep 19

LAHORE (Online): Special Central Court (SCC) Lahore has adjourned till September 19 hearing of money laundering case against Former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and others.

Money laundering case against Pervaiz Elahi and others came up for hearing in SCC Lahore Tuesday.

FIA filed challan in the court against Pervaiz Elahi, Moonis Elahi, Zara Elahi and others. Under this challan other 8 accused including Moonis Elahi have been declared proclaimed offenders.

Pervaiz Elahi, Zara Elahi and other accused appeared in the court and signed the rolls.

Aamir Saeed Ran advocate appeared on behalf of PTI leader in the court.

During the hearing of the case, Pervaiz Elahi while moving to the judge said he is indisposed.

The court directed him to sit in court room.

Counsel for former CM Punjab said Zara Elahi is burqa clad (veiled) lady. Application for her permanent exemption from attendance has been filed. She will come when indictment is framed against her.

The court summoned arguments from the respondents on exemption plea of Zara Elahi.

07 dead, 1397 injured in 1292 road traffic crashes in Punjab

LAHORE: The Emergency Services Department (ESD) responded to 1292 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. In these RTCs, 07 people died, whereas 1397 were injured. Out of these, 585 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 812 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

The majority (76%) involved Motorbikes, therefore effective enforcement of traffic laws and lane discipline are essential to reduce the increasing number of road traffic crashes.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 764 drivers, 50 underage drivers, 154 pedestrians, and 486 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 261 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 282 persons placing the Provincial Capital at the top of the list followed by Faisalabad 99 in with 104 victims and at third Multan with 80 RTCs and 79 victims.

The details further reveal that 1404 victims were affected by road traffic crashes including 1152 males & 252 females.

PFA unearths counterfeit ghee unit, discards 4,800kg hazardous ghee.

LAHORE: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has unearthed a counterfeit ghee manufacturing unit on Jaranwala Road and discarded a huge quantity of unwholesome food including 4,800kg hazardous ghee, 375kg caustic soda, 150 litre loose cooking oil and 125kg bleaching powder.

Meanwhile, the PFA enforcement team also seized 1,700 counterfeit cartons of famous edible oil brands, 775kg packing material, four storage tanks and a packing machine during a raid.

This was informed by PFA Director General Muhammad Asim Javaid while talking to the media at PFA Headquarters. He said that acting on the tip-off, the PFA raided a unit and caught the adulteration mafia red-handed while an FIR has been registered against the culprits in the respective police station, leading to the arrest of people from the spot.

He said that ghee was extracted from the filth and fat of animals. He said that germs-infested ghee was stored in rusty tanks and packed in the counterfeit packaging of popular brands to deceive customers.

He further said that FBO had mentioned the wrong addresses on the labelling of ghee packaging.

The food business operator also failed to present the necessary records to the raiding team, such as an agreement with a bio-diesel or soap manufacturing company, he said.



PESHAWAR: Members of Women Teachers Welfare Association Hayatabad are holding protest demonstration for their rights, outside KPK Assembly in Peshawar.

Photo exhibition on independence movement organized at DPS

RAWALPINDI (INP): A photo exhibition, book stall and documentary show on independence movement was organized by Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Nazariya Pakistan Trust Lahore at Divisional Public School Rawalpindi on Tuesday.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Headquarters Rawalpindi, Ms. Zonaira Aftab along with Deputy Director Muhammad Shakoor was the Chief Guest of the inaugural ceremony.

Addressing the participants of exhibition, Ms. Zonaira Aftab said that it was extremely important for the younger generation to thoroughly study the history of Pakistan so that they can understand how this country was established and who played a key role in its creation.

Federal govt dividing people instead of uniting them: Saif

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Saif on Tuesday blamed the federal government for dividing people instead of uniting them.

He stated that KP was producing the cheapest electricity in Pakistan which was being sold at exorbitant prices from the federal government, adding that people of KP were being deprived of any relief in power bills despite producing maximum electricity.

He blamed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz president Nawaz Sharif for announcing reduction in power bills by saying that an MNA elected on Form-47 can't announce lowering in rates of electricity.

He criticised the government for selective development in Punjab, imploring that small provinces needed the most share of all development as they had been left behind by large spending in Punjab.



MULTAN: DG NADRA Major Tanveer, DG MDA Rana Saleem, DC Multan Waseem Hamed Sindhu and ADC Finance Mubashir Rehman called on the Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani. Former member Provincial Assembly Dr. Javed Siddiqui is also present on this occasion.

International News

Egypt's Sisi, Blinken discuss ways to move forward in Gaza ceasefire negotiations

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met in Cairo on Tuesday to discuss ways to move forward in negotiations on a ceasefire in Gaza, the Egyptian presidency said.

Sisi warned of the risk of the Gaza war expanding regionally in a way "difficult to imagine".

"The ceasefire in Gaza must be the beginning of broader international recognition of the Palestinian state and the implementation of the two-state solution, as this is the basic guarantor of stability in the region," he added.

Blinken was in Cairo pushing for areas of possible progress on a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal in talks planned for later this week, with major areas of dispute left unresolved.

With the unabated strikes by Israeli military killing at least 40 more Palestinians across the Gaza Strip taking the death toll to at least 40,139 and a Palestinian group announcing the resumption of bombings inside Israel after many years, there are few signs of conciliation on the ground.

"In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel accepts the bridging proposal — that he supports it," Blinken told reporters in Tel Aviv.

"It's now incumbent on Hamas to do the same, and then the parties, with the help of the mediators — the United States, Egypt and Qatar — have to come together and complete the process of reaching clear understandings about how they'll implement the commitments that they've

made under this agreement." Despite US expressions of optimism and Netanyahu's office describing the meeting as positive, both Israel and Hamas have signalled that any deal will be difficult.

Hamas accused Netanyahu of "thwarting the mediators' efforts" and Turkiye said Hamas envoys had told it that US officials were "painting an overly optimistic picture" despite their clear stance of abiding by the earlier understanding and rejection of the new conditions being set by the US.

Ahead of talks in Qatar last week, Hamas had called on mediators, rather than holding more negotiations, to implement a framework outlined in late May by US President Joe Biden. After the Doha meeting, the US submitted what mediators called a "bridging proposal".



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelaty, in El-Alamein, Egypt.

India, Japan agree to bolster defence and security ties

NEW DELHI: India and Japan agreed on Tuesday to bolster defence and security ties and backed a "common strategic vision" of a free and open Indo-Pacific - a region where both countries have troubled relations with China.

Foreign and defence ministers of both countries held talks under the so-called 'India-Japan 2+2' dialogue in New Delhi, the third such bilateral engagement in five years.

The ministers discussed progress on the transfer of battleship communication antennas and related technology from Japan to India, according to a joint statement.

The move would mark Japan's first export of defence equipment and technology transfer to New Delhi under a 2015 pact, as Tokyo seeks to strengthen its defence industry.

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Saudi King Salman chairs cabinet meeting, state news agency says

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz chaired a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, state media said, for the first time since a royal decree issued by him on Aug. 8 allowing the cabinet to convene in the absence of the king, crown prince or both.

Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman chaired the Aug. 13 cabinet session. The 88-year-old king of the world's biggest oil exporter, a major US ally in the Middle East, received medical care for lung inflammation in May.

Fears for children's health as polio re-emerges in Gaza

DEIR EL BALAH: In Gaza, a mother worries that her month-old son, Mohammed, could be infected with polio after the Palestinian health ministry confirmed the first case in the enclave on Friday, ending a 25-year period in which the strip was polio-free. Just three days after his birth, Ghada al Ghandour's son Mohammed started developing skin rashes. "He had skin rashes as if he was burnt," she said. A doctor told her there were no

creams to treat her child. She later brought him to Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir el Balah in central Gaza to seek a diagnosis and treatment. The rash fueled his mother's fears that other symptoms and diseases could follow due to a lack of hygiene and medical supplies in Gaza after more than 10 months of conflict.

In a statement, the Palestinian health ministry confirmed the first case of polio in the city of Deir el Balah had been detected in a 10-month-old baby who had not been vaccinated.

Russia's FSB detains scientist on suspicion of treason

MOSCOW: Russia's FSB security service has detained a scientist in Moscow on suspicion of state treason, the Interfax news agency reported on Tuesday.

The scientist allegedly carried out distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks on critical infrastructure on behalf of Ukrainian security services, it quoted the FSB as saying.

Biden says 'I gave my best' as he passes torch to Harris

WASHINGTON: An emotional US President Joe Biden passed the torch to Democratic nominee Kamala Harris with a hug on Monday, saying he gave everything for his country in a bittersweet farewell speech at the party's convention in Chicago.

"America, America, I gave my best to you," the 81-year-old Biden said, quoting a patriotic hymn during a nearly hour-long address that ran through his achievements while urging voters to back his vice president against Donald Trump in November.

Harris joined him on stage after the speech and the pair embraced, as the crowd gave Biden a rapturous reception following his stunning decision less than a month ago to drop out of the

2024 White House race. In a remarkable turnaround, Harris has reemerged the party and wiped out Republican rival Trump's lead in the polls, but Biden insisted that he was not bitter about stepping aside. Instead, as he contemplates the imminent end of a five-decade political career, he said that he had done what he thought best to ensure that his nemesis Trump does not return to the Oval Office.

"I love the job, but I love my country more. I love my country more," said Biden. "And all this talk about how I'm angry at all those people who said I should step down — that's not true." Both Biden and Harris appeared to wipe away a tear as the US leader won a huge four-minute ovation when he first took to the stage.

Philippines to host a US visa processing center for up to 300 Afghans resettling in America

MANILA: The Philippines has agreed to a request by the United States to temporarily host a U.S. immigrant visa processing center for a limited number of Afghan nationals aspiring to resettle in America, the treaty allies announced Tuesday. The Philippine government's approval of the request, which initially faced local concerns over potential security and legal issues, reflects how relations between Manila and Washington have deepened under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who took office in 2022. The Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said the agreement was undergoing final domestic procedures and needs to be finally ratified by Marcos before it takes effect. It did not provide other details, including how many Afghans would be allowed to temporarily stay in the Philippines at any time while their special immigrant visas for resettlement to the U.S. are being completed.

A senior Philippine official, however, told The Associated Press that only 150 to 300 applicants would be accommodated in the Philippines under the "one-time" deal. The official who had knowledge of the negotiations agreed to speak on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to speak publicly. Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Assistant Secretary Teresita Daza said Afghan nationals should secure a visa to enter the Philippines and would be subjected to "full security vetting." Each visa applicant can stay not more than 59 days. The U.S. government will shoulder the costs for the stay of the Afghan nationals, including food, housing, security and medical and transportation expenses, Daza said. She added that the U.S. government and the International Organization for Migration as manager of the unspecified facility where the Afghans visa applicants would be billeted.

India's top court orders medical safety task force after doctor rape protests

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered a national task force to examine how to bolster security for healthcare workers after the "horrific" rape and murder of a doctor sparked medical strikes and furious protests.

The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata on August 9 has stoked nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women.

Doctors' associations from government-run hospitals in many cities across India have launched multiple strikes that cut non-essential services, with protests in

their second week. Demonstrators marched through Kolkata on Tuesday, holding up signs demanding "justice", while the country's top court issued orders in the capital New Delhi.

"The brutality of the sexual assault and the nature of the crime have shocked the conscience of the nation," the three-judge bench said in its order, calling the details "horrific".

Chief Justice D. Y. Chandrachud read out the order, which called for the formation of a "national task force" of top doctors to prepare a plan to prevent violence in healthcare facilities and draw up an "enforceable national protocol" for safe working conditions.

Iran closes centres linked to Germany, which summons ambassador

DUBAI: Iran's judiciary has closed two branches of organisations linked to Germany due to "illegal activities and financial fraud", the judiciary's Mizan news agency said, in a move protested by Berlin with the summoning of the Iranian ambassador.

Mizan published pictures on Tuesday of security forces removing the banner of the German Language Institute of Tehran, which is linked to the German embassy.

"Additionally, there have been reports of violations by other German-affiliated centres and investigations in this matter are ongoing," Mizan added.

Ishaq Day says United efforts, youth's hard work inevitable to make Pakistan an economic power

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Tuesday said that the nation's united efforts and youth's excellence in education and innovation were inevitable to develop Pakistan as an economic power.

"I believe that Pakistan was created in the name of Allah. This can never fail. It has to prosper. It has to develop and lead Muslim Ummah one day. You have the potential... If we put in our efforts, we can become an economic power. Once we become an economic power, we will lead Muslim Ummah," he said addressing the Youth Convention held here.

Advising the youth to avail education opportunities in classrooms as well as outside, opt for new technologies, and explore new avenues, he also asked the youth to beware of the enemies within which were

poised to destroy the country.

"The world knows that being a missile power, you can lead the 57-state Muslim world. Pakistan as a nuclear power is not acceptable to some global powers. They can't defeat Pakistan through conventional methods but they can patronise and promote their stooges to destroy Pakistan," he commented.

He told the gathering of vice-chancellors, students and educationists that during the 2013-2018 PML-N government, Pakistan was projected to become a member of G-20 nations as the country was taking off that time with 2% food inflation, 3.7% consumer price index, 6% growth and the most stable currency in South Asia.

He said the PDM government was aimed at saving Pakistan as its enemies desired to see it default.

Ishaq Dar said

Pakistan's youth had the potential to become change makers but it required unity, a continuous learning process and setting aside hatred, extremism, and personal biases.

The deputy prime minister said during his visit to Balochistan on Independence Day, he was told that some disgruntled Baloch youth were involved in terror activities.

"I believe, no one can be disgruntled with his own motherland. We should resolve the issues amicably. There is no room for terrorism in the name of disgruntlement. This is not acceptable," he remarked.

The deputy prime minister said that the government was extending facilities to the youth and Special Investment Facilitation Council was also focusing on their empowerment as they could become a source of investment in education, skill development and technology.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar delivering remarks as Chief Guest at the Inaugural session of National Youth Convention.

PM reiterates Pakistan's support for Palestinians' right to self-determination

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination and strongly condemned Israel's barbaric actions against innocent Palestinians in Gaza.

The prime minister, in a meeting with outgoing Ambassador of Palestine Ambassador Ahmed Jawad A.A. Rabei who called on him here, said Israel's barbarism since October 7, 2023, led to the heart-wrenching killing of over 40,000 innocent Palestinians, including women and children, and more than 90,000 injured.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment and support for efforts to find a just and lasting resolution to the Palestine issue through a two-state solution with the creation of an independent state of Palestine with pre-1967 borders and Al Quds as its capital, in accordance with relevant UN resolutions.

Ambassador Jawad thanked the prime minister for his support for the Palestinian cause as well as for the hospitality extended to

him during his five-year tenure.

He lauded Pakistan's historic and consistent stance on Palestine and its contribution to the international efforts for peace and stability in the region.

The ambassador thanked the Government of Pakistan for providing much-needed humanitarian assistance and offering scholarships to Palestinian medical students to complete their studies in Pakistan.

The prime minister wished the Palestinian ambassador success in his future endeavors.

During the meeting, the initial results of the competition were presented to the committee. A total of 169 books were received in various categories, including those written in the national language Urdu, regional and foreign languages. In addition, 117 articles were submitted on the topic "The Education System of the State in the Light of Seerat-un-Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him)."

After a thorough review of the scores and recommendations provided by the judges' committee, the Apex Committee finalized the results. The distinguished works would be recognized in a special ceremony next month.

The Apex Committee, comprising educationists and Islamic scholars, convened at the Ministry under the chairmanship of former Council of Islamic Ideology Chairman, Dr. Qibla Ayaz. The meeting was attended by other committee members, including Dr. Jamila Shoukat, Dr. Riaz Majeed, Dr. Yousuf Feroqi, Dr. Muhammad Baqir Khan Khakwani, Dr. Muhammad Sajjad, Dr. Ikram-ul-Haq Yasin, Dr. Mohiuddin Hashmi, Dr. Sahibzada Sajid-ur-Rehman, Dr. Munazza Batool, and Dr. Ayesha Qurat-ul-Ain.

Religious Affairs ministry finalizes results of National Seerat, Naat Competition

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Apex Committee of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has finalized the results of the National Seerat, Naat, and Articles Competition. The distinguished contributors in the field of Seerat writing will be honored with awards on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal next month.

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ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of Palestine Ahmad Jawad A.A. Rabei called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PML-N leads country towards economic prosperity: Aqeel

ISLAMABAD (APP): Barrister Aqeel Malik, the government's spokesperson on legal affairs, said on Tuesday that the as well-established and experienced political party, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has the capability to lead the country out of economic challenges. Talking to a private news channel, he said that when PML-N took charge, the country was facing the toughest economic challenges.

The government

chalked out the best economic policies, he said, while adding that the continuation of these policies will lead the country towards stability.

The first and foremost priority of the government was to reduce the inflation and give relief to the commoner, he added.

The Chief Minister of Punjab announced an electricity relief package offering a subsidy of Rs 14 per unit for customers using up to 500 units in August and September.

Governor KP attends 281st Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi attended the 281st Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai in Hyderabad/Bhit Shah. He paid homage to the Sufi saint and emphasized the importance of promoting love, brotherhood, and peace.

Governor Kundi said that Sindh is the land that has given the message of peace to the world. He added that Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai is a Sufi saint who has spread the message of love and brotherhood globally.

He emphasized that such gatherings promote

peace and harmony in the country. The Governor laid floral wreaths at the shrine, offered special prayers for national security and development, and listened to the traditional raag at the shrine.

Speaking to media representatives, Governor Kundi mentioned that he had also organized a conference at the Governor's House in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on August 13 to discuss the personalities of Khushal Khan Khattak and Allama Iqbal. He appreciated the Sindh government and Provincial Minister for Culture Syed Zulfikar Ali Shah for organizing the Urs celebrations.

IGP reviews overall crime Situation, crime prevention efforts in federal capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): According to details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir

reviewed the overall crime situation and crime prevention measures in the federal capital. He provided necessary instructions to the police officers regarding the arrest of suspects in robbery, murder, street crime, and other cases, as well as obtaining evidence for ongoing investigations.



Rizvi chaired a crime control meeting at the Central Police Office (CPO) Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

He said that DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, SSP Operations Arslan Shahzaib, and other senior police officers were present at the meeting.

IGP reviewed the overall crime situation and crime prevention measures in the federal capital. He provided necessary instructions to the police officers regarding the arrest of suspects in robbery, murder, street crime, and other cases, as well as obtaining evidence for ongoing investigations.

IGP also issued orders to senior police officers to pay special attention to serious crimes, street crime, and crime hotspots.

He emphasized that protecting the lives, property, and honor of citizens in Islamabad is the highest priority for the Islamabad Police.

All police officers should ensure effective patrolling of the city and counter criminal elements, he added.



Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), met with the delegation of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation at BISP headquarters Islamabad.

Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi says International Symposium on Ombudsmanship, Citizen's Rights to be held in I'abad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, Wafaqi



Mohtasib speaking with the Media Persons, in an informal meeting, stated that the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) in cooperation with the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat is or-

ganizing soon an international symposium on the Citizen's Rights at regional and international Ombuds bodies. The UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly have also been invited to this symposium.

The theme of the symposium involves meaningful discussion on measures to enhance the capacity of the Ombuds institutions worldwide and shall highlight the role of Ombudsmanship in realising the goals and targets of the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This will also be an opportunity to showcase Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and touristic attractions to the international participants.

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Education & health are on top of my priority list: CM Maryam

LAHORE: "Heartfelt congratulations to all position holders, toppers, their parents and teachers," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif in her speech at the Award Giving Ceremony held in the honor of position holders of all 09 Education Boards of Punjab. She added, "The special guests of today's event are these position holder children who are sitting in front of me." She lauded their stellar performance despite unavailability of required facilities, environment and resources. She highlighted, "I salute these children for achieving such great success, bringing great results and making the name of the country and nation bright."

Madam Chief Minister said, "I was eagerly waiting to meet the position holders children." She added, "On my way home yesterday, I was thinking that Shahbaz Sharif started a laptop scheme in 2011, he also sent me to distribute them among talented students, then students who came on merit were given a guard of honor."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif called up Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat and said, "These position holders are crown of our heads, if we do not give them guard of honor, who else will give it to them." She added, "These children achieved high positions despite unfavorable conditions, I congratulate all those who played a role in their success."

Madam Chief Minister said, "As a mother is happy, I am happy on the success of my children." She recalled, "I have been to jail, there were cases, but I never had tears in my eyes, but seeing the position holder children receiving guard of honor have brought tears in my eyes." She highlighted, "I salute to your parents who have brought you to this point."



MULTAN: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz interacts with flood affected people during her visit to the flood hit areas of Rajanpur, near Multan.

ISSI hosts launch of Naz Parveen's book "Xinjiang ke Khushal Uyghur"

ISLAMABAD (APP): The China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPCS) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a book launch for "Xinjiang ke Khushal Uyghur," authored by renowned columnist and author Naz Parveen.

The event was graced by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed as the chief guest. Distinguished speakers included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, Prof. Zamir Ahmed Awan, founding chairperson of the Global Silk Route Research Alliance, Professor Dr. Azhar Ahmed, Independent Analyst, and Nabila Jaffer, Research Analyst and Lead of the China Program at the Institute of Regional Studies Islamabad, a news release said.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood expressed gratitude to the guests for attending the book launch. He highlighted three key aspects: Firstly, the unique

and cherished relationship between Pakistan and China — marked by strategic mutual trust and mutual support, nurtured by successive generations, and strengthened by transformational initiatives like CPEC.

Secondly, Naz Parveen, the author and director of China Window, has made notable contributions through her writings and facilitated deeper understanding of China's culture and traditions. Thirdly, this book contains her detailed account based on observations and experiences particularly in Kashgar and Urumqi, and debunks many of the motivated narratives emanating from the West regarding the treatment of Uyghurs in China's Xinjiang region.

Prof. Zamir Ahmed Awan, emphasized the significance of cultural diplomacy in understanding China and lauded the author for her accessible and engaging writing style. He

elaborated on the rich history and cultural heritage of China's Xinjiang region, noting how the book captures the essence of this dynamic area and encourages greater appreciation of Chinese culture among readers in Pakistan.

Professor Dr. Azhar Ahmed commended the author for her achievement in publishing such a detailed and vivid travelogue. He praised the book's ability to transport readers into the heart of Xinjiang, making them feel as though they were experiencing the journey alongside the author. He also stressed the importance of such works in dispelling negative perceptions and promoting a deeper understanding of China's cultural landscape.

Nabila Jaffer expressed her admiration for the book's imaginative and artistic narrative, which she found to be a refreshing departure from typical political discourses. She highlighted the book's emphasis on personal experiences and cultural exchanges, which she believes are crucial for fostering stronger ties between Pakistan and China. Naz Parveen, the author, shared her motivation for writing the book, which stemmed from her experiences at China Window in Peshawar and her desire to counter the negative narratives surrounding China's treatment of Uyghur Muslims. She recounted her journey through Beijing, Chengdu, Kashgar, and Urumqi, where she was deeply moved by the warmth and hospitality of the Uyghur people.

IRSA releases 398,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 398,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 406,300 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1550.00 feet (maximum conservation level) and was 152.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 257,100 cusecs and 256,600 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1214.00 feet, which was 166.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.

agents were arrested outside the Regional Passport Office in the G-10 area. The arrested individuals have been transferred to Ramna police station for further legal action.

DC Memon emphasized the importance of eliminating these agents, who have been taking money from citizens under the guise of commissions.

He stated that operations against such elements should be conducted outside all government offices, including NADRA, Passport, and Excise departments. Following the crackdown at the passport office, similar actions are being taken at other locations.

HEC announces scholarships for GB students

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has invited applications from the students of Gilgit-Baltistan who intend to pursue undergraduate studies (4/5 years BS Programmes) from HEC-recognised public sector Universities/Degree Awarding Institutions.

According to the official sources, these scholarships are being offered for the academic year 2024-25 in all areas of study/disciplines under the project titled, "Undergraduate Scholarship Programme for the students of Gilgit-Baltistan in top Pakistani Universities/ Institutions (Batch-IV).

As per eligibility criteria, the applicants must have domicile/local certificate of Gilgit-Baltistan. However, he/she must have completed Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC)/Equivalent. Furthermore, the applicants who are already availing any other scholarship are not eligible to apply. The maximum age limit is 22 years as on closing date of application submission, while the candidates will have to scholarship coverage i.e. tuition fee, hostel fee and other charges—maximum Rs. 240,000 per year, stipend of Rs. 15,000 per month.

According to the AIOU, the new deadline for applications for BS (Face-to-Face), PGD programs and certificate courses is now September 5, 2024, with no late fees applied. Admissions for Matric, FA, and I. Com programs will also continue until this date.

However, no extension is available for MS, MPhil, and PhD programs due to the already scheduled admission tests from August 22 to 24.

Major crackdown on commission agents in ICT's govt offices

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a decisive move against commission agents exploiting citizens outside government offices, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration raided near the Regional Passport Office in G-10 area and arrested nine agents.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the district administration teams have intensified their efforts to tackle the growing issue of commission agents operating outside government offices.

On the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, nine



ISLAMABAD: A view of heavy tree fell on a school children pick and drop vehicle at super market due to heavy storm in morning hours in the Federal Capital.