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PM Shehbaz, Bilawal discuss political situation PPP leadership expresses full confidence in govt's policies, initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says Pakistan People's Party is an important ally, which has always supported the government's every step to strengthen national economy.

He was talking to a delegation of Pakistan People's Party, which called on him in Islamabad today under the leadership of party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

During the meeting, overall political situation of country came under discussion.

The Prime Minister appreciated the proposal of "Charter of Parliament" presented by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in the Parliament saying that it will

further strengthen democracy and the Parliament.

The PPP delegation commended the economic policies of the government to strengthen the country's economy.

The PPP delegation also expressed full confidence in the government's policies and initiatives, which was welcomed by the Prime Minister.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar, PPP leaders Syed Naveed Qamar and Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab and Attorney General were also present in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar, Syed Naveed Qamar and Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab and Attorney General were also present in the meeting

CM Sarfaraz Bugti forms committee to resolve water distribution issues between Sindh and Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has formed a committee for resolving the water issues between Sindh and Balochistan provinces.

The Committee would comprise the administrative secretaries of Irrigation of Sindh and Balochistan besides the members of IRSA.

The Chief Minister was presiding over an inter-provincial meeting of Sindh and Balochistan on the issues of water distribution between the two provinces, here at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by the Provincial

Minister for Irrigation Balochistan, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani, Minister for Irrigation, Sindh, Jam Khan Shoro, members of the provincial cabinet, members of the Balochistan assembly and secretaries of Irrigation of both the provinces.

The IRSA accord and stance of both of the provinces were presented in the meeting.

It was decided in the meeting that the committee formed by the Chief Minister would prepare viable proposals after consultation with the Provincial Ministers for Irrigation of Sindh and Balochistan on its final review report.

Govt, opposition reach consensus on "Charter of Parliament"

16-member committee formed to oversee parliamentary proceedings more effectively; NA Speaker suspends Sergeant at Arms for negligence in security duties; Issues production orders for PTI MNAs

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): In an important development, the government and opposition reached a consensus on the proposal for a "Charter of Parliament," while a 16-member committee has been formed to oversee parliamentary proceedings more effectively.

The motion, put forward by Information Minister Atta Tarar, was approved by the Lower House of the Parliament.

The committee is tasked with submitting a detailed fact-finding report on the incidents of September 9 to the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ayaz Sadiq, as soon as possible.

Speaking in the assembly, the minister assured that the committee would have equal representation from both the government and opposition.

He also addressed the recent concerns about arrests made inside the Parliament building, clarifying that no individuals were detained within the premises and video evidence supporting this claim is available in the Speaker's office.

"In the past, Asad Qaiser was frequently criticized from here. Now, we are providing transparent evidence that no one was taken from within the house," Tarar stated. Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker of the National Assembly, emphasized his commitment to uncovering the truth behind the September 9 incident, asserting that it is crucial to maintain the honor of Parliament.

"The demand from government whips was that they represent two-thirds, while the opposition is one-third. The opposition must have its voice here in Parliament," Sadiq remarked.

In response to a security lapse on the night of the September 9 incident, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq took swift action by suspending Sergeant-at-Arms Ashfaq Ashraf along with four other officials for four months due to their negligence in ensuring the security of Parliament.

A four-member committee has also been set up to investigate the security failures in detail. Additionally, five Capital Development Authority (CDA) officials, including two electricians involved in cutting off the power supply to the Parliament House on the night of the incident, were suspended for their role in the disruption.

Meanwhile National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq issued production orders for 10 arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNAs to attend the assembly session.

These parliamentarians include Sher Afzal Marwat, Amir Dogar, Ahmed Chatta, Zain Qureshi, Zubair Khan, Waqas Akram Sheikh, Owais Haider, Ahad Ali Shah, Naseem Ali Shah, and Yousuf Khan.

The orders direct that the detained members be delivered to the Sergeant-at-Arms before the session starts and returned to police custody afterward.

PTI Chairman Buxtor Gohar confirmed that all detained MNAs will attend the session.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori along with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and Ulema talking with mediemen about 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal.

A functional House must for a functional country: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday said that a functional Parliament was imperative for a functional country.

Speaking in the National Assembly on a point of order, he said that the Parliament was responsible not only to legislate but also create a conducive environment. "The cycle of protest rallies must end, with the focus shifting towards serving the people and safeguarding their rights."

He asked Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq to form a high-powered committee of the House to help restore its prestige and further improve its functioning.

Referring to the students seated in the galleries, he said in the wake of ongoing political situation they might have concerns about the country's future. In a democratic country,

being a parliamentarian was a matter of prestige and honour, but many of them would not aspire to become politicians, he added.

"Though politics has become a curse, but it will still help create employment opportunities for the youth, besides providing economic justice and good governance if practiced passionately. The country, which is currently facing multiple crises, will lead the region when today's children will be grown up."

He stressed that without establishing the supremacy of Constitution, no institution could function, and for that the members of the House must maintain a working relationship. Bilawal said the government was constantly engaged in firefighting as the opposition continued to make a hue and cry instead of doing their duty of holding the former accountable.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over an inter-provincial meeting of Sindh and Balochistan on the issues of water distribution between the two provinces

No excuses acceptable for delay in public health projects: GoB decides to establish modern Institute of Cardiology, build new Trauma Center in Quetta city

Chief Minister announces establishment of Balochistan Institute of Cardiology on model of NICVD Sindh; gives deadline of January 15, 2025 to Provincial Health Department for inauguration; approves release of funds for speedy progress on vital project

Independent Report

QUETTA: In an important development in health sector, the Government of Balochistan has decided to establish a modern Institute of Cardiology and build new modern Trauma Center in Quetta.

The decision to this effect was made in a meeting chaired by the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on the performance of Health Department here at the CM's secretariat on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by the Provincial Minister for Health, Sardarzada Faisal Khan Jamali, spokesman of provincial government, Shahid Rind, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Secretary Health, Muhammad Saleh Baloch, Principal Secretary to Chief

Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Special Secretaries Tariq Hussain, Mujeebur Rehman Qambrani, Technical Member and Additional Secretary Communications, Mukhtiar Ahmed, Director General of Health, Dr. Amin Khan Mandokhail, Managing Director Trauma Center, Dr. Arbab Kamran Khan.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister announced that Balochistan Institute of Cardiology (BIC) would be established on the model of NICVD, Sindh.

He said that free medical treatment facilities would be made available for every rich and poor in the 120-bedded hospital to be established for treatment of cardiac patients.

The Chief Minister on the occasion approved immediate release of the speedy implementation on the project.

Health department to inaugurate the BIC on January 15, 2025 any way.

He also announced to inaugurate new Trauma Center on December 15, 2024. In this context, he directed to expedite the progress on project. He said that no excuses are acceptable for delay in implementation on the projects of public health welfare projects. He warned that if the BIC was not inaugurated by the given date, then the concerned high ups should consider themselves to be suspended.

He on the occasion expressed anguish over poor state of affairs of the divisional headquarter hospitals in the province saying that the divisional headquarter hospitals are in mess. As a result of which, every serious patient of the road accident is brought to the provincial hospital, he regretfully pointed out.

Four injured in hand grenade explosion in Turbat city

Independent Report

QUETTA: Four persons got injured in the hand grenade explosion took place in main road in Turbat city on Wednesday morning.

According to the police, the hand grenade blast took place on the main road in Turbat city. As a result of explosion, four persons, stated to be passers-by were injured. The police and rescue teams reached the spot soon after the explosion.

The teams shifted the injured persons to the teaching hospital Turbat for treatment where condition of two injured is stated to be precarious.

In the meantime, the police cordoned off the area and started investigations. According to the preliminary investigations, the blast was carried out through hand grenade.

However, no arrest was reported in the subversive act. No one has claimed the responsibility of the blast till ours going to the press.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah along with Governor Sindh, Kamran Khan Tessori and others paying homage to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on his death anniversary

Death anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 76th death anniversary of the father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was observed with due solemnity on Wednesday, with the pledge to follow his teachings and golden principles of "unity, faith and discipline".

The day dawned with special prayers in mosques and other worship places for eternal peace of the departed soul and for peace and prosperity of the country.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah served as leader of All-India Muslim League from 1913 until Pakistan's creation on August 14, 1947.

He passed away on September 11, 1948, shortly after achieving freedom for the nation.

Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television are broadcasting special programs today to pay tribute to

Quaid-e-Azam for his unmatched services for freedom of Pakistan.

Solemn tributes were paid to the great leader for his pivotal role in the creation of Pakistan.

In Karachi, Quran Khawani and Fateha Khawani were held at the Mazar-e-Quaid, where people from all walks of life gathered to honour his memory. Political leaders and officials also paid their respects by visiting the mausoleum.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah passed away on September 11, 1948, just over a year after achieving independence for Pakistan. His vision and dedication to the cause of Pakistan continue to inspire generations.

His death anniversary serves as a reminder of the ideals of unity, faith, and discipline that he left for the nation.

Even if 10 or 20 people are killed, attacking Parliament is not acceptable: Achakzai

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Chairman of the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, has stated that even if ten or twenty individuals were killed the use of their deaths as a pretext to attack Parliament is unacceptable.

Achakzai was commenting on the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf lawmakers from the National Assembly premises.

The arrest took place over violations during PTT's rally in Islamabad on Sunday, including the deviation from a previously agreed route, breaching commitments, attacking Islamabad police, exceeding permitted timings, and delivering anti-state speeches.

The Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party chief on Wednesday criticised the recent action taken by security forces. He stated

that verbal remarks could not constitute as a justification for any attack on Parliament.

Speaking in the assembly, Achakzai condemned the manner in which certain remarks were made, particularly those by Ali Amin Gandapur.

He argued that such comments, no matter how provocative, do not justify an assault on Parliament. Achakzai emphasised that even the loss of life should not be used as a rationale for violating the parliament's sanctity.

He affirmed his support for upholding the Constitution, empowering Parliament, and ensuring all institutions remain within its bounds.

Minister Khawaja Asif also weighed in, stating that there is no justification for the attack on Parliament.

He highlighted that the desecration of Parliament affects everyone.



QUETTA: Balochistan Irrigation Minister Sadiq Umrani and Sindh Irrigation minister Jam Khan Shoro addressing a joint press conference at CM Secretariat.

Fazal rejects govt's claim of support for constitutional amendment

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has rejected government claims that his party supports proposed constitutional amendments, stressing that no opposition party, including JUI-F, will back any legislation that contradicts the Constitution or democracy.

According to Express News, Fazlur Rehman met with senior politician Muhammad Ali Durrani at his residence in Islamabad late on Wednesday night.

Fazlur Rehman, reaffirming his party's opposition stance, stated, "JUI-F will remain part of the op-

position, and no opposition party will support any legislation that undermines the Constitution or democracy."

He criticised the government, saying, "The government's existence and actions are against the interests of the people. The power should come from the public, and we will not allow anyone to steal the mandate in the future."

Muhammad Ali Durrani supported Fazlur Rehman's stance, remarking, "You have always stood on the right side of history and have been a guardian of political traditions and democratic values."



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani presiding over a review meeting regarding Finance Department

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Dark turn

Recent developments, seemingly orchestrated by certain powerful quarters, have demonstrated a disturbing lack of regard for both public representatives as well as parliament. As a result, there is now renewed concern on both sides of the political divide that the historic disequilibrium in the distribution of state power may be becoming increasingly more pronounced.

Those making the decisions should not overlook the long-term implications of their actions. The precedents being set are likely to have lasting effects, particularly on the nation's youth, and will help perpetuate economic and social instability well beyond the current political cycle.

Historically speaking, attempts to silence political dissidents through coercion and force have never worked as intended. Indeed, most have yielded disastrous results, especially when evaluated from the perspective of national unity. Instead of heeding this lesson, our institutions seem intent on making matters worse. The nation seems to be in dangerous territory, and it is up to the political leadership to steer it towards calmer waters.

It should worry every civilian leader how the scope of political violence and victimisation seems to be growing broader. What transpired in Islamabad over the weekend and after should give at least the old guard within the more established political parties some pause.

First, the city's administrative authorities were given carte blanche to prevent and disrupt a routine political gathering that would not have posed any imminent threat to the government if it were simply allowed to proceed unhindered. Then, the police were pushed into a confrontation with the attendees of the said political gathering based on the latter's failure to observe a draconian new law minted by parliament just days earlier. Finally, the same law was put to use to initiate a new crackdown on the PTI leadership, some of whom were picked up from parliament in ugly scenes reminiscent of dictatorial takeovers in the past.

The PTI's leaders may have gone overboard in their speeches on Sept 8. They could not keep their pent-up frustrations in check when they ought to have been more circumspect while expressing themselves. However, to use this as a pretext by law enforcers to arrest public representatives, briefly 'disappear' a provincial chief executive, and even raid Parliament House, as some reports suggest, is a worrying low. It was particularly unforgivable that all this happened on the watch of parties which do not tire of talking about the 'supremacy' of parliament.

The only consolation was that, on Tuesday, representatives from all major political parties united in demanding that the National Assembly Speaker take strict action. It is hoped that the pushback will come from the institution as a whole and that politicians from across the divide will see this as an opportunity to repair relations with each other.

Prolonged stand-off

Touqir Hussain

Historically, India-Pakistan relations have moved within a narrow bandwidth, mostly between a looming conflict and an ominous peace. A sense of tension and expectancy was always in the air, but dialogue was never taken off the table. But the current state of relations is unique. The two countries are simply not on speaking terms. There is no dialogue, nor a desire for it.

How did we get here? Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Pakistan policy began with high-visibility peace overtures, including the invitation to his swearing-in, and the theatrics of visiting Nawaz Sharif in Lahore in December 2015. He knows the power of the visual for modern media. After exciting the international media about prospects of peace in the region and conjuring an illusion of Modi as a peacemaker, he pulled the plug on the "peace initiative" by using the January 2016 Pathankot incident as an excuse. The move at once highlighted the militancy issue and Pakistan as a spoiler, and stitched the two. The accusation became India's standard playbook in its campaign to isolate Pakistan.

India, which had already become America's crucial partner in balancing China, was now an important ally in containing Pakistan. Supporting India in its regional hegemonic ambitions and its policy of making terrorism the core issue between India and Pakistan suited Washington. America's own relationship with Pakistan was becoming adversarial because of Islamabad's strategic relationship with China, unhelpful role in the failing Afghanistan war, and the alleged association with

terrorism about which the US had its own concerns.

With Indian and American policies on Pakistan beating to each other's rhythm, the forward policy of PM Modi's first term became the aggressive nationalism of the second term. In a clear break from India's past defensiveness, he responded militarily to the Pulwama incident. It worked domestically as Pulwama and the earlier incidents involving militants had triggered an enormous emotional response from the Indian citizenry, providing strong support for Modi's national security policies. And abroad, it helped highlight Pakistan as having provoked the Indian military response and thus being responsible for inciting the risk of conflict in the region, a nuclear flashpoint.

The Indian PM's muscular policies were given a strategic framework when S. Jaishankar became the external affairs minister in 2019. Besides dovetailing with America's geopolitics and India's regional ambitions, the Pakistan policy gave India a card against Beijing, and was a useful tool in electoral politics. And by doubling down on Pakistan's diminished international status, India managed to dictate its own view of Kashmir to the West and even to Pakistan's friends in the Middle East, muting their response to Kashmir's annexation. India's Kashmir strategy seems to be working. But the policy of isolating Pakistan has reached a dead end. Trying to isolate Pakistan and not talking had made sense, but why is India still not talking? India knows Pakistan would insist on talking about Kashmir, which they do not want. It wants to convince the Kashmiris that Pakistan is no longer

relevant to their future and they better reconcile to the new realities on the ground.

Some Indian scholars feel India is following a 'minimalist' approach towards Pakistan, getting involved only when absolutely necessary like securing the Feb 2021 ceasefire. Limited relations, they believe, provide stability. At least they keep one side of the border calm so that India can concentrate on relations with China.

In any case the dilemma remains how to resume the dialogue. India has maintained that terrorism and talks do not go together. Though this is not really a precondition, it puts the onus of seeking the dialogue on Pakistan. How-ever, Pakistan will not talk unless India's Aug 5, 2019 actions are reversed. But Jaishankar has recently reiterated that "So far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, Article 370 is done".

How to break the deadlock? India might at some point restore Kashmir's status. It would not change its control of the occupied territory but might give Pakistan a reason to resume talks, provided both sides come to a conclusion that it is time to do so. India knows Pakistan wants trade more than it does. And India may have its own reasons to talk. There is hesitancy on both sides for now. India faces neither an incentive nor a compulsion to talk, and Pakistan may feel — given India's constraints on the relationship — the benefits will be limited and not worth the political cost. So the status quo continues which benefits India and does not hurt Pakistan. Only strong reasons for dialogue on both sides will move the needle. -- Courtesy Dawn

Electoral meddling

Mahir Ali

"The American people," the US attorney general Merrick Garland declared recently, "are entitled to know when a foreign power engages in political activities or seeks to influence public discourse." He was pontificating in the context of a well-publicised pushback against Russian 'influence campaigns' in connection with November's presidential election.

Russia was widely seen as a culprit eight years ago, after its hackers reportedly passed on concealed Democratic National Committee (DNC) documents to WikiLeaks, in facilitating Donald Trump's 2016 triumph. The hitherto secreted emails showed how hard the Democratic Party establishment had striven to derail the campaign of Bernie Sanders, the socialist alternative who might have defeated Hillary Clinton in the primaries and proved a more formidable challenge for Trump.

Clinton won almost three million more votes than Trump, so perhaps the biggest culprit in the outcome that year was the uniquely American concept of the electoral college, which can easily be counted among the various deformities that diminish America's much-ballyhooed democracy.

Unlike 2016, when the mainstream media lapped up the DNC revelations, there has been a reticence to publicise the contents of what purportedly Iranian hackers threw up after virtually infiltrating Trump's campaign and leaking internal documents. In a mafia-like omerta, the contents remain concealed. The mainstream focus has been on the hack rather than its revelations, notably about Trump's obnoxious running mate J.D. Vance.

China has also been cited as a source of cyber campaigns, notwithstanding

Xi Jinping's vow at his summit with Joe Biden last year that Beijing would steer clear of interference.

It's worth pointing out, though, that even if the allegations against Iran and China can be substantiated, they are unlikely to be on the same side as Russia. Moscow might see Trump as an asset in the context of its invasion of Ukraine, but there's little reason for Beijing and Tehran to be on the same page, notwithstanding the broad convergence of views on foreign policy between the political rivals in America.

Nowhere is this more evident than on the policy towards Israel, which has lately revolved around mild admonitions against the ongoing genocide in Gaza and ethnic cleansing in the West Bank, while providing the Netanyahu regime with the means of mass murder. Kamala Harris represents continuity with the Biden tendency of shedding a few crocodile tears and pretending that a Washington-sponsored ceasefire is imminent, and then blaming the failure to secure it on Benjamin Netanyahu's intransigence and Hamas's obduracy.

Handwringing over the genocide is meaningless as long as the US goes on providing the means of conducting it. The extension of Israeli Defence Forces operations into the West Bank could be seen as both a reflection of the IDF's failure to obliterate Hamas in Gaza and the intention of the nation it represents to conquer all of historical Palestine.

Some Israelis even harbour ambitions of establishing Jewish settlements in southern Lebanon — hence the desire, it seems, to provoke yet another war with Hezbollah.

Unabashedly Israeli-affiliated groups in the US remain determined to en-

sure that anyone sympathetic to the idea of justice for Zionism's victims, whether on campuses or in Congress, is silenced. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) poured millions of dollars this year into what became the most expensive Congressional primary campaigns, contributing to the defeats of incumbents such as Jamaal Bowman and Cori Bush, thereby ho-ping to ensure that the humanitarian impulse towards empathy for Palestinians is diminished in the next House of Representatives. The Democratic establishment colluded with the Zionist tendency to deny the numerous 'uncommitted' dissidents a platform at the party's national conference last month.

Unrelenting interventions in US politics by AIPAC and its ilk are not considered foreign interference in mainstream US political discourse. Sure, it can be argued that while Russia, Iran and China are considered adversaries, Israel is the tightest of allies, hence its motives are not malign. But could any other close friend of Washington — from Canberra to Riyadh — get away with similar efforts to shift the dial? The negative answer is, perhaps, blowing in the wind.

Back in the 1950s-60s, Israeli efforts managed to tame American Jewish organisations that were appalled by the parallels between European antisemitism and the Nakba.

Zionists have yet to find the means of subduing the wrath of younger generations of American Jews who are horrified by what is being done in their name. So far, though, they can count on the blind bipartisan support of the American establishment as the killing goes on. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

FM reaffirms commitment for homegrown economic agenda

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday, reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a homegrown economic agenda, centered on comprehensive institutional reforms across key sectors of the economy.

The minister made these remarks during a meeting with Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki who called on him at the Finance Division.

The minister emphasized that structural reforms were pivotal for ensuring sustainable economic growth and stability, forming a cornerstone of the government's policy agenda. He expressed deep appreciation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's consistent economic support to Pakistan, while highlighting the renewed interest shown by Saudi investors in pursuing joint ventures and business collaborations with Pakistan's private sector.

recalled his productive meetings with Finance Minister of Saudi Arabia, Mohammad Al-Jadaan and CEO of the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), Sultan Abdulrahman Al-Marshad during his visit to Washington in April this year.

He further noted the significant outcomes of the high-level business delegation's visit from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan in May, aimed at exploring investment opportunities, expanding bilateral cooperation, and scaling up partnerships across diverse

sectors. During the discussion, Senator Aurangzeb outlined Pakistan's positive economic trajectory, citing key indicators such as currency stabilization, reduced inflation, a surge in remittances, prudent management of the current account deficit, and foreign exchange reserves sufficient to cover two months of imports.

On the occasion, Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki commended the government's efforts in implementing structural and institutional reforms.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, in a meeting with Vice Minister of Commerce, People's Republic of China, Ling Ji on sidelines of the SCO Ministerial Conference.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Noshervani in a group photo with District Accounts Officer, Provincial Finance Secretary Babar Khan is also present.

New legislation to unlock IT sector's potential: Afnan

ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan Wednesday assured that the government is committed to the IT sector's growth and development and is working diligently to introduce necessary legislation to address digital challenges and promote IT exports.

In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan has announced that the government is set to introduce new legislation aimed at unlocking the full potential of the IT sector, adding, this move is

expected to boost IT exports, create jobs, and drive economic growth.

Senator Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan has introduced a bill to regulate artificial intelligence (AI) in Pakistan. The Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Bill, 2024, aims to provide a framework for the development, deployment and use of AI technologies in the country. The bill will be debated and discussed in the Senate and National Assembly, he said, adding, the bill will be open for public consultation to gather feedback and suggestions from stakeholders.

President SCCI visits National Security and War Course at NDU Islamabad

SIALKOT (APP): President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik addressed the participants in the National Security and War Course at the National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad.

During the session, President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik shared Sialkot's inspiring journey from a local hub to a global leader in sports goods, surgical instruments and leather products.

Govt setting up 'Economic Zones' to boost business activity: Tanveer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday said that incumbent government was establishing 'economic zones' in different parts to boost business activity in the country.

"We are working to promote industrial sectors and for this, all necessary steps are being taken to achieve the objectives," he said while talking to a private television channel.

In reply to a question, he said International Monetary Fund didn't raise any condition regarding economic zones.

Commenting on constitutional amendment, he said, "we should have a required number of voters in the Houses to bring amendment." "We hope that leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Fazal ur Rehman would support the government to bring legislation and amendment," he added.

Cars' sale up 27% during July-August

ISLAMABAD (APP): The sale of cars during the first two months of the current financial year 2024-25 increased by 27.70 per cent compared to the same months of last year, a recent data released by Pakistan Automobile Manufacturing Association (PAMA) said.

According to the data, as many as 12,274 cars were sold during the months under review as opposed to 9,611 units in the same months of last year.

The breakup figures showed that 1,863 units of

Honda Civic and City were sold during July-August 2024-25 compared to the sale of 700 units during July-August 2023-24.

Toyota Corolla and Yaris cars sales increased by 22.18 per cent as it went up to 2,671 units from 2,186 units in the previous year. Suzuki Swift's sales also rose by 40.52 per cent as its sales surged from 755 units to 1,061 units this year. Sale of Suzuki Cultus declined to 227 units during the first two months of the current year, whereas during the same months last year.

Indonesia ready to negotiate FTA with Pakistan to promote trade liberalization: Hindiarta

ISLAMABAD (APP): Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma, Charge d'Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy on Wednesday said that Indonesia is ready to negotiate a free trade agreement (FTA) with Pakistan, which will promote bilateral trade liberalization and enhance the business volume.

In order to narrow the trade gap between Indonesia and Pakistan, the business community and chambers of commerce

from both sides have to engage and promote bilateral economic and trade integration and also stress for exchanging of business delegations and market awareness by the chambers on both sides have to be done regularly, he said.

He highlighted the rich history of friendship and cooperation between Indonesia and Pakistan during a visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(ICCI) and a meeting with its President, ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari.

Kusuma stressed the importance of utilizing the existing Indonesia-Pakistan Preferential Trade Agreement and working towards a Free Trade Agreement. The Charge d'Affaires praised ICCI's contributions to fostering economic linkages between the two nations and invited members to attend the 39th Trade Expo Indonesia from October 9-12.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Seven ships, MSC Surabaya-VIII, Maersk Nyassa, Maersk Hartford, MSC Capetown-III, Da Heng Shan, Simaisma and Al-Diab-II scheduled to load/offload Container, Bitumen, LNG and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Elengy Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile two more ships, Ab Serena and Lusail with Chemicals and LNG are arrived at outer anchorage port on Wednesday.

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 634 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 634.94 points, a negative change of 0.80 percent, closing at 78,651.80 points against 79,286.74 points on the last working day. A total of 532,732,689 shares were traded during the day as compared to 509,490,385 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 14.735 billion against Rs.13.763 billion on the

last trading day. As many as 333 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 114 of them recorded gains and 209 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 10 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 80,930,490 shares at Rs 1.52 per share, Pak Elektron with 42,596,524 shares at Rs.26.85 per share and Waves Home Appliances with 34,023,632 shares at Rs.9.42 per share.

Government determines to strengthen the ties between government, media: Saleem

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that he is determined to strengthen the relationship between the government and the media. Addressing other issues including harassment of women, drug use and political polarization in universities is a priority. He expressed these views during a meeting with beat reporters from electronic media at Governor House Lahore today. People's Party Central Punjab Information Secretary Shehzad Saeed Cheema and Secretary Records and

Events Ahsan Rizvi were also present. Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan further said that no organization can work effectively alone. He said that the People's Party has always talked about reconciliation and promoted constructive politics. Governor Punjab expressed that he will play the role of a bridge between the People's Party and the Muslim League (N). He said that the doors of Governor's House are open for people with different views. Governor Punjab while criticizing the actions of PTI advised them to

abandon the old behavior and adopt a reasonable approach. Governor Punjab praised the participation of the people in the recent celebration of Milad held at the Governor House. Governor Punjab said that collective efforts are needed to improve the country's conditions. He said that the politics of chaos and fighting is not in the national interest. While discussing the reorganization of the People's Party in Punjab, he said that he will meet with the leadership of Central Punjab in the near future to discuss the organizational issues.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with beat reporters from electronic media at Governor House.

Governor Kundi signs summary for de-notification of Advisor Mashal Azam

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, signed the summary for the de-notification of Advisor Mashal Azam Yousafzai of the provincial cabinet on Wednesday.

The Governor has approved the removal of Mashal Azam Yousafzai from her position as Advisor to the Chief Minister.

Following the Governor's approval and signature, the summary has been sent back for further processing.

Sources in the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said that the Advisor to Chief Minister on Zakat, Ushr, Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Mashal Azam was ousted

from the provincial cabinet over poor performance and other charges.

Meanwhile, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, has asserted that the land belonging to the province's universities will not be sold under any circumstances.

This statement was made during a discussion with a delegation from Mardan led by Mayor Himayatullah Mayar. Governor Kundi criticized the current administration, accusing it of incompetence for attempting to sell university lands.

He emphasized that the provincial government has exhibited extreme mismanagement, noting that there is no provincial Higher Education Commission (HEC) in KP.

Health Minister says: No compromise on quality, transparency in hospital revamping projects

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring quality and transparency in the ongoing hospital revamping projects.

Chairing a meeting at the Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education here on Wednesday, the minister emphasized the importance of completing these projects on a priority basis to enhance patient care in government hospitals.

on the progress of revamping projects at General Hospital, Services Hospital, and Yaki Gate Hospital in Lahore. Contractors involved in the projects have been directed to complete their work within the stipulated time frame to avoid delays.

"We are making every effort to ensure the projects are completed on time, without compromising on quality, so that patients receive the best facilities in government hospitals," said the minister.

5.7 magnitude earthquake jolts parts of Punjab

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) received initial reports about the earthquake from all districts of Punjab.

Director General PDMA Irfan Ali Kathia said that there are no reports of any loss of life or property in Punjab due to the earthquake. District administration, Rescue and other related organisations are present in the field. In other districts of Punjab, including Lahore, the magnitude of the earthquake was recorded at 5.7. The epicentre of the earthquake was Dera Ghazi Khan Shadiwala.

CM Maryam reviews law, order in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz presided over a special meeting here on Wednesday to comprehensively review law and order situation in the province.

The CM said, "Protecting the life and property of people of Punjab is my foremost responsibility. We will do whatever is necessary to safeguard public life and property."

The CM directed the authorities concerned to take indiscriminate action against criminals and anti-social elements.

She said police should be able to take proactive action without waiting for a crime to be committed.

She added attackers of police check posts should be given such a stern response that they do not dare to attack again.

CM Maryam Nawaz said police patrol should be arranged between police check-posts and directed the police officers to ensure foolproof security on Eid Milad-un-Nabi by visiting the scholars themselves.

ANF recovers 37 kg Ice from consignment booked for Australia

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an operation managed to recover 37 kg Ice from a consignment booked for Australia.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, in an intelligence-based operation conducted at a courier office in Lahore, ANF recovered 37 kg Ice from a parcel containing ladies' handcrafted footwear booked for Australia.



PESHAWAR: Former Federal Minister for State Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi and Former MNA Mehmoond Hayat meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

KP to reward tax fraud Identifiers with cash to curb tax evasion

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government has announced that it will offer cash rewards to individuals who report or identify tax fraud in the province, while keeping their identities confidential.

Regulations to provide legal cover for this reward system, aimed at encouraging public whistleblowers, are in the final stages of development and will soon be implemented as part of efforts to combat tax evasion and fraud with the help of citizens.

The Advisor to the Chief Minister of KP for Finance, Muzammil Aslam, during his visit to the headquarters of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA).

Addressing the KPRA officers, he emphasized that strict action will be taken against those found guilty of tax fraud or evasion based on citizens' reports.

He also announced that individuals who report such fraud will be rewarded with a cash prize, the amount of which will be decided soon.

19 dead, 1,353 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): Nineteen people were killed and 1,353 others injured in 1,302 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 570 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 783 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed that 756 drivers, 44 underage drivers, 146 pedestrians, and 470 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. The statistics showed that 264 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 278 people, placing the provincial capital at top of the list.

PHC intensifies crackdown, seals 970 quackery outlets

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) has ramped up its anti-quackery campaign, conducting raids on 4,705 treatment centres across Punjab and sealing 970 illegal healthcare facilities. The raids, carried out over a six-week period, targeted a variety of establishments, including clinics, laboratories, and aesthetic centres, according to a PHC spokesperson on Wednesday.

Among the facilities inspected, 633 centres had undergone business

changes, likely in response to the PHC's stringent measures. Meanwhile, 2,945 healthcare establishments were placed under surveillance, as they were found to be run by qualified professionals at the time of the raids.

"This ongoing initiative underscores the PHC's commitment to safeguarding public health and ensuring that only qualified and licensed professionals deliver healthcare services in Punjab."



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique chairs special meeting at Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department.

International News

Kamala Harris puts Donald Trump on defensive in fiery US presidential debate

Monitoring Desk
PHILADELPHIA: Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris put Republican Donald Trump on the defensive at a combative presidential debate on Tuesday with a stream of attacks on abortion limits, his fitness for office and his myriad legal woes, as both candidates sought a campaign-altering moment in their closely fought election.

A former prosecutor, Harris, 59, appeared to get under the former president's skin repeatedly, prompting a visibly angry Trump, 78, to deliver a series of falsehood-filled retorts.

At one point, she brought up Trump's campaign rallies, goading him by saying that people often leave early "out of exhaustion and boredom."

Trump, who has been frustrated by the size of

Harris' own crowds, said, "My rallies, we have the biggest rallies, the most incredible rallies in the history of politics."

He then pivoted to an unsubstantiated claim that Haitian immigrants in Springfield, Ohio, are "eating the pets" of residents.

The candidates clashed over issues such as immigration, foreign policy and healthcare, but the debate was light on specific policy details.

Instead, Harris' forceful approach succeeded in putting the focus on Trump, leaving her allies jubilant and some Republicans acknowledging Trump's struggles.

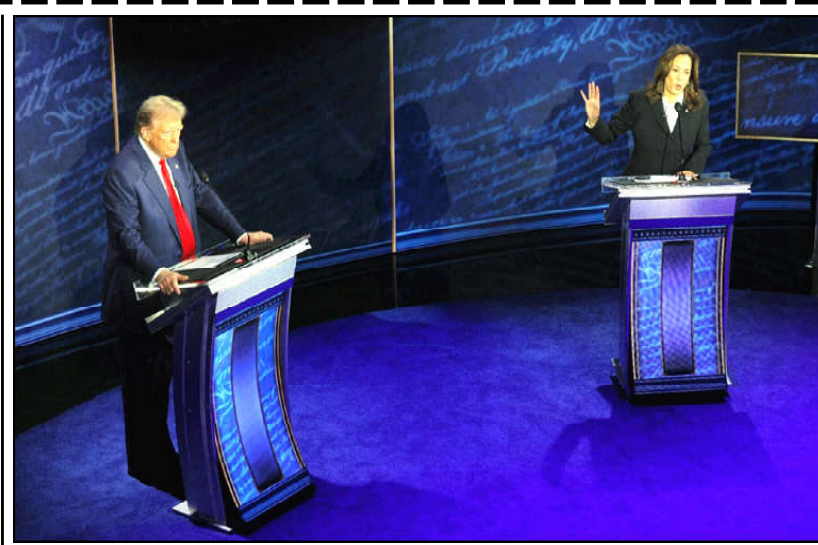
"Trump missed an opportunity to stay focused prosecuting the case against Biden-Harris on the economy and border, and instead took her bait and chased down rabbit holes on

election denialism and immigrants eating our pets," said Marc Short, who served as chief of staff for Trump's former Vice President Mike Pence.

Online prediction market PredictIt's 2024 presidential general election market showed Trump's likelihood of victory declining during the debate, to 47% from 52%. Harris' odds improved to 55% from 53%.

In a sign of confidence in the debate's outcome, Harris' campaign challenged Trump to a second debate immediately.

Trump, who has spent weeks launching personal attacks on Harris including racist and sexist insults, largely avoided that pattern during the debate's early moments but quickly became agitated under Harris' offensive.



Democratic presidential nominee, US Vice President Kamala Harris speaks during a presidential debate hosted by ABC as Republican presidential nominee, former US President Donald Trump listens, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, US.

US, allies sanction Iran for 'supplying missiles' to Russia

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Western powers on Tuesday announced fresh sanctions on Iran for supplying Russia with short-range missiles for imminent use against Ukraine, calling it a dangerous escalation of the conflict that threatened European security. The United States unveiled fresh sanctions against more than a dozen firms and individuals in Iran and Russia in response to what it called Tehran's "escalatory" decision to send

ballistic missiles to Moscow. The sanctions targeted 10 people and six companies for their involvement in supporting Iran's defence sector, and identified four vessels involved in "enabling Iran's delivery of weapons components and weapons systems," the US Treasury department claimed. "Today, the United States and our allies are taking concerted action in response to Iran's reckless decision to proliferate ballistic missiles to Russia."

Tehran did not deliver missiles to Russia, foreign minister says

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran's foreign minister said on Wednesday that Tehran had not delivered any ballistic missiles to Russia and sanctions imposed on Iran by the United States and three European powers would not solve any problems between them.

"Once again, US and E3 act on faulty intelligence and flawed logic. Iran has NOT delivered ballistic missiles to Russia. Period... Sanctions are not a solution, but part of problem."

North Korea's Kim vows to make his nuclear force ready for combat with US

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to redouble efforts to make his nuclear force fully ready for combat with the United States and its allies, state media reported Tuesday, after the country disclosed a new platform likely designed to fire more powerful intercontinental ballistic missiles targeting the mainland US.

Kim has repeatedly made similar pledges, but his latest threat comes as outside experts believe Kim will perform provocative weapons tests ahead of the U.S. presidential election in November. In recent days, North Korea has also resumed launches of trash-carrying balloons toward South Korea.

In a speech marking the 76th founding anniversary for his government on Monday, Kim said North Korea faces "a grave threat" because of what he called "the reckless expansion" of a U.S.-led regional military bloc that is now developing into a nuclear-based one.

Blinken and Lammy arrive in Kyiv as Ukraine pushes for long-range strikes against Russia

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and British Foreign Secretary David Lammy arrived in Kyiv on a joint visit Wednesday, as Ukraine presses the West to allow it to use long-range missiles against Russia.

The top diplomats reached the Ukrainian capital by train hours after the U.S. presidential debate during which Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Trump sparred over the 2 1/2-year war in Ukraine.

Blinken traveled from London, where he accused Iran of providing Russia with Fath-360 short-range ballistic missiles, calling the move a "dramatic escalation"

of the war.

For months, Ukraine has been requesting approval to use long-range weapons from the United States and Western allies to strike targets in Russia, and is expected to press harder given Russia's latest reported weapons acquisition.

"If we are allowed to destroy military targets or weapons prepared by the enemy for attacks on Ukraine, it would certainly bring more safety for our civilians, our people, and our children," Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said at a news conference in Kyiv on Tuesday. "We are working towards this and will continue to push for it every day."

EU fears Israeli-occupied West Bank becoming a 'new Gaza'

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: The European Union's top diplomat Josep Borrell warned on Tuesday that increased violence in the occupied West Bank since the Israel-Hamas war erupted meant it risked becoming "a new Gaza."

Violence in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967 and is separated from the Gaza Strip by Israeli territory, has flared alongside the war that began after Palestinian group Hamas attacked Israel on October 7.

Borrell said Israel was opening "a new front... with a clear objective: to turn the West Bank into a new Gaza—in rising violence, delegitimising the Palestinian Authority and stimulating provocations to react forcefully." Israel was also "not shying away from saying to the face of the world that the only way to reach a peaceful settlement is to annex the West Bank and Gaza," Borrell added at a ministerial meeting of the Arab League in Cairo.

He accused "radical members of the Israeli gov-

ernment" of trying to make it "impossible to create a future Palestinian state", which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and several cabinet members have painted as a threat to Israel.

Some Israeli ministers have recently called to increase military operations in the West Bank.

"Without action, the West Bank will become a new Gaza," Borrell said.

"And Gaza will become a new West Bank, as settlers' movements are preparing new settlements," he told the meeting. "The international community deplores, feels, and condemns, but finds it hard to act." Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank hit a record in 2023, according to Israeli rights group Yesh Din, and the European Union has said last year saw the most settlement building permits issued in decades. Some 490,000 Israelis live in the West Bank, in settlements which are illegal under international law, alongside three million Palestinians.

Dar calls unity among all political parties for strengthening democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday called for unity among all the political parties for the strengthening of democracy and the Constitution, warning that ongoing political conflicts could undermine the respect of the parliament.

Speaking in the National Assembly on point of order, Ishaq Dar highlighted that political engagement is essential, but red lines should not be crossed.

Welcoming Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's proposal, he said

the government fully endorsed the proposal to form high-powered committee of the Parliament so that a policy can be evolved to take the country forward with collective wisdom.

Ishaq Dar recalled that discussions for the Charter of Democracy (CoD) began in February 2002 between the PPP and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz.

Despite a history of bitterness between the two parties, Ishaq Dar said that they signed the CoD in May 2006 to restore the constitution and strengthen democracy.

Deputy Prime Minister

said the charter was subsequently endorsed by all major political parties, including Imran Khan's party at the time.

Ishaq Dar stressed that continuous internal conflicts among parties could tarnish the dignity of the parliament, adding that just because production orders were not issued during the previous government does not mean they cannot be issued now.

He supported the idea of the committee in question and urged for an open examination of how Pakistan's economy, which was the 24th largest in the

world in 2017, fell to the 47th position by 2022.

Ishaq Dar also called for an analysis of the substantial expenditure on counter-terrorism and the resurgence of terrorism, questioning the reasons behind this trend.

He emphasized that production orders are a privilege of the Speaker and suggested that the Speaker should form committees with genuine terms of reference to determine solutions for national issues.

He assured that the government would fully support such efforts.



QUETTA: A rally led by President Milad Committee Naeem Ahmed Madni, Mukhtar Habibi and Jan Ali Qasmi organized by Asalatu Wasalamu Alaika Ya Rasool Allah



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division.

ECC consider funds to Rs 238.42 million, for wheat subsidy Schemes 2015-16

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Wednesday considered a proposal for the provision of funds amounting to Rs 238.42 million, for clearing arrears of wheat subsidy schemes 2015-16, by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (NFSR). ECC took into account the recommendations of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, and directed the Ministry to arrange the funds through the available budgetary resources and settle the long pending claims, said a press release issued here.

The Economic Coordination

Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet met today to review and approve several key proposals across various sectors. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee today.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Petroleum Mussadiq Masood Malik, Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for

Privatisation and Investment, Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Governor SBP, and Chairman SECP, Federal Secretaries, and senior officers from concerned Ministries and Divisions. The ECC reviewed a summary from the Ministry of Communications concerning the "Kalkatak-Chitral 48 km (Section-III) Road Project (N-45) - Procurement of Civil Works" and authorized the Ministry of Communications and the National Highway Authority.

Govt asks SC to release dams' fund amount

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal government on Wednesday demanded release of dams' funds amount collected for construction of Diamer-Bhasha and Mohmand dams from the Supreme Court.

"We have submitted a miscellaneous petition," Additional Attorney General Amir Rehman said in the case heard by a four-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

"The amount of the dams' funds should be released to the federal government and Wapda," AAG pleaded to the court. "The State Bank had opened an

account under the supervision of the supreme court," government counsel said.

"How many funds are deposited in the dams' funds account," Chief Justice of Pakistan questioned. "There are around 20 billion rupees in dams' funds," Wapda lawyer Saad Rasool replied.

"How this case began," CJP Justice Faez Isa asked.

"The supreme court had taken notice of the Wapda's under hearing cases in 2018," Wapda lawyer replied. "Supreme Court's dams funds implementation bench conducted 17 hearings," the lawyer further said.

Govt. creating balance between resources, expenditures to avoid debt quagmire: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said the incumbent government was making its best possible efforts to create a balance between available resources and existing expenditures aimed at avoiding the debt quagmire.

"Without creating this balance, it will be impossible to come out of it, if stuck," the minister said in a televised address during a meeting he chaired on projects executed under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP).

He said if the development budget relied on borrowed money, it was the responsibility of everyone to ensure its transparent utilization, without allowing any leakage or misuse.

Ahsan Iqbal directed all Principal Accounting Officers to exercise zero tolerance against any leakage or misuse of the resources allocated for development projects. "Funds must be utilized for their intended purpose," he stressed.

Regarding the incorporation of development projects in the next PSDP, the Planning minister instructed the relevant authorities to review the development portfolio and prioritize 'advanced stage' projects that have completed 70 percent of their work.

Additionally, he specified that 'high impact' national priority projects should be given second priority, and all 'low priority' projects should be capped unless the necessary re-

sources become available.

He said that the policies introduced by the PML-N government in its previous tenures continued, the country's development budget would now be around Rs3,000 billion, compared to the existing PSDP size of around Rs1100 billion against Rs29,000 billion demands of the ministries.

He criticized that almost 40 percent of the federal government's total PSDP allocations were diverted to street-level projects of provinces during 2018-22, compared to only 14 percent during 2013-18.

He pointed out that due to mismanagement and inefficiency, the previous government allowed undue emphasis on street/local level projects.



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Reform, Ahsan Iqbal, presiding over the annual review meeting of the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2023-24.

PTV, PTV World to be revamped in accordance with modern era demands: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Attaulah Tarar on Wednesday informed the National Assembly that the state-run Pakistan Television (PTV) and PTV World were being revamped following the modern era demands.

Replying to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, the minister said that services of anchors from the private sector were hired to introduce a new face of PTV which truly depicted it as a state institution. They wanted that the opposition members could also get proper space at PTV, he

added.

Attaulah Tarar said that Pakistan would host the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit next month adding that it was imperative to revamp the English Channel. He added that the PTV World would become voice of Pakistan during the ECO Conference. To a question, he said that the government had announced Rs 37000 per month minimum wages during the federal budget. The minimum wage criterion has already been implemented in around 15 attached departments of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting except PTV, he said.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a meeting regarding Balochistan Institute of Cardiology, construction of new trauma center and other affairs

After three years Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory made functional in BMC Hospital

QUETTA: The Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory has been made functional after three years in the Bolan Medical Complex (BMC) Hospital here on Wednesday.

The Medical Superintendent of BMC Hospital, Dr. Afzal Zarkoon formally inaugurated the Cardiac Cath Laboratory, which otherwise was lying non-

functional due to technical fault for last three years.

The Head of Cardiology, BMC, Dr. Huma Naeem Tareen, Dr. Abdul Bari, Dr. Farhan Faisal and other concerned participated in the inauguration ceremony. Dr. Huma on the occasion informed that the Cath Lab has been made functional with cooperation of Health department costing Rs. 6 crore.

Two injured in vehicle collision on coastal highway near Pasni

GWADAR: A road accident occurred near the Pasni area on the Coastal Highway, resulting in two persons sustaining injuries. According to reports, a vehicle was hit by another vehicle, leading to the incident.

The Coastal Highway Police N-10, Zone-II Gwadar, promptly responded to the scene, with the in-charge of the Pasni Zero Point Check Post and his team providing assistance. The injured individuals were rushed to the Pak Oman Hospital in Pasni for medical treatment.

The driver involved in the accident has been identified as Baboo, son of Sabzal, a resident of Kalmat Pasni, with an ID number of 52102-4604827-2. The incident is currently under investigation by the authorities.

Ali Akbar Baloch posted as Sec. Agriculture; Zahid Ahmed as Dy Commissioner Panjgur

QUETTA: The senior officer of Grade-20, Ali Akbar Baloch, who was awaiting posting orders, has been posted as the Secretary Agriculture and Cooperatives.

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department on Wednesday.

According to the notification, Dawood Khan Bazai, serving as the Secretary Agriculture, has been transferred and directed to report in the S&GAD.

Similarly, Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar, Muhammad Arif Zarkoon has been transferred and directed to report in the S&GAD while Deputy Secretary Health, Yasir Iqbal Dashti has been posted as the Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar and Deputy Secretary IPC, Zahid Ahmed has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner Panjgur.

PM pays tribute to Kulsoom Nawaz's services for country, democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday paid tribute to Kulsoom Nawaz, the former first lady and wife of Pakistan Muslim League-N President Nawaz Sharif, for her services to the country and democracy.

The prime minister, in a statement on her sixth death anniversary, said the whole family could not yet grasp the grief of the passing of Kulsoom Nawaz.

Remembering her as the "mother of democracy", he said that as a wife, mother, sister and political leader, the late Kulsoom Nawaz set an unforgettable example of courage and steadfastness and acted as a shield for Nawaz Sharif.

She said that the late first lady's memorable movement against the dictatorship was a bright chapter of Pakistan's political history.

"Love and devotion to Islam, the Holy Quran and Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) remained the norm of Kulsoom Nawaz's life.

14 teachers dismissed for absence

QUETTA (APP): The Education Department dismissed at least 14 teachers absent from educational institutions for a long time to improve the education system in Kohli.

According to two different notifications issued here on Wednesday by the District Education Officer Hafeezullah Marree, 14 teachers have been dismissed from the job in light of the decisions of the District Education Group.

He said that a show-cause notice was issued to 25 teachers for not submitting the response and giving unsatisfactory answers.

District Education Officer said that the salaries of various teachers have also been cut and all these decisions were being made for the betterment of the education department.

Five killed in armed clash over karo-kari dispute

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): Five people were killed in armed clash between two groups over karo-kari dispute in Machaka police station jurisdiction, police said on Wednesday.

According to details, armed men of two groups which were in dispute over karo-kari issue traded heavy fire in Daulatabad area of Rahim Yar Khan.

The cross firing led to killing of five people and culprits managed to escape from scene.

Heavy contingent of police reached the scene and cordoning off the area.

The bodies were shifted to hospital for post-mortem.

DPO Rahim Yar Khan, Rizwan Umer Gondal took the notice of the incident and directed to arrest the culprits.

The police was conducting raids to arrest the culprits involved in fire exchange.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Ali Madad Jattak and Parliamentary Secretary Mir Barkat Rind holding a meeting

Rubaba Buledi says WDD ready to support industry-trained individuals thru Incubation Centers

QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister for the Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has emphasized the department's commitment to providing opportunities for industry-trained individuals to enhance their entrepreneurial skills.

She made these remarks during her visit to the Department of Industries here on Wednesday.

During the visit, Director General of Industries, Mr. Anees Gorgage, provided a comprehensive briefing on the department's operations. Dr. Buledi also toured the warehouses and display centers managed by the Industries Department.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi highlighted the importance of inter-departmental cooperation to pool resources and expertise to strengthen women's economic independence in Balochistan. She stated that by adopting a joint market strategy and utilizing e-commerce platforms, the identification of potential markets would create respectable employment opportunities for women.

She further added that the Department of Women Development is actively collaborating with other government departments on various initiatives aimed at empowering and economically stabilizing women across the province.

93 passport offices set up at Pakistani missions abroad: NA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Attaulah Tarar on Wednesday apprised the National Assembly that a total of 93 passport offices have been set up at Pakistani missions abroad in various countries while no such office was working in Afghanistan.

Replying to various questions during Question Hour, the minister said that the passport offices were set up based on the population of overseas Pakistanis.

To a separate question, he said that a total of 625 stalls were burnt due to a fire incident occurred at weekly Bazaar H-9.

Pakistan, EU vow to combat religious intolerance, extremism

ISLAMABAD (APP): European Union's Special Envoy for the Promotion of Religion and Belief Frans van Daele on Wednesday called on Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain to discuss the growing global concerns over religious intolerance, terrorism, sectarianism, and the promotion of peace and interfaith harmony.

During the meeting, both the dignitaries expressed their commitment to collaborate in combating religious intolerance and fostering a peaceful future.

Kakar forms committee for inquiry of alleged occupation on water supply scheme

QUETTA: The Chairman of Chief Minister Inspection Team (CMIT) Abdul Saboor Kakar has constituted committee for inquiry of the alleged occupation of the water supply scheme located in Killi Umar Khan, Airport road.

The Chairman CMIT was speaking to the delegation of Anjuman Ittehad Naujawan Killi Umar Khan who called on him here on Wednesday.

The delegation was led by the provincial president of Pashtoonkhw National Awami Party and former MPA, Nasarullah Khan Zairay.

Abdul Saboor Kakar assured that action would be taken on proving occupation of the water supply scheme in the report of committee.

Nasarullah Zairay said that the forefathers of the area dwellers had devoted the land to Public Health Engineering for the water supply scheme.

However, a farm house has allegedly been built after occupation against which the dwellers have been observing protest.

He said that no attention is being paid towards the protest and the area dwellers are being forced to vacate the scheme at their own. He expressed the hope that the issue would be resolved soon with personal interest of the Chairman CMIT.

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QUETTA: Chairman Balochistan International Think Tank Owais Jadoon meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai

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QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Social Welfare Haji Wali Muhammad Noorzai giving away souvenir to Principal Boys School Moti Ram School A. N. Nasir on excellent performance. Secretary Education Saleh Muhammad Nassar is also present



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting