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LAHORE: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti visiting the residence of Shaheed Captain Muhammad Ali Qureshi and offered condolence with the bereaved family members. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan are also present

PM expresses satisfaction over inflation rate drop; economic stability

Says government is committed to economic reforms and we are swiftly implementing the right-sizing policy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday expressed his satisfaction over the nosediving of inflation rate in the country and the indicators of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, showing a decline in the inflation rate. The prime minister said that 'Consumer Price Index' fell to record low in July 2024, bringing inflation to 11 percent and welcomed the economists' forecast of further decline in inflation in the current month of September.

"After Fitch, the global rating agency, Moody's recently upgraded Pakistan's credit rating, which is an acknowledgement of country's positive economic indicators by the international financial institutions," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the prime minister as saying.

The prime minister further said that the government was pursuing a policy of economic reforms and the implementation work was rapidly in progress over the right-sizing policy of the government which he was monitoring.

He expressed the confidence that its positive impact on the economy would be visible soon.

The prime minister also acknowledged that the

federal and Punjab governments had provided a big relief to the electricity consumers in respect of monthly bills, adding the prices of petroleum products were further reduced from today.

The prime minister said that the government believed in passing on all the benefits of such policies to the common man.

The economy was moving towards stability owing to the hard work of the government's economic and financial team, he added. He said the government was cognizant of the issues of the people and was striving day and night to resolve them.

No leniency or talks with terrorists Some elements' aim to undermine Pakistan in name of nationalism: CM Bugti

State will stand with victims; Terrorists going after soft targets

LAHORE (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti said on Sunday that no Balochi had killed any Punjabi but terrorists killed Pakistanis.

Addressing a press conference at a local hotel here he said, "Terrorists have no religion, sect or ethnicity and they should be treated as terrorist only." He said that in Baloch traditions travellers are very important and the Baloch have a lot of respect and esteem for women and children. "No Islamic or even Baloch traditions allow killing innocent human beings in front of women or children. The state is standing with oppressed people and with the family members of all those who lost their dear ones in recent terrorism incidents," he added.

The Balochistan CM said that he was here to assure that no leniency would be shown to terrorists. "In the recent terrorist incidents, BLA had attacked nine places in Balochistan and hit soft targets except one which was paramilitary an installment and three Frontier Corps personnel



were martyred in it. All other targets were civilians which exposed the capacity of terrorists. The Balochistan government along with law enforcement agencies will make sure that terrorists meet their logical end," he maintained. He also thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif,

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, who had visited Balochistan and an apex committee meeting was held there. "Action was taken on demands of the Balochistan government from the federal government. As the federal government has announced compensation for the martyrs, the Balochistan government will also give Rs 2 million to each family. The Balochistan government will also compensate for damaged vehicles," he added. The Balochistan CM said that 'Disgruntled Balochs' was not a right term, "they are only terrorists and there is a ruling of the then Speaker Qudus Bizenjo in this regard which he had given in the

Balochistan Assembly. An all-out effort will be made to eradicate terrorism from Balochistan and establish the writ of state in real sense, he maintained.

He said that those who commit violence in the name of religion had nothing to do with religion and likewise those involved in violence in the name of nationalism had nothing to do with it. He said that certain groups could not be allowed to create unrest and instability in the country just for their vested interests.

He said that people of Balochistan equally feel the pain and agony of the families of the martyrs.

He said such nefarious actions could not harm the state's resolve against terrorism.

'Dangerously delusional': Pakistan rejects India's stance on Kashmir

FO spox firmly rejects any notion that Jammu and Kashmir dispute has been or could be settled unilaterally

ISLAMABAD (INP): In response to recent comments by India's Minister for External Affairs, S Jaishankar, on Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan's Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch reiterated that the Kashmir dispute is internationally recognised and must be resolved according to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people. "The Jammu and Kashmir dispute is an internationally recognised dispute that must be resolved in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people. Resolution of this unresolved conflict is pivotal to peace and stability in South Asia," Baloch said on Sunday.

Jaishankar, speaking on Friday, had stated, "I think the era of uninterrupted dialogue with Pakistan is over. Actions have consequences, and insofar as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, I think Article 370 is done." He further added, "The issue today is what kind of relationship can we possibly contemplate with Pakistan. What I do want to say is that we are not passive, and whether events take a positive or negative direction, either way, we will react."

In her response, Baloch firmly rejected any notion that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute has been or could be settled unilaterally. "Such claims are not only misleading but dangerously delusional, as they blatantly disregard the on-ground realities. India's unilateral actions in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) cannot and will not change this reality," she said.

Two persons injured in blast near Chaman railway crossing

Independent Report QUETTA: Two persons got injured in an explosion took place near Chaman railway crossing in Quetta on Sunday afternoon. The police confirmed that two persons, stated to be passers-by, got injured as a result of the explosion took place near check post of law enforcement agency. Although the nature of blast is being determined, however, initial reports suggested that it was hand grenade that was used in the explosion.

The police and rescue teams rushed towards the spot of explosion. The injured persons were removed to the civil sanedman hospital where their condition is stated to be out of danger. Further investigations are in progress.

Joint condemnation resolution to be tabled as session of BA to be held today

Independent Report QUETTA: The session of Balochistan Assembly is scheduled to be held at 03:00 PM today (Monday). It may be mentioned here that the Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail had summoned the session of provincial assembly. According to the agenda, joint condemnation resolution would be tabled against the incidents of terrorism in the today's session.

The Provincial Ministers Ali Madad Jatak and Bakht Muhammad Kakar would table the resolution. The call attention motion would also be tabled about rehabilitation of the flood affected districts in the session. The member of opposition belonging to JUI, Zabid Ali Reki would table the motion.



MURIDKE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offers Fateha for late Rana Afzal Hussain, brother of Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister.

Visits Lahore to personally condole death of martyr Captain with family: Balochistan indebted to blood of martyr Captain Muhammad Ali; sacrifices of martyrs would not go in vain: CM

Independent Report They met the bereaved family of the Captain Muhammad Ali who was martyred during the terrorist attack in the province. They offered fateha for the departed soul and expressed condolence with the family. Speaking to the family of martyr captain, Chief Minister said that he (Captain Muhammad Ali) rendered sacrifice of his life for protection of the home land and people. He said that the province is indebted to the blood of martyr captain and the sacrifices rendered by the martyrs would not go to waste. He also reiterated the government's resolve to take the terrorists to task after chasing them.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the war against terrorism is not merely of the security forces, rather it is the war of whole nation. He also vowed that the families of martyrs would not be left alone. It may be mentioned here that Chief Minister Balochistan especially visited Lahore to meet the family of martyr captain Muhammad Ali and condoled with it. Meanwhile, he along with the Chief Secretary Balochistan also went to grave of the martyr Captain Muhammad Ali, laid floral wreath there and offered fateha for the departed souls.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the family of martyr Muhammad Ali Qureshi whom he visited in Lahore on Sunday afternoon. The Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Corps Commander Quetta, and Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan were also accompanied the Chief Minister.

He also reiterated the government's resolve to take the terrorists to task after chasing them. Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the war against terrorism is not merely of the security forces, rather it is the war of whole nation. He also vowed that the families of martyrs would not be left alone. It may be mentioned here that Chief Minister Balochistan especially visited Lahore to meet the family of martyr captain Muhammad Ali and condoled with it. Meanwhile, he along with the Chief Secretary Balochistan also went to grave of the martyr Captain Muhammad Ali, laid floral wreath there and offered fateha for the departed souls.



QUETTA: Security personnel at the site of explosion near a security forces check post at Chaman Phatak.

Terrorist attack on police checkpoint in Kurram injures three officials

KURRAM (INP): Three police officers were injured in a late-night terrorist attack on a police checkpoint in the Murghan area of Central Kurram, according to local authorities. The attack comes amid a surge in terrorist activity and movement in different areas of Central Kurram. Police sources revealed that terrorists attacked the police checkpoint in Murghan, resulting in injuries to three officers. Police retaliated with heavy fire, and there are reports of several terrorists being injured or killed. However, the exact number of terrorists involved remains unknown.

The fatalities have been reported from Qila Saifullah and Dukki areas of the province. Flood-hit people at Qambar await govt help. Although rain has stopped in Sindh, including Karachi, people are still suffering from their after-effects. The rainwater that had entered scores of villages in Qambar, Sindh from the Kirthar mountainous range has not been drained out as yet, while the water also washed away the roads, forcing the people to use boats as means of communication. On the other hand, nobody from the district administration has visited the area as yet to assess the damage done by the rains and start relief and rescue activities. Residents of the area have appealed to the provincial Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to take notice of their plight.

10 die in rain-related incidents in Karachi, Balochistan

KARACHI, QUETTA (INP): Although cyclone 'ASNA' has spared Karachi and coastal areas of Balochistan and now has moved away toward Oman, still the rain and strong winds it produced resulted in the loss of seven lives besides uprooting trees and electricity poles in the city, while three people died in Balochistan, reported on Sunday. The fatalities have been reported from Qila Saifullah and Dukki areas of the province. Flood-hit people at Qambar await govt help. Although rain has stopped in Sindh, including Karachi, people are still suffering from their after-effects. The rainwater that had entered scores of villages in Qambar, Sindh from the Kirthar mountainous range has not been drained out as yet, while the water also washed away the roads, forcing the people to use boats as means of communication. On the other hand, nobody from the district administration has visited the area as yet to assess the damage done by the rains and start relief and rescue activities. Residents of the area have appealed to the provincial Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to take notice of their plight.



QUETTA: A view of damages due to fire at Science College

Minister Education takes notice of incident of fire erupted in Science College, seeks report

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Education, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani has taken serious notice of the incident of fire erupted in the Government Science College Quetta. Expressing deep concern over the incident of fire in the Science College, the Minister Education has taken report of the incident from the concerned authorities. Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan has directed to the Secretary Colleges and Higher Education and the Principal of Government Science College to conduct inquiry of the untoward incident and submit the details in this regard immediately. She also directed to take legal action against the responsible if there's an element of any subversive act. The Minister also directed to lodge FIR of the incident. Besides, Ms. Durrani also directed to make sufficient security arrangements in the educational institutions and stop entry of the unauthorized persons in the hostels. It may be mentioned here that fire was erupted in the Science College in wee hours of Sunday. As a result of the fire, the office of Principal as well as the lecture rooms and corridor of the college were burnt. The furniture and other valuables were also burnt following the fire in the College. The fire brigades overcame the fire, which was erupted due to short circuit, as informed by the Chief Fire Officer Quetta.

He offered condolences to the minister on the sad demise of his brother Rana Afzaal Hussain, a Member of Provincial Assembly. Shehbaz Sharif prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with patience. The PM appreciated the political services of Rana Afzaal Hussain and said that his services for welfare of people would always be remembered.

Pakistan reports fourth Monkeypox case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Health on Sunday confirmed that a fourth case of Monkeypox has been reported from Peshawar. According to the spokesperson of the ministry, the affected person belongs to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The 47-year-old citizen was isolated on August 29 by Border Health Services staff based on symptoms, the spokesperson said. The affected person has come from the Gulf countries. National Coordinator for Health Dr Mukhtar Bharath said that an effective screening system is working at all airports. He said that Pakistan has taken effective measures to prevent Mpox. He said that the federal capital and provinces are in close coordination. He said that the government is ensuring that all the necessary steps are taken on time. He said that the Ministry of Health is regularly monitoring the situation. He said that the Ministry of Health and provincial governments are engaged in ensuring advance measures.



NASEERABAD: Provincial Advisor Sardar Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani inspecting damages due to flood

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

In demand

Important people have been lining up outside the maulana's residence, seemingly hoping to win his favour. What gives? Pictures of the beaming JUI-F chief, arm in arm with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, were splashed across the newspapers on Saturday.

About a week earlier, President Asif Ali Zardari and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had paid Maulana Fazlur Rehman a similar visit. In between, a delegation of senior PTI leaders, including party chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Asad Qaiser, Shibli Faraz and Raouf Hasan, knocked on the maulana's doors. A PTI leader said the maulana wanted two seats in the Senate; the prime minister promised him that all his grievances would be resolved by the government if he parted ways with the PTI. After months in the political wilderness, the maulana must be feeling good about being back in demand. After all, he was the only one left high and dry when the last election results were announced.

It seems important to outline the context. It may be recalled that these meetings started a day after the JUI-F and PTI reached an agreement on challenging the government. The PTI will be staging its first 'power show' in the federal capital next Sunday, for which it has vowed to push ahead with or without the state's permission. If the JUI-F decides to join its troops, it could become a more complex challenge to handle. Separately, the JUI-F has a significant presence in Balochistan, which was recently rocked by a series of coordinated terror attacks. The state could be planning a major counterterrorism effort there and may consider it important for the maulana to extend his backing to the state's plans. Then there are rumours that the coalition government is planning to move important legislation through parliament, in which Maulana Fazl's buy-in may make the difference between a constitutional amendment being passed or not.

This is, after all, what politics is about, and the maulana is one of the most seasoned wranglers on the national stage. His party can exert considerable street power, and he can be quite direct when criticising the state. For this reason, both factions would want him to be on their side. As long as the tug-of-war over his loyalties is confined to whether he wants to sit on the treasury benches or the opposition, the PTI and the coalition government can continue slugging it out.

However, it is hoped that the JUI-F will not become part of any scheme to amend the Constitution till the question of reserved seats is resolved by the Supreme Court. Last Tuesday, bills to amend the Constitution were sought to be tabled by a lawmaker elected on a JUI-F ticket. It is hoped that they will only be considered once parliament is fully constituted.

Tourism potential

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

At a time when tourism has emerged as a major sector of the global economy, many nations have invested heavily in the industry to contribute to their GDP and also create employment. For Pakistan, too, tourism has the potential to not only bring socioeconomic dividends, but also improve the country's image. In fact, there are very few countries in the world that can match Pakistan's combined potential for mountain, religious, heritage, and coastal tourism.

Of the many facets distinguishing Pakistan are its mighty mountains, that have attracted adventure tourists from around the world. Home to the meeting point of the Himalayas, the Karakoram, and the Hindu Kush, the northern areas of Pakistan are an authentic destination for mountain lovers. Of the 14 peaks above 8,000 metres, five are in Pakistan: K-2 (8,611m), Nanga Parbat (8,126m), Broad Peak (8,047m), Gasherbrum-I (8,068m), and Gasherbrum-II (8,035m). According to the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, Pakistan is home to 108 peaks above 7,000 metres and an equal number above 6,000 metres. This spectacular landscape is complemented by extensive glacier systems, gorgeous ridges, fabled lakes, picturesque passes, and high-altitude meadows.

The territories of Pakistan have also been the bastion of major religions. Buddhist holy places in the Gandhara region — Mardan, Taxila, Swat, and Takht-i-Bahi — attract tourists from Sri Lanka, Thailand, Japan etc. Eighty per cent of the Sikh religion's holy sites are situated in Pakistan, notably Nankana Sahib, Punjab Sahib, and

Kartarpur Sahib. Each year, thousands of Sikh yatrees visit these gurdwaras. Likewise, several temples in the country are revered by Hindus, including Hinglaj Mata in Balochistan, Katas Raj in Chakwal, and Hanuman mandir in Karachi. The Sufi culture of Pakistan also attracts spiritual pilgrims, particularly to the shrines of Data Ganj Baksh, Baba Farid Ganj Shakar, and Lal Shahbaz Qalandar.

Pakistan is also the proud inheritor of great civilisations, including Mehrgarh, and Indus Valley sites at Mohenjodaro and Harappa. Prof Michael Jansen, who studied and wrote about Mohenjodaro, was convinced that this site alone can change Pakistan's image from a terrorism-afflicted country to a bastion of proud heritage.

Pakistan's coastline also offers vast opportunities for tourism because of its sandy beaches, boating basins, beach huts and restaurants. Yet, despite this evident potential, Pakistanis wonder why the country is not able to benefit from this rich national resource. In the Travel and Tourism Development Index 2024 of the World Economic Forum, Pakistan ranks 101st out of 119 countries. (The US is at first place, while China is at nine, India 39 and Sri Lanka 76). Several reasons can be attributed to Pakistan's low standing in the tourism index.

Firstly, there appears to be no comprehensive national tourism policy framework. There are media reports that the PTDC has developed a five-year plan for 2024-2029 to promote international and domestic tourism, but it is not clear if this has been approved. In any policy framework, the government's role should be confined to being a legislator of policies, and facilitator,

regulator, and provider of services allied to tourism, while the private sector should be encouraged to create and manage tourist places. The prevailing provincial governance structures for tourism need to be revamped with enhanced coordination with the federal government.

Secondly, accurate statistics are not available, because of which planning is either not possible or is flawed. Thirdly, ownership of the local people for tourist sites is important. Only fun-c-tional local governments can engender community participation in preserving and maintaining this resource treasure, which has suffered from years of neglect by federal and provincial governments.

Fourthly, a tourist expects to receive visa facilitation, reliable air connections and safe road access to tourist destinations, decent transport, boarding and lodging, entertainment facilities, internet connectivity, and a safe security environment.

Fifthly, nothing puts off a tourist more than the garbage around tourist sites. There should be dedicated departments in local governments to ensure cleanliness. Last but not least, there should be institutions for technical training of local tourist guides. Of late, one hears of the intent of the government to encourage tourism as a revenue-generating industry. The private sector is also taking initiatives to promote tourism. Conferences are being held all across Pakistan to evolve concrete recommendations on how best to promote the tourism industry of Pakistan. Amidst the prevailing economic crunch, we need every hand on deck to help improve the economic life of the country. -- Courtesy Dawn

Under the influence

Muna Khan

I am currently struggling to embrace the era of the influencer, especially as it enters the newsroom. This is despite me attempting to convince my previous employer to let us — a legacy media outlet — join TikTok in 2022. I knew our younger audiences were on TikTok, so I wanted to train a young journalist, armed with all the principles of journalism, to engage with new audiences there. The channel was apprehensive, I guess, because change is daunting — so we didn't move forward with it.

The next year, I returned to the classroom to find students were getting their news (read views) from influencers; many even aspired to become one themselves. I felt sort of validated, save the part where students weren't really getting balanced, even well-informed information. The news media, they told me, was lying to them. And they weren't wrong, especially on the Gaza issue, which we watched unfold in class following the Oct 7 attack. In Pakistan, however, I take exception to the term lying media, which is better suited to describe the men in charge. Journalists can't say it how it is because of censorship and boss' interests, but that doesn't make us liars.

I digress. I was talking about influencers, whose global industry was worth around \$21bn in 2023, according to Harvard Business Review. Around 300m people globally consider themselves content creators. "It is difficult to imagine an organisation or a consumer today who is exempt from contending with the realities of a world shaped by influencers," they write.

While there are a lot of problems with traditional media, there are no

safety rails in place when it comes to influencers. You name a product, and, arguably, the Kardashians and their minions are selling it. This industry is, as the report says, a place for entrepreneurship but also exploitation. The influencer industry has grown from beauty, fashion, hospitality and travel to non-profits, news and politics.

Nowhere was this more visible than the Democratic National Convention last week, where content creators jostled for space with journalists and were getting access to top Democrats, like journalists. The party gave these influencers press-like credentials and a "front row seat to history". DNC's communication director told Reuters. Democrats understood they needed to tap into a younger audience which consumes information on social media. According to the latest figures from Pew Research, 83 per cent of adults use YouTube, 68pc use Facebook, 47pc use Instagram, and 33pc use TikTok. The mainstream media is no longer the gatekeeper of political news.

Of course, it rankled a lot of journalists who feel the press box is, well, for the press. The number of journalists at the convention was slashed and reporters say they faced restrictions in access as well. Meanwhile, content creators got a (real) platform from where they could record their videos.

While there's never been any consensus anywhere on who gets to call themselves a journalist, the way of reporting or covering events hasn't changed. Journalists work from a place of balance, whereas influencers are partisan from the get-go. They are not accountable to anyone. That is the fun-

damental difference, and if the DNC is roping in influencers to spread their message, is it because they have lost confidence in journalism or in its product; ie, their candidate?

At the time of my writing, Kamala Harris and Tim Walz were giving their first joint interview, an anomaly in itself. Harris has come under criticism for not giving an interview since becoming the presumptive candidate. There is a lot of speculation as to why: from she's avoiding scrutiny, to she doesn't think the media industry plays fair. My guess is that she would win (duh) and doesn't think she needs air time to get there. Maybe she's taking her cue from Joe Biden, who gave the least amount of interviews and press conferences as president since Ronald Reagan. Or she is confident her polling figures are strong enough. Whatever the reason, it hurts the media and the electorate it reports for.

To reiterate, I have no skin in this — or any country's — electoral game. What does it matter if we are bombed or sanctioned by the first Black and Indian female president? But it matters if countries take their cues from a superpower like the US and dismiss the press as an increasingly irrelevant institution that will be replaced by TikTokers. This is worrying and requires a serious re-think by media managers. They must em-b-race change, whether it is learning technological innovations, research from audience insight, or exploring new business models. I don't want officials to be answerable to in-fluencers. I want to keep asking tough questions and ensure elected officials are held to account. That is my job. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

FPCCI, Zimbabwean Embassy join hands for increasing bilateral economic ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and the Embassy of Zimbabwe in Islamabad joined hands for increasing the economic and trade ties between Pakistan and Zimbabwe and also reiterated for increasing the connections between the business community if both sides.

The Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Pakistan, Titus M.J. Abu Basutu and President Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Sheikh were addressing the dinner reception as chief guests hosted by the Convenor FPCCI, Central Standing Committee on Industry-Academia Linkages, Liaqat Ali Sultan here Sunday.

On the occasion, the Ambassador of Zimbabwe said that Zimbabwe and Pakistan had huge potential for increasing bilateral economic and trade ties and there was need to enhance the connection between the private sector of both sides.

The Ambassador said that the existing bilateral trade between Pakistan and Zimbabwe was standing at \$30 million in FY 2023 less than its potential, which needed increase up to \$100 million in the coming years.

He said the role of the private sector and especially the Federation Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry is significant to increase bilateral economic relations and the Zimbabwean Embassy in

Islamabad will provide full support to the exporters and traders in this regard.

The Zimbabwean envoy said that Pakistan's current export volume to Zimbabwe was \$20 million and Pakistan's imports from Zimbabwe were \$10 million, which was less than the bilateral economic and trade potential, which can be increased over time to strengthen economic ties.

He said that Zimbabwe imports from Pakistan mainly were agricultural goods including rice, tractors and other sectors like light engineering, electronics, medical equipment, sports equipment, safety tools and machinery. While Pakistan imports from Zimbabwe include chemicals.

FBR collects Rs.1,588b in Jul-Aug 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has collected gross revenues of Rs.1,588 billion during the first two months of the current fiscal year 2024-25.

Against a target of Rs.1,554 billion, the Board has collected Rs.1,456 billion in net revenue and refunds of Rs.132 billion (44 percent more than last year) were issued to the exporters to resolve their liquidity problems, said a news release here on Sunday.

The FBR collected Rs.593 billion under the head of domestic income tax as compared to Rs.437 billion in July-August 2023, thereby showing a growth of 36 percent.

A healthy year-on-year growth of 40 percent was achieved in the domestic sales tax with collection of almost Rs.314 billion.

Around Rs.86 billion were collected as Federal Excise Duty (FED) showing a year-on-year increase of 13 percent.

As a result a cumulative growth of almost 35 percent has been achieved in the collection of domestic taxes.

However, on the import side the same momentum could not be maintained due to continued compression in imports.

In US\$ terms, imports in the country have declined by 2.2 percent in August 2024 as compared to August 2023.

Similarly, the imports during August 2024 in PKR value also showed a decline of 7 percent as compared to August last year.

Moreover, the import of high duty items such as vehicles, home appliances, as well as miscellaneous consumer goods such as garments, fabrics, footwear etc have reduced significantly, changing the import mix.

This trend has impacted collection of Customs duties as well as other taxes collected at import stage.

Distribution centres set up in Lodhran for Kisan Cards

LODHARAN (APP): Deputy Commissioner Abdul Rauf Mahar said on Sunday that distribution centers had been set up regarding Kisan Cards across the district. Presiding over a review meeting regarding the issuance of Kisan Cards, he said the centers had been established in all three tehsils of the district. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Syed Waseem Hassan, Principal Agriculture Officer Malik Muhammad Zafar, Deputy Director Public Relations Nauman Masood Khan, representatives from the Bank of Punjab, and Assistant Directors of Agriculture from all three tehsils attended the meeting. The DC said that steps were being taken for the welfare of farmers under the Punjab Chief Minister's Agriculture Transformation Program. The meeting reviewed the progress of approved farmer-friendly projects initiated by the Chief Minister Punjab. It was informed that 22,516 applications for Kisan Cards.



RAWALPINDI: Divisional Superintendent Pakistan Railways Noorud Din Dawar inaugurates restoring of the service of Sir Syed Express under public-private partnership.

FTO's intervention boosts refunds to Rs 17.3 billion

LAHORE (APP): Advisor to Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr Waqar Arain has said the intervention of FTO has been particularly impactful in expediting the settlement of delayed refunds.

In last six months, a total of Rs 17,317.74 million have been refunded to aggrieved taxpayers, a significant increase compare to Rs 6,316.5 million last year. Speaking here on Sunday at awareness session with Prof Dr Amanullah Malik,

Principal Punjab University Law College along with other faculty, he said the transformation in the performance of Tax Ombudsman's institution reflects a commitment to upholding taxpayer's rights and improving the efficiency of tax administration, setting a new standard for responsiveness and fairness in the processes. He said that FTO Dr Asif Mahmood Jah, had adopted proactive measures by initiating all

time high number of suo moto investigations. These investigations target systemic maladministration within federal tax administration, underscoring a strong commitment to rectify underlying issues affecting taxpayers at larger scale, he added. He said that central to this success was the expertise of a dedicated team of seasoned and experienced advisors who have played a crucial role in conducting extensive outreach activities.

markets to tap into non-traditional ones and redefining the country's trade landscape.

Tariff rationalization, market and commodity diversification, regional trade connectivity; 'Look Africa Policy'; Free Trade Agreements and negotiations for trade agreements with various countries are hallmarks of policy shift to increase country's exports and curtail trade deficit.

In the current situation when the country is on path of economic stability, to remove the trade bottlenecks, the ruling alliance has initiated negotiations at the government level to increase regional trade with Central Asian states

DG hails 'Kissan Card' as a game changer for Punjab's farmers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General (Agricultural Information) Punjab, Naveed Asmat Kahloon Sunday announced an intensified awareness campaign to boost registration for the Kissan Card, a revolutionary initiative poised to transform the agriculture sector and improve farmers' lives.

In an exclusive talk with PTV News, he described the Kissan Card as a game-changer for Punjab's farmers, highlighting its potential to bring about a paradigm shift in agricultural practices.

In a bid to make the

Kissan Card initiative a resounding success, the authorities have set up registration offices in approximately 140 districts, he added.

This massive exercise aims to cover a large number of farmers, enabling them to register for the Kissan Card and reap its benefits, he said, adding that by doing so, the Punjab government is ensuring that no farmer is left behind in this revolutionary initiative.

To ensure a hassle-free experience for farmers, the authorities have implemented a smooth registration procedure for the Kissan Card.



LAHORE: People selecting and purchasing second hand toys from roadside vendor in Provincial Capital.

Trade Deficit - Embarking on a strategy to remove bottlenecks

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the nation grapples with multiple economic challenges, the present government is struggling on numerous fronts to control inflation, enhance foreign exchange reserve, boost exports and lower the burden of local and external debts.

Embarking on number a number of measures in the face of these pressing challenges, the most vital is to revitalize external trade by exploring new destinations and propel it towards a surplus, thereby fueling sustainable economic growth.

With a keen focus on diversification, the government is spearheading a multi-faceted approach to venture beyond traditional

markets to tap into non-traditional ones and redefining the country's trade landscape.

Tariff rationalization, market and commodity diversification, regional trade connectivity; 'Look Africa Policy'; Free Trade Agreements and negotiations for trade agreements with various countries are hallmarks of policy shift to increase country's exports and curtail trade deficit.

In the current situation when the country is on path of economic stability, to remove the trade bottlenecks, the ruling alliance has initiated negotiations at the government level to increase regional trade with Central Asian states

including Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. The measures also include Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Tajikistan with high-level economic team and finalization of agreements.

Negotiations for regional economic integration and trade promotion with various regional countries, including Iran and Azerbaijan also concluded at Shanghai's Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Astana (Kazakhstan) last month.

The government has directed Pakistani missions abroad to exclusively focus on economic diplomacy to increase exports in

different regions and tap potential global markets.

Industrial productivity is important to promote our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and exports," stated Alamgir Chaudhry, Chief Executive Officer, National Productivity organization (NPO).

He said currently Pakistan's exports are facing competitiveness in global markets and this issue can be resolved by modernizing our industrial sector and upgrading human resources capital. "The NPO has started Productivity Drive to improve economic literacy in the country and promote export culture."

Currently, Pakistan has a trade excess from the

Eurasian to European Countries, for which the geographical location of the Central Asian states is significant and provision of Gwadar port for these land-locked states would expand its role in the future geo-economic world and global trade.

The government is currently working on Industrial Competitiveness through Strategic Trade Policy Framework (STPF) to enhance country's trade, for which the 'Ease of Doing Policy and Made in Pakistan' initiative are of great importance for our industry to boost exports.

Alignment of trade Policy in tandem with the macro-economic framework and other national policies.

Punjab Governor says: National duty of scholars to highlight true face of Islam, play role in inter-faith harmony

Independent Report
LAHORE: Chairman Islamic Ideological Council, Mufti Raghbir Hussain Naimi called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, the president of PPP Ulama Mashaikh Wing Punjab and member of Islamic Ideological Council Allama Muhammad Yusuf Awan and others were present. Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said Islam has laid emphasis on love and tolerance and by following these orders, the society can be made

a cradle of peace. He said that it is the national duty of the scholars to highlight the true face of Islam and play their role in inter-faith harmony. Governor Punjab further said that everyone should make individual and collective efforts to improve the society. Meanwhile, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan today visited the farm house of Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain located on Narowal Road. He extended his heartfelt condolence to him over the death of his brother; Member Provincial

Assembly, Rana Afzal Hussain. Governor Punjab also offered his heartfelt condolences to Rana Ahmed Atiq Anwar, Member of National Assembly and other members of his family. He said that he equally shares the grief of the bereaved family in this time of sorrow, trouble and difficulty. On this occasion, Member National Assembly of Muslim League-N, Shaista Pervez Malik, Ali Pervez Malik, Sardar Irfan Dogar, Mohsen Shah Nawaz Ranjha, Pir Ashraf Rasool, Leader of People's Party Haji Azizur Rahman Chan, Allama Yusuf Awan and



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi addressing National Dialogue session organized by Oxford Alumni Community of Pakistan in Governor House.

CM promises realising low-income people's dream of own house

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said she will fulfill the dream of low-income people to have their own house, across the province. She was talking to Dr. Amjad Saqib, the founder and chairman of Akhut, here on Sunday. Dr. Amjad thanked the CM for her initiative of public relief in electricity bills and carrying out other important public welfare projects. The Punjab chief minister said the low-cost housing programme had been started in Punjab, and every year the scope of the project would be expanded. 'Apni Chhat,

Apna Ghar' [Own roof, own house] is the biggest programme in the history of Pakistan, she added. It would be a cheap residential project, she told Dr. Amjad. The chief minister said the main goal of the project was to provide housing to the financially weak classes. The government would give subsidies and set the easiest monthly installments, under the sustainable project, she promised. The CM said that with the implementation of the revolutionary housing project, millions of people would get a job and millions of families would be able to live a better life.

Governor Kundi issues directives to ensure women representation in syndicate, senate in universities

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, has issued directives regarding women's empowerment to ensure representation in syndicate and senate in universities through out the province. In line with the Governor's instructions, the Principal Secretary has sent a letter to all universities in the province on Sunday. The letter highlights the Governor's concern about the lack of women representation in the syndicate and senate of these universities, as mandated by the Universities Act of 2012 sections 19(7)

and 22(3A) of the Act stipulate that each university must include three women in both its syndicate and senate. However, this provision has been ignored in several universities, which is a violation of the law and contrary to the efforts towards women's empowerment. It was directed the administration universities to immediately ensure the inclusion of three women in both their syndicate and senate to guarantee equal representation and promote women's empowerment in society. Universities have been given a deadline of 15 days to comply with these

directives and issue the necessary notifications. Meanwhile, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, has paid tribute highlighting Syed Ali Geelani's significant role in the Kashmir liberation movement. Governor Kundi highlighted Syed Ali Geelani's struggle as an indelible chapter in the history of Kashmir. He commended Geelani's relentless efforts and affirmed that democratic forces in the self-determination movement salute Geelani's contributions.



LAHORE: Chairman Islamic Ideological Council, Mufti Raghbir Hussain Naimi called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

CM pays tribute to Ali Geelani

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has paid glowing tribute to Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Geelani on his death anniversary. In her message, she said, "Syed Ali Geelani will forever be remembered as a symbol of enduring freedom movement. His audacious leadership in the Kashmir liberation struggle made him a figure of great concern for oppressive forces."

Azma Bukhari says: Nawaz lifeblood, pride of nation

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari said on Sunday former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-N President Mian Nawaz Sharif "is the lifeblood, honor and pride of the nation". In response to a statement of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) main leader Asad Qaiser, she said Nawaz Sharif made Pakistan a nuclear power and put it on the road to progress, and his brother, Shehbaz Sharif, saved the country from bankruptcy, when former PTI government had pushed it into severe crises. The minister said that Maryam

Nawaz, the daughter of Nawaz Sharif, was currently serving the people of Punjab day and night as the chief minister of Punjab. She said Nawaz Sharif is a leader who talks about the country and the nation. Azma Bokhari said Nawaz Sharif returned to Pakistan and established governments both at the federal and provincial levels, and his brother Shehbaz Sharif was working tirelessly for the country's progress. The day was not far when Pakistan would stand on its own feet, and those dreaming of Pakistan's bankruptcy would be defeated, she added.

Family members of abducted guards protest at CM's house

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The family members of security guards of a private security company, who were abducted about 52 days ago during robbery of a cash van, held a protest demonstration in front of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's residence in Dera Ismail Khan on Sunday. The protesters demanded of the chief minister to take practical steps for immediate release of the security guards. They threatened of self-immolation if their loved ones were not recovered. They said that after the passage of 52 days of the abduction of their loved ones, they had no information about them.

Full-scale operation for sanitation in rural areas from Sept 16: Minister

SIALKOT (APP): Provincial Minister for Local Government Punjab Mian Zeeshan Rafique has said that a full-scale operation for sanitation in rural areas under the 'Suthra Punjab Programme' will start from Sept 16. He made this announcement while addressing a meeting of district administration, district council, municipal corporation/committees administrator and chief officers in the office of Deputy Commissioner Sialkot. DC Sialkot Muhammad Zulqarnain and Administrator

Municipal Corporation Sialkot Muhammad Iqbal were also present. According to the plan, door-to-door garbage collection would be done in each rural union council (UC) under the supervision of the local government department, with at least 10 sanitary workers and four loader rickshaws, who would transport garbage to the temporary garbage collection point, established in villages. From there, it would be responsibility of the district council to lift the garbage with trolleys and dump it at the dumping.

Ramesh lays foundation stone of new building for Sikh pilgrims

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs and President of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabhndhak Committee Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora Sunday laid the foundation stone of a new building in Nankana Sahib to facilitate Sikh pilgrims. This building will include construction of 100 rooms, dedicated to accommodating and providing comfort to pilgrims visiting from around the world. The minister stated that providing better facilities for Sikh pilgrims

remains a top priority, ensuring that they could perform their religious duties in a comfortable environment. Earlier, the provincial minister also visited various Gurdwaras, including Gurdwara Lila Ram and Gurdwara Bhatti Sahib. During the visit, Sardar Ramesh Arora inaugurated the Langar Halls in these Gurdwaras. The purpose of these Langar Halls is to provide free meals to the pilgrims, which is a tradition of the Sikh religion.

9 dead, 1,346 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least nine people were killed and 1,346 others injured in 1,257 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 570 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 776 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed that 694 drivers, 54 underage drivers, 161 pedestrians, and 500 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes.

International News

Israeli forces kill 48 Gazans ahead of polio drive

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli strikes on Saturday killed at least 48 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, ahead of the planned start of a polio vaccination campaign, the Palestinian health authorities said. The United Nations is due to start vaccinating some 640,000 children in the territory against polio, relying on daily eight-hour pauses in Israeli strikes in specific areas of the besieged enclave, Yousef Abu Al-Reesh, Gaza's deputy minister of health, said vaccination teams would try to get to as many areas as possible to ensure wide coverage but he said only a comprehensive ceasefire could guarantee enough children are reached. "If the international community truly wants this campaign to succeed, it should call for a ceasefire, knowing that this virus does not stop, and can reach anywhere," he told reporters at Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan

Yunis. On Saturday, medicines administered vaccines to some children at Nasser Hospital wards in a symbolic move before the official campaign begins. The campaign follows confirmation last week that a baby was partially paralyzed by the type 2 polio virus, the first such case in the territory in 25 years. WHO officials say at least 90pc children need to be vaccinated twice with four weeks between doses for the campaign to succeed, but it faces huge challenges in Gaza. On Saturday, as more than 2,000 medical and community workers prepared for the start of the campaign, medicines in Nuseirat, one of the Gaza Strip's eight historic refugee camps, medicines said Israeli strikes killed at least 19 people, including nine members of the same family. More than 30 other people were killed in a series of strikes in other areas

of Gaza, medicines said. The Israeli military said it continued to operate in the central and southern Gaza Strip. In Khan Yunis, however, families returned to their areas after the army ended a 22-day offensive it said was aimed at preventing Hamas from regrouping. Medics said they recovered at least nine bodies from the area where the army operated. Footage showed large areas were flattened, and buildings and infrastructure destroyed. Over the last 11 months, Israel's assault on the Hamas-governed enclave has killed more than 40,600 Palestinians, according to the local health ministry. Nearly the entire Gaza population of 2.3 million has been displaced and the enclave has a hunger crisis. Israel faces genocide allegations according to the International Court of Justice ruling.



OCCUPIED WEST BANK: An Israeli bulldozer drives as a fire breaks out in a fruit market in the city of Jenin amid ongoing Israeli raids.

Death toll from Bangladesh floods rises to 59

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: The death toll in Bangladesh from heavy rainfall and subsequent floods caused by river overflows continues to rise, with media reporting 59 deaths as of late Saturday. The Dhaka Tribune said monsoon rains have wreaked havoc across the country for nearly two weeks, severely impacting millions of lives. According to authorities, the floods have af-

ected approximately 5.5 million people in 11 districts, the majority of whom live near the Indian border. The number of fatalities has risen to 59, with 37 of them in the northeastern regions of Feni and Cumilla. Around 600 healthcare teams are on the ground in the affected areas, while over 500,000 people have been relocated to 3,403 temporary shelters as a result of the disaster.

Russia will change nuclear doctrine due to West's actions in Ukraine: official

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia will make changes to its nuclear doctrine in response to the West's actions over the conflict in Ukraine, the TASS state news agency cited Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying on Sunday. Ryabkov did not say what the changes would entail. Russia's existing nuclear doctrine, set out in a decree by President Vladimir Putin in 2020.

Israel recovers bodies of six hostages in Gaza, including Goldberg-Polin

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel recovered the bodies of six hostages from a tunnel in southern Gaza where they were apparently killed not long before Israeli troops reached them, the military said on Sunday. "According to our initial estimation, they were brutally murdered by Hamas a short time before we reached them," military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari told reporters in a briefing. The bodies of Carmel Gat, Hersh Goldberg-Polin, Eden Yerushalmi,

Alexander Lobanov, Almog Sarusi and Ori Danino had been found underground in the city of Rafah and returned to Israel, he said. "The heart of an entire nation is shattered to pieces," said President Isaac Herzog, whose post is largely ceremonial. "I embrace their families with all my heart, and apologize for failing to bring them home safely." There was no immediate comment from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is under pressure at home and abroad to reach a ceasefire deal that includes the release of remaining hostages.

Israel's Lapid calls for labour strike after hostages' bodies recovered

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid called on Sunday for a strike to shut down the country's economy in order to pressure the government to reach a deal to release the remaining hostages in the Gaza Strip. Lapid, who is also a former prime minister, called on every Israeli "whose heart was broken this morning" to join a major protest in Tel Aviv later in the day. He also called on Israel's main labor union, businesses and municipalities to go on strike.

Chinese and Philippine vessels collide at a disputed atoll and governments trade accusations

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: China and the Philippines accused each other of causing a collision between their two vessels Saturday in the latest flareup of tensions over disputed waters and maritime features in the South China Sea. In a statement posted on social media, Chinese coast guard spokesperson Liu Dejun was quoted as saying that a Philippine ship maneuvered and "deliberately collided" with a Chinese coast guard ship "in an unprofessional and dangerous manner." Philippine officials in Manila said it was their coast guard ship, the BRP Teresa Magbanua, that was rammed thrice by the Chinese coast guard without

any provocation, causing damage to the Philippine vessel. It was the second confrontation in days near Sabina Shoal, about 140 kilometers (85 miles) west of the Philippine province of Palawan, in the internationally recognized exclusive economic zone of the Philippines. The Philippine ship, the Magbanua, has been anchored in Sabina since mid-April after Manila suspected that China may construct a structure to seize the uninhabited atoll. China harbored the same suspicions and recently filed a diplomatic protest against the Philippines due to the ship's prolonged presence at the shoal.

Japan protests Chinese naval incursion following airspace violation

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japan voiced "strong concern and protest" Saturday after a Chinese naval ship entered its territorial waters, days after Tokyo accused Beijing of sending a military aircraft into Japanese airspace. A Chinese naval vessel was spotted entering Japanese territorial waters near the southern Kuchinoerabu island at around 6:00 am Saturday (2100 GMT Friday) and exiting southwest of Yakushima island nearly two hours later, the defence ministry said. Following the incident, the foreign ministry "issued Japan's strong concern and protest" to China's embassy in Tokyo. The ministry took "into account the past activities of Chinese naval vessels and others in the waters around Japan, and the recent intrusion into Japan's territorial airspace by a Chinese military plane," it said late Saturday. Japan on Monday scrambled fighter jets after a two-minute incursion by

Chinese Y-9 surveillance aircraft off the Danjo Islands in the East China Sea, which Tokyo slammed as a "serious violation" of its sovereignty. China's growing economic and military clout in the Asia-Pacific region and its assertiveness in territorial disputes—most recently with the Philippines—has rattled the United States and its allies. Last week, Japan's defence ministry sought 8.5 trillion yen (\$59 billion) for the next fiscal year, its largest ever initial budget request, as part of the country's five-year, 43 trillion yen defence buildup plan through March 2028. The request includes funding for so-called standoff capabilities to strike distant targets with missiles and unmanned vehicles. It is higher than the ministry's 7.7 trillion yen initial request last year, but smaller than the actual budget of 9.4 trillion yen approved for the current fiscal year.

Zelenskiy urges US Approval of deeper strikes into Russia

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy increased pressure on the United States to let Kyiv strike military targets deep inside Russian territory after his representatives met senior U.S. officials in Washington on Saturday. Washington has provided Ukraine with more than \$50 billion worth of military aid since 2022, but has limited the use of its weapons to Ukrainian soil and defensive cross-border operations. Zelenskiy said guided aerial bombs killed six people and injured 97 in Kharkiv on Friday, with more attacks on Saturday. These could be averted only "by striking Russian military airfields, their bases, and the logistics of Russian terror." In his nightly video address, he said, "We talk

about this every day with our partners. We persuade. We argue. We persuade. He said that clearing the Ukrainian sky of Russian guided aerial bombs would be "a strong step to force Russia to seek an end to the war and a just peace." Appealing to the United States, Britain, France and Germany, he said, "We need the capabilities to truly and fully protect Ukraine and Ukrainians. We need both the permissions for long-range capabilities and our long-range shells and missiles." Without providing specifics, he said his representatives had "provided all the necessary details" to Ukraine's partners. Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov, in Washington with a delegation on Friday and Saturday to meet U.S. officials and experts.

Taipei former mayor arrested in graft probe

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: A former mayor of Taipei who heads a small opposition party was arrested early on Saturday as part of a graft probe of a major property development in the Taiwanese capital. Ko Wen-je, mayor from 2014 to 2022 and who came third in January's presidential election, was arrested after investigators raided his home and party on Friday and questioned him for hours, his Taiwan People's Party said. Ko has denied wrongdoing in the case, which involves approvals given for a property project when he was mayor, telling reporters on Friday that "I know I have no problems." The TPP, in a statement on Saturday, said it "calls on the court to carefully examine the legality of the arrest procedure during the arraignment process, and to return justice to Chairman Ko Wen-je as he deserves."



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Kashmir Parliamentary Committee Rana Qasim Non addressing a seminar on the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of the Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Gilani.

Pak always raises Kashmiri voice at all global forums: Amir Muqam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON Engr Amir Muqam has said that considering its national duty, Pakistan has always raised its voice for Kashmiri right to self-determination at every international forum and continue to raise its voice till realisation of the Kashmiris goal of freedom.

Addressing Kashmiri Diaspora in Toronto, Canada, Engr Amir Muqam

said that Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif effectively advocated Kashmir dispute in his address at UN General Assembly forum and all international forums, said a press release. The participants given standing ovation to Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam on arrival to stage. They also chanted slogans Pakistan Zindabsd and PML N leadership Zindabad.

He said that Pakistan and particularly present

government will continue to lend its unstinted moral, political and diplomatic support to the rightful and just cause of the freedom struggle of Kashmiris.

The Indian actions of 5th August 2019 a blatant violation of the UN Charter, the 4th Geneva Convention and international laws. For the last three years India had tried every tactic of oppression against the Kashmiris but their resolve and passion for freedom could not be weakened.

The barbaric and brutal occupation of IIOJK by India not only violates international law, but also makes a mockery of the globally accepted norms of fundamental rights and freedoms. The international community can no longer remain silent while India continues to perpetrate its oppression in Kashmir. Despite more than seven decades of Indian occupation, including four painful years of continuous military siege and media blackout.

One million youths to get IT education every year: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE (APP): Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday said that government has planned to train youths in the IT sector through Chinese cooperation.

In a statement issued here, he highlighted the contribution made by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) government, asserting, "The PML-N led governments have distributed 1 million laptops among students."

"One million youngsters will get IT education every year," he added.

The minister said that

that the incumbent government was creating opportunities to provide digital education to people, stressing the need for increasing literacy. "We will have to boost literacy by up to 90 percent in a bid to steer the country towards prosperity," he added.

The minister announced the release of the district education index report. "Schools from 124 districts of the country have scored 53 percent. The prime minister has established a task force in connection with the educational emergency," he added.

Gilani calls health a fundamental right of every citizen

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Sunday highlighted the importance of health as a fundamental right of every citizen, stressing the collective responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to the knowledge and resources needed to lead a healthy life.

While addressing a celebration ceremony and health awareness seminar organized by TIENS International he extended heartfelt congratulations to TIENS International for their remarkable achievements and unwavering commitment to health and wellness. "Today's seminar is a testament to their ongoing efforts to raise health awareness and promote well-being," he said.

For over two decades, TIENS has made a profound impact on the health and entrepreneurial landscape of Pakistan.

The chairman praised TIENS's dedication to promoting Traditional Chinese Medicine and related products, which has significantly improved the lives of countless individuals.

He specifically com-

mended TIENS for addressing critical health issues such as ageing, obesity and personal care, aligning perfectly with national health objectives.

Gilani underscored the importance of health awareness in today's society, particularly in Pakistan, where the population faces numerous health challenges.

He emphasized the critical role of preventive healthcare and lauded TIENS for its efforts in promoting health awareness, which resonates with national goals of improving public health outcomes and reducing the burden of disease. He also praised TIENS for empowering individuals by providing access to reliable health information and resources, enabling them to make informed decisions about their well-being. "By preventing diseases and promoting a higher quality of life, TIENS is making a significant contribution to our society," he added.

He highlighted the importance of fostering an environment where individuals can achieve financial stability, contributing to

the economic growth and prosperity of the nation. TIENS, through its innovative business models and support systems, is helping many realize their dream of financial independence. The Chairman Senate also recognized TIENS International's commitment to people development education, particularly through its capacity-building and personal grooming training programs. These initiatives, he said, are instrumental in uplifting the social IQ of the youth, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the challenges of a rapidly evolving world. Reflecting on Pakistan's 77th Independence Day, Gilani urged the nation to remember the sacrifices of the forefathers and renew their commitment to building a stronger, more united Pakistan.

He called all stakeholders—government, the private sector, and civil society—to collaborate in promoting health awareness and entrepreneurship, creating an environment where health education is prioritized.



QUETTA: Pro-Vice Chancellor BUTTEMS Dr. Abdul Rehman Khan and Prof. Dr. Salman Shahzad signing MoU between BUTTEMS and Institute of Clinical Psychology Karachi University

Historic climate camp in Balochistan: a milestone in climate awareness

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan, located on the frontline of the global climate crisis, is bearing the brunt of climate change's impacts. Rising temperatures, droughts, and extreme weather events are affecting the region's ecosystems, livelihoods, and communities.

These issues were discussed extensively at the first-ever youth camp organised in Balochistan on climate crisis, said a press release issued on Sunday.

The statement said Madat Balochistan, a women-led indigenous organisation, successfully hosted the first-ever climate camp in Balochistan, held in Ormara.

Co-founded and lead organiser of the event, 17-year-old Nafeesa Baloch said, "I represented Balochistan at COP27, COP28, SB58, and the UN

Water Conference and this groundbreaking event with about 50-70 attendees aimed to raise awareness about climate change in the region."

Alongside Madat Balochistan, youth organisations from all over the country participated and helped organise two-day event. Booni Environmental Academy from the Gilgit Baltistan region and Youth Climate Activists Pakistan presented various sessions on climate adaptation and resilience.

Hania Imran, another youth climate activist and organiser, shared, "Balochistan's youth are on the frontlines of the climate crisis, and productive climate education camps that share resources and opportunities with them are a step in the right direction."

Didar Ali, an organiser from Gilgit, said, "The aim

of the camp was to empower local communities to take action against climate change and foster global leadership."

The event mainly featured interactive sessions around climate crisis issues, informative presentations and a tree plantation session. In the end, 95% of participants reported a better understanding of climate change and its impacts and 80% expressed a willingness to take action in their local communities. The event ended with a certificate and award distribution ceremony.

The participants said that by amplifying the voices of Balochistan's climate activists, Nafeesa and Madat Balochistan are bringing attention to the region's overlooked climate crisis, demanding action, and inspiring a new generation of climate leaders.

Sir Syed Express train restored under public private partnership

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Railways has restored the service of Sir Syed Express under public-private partnership. According to PR spokesperson, the first train comprising 16 coaches left for Rawalpindi from Karachi via Faisalabad on Sunday.

The train offers a variety of classes to passengers, including one AC sleeper coach, three AC business class coaches, one AC standard coach, a dining car and eight economy class coaches. Special measures have been implemented to ensure continuous water supply and cleanliness on board, enhancing passenger comfort.

Free Wi-Fi access is available throughout the journey, allowing passengers to stay connected.

Tickets for Sir Syed Express can be purchased through mobile applications, allowing passengers to book their travel from the comfort of their homes.

Railway CEO Amir Baloch expressed optimism about the venture, projecting an annual revenue of approximately Rs 3 billion from the Sir Syed Express. He emphasized that the public-private partnership model would play a crucial role in achieving self-sufficiency and boosting revenue for the Pakistan Railways.

menting Traditional Chinese Medicine and related products, which has significantly improved the lives of countless individuals.

He specifically com-



QUETTA: Chief of Haq Do Tehreek and Naib Amir, JI, MPA Maulana Hidayatullah Rehman Baloch and others meeting with President Quetta Press Club Abdul Khaliq Rind

Governor condoles death of Zareef; pays tributes on services

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of former Senator Sheikh Zareef Khan Mandokhail.

In a condolence statement issued here on Sunday, the Governor said that late Sheikh Zareef Khan Mandokhail was a thoughtful gentleman and a kind person. He said that services of late Mandokhail would be remembered for long.

He prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family members to bear the loss of his death.

Rain-wind, thundershower expected in parts of Balochistan today

QUETTA (APP): Regional Meteorological Center Quetta on Sunday predicted that rain-wind/thundershower was expected in Quetta, Zhob, Sibi, Sherani, Qila Abdullah, Pishin, Killa Saifullah, Harnai, Ziarat, Kalat, Naseerabad Awaran, Lasbela and Barkhan districts from Monday to Wednesday with occasional gaps.

The Meteorological Center has forecasted that the coastal belt of Makran, Jiwani, Gwadar, Pasi and Ormara and the adjacent areas of Kech are expected to experience thundershowers with winds of up to 50-60 kilometers per hour.

On Monday, the weather will remain hot and dry in most parts of the province, while there is a possibility of thundershowers in Zhob, Sherani, Qila Abdullah, Pishin, Killa Saifullah, Loralai, Quetta,

Mastung, Kalat, Khuzdar and Harnai districts.

The Cyclic Storm (CS) "ASNA" having moved further southwestward during last 12 hours weakened into a Deep Depression and now lies at around Latitude 22.0 N and Longitude 61.2 E at a distance of about 320km northeast of Masirah Island (Oman), 340km east-south-east of Muscat (Oman) and 370km south of Gwadar.

The system is likely to continue moving south-westwards and further weaken into a Depression by late night/early morning of September 2.

Sea conditions are likely to remain rough/very rough with squally winds of 40-50 Km/hour gusting 60Km/hour till tonight.

The fishermen of Balochistan are advised not to venture in open sea till tomorrow.

No desire to hold talks with govt: Asad Qaiser

ISLAMABAD (INP): If Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) form an alliance, the politics of other political parties will come to an end, said PTI leader Asad Qaiser in a statement issued here on Saturday. "Fair and free election is the only solution to the problems. PML-N has lost its senses," added the former speaker of National Assembly.

"I could not understand the mind of Khawaja Asif. We do not desire for holding talks with the government. We believe elections could steer the country out of the quagmire of crisis. The government seems helpless to put the things in order," the PTI central leader said.

After Germany, Austria also decided to deport Afghan citizens

VIENNA (Online): Austria's Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum has announced that deportations to Afghanistan will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, reflecting the evolving security situation in the country, Euro News reported.

Following Germany's recent action of deporting 28 "convicted criminals" to Afghanistan—the first such deportations since the Taliban regained power in 2021—Austria has indicated its intention to begin similar efforts.

Chancellor Karl Nehammer stated that Austria aims to collaborate closely with Germany on joint deportations. He noted that Interior Minister Gerhard Karner has engaged in extensive negotiations with his German counterpart to find solutions for deporting Afghan and Syrian nationals. The next step, according to

Nehammer, is to facilitate direct deportations to Afghanistan or Syria.

Karner has praised Germany's recent decision to deport convicted criminals to Afghanistan, calling it "very good." In March, he emphasized the need for discussions on potentially reassessing the EU-wide ban on deportations to Afghanistan and Syria, labeling the issue as "necessary and urgent." Karner noted that under current EU law, Austria is unable to repatriate individuals to such countries. He highlighted that Afghanistan and Syria account for approximately three-quarters of all asylum applications in Austria.

Austria's Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Office for Foreign Affairs are actively working to implement deportations to Afghanistan, with ongoing discussions involving several European countries.



NAROWAL: Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal addressing faculty members of Narowal Medical College

Federal Minister introduces tougher axle load enforcement & road safety measures

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization, and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday has announced new measures to enforce axle load restrictions on highways and GT Roads.

According to a press release in a bid to enhance road safety and infrastructure integrity, Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization, and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan has mandated stricter enforcement of axle load restrictions on all highways, including the Grand Trunk (GT) Road.

Federal Minister chairing a joint meeting with the National Highway Authority (NHA) and the Frontier Works Organization (FWO), Khan emphasized the importance of replicating motorway standards for heavy vehicle regulations across national

roads. Minister directed that weigh stations, akin to those on motorways, be established to ensure compliance with weight limits, preventing potential damage to road infrastructure.

Additionally, Abdul Aleem Khan underscored the need for comprehensive surveillance and e-Challans to address violations such as speeding, not wearing seat belts, and mobile phone use while driving.

Federal Minister also highlighted future planning for highway construction, stipulating that new motorways must feature at least two lanes in each direction and no fewer than six lanes in total.

Aleem Khan called for expedited efforts to complete ongoing projects, including the Sialkot, Kharian, and Islamabad motorways, through coordinated policies between NHA and FWO.

UK newspaper lambasts Imran Khan's candidacy for Oxford's chancellorship

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Guardian, a reputed English newspaper, has found fault with the decision of PTI founder Imran Khan to contest for the Oxford University Chancellor's post.

Catherine Bennett, a regular columnist for the paper, voiced her opinion and said Khan had called Osama bin Laden a "martyr" in the past while mentioning he also refused to call him a terrorist.

Not only that, the columnist noted that Khan had congratulated the Taliban for "breaking the shackles of slavery."

The paper also added that the PTI founder has excused the Taliban's ban on women's education.

Hafiz Naem says JI to unite public against feudalism and corruption

LAHORE (PR): Hafiz Naemur Rehman, chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, has vowed to unite the public to challenge the "oppressive feudal lords and corrupt capitalists," rejecting any divisions based on ethnicity.

Speaking at the launch of the membership campaign and a community breakfast in Johar Town, Lahore on Sunday, Rehman said, "Pakistan does not belong to any general, bureaucrat, or politician. The state is defined by its people, not by the military or judiciary."

He criticised the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), claiming they were entrenched in power since

1947 based on wealth rather than democratic principles.

Prominent party leaders including Secretary General Ameerul Azeem, Secretary Information Qaiser Sharif, and other regional heads were present at the event. Rehman emphasised Jamaat-e-Islami's commitment to peaceful political resistance, urging the people of Balochistan to fight their case at Minar-e-Pakistan.

"Today, we officially launch the second phase of the Haq Do Awam Ko (Give People Their Rights) movement," he announced. "I invite everyone to join Jamaat-e-Islami, become our allies in ending injustice, establishing justice."

Power Division refutes news item about summoning owners of IPPs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Power Division on Sunday strongly refuted news item airing on various TV channels about summoning the IPPs owners by the investigation committee.

"There is no truth in the news about summoning the owners of IPPs by the investigation committee," said a clarification issue by the Power Division here.

It further said that the owners of IPPs were not invited by the inquiry committee.



QUETTA: An injured of explosion near a security forces check post at Chaman Phatak being treated at Civil Hospital.

Indian troops martyr seven Kashmiris in August in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian troops in their unabated acts of state terrorism martyred seven Kashmiris in the last month of August in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

According to the data issued by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service, today, the Kashmiris were martyred in different fake encounters while one woman was disgraced by the Indian police personnel in the territory.

During the period, the personnel of Indian army, police, paramilitary, Special Investigation Agency (SIA)

and National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested 96 civilians, mostly political activists, youth and students, during 186 cordon and search operations and house raids while several of them were booked under black laws, including Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Public Safety Act (PSA).

Properties, including house and lands, of the five Kashmiris were attached and eight Kashmiri Muslim employees were suspended from their government services by the New Delhi-controlled Bharatiya Janata Party regime.



JHAL MAGSI: Commissioner Naseerabad Division Moeenur Rehman Baloch being briefed by Deputy Commissioner Jhal Magsi Syed Rehamatullah Shah about flood affected areas