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PM reaffirms Pak commitment to ozone layer protection

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has reiterated Pakistan's strong commitment to the preservation of the ozone layer, marking World Ozone Day.

In his message, the prime minister emphasized the crucial role of global collaboration in addressing ozone depletion and highlighted Pakistan's significant contributions to international efforts.

Acknowledging the damage caused by human activities, the prime minister expressed concerns over the depletion of the ozone layer, which resulted in the formation of the ozone hole, posing severe risks to life on Earth.

However, he praised the positive impact of global initiatives such as the United Nations Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, which had facilitated the recovery of the ozone layer.

"Pakistan has been an active participant in these UN agreements," PM Shehbaz Sharif noted, pointing out that the country ratified the Montreal Protocol in 1992 and has since made considerable progress in phasing out ozone-depleting substances (ODS).

The establishment of the National Ozone Unit (NOU) in 1996 has played a pivotal role in driving these efforts, working in collaboration with customs officials, the refrigeration and air conditioning industry, and other key stakeholders.

He highlighted that Pakistan successfully phased out the first generation of ODS by 2009 and achieved a 50% reduction in HCFCs by 2020.

"The country is on track to meet its target of a 67.5% reduction by 2025, with many industries having already transitioned to ozone-friendly technologies."

The prime minister also stressed Pakistan's preparedness for the phase-down of hydro-fluorocarbons (HFCs) under the Kigali Amendment.

Additionally, he also reaffirmed his government's commitment to climate action and environmental sustainability.

He urged for continued global cooperation, in line with this year's theme, "Montreal Protocol - Advancing Climate Actions", to ensure a safer and more sustainable planet for future generations.



ISLAMABAD: A view of lightings in connection with Eid Milad un Nabi SAW, in the Federal Capital.

Constitutional package in limbo as Fazal opposes judges' extension, retirement age hike

NA session to be postponed till today as govt, opposition fail to reach consensus on constitutional amendments

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Amid the government's efforts to introduce a "constitutional package" that reportedly gives it greater control over judicial procedures, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has taken centre stage, with both the ruling coalition and the opposition vying for his support in Parliament.

"We haven't received the draft amendment bill yet [...] How can we vote before analysing it?" JUI-F General Secretary Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri said speaking to journalists outside Fazl's residence.

He said that the government delegation had been

asked not to rush in tabling the bill. "We will participate in the [special parliamentary] committee's meeting and present our stance," he added.

Haideri stressed that the opposition parties should also review the amendment bill, saying they have sought "some time" before making a decision.

After a slew of meetings with the ruling coalition and opposition, Maulana Fazlur Rehman arrived at the Parliament House to attend the special parliamentary committee meeting. "Stay tuned," the veteran politician responded to a journalist's question in the parliament corridor.

Both sessions of the National Assembly (NA) and the Senate — originally scheduled for earlier in the day — have been delayed multiple times as both the government and the opposition were holding consultations.

However, sources told that the federal cabinet meeting — summoned for the approval of the draft amendment — has been postponed until tomorrow.

The government has been tight-lipped on the proposed amendments to the Constitution, but clarified that the package will not be a person-specific and would give the authorities ingress in the judicial procedure.

Mengal demands release of missing persons in return of supporting bill

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan National Party Mengal (BNP-M) chief Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal has demanded the release of missing persons in return of supporting the ruling coalition in passing the constitutional amendment bill.

Mengal got much importance in the current political landscape as the ruling coalition is desperate to pass the constitutional amendment bill at any cost.

He was approached by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and former Senate chairman Sadiq Sanjrani on Sunday. The sources said that the Baloch veteran has refused to vote till the recovery of missing persons.

The ruling coalition is struggling to meet the required numbers in both houses of the parliament to pass the legislation and BNP-M has two votes in the Senate.

The sources said that Mengal has sought the draft of proposed legislation from Sadiq Sanjrani.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi leaving Mulana Fazlur Rehman residence after the meeting with JUI(F) chief Mulana Fazlur Rehman

Friendly nations to invest \$27b in Pakistan in coming years: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has said the government is committed to bringing socio-economic and judicial reforms to put the country on the fast track economic development.

In his televised remarks today, he categorically stated that nobody will be allowed to play with the peace and stability of the country. Strongly criticizing the politics of PTI, he said the party should play its role in the parliament instead of taking to the streets.

Ahsan Iqbal said friendly countries have extended assurance of invest-

ing twenty seven billion dollars in Pakistan in the next five years. He said Saudi Arabia has announced to invest five billion dollars, while the UAE and Kuwait will each invest ten billion dollars and Azerbaijan will invest two billion dollars.

He said these are the external opportunities that are knocking at our doors. He said it is our responsibility to take full advantage of these opportunities through continuity of policies and reforms.

Ahsan Iqbal said China has also shown willingness for the second phase of CPEC. He said China has given assurance for the est-

ablishment of five new corridors including that of growth, livelihood, innovation, green economy and open regional inclusive development.

The Minister for Planning said that a Danish company has announced to invest two billion dollars in Pakistan's Port Infrastructure. He regretted that PTI is trying to create impediments in the way of this investment. He recalled that the party had also tried to sabotage IMF deal.

Ahsan Iqbal said it is important to bring reforms in the judicial system as well to attract the foreign investment.

Govt slashes petrol price by Rs10 per litre

ISLAMABAD — The federal government slashed the petrol price by Rs10 per litre for the next fortnight.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved the new prices of petroleum projects.

The federal government reduced the price of petrol by Rs10 per litre. Additionally, the price of high-speed diesel has been decreased by Rs13.06, kerosene by Rs11.15, and light diesel oil by Rs12.12 per liter.

Following the Rs10 reduction, the price of petrol is now set at Rs 249.10 per liter. The price of high-speed diesel, after a Rs 13.06 cut, is now Rs 249.69 per liter.

Similarly, the price of light diesel oil has been lowered by Rs12.12 per liter to Rs141.93, and kerosene has dropped by Rs11.15 to Rs158.47 per liter.

CM Marriyam lauds PM Shehbaz for bringing economic stability

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Information Secretary Marriyam Aurangzeb praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for bringing economic stability to the country after several years.

She said that the youth must understand why the economic indicators begin to improve as soon as the PML-N government comes into power. With the PML-N's governance, inflation starts to decrease historically, and the public begins to receive relief.

She noted that the historic reduction in inflation from 38% to 9.6% is nothing short of a miracle. The decrease in the interest rate (policy rate) from 22% to 17.5% is proof of successful economic policies, while, for the last five years, incompetent, inefficient, and conspiratorial mafias played with the economy, causing its destruction and making the country more expensive.

The senior provincial minister stated that Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif, with the help of God, made decisions in the national interest that saved the country from default. Whenever Pakistan Muslim League-N comes into power, God bestows His blessings. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is turning the tide of economic storms, Alhamdulillah.

Successes on all fronts, including the economy, foreign affairs, and public relief, are proof that the PML-N and its leadership are the ones who bring progress to the country and its people.

Marriyam Aurangzeb remarked that every decision made by Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, and Maryam Nawaz Sharif is aimed at reducing inflation, and every decision by the Chief Minister of Punjab is for public relief.

After the decrease in inflation, the 4% reduction in the interest rate is a testament to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's hard work, honesty, and sound economic policies.

Reforms imperative to provide speedy justice to masses: Tarar



ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that reforms were essential to provide speedy justice to the people.

Talking to the journalists here, the minister assured that any legislation to be done in the collective interest of the nation.

The minister remarked that many decades were passed to solve the cases in the judiciary and it was imperative to take measures for providing speedy justice to the people.

He said that all coalition parties had representation in the special committee constituted for this

purpose.

He said that Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar had talked about the Charter of Democracy to reform judicial system.

"Any amendment in matters of national concern should benefit the entire Pakistani nation," he opined. He maintained that due to legal lacunae, many times the cause list was not issued, notices were not served and orders were issued. There should be a balanced system to maintain balance in this regard, he observed.

The minister said that members of the cabinet were present, there will be

a meeting of the cabinet shortly.

The government was positive about the number game, he said adding Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Amir

Maulana Fazlur Rahman was an old ally and partner. He asked the media to wait a little to get good news in this regard.

Meanwhile Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has assured madrasas and Islamic universities of the government's full support in upgrading their facilities to include contemporary education alongside traditional Islamic teachings.

Addressing a one-day training workshop, organised by Dar-ul-Uloom Islamia in Allama Iqbal Town via video-link on Sunday, the minister emphasised that integrating modern education into the madrasa system is a "great national service". He congratulated Dar-ul-Uloom Islamia for its efforts in introducing degree programs in modern subjects alongside religious studies.

Pakistan to secure fresh IMF bailout package on September 25

ISLAMABAD (INP): Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that the country will secure an extended International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme on September 25.

Speaking at the CFA Society of Pakistan's 21st Annual Excellence Awards, Aurangzeb expressed hope that it will be the country's final IMF programme. However, he warned that failure to sustain reforms might lead to a 25th programme.

His remarks come as Islamabad reached an agreement with the Washington-based lender on a \$7 billion 37-month loan programme in July earlier this year. However, the future of the bailout package is subject to the approval of the Fund's executive board which is set to convene on September 25 with Pakistan included in its meeting agenda.

The country was required to secure external financing of \$2 billion from bilateral and commercial lenders as a pre-requisite for the IMF board's approval.

It is to be noted that Pakistan owes \$5 billion to Saudi Arabia in the form of cash deposits, along with \$4 billion and \$3 billion from China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gailo meeting with Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nassar

PM actively working to address challenges facing Pakistan: Syedaal Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman of the Senate, Syedaal Khan Sunday said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is actively working to address the challenges facing Pakistan and is committed to fostering prosperity and development in the country.

He urged all coalition parties to fully support Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the current political scenario.

Syedaal expressed these views during a meeting with key political figures, including Parliamentary Leader of PML-N Senator Irfan-ul-Haque Siddiqui, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Senator Mir Aslam Abro, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Federal Education Senator Bushra Anjum Butt, Provincial Minister for Revenue of Balochistan Asim Khan Kurd Gello, JUI Par-

liamentary Leader in the Senate Senator Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman, and Senator Haji Shakoor Ahmed Achakzai.

He also expressed gratitude to the political leaders and coalition partners standing in solidarity with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and former Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, working together to resolve the nation's issues. He highlighted that significant efforts are being made to tackle the country's problems effectively. He further said that thanks to the relentless efforts of both Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif, a noticeable reduction in inflation has been achieved.

He pointed out that electricity prices have been reduced under Nawaz Sharif's directives, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's tireless efforts have contributed to a significant decrease in inflation.

Three more cases of monkeypox virus detected at Karachi Airport

KARACHI (INP): The signs of the monkeypox virus were detected in three passengers who arrived from Jeddah and Dubai at Jinnah International Airport (JIAP) Karachi in a single day, reported on Sunday.

Sources said that monkeypox was detected in a woman who reached Karachi from Jeddah while another man aged 18 arrived from Dubai.

Sources further said that monkeypox was also found in a 44-year-old passenger who touched Karachi airport via Saudi Airlines Flight SV-708.

After the detection of the monkeypox virus, all these patients were immediately shifted to the Infection Diseases Centre Hospital for further treatment.



Senator Hidayatullah Khan, presiding over a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Narcotics Control after being elected as Chairman of the Committee at Parliament House Islamabad.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Amendment furore

The inter- and intra-institutional battles continue apace. With rumours and speculation at fever pitch, the National Assembly and Senate convened late Saturday afternoon, ostensibly to debate amendments to the Constitution.

However, soon after sessions commenced in the two Houses, it became clear that nothing dramatic was planned for the day. The opposition and treasury benches seemed more interested in trading barbs and attacking each other's democratic credentials, while there was little discussion on the 'constitutional package' that was supposed to be tabled. As the day wore on, speculation picked up that the government had failed to lock down the votes it needed. Even with its allies, it seems to be short of the required two-thirds majority in both Houses. Furthermore, a Supreme Court judgment in the field on Article 63-A ensures that even if opposition legislators are induced to vote against their party lines, their votes will not count.

While these debates and discussions were playing out in parliament and on television talk shows, a bolt landed from the blue. The Supreme Court issued a long-awaited clarification in connection with its earlier ruling in the reserved seats case, directing the Election Commission of Pakistan to immediately notify all remaining PTI lawmakers as members of its parliamentary party. This gave finality to the status of 41 lawmakers that the government had been describing as 'independents', whose votes were up for grabs.

As things now stand, making constitutional amendments while remaining within the bounds of propriety and the law seems like an increasingly difficult task. The government should be asked why it set about attempting to change the Constitution in such a furtive manner. Few seem to know what is in its legislative package, and with the opposition accusing it of pressuring lawmakers to vote for it, it seems like a thoroughly undemocratic exercise overall.

Lastly, a word too on the ECP, one of the primary actors responsible for the growing political mess in Pakistan. Yet again, its actions have been found to be in bad faith and violative of the law. Not only that, the Supreme Court has also slammed its attempt to delay implementation of the July reserved seats verdict by seeking 'clarification' on the PTI's organisational structure. The "attempt by the ECP to confuse and cloud what is otherwise absolutely clear as a matter of the Constitution and the law must [...] be strongly deprecated," the court has noted, warning it of consequences if it tries to delay issuing the notifications any longer.

Perhaps it is time that the institutions propping up the current regime realised that the state is sinking deeper in crisis not just because of the PTI, but also because their own actions are gradually robbing it of all legitimacy.

Women in trouble

Muna Khan

Every day is a terrible day for women everywhere in the world. I'm loath to rank crimes from most horrendous to least because there's no such thing, so I'm writing about some especially horrific stories in no particular order. Although I have been covering gruesome acts against women for at least two decades and consider myself desensitised, I was stunned by the following.

Dominique Pelicot is on trial in France for the mass rape of his wife, the 72-year-old Gisele, whom he drugged; he enlisted 80 men to rape her in her own bed for a decade. Gisele only found out about these unimaginable crimes when her husband was arrested for inappropriate filming of young girls and police confiscated his computer. There he had kept meticulous records of the repeated sexual abuse of his wife, which he organised and filmed. Police say it is not possible the men did not know she was unconscious. One man charged with the crime told police he thought she was asleep and it was "part of the play".

Dominique has admitted to drugging his wife with sleeping pills before inviting men he met on an online platform to abuse her. "I put her to sleep, I offered her, and I filmed," he told the police when he was arrested, according to French media.

I salute Gisele for her bravery in waiving her right to anonymity, attending the trial which she asked be made public and sitting through the images and videos.

Dominique and 18 men are in custody while 32 are attending the trial as free men while one man, who remains at large, will be judged in absentia. He and the 50

men could face up to 20 years in prison if found guilty. Thirty men, however, are still at large.

Gisele told the court she was worried she had Alzheimer's because her memory and concentration were poor. The toughest part was telling her adult children what their father had done. Their daughter, who published *And I Stopped Calling You Dad* in French in 2022, described him as "one of the worst sexual criminals in the last 20 years".

Gisele has been hailed for her calm demeanour during the trial but she was quoted in the BBC as saying her face "masked a field of devastation". The Guardian reported her saying "I no longer have an identity ... I don't know if I'll ever rebuild myself."

While Gisele has the support of her children and European social services, what can we expect for the woman scrap collector in Madhya Pradesh who was raped on a busy street last week as bystanders watched and filmed the incident. It was uploaded on social media and went viral. A man has been arrested for luring the woman and plying her with alcohol before raping her in broad daylight. He has admitted to the crime. Police say they are looking for those who filmed the incident.

Her case will not get the attention it deserves perhaps because Indian media is numb or this woman's rape did not receive the outrage the rape of the trainee doctor in Kolkata did. It is a reminder of the challenges India faces with high rape cases and low conviction rates — 27 per cent between 2018 to 2022 according to official figures.

A criminal lawyer told Reuters rapists still think they can get away

with the crime.

We've made getting away with crimes an art form in Pakistan.

You can say the most odious of things about women — on TV (dramas and news), in parliament or political rallies — and not face serious consequences. Women journalists are especially vulnerable. We saw it on Sunday when KP's Chief Minister Ali Gandapur launched into a diatribe against women journalists using highly objectionable language. Reporters at this rally said they felt the crowd's hostility turn towards them. This is so dangerous as increasingly people are being whipped into a frenzy and turn violent. Who would be held responsible if women journalists were attacked that night?

At the time of writing Gandapur had not apologised for those comments and after condoning them, Imran Khan told journalists in prison that Gandapur went too far. But it is because journalists protested. This is what we need to see more of: collective action like refusing to cover events where women are targeted. There must be consequences for dragging women down.

Earlier this year the World Health Organisation published a report showing that "globally about one in three ... women worldwide have been subjected to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner in their lifetime." It is a major public health problem. I don't know how policymakers can redress this issue but I know our attitudes — especially certain politicians — need a major overhaul. -- Courtesy Dawn

Bangladesh renewal

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Forty days after Sheikh Hasina Wajed fled Dhaka, Bangladesh is slowly recovering from the after-effects of her government's violent crackdown on the students-led protests, that reportedly cost over 1,000 lives. The intellectual community worldwide is curious to understand why Hasina, who cultivated her image as the 'iron lady', lost her grip on power so rapidly, as well as the nature of the change in Bangladesh. Since 2009, Hasina ruled Bangladesh like an autocrat, crushing all opposition ruthlessly. She also built a cult around the figure of her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Her ouster pacified widespread concerns in the country regarding the erosion of multiparty democracy under her and the attempt to impose one-party rule.

It has certainly been a peoples' moment in Bangladesh, with terms such as 'Monsoon Revolution' being used to describe the change. However, it is not clear if this change is permanent and if political stability will return to the country soon. Hasina's party, the Awami League, has lost considerable ground, but will endeavour to make a comeback, arguing that it represented the country's secular ethos. Her 15-year rule enabled the party to spread its tentacles to every aspect of national life. Under her, the country saw notable economic development, though this was not inclusive and inequalities sharpened amidst unemployment and inflation.

In foreign policy, Hasina chose to capitulate to Indian dominance, which for the freedom-loving Bangladeshis was suffocating. For now, India's space in Bangladesh has been squeezed, but it is evi-

dent that it will make every effort to preserve its influence. Of crucial interest to India is border security, given the 4,000-kilometre-long porous border and active insurgencies in India's north-eastern states. However, the immediate challenge for India's leaders is how to handle the presence of Hasina in their country.

As long as she is in Delhi, the latter's relations with Dhaka are not likely to improve. Given that the two countries signed an extradition treaty in 2013, many in Bangladesh have called for seeking her return to stand trial for the over 900 criminal cases lodged against her and her aides.

India is trying to manipulate the narrative that brought about the change in Bangladesh. Indian researchers and media are advancing a narrative that the change would nudge Bangladesh towards Muslim fundamentalism, and that the Hindus in Bangladesh were being targeted, which according to the BBC were mostly rumours. Ironically, it is India where religious persecution has risen to alarming levels. India is also desperately projecting the possible involvement of a foreign hand in the change, which appears to be totally indigenous. This is intended to discredit the change brought about by the sacrifice of the students who stood up to Hasina's tyranny.

Meanwhile, the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus is struggling to address the politically charged environment and reboot the economy, which was slowing down even before the protests began. The country's garment industry has taken a particular hit due to the weeks-long protests. The government has set up a task force called 'Re-strategising the economy and mobilising

resources for equitable and sustainable development'.

Politically, a healing touch is required. The student leadership wants fundamental reforms in the judiciary, police, and election commission before the polls. It appears that elections may be delayed for some time.

As for the regional setting, Muhammad Yunus has underscored the need to revive Saarc, which was established in Dhaka in 1985. He wants Bangladesh to be-co-me a member of Asean and then serve as a bridge between Saarc and Asean.

How should Pakis-tan respond to this change? Pakistanis care for the people of Bangladesh, and should fully respect their right to determine their political destiny in whatever way they want. However, Pakistan can take satisfaction from the fact that Hasina will no longer be able to falsely accuse it or manipulate the sad events of 1971. The poisonous propaganda against Pakistan might also stop.

Hasina's exit from power provides an opportunity for Pakistan and Bangladesh to reset bilateral ties. However, Pakistan must have realistic expectations of what the new interim government can do at a time when it is endeavouring to set matters right internally. Pakistan has done well by expressing solidarity with the people of Bangladesh in the face of the devastating floods that recently hit the country's eastern region.

The two countries could also encourage people-to-people contacts and youth exchanges that Hasina had blocked. It would be appropriate for both countries to move towards each other at a measured pace with realistic expectations. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

CIFTIS 2024:

Global enterprises showcase interest in China's expanding market as UAE, Pak debut national pavilions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) 2024 has once again demonstrated China's high level of openness by fostering international cooperation and mutual benefits.

According to the information, over 450 Fortune 500 enterprises and leading companies, along with representatives from 85 countries and international organizations, are participating in the event.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) debuted its National Pavilion at CIFTIS this year, showcasing a keen interest in exploring the vast Chinese market.

The pavilion, featuring a completely open design, prominently

displays the national brand 'Halawah', one of the best Marathi sweets. "We are really excited to introduce our products here in China. Our sweets, representing a unique flavor from the Middle East, will bring a whole new taste for Chinese consumers," Marilou Malacaste, staff of Halawah, told China Economic Net.

Business Development Manager Amer Tolba added, "In just two days, several companies have expressed interest in cooperation. We are optimistic about finding distributors in China to expand our presence in this expansive market." Pakistan, having inaugurated its National Pavilion, seeks collaborations in various sectors, including textiles,

chemicals, and agriculture. Muhammad Barbar Khan, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Multinational Export Bureau, a knitted garment manufacturer and exporter, attended the fair to seek potential buyers and investors. "Our company has operated successfully for 30 years, serving clients globally. This platform offers a great opportunity to expand our business in China," he said. Barbar emphasized the cost-effectiveness of doing business in Pakistan, which could attract Chinese investment and technology transfer, benefiting both economies.

Swiss company IQAir, which has sold air purification systems in China since 1998, views China as a crucial market.

CIFTIS opens new avenues to boost China-Pak banking ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Shaikh Muhammad Shariq, Vice President of National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and Chief Representative in China Sunday said that China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) had emerged as a pivotal platform, fostering enhanced financial cooperation between Chinese banks and their international counterparts. Addressing a seminar titled "Investment in Pakistan", he said, "This year's fair not only showcases innovative financial services but also facilitates meaningful dialogues and partnerships to strengthen global financial ties, particularly for NBP." As the National Bank of Pakistan seeks to navigate an increasingly interconnected world, CIFTIS offers a unique opportunity to explore collaborative ventures that can drive mutual growth and stability in the financial sector," he added.

He emphasized to the investors of Chitral that they should invest in Chitral instead of Islamabad and other cities to set the wheel of progress and prosperity to rotate.

He explained the economic policy of the PTI government and said that it has given priority to make maximum use of local resources, while partnership is the main element in this regard and the provincial government will welcome any proposal that the basis is commercial cooperation.

Regarding the economic development in Chitral, he said that the fruits, vegetables, minerals and other products here can be made more expensive and increase their demands in the market through value addition.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister AJK Chaudhry Anwarul Haq along with Intiaz Naseem in a group photo with a delegation of Chinese companies led by Vice President China-Pakistan Commerce Alliance International Bilal Janjua.

MPA visits Kisan card distribution centre Dunyapur

LODHRAN (APP): Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Punjab Shazia Hayat Tareen paid a visit to Kisan card distribution centre in Dunyapur to review arrangements.

She inspected the Kisan card delivery centre and distributed Kisan cards among farmers. Nasrullah Khan Tareen, Deputy Director Agriculture Extension Lodhran, Muhammad Zafar Malik, Assistant Director Agriculture Dunyapur, Shahid Iqbal Cheema and others were present.

Channar for resolving farmers' problems

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Zaheer Iqbal Channar urged all departments concerned and stakeholders to play due role for resolving issues confronting the farming community. He stated this while talking to several delegations which visited his residence here, says a news release issued here on Sunday.

The Deputy Speaker told the delegations that the provincial government had been taking practical measures to resolve the problems of common people. He said that agriculture was backbone of

MPA visits Kisan card distribution centre Dunyapur

The Agriculture (Extension) deputy director briefed the MPA about the Kisan card distribution centre. He informed her about the process of information desk, biometric verification and the Kisan card delivery desks. As part of the "Plant a Tree for Pakistan" campaign, she also planted a sapling.

She stated that over 850,000 farmers across the province have got registration for Punjab CM Kisan card so far, and 250,000 cards were being distributed after printing.

national economy, and added that special steps were being taken to boost agro-economy, especially in Punjab province. "Punjab is an agro-economy province which has been contributing a lot in the national economy by producing agri products," he said. He said the Punjab government had also introduced several schemes for the development of agriculture sector and to support local farmers. "The Punjab government has introduced and implemented schemes for farmers of the province including green tractor, solar tube-wells, agricultural machinery.

Iftikhar Ali Malik urges SCO members to enhance trade cooperation, regional integration

LAHORE (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik called on Sunday for enhanced cooperation among Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) members to boost trade facilitation, reduce tariffs, and eliminate non-tariff barriers, aiming to deepen regional economic integration.

Hailing here today holding of 23rd SCO ministerial meeting successfully in Islamabad, he said recognizing the

challenges posed by unilateral trade barriers, SCO ministers emphasized that collaboration through multilateral platforms is essential to addressing these issues. He said meeting emphasized the urgent need to counter rising protectionist trade measures globally and they stressed that such practices hinder international trade and undermine global economic growth, calling instead for a strengthened, inclusive, and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system

based on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) framework. The meeting also highlighted the importance of upholding the core principles of the WTO, particularly in ensuring free, fair, and predictable trade rules that apply equally to all member states.

He said SCO ministers also underlined the need for modernizing trade rules to reflect current global economic realities, particularly in areas like digital trade and sustainable development.

Significant reduction in solar panels prices

LAHORE (APP): The rates of solar panels have shown a decline lately, as the price of five to fifteen kilowatt systems has recorded a decrease of Rs 200,000, to 300,000. Sources told APP that for five kilowatt system, the price has been fixed at Rs. 650,000, while for the seven kilowatt system, the price has been fixed at Rs. 725,000. Similarly, the price has been set at Rs 950,000 for 10 kW system, Rs 1,100,000 for 12 kW system, and Rs 1,250,000 for 15 kW system. Sources said these prices have been fixed for the on-grid system, but for the hybrid system, additional cost of batteries would have to be paid.

Punjab to launch modern, innovative fruit & vegetable market

LAHORE (APP): A groundbreaking initiative is underway in Punjab with the launch of the country's first modern and innovative fruit and vegetable market in Lahore.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is set to lay the foundation stone for this project in Lahore soon, said a handout issued here on Sunday. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed that the new market be developed into the best market in Asia and has mandated its completion within 18

months. The project will be built on 300 acres of land and will feature infrastructure meeting international standards. The market is envisioned as an export zone and a major hub for exports. It will be strategically located to ensure accessibility from various routes, including GT Road Gujranwala and the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway, allowing trucks and vehicles to directly access the market. Additionally, metro and speedo bus routes will be introduced to facilitate easy transport for workers and vendors.

Journalist problems to be solved on priority: Azma Bukhari

Provincial Minister orders tight security on Eid Milad

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Information & Culture Azma Bukhari visited Faisalabad Press Club (FPC) here on Sunday and promised to redress the problems being confronted by the journalist community on top priority basis.

During her visit to Faisalabad, she also went to FPC where she accorded a rousing reception.

She said that journalism was a noble profession and the government would resolve problems of this sector on urgent basis. She also assured an annual grant of Rs.2.5 million for FPC in

addition to addressing the issue residential colony for local journalists.

President FPC Abdur Rehman briefed the information minister about role of press club and highlighted various issues. Parliamentary Secretary for Information & Culture MPA Shazia Rizwan and others were also present on the occasion.

Meanwhile Provincial Minister for Information & Culture Azma Bukhari directed the police and local administration to ensure tight security and administrative arrangements on Eid Milad-un-Nabi.



FAISALABAD: Punjab Information and Culture Minister Ms. Uzma Bukhari inaugurates the Islamic calligraphy exhibition for Rabi' Al-Awwal at the Arts Council.

Ashra Rehmat-ul-Alameen competition to be held today in Peshawar

Independent Report PESHAWAR: On the instructions of the provincial government, the Auqaf Department is organizing the Ashra Rehmat-ul-Alameen Competition, which will take place today, Monday, at the Auqaf, Hajj, and Religious Affairs Department on Charsada Road, Peshawar.

The event will be presided over by Provincial Minister Sahibzada Adnan Qadri. Participants include

divisional-level position holders in speech, recitation, and Naat Khwani competitions, along with religious scholars. These participants will now compete at the provincial level, with winners in each category set to receive cash prizes, certificates, and shields. The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, along with Provincial Minister Auqaf Sahibzada Adnan Qadri and other dignitaries.



MIRPUR: Prime Minister A.J.K. Chaudhry Anwarul Haq presiding over a meeting regarding AJK University.

AJK PM assures all possible financial resources for uplift of state-run AJK University

Independent Report

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the government would provide all possible resources to solve the problems faced by the state-run university of Azad Jammu Kashmir.

The PM made this assurance while addressing an extraordinary meeting held with him in the chair to

discuss the ensuing financial challenges faced by the varsity at the Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis on Sunday.

The meeting was attended among others by Minister of Higher Education Malik Zafar Iqbal, Chief Secretary Dawood Muhammad Barich, Secretary to the President Muhammad Idrees Abbasi, Secretary of

Higher Education Chaudhry Muhammad Tayyab, Vice Chancellor Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, and others.

Stressing the need for strengthening the institutions, the PM said that the financial problems of the university would be addressed on a priority basis.

The Prime Minister directed the concerned

authorities to submit a comprehensive report regarding the problems of the university so that comprehensive measures could be taken to solve them.

Earlier, Secretary Higher Education of AJK Muhammad Tayyeb Chaudhry briefed the Prime Minister of the financial challenges being faced by the university.

Info. minister inaugurates calligraphy exhibition

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Information Azma Bukhari has said the government is concentrating to protect the Islamic culture and historic values in order to disseminate it in the coming generations for promoting healthy and noble society.

She was talking to media persons on the occasion of inaugurating calligraphy exhibition at Faisalabad Arts Council in connection with the celebrations of Rabi-ul-Awwal here on Sunday.

She said that a comprehensive strategy has been chalked out to utilise social media for promotion of soft image of Punjab. In this connection, arts councils were also directed to prepare out-of-box programs whereas the universities would arrange various events.

Minister announces upgradation of Ahmad Wala Agricultural Research Station Karak

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Agriculture Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal announced upgradation of Ahmed Wala Agricultural Research Station of Karak District and the cultivation of saffron on an experimental basis in Karak district.

He expressed these views as a special guest at the closing ceremony of the Honey Project at Ahmed Wala, Agricultural Research Station in Karak district.

Director General Agriculture Extension Abdul Qayyum Khan, Senior Director Dr. Dil Fayyaz Khan, Project Director Muhammad Younis Khan, Station Director Tahir Sajjad,

Research Officers Dr. Muhammad Ejaz Khan and Ashfaq Khan participated in the ceremony.

The Provincial Minister for Agriculture was briefed regarding the ongoing activities of the agriculture department and especially honey training and production. Speaking at the closing ceremony, Provincial Minister for Agriculture Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal said that a new agricultural policy is being prepared at the provincial level to increase agricultural production per hectare.

From Chitral to Khyber and from Khyber to DI Khan, full attention will be paid to increasing the production of local crops.

CPO directs beefing up security at Iqbal Stadium

FAISALABAD (APP):

City Police Officer (CPO) Kamran Adil visited the Iqbal Stadium Faisalabad here on Sunday and directed officials to beef up security in the stadium to provide fully secured atmosphere to cricket lovers and teams of the Champions Cup Tournament.

He also checked the presence of security personnel at all gates, inside and outside the stadium and directed them to ensure a thorough search of people before their entry into the stadium.

He also directed the police officials to deal the public politely and perform their duties vigilantly by keeping an eye on the movement of suspected elements.

Khawaja Imran announces evening OPDs at THQ, DHQ hospitals

LAHORE (APP):

Punjab Health Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare, Khawaja Imran Nazir, has announced the initiation of evening outpatient departments (OPDs) at Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) and District Headquarters (DHQ) hospitals in Lahore starting from next month.

This decision comes following directives from Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif as part of the government's ongoing efforts to improve healthcare services in the province. The announcement was made

during a meeting held on Sunday at the Health Department, where the minister discussed the enhancement of healthcare facilities at Raiwind and Ghaziabad THQ hospitals. Several key decisions were taken to ensure the performance of these hospitals is improved. Imran Nazir also revealed plans to implement a Queue Management System (QMS) in all hospitals across the province, starting in phases, to streamline patient management. He instructed that all beds at Raiwind Hospital be replaced immediately with new ones.



SARGODHA: A beautifully decorated Rescue 1122 building in celebration of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal.

13 dead, 1,366 injured in Punjab road accidents

Independent Report

LAHORE: At least 13 people were killed and 1,366 others injured in 1,294 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 585 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 781 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed that 738 drivers, 43 underage drivers, 168 pedestrians and 473 passengers were among victims of road accidents.

The statistics showed that 246 accident were reported in Lahore, which affected 258 people, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Faisalabad with 105 accidents and 106 victims, and at third Multan with 83 accidents and 92 victims.

According to the data, 1,185 motorbikes, 66 auto-rickshaws, 119 motorcars, 23 vans, nine passenger buses, 27 trucks and 111 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road traffic accidents.

International News

Russia threatens Ukraine, West as long-range strikes decision looms

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russian officials threatened the West with an uncontrolled escalation of war and Ukraine with the destruction of Kyiv as Western leaders discussed whether to allow Ukraine to use their weapons for strikes deep into Russian territory.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said late on Friday that his plan to achieve victory depended on Washington's decision, a clear reference to the authorisation for long-range strikes that Kyiv has long sought from NATO allies.

Andriy Yermak, head of Zelenskyy's office, said on the Telegram messaging app on Saturday: "Strong decisions are needed. Terror can be stopped by destroying the military facilities where it originates."

Kyiv has said such strikes are critical for its efforts to restrict Moscow's ability to attack Ukraine, but allies have so far been reluctant to permit them, citing fears Moscow will treat them as an escalation and doubting their efficiency.

While no official decision on the matter has been announced so far, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov alleged it had already been made and communicated to Kyiv, and that Moscow would have to respond with actions of its own.

"The decision has been made, the carte blanche and all indulgences have been given (to Kyiv), so we are ready for everything," the RIA news agency quoted Ryabkov as saying. "And we will react in a way that will not be pretty."

Former Russian President Dmitry

Medvedev, who now serves as deputy chairman of the country's security council, said the West was testing Russia's patience but it was not limitless.

Medvedev said Ukraine's incursion into Russia's Kursk region, which Zelenskyy described as a successful operation slowing Russia's advance, already gave Russia formal grounds to use its nuclear arsenal.

He said that Moscow could either resort to nuclear weapons in the end, or use some of its non-nuclear but still deadly novel weapons for a large-scale attack.

"And that would be it. A giant, grey, melted spot instead of 'the mother of Russian cities,'" he wrote on the Telegram messaging app, referring to Kyiv.



Haiti Prime Minister Garry Conille looks on, as an injured victim who was evacuated to receive medical care following a fuel truck explosion exits a helicopter, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Haiti confirms 24 killed in 'horrible' gas truck blast

Monitoring Desk

PORT-AU-PRINCE: A fuel truck explosion on a road in Haiti's southern peninsula on Saturday killed 24 people and left half of the 40 injured survivors with third-degree burns, the government said.

Haiti Prime Minister Garry Conille visited the site, near the coastal city of Miragoane in the department of Nippes, and said some of the most seriously injured victims were evacuated by helicopter to receive

specialized care. Ambulances were also being sent as quickly as possible to attend to others with severe burns and to relieve overcrowded local hospitals.

"It's a horrible scene we've just lived through. Many dozens of victims, wounded, severely burned," Conille said in a video distributed by the government.

The injured were mostly men, as well as three women and a child, according to a report from Haiti's emergency services.

North Korea's Kim meets Russia's Shoigu, vows more cooperation, KCNA says

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met with top Russian security official Sergei Shoigu and discussed deepening strategic dialogue between the two countries, state media KCNA said on Saturday.

They had a "wide exchange of views on regional and international situations", and reached a satisfactory consensus on issues including "cooperation to defend mutual safety interests," KCNA said. Kim said North Korea will continue to expand cooperation with Russia in

accordance with the strategic partnership between the two countries, KCNA said. The United States and Ukraine among other countries, as well as independent analysts, say that Kim is helping Russia in its invasion of Ukraine by supplying rockets and missiles in return for economic and other military assistance from Moscow.

Moscow and Pyongyang have denied the accusations, but pledged to boost military cooperation and signed a comprehensive strategic partnership at a summit in June.

Israeli strike kills 11 from one family in Gaza City

Monitoring Desk

GAZA CITY: An Israeli air strike hit a house in Gaza City and killed 11 members of a single family, including women and children, according to the civil defence agency.

"We have recovered the bodies of 11 martyrs, including four children and three women, after an Israeli air strike hit the house of the Bustan family in eastern Gaza City," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said.

The strike took place near the Shujaiya school in the Al Tuffah neighbourhood of Gaza City, he said.

"Rescuers are continuing to search for the

missing."

The Israeli military had no immediate comment on the strike.

Mahmud Bassal, the spokesman, said Israeli forces carried out similar strikes in some other parts of the Hamas-run territory, killing 10 people.

Five people were killed in north-western Gaza City when an air strike hit a group of people near Dar Al Arqam school, he said.

Three others were killed in a strike in the Al Mawawi area of the southern Khan Yunis region, where tens of thousands of displaced Palestinians have sought refuge, Bassal added.

Trump sharpens anti-migrant attacks as both candidates visit key states

Monitoring Desk

RANCHO VERDES: Donald Trump doubled down on Friday on his anti-migrant attacks despite facing criticism for amplifying a conspiracy theory targeting Haitian immigrants, as he and election rival Kamala Harris took their presidential campaigns to swing states on opposite sides of the United States.

Trump, 78, promised "large deportations" from the Ohio town at the centre of the racially charged row, as the Republican former president prepared to head to a rally in the western battleground of Nevada.

Democratic Vice President Harris, 59, meanwhile hit the stump in Pennsylvania — arguably the most crucial of the half dozen states that are set to decide a desperately close election on Nov 5.

Pope Francis weighed into the issue on Friday — equating Harris's support of abortion to Trump's "sin" of turning away migrants. "One has to choose the lesser of two evils," Pope Francis told report-

ers. Coming off a strong performance in Tuesday's televised debate against Trump, Harris gave her first solo sit-down interview since her nomination to an ABC television affiliate in Philadelphia, the state's largest city.

"I offer a new generation of leadership," Harris said in the interview, as she spelled out her policies on tax cuts and credits for new parents, homeowners and businesses. Harris also appealed to moderate American voters, telling them she herself is a gun-owner who wants to preserve the right to bear arms while maintaining common-sense gun safety laws.

Later at a raucous rally in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, she again pushed her economic plans and bashed Trump on his debate performance.

Polls show a near dead heat with only seven weeks until election day, in an incredibly dramatic campaign that has seen Harris suddenly replace the aging Joe Biden and Trump survive an assassination attempt.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi's celebrations kick off with religious reverence, traditional fervor nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Eid Milad-un-Nabi, marking the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), is to be observed with religious reverence and traditional fervor across the nation on 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal falling on September 17, Tuesday. The day is celebrated to express deep love and respect for the last Messenger of Allah Almighty, whose teachings of peace, tolerance, and compassion continue to inspire billions on the globe. Since the advent of the

blessed month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, homes, businesses, mosques, and public buildings across Pakistan have been adorned with vibrant lights and colorful flags. Major cities such as Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, and Peshawar are glowing with grandeur, as streets, alleys, and markets radiate with green and white decorations, symbolizing devotion to the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).

The government buildings and public spaces have also joined the celebra-

tion, as the nation unites in an atmosphere of joy and spiritual reflection.

The vibrant display is a testament to the deep-rooted love and respect the faithful hold for the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and his teachings.

Special gatherings have been arranged at various religious and cultural centers, where renowned scholars, Ulema, and Mashaykh deliver sermons to highlight the teachings and legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

opportunities for the faithful to gather in reverence, recite Naats (poetry in praise of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), and reflect on the Seerat (life) of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).

Special gatherings have been arranged at various religious and cultural centers, where renowned scholars, Ulema, and Mashaykh deliver sermons to highlight the teachings and legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on by faculty staff of the department of Arts & Design of Iqra National University Peshawar at Governor House.



DIG emphasizes zero tolerance for corruption and crime

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Syed Ali Raza on Sunday emphasized a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption and abuse of authority, stressing that the protection of life, property, and citizens' dignity was of paramount importance. He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting at his office, attended by all Station House Officers (SHOs), and beat officers.

He said that he formed crime control teams to prevent the incidents of robbery, snatching and theft. DIG directed all SHOs to form dedicated teams and work closely with them to effectively combat crime. Raza highlighted the importance of officers remaining vigilant against criminal activities. Ali Raza instructed all officers to increase patrolling in their respective areas to control crime and ensure a visible police presence.

Additionally, DIG directed them to compile lists of absconders, proclaimed offenders, and individuals involved in serious crimes, and to locate and apprehend them. "Any kind of negligence will be dealt with strictly against the officers," DIG said. "Safety of life and property of the citizens is the first priority and any kind of violence is unacceptable," Raza concluded.

QAU Alumni contributes towards alma mater's guest house

ISLAMABAD (APP): In keeping with the longstanding tradition of supporting Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), the alumni of QAU have once again stepped forward to assist in the renovation of the university's Guest House.

Essential items, including an electric water cooler, air-conditioner, and a dead body freezer box, were handed over to the university administration, alongside various materials necessary for the renovation of the facility.

Muhamamd Murtaza Noor, Secretary General QAU Alumni Association Founders Group thanked to the support of the alumni, the QAU Guest House, located on the scenic campus, now offers an enhanced experience for the visitors.

At the request of the

QAU Alumni Association, the guest house is available to alumni at a very nominal rate, making it a convenient option for Quaidians and their families, he added. Numerous alumni have already availed of this facility and enjoyed the beautiful surroundings of the campus.

He said we are especially grateful to Muhammad Asif Sahib, Tahir Masood Sahib, and Dr. Samina Yasmeen for their generous contributions in arranging these much-needed items. Their dedication and commitment to the university's welfare are truly commendable.

The QAU Alumni remains committed to contributing positively and constructively towards the betterment of our alma mater.



ISLAMABAD: Workers busy repairing cemented blocks at center path of Islamabad Highway.

18.39 percent households undernourished with majority in urban areas of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Head of Policy and Advocacy, The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), Faiz Rasool has said that the increasing population of undernourished households is driving the nutritional and health crises in the country amid policy gaps and the absence of proactive legislation in line with rapidly changing environment.

He was addressing a media session jointly organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and GAIN to explore critical aspects around communicating food security, healthy diet and food system and its impact on public health and sustaining the food systems.

Faiz Rasool said almost of the country's population is persistently facing a threat to their health due to poor access to healthy diet, whereas 18.5% of them were undernourished.

"Malnourishment and obesity as health risks are simultaneously existing

in the country, as Pakistan is facing a double burden of malnutrition resulting into aggravated disease burden due to unhealthy diet. Moreover, 6/10 of population diseases are related to food-related problems and poor quality diet," he said.

Since the country is facing nutrition and food safety challenges there is no nutrition policy in the country as there has been no focus of the quarters concerned on establishing such document, he added.

The GAIN official underscored that there are serious policy gaps and no guidance available to address nutrition challenges in the National Food Security Policy approved in 2018. Globally, he said 3.1 billion people almost 42% of the total world population are unable to afford healthy diet. He pointed out that there were food authorities in all the four provinces of the country, whereas food safety was the most serious issue after nutrition in the country.

ITP cracks down on helmet violations, issues 40,000 fines

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) issued over 40,000 fines to motorcyclists for driving without helmets during the ongoing year.

According to a public relation officer a vigorous campaign of Islamabad capital police had been launched as per the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, in order to create awareness among citizens about the traffic rules.

He said that the ITP is endeavoring to maintain an exemplary traffic system in the city and check those involved in negligence on roads.

He said that all the officers have been directed to ensure the implementation of traffic rules and regulation irrespective of status and rank and demonstrate patience and politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users.

02 bike lifter held; 3 stolen bikes recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Sham Colony police station team on Sunday apprehended two wanted members of a bike lifter gang involved in numerous bike lifting activities and recovered three stolen motorcycles from their possession.

According to a police spokesperson following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, ICT Police had started a crackdown against criminal elements involved in bike lifting activities in order to save the precious lives and property of citizens.

Hidayatullah elected as chairman of Senate body on Narcotics Control

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Hidayatullah Khan was elected unopposed as the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Narcotics Control. Senator Hidayatullah Khan was nominated for the position by Senator Ashraf Ali Jatoi and seconded by Senator Bilal Ahmed Khan. In his remarks, the newly elected Chairman thanked the committee members for their confidence in him and assured them of his commitment to work as a team to combat the growing menace of narcotics in the country.

Parliamentarians mark 'World Democracy Day' with pledge to uphold democratic values

ISLAMABAD (APP): On World Democracy day, parliamentarians reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to the fundamental pillars of democracy, including respect for institutions, transparency, accountability and the recognition that democratic norms which are vital for fostering trust among citizens and ensuring the efficient operation of governments.

In an exclusive talks with PTV news channel, Parliamentarians emphasized that democracy serves as a robust pillar, bridging the gap between citizens and governments.

Member of the National Assembly Mirza Ikhtiar Baig emphasized that democracy is not merely a system of government but a way of life that fosters inclusivity, diversity and equal opportunities for all citizens.

Baig urged continued efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, promote

democratic values and ensure the active participation of citizens in the democratic process.

MNA Aftab Ahmad Sheikh stressed that a robust democracy is essential for addressing the challenges facing the nation, driving social and economic progress and upholding the principles of justice, equality, and human rights.

By reinforcing democracy, he believes that Pakistan can unlock its full potential and create a brighter future for generations to come.

"Democracy is the backbone of a progressive society and we must work tirelessly to nurture and strengthen it," said Senator Rubina Khalid.

Shehla Raza, a prominent parliamentarian also paid a heartfelt tribute to the iconic leaders Benazir Bhutto and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, recognizing their unwavering struggle for democracy in Pakistan.

CDA chairman inspects Jinnah Convention Center renovation ahead of SCO meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, conducted a thorough inspection of the ongoing renovation work at the Jinnah Convention Center.

According to CDA spokesman, the visit aimed to ensure the center's readiness for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting.

Randhawa was briefed on the progress of the renovation work, which is being carried out under the supervision of top architects.

The center is being upgraded to international standards, with a focus on transforming it into a smart building.

The upgrades include, installation of SMDs, digital boards, and modern

conferencing facilities, provision of high-speed internet and excellent lighting.

Similarly, renovation of the main hall, committee rooms, and complete flooring, repairs, painting, and glasswork, upgraded furniture and carpets, besides beautiful landscaping through tree planting and horticulture.

The chairman expressed satisfaction with the progress but emphasized the need for further improvement in the quality and speed of work.

Meanwhile, Randhawa visited Park Road Project, which has been affected by recent rains. He directed the completion of ongoing work on the road as soon as possible.

PIDE proposes modernization of overhauling governance system

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) on Sunday proposed modernization and overhauling of the governance system and highlighted Pakistan's governance bottlenecks for sustainable economic development.

A new report titled Modernizing Governance: Challenges and Solutions in Pakistan's Rules of Business and Secretariat Instructions, authored by Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque, Vice Chancellor of Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Prof. Nadeem Ahmed Khan, Dr. Khuram Ellahi Khan, and Prof. Hassan Rasool, has been released by PIDE highlighting key inefficiencies within Pakistan's governance framework, said a release issued here.

This report comprehensively addresses the challenges and provides actionable solutions to improve governance and modernise the country's administrative structures, using best practices from

global governance models.

The report reveals that while Pakistan's Rules of Business 1973 and Secretariat Instructions are the backbone of federal governance, they have not sufficiently evolved to meet modern administrative needs.

For instance, over 80% of federal processes still rely on outdated, manual systems, significantly delaying decision-making and policy implementation and centralized approval mechanisms alone account for up to 60% of these delays, creating bottlenecks across ministries.

Furthermore, the report shows that more than 50% of all federal decisions are delayed due to excessive bureaucracy, with less than 10% of officials held accountable for inefficiencies.

The report also highlights inefficiencies in inter-divisional consultation, noting that over 70% of inter-ministerial communications face delays due to centralized control and ineffective processes.

Imparting modern education to seminaries students great service to nation: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that introduction of latest knowledge in seminaries and imparting latest education to their students was a great service to the nation.

Addressing a ceremony at Jamia Darul Uloom Al-Islamia in Lahore through video link, he congratulated the management of the Darul Uloom for introducing new degrees in various educational sectors in many seminaries.

He said this would help equip the students of religious seminaries with

modern education and they would be able to join the national mainstream.

He expressed the hope that among the students of seminaries will emerge leading scholars, intellectuals, legal experts, doctors etc.

By reinforcing modern education to all was need of the hour and steps taken by Jamia Darul Uloom Al-Islamia would prove a milestone in this mission. Tarar hoped that in the near future, graduates from seminaries would come forward and play an important role in making Pakistan an ideal Islamic welfare state as envisaged by the Quaid-

e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Poet of the East Allama Iqbal.

He said once there was a time when leading scientists, intellectuals, and experts of mathematics were Muslims and their books were taught all over the world and the time had come to revive the past glory.

He said his family had been affiliated with service to Islam and Tehreek Khatam-e-Nabuwat since 1953 when his grand-father Justice (ret'd) and former president Muhammad Rafiq Tarar actively participated in this movement and remained steadfast in serving this mission till his last breath.

Iqbal Jhagra calls for unity on 'Democracy Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): On Democracy Day, a senior leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Iqbal Jhagra Sunday called on the nation to unite in their commitment to democratic norms and the rule of law, emphasizing the importance of following the Quaid-e-Azam's principles for a prosperous and progressive Pakistan.

Talking to PTV news channel, Jhagra stressed that institutions are the backbone of democracy and their respect is vital for the smooth functioning of the government.

Rubina Khalid lauds Sindh Govt decision to abolish birth certificate fee

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Sunday expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Minister of Sindh and the cabinet members for approving the abolition of the birth certificate fee for children in Sindh.

She welcomed this decision, which was made during a recent Sindh Cabinet meeting, recognizing its positive impact on the province's underprivileged families.

On Chairperson Rubina Khalid's instructions, Director General BISP Sindh, Zulfikar Ali Shaikh, engaged in various discussions with key figures such as Provincial Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani, Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah, and Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab.

These meetings focused on resolving the challenges hindering the issuance of birth certificates and B-forms to the registered beneficiaries of BISP.



KARACHI: Japanese Ambassador Mr. WADA Mituhiro in a group photo with honorary Advisor Board of Investment Syed Farooq Alam Shah and others.

Polio drive success: Over 98% of ICT children vaccinated

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the anti-polio vaccination drive concluded in the Federal Capital, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon highlighted the dedication of polio workers, security personnel, and parents in achieving a major milestone in the fight against polio. Chairing a meeting, the DC praised the efforts of polio workers and security personnel for their key role in the anti-polio campaign's success.

The DC informed that more than 98% of the targeted children received the anti-polio vaccine during the drive, marking significant progress in the district's efforts to eliminate the disease. Memon also recognized the vital role played by parents in ensuring their children were vaccinated, saying their support had been crucial in the success of the campaign. He acknowledged the hard work of both the polio workers and security teams who ensured that the campaign went smoothly.

SUPARCO gears up to mark World Space Week through series of activities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Maintaining its previous traditions, Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO)-the national space agency has planned a series of activities to mark the upcoming World Space Week, to be held from October 04-10.

According to an official of SUPARCO, the Space Week will be marked under the theme of using space technology to fight climate change.

The SUPARCO has announced various contests for the general public in different categories revolving around the theme.

The first category is "Reuse, Reduce, Recycle for Climate Action: Show how small steps can make a BIG difference!" while the second category is, "Planting for a Greener Pakistan: Let's work together to plant a sustainable future!"

The third category of the contest is "Space form limited: Video Challenge: Share your creative ideas on how space technology can help save our planet!"

The students, professionals or climate enthusiasts can participate in the contests to create a better world for future generations. World Space Week is an international celebration of science and technology, and their contribution to the betterment of the human condition.

The United Nations General Assembly de-

clared in 1999 that World Space Week will be held each year from October 4-10.

These dates commemorate two events including 'October 4, 1957: Launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1, thus opening the way for space exploration' and the other is 'October 10, 1967: the signing of the treaty on principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies'.

World Space Week consists of space education and outreach events held by space agencies, educational institutions, planetaria, museums and astronomy clubs around the world in a common time frame under the ambit of the United Nations to enhance awareness about space and related technologies and to highlight its role towards national development.

SUPARCO being the National Space Agency annually organizes World Space Week (WSW) in Pakistan as WSW national coordinator since 2005.

Pakistan has managed to make its mark each year with the greatest number of events conducted globally.

Pakistan stood third in the year 2023 for conducting 7,836 space events in the country during the festive week which is an honour for the country.



ISLAMABAD: Work in progress of reconstruction of road.