

# Independent

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## OGDCL, Chinese CCDC sign MoU for shale, tight gas exploration

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan with an aim to alleviate energy needs of the country through indigenous resources. Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China, witnessed the MoU signing ceremony during the ongoing 8th Silk Road International Expo for Investment and Trade, according to a news release received here.

The MoU highlights the commitment of both countries to developing Pakistan's shale and tight gas potential, aiming to address the country's energy needs through indigenous resources.

The MoU underscores commitment of both the brotherly countries for the development of Shale and tight gas potential of



XIAN: Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik witnessed the MoU signing ceremony between OGDCL and Chinese company CCDC in Xian, China.

## Public rejects politics of chaos, endorses government's sound economic policies: PM Sharif

Shehbaz reaches UK, set to address UNGA on Sept 27

LONDON (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that the public had rejected the politics of chaos and instead prioritized the need for sound economic policies that directly address inflation and improve the living standard of the people.

"The people want a reduction in inflation, solutions to their problems, and economic betterment," the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM Office.

The prime minister, stressing the urgency of addressing the public's economic concerns, called for a shift in political priorities, arguing that instead of focusing on rallies and political gatherings, the immediate need was to improve the economic condition of

the masses.

"We will hold rallies in 2028; but right now, it is time to work hard to fulfill the pledges made to the people."

He linked the success of the country's economic recovery directly to political stability, warning that political chaos would disrupt efforts to provide relief to the public. "Economic recovery is tied to political stability; political chaos means affecting the process of providing relief to the people," he said.

He praised the people for their role in supporting economic growth by promoting political stability and emphasized that national unity was crucial for sustaining this progress.

"National unity for political stability will prove to be the guarantee of

Pakistan's bright economic future and relief from inflation," he remarked.

To address the country's ongoing economic and security challenges, the prime minister called for collaboration between political parties, institutions, and provinces. "To tackle economic challenges and terrorism, the nation, political parties, institutions, and provinces must work together," he urged.

Recalling the past political instability, PM Shehbaz Sharif lamented that a lot of time had been wasted in political chaos therefore wasting more time was not in the interest of the country and the nation.

On the economic front, the prime minister was optimistic about the country's progress, noting

that inflation had returned to single digits and that Pakistan's overall economic situation was improving.

"Thank God, inflation has returned to single digits, and the economic situation is improving," he said, highlighting key indicators such as rising exports, the stability of the rupee, increasing remittances, and declining interest rates.

Looking forward, the prime minister underscored that the current International Monetary Fund (IMF) program should be the last one for Pakistan, saying "if it is so, it will be a true success".

He warned that abusive language, violence, and chaos would not lead to progress, urging every province and institution to play its role in solving the public's problems.

## 51 killed in Iran coal mine gas explosion

TEHRAN (Online): In Iran, fifty-one people have been killed and several others injured in a gas explosion in coal mine in southern Khorasan province.

There were about sixty-nine workers in the mine at the time of explosion.

Iranian state media on Sunday said an incident at a coal mine in eastern Iran killed at least 51 people and left 20 others injured.

The deaths were at a coal mine in Tabas, some 540 kilometers (335 miles) southeast of the capital, Tehran.

State media had earlier said about 24 people remained trapped below ground. The explosion occurred on Saturday at about 9 p.m. (1730 GMT/UTC).

Emergency personnel were responding to the incident at the mine in South Khorasan province.

The accident was reportedly caused by a methane gas explosion in two blocks of the mine run by the Madanjoo company.

The total number of workers in both blocks



SARAJEVO: Director Foreign Affairs Asif Luqman Qazi during a meeting with Dr. Husein of Kavazovic, Rais-ul-Ulema of Bosnia.

## Three ATF cops martyred in terror attack at Zhob

Governor, PM express sorrow on martyrdom, injuries of police in Zhob firing incident

ZHOB (INP): A tragic terrorist attack on the Zhob-DI Khan National Highway has claimed the lives of three Anti-Terrorist Force (ATF) personnel deployed to protect the polio workers.

The incident occurred when terrorists opened fire on polio vaccination security teams. According to police officials, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Gohar Khan was martyred on the spot due to the gunfire.

Two other police personnel, Amir Muhammad and Muhammad Shafiq, were critically injured and immediately shifted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH). Sadly, both succumbed to their injuries during treatment.

All three officers—

## Hafiz Naeem warns Unlike Bangladesh, Pakistani rulers might not be offered the airlift opportunity

Independent Report KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Ameer Engr Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has shed light on virtually dissected anatomy of the ruling elite in the country, in the most ruthless way possible and said that the rulers only believe in unity among themselves in order to safeguard their interests.

The JI supreme leader expressed these views while addressing a session at the Karachi Expo Center, here on Sunday, while he was delivering a lecture at the two-day biannual countrywide central convention held by the Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA).

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the ruling elite was a class that doesn't believe in cast, creed or color but their mutual interests.

He further said that every society has its own boiling point and it seems that the days of ruling elites



NAROWAL: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal talking to media persons.

## World leaders set to discuss raging conflicts, Global South's concerns over poverty, inflation & debt

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will join world leaders at the United Nations next week to deliberate on key international issues, as wars in the Middle East and Europe threaten to spread with no end in sight and to address Global South's concerns over increasing poverty, inflation and debt burden, while impacts of climate change worsen. More than 130 heads of state/government will attend the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly's 79th session beginning on Tuesday, Sept 24.

"We see out-of-control geopolitical divisions and runaway conflicts — not least in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and beyond," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters at a news conference ahead of



SIALKOT: Group Leader Etihad Founder Sheikh Riazuddin and Majid Raza Bhatta pose for a group photograph with the newly elected Chamber of Commerce Officials for 2024-26.

## The Jerusalem Post declares Imran Khan an advocate of Pak-Israel relations

TEL AVIV (INP): Israel's newspaper, The Jerusalem Post, has claimed that despite the fact the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has denounced Israel in public, the truth is that he is in favour of the normalization of relations with the Jewish state. The newspaper has backed claims made by the Times of Israel stating that Imran Khan despite his public anti-Israel stance has internally expressed a desire to normalize relations between Pakistan and Israel.

According to the article, Imran Khan would play a crucial role in building ties with Israel as he could change public opin-

## One Police officer martyred, 3 injured in blast targets police vehicle in Swat

ISLAMABAD (APP): One police officer was martyred and three others injured on Sunday due to an explosion on Malam Jabba Road, in Swat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Deputy Inspector General of Swat, Muhammad Ali Khan, said that a substantial police presence was dispatched to the scene, and rescue operations were underway, reported a private news channel. He confirmed that Constable Burhan lost his life in the attack, while Sub-Inspector Sar Zameen, Constable Amanullah, and Constable Habib Gul were among the injured.

The area surrounding the explosion has been secured, with police initiating a search operation to locate potential suspects. Emergency services swiftly arrived at the scene, where rescue operations were launched to assist the injured and secure the area.

## Diplomats unhurt in blast near Malam Jabba: FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Foreign Office Spokesperson on Sunday confirmed that the diplomats traveling with the convoy that was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) near Malam Jabba, Swat remained unhurt and have safely returned to Islamabad.

In a press release, the spokesperson said that a police convoy escorting a group of diplomats near Malam Jabba, Swat, was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) today, resulting in the martyrdom of one policeman and injuries to three others. The group of diplomats was traveling to Islamabad after their trip to Malam Jabba and Swat. "Our sympathies are with the families of the Shaheed policeman and three injured in the incident," the spokesperson said.

## PM felicitates Anura on winning presidential election in Sri Lanka

LONDON (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday extended his felicitations to the newly elected President of Sri Lanka.

"My sincere felicitations to Anura Kumara Dissanayake on his victory in the presidential elections of Sri Lanka," the prime minister wrote on his official X timeline.

He wished the President-elect every success saying that he looked forward to working with him for further strengthening of Pakistan-Sri Lanka relations.

## Chairman Pullain Baloch vows to end backwardness of Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the National Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Pullain Baloch Sunday reiterated the government's resolve to uplift women and propel development in Balochistan, narrowing the developmental divide with other provinces.

In an exclusive talk with PTV news channel, Chairman has made a commitment to tackle Balochistan's longstanding development challenges and promote women's empowerment in the region, adding, it will not be neglected under any circumstances.

He expressed deep regret over the historical neglect of Balochistan, emphasizing the urgent need to prioritize development programs and improve the province's condition.

Chairman has also emphasized the importance of empowering women in Balochistan to utilize their capabilities for the development of the province and the country.

Baloch has reaffirmed the importance of gender equality in Balochistan, emphasizing that women in the province are not lagging and are equally capable as their male counterparts.

He highlighted the significant progress made in women's education, underscoring that women are actively pursuing educational opportunities and excelling in various fields.

Responding to a query about standing committee scheduled meetings and progress, Chairman Pullain Baloch has announced plans to hold meetings in all four provinces to prioritize and resolve issues faced by employees in the information and broadcasting sector.



MUZAFFARABAD: Children of all Adhoc Contract employees of Azad Kashmir are protesting by lighting candles for their rights at Azadi Chowk.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### TTP's reach

Though the banned TTP is principally a threat to Pakistan's security, the terrorist group's wider ambitions should not be ignored by the world. In this regard, Pakistan's ambassador to the UN, Munir Akram, recently told the Security Council that the TTP is an "umbrella organisation" for militant actors, with the potential to destabilise the region. Moreover, indicating the state's dissatisfaction with the Afghan Taliban regime, he added that the TTP operates with "full support ... of the Afghan interim government".

There are, of course, justified reasons for the state's frustration with the Afghan Taliban's inability to crack down on cross-border terrorism. In attacks on Thursday and Friday, several security men were martyred, mostly in areas close to the Afghan border. In one incident, terrorists were prevented from crossing into Pakistan, while in another, Pakistani forces traded fire with Afghan security men.

Expanding on the TTP's potential to cause havoc beyond Pakistan, Mr Akram cited the terrorist group's ties with Al Qaeda, saying that the TTP — by joining forces with the multinational terror franchise — could become a "spearhead" for regional and global terrorist goals. The TTP is already on the UN's radar, as the multilateral body has affirmed that the outfit is currently the largest terror group in Afghanistan, enjoying close bonds with the Afghan rulers. While there are strong ideological and doctrinal links between the Afghan Taliban and the TTP, the former are satisfied with implementing their rigid system internally, while the latter group has a wider 'vision', working as it does with transnational terror concerns. Therefore, as this paper has mentioned before, there is a need to pursue the anti-TTP campaign on two fronts: the domestic and the foreign.

Domestically, the state must ensure that TTP fighters and allied groups are not able to hold any territory or freely cross the Afghan frontier. Our demands for international action will lack conviction if we are not able to keep our own soil free of terrorist groups. Secondly, as the ambassador pointed out, the TTP — particularly its activities inside Afghanistan — should be a matter of global concern, specifically for regional states.

The TTP is not the only violent outfit operating within Afghanistan; Al Qaeda, IS-K, Central Asian fighters, as well as Uighur militants are also believed to have a presence in that country. Some have cordial relations with the Afghan Taliban, while others, for example IS-K, have adversarial ties with Kabul's rulers. Therefore, Pakistan, along with Iran, the Central Asian states, Russia and China, should evolve a joint strategy to address the militancy problem in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's warning about the threat the TTP poses should be heeded by the international community, as Afghanistan has remained a hotbed of extremist groups in the past. The same mistake should not be repeated.

## China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Benefits People of Balochistan



By Zhang Hao

In June of this year, the China-Pakistan Friendship Hospital (CPFH) in Gwadar, Balochistan, was officially handed over to the Pakistani side. As a significant livelihood project under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), this modern comprehensive hospital, with 150 beds, features an intensive care unit (ICU), a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), and four fully equipped operating rooms. It serves over 900 patients daily and employs nearly 300 local people.

Fahad Muhammad, the Pakistani project director of the hospital, stated that there is no second hospital in the entire province of Balochistan that meets international standards like this one, which will benefit the people of Balochistan as a whole.

"To get rich, we must first build roads". China's over 40 years of reform and opening up have revealed that for a country or region to achieve sustained development and improve people's lives, upgrading infrastructure is essential. The China-Pakistan Friendship Hospital in Gwadar is a clear example of how the construction of CPEC has

boosted the improvement of infrastructure in Balochistan and benefited local people. Since its launch in 2013, the CPEC has brought water and electricity, roads and airports, schools and hospitals to the people of Balochistan, leading to more employment opportunities, improved living conditions, and a promising future. Take Gwadar Port as an example, driven by the construction of CPEC, the port has developed into a multi-purpose terminal with three multi-purpose berths, capable of docking two 50,000-ton cargo ships at the same time. A regular container shipping service has also been launched. The China-assisted Gwadar East Bay Expressway was officially opened in June 2022, creating a transportation link between Gwadar Port and the southern key city of Karachi, enhancing connectivity between Gwadar Port and the economic heartland of Pakistan. The new Gwadar International Airport completed its test flights in June of this year, and when completed, it will form a modern three-dimensional transport network by sea, land and air together with the maritime route of Gwadar Port and the East Bay Expressway. The construction of these new port, road, and airport has transformed the Gwadar region from a remote fishing village into an important regional logistics hub and industrial base. The number of local shops, com-

munication base stations, cold storage facilities, and restaurants has doubled in recent years, and the number of tourists has also doubled, leading to a significant increase in local people's economic income as the saying goes that "a rising tide lifts all boats". This demonstrates that the traction effect of infrastructure development on improving people's livelihoods will be substantial and continuous to be released.

In promoting the construction of the CPEC, China focuses on large-scale infrastructure projects that support the long-term development of Balochistan while also carrying out numerous "small yet smart" livelihood assistance projects:

We are committed to providing timely assistance. During the pandemic, the Chinese government provided essential supplies such as rice, flour, and cooking oil to fishermen in Gwadar, effectively alleviating their difficulties. After the floods in 2022, the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan promptly distributed relief supplies to 3,000 affected households in the Bugti tribal area, helping them to get through the difficult times. When Balochistan was hit by floods again this year, the Chinese government quickly provided \$100,000 in emergency cash assistance and 10,000 solar-powered lighting equipment, endeavouring to alleviate difficulties.

We care about the development of

women and children. The Chinese government's project to donate 20,000 women's health kits to Balochistan was launched in July, aiming to improve the quality of life and health awareness of local women. The Chinese-aided Gwadar Faqeer School was expanded from a primary school to a primary and middle school with modern teaching facilities, including multi-purpose classrooms, and the original enrolment of 150 students has increased to more than 1,000, which is known as "the school that grows up" by the local people. The Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute at Gwadar focuses on short-term professional training for local workers, with 366 trainees already completed and 145 currently enrolled. Students from Gwadar can attend for free and have the opportunity to study in China in the future.

We provide assistance tailored to local conditions. The Chinese government organized enterprises to donate high-yield hybrid rice seeds to farmers affected by disasters in Balochistan, allowing them to enjoy the joy of a bountiful harvest with "Chinese seeds". The Central South University of Forestry and Technology in China has cultivated plants such as date palms, figs, and Sesbania in Balochistan, not only increasing local vegetation coverage but also providing food

sources or animal feed, effectively boosting local people's economic income. The Chinese Consulate General in Karachi implemented the "Lighting up Gwadar" project, installing 73 solar street lights to illuminate roads used by Gwadar fishermen at night.

The construction of the CPEC is inseparable from the efforts of numerous Chinese enterprises. While promoting industrial development and providing a large number of employment opportunities in Balochistan, they have also taken on the role of fulfilling their Corporate Social Responsibility with heart and soul, and have sincerely solved practical difficulties for the people of Balochistan through various means such as building roads, bridges, wells, hospitals, schools, and donating materials. The Hub Coal Power Project, not only created nearly 10,000 jobs in Balochistan during its construction but also continued to carry out desert tree planting and coastal cleaning activities for many years, and helped build a fishing pier and a public welfare school.

The Saindak Copper Gold Project built the only high school in the area, Saindak High School, providing free education to more than 600 students, and its project hospital serves over 4,000 villagers. Since its operation, the Duddar Lead-zinc Mine Project has

newly built and renovated six surrounding primary and secondary school buildings and regularly assisted about 300 students in surrounding community schools with study and living supplies. The project has also funded the continuous maintenance of roads and bridges within 100 kilometers from Duddar to Winder and constructed a causeway, completely solving the problem of poor transportation during the rainy season in the Kanraj area, effectively ensuring the transportation lifeline in surrounding communities smooth.

"Of all the things that matter, people's livelihood comes first". In the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the most important value orientation of the Chinese government's governance is to further safeguard, improve, and develop people's livelihood, striving to realize the people's aspirations for a better life. The second phase of the CPEC will continue to uphold this development concept, making greater contributions to the economic development and livelihood improvement of Balochistan, benefiting more local people, and fully demonstrating the universally beneficial and inclusive nature of China-Pakistan friendly cooperation.

About the author, Mr. Zhang Hao is the acting CG of People's Republic of China in Karachi.

## Commerce News

### UK Trade Commissioner Oliver Christian begins key visit to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Trust at the Novacare Hospital in Islamabad, said a press release. These initiatives are set to deepen the UK's investment in Pakistan's education and healthcare sectors. The University of Essex partnership aims to provide Pakistani students with access to world-class education, while the Novacare project will set a new standard in healthcare facilities and services in the region. British Deputy High Commissioner, Karachi Sarah Mooney said: "As Pakistan's third-largest trade partner, the UK is committed to driving

economic development and addressing challenges that hold back growth. This visit reinforces our commitment to working together to unlock opportunities to benefit both countries."

His Majesty's Trade Commissioner for the Middle East and Pakistan, Oliver Christian said: "British firms are not just operating in Pakistan, they are market leaders in their respective fields, trusted by millions of consumers as household names and making a significant contribution to the economy."



QUETTA: A vendor displaying stuffed toys to attract the customers at roadside near Sunday Bazaar at Joint road.

### Pak Railways introduces affordable AC travel, cuts fares across board: Amir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways' CEO Aamir Ali Baloch Sunday announced exciting plans to enhance the travel experience for passengers where the government is taking significant steps to make Pakistan Railways a more attractive option for travelers by decreasing fares and introducing state-of-the-art air-conditioned trains for affordability to commuters. Talking to PTV news channel, the CEO has unveiled an ambitious plan to transform Pakistan Railways into a world-class transportation system, reviving Pakistan's rail network.

He said Pakistan Railways has announced a 10% reduction in fares for all passenger trains, including air-conditioned and economy classes. The fare cut will be effective from 23 September and applies to both express and mail trains, he mentioned. Pakistan Railways is undergoing significant changes to streamline operations, boost efficiency, and optimize resource management, he said, adding that this transformation is part of a larger strategy to modernize the railway system, making it more reliable and comfortable for passengers.

### 82pc BISP beneficiaries get quarterly tranche

LODHRAN (APP): About 82 percent beneficiaries of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) got quarterly tranche of Rs 10,500 each in the district. Talking to APP here on Sunday, BISP Lodhran District Director Irfan Malik, informed that ten camp sites were set up across the district in collaboration with the district administration for the disbursement of quarterly financial assistance. Four camp sites have been set up in Tehsil Kahrora Pacca, three in Duniyapur and three in three in Tehsil Lodhran.

Irfan Malik stated that Rs 10,500 each were disbursed among 131,000 beneficiaries through 120 retailers registered with the BISP across the district. He added that strict monitoring of disbursement of quarterly tranche was being ensured to provide full payment to the deserving beneficiaries in a transparent manner.



ISLAMABAD: Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan chairs the 85th EDF Board meeting, approving Rs. 8.5 billion for initiatives aimed at boosting Pakistan's textile, agriculture and global branding efforts.

### EDF Board approves 20 proposals of worth Rs 8.5 bn for textile, Agri, global branding

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant move to bolster Pakistan's export sector, the Export Development Fund (EDF) has approved 20 proposals of worth Rs 8.5 billion for initiatives targeting textiles, agriculture, gems and jewelry, defense, and global branding.

This was approved during the 85th meeting of the Export Development

Fund (EDF) Board under the chairmanship of Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, said a news release here on Sunday. The Board approved 20 out of the 29 financial proposals by participating in Expo 2025 in Osaka Japan.

The minister highlighted the potential available in the reformed EDF for boosting the Pakistan exports by

channelizing the money into various activities as per needs of the exporters and creating facilitative mode at the national level for value addition, research & development, increasing compliance as per global requirement, upgradation of the export infrastructure and marketing/branding of the country's potential in the international arena.

country was only 15 maunds which pressured the government as well as scientists' to research and develop high-yielding and disease-resistant varieties to ensure adequate supply of wheat and make the country self-reliant in this basic staple food.

MaxiPak was the first seed to revolutionize wheat production and Nuclear Institute for Agriculture & Biology (NIAB) developed cotton variety NIAB-78 that ruled around two decades giving maximum yield of 14 billion bales.

### Shocking revelations about IPPs came to light

RAWALPINDI (Online): It has been revealed that some of the IPPs (Independent Power Producers), private power companies in Pakistan have received billions of rupees from the government of Pakistan without generating electricity due to wrong contracts. Sources revealed that these IPPs are reluctant to undergo a forensic audit despite the immense insistence of the Government of Pakistan.

These IPPs have received billions of rupees from the government of Pakistan for the maintenance of the plants, government is also bearing their insurance, but despite the payment of billions, the government can never become the owner of these plants.

Experts were of the

view that these IPPs have earned hundreds of times their profit, so the contracts should be reviewed. According to the sources, IPPs installed wind plants of the same capacity in Pakistan four times more expensive than in Bangladesh and Vietnam, and committed an over invoicing.

Despite coal reserves in Pakistan, IPPs are dependent on imported fuels such as high-speed diesel and imported coal for power generation.

Costly electricity is being generated due to these initiatives of IPPs.

According to sources, IPPs did not generate as much electricity as they imported fuel and also received billions of rupees subsidy from the government.



MULTAN: Labourer is busy spreading raw rice for drying in the field.

### Research on new seeds imperative to enhance agriculture productivity

FAISALABAD (APP): In a rapidly changing world and mounting population pressure, countries like Pakistan shall have to embark on strategies aiming at generating new seed varieties for enhanced productivity and compatibility to climate change effects.

Although research and development of seeds is a continuous ongoing and tough process, yet it is imperative to enhance agriculture produce to cater to food requirements of burgeoning population and achieve the goals of food security and national progress and prosperity.

Immediately after independence, per acre yield of wheat in the

number of seed varieties for different climatic zones. Very recently, the Cotton Research Institute Sakrand has developed three new cotton varieties including one non-BT (CRIS 644) and two BT varieties (CRIS 674 and CRIS 682).

Similarly, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) recently developed soybean seed that is suitable for local farming and would help Pakistan to curtail import of soybean and locally meet soybean needs.

"Only the UAF soybean variety can help country save \$1.5 billion spent on import of edible oil," said Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan, Vice

Chancellor (VC) UAF. "We have produced 50 new high-yielding varieties of different crops, fruits and vegetables during last three years." Recently, he informed that UAF developed two high-yielding sugarcane varieties including Insect-resistant transgenic sugarcane (CABB-IRS) and Herbicide-tolerant transgenic sugarcane (CABB-HTS). "These varieties carry superior traits and would help Pakistan to curtail import of soybean and locally meet soybean needs."

"These varieties are second in the world and

first in Pakistan and would help boost up sugarcane productivity manifold," he added.

Similarly, Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) scientists have so far developed more than 700 seed varieties of different crops including 103 varieties of wheat and barley, 75 of cotton, 35 of rice, 29 of sugarcane, 48 of maize and millets, 51 of pulses, 57 of oilseeds, 47 of fodder, 83 of vegetables and 159 varieties of fruits.

"Now, AARI scientists are striving hard to surpass the yield barriers and their efforts are to move from green revolution to the gene revolution."

## Governor KP stresses for free judiciary, strengthening democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday stressed on the rule of law and the protection of the constitution. He said this during meeting with a delegation led by Qazi Muhammad Bashir, President of Peoples Lawyers Forum (PLF) Sindh. The delegation included PLF Karachi Division President Syed Arshad Hussain Naqvi, Information Secretary Dar Shah, General Secretary

Ijaz Sumro, and members from the Pakistan Peoples Party including advocate Tariq Khattak and Karachi Bar Association President Amir Nawaz Warraich. During the meeting, they engaged in detailed discussions on the rule of law and the protection of the constitution, highlighting the historic role of the Pakistan Peoples Party in these matters.

Governor Kundi praised the contributions of the party's founder, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali

Bhutto, in establishing the 1973 Constitution, which provided a unified constitutional framework for the country.

He emphasized that Bhutto prioritized justice and public rights, making the 1973 Constitution a significant legal document still in effect today.

Kundi also commended the PPP leadership and lawyers' organizations for their role in the judicial restoration movement, asserting that the party has consistently fought for judicial

independence and the promotion of democracy.

He reaffirmed the PPP's commitment to continue advocating for democracy, the constitution, and the rule of law, saying that the legal community stands alongside the party in this mission. The lawyers expressed their appreciation for Governor Kundi's leadership, saying that the central leadership of the party has entrusted an excellent individual with the Governor's responsibilities.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presides over the high level meeting regarding transforming Agriculture in Punjab.



PESHAWAR: A special ceremony was organized in connection of 11 years of two suicide bombings in the year 2013 at the famous All Saints Church Kohati Gate in Peshawar

## Up-gradation of inside city hospitals begins

LAHORE (APP): On the direction of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the up-gradation of all hospitals inside the city has commenced. This was disclosed by Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Khawaja Imran Nazir during the inauguration of a new nursery and blood bank at the Govt Maternity Hospital New Karol on Sunday.

that each hospital would be thoroughly assessed, and any missing or inadequate facilities would be provided on a priority basis. Khawaja Imran Nazir announced the opening of clinics for hepatitis and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) under the chief minister's directive, further enhancing the healthcare system in the city.

The newly inaugurated nursery and blood bank at New Karol Hospital were expected to significantly improve the quality of care for local patients.

## Two killed in Motorcycle, trawler collision in Kashmir

DERA MOR (APP): At least two motorcyclists died on the spot while one other person was critically injured after the motorcycle they were riding was hit and crushed by a trawler in Dera Mor, Kashmir on early Sunday.

According to details, Rescue 1122 both motorcyclists died after a trawler hit their motorcycle, on which they were riding, while another person received critical injuries during the accident, a private news channel.

## Mariyum Aurangzeb says: Crackdown on illegal wildlife trade geared up

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb has affirmed that the Punjab government's crackdown on the illegal trade and smuggling of rare wildlife and birds is gearing up.

Following a tip-off, the Wildlife Department, in collaboration with police, conducted a successful operation in Taunsa, resulting in the arrest of a suspect. During the operation, a rare eagle

valued at over \$36,000 was recovered, and the bird was found to be in good physical condition.

The arrested individual is believed to be involved in the smuggling of rare birds abroad.

Senior Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb praised the Wildlife Department on behalf of the Chief Minister Punjab, stating that the recovered eagle will be fitted with a tracker before being released back into the wild.

## World Rose Day CM Maryam pledges quality treatment for cancer patients

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif extended her heartfelt wishes to cancer patients, acknowledging their strength and resilience.

In her message on World Rose Day, a day dedicated to hope and awareness for cancer patients, she stated, "Cancer patients are truly courageous individuals," and expressed her prayers for their swift recovery.

The chief minister prayed to Allah Almighty for the complete healing of every cancer patient. She also announced the establishment of the first Nawaz Sharif Cancer Hospital in Lahore, which represents a significant step in providing essential treatment and care for cancer patients.

CM Maryam Nawaz emphasized the government's commitment to supporting cancer patients, affirming that every patient will receive

free and quality treatment. She expressed her determination to eliminate barriers to accessing necessary medical care and announced plans to establish specialized cancer treatment centers in every district of Punjab, ensuring that all patients have access to quality healthcare services close to their homes. The chief minister reaffirmed the government's dedication to improving the welfare of cancer patients.

## Unhealthy junk food harming youth health

PESHAWAR (APP): Excessive use of unhealthy food by bulk of teenagers and youngsters across the country had negative effects on their health exposing them to fatal ailments like obesity, piles, allergies and stomach disorders.

Like other parts of the country, unhindered use of junk and expired food like burger, shawarma, chicken rolls, chips, snacks, burgers etc in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also often land its victims to doctors clinics and hospitals.

Faraz Khan (24), a youth of Wapda Town Nowshera was a recent instance of this dilemma as few days back he felt

## Hezbollah, Israel exchange heavy fire after deadly Israeli strike

BEIRUT: Israel and Hezbollah exchanged heavy fire into Sunday, with Israeli warplanes carrying out the most intense bombardment in almost a year of conflict across Lebanon's south and Hezbollah firing rockets deep into northern Israel.

The Israeli military said it struck around 290 targets on Saturday, including thousands of Hezbollah rocket launcher barrels, and said it would continue to hit more targets.

## Israeli forces raid Al Jazeera bureau in West Bank with closure order

CAIRO: Qatari Al Jazeera TV said on Sunday morning that Israeli forces stormed its bureau in the West Bank's Ramallah city with a military order to close it for 45 days.

The Qatar-based channel aired live footage of the Israeli troops storming the channel's office and handing over a military closure order to one of the Al Jazeera TV staff before the broadcast was disrupted. In a statement, the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate condemned the Israeli move, saying "this arbitrary military decision is considered a new violation against journalistic and media works."

## Iran's Supreme Leader says Israel is committing 'shameless crimes' against children

TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said on Saturday that Israel is committing "shameless crimes" against children, not combatants.

His comments came a day after an Israeli airstrike on the Lebanese capital, Beirut, killed at least 31 people, including three children and seven women, according to the Lebanese health ministry.

Friday's strike, which according to a source targeted a building next to a nursery, was the deadliest in a year of conflict between Israel and the Iranian-backed Lebanese Hezbollah militia.

It followed two days of attacks in which paggers and walkie-talkies used by Hezbollah members exploded. Lebanon blamed the attacks on Israel, which has neither confirmed nor denied its involvement.

Khamenei said Israel was not even hiding its different forms of "shameless crimes" in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon and Syria.

It is not combating "fighting men, but ordinary people," Khamenei told a group of envoys from Muslim countries in Tehran in remarks broadcast on state TV.

"Unable to hurt the real fighters in Palestine, they are venting their malicious anger on small children, on hospital patients, and on schools filled with young children."

Also on Saturday, in a show of strength, Iran unveiled its "Jihad" single-stage liquid-fuel ballistic missile with a high-explosive detachable warhead and a range of 1,000 km, according to state TV. The missiles were displayed, along with other military hardware, during a parade marking the anniversary of the start of the 1980-88 war with Iraq.

## Sri Lanka picks Marxist-leaning Dissanayake as president to fix economy

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka elected Marxist-leaning Anura Kumara Disanayake as its new president on Sunday, putting faith in the 55-year-old's pledge to fight corruption and bolster a fragile economic recovery following its worst financial crisis in decades.

Dissanayake, who does not possess political lineage like some of his rivals in the presidential election, led from start to finish during the counting of

## 9 Indian fishermen feared dead after trawler capsizes in Bay of Bengal

NEW DELHI: Nine Indian fishermen are feared dead after their trawler capsized in the Bay of Bengal during a storm, an official told AFP on Sunday. The trawler had left from the Sundarbans in West Bengal on Wednesday with 17 men on board, said Surajit Bag, assistant director of fishing in the state government.

Eight were on the deck while nine others were asleep in the cabin below when the storm struck early Saturday near Bagher Char island he told AFP. "The trawler was overwhelmed by high waves and it capsized," he said. Another trawler rescued the eight on deck after they were thrown overboard, he said.

## Israeli strike on school housing refugees kills 21

GAZA STRIP: Gaza's civil defence agency reported 21 people were killed in an Israeli strike on Saturday, the latest attack on a school sheltering displaced Palestinians. A spokesman for the civil defence agency, Mahmud Bassal, said more than half the dead at the Gaza City school were children.

Displaced Gazan Randa al-Nadim told AFP she saw a pregnant woman killed in the strike. "Here a woman was martyred, and this is her blood on the stairs... we found her belly open and the fetus on the stairs," she said. "Did the fetus fight Israel?"

A strike on the United Nations-run Al-Jawani School in central Gaza on September 11 drew international outcry after the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said six of its staffers were among the 18 reported fatalities.

The Israeli military accuses Hamas of hiding in school buildings where many thousands of Gazans have sought shelter — a charge denied by the Palestinian group. Hamas on Saturday condemned the strike on Al-Zeitun School C, describing it in a statement as "a war crime under American cover", a reference to Washington being Israel's most important military backer.

The health ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip gave the same death toll for what the Israeli military said was a precise strike on fighters who were operating inside a Hamas command-and-control centre... embedded inside an adjacent school. AFP TV footage showed the ground floor

of the school-turned-shelter covered with concrete rubble and mangled chairs and tables, and a gaping hole in the ceiling of what appeared to be a classroom. Thousands of Palestinians displaced by the war had sought shelter there, Bassal said.

There were "around 30 injured, including nine children (needing) limb amputations, as a result of an Israeli bombing on Al-Zeitun School C" in Gaza City, he said.

Israel's military said its target was in Al-Falah School, adjacent to the Al-Zeitun School buildings. An AFP reporter at the scene confirmed that Al-Zeitun School C had been hit.

The military, without mentioning the casualties reported by Gaza's civil defence and health ministry, said it had taken steps "to mitigate the risk of harming civilians, including the use of precise munitions, aerial surveillance and additional intelligence".

## Russian strike on apartment block in Kharkiv injures 12

KYIV: Russian forces struck a multi-storey apartment building in Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, on Saturday evening, injuring at least 12 people and prompting an evacuation of some of its residents, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said.

Regional Governor Oleh Syniehubov said a child was among those injured. He said there had been two attacks on the city and a strike near the city of Izium, southeast of Kharkiv, which had set two private homes on fire.

On Friday, Russian forces launched three strikes on Kharkiv, injuring 15 people. Further south, a Russian drone attack killed two people on Saturday in the town of Nikopol, the regional governor said. In Kurakhove, one of the focal points of Russia's slow advance through Donetsk region, one person was killed in a Russian artillery strike.

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Palestinians inspect the damage to a school sheltering displaced people after it was hit by an Israeli strike, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, at Beach refugee camp in Gaza City.

## World leaders set to discuss raging conflicts, Global South's concerns over poverty, inflation & debt

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will join world leaders at the United Nations next week to deliberate on key international issues, as wars in the Middle East and Europe threaten to spread with no end in sight and to address Global South's concerns over increasing poverty, inflation and debt burden, while impacts of climate change worsen.

More than 130 heads of state/government will attend the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly's 79th session beginning on Tuesday, Sept 24.

"We see out-of-control geopolitical divisions and runaway conflicts — not least in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and beyond," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters at a news conference ahead of the annual debate.

Those three wars are set to dominate the agenda — both in world leaders' speeches before the assembly and at numerous side meetings.

Getting to a cease-fire in Gaza is even more urgent now that Israel has turned its guns towards its northern border with Lebanon in pursuit of its object to destroy Hezbollah. Earlier this week, Israel's detonations of hand-held devices by Hezbollah members left 37 dead and a hundred more injured that outraged most of the world.

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# “Ishq e Payambar e Azam Markaz Wahdat Muslimeen” conference held

ISLAMABAD (Online): On the auspicious occasion of the blessed birth of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH), Milli Yakjehti Council (MYC) and Majlis Wahdat Muslimeen Pakistan, jointly organized an annual grand gathering titled “Ishq e Payambar e Azam Markaz Wahdat Muslimeen” in the Federal Capital.

A large number of women and men of all schools of thought participated, the leaders of the religious and political parties of the country, scholars and elders and central leaders addressed the conference.

In his speech, the head of Majlis-e-Wahdat

Muslimeen, Senator Allama Raja Nasir Abbas, condemned the government’s approach to hinder the conference was a reprehensible move. No one can stop the program of remembrance of Holy Prophet (PBUH). The government should correct its Qibla. We support the oppressed people of Gaza and will continue to do so. Government want to spread chaos through terrorism in Parachinar. The Messenger of God will be happy that the oppressed people of Gaza remained steadfast despite suffering oppression.

Mujahideen of Lebanon also proved that they are lovers of the Messen-

ger of God by giving sacrifices. And there is a need to support the people of Lebanon and show proof of being a real Ummah. Addressing the conference, President MYC Sahibzada Abul Khair Muhammad Zubair said it is the blessing of the unity that the decision of Mubarak Sani case was returned. We should raise our voices unitedly on all the problems. Sahibzada Muhammad Hamid Raza, the head of Sunni Ittehad Council Pakistan, said that the cruelty is reaching its peak in Gaza, but if you look at it today, we are also facing the situation of Gaza in Pakistan, there can be neither a protest for Gaza

nor it is allowed to celebrate the birth anniversary of Rasool Akram.

MYC should meet at D Chowk to free the people from this siege, it seems our state has officially recognized Israel. Liaqat Baloch General Secretary MYC said that it is surprising that the government did not allow Milad-ul-Nabi at the designated place in Islamabad. Allama Hasnain Gardizi, Allama Syed Ahmad Iqbal, Khawaja Mudassar, Muhammad Abdullah Gul, Syed Fida Bukhari, Allama Arif Wahidi, Syed Nasir Shirazi, Pir Atiq Chisti, Syed Asad Naqvi, Syed Ali Abbas, Maysam Kazim, Sabz Ali.



ISLAMABAD: A large numbers of parents stands outside Islamabad Model College for Girls G-10 as waiting for their children during the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) 2024, in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: A large numbers of heavy trailers parked in front of factories for waiting loading iron at Industrial area sector I-II, in the Federal capital.

## MDCAT test being held amid strict security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, under the special direction of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, have implemented tight security arrangements at Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) centers across the district.

According to a police spokesperson, the MDCAT is currently being held across Pakistan under the supervision of the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC).

Students are prohibited from carrying mobile phones, wallets, or any electronic devices during the exam, as per a notification

issued by the department. He said mobile phone signals will also be blocked, with jammers installed at the test centers to ensure security.

Additionally, mobile and internet services within a 500-meter radius of the exam centers have been suspended from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM to facilitate the smooth conduct of the examination, he added.

He said robust security measures are in place at examination centers throughout the ICT Police District. “The police urge the public to refrain from participating in any illegal activities during this period,” he added.

## Jaberi Ansari appointed new CEO of IRNA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Seasoned diplomat Hossein Jaberi Ansari has been appointed as the new CEO of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA).

According to IRNA, Jaberi Ansari has worked in various roles in the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the past three decades, including as Deputy Minister for Arab and African Affairs. He has authored and translated several books on foreign affairs issues, including the latest publication entitled “Spark on One’s Chest” which is a translation of the Palestinian writer Munir Shafiq’s Arabic book “From a Spark to Another Spark”.

## 100 ICT rural schools being solarized

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has commenced work on solarizing 100 rural ICT schools, providing a reliable and sustainable power backup for quality education. According to the Education Ministry, this initiative ensures uninterrupted learning experiences and supports modern education ecosystems.

Sharing the key highlights, the ministry said that 100 rural ICT schools to be solar-powered. Reliable, renewable energy for schools and labs will be provided. It is stated that project cost

recovery is expected within 20 months.

The ministry is committed in enhancing educational outcomes through technology integration, it added. This sustainable energy solution reduces carbon footprint, minimizes power outages, fosters digital literacy, and supports Pakistan’s vision for a technologically advanced education system.

“By harnessing solar energy, we’re empowering future generations with access to quality education, bridging the digital divide, and contributing to a greener tomorrow” it added.

## 14 outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police apprehended 14 outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Islamabad Police has exaggerated crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

## DIG Islamabad orders crackdown on criminals

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza Raza, conducted a briefing for all police station muharrars, readers, Dolphin Squad, Ababel Squad, City Watchers, and Patrol Unit officers.

On the occasion, senior police officials, and a large number of police officers were also present, a public relations officer said.

During the briefing, the DIG Islamabad emphasized the importance of briefing and said that our

will respond promptly to every call.

Additionally, individual performance reports of all officers will be compiled daily. Officers stationed at checkpoints will ensure effective monitoring of criminal elements.

Each officer will be held accountable for their individual performance as well as the crimes occurring in their areas. Corruption and negligence in duties will not be tolerated, he added.

DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza further said that,



duty is to ensure the safety of citizens’ lives and property and to enhance the reputation of our department”, he added.

Moreover, DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza mentioned that special beat officers will be deployed alongside the Dolphin Squad to make patrolling more effective in the federal capital. These beat officers will remain in their designated areas 24/7 and

the welfare of all officers is my top priority. You must conduct effective crackdowns on criminal elements. All police officers are urged to enhance patrols in the federal capital to prevent crime, ensure immediate response to emergency calls to the helpline Pucar-15, and serve citizens promptly. Protecting the lives and property of citizens is our foremost responsibility, he maintained.

## Gilgit-Baltistan sanitation project to be functional by 2025: Project director

ISLAMABAD (APP): Gilgit-Baltistan’s long-standing demand for improved sanitation and sewerage infrastructure is finally completed where approximately 16% of the work has been completed, Project Director Engineer Shafiq Ali disclosed on Sunday. In an exclusive interview with PTV news channel, he assured the residents of Gilgit-Baltistan that the sanitation project will be fully functional by

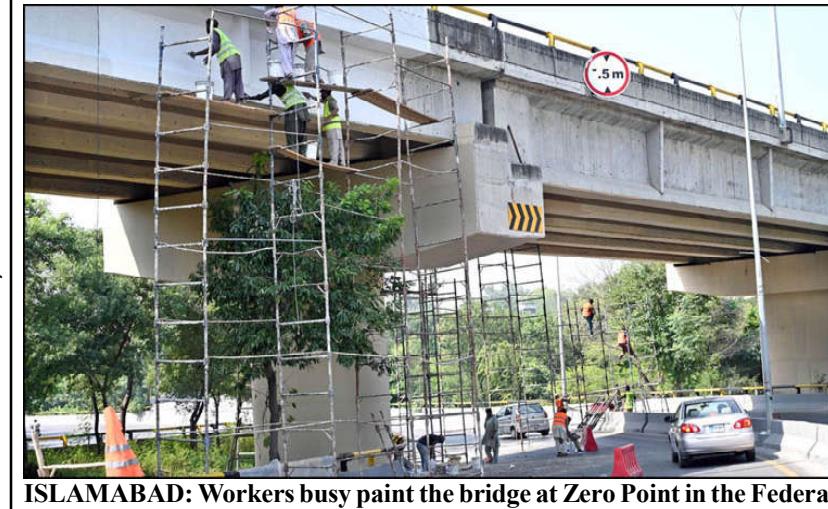
2025 and this milestone project will mark a crucial step towards addressing the region’s long-standing sanitation challenges.

He explained that the sanitation project aims to improve the quality of life for Gilgit-Baltistan’s residents by providing modern sanitation infrastructure.

Upon completion, the project will significantly reduce the risk of waterborne diseases, mitigate environmental pollution.

## Women and children facing exploitation in brick kilns work

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least 20 thousand workers work at brick kilns and most of them are women and children facing exploitation which stirs the need for proper implementation of existing laws towards the most neglected sector, said Human Rights activist Ayub Malik here on Sunday. Talking to APP, in the world’s poorest countries, slightly more than 1 in 5 children are engaged in child labour and 87,000 children.



ISLAMABAD: Workers busy paint the bridge at Zero Point in the Federal Capital.

## ED GCISC calls for collective action on waste management, environmental protection

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director of the Global Climate-Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC) Arif Goheer has called for the urgent need of collective action to address waste management challenges and protect the environment.

He said this while talking to APP in connection with the ‘World Cleanup Day’.

In his remarks, Goheer highlighted the growing environmental and health risks posed by improper waste disposal, plastic pollution, and the unsustainable

consumption of resources.

“World Cleanup Day is a powerful reminder that environmental stewardship is a shared responsibility. It’s time for individuals, businesses, and governments to prioritize cleaner, greener practices to safeguard our planet,” said Goheer.

He also underscored the importance of integrating modern waste management technologies, including recycling and waste-to-energy solutions, to reduce the strain on natural ecosystems.

## Security officials briefed for effective duty

ISLAMABAD: According to details, following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, SP Industrial Area zone Ali Raza visited various checkpoints of Industrial Area zone and briefed the officers regarding the better performance of their duties. Moreover, officers were briefed regarding the duty in view of the current situation, to be alert during checking and keeping a watchful eye on suspicious persons, strict orders were issued.

## Spaceacademy Society offers interactive learning activities for students

ISLAMABAD (APP): To celebrate the World Space Week from October 4-10, the Spaceacademy Society has planned an exciting series of interactive space science activities for students from different schools.

Spaceacademy Society will arrange various activities under the theme “Explore the Universe – A Journey to the Cosmos” in coordination with the Space Education and Awareness Drive of Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco).

According to an official source, the program is aimed at engaging the students with hands-on learning experiences that explore the mysteries of the universe through telescope

observations, virtual space journeys, and more.

The organization has invited educators to engage their students in a series of hands-on, interactive activities designed to foster a deeper understanding of space science.

The program will feature a variety of learning experiences, including telescope observations of celestial phenomena, both during the day and at night.

Students will also have the chance to participate in expert-led sessions on celestial objects such as planets, stars, and black holes, delving into the mysteries of the universe.

Another highlight of the initiative is a virtual space journey.



ISLAMABAD: CDA workers busy sapling plants at greenbelt along with Expressway in the Federal Capital.

# Structural Reforms – A way forward to macroeconomic stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): As Pakistan struggles to achieve sustainable growth, the federal government is firmly resolute in its commitment to tax reforms and rightsizing to achieve macroeconomic stability and secure a prosperous and progressive future for the country.

For ordinary citizens, the impact of tax reforms and rightsizing may seem distant, but government is clear in its thinking that everyone must contribute to country’s economy and play their respective role in economic uplift.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a message termed the structural reforms as crucial for achieving macroeconomic stability, which he

called is a “basic hygiene” for sustainable growth.

“Structural reforms are pivotal for ensuring sustainable economic growth and stability, forming a cornerstone of the government’s policy agenda,” the finance minister said while reacting on the issue. Since respective governments have been endeavoring to broaden tax base by bringing more eligible into tax net, the efforts could not generate desired results. Therefore, the present government has once again embarked on an agenda to improve tax collection and bring the most needed reforms in this regime.

As per the official data, country’s 43% of sectors in the economy pay less than 1% tax, resulting in a tax-to-GDP ratio of just 8.8% which is unsustainable

and no country in the world could be run with these meager resources. The consequence is very much evident that Pakistan had to depend on external financing to bridge the fiscal gaps.

In order to reduce dependence of external financing and improve revenue collections, the government eyes on lifting the tax-to-GDP ratio up to 13% as envisaged in the budget document for current fiscal year (2024-25).

The way forward is clear and needs to broaden tax base and bring potential taxpayers into tax net to boost income of the national exchequer and help reduce dependence on external financing besides encouraging investment and economic growth.

In addition to tax gen-

eration, the government has been seriously taking measures to reduce its expenditures and slash fiscal deficit. The federal budget 2024-25 predicted a headline deficit of 5.9% of GDP and a 2.0% primary surplus against 7.4% and 0.4 percent respectively during 2023-24. Currently Federal Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb is heading the High-Powered Committee on Rightsizing of the Federal Government to reduce size of different ministries and autonomous bodies. Six ministries were asked to prepare an implementation plan for rightsizing, considering their employees, resources, properties and litigation matters. Once this process is complete, further ministries would be considered

for reforms and rightsizing. However, the government would need to bring legislative changes in Civil Servant Act 1973 to carry forward the rightsizing process smoothly. Experts believe that rightsizing would help reduce expenditures and slashing fiscal deficits; improve efficiency and productivity in the government ministries and autonomous bodies; reducing size of the federal government and improving governance besides encouraging private sector growth and investment.

Although the ride is bumpy, yet the efforts look sincere as ever since the incumbent government had assumed power, the economy is gradually coming on the right track as demonstrated by various economic indicators.

# Yes, of course it hurts



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