

# Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 224 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Friday September 27, 2024, Rabi-ul-Awwal 22 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

## PM urges sanctions on Israel for genocidal acts against Palestinians

Stresses global unity to demand immediate Gaza ceasefire, creation of Palestine state

NEW YORK (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday urged the United Nations Security Council to apply sanctions against Israel including an arms & trade embargo for its genocidal acts against the Palestinians. "We must compel Israel to halt its genocidal war in Gaza and prevent its attempts to provoke a wider conflict in the Middle East," the prime minister stressed while delivering a statement during the High-Level Open Debate of the Security Council on "Leadership for Peace" on the sidelines of the 79th United Nations General Assembly Session.

While strongly condemning Israel's bombing in Lebanon, the prime minister emphasized that it was time to hold its leadership

accountable for its crimes against the Palestinians and the Lebanese people. In addition, he also urged the Security Council to develop an impartial plan for a cease-fire and peaceful solution for the war in Ukraine. He said proliferating wars in the Middle East, Europe and elsewhere, great powers' tension, and growing poverty were threatening the foundations of the world order. "Last Sunday we approved the pact for the future. We must give life to our commitments otherwise, the future will be bleak and dangerous," he stressed.

As regards the Kashmir issue, he emphasized that the Council could no longer ignore the fostering Jammu and Kashmir dispute. "It

poses a great threat to international peace and security. The Council must call for a halt to the massive violations of the fundamental rights of Kashmiri people and implement its own resolutions that demand a plebiscite for self-determination in Kashmir valley," the prime minister added.

Furthermore, he called upon the Council to also effectively address the resurgence of the threat of terrorism from Afghanistan especially from Daesh, and Fitna al-Khawaraj. Likewise, he said the Council must extend active support to the African countries and the African Union to defeat terrorism and foreign interventions. "UN peacekeeping must become more robust and effective."

He added that the Council should initiate building measures to prevent a war between major powers and ease the rising tension, especially in Asia. Additionally, the prime minister stressed that the Council must declare zero tolerance for the illegal use of force and revive global efforts to halt and reverse the new arms race in nuclear and conventional weapons. "It must also build control over new weapons and technologies including Artificial Intelligence that is making war more likely and more lethal."

He said in cooperation with other member states, Pakistan would pursue these objectives in the Security Council after assuming its seat in the Council next year.



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting with the President of the State of Palestine Mahmoud Abbas on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

## CJP explains reasons to reconstitute judges committee

Responds to Justice Mansoor Shah's objection to removal of Justice Munib Akhtar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has given reply to the letter of most senior judge of Supreme Court (SC) Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. In his letter Justice Mansoor Ali Shah has written all the reasons for not sitting in judges committee. According to sources Justice Mansoor Ali Shah had refused to participate in the meeting of practice and procedure committee. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah had expressed reservations over presidential order by writing letter besides raising question on expulsion of Justice Munib Akhtar from the committee. Sources said CJP Qazi

Faez Isa has written reply to the letter of Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. The contents of the reply from CJP have not come to open so far. According to sources CJP have told 11 reasons for not including Justice Munib Akhtar in practice and procedure committee. CJP said in his reply that the attitude of Justice Munib Akhtar with his senior judges was very harsh. This was done Justice Mansoor on your insistence. Legally you cannot raise question on this thing that CJP should include which judge in the committee. I have always supported accountability and transparency. I am telling you the

reasons for not including Justice Munib Akhtar in the committee. The CJP wrote Justice Mansoor legally you cannot ask that I should nominate or otherwise whom as third judge, otherwise. Qazi Faez Isa wrote in his letter that Justice Munib Akhtar had opposed strongly practice and procedure law. Justice Munib was among those two judges who availed all the summer vacations. Justice Munib was not available for doing court's work during vacations. He insisted on participating in committee's meetings despite being on leave which reflects his mistrust on next senior judge Justice Yahya.



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the sidelines of the UNGA.

## PM Shahbaz says IMF's assistance helped strengthen country's institutions, improve economic management

NEW YORK (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday appreciated the IMF's technical assistance and capacity building programmes, which, he said, had helped strengthen the country's institutions and improve its economic management. He was talking to Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva in a meeting on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session. Appreciating the col-

laboration with IMF for a successful Staff Level Agreement (SLA) for a 37-month USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Pakistan, the prime minister highlighted the government's commitment to implementing structural reforms and promoting private sector development. The IMF managing director expressed the Fund's support for Pakistan's efforts and emphasized the importance of maintaining macroeconomic stability, and promoting inclusive and sustainable growth.

## Prudent policies of government resulted in stability of economy, decrease in inflation: Tarar

NEW YORK (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar has said that stringent measures and prudent policies of the government had resulted in stability in the economy. Addressing a press conference here he said that due to steps of the present regime, inflation and prices of daily use commodities had fallen considerably. "A certain political party wanted the economy to default," the information minister said, adding, but the government took steps to avert such a situation. He said that the inflation ratio had decreased significantly compared to the same period last year and now it had come down single digit which was a good sign. Tarar said that the smuggling of dollars has been stopped by taking stringent measures and Information technology sector-related exports have increased significantly. The economic stability of Pakistan was being acknowledged at the international level as well, he said.

Moody's and Fitch also declared Pakistan's economy stable whereas Bloomberg described the Pakistani economic indicators as positive. "According to a Bloomberg survey, Pakistan's stock exchange is moving in a positive direction", he maintained. The arrival of record remittances from overseas Pakistanis was also a good omen, he remarked. The agreement with the IMF, the minister said would make the economy more stable, he remarked. The minister said that Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan also praised Pakistan's step toward economic stability. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had held meetings with the heads of various countries on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session. The determination of Bangladesh and Pakistan relations was reiterated during the PM's meeting with Chief Adviser Dr Yunus in New York proved quite useful.

## Powerful blast at Swabi police station leaves one dead, 16 injured

**Monitoring Desk**  
PESHAWAR: At least one person was killed and another 16 injured, including police officers on duty, after a powerful explosion rocked the Swabi City police station in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday, causing the building to collapse, local authorities confirmed. The blast occurred in the station's storage room, where explosive materials seized from terrorists were reportedly being kept. According to initial reports, the explosion was triggered by a short circuit, which caused multiple detonations. District Police Officer (DPO) Swabi said investigations are underway to

determine the exact nature of the blast. "The explosion has severely damaged the building, and rescue teams are on the ground," he stated. Rescue workers and fire brigade personnel quickly reached the scene, transferring the injured to nearby hospitals, including the Bacha Khan Medical Complex, where an emergency has been declared. A hospital spokesperson confirmed that eight injured have been admitted so far, with two in critical condition. "All necessary medical care is being provided, and the hospital administration is closely monitoring the situation," the spokesperson added.



ISLAMABAD: Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malki meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

## Eight Khawarij terrorists killed in North Waziristan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Security Forces on Thursday killed eight Khawarij terrorists in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted on the night of September 25/26 in general area Razmak, North Waziristan District. During conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange took place between the Army troops and Khawarij, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR)

news release said. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from killed Khawarij, who remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces as well as target killing of innocent civilians, it said. Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday lauded the security forces for carrying out a successful anti-terror operation in the Razmak area of North Waziristan.

## US enjoys 'deeper' ties with Shahbaz Sharif's govt, says Donald Lu

NEW YORK (INP): U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Donald Lu, expressed optimism about Pakistan's ongoing economic recovery. "We are greatly encouraged by the economic recovery Pakistan is undergoing," said Donald Lu in his interaction with a private TV channel. He shared details of his recent meeting with Pakistan's Finance Minister, Aurangzeb, where they discussed the government's economic plans and reforms. "These reforms are not easy, but they are crucial for Pakistan's future," the US official remarked. He said that the successful implementation of these initiatives will help stabilize Pakistan's economy, benefiting not just the youth but all segments of society.

## Election amendment act be given preference or court's decision: EC resorts to SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan has filed miscellaneous petition in Supreme Court (SC) on the matter of implementation of order regarding reserved seats. ECP has sought guidance from SC the election amendment be given preference or court's decision. The EC has taken plea speaker National Assembly wrote letter that amendment in election act was made after court's decision. The members who were identified by EC also approached for implementation of amendment in election act. EC has implemented to the extent of 39 members.

## Pakistan intends to direct trade route to Tajikistan, road access to Central Asia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan intends to have direct trade route to Tajikistan and road access to Central Asian countries for which corridor of China and Afghanistan may be under consideration. In this regard, Kurakram Highway, Khunjarab, Kashgar, Murghab and Dushanbe route will be utilized for two-way trade.

This was discussed in the meeting of Minister of Transport of Tajikistan Azim Ibrahim and Minister for Communications, Board of Investment & Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan at Beijing, China as sideline meeting on the eve of Global Transport Forum. Aleem Khan observed that Pakistan is ready for the meeting of Joint Minis-

terial Committee and Joint Working Group with Tajikistan. He welcomed the starting of direct flight between the two countries as a positive impact of his recent visit to Tajikistan in May. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan wants to promote bilateral trade with all Central Asian countries for which more initiative will be taken.

## Balochistan is heart of Pakistan & priority of our Govt.: Balochistan being given special attention by present federal Govt: Amir Muqam

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Federal Minister for State and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), Engineer Amir Muqam has categorically stated that Balochistan is the heart of Pakistan and as such special attention is being given to the province during the present era of our government. He said that more funds have been allocated for Balochistan in the current federal PSDP than other provinces even Punjab. He mentioned that Rs. 120 billion have been allocated for Balochistan in the current PSDP by the federal government, which are higher than other provinces. He said that constitutional amendments are being made in favour of the



people of the country, and this is not a new thing. He said that the reforms and constitutional amendments are being made for well being of the people. He said that people want to use the institutions for the political gains. He believed that the IMF's agreement would bring economic stability in the country. He said that the country would suffer instability

if the institutions are weakened. These and similar other views were expressed by the Minister for SAFRON while speaking to the media persons during his visit to the Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees here on Thursday. The Secretary of SAFRON, Commissioner Afghan Refugees and other concerned high ups were also present on the occasion. The Federal Minister for SAFRON was briefed about the overall functioning of the Ministry and situation of Afghan refugees and other related matters. Speaking to the media, Amir Muqam said that unfortunately lawlessness has returned in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The people of two provinces have suffered due to the law and order situation and terrorism.

However, Amir Muqam added that the people of Balochistan have faced terrorism bravely. He also said that the security forces have rendered great sacrifices in the war against terrorism. He said that the victory would be of peace in the end. He categorically stated that the terrorists are neither Baloch nor Pakhtun nor Muslims. He said that we would have to fight terrorism together. He on the occasion appreciated the female Adeela Baloch, who given up the suicide bombing. Referring the agreement made with IMF, the Federal Minister SAFRON noted with contentment over the agreement that was done successfully under leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal chaired the meeting on the National Urban Planning Framework in Islamabad.

## Sibi bus stand blast claims child's life, 2 critically injured

QUETTA (APP): A powerful explosion struck a Sibi bus stand, killing one child and critically injuring two others on Thursday. According to the rescue teams, the injured children are receiving medical care at Sibi Teaching Hospital, where the Medical Superintendent (MS) has confirmed that their condition remains critical, a private news channel reported. Law enforcement agencies have cordoned off the area and launched an investigation into the cause of the explosion.

## Pakistan inks contract for selling JF-17 Block-III fighter jets to Azerbaijan

RAWALPINDI (APP): As part of Pakistan's efforts to enhance defence cooperation with friendly countries, a contract for the sale of JF-17 Block-III fighter aircraft to bolster air power capabilities of Azerbaijan has been recently signed. During his recent visit to Pakistan, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev was briefed on the combat capabilities and versatile employment options of JF-17 BLOCK-III fighter aircraft, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said on Thursday.

Pursuant to President Aliyev's visit and on the request of Government of Azerbaijan, Pakistan deployed a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) contingent at Baku to participate in ADEX-2024 showcasing the aerial prowess and static display of Pride of Pakistan JF-17 Thunder Block-III. During deployment, JF-17 carried out air-to-air refuelling from the PAF Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) aircraft deploying in a single hop to Baku, demonstrating long haul capability and reach of the PAF's fighter jet.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Taxation plan**

At first glance, the new FBR 'transformation plan', which aims to broaden the tax net, scrap the category of 'non-filers', and improve compliance and enforcement through fresh punitive measures, might come across as a positive step.

Yet, without addressing the deep-seated and long-standing issues of tax equity, policy reforms and institutional restructuring of the FBR, can it work? Indeed, the idea of making 'dirty money' redundant through imposing restrictions on asset purchases and investments by tax evaders and cheaters should be appreciated.

But how will the plan be executed? The proposed plan shifts the entire burden of tax scrutiny of a spender on other regulators and sellers rather than building its own capacity to net the dodgers. It is also likely to create problems for tax-exempt segments, including those whose annual income is less than Rs600,000 or housewives or Pakistanis abroad. Will they also be required to file annual tax statements? The plan does not distinguish between tax evaders and middle-class taxpayers showing an annual income of less than Rs10m in their tax statements. They could also face the same spending curbs as articulated for non-filers when they try to purchase a vehicle or real estate or financial instruments or attempt to open bank accounts.

This is not the first time the tax bureaucracy has come up with a plan to boost tax revenues. But previous efforts have, for the most part, only made the taxation system more complex and expensive for taxpayers, providing a 'reason' for others to stay out of the net. That inflation-adjusted real tax revenue growth has stood at a mere 2pc a year since 2018 confirms the futility of past FBR plans. Little wonder, Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio has grown to just 9.5pc from 8pc in 2000. In comparison, India has improved its taxes to 18.5pc of its GDP from 13.4pc and Nepal to 17.5pc from 8.7pc in the same period.

These countries have improved their tax performance not just by taking punitive actions against tax dodgers and cheaters but also making their tax regimes equitable, fair and easier to comply with through wide-ranging policy and administrative reforms. Unless Pakistan also follows the principle of equity, does away with wasteful exemptions of Rs4tr, and restructures the FBR to weed out inefficiencies and corruption, punitive actions will not have the intended effect.

The measures to make dirty money difficult to spend are welcome. Those who do not pay their taxes or underreport their income should be punished. But the FBR must also give details on how it intends to execute these proposals without creating more difficulties for compliant taxpayers or tax-exempt segments. So far, the intent seems to be to squeeze existing taxpayers to meet the revenue targets rather than broadening the net.

**F.S. Aijazuddin**

Pakistan skates too dangerously on thin ice. Despite the blunt-bladed incompetence of its governments, it has managed to wobble and stumble for 77 years.

Today, many Pakistanis wonder how long it can continue to defy the laws of economic gravity and ignore the need for a national purpose. How long can our state sustain this war with itself — the judiciary vs its brother black coats; the state vs its public; the legislature vs its electorate; impetuosity vs common sense? We survive each day in an uneasy condition, the very opposite of Chamberlain's peace with honour.

In many countries — certainly those with a burgeoning population the size of ours — political parties prepare a plan on the essentials of governance before coming to power. Others with less foresight wait until they are in government and then announce national strategies. The foolhardy prefer the doctrine of *arrière-pensée*, steering themselves by using the rear view window.

Take the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960. In 1947, the water system was bifurcated, with headworks located in India and downstream canals running through Pakistan. After six years of desultory talks, Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru and our president Ayub Khan signed the IWT in September 1960. The lollipop provided by the World Bank financed the Mangla and Tarbela dams.

The treaty spawned a Permanent Indus Commission with commissioners from each side to ease implementation of the treaty. The 118th meeting of the Pakistan-India Permanent Indus Commission was held in New Delhi from May 30-31, 2022. During it, "Pakistan highlighted its objections on India's hydroelectric projects on the western rivers. The Indians assured that Pakistan's outstanding objections would be discussed in the next meeting". Both sides reiterated their commitment "to implement the Indus Waters Treaty in its true spirit". In effect, the party to the First Part promised to continue living with the party to the Second Part.

**On thin ice**

The 119th meeting is unlikely to be held, as India refuses to hold any more meetings until the IWT is renegotiated. India issued a notice in 2023 and another in 2024 seeking "a review and modification" of its terms. India has cited "changes in population growth, agricultural needs, and the evolving water usage situation since the treaty's inception in 1960". PM Modi's rationale is blunter: "Blood and water cannot flow together."

Our powers that ought to be should recall the warning of the expert David Lilienthal, who conceived the IWT: "No armies with bombs and shellfire could devastate a land so thoroughly as Pakistan could be devastated by simple expedient shutting off the source of water that keeps the fields and people of Pakistan green."

Our governments, however, continue to behave like some tethered goat, tied to the past, bound to the rigid terms of the IWT and the now sterile UN resolutions on Jammu & Kashmir. PM Modi resolved the J&K conundrum by abrogating Article 370 and absorbing its possession of the disputed territory into India. He now proposes to abrogate the IWT and leave us dehydrated, a modern Mohenjodaro.

Has the government any more leeway than it had in the Reko Diq mining deal? Reko Diq is "the world's largest gold and copper mine, with deposits capable of producing

200,000 tons of copper and 250,000 ounces of gold a year for nearly 50 years". Our paper riches turned instead into \$11 billion in fines. Islamabad escaped them through a renegotiated deal which cost \$900m paid to a former investor.

In another deal gone sour — the Iran-Pakistan pipeline — we avoided a penalty of \$1m a day by building our rump of the pipeline, shrinking it from the planned 785 kilometres to 80 km.

Sadly, the independent power producers are headed also towards confrontation. Recently, the government 'urged' owners of five IPPs to voluntarily terminate their power purchase agreements and shift to a 'pay and take' model. Worse still, some IPPS are being told to replace their feedstock from rich imported coal to poorer local Thar lignite. Such draconian measures can only dishearten existing owners and discourage future investors.

News now abounds that the Pakistan Steel Mills (Pasmic) — a defunct monument to avarice and incompetence — is being resurrected with Russian help. As if on cue, a convoy of diplomats (including the Russian ambassador) returning from a jaunt in Swat to explore investment, was attacked by someone using an improvised explosive device. History reminds us that the assassination at Sarajevo started the First World War on flimsier grounds.

In 1961, Russia helped us establish the Oil & Gas Development Company, and in 1974 Pasmic. Is it possible that Russia's Lazarus interest in Pasmic in 2024 has something to do with the announcement of major oil and gas reserves off our coast? -- Courtesy Dawn

**Child protection**

**Kishwar Enam**

A few weeks ago, an 11-year-old girl in Karachi was kidnapped, tortured, raped, and murdered. Her body was discarded in a garbage dump. The Sindh Police responded swiftly, and apprehended the suspect. The culprit may face justice. But is this the end of the story?

Unfortunately, such horrifying incidents are common, and each new tragedy eclipses the previous one in the public's memory. Only cases that capture media attention or come under the radar of officials, NGOs, child rights activists, or concerned individuals see action, but even these are few and far between. The vast majority of child abuse cases in Pakistan remain hidden, neglected, or dismissed by the authorities.

Child abuse in Pakistan takes various forms, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and neglect. Children are frequently exploited through begging, labour, domestic servitude, trafficking, and underage marriages. Many are also deprived of their right to education, healthcare, and shelter. Yet Pakistan lacks a centralised database to accurately record and assess the extent of child abuse.

Child abuse cases are handled in a disjointed, arbitrary manner, with no standardised protocol in place. Each case is treated uniquely, often resulting in haphazard responses that do more harm than good.

According to Unicef, a child protection system consists of laws, policies, regulations, and services required across social sectors — such as social welfare, healthcare, security, and justice — to prevent and respond to risks related to child protection. Typically, such systems are government-led and supported by collaboration among various

departments, NGOs, and citizen groups.

However, effective child protection requires seamless coordination between key stakeholders, including child protection authorities, police, medico-legal officers, and the judiciary. This is severely lacking in Pakistan. Each department operates its own helpline; efforts to create a unified helpline for child protection have met with resistance. Each department responds to cases according to its individual protocols, resulting in delays and confusion.

Hospitals are another critical part. When a case of child abuse is reported, hospitals should follow established protocols. Unfortunately, very few public or private hospitals here have such protocols. Also, the need for mental health services, which are essential to help children recover from trauma, is often overlooked.

Given that children spend a significant part of their day at school, schools are also integral to the child protection system. By establishing child protection committees within schools and incorporating lessons on child rights, we can empower children to understand their rights and seek help when needed.

A group of concerned citizens from diverse backgrounds has drafted a document on an integrated child protection system. This group has studied child protection systems worldwide and reviewed SOPs of local authorities, many of which were found to be incomplete and complex. Some employees were unaware that these SOPs even existed.

For a child protection system to work in Pakistan, we need coordination among all stakeholders involved in child protection, including citizens, professionals

working with children, child protection authorities, police, the judiciary, lawyers, and healthcare providers. We need pre-designed forms for reporting incidents of child abuse, step-by-step guidelines for handling cases, and clear protocols for monitoring, auditing, and reviewing processes to ensure compliance with best practices.

The system should aim to simplify the documentation and procedural workflow, ensuring that it is consistently followed, reviewed, and improved as needed. By fostering an environment of transparency and responsiveness, we can hope to build public trust and encourage more families to report abuse.

The child protection system should be implemented in such a way that it unites all relevant stakeholders, ensuring cases are handled smoothly without the need for public pressure or social media campaigns to achieve justice. Its primary goal should be to protect the child and family from further trauma, while offering a systematic, trauma-informed approach to address child abuse. Awareness campaigns should be consistent and will only succeed when a strong child protection system is functioning effectively.

Pakistan is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and several child rights laws exist. However, enforcement remains minimal.

It is strongly urged that the relevant authorities prioritise child protection. Our children — the country's future — deserve a safe and nurturing environment where they can grow and thrive, free from the shadow of abuse and neglect. The time for action is now. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Kamal reviews transshipment policy; seeks proposals for E-Commerce development**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan here on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to revamp the country's transshipment policy.

According to press release issued by the ministry, the meeting was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, FBR, Customs, Railways, Commerce, and other key stakeholders.

Discussions focused on addressing various issues such as alternative routes, transshipment modes, and regulatory measures to remove

obstacles, with the goal of making Pakistan a regional transshipment hub.

The revised policy aims to facilitate cargo movement for both intra-regional and inter-regional trade, with a special focus on serving landlocked countries in the region.

The initiative is expected to boost revenue for the FBR, create employment opportunities for skilled workers, and spur overall development in the country.

Jam Kamal Khan directed all stakeholders to expedite pending matters to ensure the timely implementation of the policy, and emphasized the

importance of consulting the private sector for their input. Meanwhile, the minister also chaired the first meeting of the IT & E-Commerce Council, aimed at accelerating the growth of Pakistan's IT and e-commerce sectors.

Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja also participated in the meeting virtually.

During the session, Minister Jam Kamal Khan asked council members to submit proposals for further review by the Executive Committee of Commerce, chaired by the Commerce Minister himself.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Mr. Ajaypal Singh Banga, President of the World Bank on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York. Finance Minister, Muhammad Aurangzeb was also present in the meeting.

**Gilani calls for adopting digital transformation to boost investment in pharmaceutical sector**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has called for embracing innovation, forge partnerships, and adopt digital transformation to boost investment in Pakistan's pharmaceutical sector.

"The world is rapidly changing, and the pharmaceutical sector is no exception. We must leverage new technologies such as telemedicine and digital health records," he made these remarks while addressing the

3rd Pharma Export Summit & Awards (PESA).

He further emphasized the importance of advancing research and development, establishing a robust regulatory framework, and promoting international cooperation through public-private partnerships.

Gilani said that the pharmaceutical sector is one of the key pillars of the country's economy and it is highly promising that the sector is expanding its reach into

high-value markets such as Europe, the USA, and emerging markets in Asia and Africa. "Despite the smaller scale, Pakistan's pharmaceutical industry is expanding, with local companies increasingly capturing market share from multinational corporations," he added.

He highlighted few key areas where industry can strategically focus to increase exports and compete on a par with regional players in global market.

**PM reaffirms commitment to achieve Pakistan's development goals**

NEW YORK (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to achieving Pakistan's development goals, aligned with Vision 2025 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The prime minister was talking to President of the World Bank Ajaypal Singh Banga in a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting,

the prime minister appreciated the World Bank's continuous support to the Government of Pakistan in introducing critical economic reforms and addressing Pakistan's economic challenges, including poverty reduction and infrastructure development.

The prime minister apprised the WB president of the government's steps, involving policy, administrative and organizational reforms, to realize the full potential of the economy and to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth.



SIALKOT: President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry Abdul Ghafoor Malik presenting a shield to British High Commission Deputy Director Communication Sneha Leela visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry attending a seminar on Cheung Scholarship Program.

**OEC to export skilled workforce to S. Arabia**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) working under the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) would export the skilled workforce to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

An official source told APP here on Thursday, he said that skilled workforce would work under the Saudi Ministry of National Guard - Health Affairs as a Tradesman Assistants who meet the prescribed qualifications and experience as following

Tradesman Assistant (Age 25-50), Education should be High School Graduate - Essential, Diploma Degree in Technical College or engineering in the specific area of assignment or recognized apprenticeship program in a specific area of assignment from an accredited institution would be preferred. He said that the responsibilities/duties of the workforce would be carried out general cleaning duties within workshop or plant room areas, and assist tradesmen with duties such as painting.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani addressing as chief guest of 3rd Pesa Export Awards in Islamabad.

**Pak strengthens automotive ties with China, eyes joint innovation in EV sector**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Consul General in Shanghai, Shehzad Ahmad Khan, reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast commitment to enhancing its bilateral relations with China, with a particular focus on the rapidly growing automotive sector.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of a four-day 2024 Taizhou International Automobile Industry Expo, he said Taizhou's pivotal role as a trailblazer in China's automobile industry and praised the city's innovative achievements

and its substantial contributions to the global market.

Highlighting the importance of technological collaboration, Shehzad emphasized the potential for groundbreaking advancements in automotive technology through joint efforts between Pakistani and Chinese enterprises. "Such collaboration can drive significant strides in knowledge sharing, capacity building, and sustainable practices within the industry,"

**Shipping activity at Port Qasim**

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships, SSL Brahmputra, Maersk Cape Town, Forza Roma and Hafnia Express scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice and Gas oil, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Grain Terminal and FOTCO Oil Terminal respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile five more ships, Phoenicianm, Ashico Victoria, Cape Andreas, Solar Roma and Papino scheduled to load/offload Rice, Container and steel coil are also arrived at outer anchorage port during last 24 hours. A total of ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, Maersk Cape Town, SSL Brahmputra, North Berwick, Bentley-I and Al-Deebal left the port on today morning, while two more ships, Scarable and Cape Andreas are expected to sail on today afternoon. Cargo volume of 97,522 tonnes, comprising 77,632 tonnes imports cargo and 19,890 tonnes export cargo carried in 1,866 Containers (845 TEUs Imports & 1,021 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

**SCCI takes stand against IPPs**

PESHAWAR (APP): President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Fawad Ishaq has said that the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) issue, calling it the "biggest burning issue" in the country. Speaking at a press conference, SCCI President Fawad Ishaq revealed that the chamber has been fighting against IPPs for the past year, with their legal team and business community closely monitoring the situation. Fawad Ishaq expressed grave concern that IPPs have exceeded the country's defense

budget, causing destruction to the economy and industry nationwide. He emphasized that FPCCI and chambers across the country are united against IPPs. After legal consultation, SCCI has filed a writ petition against IPPs in the Peshawar High Court, arguing that IPPs are much higher than the country's needs, with sufficient nuclear and green energy available.

Fawad Ishaq criticized the "Take and Pay" policy under which IPPs agreements were made, benefiting favored individuals.

**Business Forum wins SCCI elections**

PESHAWAR (APP): All candidates of Businessman Forum (BF), led by former Senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour have emerged victorious in Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) elections. The Businessman Forum candidates on 10 Corporate and 10 Associate Group seats succeeded with high margin in the election. A total of 2,026 votes were polled including 381 in Corporate and 1645 in Associate Group. The results were announced by a senior member of Election Commission Malik Niaz Ahmad. Business community.

## Political stability indispensable for the country's stability and economic development: Saleem

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan today visited Sadaqat Sherwani's residence in Model Town where he consoled with him over the death of his son-in-law. Later, talking to the media, he said that political stability is indispensable for the country's stability and economic development. Governor Punjab underlined the need for unity and joint efforts to tackle the challenges faced by the country. In response to a question, he stated that future of our youth

depends on the quality of education being given at the universities. Therefore, as Chancellor, he wants Vice-Chancellors to be appointed on merit. He said that no compromise will be made on governance issues in the universities. Governor Punjab further said that the doors of Governor House are open for everyone including party workers. He said that PPP has always given respect to its workers. He said that he was committed to fulfill his constitutional role in a good way and contribute to the improvement of the

province. Later on, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan went to the residence of President Lahore District 4, Rana Ashar Nisar, in Township. He expressed condolences to him over the death of his mother and recited Fatiha. Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan also went to the residence of late Mian Khalid Saeed where he consoled with his family on the death of his mother. Furthermore, he went to the residence of President PP 147, Javaid Alias Butt and consoled with him on the death of his daughter.

## Salman announces modern reforms for nursing sector

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique announced on Thursday that the Punjab Health Department was introducing modern reforms aimed at enhancing the nursing sector. He was addressing the Special Investment Facilitation Council meeting held in the Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education here. The meeting's agenda included a national policy framework for nursing and midwifery, improvements in nursing training through medical colleges, and revisions to the blood

transfusion policy. The minister emphasized the critical role of nursing in the healthcare system, stating, "Nursing is the backbone of our health system, and we are committed to developing master trainers during nursing training." He further stressed the government's focus on ensuring the availability of clean blood for patient care in government hospitals. He added, "According to the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, we are striving to provide improved healthcare services to the people of Punjab."

## Shah Farman appointed KP CM Advisor

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has appointed former KP governor Shah Farman as his Senior Advisor on Political Affairs. The CM Secretariat in a letter to the Chief Secretary on Thursday said that the services of Shah Farman would be utilized on honorary basis without any remuneration or compensation. The CM further directed that the Advisor Shah Farman should be officially invited in all cabinet meetings.



LARKANA: Sindh Minister for Health and Population Welfare Department Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho addressing during the first SMBBMU International Conference on Family Planning "Way Forward For A Sustainable World" at Chandka Medical College auditorium Hall.

## Largest shrimp farming pilot project launched in Muzaffargarh

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced on Thursday incentives for shrimp farming, setting an ambitious target of cultivating it on 100,000 acres in the province. During her visit to the shrimp farming pilot project in Jharen Shumali, Muzaffargarh, she inspected the facility. She also conducted an aerial survey of the project, officially inaugurating the "Pilot Project for Adaptive Research on Shrimp Farming".

Maryam highlighted the global demand for shrimp, and encouraged the farming community to capitalise on the opportunity. She projected that shrimp farming on 100,000 acres could generate up to one billion dollars in foreign exchange. With a potential profit margin of 40 per cent, she highlighted the plan to turn barren lands in south Punjab into productive farms through shrimp cultivation. The chief minister

promised lease of land and incentives for farmers and investors involved in shrimp farming. She assured that the necessary feed, seed, and equipment would be provided. Praising Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb and her team, she congratulated them for their hard work in advancing the project. During the briefing, it was revealed that the pilot project, overseen by the Punjab Fisheries Department, was completed within a record time of two months.

## Punjab govt to launch crackdown on medicine shortage, price hike: Imran

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Khawaja Imran Nazir announced a swift crackdown on those responsible for shortage of essential medicines, including insulin, and the recent surge in drug prices. The announcement came during an emergency meeting, held on directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, following alarming reports of insulin shortages and price hikes. Chairing the meeting on Thursday, the minister

warned that strict action would be taken if the shortage of insulin and other crucial medicines is not resolved within the next 24 hours. He stressed that individuals attempting to exploit the situation by overcharging for medicines would face severe penalties. Khawaja Imran Nazir reminded stakeholders that hoarding medicines or inflating prices is a clear violation of the Drug Pricing Policy 2018, and such activities would be curbed immediately.

## Met office issues dengue alert in 10 major cities

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department has issued an alert in 10 major cities of Pakistan, showing the fear of increasing dengue epidemic. According to the alert issued by the department, the epidemic cases that started from September are expected to increase in October. The risks of this epidemic are high in 10 major cities of the country, which include Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Multan, Hyderabad and Larkana.

## Governor lauds KP-PRCS efforts, added 12 new members

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday lauded the efforts of Pakistan Red Crescent Society (KP-PRCS). The Governor in the meeting approved the addition of 12 new members to the managing committee of the PRCS Khyber Pakhtunkhwa branch, including provincial assembly members Ahmad Karim Kundi, Arbab Zarak, and Sardar Ehsanullah Khan Miankhal, among others. The meeting was briefed on the objectives, functions, financial, and administrative matters of the PRCS. Details were shared regarding the

availability of relief supplies for natural disaster response, annual income and expenses, fundraising from donors, volunteer services, and vocational training centers. The discussion also covered the use of properties under the PRCS's management and the need to organize a donor conference to ensure adequate funding. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi welcomed the new committee members and praised the contributions of the outgoing members. He expressed hope that the new members would work diligently, emphasizing the necessity for increased efforts in fundraising.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Law Malik Sohaib Ahmed Berth presides over high level meeting to set standard for selection of members of Provincial Police Complaint Authority, Home Secretary Punjab, Secretary Law, Additional IG Special Branch and Additional IG Punjab are also present.

## 22,000 students complete Chinese language course from UAF: Dr Iqar

FAISALABAD (APP): University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Iqar Ahmad Khan said on Thursday that 22,000 students had completed Chinese language course, offered by the Confucius Institute of the university during a decade and out of which, 600 are studying at Chinese universities under scholarship programmes. The Xinjiang Agricultural University (XJAU) and the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF) convened ceremony

to commemorate the inauguration of the Model Confucius Institute and celebration of ten-year completion of Chinese Confucius Institute. Prof Dr Iqar Ahmad Khan said that the Confucius Institute has played an instrumental role in fostering mutual understanding and respect through the promotion of Chinese language, culture, and heritage. Over the past decade, this institute has become a beacon of academic cooperation, knowledge sharing, and intercultural dialogue.

## International News

## Putin threatens to use N-weapons if Ukraine hits Russia with Western missiles

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin warned the West on Wednesday that Russia could use nuclear weapons if it was struck with conventional missiles, and that Moscow would consider any assault on it supported by a nuclear power to be a joint attack. The decision to change Russia's official nuclear doctrine is the Kremlin's answer to deliberations in the United States and Britain about whether or not to give Ukraine permission to fire conventional Western missiles into Russia. Putin, opening a meeting of Russia's security council, said that the changes were in response to a swiftly changing global landscape which had thrown up new threats and risks for Russia.

The 71-year-old Kremlin chief, the primary decision-maker on Russia's vast nuclear arsenal, said he wanted to underscore one key change in particular. "It is proposed that aggression against Russia by any non-nuclear state, but with the participation or support of a nuclear state, be considered as their joint attack on the Russian Federation," Putin said. "The conditions for Russia's transition to the use of nuclear weapons are also clearly fixed," Putin said, adding that Moscow would consider such a move if it detected the start of a massive launch of missiles, aircraft or drones against it. Russia reserved the right to also use nuclear weapons if it or ally Belarus were the subject of aggression, including by conventional weapons, Putin said.

The clarifications were carefully calibrated and commensurate with the modern military threats facing Russia, confirmation that the nuclear doctrine was changing, the president added. Russia's current published nuclear doctrine, set out in a 2020 decree by Putin, says it may use nuclear weapons in case of a nuclear attack by an enemy or a conventional attack that threatens the existence of the state. The innovations outlined by Putin include a widening of the threats under which Russia would consider a nuclear strike, the inclusion of ally Belarus under the nuclear umbrella and the idea that a rival nuclear power supporting a conventional strike on Russia would also be considered to be attacking it.

## 46 people drown during Hindu festival in India: govt official

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: At least 46 people, including 37 children, have drowned while celebrating a Hindu festival in eastern India, a local government official told AFP on Thursday. The victims drowned in separate incidents in Bihar state while ritually bathing in rivers and ponds swollen by recent flooding, an official from the Bihar Disaster Management Department told AFP. "People ignored dangerous water levels in rivers as well as ponds while bathing to celebrate this festival," said the official, who requested anonymity because he was not authorised to speak to the media. The drownings occurred from Tuesday across 15 districts of Bihar state as devotees marked the Jitiya Parv Hindu fes-

tival, observed by mothers for the wellbeing of their children. Authorities were still working to recover three other bodies, the official said. Jitiya Parv runs over several days and is also observed in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand states, and in parts of Nepal's southern plains. The Bihar state government has announced compensation for each of the victims' families, the government official said. Last year local media reported 22 people drowned during a 24-hour period in Bihar, most while marking the same festival. Deadly incidents are common at places of worship during major religious festivals in India, the biggest of which prompt millions of devotees to make pilgrimages to holy sites.

## Milei's austerity seen pushing half of Argentina into poverty

**Monitoring Desk**  
BUENOS AIRES: Irma Casal, a 53-year-old in Buenos Aires, works three shifts as a garbage recycler, cardboard collector and bricklayer, but, like many Argentines at a time of rising poverty, she still struggles to make ends meet. Argentina will publish poverty data on Thursday that is expected to show the rate soaring to over 50% in the first six months of the term of libertarian President Javier Milei, who has enacted tough austerity measures in a bid to dig the country out of debt. "Since this government came to power, jobs have dropped away. We work twice as hard for less and we have to keep going," said Casal, who has 14 children and 42 grandchildren, in the low-income Buenos Aires suburb of Villa Fiorito.



Kenya's President William Ruto addresses the 79th United Nations General Assembly at United Nations headquarters in New York, U.S.

## Lebanese officials say an Israeli strike killed 23 Syrian workers and family members in Lebanon

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIRUT: An Israeli airstrike in Lebanon hit a building housing Syrian workers and their families, killing 23 people, Lebanese officials said Thursday. It was one of the deadliest single strikes in an intensified air campaign against the militant Hezbollah group. The strike late Wednesday came as the United States and its allies called for an "immediate" 21-day cease-fire to "provide space for diplomacy." Israel has threatened to

launch a ground invasion, and the increasingly heavy exchanges of fire could trigger an all-out war. Lebanon's National News Agency said the strike occurred near the ancient city of Baalbek in Lebanon's northeastern Bekaa Valley, which runs along the Syrian border. It quoted Ali Kassas, mayor of the village of Younine, as saying that the bodies of 23 Syrian citizens were pulled from under the rubble. He said four Syrians and four Lebanese were wounded.

## US and allies call for an immediate 21-day cease-fire between Israel and Hezbollah

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW YORK: The U.S., France and other allies jointly called Wednesday for an immediate 21-day cease-fire to allow for negotiations in the escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah that has killed more than 600 people in Lebanon in recent days. The joint statement, negotiated on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York, says the recent fighting is "intolerable and presents an unacceptable risk of a broader regional escalation." "We call for an immediate 21-day cease-fire

across the Lebanon-Israel border to provide space for diplomacy," the statement said. "We call on all parties, including the governments of Israel and Lebanon, to endorse the temporary cease-fire immediately." There was no immediate reaction from the Israeli or Lebanese governments — or Hezbollah — but senior U.S. officials said all parties were aware of the call for a cease-fire. Earlier, representatives for Israel and Lebanon reiterated their support for a U.N. resolution.

## Kenya will send more police officers to Haiti, president says

**Monitoring Desk**  
NAIROBI: Kenya will deploy additional police officers to Haiti to help the government there fight armed gangs as part of a 2,500-strong multinational force, President William Ruto said on Thursday. Ruto said in a speech at the United Nations General Assembly that Kenya had already deployed 382 specially trained officers, whom he visited in Haiti last week.

## California governor vetoes bill to ban caste system in South Asia

**Monitoring Desk**  
CALIFORNIA: California Governor Gavin Newsom vetoed a bill recently passed by the state legislature against the caste system in South Asia. The bill was meant to discourage the caste system based on discrimination. The said bill was earlier passed at the first stage but California's Governor Gavin Newsom had vetoed it. Governor Gavin was influenced by Indians settled in US who gave hefty amount in donations.

## UN chief criticizes divided Security Council for failure of leadership to end wars, calls for unity

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations chief sharply criticized the powerful but deeply divided Security Council at a high-level meeting Wednesday for a failure of leadership to end wars in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan and beyond. "Peace demands action. And peace demands leadership," Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told the 15-member council charged with ensuring international peace and security. "Instead, we're seeing deepening geopolitical divisions and mistrust." He pointed to repeated violations of the U.N. Charter and interna-

tional law, conflicts multiplying and becoming more deadly, and civilians paying the steepest price. The council has been blocked from any action on Ukraine because Russia is a veto-wielding member and a party to the conflict — invading its neighbor in violation of the U.N. Charter, which requires all members to ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all other nations. It has been stymied in taking tough action on the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza because of Israel's close ally, the United States, another veto-wielding member. And in Sudan, there are divisions among some members supporting the warring rival generals.

## North Korea may be able to produce a double-digit number of nuclear weapons, MP says

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: North Korea has enough plutonium and uranium to produce at least a double-digit number of nuclear weapons, a South Korean lawmaker said on Thursday, citing the country's spy agency. The agency also sees the prospect of North Korea potentially carrying out a seventh nuclear test after the US presidential election on November 5, Lee Seong-kweon, who sits on the parliamentary intelligence committee, said. In July, a report by the Federation of American Scientists concluded that Pyongyang may have produced enough fissile material to build up to 90 nuclear warheads, but that it has likely assembled closer to 50. Lee said it was rare for North Korean state media to report on leader Kim Jong Un's visit to a uranium enrichment facility, suggesting the report published earlier this month was likely aimed at sending a message to Washington ahead of the

US presidential election. Lee, who was speaking to reporters after being briefed by South Korea's National Intelligence Service, also said the report on the visit may be for domestic purposes. "It was said that the economic situation is dire, so it could be interpreted as an act to instill confidence in residents," Lee said. Pyongyang says its arsenal of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles to carry them are necessary to counter threats from the United States and its allies. It also often touts the weapons as a matter of national prestige and proof of the country's power. The North Korean Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), the exclusive state's rubber-stamp parliament, is set to convene a new session on Oct. 7 in Pyongyang. During the session, the North might amend its constitution and take follow-up measures to draw new boundaries with the South, Lee said.

## Bill Gates lauds PM's oversight of polio vaccination efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met Bill Gates, founder and co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 2024) Session.

Recalling Gates' recent visit to Pakistan in June this year, the prime minister thanked him for the invitation to visit the Gates Foundation in Seattle in December 2024.

He also appreciated the Gates Foundation's engagement and support to Pakistan on polio eradication, maternal and child health, nutrition, immunization, digitization, and financial inclusion.

The prime minister highlighted Pakistan's unwavering commitment to ensure complete eradication of polio from the country. He thanked the BMGF for its longstanding support in this effort

and underscored the need for sustained efforts and supports to Pakistan, particularly for health system strengthening and maternal and child nutrition in this regard.

Acknowledging Pakistan's efforts Bill Gates stressed polio eradication was vital to protect its future generations from this crippling disease. He appreciated the prime minister's personal supervision and engagement of the Provincial governments in the polio vaccine program across the country.

Gates shared updates on a comprehensive Health Dialogue with Afghanistan and requested support for the initiative.

He also communicated his willingness to focus more on the pockets where the number of missed children or refusal of polio vaccines is higher especially where the morbidity of children is higher.

He also shared

with the prime minister on King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre's support for polio and other health relief-related initiatives.

He also shared with the Prime Minister BMGF's work on nutrition especially the micronutrients for pregnant women and how it can be increased by providing them additional vitamins in support of UNICEF. The prime minister complimented the Gates Foundation for its Polio campaign in Gaza given the challenges there and the plight of children. He emphasized on immediate ceasefire and the resolution of the conflict as per the UN Resolutions. He also complimented BMGF for being a trusted ally in Pakistan's socio-economic development and expressed interest in broadening collaboration in areas such as information technology, STEM education, agriculture, and livestock.



NEWYORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Mr. Bill Gates, founder and co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

## Pirzada emphasizes ensuring quality housing facilities

Addressing delays in residential projects as top priorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada emphasized that providing high-quality residential facilities is a top priority, with his team at the ministry and FGEHA committed to resolving delays in ongoing projects.

During a visit to the Sky Gardens housing project to oversee infrastructural development, the minister received a formal briefing from the Director General of FGEHA. He also engaged

in detailed discussions with the contractors regarding the progress of the development work.

The minister attributed the project site as paradise like with beautiful views and scenic beauty around that would be furnished with high quality urban housing facilities, said a press release.

He applauded the whole team of contractors and workers for their continued work and stressed upon the early completion of the project.

Minster was apprised of the land sharing formula pertaining to developed plots in this scheme that is Residential 70:30 & Commercial 45:55. Further, the continuing activities relating to infrastructure in some blocks will be completed in coming December this year and all developmental work has been evaluated to complete till the end of 2026.

During the visit, minister also inaugurated Commoners Bridge and planted a tree.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Housing & Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada unveiling plaque to inaugurate Commoners Bridge at Sky Gardens a project of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority Murree Expressway.

## Team of Federal Ombudsman conducts inspection visit to Islamabad Airport

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Responding to a large number of complaints regarding maladministration of the Federal Agencies performing duties at the Islamabad new airport, a Wafaqi Mohtasib's Inspection Team visited the Airport, on the directives of Wafaqi Mohtasib Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, here today. The Inspection Team was headed by Senior Advisor, Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat, Syed Asif Shah.

Members of the team interacted with the passengers, listened to their complaints and passed on the spot instructions to the administration for their immediate redressal, said in a Press Release issued here on Thursday.

The team included Grievance Commissioner for Overseas Pakistanis, Deputy Advisor (Implementation), WMS and Consultant (Media), WMS. The team visited the na-

tional and international lounges, luggage area, the CIP Lounge besides the immigration counter and the counters of other agencies performing duty at the airport and obtained first-hand knowledge of the problems being faced by the passengers.

It was found that a large number of complaints by the passengers were related to delays in immigration, unwarranted meddling and high-handed attitude of the FIA, ASF and Custom officials posted there, whereas the incoming passengers complained of loss and late delivery of the luggage.

Earlier, the Inspection Team reviewed the status of implementation of the recommendations made by such teams during their previous visits. It may be recalled that the inspections teams during their previous visits had instructed the authorities concerned to merge the desks of ANF.

## Eradicating fake news top priority of PML-N govt: Daniyal Chaudhry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Member of the National Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Daniyal Chaudhry, on Thursday reaffirmed his government's commitment to upholding freedom of expression, emphasizing the need to combat the spread of fake news. He made these remarks during the 19th General Council meeting of the Press Council of Pakistan (PCP). Chaudhry highlighted the critical role the PCP plays in maintaining media integrity and expressed his full support for the council's efforts.

"Our government firmly believes in the freedom of expression, but at

the same time, we must discourage the dissemination of fake news," he said.

He commended the integrity and leadership of PCP Chairman Arshad Khan Jadoon, stating that Jadoon has significantly contributed to the council's success. "The Chairman is a man of integrity and good standing. His leadership has been instrumental in ensuring that the council operates effectively," Chaudhry added. Daniyal Chaudhry assured the members of the General Council that he would act as a bridge between the PCP and the government, promising to raise their concerns directly with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## DIG Islamabad directs officers for effective measures to eradicate crime

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza on Thursday held an important meeting with ARDU and ALVC police officers which was attended by in-charge ARDU and AVLC and other concerned police officers.

On this occasion, while issuing directions to the officers, DIG Islamabad said that in the upcoming meeting, the performance of all the officers will be reviewed and there will be no compromise on the addition of crimes.

During the meeting, DIG Islamabad issued directions to police officials of ARDU and AVLC to prevent incidents of robbery, dacoity, and vehicle theft.

Under the supervision of the in-charge ARDU and AVLC special teams will work effectively to arrest gang members involved in dacoity, snatching, and vehicle lifting activities.

## Three missing children reunited with families

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police teams from Golra, Sumbal, and Aabpara, police stations have successfully reunited three missing children with their families on Thursday.

According to a police statement, the teams from Golra, Aabpara, and Sumbal, police stations received reports from citizens stating their children had been missing and could not be traced despite extensive efforts by family members.

He said upon receiving the reports, the police teams utilized both technical and human resources to trace the missing children, ensuring their safe return to their families. He added that the families expressed their gratitude for the police team's swift actions.

## Govt trying best to improve maritime sector: Qaiser

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh on Thursday said that the present government was trying its best to improve the maritime sector.

In a message on the occasion of World Maritime Day issued here, the minister said that the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization also appreciated our excellent and marvelous performance.

He further said that Pakistan Navy was also helping the ministry to resolve maritime sector issues. Paying special attention toward maritime security and blue economy, he added.

Qaiser Sheikh said that digitization of Ports through Maritime Single Window was in progress, adding that modern world class training programs were being conducted in Pakistan Marine Academy. The revenue of Karachi Port Trust (KPT) has also increased compared to last year, he added.

The minister said that Pakistan's location in terms of maritime trade was the most important in the region, adding that he was ready to sit with every stakeholder for the betterment of ports.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi presiding over the meeting during his visit to Islamabad Airport along with Inspection Team.

## Mashhood urges Youth to explore diversity in tourism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, on Thursday emphasized the need for youth to engage in tourism activities and explore diverse cultural traditions.

Celebrating World Tourism Day at a local hotel, he highlighted the importance of tourism in youth development and its impact on the economy.

The event featured

discussions on tourism initiatives, cultural exchanges, and networking opportunities. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan reiterated the government's commitment to promoting tourism and empowering youth. He encouraged youth to take advantage of tourism opportunities and contribute to the country's economic growth. The event aimed to promote tourism and cultural exchange among youth and was attended by youth leaders.

## UN Women Pak took steps to incorporate gender indicators

ISLAMABAD (APP): UN Women Pakistan has taken a step to effectively get gender indicators incorporated into the provincial plans by developing a set of Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRPB) Guidelines.

According to UN Women Pakistan, the Labour and Human Resource Department, the Government of Punjab and Labour Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have both endorsed, adapted and notified these Guidelines to ensure that the processes for planning (of projects and schemes) and budgeting (of the finalized projects and schemes) are gender-responsive with regard to the Annual Development Programme (ADP). It was no minor achievement that the guidelines were endorsed and notified by government departments.

UN Women have been set up in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab to provide psycho-social help, skill-building activities and rehabilitation support services to women and girls, said an official here on Thursday.

According to data revealed by UN Women said that Pakistan's partnerships with private sectors aim to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community through facilitating knowledge sharing, adopting best practices, and creating dignified, harassment-free environments for all.

Through partnerships, the engagement promotes safer mobility, creates sustainable talent pipelines, influences CSR spending on gender-related initiatives, and encourages businesses to adopt gender-responsive procurement practices to support women-owned businesses, it added.

## 2 shot dead in front of Islamabad Kutchery due to old enmity

ISLAMABAD (Online): 2 persons were killed in firing in front of Islamabad Kutchery.

The Islamabad police spokesperson said firing incident took place on G-11 Service road due to old enmity. One person was killed and one was injured due to firing.

Later the injured person succumbed to injuries. The victims of firing were Syed Tafseer Haider and Nazir. They were presented in the court in 24/173 case.

The rival party opened fire on them after their acquittal from court.

## IHC directs Federal cabinet to evolve mechanism for recovery of missing persons

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while declaring unsatisfactory report of registrar Missing Persons Commission (MPC) regarding disappearance of 3 students has directed federal cabinet to evolve mechanism for recovery of missing persons.

A 3-member larger bench of IHC presided over by Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani took up for hearing petition seeking recovery of missing persons from KP.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani remarked on one side there is state and on the other side there are rights of citizens. We have to see the situation in country too. Policy of state changes along with time. At some time those who were standing that side are now standing this side. Reports of all agencies except one are available.

Emman Mazari advocate said list of 179 people have come to us from Baloch Yakjehti committee. 8 persons have gone missing after Gawadar protest.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) said this list is from Balochistan. It will be better if information is obtained from there.

The court remarked this court has constituted committee. Then Balochistan High Court will give no decision. Earlier this list pertained to disappearance of 67 persons and now it has reached 179. It is your responsibility not to let increase the list.

## Pakistan, UK agree to promote bilateral ties in various sectors

NEW YORK (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his United Kingdom counterpart Rt. Hon. Sir Keir Starmer on Thursday agreed to further strengthen bilateral ties in various sectors, especially trade and investment.

During a meeting on the sidelines of 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), they discussed matters of mutual interests and bilateral relations between the two countries.

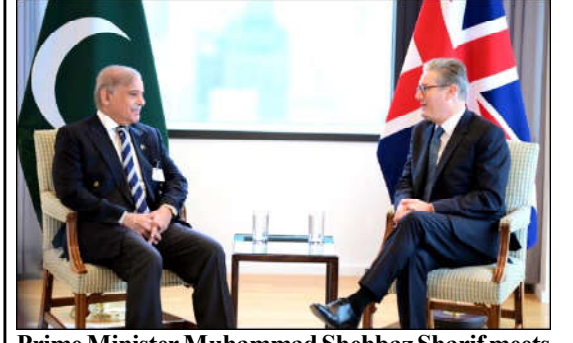
The prime minister apprised his British counterpart of the country's current economic situation and the measures being taken by the government for the development and growth of the economy, especially the efforts made in implementing the FBR tax reforms and expanding the tax base.

PM Shehbaz also informed Sir Keir Starmer about the challenges Pakistan faced due to the adverse effects of climate change.

He highlighted Pakistan's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, which, he said, was a global issue that required collective action from the international community.

The prime minister noted that the United Kingdom (UK) was the third-largest investor in Pakistan, and discussed the investment opportunities and projects available in the country.

While mentioning the significant role of Pakistanis residing in the UK in the development of both countries, the prime minister expressed a desire to utilize their contributions effectively to achieve mutual development goals.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Prime Minister of United Kingdom Rt. Hon. Sir Keir Starmer on the sidelines of 79 Session of United Nations General Assembly in New York.

## Envoy for initiating exchange visits to identify areas of mutual cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan Dr. Ihab Mohammad Abdel Hamid Hassan on Thursday underlined the need for initiating reciprocal exchange visits between the businessmen from both the countries to identify potential areas for mutually beneficial for enhancing trade and investment relations.

Talking to President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, the envoy said, "Egypt's recent economic reforms, growth initiatives and investment incentives offer lucrative opportunities to Pakistani businessmen," said a press release.

He called on the business communities of the two countries to exchange delegations to strengthen bilateral economic trade and investment ties.

He said, "Pakistan-Egypt relations are built on a strong foundation of common faith, cultural affinities, and aspirations and would grow further with the passage of time."

"Egypt has been a cradle of civilizations and world heritage and tourists from around the world visit

this country to discover its beautiful places, scenes and sites," he said.

"Fostering economic and business cooperation between the two countries require strategic efforts from both nations," he added. "Egypt's location makes it an ideal hub for Pakistani businesses to access African and Middle Eastern markets," he said adding, "Pakistan can leverage Egypt's Free Zones and trade agreements with regional blocs and Western countries to increase mutually beneficial cooperation and dialogue between the two countries."

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari pointed out similarities between the two countries, especially in tourism saying, "Both Egypt and Pakistan are popular countries for tourism and the business community of both countries must play its due role in that regard." He also stressed the need to promote people-to-people contacts between the two nations for the promotion and strengthening of multilateral ties adding, "Direct air connectivity between the two countries will play a significant role in achieving this cherished goal."



KARACHI: Commandant PNS BAHADUR inaugurating World Maritime Day Gala 2024 at Pakistan Maritime Museum.

## Pakistan Navy celebrates World Maritime Day 2024

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Navy celebrated World Maritime Day (WMD) 2024, with this year's theme "Navigating the Future: Safety First".

The year 2024 marks 50 years since the adoption of the 1974 International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention, the key IMO treaty regulating maritime safety, a Pakistan Navy news release said. This day is observed annually to highlight the maritime sector's contribution to economic development and to raise awareness about the importance of shipping safety, maritime security, and marine environmental protection.

The theme is closely linked with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG-7, which focuses on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy by facilitating access to clean energy research.

Safety has always been a core value for the Pakistan Navy. PN has instituted

measures to uphold the "safety first" principle onboard all seagoing platforms as well as ashore.

In his message on World Maritime Day, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf emphasized the need to align national objectives with the ongoing global shift towards sustainable and green maritime practices, demonstrating determination, commitment, and resolve.

He underscored PN's efforts toward maritime safety, which remain a testament to its unwavering dedication, and reiterated Pakistan Navy's commitment to ensuring maritime safety and upholding environmental mandates.

On this occasion, Pakistan Navy organized a series of activities to emphasize the significance of maritime sector. Major events included seminars at Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore, under the auspices of the Maritime Centre of Excellence (MCE) and the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA).



ISLAMABAD: A group Photo of incumbent and former Information Secretaries and senior serving and former Information service officers at a dinner hosted by former PIO Rao Tahseen at his residence in federal capital.