

Independent

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

Vol. XIV No. 226 Reg. mails-B/ID-445 Monday September 30, 2024, Rabi-ul-Awwal 25 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

Govt committed to implement structural reforms in all sectors: Finance Minister

Number of tax filers doubled compared to last year; DNA overhaul must to foster sustainable economic growth; Emphasises on penalties for non-filers, such as difficulties in withdrawing and depositing money

ISLAMABAD (Online): Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has reaffirmed government's resolve to implementing homegrown structural reforms in all sectors.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Sunday, he said fundamental changes in country's economy will increase exports and foster sustainable growth.

Muhammad Aurangzeb said bringing structural reforms is not only a requirement by the International Monetary Fund but Pakistan needs it.

The Finance Minister said macroeconomic stability, creates a foundation for inclusive and sustainable growth in the country.

He said the macroeconomic stability continued

during the first quarter of the current fiscal year; however it needs permanence to lead to sustainable growth.

The Finance Minister said for homegrown economic reform agenda, we will always consult our think tanks and take foreign advice into consideration.

He said the measures taken by the government are showing positive results as indicated by economic indicators adding the results coming out could be witnessed practically by seeing results.

The Minister said, there has been 29 percent increase in exports on year on year basis whereas inflation has decelerated from 38 percent to single digit and going down further.

On external front, he

said, credit ratings have also gone forward and we will continue this journey till we get into investment grade at least into B or B- ratings as we go forward".

He said PSX is also setting new records and moving in right direction.

The Minister reiterated government's commitment to reduce size of federal government, adding decision regarding abolition or merger of six ministries has already been made and it is at implementation stage.

On tax side, the Minister said, the return filing has increased double from last year's 1.6 million to 3.2 million till date whereas there were 300,000 new filers last year, however the number has risen to 723,000 till now.

APP adds Reaffirming

the government's resolve to implementing homegrown structural reforms, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Sunday emphasized the crucial need to bring fundamental changes in the DNA of country's economy, leading to an export-driven model, thereby fostering sustainable growth.

"We need to adopt new approach. If we are saying that this is going to be the last programme of IMF, we have just embarked on, we have to change the DNA of economy fundamentally," the minister said while addressing a press conference here. He was accompanied by Chairman Federal Board of Revenue, Rashid Mahmood Langrial.

The Minister said, there were two main reasons for going to Interna-



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb addressing a press conference at PTV Headquarter.

KPK CM's march on Islamabad, Punjab aims to repeat May 9 mayhem: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur had made his intention clear to create another May 9 like chaos in the country by announcing his plans to march on Islamabad and Punjab by force.

The minister, in a news statement, condemned the alleged remarks made by the KPK CM about use of force in the protests, calling it an admission of his own failure to govern the province effectively.

"The Chief Minister's threat of firing bullets for a bloodshed is a clear manifestation that he is incapable of running the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government. His threats to march on Islamabad and Punjab with force are nothing but an attempt to repeat the May 9."

He further criticized the KPK Chief Minister's transition from verbal abuse to

hurling threats of violence, warning that this approach would only harm him, not anyone else.

"There is nothing democratic, political, or parliamentary about the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) provincial government's statements, actions, or conduct," the minister added.

Tarar lamented that the provincial leadership of PTI had never focused on competing with the center and Punjab in areas such as education, healthcare, employment, or economic improvement.

He urged that if PTI wanted to bring about a revolution, it should focus on transforming these sectors for the betterment of the people.

"Corruption and incompetence have reached their peak in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The real competition should have been in providing relief to electricity consumers, as the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz led governments has done in Islamabad and Punjab," he said, adding it should have

been about building hospitals and educational institutions to serve the people.

Tarar accused the PTI of trying to disrupt the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in a similar fashion it had attempted to sabotage President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan with its previous sit-ins in Islamabad in 2014.

He said the economic stabilization had perturbed the PTI, which had brought Pakistan to the brink of default.

The substantive drop in the inflation from 32 per cent to 9.6 per cent had literally irked them, he added.

"Violence, threats, and guns will not reduce inflation or unemployment," he said, while regretting the sheer corruption in KPK during the last 11 years of the PTI tenure.

Tarar said Prime Minister Shehbaz Shari's firm stance in support of Palestinians and against Israel at the United Nations General Assembly had caused a real inconvenience to the "Israeli agents" in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari in a group photo with Balochistan Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani and Advisor Trade and Industry Mir Ali Hasan Zehri.

Mohsin Naqvi lauds China's role in Pakistan's economic growth

ISLAMABAD (Online): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has said that CPEC projects have taken Pakistan-China friendship to new heights.

He stated this during meeting with Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren in Lahore on Sunday.

During the meeting, Interior Minister felicitated him on Chinese National Day. They discussed mat-

New DG ISI to assume office today

ISLAMABAD (Online): The newly appointed head of the National Security Agency, Lt. Gen. Muhammad Asim Malik will assume his duties today, Monday.

Few days ago, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had appointed Lt. Gen. Asim Malik as DG ISI. He is set to assume his new role on Monday. Lt Gen Muhammad Asim Malik will be succeeding Lt Gen Nadeem Anjum.

Lt Gen Asim Malik, HI (M) is currently serving as Adjutant General at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. He has previously commanded an infantry division in Balochistan and an infantry brigade in Waziristan.



ters of mutual interest and ways to boost bilateral ties.

Mohsin Naqvi said that under President Xi Jinping's leadership, China has crossed new milestones of progress.

He said that China is



most trusted and loyal friend of Pakistan and its fast paced progress is a role model for all.

Interior Minister said that China's historical role for strengthening Pakistan's economy is unforgettable.

He said that Pak China friendship will remain intact and strong forever.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chinese Consul General thanked Interior

Fake parliament lacks mandate for constitutional amendment: Fazlur Rehman

JUI-F general council re-elects Maulana Fazlur Rehman as party's chief, Abdul Ghaffoor Haideri as secretary-general for five years

PESHAWAR (INP): After being re-elected as the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief for five years, Maulana Fazlur Rehman has slammed the incumbent government, saying that the "fake parliament" lacks a real mandate for a major constitutional amendment.

"We want a fresh [general] election," Fazlur said while addressing a press conference after the conclusion of the party's intra-party poll in Peshawar on Sunday. "This parliament does not deserve this huge constitutional



amendment."

The government pushed the proposed constitutional package amid speculation about a potential extension in the tenure of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, who is set to retire in October this year, following the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) request last month for the early issuance of a notification regarding the appointment of the next top judge.

PM greets Fazal on unopposed election as JUI-F chief

LONDON (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif on Sunday extended his congratulations to Maulana Fazlur Rehman on his unanimous and unopposed election as president of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) for the upcoming five-year term.

In his congratulatory message, the prime minister remarked that under Maulana Fazlur Rehman's leadership, JUI-F has always effectively represented the people.

The prime minister emphasized that Maulana Fazlur Rehman's election as the head of JUI-F will foster democratic values, also acknowledging his significant role in reinforcing the supremacy of Parliament in the country. The prime minister expressed confidence that Maulana Fazlur Rehman's leadership and vision would undoubtedly elevate Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) to new heights.

MQM-P rejects extension in quota system

KARACHI (INP) - The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has rejected an extension in the quota system.

One of the most important government allies said that an extension of 20 years in the quota system is sheer injustice.

According to sources,

Asian countries' collective efforts must for regional development: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has said that Asian countries will have to work together to transform it into a strong region.

Addressing as guest of

a lot due to climate change," he said. Ahsan Iqbal said that Asia accounts for 50 per cent of the world's population and it will soon account for more than half of the world's GDP, asserting that Asia is also a major center of energy consumption.

ity through coal. "We have to innovate in our projects. We also have to see how the investment for these projects will be received and we need to bring many changes in our policies for creating an environment that facilitates investment and further development in the energy sector."

He said, Asian countries will have to work together, citing that

some countries are rich and some are poor, everyone must work together to improve Asia. Cooperation is essential for the betterment of the region: if all these things are implemented, Asia can become a stronger region.



honour here at Asia's Energy Transition Summit on Sunday, he was of the view that energy use would determine the climate change that is a very important global issue. "We have suffered



Federal Minister said that environmentally-friendly energy projects are implemented in Pakistan and an environment-friendly policy was also adopted to generate electric-

Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal said, "Our target is to achieve green energy. We want everyone to have access to affordable, environmentally friendly energy."

PTI Govt fails to address problems despite 3rd term

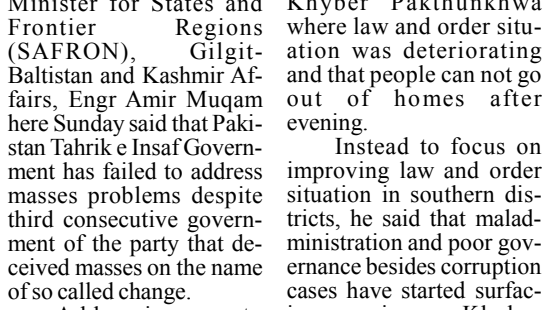
Amir Muqam says:

lems, governance and improvement in health and education sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said that tax payers money was being used on the uncalculated and irrational politics by the PTI leadership, increasing problems of common man.

He advised CM KP to hold public meetings at southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where law and order situation was deteriorating and that people can not go out of homes after evening.

Instead to focus on improving law and order situation in southern districts, he said that maladministration and poor governance besides corruption cases have started surfacing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said that recent corruption allegations by the Provincial Ministers and advisers against each others has exposed the anti corruption claims of the rulers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Instead to focus on resolution of people prob-

Rind rebuts news of labourer' missing in Musakhel district

QUETTA (APP): Spokesperson of the Balochistan government, Shahid Rind said the reports of labourers being abducted from Musa Khel district are unconfirmed.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said the district administration and security forces have already reached the area.

"So far, no evidence of the abduction of labourers has been found, he said while quoting to the Commissioner of Loralai. Four labourers had hidden out of fear, he added.



OMAN: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, receiving a souvenir from Oman's Minister of Labour, Dr Mahad bin Said bin Ali.

Every bullet, shell, baton to be responded: CM Gandapur

PESHAWAR (INP): Commenting on the incidents of clashes between Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers and police in Rawalpindi a day ago, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur said his party would reply to every bullet, shell and baton that would be used against its supporters.

In a statement on Sunday, the firebrand PTI leader claimed bullets were fired on three of their workers and whereabouts of one of them could not be traced. "More than 50 PTI workers have been injured in shelling as shells and bullets were fired every three kilometres on us," he said. The KP Chief Minister Gandapur said this after returning to Peshawar as the PTI protest in Rawalpindi was "called off" amid violent clashes between protesters and riot police near Liaquat Bagh.

Pakistan, Oman agree on MoU to facilitate enhancement of workforce

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Oman on Sunday agreed on early finalization of memorandum of understanding (MoU) on labor and manpower exchange which would facilitate the enhancement of Pakistan workforce and its smooth movement from Pakistan to Oman.

This was decided in a meeting held in Muscat between Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Minister of Labour of the Sultanate of Oman Dr. Mahad bin Said bin Ali Baowain, said a press release issued here.

Chaudhry Salik Hussain is on a three-day visit to the Sultanate where he will meet several ministers of Oman and will inaugurate a new branch of Pakistan International School in Muscat. During the meeting, Chaudhry Salik Hussain apprised the Omani side of

the major reforms the government was undertaking to improve the emigration process of Pakistani workers, their professional capacity enhancement and the marketing of Pakistani workforce abroad.

He said that Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis was upgrading the technical training centers in Pakistan on modern lines which would train the workforce according to the certification requirement of each individual country or region. Chaudhry Salik Hussain informed that Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis was going to start a compulsory pre-departure orientation program for all the workers going abroad which would educate them about the labor laws of the host country, workers' rights and duties, cultural sensitivities of the host country and relieve mechanism in case of any eventuality.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

A close watch

The IMF Executive Board's stress on the importance of "vigilant monitoring" of its new \$7bn programme's implementation, and "robust contingency planning" to safeguard its success is a reflection of two concerns. One, in spite of the recent economic recovery under the last \$3bn Stand-by Arrangement, Pakistan's vulnerabilities and structural challenges remain formidable. The business environment poses problems amid weak governance and the state's oversized role, hindering investment. Likewise, the tax base remains too narrow to ensure tax fairness and fiscal sustainability or meet large development spending needed to tackle poverty. Without concerted adjustment alongside prudent spending management and sustained reforms, Pakistan risks falling further behind its peers. Two, Pakistan's credibility when it comes to pursuing programme policies and ensuring macroeconomic sustainability through consistent policy implementation remains suspect in the eyes of its creditors and development partners — despite the successful implementation of the SBA that saved it from default.

Therefore, IMF directors have emphasised "the criticality of sustained programme implementation" and "steadfast execution of the planned continued consolidation in the FY25 budget" in a statement after approving the loan this week. Some of them noted that "there is no room for policy slippages without undermining debt sustainability". The new programme mandates policies to help Pakistan move away from its state-led growth model to private sector-led growth by strengthening the business environment and ensuring a more even playing field. Other priorities include reforming SOEs, removing trade barriers and market distortions, reinforcing governance frameworks, strengthening energy sector viability, and building climate resilience. Indeed, the agenda for Pakistan's politically beleaguered rulers is huge. It cannot wriggle out of it without endangering the recent, fragile stability. The government's resolve to stick to the IMF-mandated agenda will be tested every time the lender reviews its progress before releasing the next tranche. Other multilateral and bilateral creditors will also be watching Islamabad's performance very closely. The prime minister has repeatedly pledged to make this programme the last bailout from the IMF. Other countries like India have pulled this off by restructuring their economies. Can we do so? The jury is out.

SRH matters

Luay Shabaneh

I hesitated to write about International Sexual Health Day, celebrated in 60 countries early this month. However, in my view, the matter goes beyond sexual relationships; it speaks to the future of a nation struggling to find its place in an increasingly competitive global landscape. Fourteen years ago, the World Association for Sexual Health declared Sept 4 as World Sexual Health Day and called to promote social awareness on sexual health across the globe.

The 2023 theme focuses on positive relationships grounded in mutual respect and understanding — cornerstones for sexual health and well-being, which is a human right. Everyone has the right to engage in safe relationships that fulfil their needs, honour bodily autonomy, and promote equality and respect. It also leads to better reproductive health outcomes. While sexual health is a private matter between couples, its consequences extend beyond the individual and are deeply embedded in social values. Therefore, health literacy and sexuality education are crucial in developing positive relationships, protecting sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and reproductive rights (RR), and empowering individuals to make informed choices.

Access to comprehensive, high-quality and accurate information about SRH promotes the appropriate and timely use of SRH services. This facilitates the prevention, early detection, and treatment of HIV and other STIs as well as their adverse consequences. Informed individuals create more empowered families that are grounded in facts, free from judgment, and open to constructive discussions on sensitive

topics. This environment helps adolescents and young people understand and communicate effectively about matters related to sexual health. Deep-seated inequality and pervasive disrespect within relationships are major contributors to violence, particularly gender-based violence. Cultivating respect and trust in SRH matters and well-being is crucial for eliminating the fear of violence and violations. Every individual above the legal age of consent, as defined by their respective states, should have the right to engage in relationships free from threats of GBV and sexual assault. Governments bear the responsibility of implementing effective prevention and response measures, while the broader social community must actively condemn all forms of violence.

Globally, over a billion people are living with sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, many of which remain incurable. This situation could have been reversed if there were timely interventions and a tolerant social culture, free from stigma. Avoiding discussions about problems does not solve them; it only complicates them further and increases the financial burden of addressing them in the future.

In Pakistan, like in many societies with conservative social norms, the discourse on sexuality is often confined to a limited perspective focusing solely on sexual contact and adherence to local religious interpretations and social expectations. This narrow framing diverts the discussion away from the duty of the state and society to find solutions for SRH challenges to judging individuals' adherence to social norms.

In a society marked by gender bias, men have

often politicised and ideologised these matters to maintain control and an unequal power structure. This mirrors the discussion about women's access to their rightful inheritance, where various barriers are erected to keep wealth concentrated in the hands of men. This explains the surprising alignment between men of diverse ideological backgrounds — religious, atheist, conservative, or liberal when it comes to women's rights to inheritance despite the enshrined rights in both religious and social norms. In a context where most politicians, legislators, and policymakers are men who benefit from maintaining the taboo around sexuality and women's rights, achieving meaningful reform is often characterised by lip service rhetoric.

This highlights the importance of gender equality as a catalyst for genuine social reform, which is fundamental to fostering respectful sexual relationships, reducing GBV and increasing the likelihood of sustainable marriages in a society grappling with high rates of early divorces.

My message today is to call upon politicians and decision-makers invested in the country's future to embrace a broader perspective on gender equality, recognising its social, political, and economic dimensions. It is essential to break down all forms of unfair taboos and encourage open public debate to create an enabling environment for future generations, allowing Pakistan to secure its place in a rapidly changing world where seats at the table are reserved for socially open-minded, economically empowered nations free of gender bias, and embracing innovation. -- Courtesy Dawn

Digital eternity

Muna Khan

We've probably imagined some version of "I wish I had the chance to tell [someone] how much I loved them before they died". I don't have such thoughts for my mother who died unexpectedly in 1995. But since reading about the use of bots to create digital avatars of our dead loved ones, I have wondered if I'd be willing to turn to AI to help me grieve, 30 years on.

My instinct is a firm no because she would loathe it, not least because she was devout but also it seems a bit sci-fi and creepy and probably very upsetting. However, it's been very helpful for the innumerable families across China using "grief tech". I recently wrote about people using digital avatars for companionship but this is more personal. This is you holding onto someone you deeply loved in a bid to find closure and I wonder if it helps or prevents you from moving on. I also watched a short documentary on a 37-year-old woman in Singapore, mum to four kids, who was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer who chose to record videos for her children so they wouldn't forget her. The company will interview her for six to eight hours, record a data of memories to store in the cloud, which her children can then access over the years by asking "her" a question about a memory. This is different to the tools available for posthumous work.

For around Rs800, you can create an animated avatar of any person on some of these Chinese sites. For more money, according to a report in NPR in July, you can choose options featuring AI-powered chatbots, conversa-

tional videos or interactive séance.

One 47-year-old man in Nanjing featured in NPR said he talks to a digital avatar of his mother — "rendered from the shoulders up by artificial intelligence to look and sound just like his flesh-and-blood mother" who died in 2018. He said it's the best person to confide in, and he regards the avatar "truly like his mother".

Many cultures build altars for their dead relatives in their homes or communicate with them through ceremony. Families honour the dead and maintain their graves at the yearly tomb sweeping ceremony in China; they also tell them what their year was like. This year, some brought moving digital avatars of their deceased relatives for a two-way conversation.

Is this the end of 'rest in peace' as we have known it all this time? And what about the ethics of replicating people, alive or dead; do we need their consent?

China has a robust e-commerce market, reports MIT Technology Review, and many brands would hire livestreamers to sell their products.

Now they use AI-cloned influencers that can stream 24/7. According to one estimate reported in The Guardian, the market size for "digital humans" was worth 12 billion yuan (\$1.7bn) in 2022, and is expected to quadruple by 2025.

You can see this as technology that is profiting from death or offering people a chance to deal with the layers of grief. Technology has helped us grieve from afar, by attending funerals and prayer meets over Zoom and we find solace in pouring over photographs or home videos or social media

posts of our loved ones; so what is different if we take all that material and feed it into large language models to create digital avatars? You need a one-minute video for a basic avatar (costs around Rs8,500) and ones that require generative AI to make the avatar move and talk to you costs a few thousand dollars.

Digital immortality has a dark side too. Fans recreated a digital avatar of Qiao Renliang, a pop star who died by suicide in 2016, and then made new content, including a video of him saying "I never went away". This caused a great deal of pain to his family, who said it opened old wounds and did not have their consent.

One of these AI tech grief companies in China has built a cemetery in Shanghai where tombstones are digitised. You can scan a QR code on the headstone and access the deceased's life through multimedia.

A company representative told NPR they hoped this would allow people to see a graveyard as a place to celebrate life, not just mourn death.

Things once in the realm of sci-fi are becoming a reality due to investment in computing power.

On one hand we are ploughing money in medical technology to allow us to live longer, or figuring out how to merge our brains with computers so we can have a digital version of ourselves in the cloud, and now digital immortality is advancing. Are we so afraid of death? Is grief so unbearable that some would rather stay in perpetual mourning by recreating our parents, partners, etc.? -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Ch. Shafay says: Special incentives available for investors in Punjab's SEZs
International labour & trade unions delegation meets Ch Shafay Hussain

LAHORE (APP): A 12-member delegation of International Labour and Trade Unions called on Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain at a local hotel on Sunday.

The delegation was headed by Shoya Yoshida, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, Asia-Pacific, Singapore.

During the meeting, mutual cooperation was agreed upon for the preparation of skilled manpower and the promotion of technical education.

The possibilities of trade with various countries were also reviewed.

The minister briefed the delegation about the investment opportunities and the measures taken to promote technical education.

He stated that special incentives are available for investors in Punjab's Special Economic Zones (SEZs) including a 10-year income tax exemption and a one-time duty-free machinery import facility. He shared that 19 Centers of Excellence are being established in different cities by TEVTA with the support of the Asian Development Bank. A Garment City is being developed on 630 acres in Sheikhpura, where the government would build

industrial unit structures and offer them to investors on rent.

The minister highlighted the ongoing improvements in industrial infrastructure and the upgradation of TEVTA institutions. He also shared that Punjab's Skill Development Policy 2024 has been submitted for cabinet approval. He added that solar study programs have been introduced in TEVTA institutions for the first time. Additionally, several Chinese companies have expressed interest in investing in Punjab.

Ch. Shafay Hussain emphasized that promoting solar energy and electric vehicles is the Punjab.



LAHORE: A delegation of International Labour and Trade Unions meeting with Punjab Minister for Industries and Commerce Ch. Shafay Hussain.

Secretary says: Punjab govt guarantees foreign investor safety, unveils robust security plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant move to bolster economic growth, Punjab Secretary for Industries and Food, Ehsan Bhutta, has reiterated the provincial government's dedication to creating a conducive environment for foreign investors.

Secretary Ehsan Bhutta talking to PTV news channel reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing a secure and supportive business environment.

Bhutta emphasized that a robust security

framework is being implemented to safeguard investors' interests, fostering an environment conducive to growth and progress. Bhutta outlined a comprehensive strategy to boost foreign investors' confidence, including streamlined regulatory frameworks, efficient dispute resolution mechanisms, and enhanced security protocols. This multi-faceted approach aims to mitigate risks and provide a secure environment for investors to operate.

The Secretary stressed that the security of foreign investments is a top priority for the Punjab government, adding, to achieve this, the government is collaborating with international organizations and leveraging cutting-edge technology to monitor and address potential security threats. He said that Under Chief Minister Punjab' leadership government will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that your investments are protected and thrive in our province.

We will strengthen our liaison with the govt, Mian Tanvir

MULTAN (APP): Newly-elect president Multan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) Mian Bakhtawar Tanvir Sheikh said on Sunday that unemployment rate was continuously rising in the country which affecting all strata of society, suggesting that the voice of business community should be reached to decision-makers and steps should be taken towards improving the ease of doing business.

He expressed these views while addressing the Annual General Meeting (AGM) here at MCCI. Earlier, following the announcement of final results by the election commission, Mian

Bakhtawar Tanveer Sheikh, along with Senior Vice President Khawaja Muhammad Mohsin Masood and Vice President Azhar Javid Khan, assumed their offices. "We will strengthen our liaison with the government, especially to push for changes in tax laws and for easier taxation for the business community," he remarked. They said that they would work on infrastructure, economic, and industrial development to make Southern Punjab an exemplary region. The industrial trade, particularly the SME sector, was struggling significantly, Bakhtawar said and added that in this regard,



LAHORE: A vendor arranging and displaying the different kinds of clay made decoration items to attract the customers at his roadside setup.

PCMEA elects new leadership

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) has announced its new leadership following recent elections.

Mian Atiqur Rehman takes the reins as Chairman, joined by Zahid Nazir as Senior Vice Chairman (Southern Zone) and Riyaz Ahmed as Vice Chairman (Northern Zone), senior leader Abdul Latif Malik has been appointed as Patron-in-Chief in recognition of his immense contributions to the industry.

The election of the members of the Executive Committee, Northern Zone and Southern Zone also took place. All the officials were elected unopposed and their term will be for two years, according to PCMEA spokesmen here Sunday. Among the members of the Northern Zone Executive Committee are Mehmood Ahmed, Bilal Ahmad Butt, Ahmed Irfan, Muhammad Jafar Khalid, Qamar Zia, Sheikh Amir Khalid, Usman Rasheed, Ali Ahmed, Saadul Rehman and Farooq Ahmed Butt, while the members of the Southern Zone Executive Committee are Parvez Sajjad, Muhammad Arif Latif.

RCCI urges FBR to extend date for annual tax filing

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has demanded an extension of the last date for submission of tax returns. Chamber President Saqib Rafiq in a statement issued here on Sunday pointed out slower FBR's system (Iris) due to heavy filings. He said that closure of banks and other related institutions on Saturdays and Sundays has furthered the difficulties facing the taxpayers in obtaining bank accounts and other relevant documents.

Small Industry—Unlocking South Punjab's economic potential

MULTAN (APP): Having a long history of calligraphy, pottery, handicrafts and agricultural, South Punjab can be turned into treasure trove of opportunities for businesses especially small industries with its diverse sectors ready to boost the region's economic growth.

From agriculture to handicrafts and diminishing cottage industry, the region is teeming with potential for development and offers an array of business avenues for value addition that could uplift local communities and contribute to country's economic progress.

At the heart of the opportunity is the region's

agricultural strength. Agrobased businesses such as fruit and vegetable processing, dehydration units and spice grinding mills are particularly viable. These industries could capitalize on South Punjab's rich produce and help reduce post-harvest losses that currently affect farmers due to lack of processing facilities.

"Huge quantities of vegetables and fruits perish due to their short shelf-life. Their proper preservation and value addition can help earn substantial revenue," remarked President Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Mian Rashid Iqbal.

"Dehydration units

could convert excessive vegetables into powder as these powder form vegetables were highly popular in international markets," he stated. "With the right facilities, local farmers could benefit from enhanced incomes through value-added products like jams, pulps and powders etc."

Rashid Iqbal also mentioned to livestock sector as another pillar of South Punjab's economy. "Milk and meat processing, as well as production of organic dairy products offer numerous business opportunities for small-scale entrepreneur."

However, he voiced concerns about the

exploitation of farmers by multinational companies that buy milk at very low prices but sell it at a premium. "By establishing local processing plants, farmers could retain more profit like our neighboring country where cattle farmers work in clusters to process and sell milk."

The President MCCI stressed the need for government's intervention to support local farmers and reduce reliance on multinational companies.

Fish farming, particularly fish cage culture, is also untapped resource in South Punjab. With three rivers and dozens of canals, the region offers ideal conditions for

fish farming, which could remarkably improve living standards of farmers besides bolstering national economy. The introduction of fish farming on a larger scale would provide a sustainable livelihood for many, allowing rural communities to thrive.

In addition to agriculture and livestock, South Punjab also is home to rich traditional handicrafts. Local artisans create beautiful pottery, woodwork, brassware and textiles that are cherished locally and abroad. The famous blue pottery, camel-skin lamps, and hand-woven carpets are just a few examples of the region's craftsmanship.



MULTAN: Punjab Secretary Agriculture Iftikhar Ali Sahoo talking to farmers during his visit to Kissan Card distribution centre.

Governor Kundi lashes out at PTI for worsening law & order situation in KP

MULTAN (APP): Governor KP Faisal Karim Kundi expressing grave concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in his province, accused the provincial government of neglect and incompetence.

Talking to the media at the residence of Naseem Labar, PPP city president here on Sunday, he stated the KP government failed to establish peace in the region as unrest was on the rise while KP Chief Minister was observed managing political rallies. Kundi asserted, "KP is becoming increasingly unsafe, from Dera Ghazi Khan to Kohat.

Certain areas have now become no-go zones, and even judges are being abducted". He questioned the commitment of the provincial government to peace, adding, "Has there ever been a serious meeting to address the unrest? When meetings are held, it is only to malign the institutions", he added. Reflecting on the past, the governor recalled the situation in 2008 when the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) inherited a country engulfed in terrorism. "The country is facing serious issues due to militancy, but we brought peace with the sacrifices of armed forces," he stated.

Kundi lamented, today's unrest is plaguing a province that was once pacified by the PPP's efforts.

Kundi also pointed out corruption in the KP government, especially pointing to the Peshawar BRT project and the

alleged misuse of funds allocated for security. "An amount of Rs 600 billion was given for security, yet the police lacked resources. If corruption was not committed, where did the money go?" he questioned.

The governor accused the KP administration of focusing solely on corruption while failing to deliver results on the ground.

Referring to PTI's leadership, Kundi remarked that the party's members were more interested in public spectacles than governance. "They know only how to dance in streets, while the province suffers," he said, adding, "If they have any sense of responsibility, they should focus on the people rather than seeking power at any cost."



MULTAN: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi talking to media persons at the residence of Naseem Labar.

Minister says inflation being controlled successfully

SARGODHA (APP): Punjab Minister for Zakat and Usher and General Secretary Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Sargodha Division Rana Munawar Ghous Khan termed record decrease in inflation a positive indicator for the country and reaffirmed the government's commitment to work hard till complete revival of the economy.

Talking to APP on Sunday, he said, "The inflation rate has dropped

to 11 per cent during this month, as reported by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Bloomberg, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, World Bank and other international departments are also acknowledging progress on Pakistan's economy and also see it on the right path." Munawar Ghous highlighted government's tireless efforts from day one, focusing on the economy, leading to several positive outcomes.

Ex Minister Irshad Sial condemns brutal killing of labourers

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Pakistan People Party senior leader and former federal minister Mehar Irshad Sial strongly condemned the brutal killing of seven labourers from south Punjab in Panjgur, Balochistan. In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said: "We strongly condemn the murder of poor labourers". He called for every possible measure to ensure the rights and safety of labourers, stressing the need for swift action.

Maryam Nawaz says: Reducing food waste religious, moral duty

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said on Sunday that reducing food waste was a religious and moral duty of all Pakistanis. In a message on the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, she said: "Food waste is a global problem, which damages the economy and environment alike."

She added, "It is depressing to note that millions of people around the world are suffering from hunger, while millions of tonnes of food is wasted globally." The chief minister said, "Pakistan is also suffering from food waste and shortage to some extent. Planning is needed to save resources from being wasted."

Maryam Nawaz said, "Help the hungry people by reducing food waste" adding that "An effective awareness campaign is necessary to prevent food waste." She noted, "School nutrition programme in Punjab is a historic initiative to address malnutrition in children."

The CM said, "Proportionate consumption of food is inevitable, highlight the value of food in your community."

She hoped, "Together we can save the natural resources of Pakistan."

The chief minister declared that reducing food waste was not only a moral and religious obligation but also essential for effective resource management.



LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari talking to media persons at DGPR.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Imran Nazir addressing the oath taking ceremony of PPMA North Zone.

Azma Bukhari says: Bullying, hooliganism not allowed in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bukhari said on Sunday that Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur should know it well that his bullying and hooliganism were not allowed in Punjab.

While holding a press conference here, she said the government would not allow anyone to take the law into their hands in Punjab. She said that in case of any law violation, the violators would be

8 dead, 1,359 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): Eight people were killed and 1,359 others injured in 1,251 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 578 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 781 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed that 737 drivers, 47 underage drivers, 134 pedestrians, and 496 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. The statistics show that 269 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 292 people, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Faisalabad with 84 accidents and 91 victims, and at third Multan with 70 accidents and 83 victims. According to the data, 1,130 motorbikes, 77 auto-rickshaws, 101 motorcars, 30 vans, 09 passenger buses, 20 truck and 121 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road accidents.

Experts in KP term PM's USA visit highly successful

PESHAWAR (APP): International Relations experts have praised Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's recent five-day visit to the United States of America (USA) to attend the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), declaring it highly successful and beneficial for Pakistan.

Former Ambassador Manzoorul Haq highlighted the significance of the Prime Minister's address at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Moment 2024, which received widespread acclaim. He noted that the Prime Minister's remarks served as a powerful call

for international and regional unity to confront critical global issues such as climate change, the debt burden, and terrorism—challenges that disproportionately impact underdeveloped and developing nations, including Pakistan.

Emphasizing the importance of the Prime Minister's focus on solutions to these urgent global challenges, particularly in the context of rising carbon emissions and the increasing financial pressures faced by vulnerable countries, he said the Premier visit has not only elevated Pakistan's stance on the international stage but also

reinforced the need for collaborative efforts to achieve sustainable development goals.

He said the huge debt burdens which are increasing with each passing year, are directly affecting underdeveloped and developing countries including Pakistan, and the premier was being appreciated at national and international forums for highlighting the negative effects of debts burden on poor economies.

Professor Dr Ejaz Khan, former Chairman, International Relations Department, University of Peshawar also termed the visit of PM as highly successful at UNGA where

he met with top world leaders of friendly countries and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest with special focus on resolution of Kashmir dispute and sustainable socio-economic development of Pakistan.

In his historic address at 79th session of the UNGA, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has boldly highlighted the genocidal war of Israel at Gaza, human rights abuses at Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, waning the hearts and minds of Pakistanis, Kashmiris and Plistanians. Muhammad Hussain Khateeb, Member All

Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC Gillani Group) said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had won the hearts and minds of all Kashmiris for exclusively highlighting the Kashmir dispute in its true perspective at UNGA.

He said Indian occupational forces' war crimes, state terrorism and human rights abuses had made life a worst nightmare for over one million oppressed Kashmiris.

APHC leader said India had imposed military siege on some 10 million Kashmiris in IOJK where over 900,000 Indian forces were deployed with no regards for human rights.

International News

Erdogan's anti-Israel rhetoric falters as Turkey loses regional clout

NEW YORK: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has used the United Nations General Assembly to criticise Israel and its Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. But as Erdogan tries to lead opposition to Israel, Turkey is finding itself increasingly sidelined in the region.

At the UN, Erdogan again compared Israel to Hitler, calling for an "international alliance of humanity" to stop Israel as it did Hitler 70 years ago. However, such fiery rhetoric is finding a shrinking audience. "It's more conveying a message to their base," said Sezgin Oney of the Turkish news portal Politikoy. "There isn't an audience that sees Turkey or Erdogan as the vanguard of Palestine rights anymore. On the contrary, that ship sailed long ago."

Erdogan attempted to

boost his image as a powerful regional player by meeting with the Lebanese and Iraqi Prime Ministers on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. But Ankara is increasingly finding itself sidelined as a regional diplomatic player.

"Ankara's pro-Hamas approach has only marginalised Turkey in the international arena," said international relations expert Selin Nasi of the London School of Economics. "So we see Egypt and Qatar receiving credits for their roles as mediators. And Turkey is locked out of international diplomatic efforts."

Since Hamas's 7 October attack on Israel and Israel's subsequent Gaza campaign, Ankara has tried to position itself among international mediating efforts to end the fighting, given its close contacts with Hamas. "Turkey was



BEIRUT: People inspect the devastation in the Hadath district of the Lebanon capital's southern suburbs in the aftermath of intense Israeli air strikes.

Hashem Safieddine tipped as successor to Nasrallah

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Hashem Safieddine, a potential successor to his slain cousin Hassan Nasrallah, is one of Hezbollah's most prominent figures and has deep religious and family ties to Iran.

Safieddine bears a striking resemblance to his charismatic maternal cousin Nasrallah but is several years his junior, aged in his late 50s or early 60s. A source close to Hezbollah said the grey-bearded, be-

spectacled Safieddine was the "most likely" candidate for party's top job.

As head of the executive council, Safieddine oversees Hezbollah's political affairs. Safieddine's public statements often reflect Hezbollah's militant stance and its alignment with the Palestinian cause. At a recent event in Dahiyeh, Hezbollah's stronghold in Beirut's southern suburbs, he declared, "Our history, our guns and our rockets are with you."

Nine drown, 48 missing as migrant boat sinks near Spain

Monitoring Desk MADRID: A boat carrying migrants capsized off Spain's Canary Islands overnight, killing at least nine and leaving 48 missing, the national maritime rescue service said on Saturday. Eighty-four people were on board and 27 were saved after rescuers responded to a distress call received shortly after midnight from off El Hierro, one of the islands in the Atlantic archipelago, a statement said.

At least six killed by bomb blasts in Somalia

Monitoring Desk MOGADISHU: At least six people were killed and 10 injured by bomb explosions in Somalia's capital Mogadishu and a town in the country's Middle Shabelle region, police and witnesses said. It was not immediately clear who had carried out the attacks, although Islamist militant group al-Shabaab frequently orchestrates bombings and gun attacks in Mogadishu and elsewhere in the Horn of Africa country. The blast in Mogadishu involved a bomb-rigged car that was parked on a road near the National Theatre in Mogadishu, about one kilometre away from the president's office.

148 dead in Nepal floods after relentless monsoon rains

Monitoring Desk KATHMANDU: Residents of Nepal's flood-hit capital returned to their mud-caked homes on Sunday to survey the wreckage of devastating floods that have killed at least 148 people across the Himalayan republic.

Deadly rain-related floods and landslides are common across South Asia during the monsoon season from June to September, but experts say climate change is increasing their frequency and severity. Entire neighbourhoods in

Kathmandu were inundated over the weekend with flash floods reported in rivers coursing through the capital and extensive damage to highways connecting the city with the rest of Nepal.

Kumar Tamang, who lives in a slum area by a riverbank, told AFP that he and his family had to flee after midnight on Saturday as waters rushed into his shack.

"This morning we returned and everything looks different," the 40-year-old said.

World powers warn of Israeli attack's repercussions

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: With the spectre of all-out war looming over the Middle East, world powers warned of the potential repercussions of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah's assassination by Israel amid growing calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in the Middle East. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told the UN General Assembly on Saturday that there must not be a delay in reaching a "comprehensive ceasefire" in the Middle East, and said a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians remains the way out of the region's tensions.

Russia strongly condemned "yet another politi-

cal assassination" in the Lebanese capital Beirut. Its foreign ministry said, "This forceful action is fraught with even greater dramatic consequences for Lebanon and the entire Middle East. The Israeli side could not fail to recognise this danger, but took the step of killing Lebanese citizens, which would almost inevitably provoke a new outbreak of violence. Thus, it bears full responsibility for the subsequent escalation."

However, US President Joe Biden the United States fully supported Israel's right to defend itself and said he had directed Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin to further enhance the US military forces.

China, at UN, warns against 'expansion of the battlefield' in the Ukraine war

Monitoring Desk NEW YORK: Three days before his communist government turns 75, China's foreign minister warned fellow leaders Saturday against an "expansion of the battlefield" in Russia's war with Ukraine and said the Beijing government remains committed to shuttle diplomacy and efforts to push the conflict toward its end.

"The top priority is to commit to no expansion of the battlefield. ... China is committed to playing a constructive role," Wang Yi said. He warned against other nations "throwing oil on the fire or exploiting the situation for selfish gains," a likely reference to the United States.

Wang's speech appeared to break no new ground, as is generally China's recent practice at the U.N. General Assembly's annual meeting of leaders. In fact, his boss, Chinese President Xi Jinping, has not participated in the leaders' meeting since 2021—and then only virtually, during the pandemic. Xi has not attended in person for sev-

eral years.

On Friday, on the assembly sidelines, China and Brazil sought to build enthusiasm for their peace plan for Ukraine. They said about a dozen countries signed a communique that says they "note" the six-point plan. The plan calls for a peace conference with both Ukraine and Russia and no expansion of the battlefield, among other provisions.

Ukrainian officials have given the proposal a cold shoulder, but the countries that signed the communique are forming a group of "friends for peace" for their U.N. ambassadors to keep the conversation going among themselves. Ranging from Algeria to Zambia, the members are largely African or Latin American countries. Wang made sure to note Friday that the group doesn't decree individual countries' policies.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said at a news conference Saturday that Russia was ready to provide assistance and advice to the group.

Israel says it has struck dozens of Houthi targets in Yemen

Monitoring Desk JERUSALEM: The Israeli military says dozens of aircraft have struck Houthi targets in Yemen in response to recent attack on Israel.

The military said it targeted power plants and sea port facilities in the city of Hodeida.

The Houthis launched a ballistic missile attack on Ben Gurion airport on Saturday when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was arriving.

The Israeli military said Sunday it has killed another high-ranking Hezbollah official in an airstrike as the Lebanese militant group was reeling from a string of devastating blows and the killing of its overall leader, Hassan Nasrallah. The military said Nabil Kaouk, the deputy

SpaceX launches rescue mission to bring home stranded astronauts

Monitoring Desk FLORIDA: A SpaceX rocket lifted off with two passengers on Saturday to retrieve two American astronauts stranded on the International Space Station (ISS) for months, according to Nasa.

The Falcon 9 rocket lifted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida, at 1:17pm, carrying Nasa astronaut Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Alexander Gorbunov to the ISS. The mission, Crew-9, features two empty seats intended to return Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who have been stranded on the ISS for months due to issues with their Boeing-designed Starliner spacecraft. "Congrats to Nasa and SpaceX on a successful launch," NASA chief Bill Nelson wrote on X.

Irfan calls for collective action to streamline 'Judicial Processes'

ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N Senator Irfan Siddiqui Sunday urged all political parties to join forces to create meaningful change and emphasized that collective action was crucial to tackle the deep-seated issues plaguing the judicial system.

"By working together, Pakistan can create a more robust and effective judicial framework that promotes justice, equality, and prosperity for all," he said while talking to a Private news channel.

"Around 85 countries have adopted constitutional reforms, offering valuable lessons for nations looking to strengthen their governance," he further mentioned.

"These reforms focus on enhancing accountability, transparency, participation, and predictability essential elements of good governance," he said.

"By learning from others' experiences, countries can create more effective and just systems," he added.

Responding to a query, Senator Irfan Siddiqui has called out Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), urging them to pursue legal channels if they had any grievances, rather than pressuring institutions and exploiting citizens for political gain.

He emphasized the importance of respecting democratic institutions and the rule of law.

PTI Should knock on

the doors of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and courts for promoting a peaceful and constitutional approach to resolving disputes, he stressed.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui also praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's powerful speech at the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), where he addressed pressing global issues.

PM Sharif's speech was notable for its emphasis on key issues such as Israel's military actions in Gaza, the unresolved Kashmir dispute, the global climate crisis and the international community's failure to uphold justice and human rights.



ISLAMABAD: Activists of Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen carrying placards and Palestinian national flags stand beside a portrait of slain Lebanese Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, during an anti-Israel protest in the Federal Capital.

Over 25 students injured in clash b/w two student groups at Quaid-e-Azam University

ISLAMABAD (APP): More than 25 students were injured in a violent clash between two student groups at Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad last night and university administration has lodged a complaint against members of both groups involved in the incident, sparking concerns over campus safety.

A violent confrontation took place between the Punjabi Students group and Pakhtun Students group at Quaid-e-Azam University late on the night of September 28, 2024. The clash, which erupted near the university hostels, saw dozens of students from both sides engaging in a physical fight, a police officer said while talking to APP on Sunday.

According to a report filed by the English campus manager of Quaid-e-Azam University, Lieutenant Colonel Nadeem

Police nab 25 criminals, narcotics, weapons seized

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police apprehended 25 criminals involved in different criminal activities, including drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons in different raids during last 24 hours.

A public relations officer told APP on Sunday that police teams also recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession.

In this regard, the Islamabad Police Aabpara, Sumbal, Tarnol, Sangiani, Industrial Area, Noon, Shams Colony and Koral police station teams took legal action against accused involved in drug peddling, selling liquor and possessing illegal weapons, he said.

Police teams arrested 13 accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons and recovered 1,375-gram heroin, 3,500-gram hashish, 110-gram Ice, 10 Liters of liquor, two daggers and five pistols with ammunition from their possession. Moreover, 12 absconders were also arrested during the last 24 hours, he added.

Managing watercourses imperative to avoid urban flooding

ISLAMABAD (APP): Managing watercourses effectively is crucial for mitigating urban flooding, especially in cities like Rawalpindi that faces significant challenges due to its topography and rapid urbanization.

Different watercourses especially Nullah Lai, flowing through the city, often plays havoc with city residents when it overflows after torrential rains during monsoon season submerging different localities and inflicting losses of millions of rupees on businesses and household.

With its total length of 16 kilometers from Kattarian Bridge to Soan River near Lahore High Court's Rawalpindi bench building, 600 cusecs sewage is discharged into it daily. But, during heavy rains in twin cities, its water level rises to dangerous level of 18 feet, most often overflowing to adjacent localities.

"Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi has conducted detailed assessments to identify flood-prone areas, considering factors like topography, land use and flood data," claims Managing Director (MD) WASA, Saleem Ashraf. "The capacity of existing drainage systems was improved by deepening and widening this course to handle extra water."

He said officers concerned ensure routine inspections of Nullah Lai particularly during Monsoon to prevent blockages. "A real-time monitoring system was installed to track water levels and rainfall. The data is used to predict potential flooding and take proactive measures."

Police & CTD carry out search operation in limits of PS Secretariat

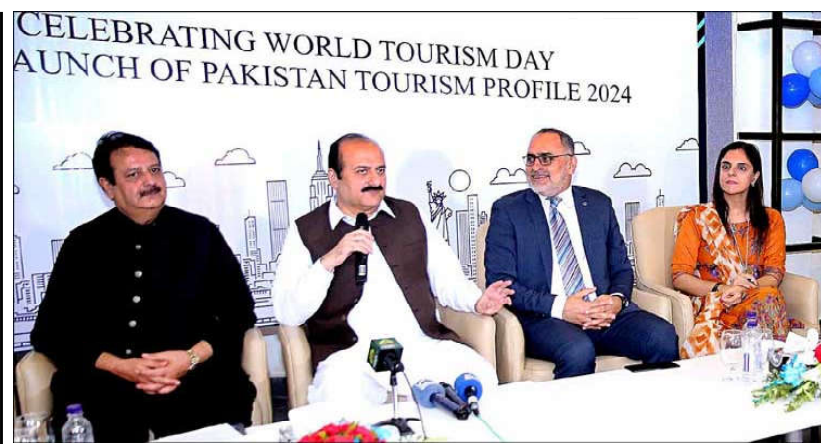
ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police conducted a search and combing operation on Sunday in the jurisdiction of Secretariat police station.

According to police statement, under the special directions of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate crime from the city.

Following these directions Superintendent of Police (SP) City zone Khalid Mehmood Awan, a search and combing operation was conducted in different areas of Secretariat police station by ICT Police teams including CTD and lady police teams.



ISLAMABAD: Disable persons take part in race during a ceremony title 'Save Tomorrow 8 Run and Walk' at Fatima Jinnah Park, organized by KKAWF, in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan addressing the inaugural ceremony of launching of Pakistan Tourism Profile 2024.

KP CM limited to filmi dialogues, threats: Kundi

RAHIM YAR KHAN (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Sunday criticized the chief minister's approach as limited to filmi dialogues, threats, and broken commitments.

Commenting on the security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Governor Kundi described it as dire, criticizing the provincial government's approach as limited to stage and social media.

He pointed out the rampant corruption and the public's sense of insecurity in the province.

He said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)

has consistently worked in the broader interest of the nation and prioritized public welfare.

He made these remarks during a public gathering held at Dua Chowk, organized by former provincial assembly candidate Raja Solangi.

During the public meeting, Raja Solangi and Sardar Habib Rahman Khan, the president of PPP Rahim Yar Khan, also addressed the crowd.

Governor Kundi highlighted that the leadership of the PPP has taken practical steps to address public issues in every era and has played a significant role

Ambassador Asim outlines importance of cultural diplomacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ambassador in France Asim Iftikhar Ahmad on Sunday said that the diplomatic world was particularly conscious of fashion's growing role in cultural diplomacy.

The ambassador expressed his views during a multi-designer and multi-cultural fashion show which was held at Embassy of Pakistan, Paris in collaboration with Fashion London to celebrate the diverse cultures and unique fashion scenes of Pakistan, Uzbekistan, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

A large number of guests from different walks of life including French officials and friends, diplomats, fashion and business circles, students and media attended the fashion show.

Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad welcomed the guests "Spring Summer 2025 Paris", featuring six dynamic designers, all of whom had previously presented their collections internationally, a press release said.

"Much as food, art and sports say a lot about a nation's culture, fashion has its unique place. Cultural diplomacy was one of the priorities of the Embassy, and events like this transform dreams into reality. The objective was to showcase the rich cultural heritage of our country by drawing linkages and partnering with other friends," he added. He said as the world evolved, so did fashion and Pakistan was home to countless extravagant fashion weeks that were conducted annually.

While appreciating the work of all designers, he said that behind every quality garment, there was a story — a tale of tradition, artistry, and passion. "This storytelling was evident in the meticulous details, the selection of fabrics, the colour palettes.



PESHAWAR: Former prime minister and Awami Pakistan Party leader, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi addresses to media persons during press conference held at Peshawar press club.

Khaqan Abbasi criticizes proposed constitutional amendment process

MULTAN (INP): In a recent interview with a private TV Channel, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Chief of the Awami Pakistan Party, expressed serious concerns regarding the proposed constitutional amendment, revealing that none of the 450 members of parliament have read the draft.

Abbasi highlighted the alarming trend of legislation being passed without thorough examination, questioning, "Show me a country where laws are passed without reading them?"

Abbasi pointed out that the integrity of constitutional courts is at stake, urging transparency in the amendment process. "Why are you afraid of putting the constitutional amendment in front of the people?" he asked, emphasizing the need for public engagement in significant legal changes.

During a party event, Abbasi reiterated his commitment to addressing pressing issues, including women's rights. He remarked, "Women constitute fifty percent of the population, yet they have not been granted equal rights as per the constitution." Highlighting the potential of Pakistan's youth, he stated, "Pakistan is the fourth smartest nation in the world," but lamented that their future hinges on the country's economic health. He called for job creation, respect, and business opportunities to address youth concerns. Abbasi criticized the current political climate, where fundamental rights to free speech are suppressed, asserting, "When you do not give the right to speak, then there will be chaos." He called for a return to democratic and parliamentary values to restore political stability.

Reflecting on Pakistan's constitution, he noted its historical significance and beauty, reminding that many new nations once looked to it as a model. However, he lamented the frequent breaches of constitutional principles, questioning how the country can thrive if its foundational legal framework is ignored.

Abbasi concluded that the resolution to Pakistan's problems lies within the constitution itself, urging leaders to uphold its tenets for the betterment of the nation.



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Capital Development Authority (CDA) installing new colorful lights under zero point bridge, in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan hits back at India for accusing Islamabad of cross-border terrorism at UNGA

UNITED NATIONS (APP): A Pakistani diplomat hit back at the Indian External Affairs Minister's speech in the UN General Assembly on Saturday that depicted Pakistan as a promoter of terrorism, saying it was well documented that India was not only committing state terrorism in occupied Kashmir but also abroad.

"It is most ironic that India, which is committing the worst form of state terrorism in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir while also actively engaging in sponsoring terrorism abroad, is portraying itself as the victim," Pakistani diplomat Muhammad Faheem told the 193-member Assembly.

Earlier in the day, S. Jaishankar, the Indian minister, protested against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif raising the Kashmir dispute in the General Assembly and went on to accuse Islamabad of pursuing a policy of cross-border terrorism.

"It is a familiar ploy of all occupiers and colonizers to paint legitimate struggles for freedom and liberation as terrorism. India is failing to grasp the enormity of the indigenous Kashmiri resistance against its stranglehold and wrongly blaming it on cross-border terrorism," Faheem, a third secretary at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, said while exercising his right of reply.

"India must introspect, reflect, and immediately implement the Security Council resolutions that provide for the Kashmiris to exercise their right to self-determination," he said, and called for holding India accountable for its actions that violate international law.

Aleem Khan engages top Chinese investors to invest in Pakistan

BEIJING (INP): Abdul Aleem Khan, Federal Minister for Investment and Privatization engaged here over 30 top Chinese entrepreneurs in various sectors to invest in Pakistan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday.

Addressing the "Business Roundtable" at Pakistan's Embassy, the Minister said that he was pleased to see that a big number of Chinese companies are eager to invest in important sectors such as construction, logistics, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, technology, agriculture and automobile industry.

He said, "CEPC has already delivered results in transport infrastructure, connectivity, and energy generation.

As we advance the next phase of high-quality development of CEPC, our joint focus is on industrialization, especially through focuses B2B cooperation, the development of SEZs, Export Processing Zones (EPZs), and the Gwadar Free Zone."

Pakistan's renewable energy sector also holds great promise, with an estimated potential of generating 3,300 GW of electricity. The energy consumption is expected to increase further by 1.5 times by 2030.



ISLAMABAD: Naib Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Mian Muhammad Aslam offering absentee funeral prayer of Lebanese Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah.

IPRI hosts book launch 'How China Became Rich-From Poverty to Prosperity'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) hosted the Book Launch of "How China Became Rich-From Poverty to Prosperity: An Eyewitness Perspective" by Author Syed Hasan Javed. The book provides insights into how China underwent a series of reforms to overcome severe poverty and become of the strongest economies in the world, said a press release on Sunday.

In his opening remarks, President IPRI, Dr

ICT Police to constitute special squads against signal violators

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police has decided to accelerate efforts to ensure implementation of traffic laws and take strict action against those involved in violation of red-signal.

According to police statement on Sunday a special campaign is underway to check violations while various squads are performing duties at main roads and boulevards of the city and taking action against the violators.

He said efforts are underway to ensure a disciplined traffic system in the city. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Islamabad Muhammad Sarfraz Virk directed the Police personnel to ensure implementation on traffic rules and regulation irrespective of status and rank and demonstrate patience and politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users, he said.

Elections in IIOJK cannot resolve Kashmir dispute: Mirwaiz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has said that elections in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir cannot resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq in a media interview said the changes brought in by the Indian government post 2019 have taken all the powers from the elected legislature, and gave it to the lieutenant governor, who is an appointee of the Indian government, KMS reported.

He said he has faced significant restrictions since August 2019, including house arrest and limitations on his movements.

"I was partially released from house arrest in September 2023 after legal intervention, yet my freedom remains constrained. I have to seek permission for any movement outside my residence, and since the announcement of elections, I have been placed under house arrest again.

Therefore, I am not a fully free man, as my activities are monitored and restricted by the authorities and I can be detained anytime at home by them."

To a query, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said in August 2019, drastic unilateral changes were executed. He added that without any care for the will of its people, New Delhi divided Jammu and Kashmir into two parts and downgraded it from a state to a union territory.

"The constitutional commitment made to the people under Article 370 was withdrawn and people lost safeguards over land, jobs and resources guaranteed under Article 35A," he lamented.

He said the changes were accompanied by increase in coercion and surveillance of people including arrests, and slapping of draconian Public Safety