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Federal Cabinet directs increased export through Gwadar Port

PM hails 2% policy rate cut, says it will boost economic activities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Pakistan and Sri Lanka for the issuance of a commemorative postal stamp to mark 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The meeting of the Federal Cabinet was held in Islamabad today with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair.

A report from the Cabinet Committee established by the Ministry of Industries and Production regarding the export of sugar was presented in the meeting.

The Cabinet expressed satisfaction that a better decision by the Cabinet on sugar exports not

only brought valuable foreign exchange to the country but also kept sugar prices under control and provided fair compensation to sugarcane growers for their efforts.

The Federal Cabinet approved directives for all government agencies to ensure that 50 percent of their imports, such as wheat, sugar, and fertilizer, are accessed through the Gwadar Port. The Cabinet also directed that the percentage of exports through Gwadar Port should be increased in the future.

A sub-committee of the Cabinet will be formed to present a quarterly report on imports and exports through Gwadar Port. On the recommendation of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, the forum approved

the reconstitution of the Board of Directors of the Korangi Fish Harbour Authority, Karachi.

The Cabinet directed that such government boards should include representation from all provinces. Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) decision to reduce the policy rate by 2%, lowering it from 19.5% to 17.5%.

He expressed optimism that this move would stimulate exports, investment, business, agriculture and overall economic growth in the country.

The prime minister expressed hope that the policy rate could gradually decrease to single digits, in line with the country's inflation rate.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs the Federal Cabinet meeting.

Sindh Govt intensifies efforts to launch electric taxis across province

Independent Report
KARACHI: The Sindh government has intensified efforts to launch electric taxis across the province.

Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon held meeting with representatives from the Chinese automobile manufacturer GAC and Dewan Motors here on Thursday.

Transport Secretary Asad Zamin, Dewan Yousif Farooqui, Chu Song from the Chinese company GAC, Chen Wen, Zafar Hassan and other officials participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, Chu Song, General Manager of the Chinese company GAC, gave a detailed briefing on electric vehicles. Various options for intro-

ducing electric taxis in Sindh were discussed.

Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon assured full cooperation and support for the Chinese company's investment.

He stated that the Government of Sindh will provide all necessary infrastructure and facilities for electric taxis, including setting up charging stations, streamlining the regulatory process, and creating a business-friendly environment for investors.

He stated that the introduction of electric taxis will not only provide safe and modern travel options for people but will also help protect the environment by reducing carbon emissions.



KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon presiding over a meeting with representatives from the Chinese automobile manufacturer GAC and Dewan Motors.

Government will soon extend relief to traders, shopkeepers: Ghani

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Local Government Minister, Saeed Ghani, has said the provincial government will soon extend relief to the concerned traders and shopkeepers in the main Saddar area and adjoining markets by resolving their pressing civic issues.

The Local Government Minister extended the assurance to this effect as he met a delegation of the Electronics Dealers Association in his office on Thursday. The delegation was led by the association's President Rizwan Irfan who briefed the Local Government Minister about the civic problems related to the sewerage system, sanitation, and vehicular parking in Saddar and adjoining markets.

He told Ghani that traders on Abdullah Haroon Road and Regal Chowk area in Saddar had been acutely suffering due to the non-functional sewerage system in the busy commercial neighborhood. Irfan said that motorcycle users had also been facing acute hardships due to the unscrupulous elements involved in illegal parking and personnel deployed at the authorized parking zones. He said it was high time that the city's major retail markets in Saddar areas should be freed of all the civic issues concerning Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, Sindh Solid Waste Management Board, and Karachi Water & Sewerage Corporation.

Information Minister commended the efforts of Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam for building liaison with international partners to address the issue of climate change.

JUI-F Chief urges political parties to work for supremacy of parliament

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman Thursday urged all political parties to work towards the supremacy of Parliament and the strengthening of democracy.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said, "We must make Parliament supreme, and as the highest authority, it should be trusted."

He suggested that a joint meeting between the Judicial Council and a parliamentary committee be held to discuss reforms in the judiciary.

He said that his party is committed to this cause and will bring more suggestions in this regard.

Info Minister vows to address challenge of climate change

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has expressed government's commitment to address the challenge of climate change in collaboration with international partners.

He was addressing a news conference flanked by Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam in Islamabad on Thursday.

The Minister said contribution of Pakistan in global carbon emission is minuscule, but unfortunately, the country is included in the list of those nations which are suffering badly due to the hazardous impacts of climate change.

Attaullah Tarar called for raising awareness to grassroots level to address this subject and convince the general public to participate in the tree plantation.

Information Minister commended the efforts of Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam for building liaison with international partners to address the issue of climate change.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah, calls on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Chairman Pakistan People's Party and MNA, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, is also present in the meeting.

Pakistan Chairs 23rd meeting of SCO ministers responsible for foreign economy, trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Commerce Minister, Jam Kamal Khan chaired the 23rd Meeting of Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States responsible for foreign economy and trade activities on Thursday.

Pakistan hosted this gathering in its capacity as the chair of the SCO Council of Heads of Government, the second-highest forum of the organization, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

The ministerial meeting was preceded by the 47th Meeting of the Commission of Senior Officials (CSO) of SCO Member States on 10th and 11th September 2024, also held in Islamabad. In his opening remarks, Jam Kamal Khan, welcomed his counterpart Ministers from the SCO fraternity to Pakistan and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the laudable aims and objective of the SCO to promote peace and prosperity in the region.

While acknowledging

the global economic challenges facing the region, he emphasized the vital role of the SCO in addressing these issues through cooperation and constructive engagement. To this end, he conveyed Pakistan's strong commitment and readiness to contribute to and collaborate with all Member States to achieve our shared goals.

"Let us seize this opportunity to forge stronger partnerships, enhance regional cooperation, and pave the way for a brighter and more prosperous future for all our peoples", he added. In their national statements, the SCO Ministers also deliberated in detail and shared their views on the prospects and measures to deepen the economic and trade cooperation among SCO countries.

The collective vision of the SCO Ministers on these issues was articulated in the Ministerial Statement adopted by the Meeting, which inter alia underscored the importance of fair trade practices.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan addresses the 23rd meeting of the Ministers of the Member States of the SCO 'Responsible for Foreign Economic and Trade Activities'.

UN delegation meets Chief Secretary Sindh

Independent Report
KARACHI: A high-level United Nations delegation, led by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Pakistan, Mohamed Yahya, met with Chief Secretary Sindh, Asif Hyder Shah, to discuss the Makli Heritage Site, the Living Indus Project, and key environmental and humanitarian challenges.

The delegation included senior representatives from the United Nations office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), and the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

During the meeting, the CS Sindh praised the United Nations for its role in post-2022 flood rehabilitation efforts. He highlighted the devastating impact of climate change on the province, mentioning frequent floods, sea intrusion, and rising pollution, all of which have led to climate-induced displacement and long-term environmental concerns in the region.

Asif Hyder Shah informed the delegation about the damage caused by recent rains and stated that divisional commissioners have been tasked with assessing the impact on infrastructure and agriculture.

The Chief Secretary requested the delegation's assistance in the conservation of Makli Graveyard, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which holds immense cultural and historical value.

The UN delegation reaffirmed its commitment to helping Sindh tackle these challenges. Mohamed Yahya proposed the organization of a climate dialogue in Sindh, involving key donors and partners to explore sustainable solutions and develop cost-effective, practical initiatives to address the province's environmental issues. The discussion also touched upon the energy crisis, with the delegation offering technical support to align Sindh's energy policies with renewable and sustainable energy goals.



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Japanese envoy Mitsuhiro calls on Governor Sindh, discusses bilateral relations

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori hosted a meeting with Japanese Ambassador Mitsuhiro Wada at the Governor House on Thursday. The two dignitaries exchanged views on enhancing bilateral relations, investment and trade between Japan and Pakistan, along with other mutual interests. During the meeting, Governor Kamran Tessori emphasized that Japanese investors should capitalize on the vast potential across various sectors in the province. He highlighted Sindh's highly educated, skilled, and hardworking youth as an attractive resource for investment. He further assured that comprehensive support is being provided to investors through the Special Investment Facilitation Center (SIFC).

Governor Tessori expressed a strong desire to

increase trade with Japan. Ambassador Wada affirmed that Japanese investors are keen on exploring different sectors in the province. He also commended the ongoing initiatives under the Governor's leadership, noting their positive impact. In a symbolic gesture, the Japanese ambassador planted a tree at the Governor House as part of the tree-planting campaign, and later inscribed his thoughts in the guestbook. While speaking to the media after the meeting, Governor Kamran Khan Tessori stated that efforts would be made to strengthen the collaboration between the Japanese investors and local business communities. He also mentioned that he would discuss with the federal government the possibility of providing further facilities to Japanese business communities.



KARACHI: Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, Mitsuhiro Wada calls on Sindh Governor, Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House.

K-P CM's call to talk with Afghanistan an attack on federation: Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Thursday criticized Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's statement about holding direct dialogue with Afghanistan, calling it a direct attack on the federation.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said that no province has the authority to hold direct talks with any foreign country.

He also highlighted the initiatives taken by the Speaker of the National Assembly to ensure the supremacy of Parliament.

The Minister said the Sunni Ittehad Council had not lost their representation due to the Speaker's issuance of production orders.

He urged that the tradition set by Speaker Sardar

Ayaz Sadiq should continue, stressing the importance of following rules and laws. Recalling past events, he pointed out that during the PTI regime, the former Speaker denied production orders of the arrested members.

The Minister also informed the House of the victimization carried out by the PTI government, stating that Rana Sanaullah Khan, Maryam Nawaz, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, and Asif Ali Zardari's sister had been arrested in fake cases.

Asif further mentioned that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was consulted on important legislation during the PDM government.

He said that now is the time to promote a politics of tolerance in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam addresses a press conference on 'Recharge Pakistan Project' at the PTV Headquarters.

SBP slashes policy rate by 200bps to 17.5%

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan, Thursday, slashed policy rate by 200 basis points to 17.5 percent owing to sharply declining inflation and moderate pick up in the economic activity during the past months.

The central bank, in the monetary policy statement issued here, informed that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reviewed overall economic and financial situation and decided to decrease the policy rate to 17.5 percent effective from September 13, 2024. The MPC observed that both headline and core inflation fell sharply over the past two months with a disinflation pace exceeding the committee's expectations, mainly due to the delay in the implementation of planned increases in administered energy prices and

favorable movement in global oil and food prices.

The inherent uncertainty related to these developments warranted a cautious monetary policy stance, the committee acknowledged and underscored the importance of the tight monetary policy stance in driving the sustained decline in inflation over the past year.

The MPC also reviewed key developments since its last meeting that have implications for the macroeconomic outlook including sharp decline in global oil prices, stability in SBP's FX reserves despite weak official inflows and continued debt repayments, decline in secondary market yields of government securities, improved inflation expectations and confidence of businesses and lower than target tax collection by

FBR during July-August 2024.

Taking into account these developments as well as the potential risks to the inflation outlook and the latest rate cut decision, the MPC assessed that the real interest rate will still remain adequately positive to bring inflation down to the medium-term target of 5 to 7% and help ensure macroeconomic stability.

Taking stock of developments in the Real Sector the MPC observed that recent high-frequency sales indicators reflected a moderate pick up in the economic activity as domestic cement and POL sales increased in August while manufacturing firms reported increased capacity utilization. The latest business sentiment surveys also support the assessment of a moderate pickup, it added.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Lakki police protest

The protest sit-in by hundreds of police personnel in KP's Lakki Marwat district entered its third day on Wednesday, with no sign of an amicable resolution. The law enforcers have taken to the streets to protest rising militancy in their district, and surrounding regions. They say they feel vulnerable, and want the counterterrorism drive in the area to be led by them, instead of the military. Police officers from surrounding districts, including Bannu, D.I. Khan and Tank, have joined their protesting colleagues, while political parties, tribesmen and civil society groups have also expressed solidarity with them. Efforts by the local administration to end the impasse have failed, and traffic between this part of KP and the rest of the country has been suspended.

The policemen's concerns are not without merit. According to figures published recently, KP experienced 29 terrorist attacks in August alone, in which 25 lives were lost. Lakki Marwat and its surrounding districts have been particularly affected by terrorism, with most of those targeted being police personnel, security men and government officials.

Therefore, if policemen have come out on the roads to protest, it shows that the state of law and order in the area is clearly a matter of grave concern. If police morale is low and law enforcers have to publicly air their grievances, it reflects a failure of the administration and the security forces to crush militancy in the affected areas. It is also significant that the local civilians are backing the policemen's demands.

Unfortunately, the KP administration and security forces seem too consumed with political matters to address the issue of militancy with the seriousness and urgency it deserves. Police personnel are on the front line in the campaign against militancy, and their concerns cannot be dismissed. As the protesting law enforcers have demanded, they should be empowered to deal with terrorist groups.

The fact is that it requires a combined effort involving the police, Counter-Terrorism Department, intelligence agencies and the military to wipe out the terrorist menace before the matter gets out of hand. As they negotiate with the protesting policemen, members of the administration must keep their concerns — as well as those of the local civilians, who pay a high price whenever there are kinetic operations — in mind to evolve a dynamic and effective CT plan.

Both the KP government and security forces must lend a sympathetic ear to these demands, as the province cannot expect a demoralised police force to deal with the militant threat. Let the police lead CT efforts, backed by the military where required, so that terrorist groups are cleared from the areas. And after kinetic operations to uproot terrorist groups, the civilian administration needs to implement the 'build' phase successfully.

'Lambooo' Nayar

F.S.Aijazuddin

No one stood taller among the pique of Indian political columnists than Kuldip 'Lambooo' Nayar. Ironically, he received that nickname from the shortest of Indian prime ministers — Lal Bahadur Shastri.

Born in Sialkot, Nayar lived a long life, dying in New Delhi in 2018 at the age of 95. He had a career crammed brimful with history. Initially an Urdu press reporter, he served as editor of The Statesman, saw prison during Mrs Indira Gandhi's Emergency (1975-77), became Indian high commissioner to Great Britain in 1990, and sat in his country's Rajya Sabha in August 1997. His syndicated columns appeared in over 80 newspapers.

Just before his death, he compiled portraits of Leaders and Icons from Jinnah to Modi (2019). (He felt tempted to rename his book 'Heroes, Neros, and Zeros'.) That slim volume included his recollections of Indian and Pakistani leaders — M.K. Gandhi to N. Modi, and from M.A. Jinnah to Z.A. Bhutto. He knew them all — perhaps, only too well.

Nayar's personal 'trysts with destiny' began early. In 1945, as a young student, he heard M.A. Jinnah speak to a sparse audience in Lahore. Nayar asked him whether after independence, Hindus and Muslims might be 'at each other's throats'. Jinnah disagreed, countering that the two new nations would live in amity, like postwar Germany and France.

On Jan 30, 1948, he walked in Birla House, the scene of Gandhi's assassination, noticing "a few drops of blood glistening in the receding light".

He interviewed K. Abdul Ghaffar Khan — the Frontier Gandhi —

who startled Nayar by asking him pointedly: "Kya aap log baniya hotay ho?" (Are you Indians still traders?)

In February 1999, he travelled to Lahore in PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's peace bus yatra from Amritsar to Lahore. An advocate of Indo-Pak amity, he renewed his commitment each year by lighting a peace candle on Wagah border on Aug 14-15.

Nayar had unbridled admiration for Jawaharlal Nehru's commitment to democracy and secularism. He thought less of Indira Gandhi, and even less so after being imprisoned by her for his abrasive articles. Nayar could see that Sanjay Gandhi held sway over her. He asked Sanjay how long did he think he and his mother could get away with their authoritarian tactics? Sanjay replied: "In my scheme of things, there were to be no elections for three to four decades."

Kuldip describes Z.A. Bhutto as "brilliant, audacious, and adventurous [but] arrogant". Bhutto asked Nayar, now that he had met Indira, Sheikh Mujib and himself, did he not agree that he (Bhutto) "deserved to be prime minister of the subcontinent?"

At Shimla, Nayar insists, "Bhutto had accepted the ceasefire line as an international border, meaning thereby that Pakistan would retain the territory it held in Kashmir (called Azad Kashmir), and India the rest of the Valley, Jammu and Ladakh". (PM Modi's subsequent abrogation of Article 370 had early roots). Nayar's plethora of Pakistani friends included Faiz Ahmed Faiz whose verses (if not his recitation) he admired. Nayar believed that Faiz's "humanity was his religion". He asked Faiz who was his favourite singer. To his surprise, Faiz did not say Iqbal Bano nor

Noor Jehan. He opted for Nayyara Noor.

On one of his trips to Lahore, Kuldip Nayar asked to meet Noor Jehan. He was taken to a film studio in Model Town. Not recognising her at first (he remembered her as the Baby Noor Jehan of her Bombay days), he began by asking how many songs had she sung. Her witty response— "Na hi gaano ka shumaar hai, aur na hi gunahon ka" (Neither can I re-m-ember the number of records, nor count the number of sins I have committed).

Nayar met Nawaz Sharif during his exile in Jeddah. He did not accept Sharif's assertion that he knew nothing about Kargil. (Nayar drew a comparison with Bhutto's denial about prior knowledge of the 1965 war.)

After Sharif's ouster, Nayar interviewed A.B. Vajpayee. Vajpayee told him: "Nawaz Sharif sacrificed himself for us." Referring to the back-channel talks between R.K. Mishra and Niaz Naik, Vajpayee added: "We were almost there." Years later, PM Manmohan Singh expressed the same regret over the failure of the S.K. Lambah/ Tariq Aziz talks.

Like many others, Nayar commented on Sonia Gandhi's use of "stalking horse". He too noticed "how unhappy Manmohan Singh looked when occupying the chair ahead of Sonia Gandhi, his benefactor". After Nayar's death in 2018, his ashes crossed Wagah border where he had lit candles each year, and then were immersed by co-peacekeepers in the river Ravi. Before his death, Nayar predicted that PM Modi "is not likely to take any initiative on Pakistan". Neither then, nor it would appear ever again in PM Modi's political lifetime. -- Courtesy Dawn

Informal jobs

Neda Mujli

In the last decade, informal jobs have mushroomed in Pakistan. Part of the reason is the high income tax levy which makes small firms contain costs by hiring cheap labour for informal jobs. Historically, societies have not been able to grow economically without a structured job market. In Tanzania, Ethiopia and the Czech Republic, for example, cheap labour coupled with the scarcity of capital made informal labour predominate even in industry. Clearly, these economies have suffered stagnation as opposed to Taiwan and Vietnam, where the main driver of growth was the formal jobs sector.

With fast automation in all sectors, labour-intensive economies are likely to spiral further downward. Traditionally, in Pakistan, low-cost labour has meant quick income for families that have many mouths to feed. However, this can at best be a survival mechanism for a fledgling economy. Hope for growth can only come from a sound industrial policy that not only creates formal employment but also upgrades the skill level required for those jobs.

Education and training remain the key drivers of economic, industrial and social development as we have seen in many successful economies. Those that have run into roadblocks after a period of intense growth — such as the Philippines and Argentina — have been burgeoning informal economies. Both economies, once successful, struggled due to the exponential growth of their informal sectors, relying on low-skilled labour.

From street vendors to low-wage domestic staff, unskilled handymen to unlicensed

wives, we have seen the unregulated growth of low-wage jobs in Pakistan. Those in low-skill jobs will always be at a disadvantage due to the unsustainable nature of the work, lack of contracts and zero social or legal protection. What's worse is the lack of economic mobility where generations will be trapped in the disadvantaged strata of society.

For sustained industrial growth, STEAM-based and digital literacy programmes need to be established for quick labour mobility — a paradigm shift from low-paying, low-skilled jobs to learning the ropes for more demanding, high-paying jobs. Developments in technology will essentially result in large gaps between those who are unable to rise to the job demands — therefore falling prey to wage stagnation or lay-offs — and those who can upgrade their skills.

In the absence of a higher education system that can develop the skills required by industry, the government will need to establish programmes to upskill workers in a public-private partnership model. Last year, in a bid to contribute to technological development, 100,000 laptops were handed out on a merit basis to university graduates. Initiatives like these are a case of 'too little, too late'. It is not so much access to technology that is required but the skills to be able to use the technology. Access can be provided on the job. Yet, without training, technology will still be out of reach for many.

This brings us back to the critical need for education and training to address the skills gap, for growth to be enabled in all sectors of the economy. Higher education institutes worldwide provide

part-time jobs to students that enables them to earn a little extra, develop basic skills that will lay the ground for their professional lives and also to help them engage in some networking with industry professionals. Part-time jobs at university have a range of benefits, from learning time-management and interpersonal skills to acquiring work discipline; the students are already on a springboard to support their careers.

In Pakistan, however, the jobs that should be open to students are usually taken by less skilled, low-wage earners. In an informal economy, we can't strictly classify jobs as open to 'students only'. There are huge opportunities that we haven't tapped into. We haven't yet explored the options available for certifying students for jobs because all these and much more are being managed in an informal capacity by untrained workers.

In many countries, students work in libraries, cafeterias, or as administrative and research assistants in a paid capacity. There are university portals that list the available on-campus jobs, and any certification options such as first-aid worker jobs. This is where students find preparatory ground for soft skills that will be required in a more formal job environment. Students can also undertake shadow work or apprenticeships within the university IT, marketing or curriculum planning teams. Gradually, we may be able to stem the tide of informal employment and bring more citizens into the safety net through training and regulation. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

China, Pakistan ink landmark leather industry pact, boosting Sino-Pak collaboration, trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Economic Net reported. Leather industry plays a crucial role in Pakistan's economy as it is one of the topmost foreign exchange earners for the country. It's widely recognized that China and Pakistan are complementary in leather industry. Through cooperation with China such as establishing joint ventures, modern Chinese technologies can be used to improve Pakistan's leather processing and product quality while Pakistan offers unique advantages of abundant raw materials, low labor costs, etc. Recently, the interactions between China and Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Albert P. Khuriev Russian Ambassador to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Industries & Production and National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain.

Delegation of int'l major investment companies meets Shafay Hussain

LAHORE (APP): A delegation of major investment companies from America, Europe and Great Britain met Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain to discuss investment opportunities in the province, at Punjab Investment Board Committee Room. The provincial minister informed about the possibilities of investment in the industrial estates of the province and the facilities being provided. A joint investment agreement was also signed between

the providential group and a multinational group from the United States, Europe and the United Kingdom. According to the agreement, there will be an investment of 1.5 billion dollars in energy, mining, real estate development, agriculture and other sectors in Punjab. This will be the largest foreign direct investment by a multinational group.

The head of the delegation said that there is a vast scope for investment in Punjab and "We will take advantage of the investment opportunities."



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh in a group photo at International Maritime Sustainability Exhibition & Conference Pakistan IMSEC-2024.

Pakistan's blue economy has potential to become a driving force for growth, resilience: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Business and Finance Conference held here, said that to enhance Pakistan's share in the blue economy, efforts were being made under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to modernize the fisheries and shipbreaking industry using advanced technology. He told the gathering that the government had already removed sales tax on fisheries processing plants and fishery seeds.

The deputy prime minister, addressing the International Maritime

Conference held here, said that to enhance Pakistan's share in the blue economy, efforts were being made under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to modernize the fisheries and shipbreaking industry using advanced technology. He told the gathering that the government had already removed sales tax on fisheries processing plants and fishery seeds.

Highlighting the significant investment opportunities offered by the country's ports, he said the oceans supported around 85% of global trade and also played a critical role in meeting the sustainable development agenda. Dar said that as a maritime nation, Pakistan viewed the Arabian Sea as its fifth neighbor and a vital component of its economic and strategic paradigm. Pakistan's unique

geopolitical and geographical position offered immense potential for trade with economic zones offering opportunities for coastal tourism, aquaculture, biotechnology, energy, and health. He said Pakistan was transforming ports into hubs of regional and international trade and efficient green transshipment as a maritime single window was operational to enhance the efficiency of ports.

Rupee gains 10 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Thursday appreciated by 10 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.44 against the previous day's closing of Rs278.54. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279 and Rs 280.85 respectively. The price of Euro decreased by Rs 1.05 to close at Rs 306.46 against the last day's closing of Rs 307.51, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Senate body reviews progress on key infrastructure projects, calls for enhanced accountability

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: The meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Senator Saifullah Abro convened today at Parliament House. The meeting began with a detailed update on the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee in its previous meetings. The Addl. Secretary of Economic Affairs Division provided an overview of ongoing and completed

projects in the communications sector, covering national highways, motorways, and road infrastructure. These projects, carried out under multilateral and bilateral agreements, and with support from UN agencies, included information on proposals, the tendering process, current progress, interest paid by the federal government or departments, and other relevant details dating back to 2002. The Committee

also reviewed a summary of ongoing and completed communication sector projects, including 16 projects funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with disbursements of 1,331.04, and 5 projects funded by the World Bank, with disbursements of 1,754. Chairman Committee Senator Saifullah Abro suggested that adding tender process updates to date to the report would provide greater clarity.

Pakistan, Russia to sign agreement for enhancing agri, industrial cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Russia are set to sign a memorandum of understanding to promote agricultural cooperation aimed at developing the local agriculture sector and enhancing the productivity of agricultural products. Russia will also provide technical assistance for modernizing fertilizer manufacturing plants in Pakistan to boost the output of fertilizers and meet local agricultural input requirements.

This consensus was reached during a meeting between Minister for National Food Security and



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and the Trade Minister of Tajikistan exchange souvenirs during a sideline meeting at the SCO Summit. Discussions focused on enhancing bilateral trade volume and mutual interests.

Support 10 mln families BISP to increase Kafaalat stipends amount up to Rs. 13,500 by January

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Thursday announced that the number of families benefiting from BISP will reach 10 million by the end of this year.

She expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for increasing the financial budget of the BISP, which will result in the quarterly installment of the Benazir Kafaalat being raised from 10,500 rupees to 13,500 rupees starting in January 2025. She shared these remarks while speaking to media representatives at the zonal office of BISP in Gilgit. Senator Rubina Khalid stated that the registration of deserving families is ongoing through Dynamic Registration Centers across the country. Additionally, recertification of already registered households is in progress to evaluate the socio-economic conditions of eligible families.

Women possess immense potential for skill development, art and design: Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday said that women possess immense potential for skill development, particularly in the fields of art and design.

Their creativity and innovative thinking drive advancements and bring fresh perspectives to the industry. Investing in women's talents not only enhances their personal growth but also contributes significantly to cultural and economic progress.

Empowering women in art and design can lead to groundbreaking contributions and a richer, more diverse creative landscape.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said this in a meeting delegation from the Arts and Design Department of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University at the Governor House.

The delegation, including Schrish Zafar, Aneela Mudassar, Saima Naseer, Saniya Siraj, and Nida, discussed various proposals aimed at enhancing the province's soft image through art and design.

The delegation highlighted the lack of infrastructure at the university, including designated spaces for practical activities, display centers, and classrooms, which has hindered

research and practical work for the students.

They informed the Governor about a proposal sent to the Higher Education Commission, JICA, and the Museum Department, adding the HED also had not seen any progress since 2021 in this regard. Additionally, the delegation proposed establishing a Biennale 3D Installation Exhibition in Peshawar.

During the discussion, the Governor assured full support for the department and recommended preparing a comprehensive new proposal.

He also suggested informing him about countries that support fine arts.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on by faculty members of Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology at Governor House.

Rana Mashhood says: Country's development depends on youth prosperity

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Youth Program Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Thursday said that enemies wanted to create a division between the public and the state institutions. "Seeds of hatred are being sown between the people and the institutions, and a campaign is being run against them", he added.

He was addressing a seminar on "Exemplary Ways in Education System in Light of Prophetic Teachings" held here at Arfa Karim Tower.

Recalling the past, he stated that Pakistan had attracted students from around the world due to its high-quality education system and today, there was a visible decline on proper training and values.

Rana Mashhood said: "We are left with only those who talk a lot but lack of action. There are many who deceive with their words but the real heroes of character are rare," he remarked.

In a message to the youth, Rana Mashhood emphasized that future of the youth is the most important for progress and development of the country.

Governor signs summary of appointments for Advisor, Sp Assistants

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday signed the summary for the appointments of Advisor and Special Assistants to the Chief Minister.

Governor Kundi has approved the appointment of four special assistants including Mussavir Khan, Muhammad Sohail Afridi, Naik Muhammad Khan Humayoon Khan, and one Advisor Ihtisham Ali to the Chief Minister (CM) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

Following the Governor's approval and signature, the summary has been sent back for implementation.

Regional Director ANF calls on Governor Punjab

Independent Report LAHORE: Regional Director Commander Anti-Narcotics Punjab Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan and discussed measures on drug prevention in educational institutions of Punjab during a meeting at the Governor's House, here on Sunday.

Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that youth are the asset of the country, adding that it is the responsibility of the government to provide them with a secure and conducive learning environment. He said that as chancellor he is taking various steps for the betterment of universities.

He said that all possible measures will be taken to eradicate drugs from the campuses. The Governor Punjab said he has issued instructions to the vice chancellors of the universities to implement prohibition of smoking in campus premises and hostels in letter and spirit. This initiative will help in promoting a clean and conducive learning environment for the student, he added.

He said that counseling of students who would be found involved in taking drugs would also be ensured. He also emphasized the need to organize anti-drug awareness campaigns in educational institutions across Punjab.



LAHORE: Regional Director ANF Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor's House.

Rs320m allocated for third phase of Drug Free Peshawar: Finance Advisor

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has allocated a sum of Rs 320 for the rehabilitation of drug addicts in Peshawar.

This was informed by Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance, Muzammil Aslam during a high-level meeting that was attended by Excise Minister, Mian Khaliq ur Rehman, Secretary Excise, Fayyaz Ali Shah, Secretary Social Welfare and Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Mehsud.

The Advisor Finance informed that all arrangements have been finalized to start work on the third phase of "Drug-Free Peshawar." Under the project, he said a total of 2000 drug addicts would be rehabilitated. Aslam further said that on the instruction of the provincial cabinet, an amount of Rs 320 million has been allocated for the purpose adding that around Rs 160,000 would be spent on the rehabilitation of a single drug addict.

Post-induction training course participants visit PSCA

LAHORE (APP): Officers taking part in the post-induction training course visited the Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA), here on Thursday.

According to details, Operations Commander SP Shafiq Ahmed briefed the delegation about the institution's working. The trainee officers were taken to various departments, including the Virtual Centre for Child Safety and the Women's Police Station.

The delegation also reviewed the modern features of the 15 Emergency Helpline Centre and the operations of the monitoring centre.

The officers were briefed about the working of the Artificial Intelligence Traffic Management System.

Operations Commander Shafiq Ahmed informed the delegation that the Virtual Women Police Station, established to ensure the protection of women.



LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari inspecting the newly constructed building of DGPR, Punjab Secretary Information and DGPR Shenshah Faisal Azeem is also present.

PWD secretary holds 34th annual Country Engagement Working Group meeting

LAHORE (APP): Population Welfare Department (PWD) Punjab Secretary Salman Ijaz chaired the 34th annual Country Engagement Working Group (CEWG) meeting, organised by the Federal Ministry of Health at a local hotel here on Thursday.

Secretary Health Syed Muazzam Ali, Secretary Health Balochistan Abdullah Khan, Secretary Health KP Imdad Ali, Secretary Health

Azad Kashmir Attaullah, Programme Specialist UNFPA Dr Jameel, DG Welfare Punjab Saman Rai, Director Federal Population Welfare Department Dr. Shabana Begum, DG Gilgit-Baltistan Arif Tahsin, senior government officials from various departments from Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan participated in the meeting.

Sikh community has special respect for Hazrat Mian Mir (R.A): Ramesh

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora, while addressing an interfaith harmony conference, said here on Thursday that the message of Hazrat Mian Mir (R.A) is for all of humanity, as it is continuation of the message delivered in the farewell sermon of Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).

He said that societal conditions would only improve when all citizens would teach respect and tolerance for one another. Hazrat Mian Mir (R.A) holds a special place in the Sikh community, as he was a close friend of the fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, the minister said. The messages of humanity from Guru Arjan Dev and Mian Mir will always be respected and followed, he added.

He stated that the land of Pakistan is the soil of Sufis, saints, and gurus, which promotes peace and love, with a heritage spanning thousands of years.

He noted that the relationship between Sikhs and Pakistan is deep and must be understood.

IGP issues Rs 2.4m for treatment of injured cops

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has released Rs. 2.4 million for medical treatment of policemen injured in the line of duty. According to details, Rs. 1 million were released for treatment of constable Muhammad Salman Asghar of Sialkot, Head Constable Ashfaq Ahmad from Lahore has been awarded Rs. 700,000 for his medical expenses, while Constable Muhammad Zafarullah has been given Rs. 300,000.

International News

At least 34 dead as Israeli planes hit UN school and homes in Gaza, hospitals say

Monitoring Desk DEIR AL-BALAH: Israeli airstrikes across Gaza overnight and Wednesday hit a UN school sheltering displaced Palestinian families as well as two homes, killing at least 34 people, including 19 women and children, hospital officials said. A UN official said six staffers were among the dead.

The war in Gaza is now into its 11th month, with tens of thousands of people dead, and international efforts to mediate a cease-fire between Israel and the Hamas militant group have repeatedly stalled as they accuse each other of making additional and unacceptable demands.

In the occupied West Bank, Israeli troops launched raids in several towns backed by airstrikes, continuing a crackdown across the territory that the military says is targeting fighters but has wrecked

neighborhoods and killed civilians. One airstrike killed five people the military said were militants threatening its troops. A second strike on a car killed at least three people, the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

An attacker crashed a fuel truck into a West Bank bus stop near the Israeli settlement of Givat Assaf, killing an Israeli soldier, the military said. Officials said soldiers and an armed civilian "neutralized" the attacker.

The strike on the UN's al-Jaouni Preparatory Boys School in the Nuseirat refugee camp killed at least 14, including two children and a woman, officials from Awda and al-Aqsa Martyrs hospitals said. At least 18 other people were wounded, they said.

The Israeli military said it was targeting Hamas militants planning attacks from inside the school. The

claim could not be independently confirmed.

One of the children killed was the daughter of Momin Selmi, a member of Gaza's civil defense agency, which rescues wounded and retrieves bodies after strikes, the agency said.

Gaza's schools are packed with tens of thousands of Palestinians driven from their homes by Israeli offensives and evacuation orders. The al-Jaouni school, one of many in Gaza run by the UN agency for Palestinians, or UNRWA, has been hit by multiple strikes during the war. UNRWA said six staffers aiding the displaced, including the manager of the shelter, were killed. "Humanitarian staff, premises & operations have been blatantly & unabatedly disregarded since the beginning of the war," the agency's director, Philippe Lazzarini, wrote on X.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Bridget Brink as he prepares to depart the train station in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Saudi Crown Prince, Chinese PM discuss cooperation in several sectors

Monitoring Desk BEIJING: Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman discussed cooperation in several sectors including energy, investment and trade in a meeting in Riyadh on Wednesday, the Saudi state news agency SPA reported.

Earlier, Li had urged Beijing and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which includes Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, to accelerate free trade negotiations. Li made his remarks in a meeting in Riyadh with GCC Secretary General Jassem al-Budaiwi, Chinese state news agency Xinhua said. SPA reported that al-Budaiwi had stressed the importance of moving forward and finalising the trade talks in the "near future".

The free trade negotiations have stalled over concerns by Saudi Arabia about cheap Chinese imports, with sources telling Reuters in May that the talks were at an impasse.

Tehran did not deliver missiles to Russia, foreign minister says

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Iran's foreign minister said on Wednesday that Tehran had not delivered any ballistic missiles to Russia and sanctions imposed on Iran by the United States and three European powers would not solve any problems between them.

"Once again, US and E3 act on faulty intelligence and flawed logic. Iran has NOT delivered ballistic missiles to Russia. Period... Sanctions are not a solution, but part of problem."

Hamas says ready to implement ceasefire without new conditions

Monitoring Desk CAIRO: The Palestinian Hamas group said on Wednesday that its negotiators reiterated its readiness to implement an "immediate" ceasefire with Israel in Gaza based on a previous US proposal without new conditions from any party.

The Palestinian group said in a statement that their negotiation team, led by senior official Khalil al-Hayya, met mediators on Wednesday including Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and Egypt's intelligence chief Abbas Kamel in Doha to discuss the latest developments in Gaza.

Talks have so far failed to reach a deal to end the 11-month-old war. Lingered issue include control of the Philadelphi corridor, a narrow stretch of land on Gaza's border with Egypt, persisting.

CIA Director William Burns, who is also the chief US negotiator on Gaza, said on Saturday that a more detailed ceasefire proposal would be made in the next several days.

Trump says debate was 'rigged'

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Republican US presidential candidate Donald Trump on Wednesday claimed — without providing evidence — that the debate between him and rival Kamala Harris was "rigged."

"It was a rigged deal, as I assumed it would be, because when you looked at the fact that they were correcting everything and not correcting with her," he said on right-wing news channel Fox News.

He also panned pop megastar Taylor Swift for endorsing Harris shortly after the debate,

Blinken says US will keep pressing Israel to spare Gaza humanitarian sites

Monitoring Desk NEW YORK: The U.S. secretary of state said Thursday the United States will continue to press Israel to do more to spare humanitarian sites in the Gaza Strip, a day after an Israeli airstrike on a U.N. school complex sheltering displaced Palestinians killed 14 people there, including six U.N. staffers.

Meanwhile, Turkey announced its own probe into the death of a Turkish-American activist who was shot and killed by Israeli forces last week while protesting settlements in the occupied West Bank. And a Syrian pro-government media outlet and an opposition war monitor said an Israeli strike hit a car in southern Syria on Thursday, killing two people.

The deaths at the U.N. school on Wednesday came amid a spate of Israeli airstrikes across Gaza that killed at least 34 Palestinians, according to local officials. Among those killed were 19 women and children, they said.

The Health Ministry says more than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since the Israel-Hamas war began. It does not differentiate between fighters and civilians in its count. The war has caused vast destruction and displaced about 90% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million, often multiple times.

Greek PM says German border plan will be burden for Greece

Monitoring Desk ATHENS: Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said on Thursday that a German plan to impose tighter checks at its land borders amounted to unilateral scrapping Europe's open-border Schengen zone and would burden frontline states such as Greece.

Germany said this week that the checks within what is normally a wide area of free movement - the Schengen zone - would start on Sept. 16 and initially last for six months, as the country tries to clamp down on irregular migration.

"Germany had an extremely tolerant and I would say socially generous policy against migrants which is now triggering a big social backlash," Mitsotakis said in an interview with a Greek radio station. "The response cannot be unilaterally scrapping Schengen and dropping the ball to countries which sit on Europe's external borders," he said.

Instead, the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, a revamped migration system which recognises the importance of guarding Europe's external borders, should be implemented, Mitsotakis said.

Greece was on the frontline of Europe's migration crisis in 2015-16 when more than a million refugees - many of them fleeing civil war in Syria - arrived, mainly via Turkey. Most eventually moved on to Germany and other Western European destinations.

The number of arrivals in Greece has since fallen sharply but many migrants, mainly from Libya and Egypt, still reach Greek shores before also heading towards western Europe. Mitsotakis' conservative government, which won a second term last year, has tightened its migration policy since 2019. A cement and barbed-wire fence that Greece is extending along its northern border with Turkey to prevent migrants from entering the country will be completed within a year, Greek Citizen Protection Minister Michalis Chrisochoidis told state television on Thursday.

North Korea launches multiple ballistic missiles off Korean peninsula

Monitoring Desk SEOUL: After months of trading provocations with South Korea and a recently renewed vow to keep growing its nuclear arsenal, North Korea sent its most aggressive message yet when it fired numerous ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan on Wednesday, as confirmed by both South Korea and Japan.

North Korea fired multiple short range ballistic missiles into waters east of the Korean peninsula on Thursday, Seoul's military reported, days after the nuclear-armed North marked a state anniversary.

Seoul's Joint Chief of Staff said it had detected multiple "short-range ballistic missiles launched into the East Sea around 07:10 from Pyongyang today (2210 GMT on Wednesday)," referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan.

It said it was analysing details of the launch and "closely sharing information on the North Korean ballistic missile with the USA and Japanese authorities, while strengthening surveillance and vigilance in preparation for further launches".

Japan's defence ministry also confirmed the launch of at least one suspected North Korean ballistic missile, with the coastguard warning vessels to take care.

It is Pyongyang's first apparent weapons test since July 1, and comes days after the isolated, nuclear-armed country marked a key anniversary celebrating the founding of the ruling regime.

Guinea Bissau President Embalo says he will not run for a second term

Monitoring Desk BISSAU: Guinea Bissau's President Umaro Cissoko Embalo said on Thursday he would not run for a second term in elections in November.

Embalo, 51, was elected in January 2020 to succeed outgoing president Jose Mario Vaz. He defeated runner-up Domingos Simoes Pereira with 54% of the vote and would have been eligible for another term in office.

The unexpected announcement could trigger a power vacuum and heighten political instability in the coup-prone country of around two million people.

At the end of a council of ministers on Thursday night, Embalo said his wife had dissuaded him from running again.

Pakistan committed to conserving marine ecosystem: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday reiterated Pakistan's commitment to conserving its marine ecosystems and coastal areas by addressing challenges such as sea pollution and climate change.

He said that maritime pollution was a major concern for Pakistan as it was negatively affecting aquatic life, causing a decline in the growth of the country's fisheries sector.

The president expressed these views while talking to the visiting Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Arsenio Antonio Dominguez Velasco, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh, Chairperson Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman, and senior government officials attended the meeting.

Welcoming the Secretary-General, the president said that focusing on the blue economy was a cornerstone of national development strategy as Pakistan was keen on modernizing its fisheries and ship-breaking sectors under the Special Investment Facilitation Council.

He said that Pakistan was taking effective steps to tackle the effects of climate change. He said that Pakistan intended to improve its marine ecosystem and would welcome IMO's assistance and expertise in this regard. In order to mitigate the impacts of climate change, he highlighted that Pakistan had planted mangroves over a million acres in Sindh and also sold carbon credits in the international market. He informed that plans were afoot to plant mangroves on another 2 million acres of land.

The president also highlighted Pakistan's

strong commitment to adhering to IMO regulations and standards for maritime safety, security and environmental protection. He said that Pakistan was looking forward to exploring potential areas for future collaboration with IMO, including technical cooperation and expertise-sharing to improve Pakistan's maritime sector.

The Secretary-General said that Pakistan had great maritime potential, adding that IMO would continue to support Pakistan in advancing collaborations and promoting a sustainable and efficient maritime industry.

The president congratulated the Secretary-General on his election as the 10th Secretary General of IMO and expressed confidence in his leadership to advance the organization's mission for a fair and effective regulatory framework for the global shipping industry.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif exchanging views with Syed Murad Ali Shah, Sindh Chief Minister and Syed Naveed Qamar, Member of National Assembly (MNA) during meeting held in Islamabad.

Governor Balochistan calls on Governor Kamran Tessori

KARACHI (APP): Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail called on Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori here at Governor House on Thursday and discussed matters of mutual interest.

Governor Kamran Tessori said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was taking interest in the development of Karachi. He said that the exchange of delegations from Balochistan would be beneficial for taking benefit to each other's experiences.

Governor Balochistan also praised the ongoing IT classes and other projects under the Governor's Initiative launched by Kamran

Khan Tessori and said that he was very impressed by these initiatives. Governor Mandokhail expressed pleasant surprise by ringing the "Bell of Hope".

Governor Sindh informed Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail about the aims and objectives of "Bell of Hope".

Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail inspected the ration bags and also praised the initiative of Governor Sindh. Governor Mandokhail also praised a sapling in the Governor's House as part of the tree plantation campaign on the occasion.

PTA blocked 465 mobile SIMs in Katcha areas: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication Ms Shaza Fatima on Thursday told the Senate that the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority had blocked some 465 SIMs used by dacoits in the Katcha areas of Sindh, including the districts of Shikarpur and Ghotki.

Replying to a question of Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan in the House, she said that mobile numbers/SIMs, IMEIs and CNICs (Computerized National Identity Cards) were blocked on the directions of the Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Inter Services Intelligence and Signals Directorate of General Headquarters.

Court reserves verdict in bail pleas of PTI founder, Bushra Bibi

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Accountability Court (AC) of Islamabad on Thursday reserved its verdict on bail petitions of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and his wife Bushra Bibi in the 190 million pound graft reference.

Accountability Judge Nasir Javed Rana, however, rejected the acquittal plea of PTI founder in the same reference after hearing arguments from both sides at the Central Jail Adiala Rawalpindi.

The accused were produced before the court. Bushra Bibi's lawyer Usman Riaz Gil gave arguments on the bail petition of his client.

Farewell event held in Commissioner office

SUKKUR (APP): The farewell of a Senior Staff Officer, Commissioner Office Sukkur, Niaz Hussain Vistro was held Thursday on his retirement from Government Service.

The farewell event was arranged by the divisional commissioner Sukkur, Fayyaz Hussain Abbasi, in which all the officers including Dr Muhammad Amir Ansari, Additional Commissioner-I, Muhammad Hajan Ujjan, Additional Commissioner-II, Iftikhar Ahmed Qureshi Deputy Director (Planning & Development), Abdul Ahad Solangi, Assistant Commissioner (General), staff of Commissioner office and officers/officials of other departments including Regional Revenue office, Bureau of Statistics, Regional Transport Authority, local government, human rights attended the farewell.

SALU VC Dr Yousuf Khushk meets SMU VC

KARACHI (APP): Newly appointed Vice Chancellor of Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur (SALU) Dr Yousuf Khushk held a meeting with the Vice Chancellor of Sindh Madressatul Islam University Dr Mujeeb Sahrai, here at his office on Thursday.

Both academicians shared views about the improvement of higher education and other related matters. They also agreed on the point that the universities must generate their resources also as they could function without facing crises. Dr Mujeeb Sahrai congratulated Dr Yousuf Khushk on his appointment as the vice chancellor of the SALU.

Dr Sahrai said, "The Shah Abdul Latif University has passed through deep crises in recent years, therefore he hoped that Dr Khushk shall make it stable and successful in all areas from quality education.

PM, Sindh CM discuss political situation, development projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Minister of Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and Pakistan Peoples Party leader Syed Naveed Qamar on Thursday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Khan Cheema and Minister of State Ali Pervaiz Malik also attended the meeting.

In the meeting, they discussed the ongoing federal government projects in Sindh and public welfare initiative being taken by both Sindh and federal governments.

The Sindh chief minister thanked the prime minister for taking special interest in the development of Sindh province. Murad Ali Shah also briefed the prime minister about the progress in the ongoing energy projects in the province, and the law and order situation.

They also discussed the overall political situation in the country.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador-designate of Sweden, Ms Alexandra Berg Von Linde, presenting her diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Sindh govt bans pillion riding in Karachi, other cities

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh government has imposed a ban on pillion riding in several districts of the province, including Karachi to maintain law and order during processions and Rabiul Awwal gatherings.

A notification to this effect has been issued by the provincial home department. According to the notification, the restriction will come into effect from tomorrow in several districts.

The pillion riding will be banned in cities including Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, Nawabshah, Sukkur, Kashmore, Khairpur, Dadu, Qambar Shahdadkot, and Ghotki. In Karachi, the ban will be enforced in District South on September 13, 14, 16, and 17. District East will see restrictions on September 13, 16, and 17, while District West will have the ban in place on September 16 and 17.

In Hyderabad, the restriction will remain in effect from 12th Rabiul Awwal. Dadu will face the ban on September 16 and 17, while Nawabshah and Sanghar will enforce the ban on September 17.

Similarly, pillion riding in Sukkur will be banned on September 16 and 17. In Khairpur and Ghotki, the restriction will apply from September 13 to 17.

Muslims worldwide observe Eid Miladun Nabi, the birth of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), on the 12th of Rabiul Awwal, the third month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

SAU launches 10 million tree plantation drive to combat climate change

HYDERABAD (APP): In a landmark effort to address climate change and environmental degradation, Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam has launched an ambitious 10 million tree plantation campaign in collaboration with provincial institutions, farmers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The initiative aims to restore ecological balance and mitigate the adverse impacts of deforestation and climate change in the region.

The university's department of energy and environment, in partnership with lions club Karachi, the high court environment campaigner and rotary international hosted a seminar titled "Planting for the Future: 10 Million Trees as Guardians Against Climate Change."

The inauguration ceremony, led by SAU Vice Chancellor Dr. Fateh Mari, saw participation from distinguished figures including Vice Chancellors Dr. Nusrat Shah, Dr. Arabela Bhutto and Dr. Rafiq Ahmed Memon, alongside representatives from public and private institutions and key farmer associations.

Addressing the audience, Dr. Fateh Mari emphasized the crucial role trees play in combating rising temperatures and the destructive effects of climate change, highlighting the severe damage caused by deforestation. He added that deforestation has not only displaced millions of people due to flooding but also caused irreparable loss to agriculture in the country.



SUKKUR: District Council Sukkur Chairman, Syed Kumail Haider Shah addresses to media persons during press conference, at Sukkur press club.

DC Matiari visits district including Katcha area; urges enhanced efforts in polio eradication campaign

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Matiari Muhammad Yousuf Shaikh while accelerating efforts to eradicate polio, visited various areas of the district including the Katcha area. During his visit, he met with residents and persuaded them to administer polio vaccination drops to their children.

He toured different Union Councils in the district to oversee the ongoing anti-polio campaign and urged parents to cooperate with the administration and ensure their children receive the polio vaccine. The DC also directed officials to maintain strict diligence throughout the campaign.

District Health Officer (DHO) Pir Ghulam Hussain, District Focal Person Dr. Nazir Mallah, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Matiari Abdul Sattar Shaikh and AC Hala Mazahir Ali were also present on the occasion. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized achieving a 100% target to combat the disease effectively and secure a safe future for the next generation.

He stated that eradicating polio was a national goal and that all stakeholders should utilize their full capabilities and resources in this regard. The Deputy Commissioner added that district Matiari was currently polio-free, but caution remains essential due to reported polio cases and positive environmental samples in Hyderabad.

Pak envoy discusses agenda of UNGA's 79th session with new president

UNEPUR (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Munir Akram, discussed the agenda of the 79th session of UN General Assembly when he formally called on the new President of the 193-member Assembly, Philemon Yang of Cameroon, at UN headquarters in New York on Wednesday, and assured him of Pakistan's cooperation.

The Ambassador congratulated Ambassador Yang on his assumption of UNGA's Presidency of the current session.

Provision of basic health facilities responsibility of government: Sheikh

MIRPUR MATHELO: Regional Director Ombudsman Ghotki Gul Hassan Sheikh has said that it is the responsibility of the government to provide basic health needs and take care of all the patients who come to the hospital to provide them with better treatment facilities.

On the occasion of the visit to Mirpur Mathelo, while giving instructions to the doctors and other staff on the occasion of the visit to the various wards and departments of the hospital, he also met the patients on the occasion of the visit to the various wards of the hospital and the facilities provided in the hospital.

Thatta police crack blind murder case, arrest two main suspects

THATTA: Thatta Police have solved a blind murder case within three days, arresting two main suspects involved in the killing of Rehwan Samoon. According to police, unknown assailants on a motorcycle shot and killed Samoon near the Makli shrine on the Thatta-Makli road three days ago. SSP Thatta Dr. Muhammad Imran Khan formed a special team to investigate the case, which worked tirelessly to trace and arrest the suspects.

Police arrest five drug peddlers, recover mainpuri, gutka

HYDERABAD (APP): Police in its continued drive against narcotics and criminals on Thursday arrested five accused and recovered mainpuri and gutka from their possession.

Station House Officer (SHO) City Police station Inspector Ghulam Asghar Tunio along with his staff conducted a raid in his territorial jurisdiction and held five accused Rehan Mughal, Sajid Yousufzai, Ali Sher Baloch, Hasnain Bengali and Zuber Shaikh and recovered mainpuri and Indian gutka from their possession.

Police have registered a case against the accused under gutka and mainpuri act.

Govt announced "Sasti Basti" housing project for poor people of province

KARACHI: The Sindh government has announced a "Sasti Basti" housing project for poor people of the province. Najmi Alam said that the project is being started so that they can get their own house.

Advisor to CM for Human Settlement Authority, Livestock and Fisheries Najmi Alam, while presiding over the 29th Governing Body meeting of the Human Settlement Authority's annual budget in his office on Thursday. MPA's Muhammad Yusuf Baloch and Aruba Rabbani, Mayor Hyderabad Kashif Shoro, Mayor Sukkur Barister Arslan Sheikh, Secretary and Director General Human Settlements Shariq

Ahmed, Chief Engineer Kashif Khan, Regional Director Bilal Sheikh participated in the meeting. In the meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved along with the budget of the annual budget. Syed Najmi Alam told the members in the meeting that we have approved the project of "Sasti Basti" for the poor people of Sindh to build their houses, while we have also approved the recruitment of demolition squads to remove encroachments in the slums of Sindh. He said that we have named the project of providing houses to the needy victims of Sindh as "Sasti Basti" and this project is in line with the vision of our party chairman Bilawal Bhutto.



HYDERABAD: Custom Collector, Mona Mehfooz Baloch talking to media persons during the burning pile of confiscated drugs, cigarettes and others goods which were seized from different areas during Drug Destruction ceremony organized by Customs, in Hyderabad.

KU, ICAN signs MoU to enhance quality life of children, young adults

KARACHI (APP): The Department of Psychology of the University of Karachi and Icon for Child and Adult Nurturing (ICAN), a nongovernmental organization, working to promote positive mental health and wellness of children, young adults, and mothers in society, inked the memorandum of understanding to enhance the quality of life of children, young adults, and mothers at the Vice Chancellor's Secretariat.

KU VC Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi and the Founder and Director of the ICAN Dr Sajida Hassan signed the MoU document in presence of the ICAN team, and faculty members of the KU Department of Psychology, the KU Director ORIC Dr Syeda Hoor-Ul-Ain, and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Dr Shaista

Tabassum. On this occasion, the Director of the ICAN Dr Sajida Hassan shared that the organization was formed to establish a connection with communities to serve society. She mentioned that the ICAN is committed to enhancing the overall quality of life for individuals across various life stages, focusing on children and young adults. She asked the KU administration to start short courses or a special-degree program on child psychology in the department. According to her, the ICAN's strength is derived from close partnerships with grassroots community-based organizations. She added that the organization is working with the University of Leicester, the University of Birmingham, the Welcome Trust of the UK.



KARACHI: A health worker administering Polio Vaccine Drop to a girl during Polio Vaccination Door-to-Door Campaign in the city.

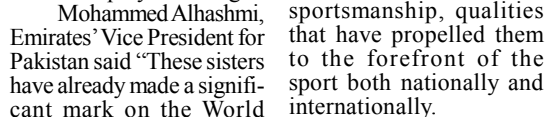


KARACHI: Balochistan Governor, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail in a meeting with Sindh Governor, Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House.

Emirates supports young golf hopefuls journeys to US for Higher Education

KARACHI: Emirates is supporting the flight journeys for Syed Daniah and Syed Abiha, two remarkable young golf prodigies from Karachi, as they head to the United States to pursue their higher education at Blinn College-Brenham Campus in Brenham, Texas. Through supporting flights from Karachi to Houston, Emirates continues its commitment of positively impacting the communities it serves by providing opportunities for talented youth from diverse backgrounds to fulfil their potential and pursue their academic and athletic dreams. By facilitating the journey of Daniah and Abiha to continue their education while competing at the highest levels of collegiate golf, Emirates is also reinforcing its dedication to nurturing the pipeline of sporting talent as a new generation of players emerge.

Mohammed Alhassmi, Emirates' Vice President for Pakistan said "These sisters have already made a significant mark on the World Amateur Golf Ranking list and these remarkable achievements have earned them full scholarships. They were awarded for their exceptional talent and dedication to the sport. As key members of the Pakistan National Team, they have represented their country in prestigious tournaments worldwide, earning acclaim in countries such as Scotland, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Dubai, and Thailand and we are proud to be an enabler in their pursuit of education abroad." Syed Abiha, currently playing with a handicap of 2 and a driving distance of over 240 yards, has achieved a best score of 70 (2 under) while her sister, Syed Daniah, with a handicap of 1 and a similar driving distance, boasts a best score of 69 (3 under). Both sisters are recognized not only for their impressive golfing skills but also for their leadership and sportsmanship, qualities that have propelled them to the forefront of the sport both nationally and internationally.



HYDERABAD: SP Headquarters listening the problem of Brohi Community during their protest demonstration against high handedness of police, outside SSP Office in Hyderabad.

Mari for strengthening Sindh's Agricultural industry through CPEC

SUKKUR (APP): Vice Chancellor (VC), Sindh Agricultural University, Dr. Fateh Muhammad Mari on Thursday emphasized the crucial need to fortify the agricultural industry in the province by leveraging the opportunities presented by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and other cutting-edge scientific initiatives.

He stressed that the agricultural sector, which is the backbone of Pakistan's economy, must be revitalized and modernized to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Dr. Mari highlighted the vast potential of CPEC to transform the agricultural landscape of Sindh, citing the project's focus on infrastructure development, technology transfer, and market access. He urged the agricultural community to capitalize on these opportunities to enhance productivity, improve quality, and

increase exports. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of embracing scientific innovations and technologies to drive growth and sustainability in the agricultural sector. He mentioned the need for research and development, capacity building, and collaboration between academia, industry, and government to address the complex challenges facing agriculture in the province.

By strengthening the agricultural industry through CPEC and scientific projects, Dr. Mari envisioned a future where Sindh becomes a hub for high-quality agricultural products, contributing significantly to the national economy and improving the lives of farmers and rural communities. He also emphasized that a robust agricultural industry in Sindh is a prerequisite for prosperity in the province.