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Pakistan, Russia to cement ties through dialogue, cooperation

DPM Ishaq Dar says Pakistan views Russia as key player in regional cooperation; Calls for enhanced energy, trade cooperation with Russia; Pakistan, Russia sign MoU to boost economic, trade cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday underscored the considerable potential in Pak-Russia relations, emphasizing the importance of boosting economic ties and increasing cultural and educational exchanges, as well as enhancing cooperation in energy, trade, and regional connectivity.

Addressing a joint press briefing with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk, Ishaq Dar welcomed the Russian delegation and noted last year's record high in bilateral trade.

He pledged to tackle logistical challenges in future meetings, including the Pak-Russian intergovernmental commission and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) discussions, which are crucial for

enhancing cooperation on Afghanistan, energy security, and food security.

Ishaq Dar stated that the visit of the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and his delegation reflects the growing depth and scope of economic cooperation, highlighting a clear mutual desire to strengthen Pak-Russia relations.

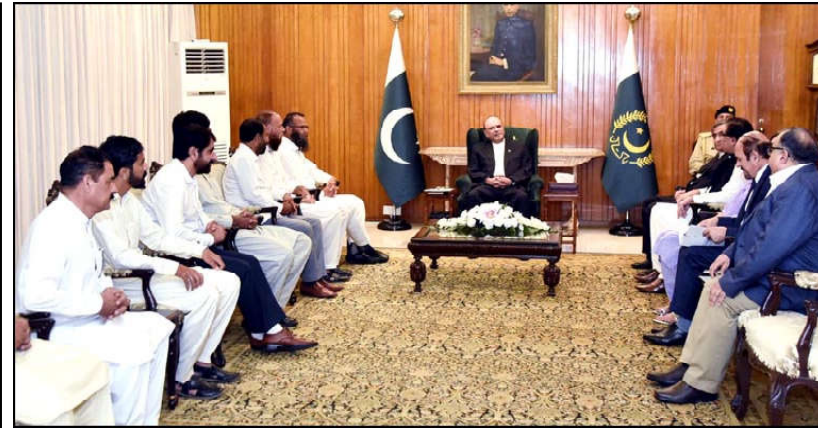
Strengthening bilateral cooperation with the Russian Federation remains a key priority of Pakistan's foreign policy.

Ishaq Dar noted that Pak-Russia relations have advanced significantly, with a strong desire to forge cooperation between the two countries. A step-by-step approach based on trust and mutual respect has placed the relationship on a positive trajectory. Both delegations engaged in in-depth discussions focused on bilateral relations,

identifying potential areas for economic expansion. Specific areas of mutual interest were outlined, including trade, economic collaboration, cultural relations, and people-to-people contacts.

Dar said Pakistan and Russia see significant potential for cooperation in the agriculture sector. Both countries aim to expand bilateral ties and navigate banking sanctions. Pakistan is eager to join BRICS, which was created by Brazil, Russia, India, and China, and looks forward to a positive role from Russia in helping it join the organization, as well as participation in other similar organizations.

He stated that the SCO provides an important forum aimed at promoting peace, development, and stability in the region.



A delegation of migrants from the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, led by Mr Uzair Ahmed Ghazali, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

Demands action against Modi over HRs' violations President rejects IIOJK elections amid human rights concerns

Asif Zardari says such elections unacceptable to Kashmiris, calls for plebiscite in line with UN resolutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday categorically rejected the elections for the Legislative Assembly of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), asserting that the polls were no substitute for the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination.

President Zardari, talking to a delegation of migrants from the IIOJK residing in Pakistan since 1989 led by Uzair Ahmed Ghazali at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, emphasised that such elections were unacceptable to the people of Kashmir and called upon the international community to hold the Modi government

accountable for ongoing human rights violations in the occupied territory.

He further urged the need to take concrete steps toward conducting a plebiscite in line with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Welcoming the delegation, the president condemned the Legislative Assembly elections in the IIOJK, terming them part of India's broader strategy to consolidate its illegal occupation of the region.

He highlighted that such measures could neither legitimize India's occupation nor suppress the freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people.

He stated that India was trying to alter the demographic structure of the IIOJK by turning the Kashmiri Muslims into a minority and transforming them into a disempowered community in their own land.

President Zardari said that Pakistan greatly valued the sacrifices made by the Kashmiri people for their rights and would continue to stand in solidarity with them.

He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to provide moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people till the realization of their right to self-determination.

Sindh govt approves Rs1.5bn to repair rain-affected roads in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has approved Rs1.5 billion to repair roads damaged during rainfall this year in Karachi.

Presiding over a meeting, CM Murad Ali Shah directed the Local Government Department to initiate an inquiry into the roads constructed or repaired after 2022 that have since been washed away.

"It is unacceptable for the quality of work to fall short of standards, and strict action must be taken against those responsible," the chief minister said.

The CM directed Ghani to initiate an inquiry into the roads constructed or repaired after 2022 that have since been damaged. "This shows that the quality of the work was not maintained, therefore they must be brought to book," he said. District South has 909,500 square feet of dam-

aged roads, East 795,000 square feet, Central 832,000 square feet, West 13,750,000 square feet, Korangi 5,555,000 square feet, Malir 625,000 square feet and 395,000 square feet of flyover and bridges.

The CM was told that 120 roads, flyovers and underpasses of the city needed patchwork, including 20 roads in district South, 22 East, seven Central, 38 West, 11 Korangi, 12 Malir and 10 flyovers.

The meeting, which was held at the CM House, was attended by Planning and Development Minister Nasir Shah, LG Minister Saeed Ghani, Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, P&D Chairman Najam Shah, LG Secretary Khalid Hyder Shah, Municipal Corporation Secretary Karachi Afzal Zaidi and Finance Special Secretary Asghar Memon.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting to assess the damage caused to the city roads by the 2024 heavy rainfall, at CM House in Karachi.

As part of a fundraising initiative Sindh Excise Department announces online auction for premium number plates

Independent Report
KARACHI: The Excise Department, Government of Sindh, has announced the commencement of an online auction for premium number plates as part of a fundraising initiative. Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the auction will offer number plates in platinum, gold, and silver categories. The aim of this auction is to raise funds for the construc-

tion of houses for the victims of the devastating floods in the province. A high-level meeting of the Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control Department was held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister and Provin-



Speaking at the meeting, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon announced that a special portal would be introduced for premium number plates. Participants will be able to bid for plates in the platinum, gold, and silver categories.

35-day World Culture Festival Karachi to begin on September 26

Independent Report
KARACHI: Chief Secretary Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, announced that the 35-day World Culture Festival Karachi, an event fully supported and owned by the Sindh Government, will commence on September 26.

This landmark cultural event, making its debut in the country, will feature over 400 artists from 40 countries, including Europe, America, Africa, and Arab nations. The festival will showcase a diverse range of performances, including Sindh folk singers and indigenous musical instruments, highlighting the rich cultural heritage of the region.

During a high-level meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary Sindh, which included Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Iqbal Memon, President of Arts Council Karachi Muhammad Ahmed Shah, Additional I.G Karachi Javed Alam Odho, Secretary of Universities Muhammad Abbas Baloch, Secretary of Imple-



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and his counterpart Russian Russian Alexei Overchuk addressing a press conference.

PPP to prepare new draft of constitutional amendments: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Claiming that the draft of the constitutional amendments doing rounds in the media was not correct, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday announced that the party would prepare a new draft.

Talking to a private news channel, Bilawal said that JULF chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman was also busy preparing the draft. "We will reach a consensus with Maulana on a single draft," he said. The controversial amendments aimed at giving the executive more power over the judiciary are the latest bone of contention between the government and the opposition.

And despite the fact that the government looked confident that it would be able to get the legislation passed by enlisting the

support of the required number of MNAs and senators, from the treasury and opposition benches, it badly failed in its efforts.

But even after receiving the setback, the government insisted that it had not backed down and the proposals to alter the constitution were still on the table.

The opposition, mainly led by former prime minister Imran Khan's PTI slammed the proposed reforms, calling them "unconstitutional" and saying that no draft of the proposed changes had been shared with them or the media.

According to statements made by the opposition parties and local media reports, the government's package includes more than 50 proposals, most of them concerning the judiciary.



ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam called on Federal Minister for Defence, Defence Production, and Aviation Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

Syed Najmi says By improving quality of meat sent abroad, we can earn a lot of foreign currency

Independent Report
KARACHI: Advisor to Chief Minister Sindh for Livestock and Fisheries Syed Najmi Alam presides over meeting with the meat exporters.

Syed Najmi Alam said that by improving the quality of meat sent abroad, we can earn a lot of foreign currency.

By registering the slaughterhouses we have to take steps to ensure that the public gets better meat in the market and for this we have to legislate.

Secretary Livestock and Fisheries Dr. Kazim Hussain Jatoti, Additional Secretary Technical Livestock Dr. Nazir Hussain Kalhoro, CEO of Tata Group of Exporters Bilal Anwar and representatives of Meat World also participated in the meeting.

Najmi Alam said that we have to complete the process of registration of farms and tagging of animals to avoid consumption of meat from sick and dead animals.

Murtaza appointed Bilawal Bhutto's spokesperson

KARACHI (INP): Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab has been appointed spokesperson for Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

In a statement issued by the official X account of the PPP, it was stated that Murtaza Wahab was appointed as the spokesperson for Bilawal.

It should be noted that Barrister Murtaza Wahab has previously been the administrator of Karachi, Sindh law adviser, information adviser and spokesperson for chief minister Sindh.

COAS reiterates desire to foster defence ties with Russia

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir has reiterated Pakistan's commitment to fostering traditional defence ties with Russia.

He was talking to Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk, who paid a courtesy call on him at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi today.

Both the sides reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen security and defence cooperation in multiple domains.

During the meeting, they engaged in productive discussions on matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics, and bilateral cooperation across various sectors. The visiting dignitary praised pivotal role played by Pakistan Armed Forces in combating terrorism, and their tireless efforts to promote peace and stability in the region.

PR completes 40% of bridge restoration

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways has successfully completed 40 per cent of the restoration work on a bridge damaged by terrorism in Quetta, Balochistan, a PR spokesperson confirmed on Wednesday. The ongoing work was being carried out in two shifts under the supervision of Railway Chief Executive Officer Aamir Baloch.

Governor Sindh inaugurates Zaitoon Ashraf IT Park

KARACHI (INP): Governor of Sindh, Kamran Khan Tessori, inaugurated the Zaitoon Ashraf IT Park, established near the Baloch

diplomats, including Consul Generals from Bahrain, Malaysia, the UAE, Turkey, Japan, Indonesia, and the Deputy Consul General

education to the youth is to enhance foreign exchange earnings. In this regard, the government is fully supporting private sector and



Colony Bridge under the administration of the Saylani Welfare International Trust. The IT Park is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by the founder of Saylani Welfare International Trust, Maulana Bashir Farooq Qadri, along with foreign

of Iran, as well as prominent business figures and city elites.

During his address, the Governor remarked, "By establishing this IT Park, Saylani has achieved another milestone in the field of Information Technology."

He added that the goal of providing advanced IT

nonprofit IT programs. He further emphasized the increasing importance of telecommunications and information technology in today's world.

Governor Tessori expressed that his appointment notification was issued on the blessed day of 12th Rabi' al-Awwal, a personal honor.

ing to a PM Office press release.

Prime Minister Sharif reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the Commonwealth and the values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter.

He said that the CHOGM in Samoa would provide a forum to discuss opportunities for enhancing intra-Commonwealth cooperation on a number of important issues, such as fostering sustainable development, strengthening democratic institutions, and empowering Commonwealth youth.

King Charles phones PM Shehbaz; invites to attend CHOGM in October

ISLAMABAD (APP): King Charles III of the United Kingdom on Wednesday telephoned Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and formally invited him to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Samoa in October.

Accepting the invitation, the prime minister said that the CHOGM in Samoa would be a significant moment in the history of the Commonwealth, being the first summit to be chaired by the King since becoming Head of the Commonwealth, according to a PM Office press release.

Prime Minister Sharif reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the Commonwealth and the values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter.

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3 'terrorists' killed in Nankana Sahib shootout

LAHORE (APP): Three alleged terrorists were killed and two escaped during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Nankana Sahib, on Wednesday.

According to the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) spokesperson, terrorists opened fire on its team. The team retaliated the fire and in the shootout, three alleged terrorists were killed, while two others escaped.

The CTD team recovered three grenades, three detonators, safety fuse wire, two rifles, bullets and explosives from terrorists. "A search operation to arrest the escaped terrorists is under way," said the spokesperson, adding that CTD teams had set up a picket near Motorway Nankana Interchange A and the process of identifying the slain terrorists was underway.

The terrorists were planning to launch a major attack on Lahore, the spokesperson said.

Pakistan has experienced an increase in terrorist attacks as a total of 59 such incidents occurred countrywide in August compared to 38 attacks in the previous month, according to a digital database maintained by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), an Islamabad-based think-tank.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) Deputy Convener, Mustafa Kamal along with others distributing drinking juice from Sabeel during celebration of religious procession on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal Eid Milad-un-Nabi, the birthday anniversary celebration of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) held by thousands of devotees is passing through the road, held at M.A. Jinnah road in Karachi.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Parliament's place

With the storm around the government's planned amendments to the Constitution now behind it, will parliament turn its attention once again to protecting its privileges and reasserting the stature it has been granted within the configuration of the state?

The issue, it may be recalled, had been taken up last week after masked individuals entered the National Assembly's premises to arrest several lawmakers associated with the PTI — a serious infraction of House privileges that had triggered an uproar on both the treasury and opposition benches.

In the aftermath, a special 16-member committee was set up through a unanimous motion moved by the Lower House, which has been followed by the formation of a similar 13-member committee in the Senate as well. The committees are tasked with discussing, analysing and making recommendations regarding issues related to parliament, rules and procedure, and conduct of business.

While the committees get to work on their mandates, it is pertinent to examine the scope of the crisis parliament faces today. Over the years, a series of poor precedents have been set under successive governments that have greatly undermined its prestige and power. For example, it would be a big step towards restoring the prestige of parliament if our elected representatives agreed to stop constantly painting each other as the vilest villains to roam the earth. The executive and judiciary have remained shielded from the kind of continuous controversy that afflicts the legislature mainly because they do not air their members' dirty linen in public.

This, of course, should not be taken to mean less transparency and accountability; however, there is an urgent need to set some basic rules of engagement between political rivals.

Relatedly, there is a need to realise that parliament and its members must be respected regardless of who controls the government and who sits on the opposition benches. For example, parliament injures itself when it blacks out the speeches of some of its lawmakers. If parliamentary privileges protect all lawmakers' speeches on the floor of the House, then no power should be able to dictate which speeches can be heard by the public, and which cannot. It should be left to parliamentarians to bear responsibility for their words.

Secondly, those who champion parliamentary politics must also respect its procedures. Attempts to bulldoze major legislation through backdoor deals, with votes coerced out of unwilling lawmakers, undermines everything parliament stands for. Legislative activities must be open to scrutiny and debate — it is this transparency from which parliament derives its legitimacy and, ultimately, its power. Lastly, the effort to restore parliament's sanctity must not be predicated on the actions or words of any individual. It must rise above all political differences, no matter how serious, if it is to achieve its intended results.

One ummah

Qasim A. Moini

In the Holy Quran, in the Almighty's final message, as relayed to His beloved final Messenger, the Holy Prophet (PBUH), the Creator classifies believers as members of one ummah (community) as mentioned in Surah Muminun.

Of course, the Quran classifies mankind using different terms. For example, elsewhere (Surah Nisa), it is stated that humanity has been "created ... from one soul", highlighting the common origins of the human race.

Yet the ummah is a specific classification, bringing together all those who testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa is His last and final Messenger. In essence, while humanity is one tribe, the ummah is a smaller subgroup consisting of close 'relatives'. Therefore, when members of one part of the ummah are in distress, it should concern all other members of this 'family'.

Critics can question why such focus on members of the ummah, when Islam claims to be a universal religion, more so when the Holy Prophet, whose birth we are celebrating today, is described in the Quran as a "Mercy to the worlds". Indeed, we should be concerned when any part of humanity is suffering. But going back to the tribe/family analogy, while one would be concerned about troubles confronting those in one's neighbourhood or city, one would be most concerned when members of one's immediate family are in anguish.

Apart from the Quran, the need for believers to come to the aid of other believers is clearly mentioned in hadith literature. For example, in Biharul Anwar, it is stated that "if any believer comes to the aid

of one who is oppressed, that would be better than fasting for a whole month and performing i'tikaf in the Sacred Mosque". Similarly, in Sahih Bukhari, it is stated that "a Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor".

Where the suffering of Muslims is concerned, there are many vulnerable populations worldwide. For example, there has been no satisfactory resolution of the Rohingya's plight, as this stateless population continues to live in squalid refugee camps. Elsewhere, the people of Kashmir endure a brutal Indian occupation, while a vicious civil war in Sudan has disrupted life for millions. But perhaps no other Muslim population is enduring the hellish circumstances that the people of Gaza have been going through for the last year, due to Israel's genocidal assault.

Unfortunately, most members of the ummah living in comfort seem oblivious to Gaza's suffering. The terrified screams of its children do not move them; the numb bodies of its adults do not affect them. Surely, this lack of empathy for fellow believers in distress is diametrically opposed to the message of the Quran, and the teachings of the Holy Prophet.

While some Muslim governments have tried to raise the issue internationally and ostracise Israel for its vile behaviour, most rulers of Muslim-majority states seem unconcerned about Gaza's plight, other than issuing statements of condemnation. The 'Muslim street' — ordinary believers — on the other hand, is reacting in a variety of ways, including the boycott of brands seen as supportive of Israel, along with taking part in demonstrations to denounce the butchery in Gaza. And while large protests have been held in Muslim cities — Amman, Sana'a, Baghdad, etc — amongst the largest pro-Palestine rallies have taken place in non-Muslim states.

Ironically, as much of the ummah sleeps, many non-Muslims with a conscience are awake to their responsibility as human beings to raise a voice for Gaza's defenceless people. To reiterate their belief in the concept of the ummah, and the teachings of the Noble Prophet (PBUH), leaderships of Muslim states must do much more to defend Gaza. This should include economic sanctions targeting Israel and all those states that are helping power Tel Aviv's war machine. Moreover, Muslim states need to team up with non-Muslim supporters of Palestine, such as South Africa and Brazil, at multilateral fora such as the UN, ICJ etc, to help end the genocidal violence.

It is unconscionable that as Muslims in 'safer' locations continue to live life as usual, the people of Gaza are being subjected to a slaughter perhaps unparalleled in modern times. This lack of concern is an affront to the concept of Islamic brotherhood and community, while it betrays the human values of empathy and compassion as well.

As per Islamic belief, this life is transitory, while the next life is eternal. Therefore, those subjecting Palestine's people to such monstrous violence must remember that they will one day face Divine justice to ensure their will one day face Divine justice. And those powerful members of the ummah that are doing nothing for Palestine must remember that on the Day of Judgment, the children of Gaza will have every right to complain to Allah and His Prophet. - Courtesy Dawn

Perverse third way

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Capitalism and socialism are the great global ideologies of our age. The word before 'ism' reflects the core logic running a system. So, under capitalism, the interests of private capital do so and subjugate all societal concerns. Private capital, profits, wage labour, etc — wrongly seen as capitalism's core — have actually existed forever. But as American sociologist Karl Polyani reminds us, capitalism emerged in the 17th century when capital's interests became dominant societally. Since then, it has given us efficiency and productivity, but also huge inequity, ecological damage and conflict.

Under socialism (a response to capital's ugly hold), common social interests rightly serve as the dominant concern. Communist states, though, wrongly equating capitalism's core with private capital, wage labour, etc, eradicate them, with poor results. Scandinavian states, seeing the sway of capitalist interests as the real problem, make social concerns paramount, but allow private capital to operate under them, with better results.

However, a few states (Pakistan, Thailand, Myanmar, Sudan, Egypt, etc.) follow a perverse third way where military interests subjugate both capital and social interests in six key spheres. Their specific patterns vary much across such states. First, armies control ties with key states. Some, like Egypt, become clients of big states to ensure their own survival, while others, such as Sudan and Myanmar, have tense ties with the West. Some, like Pakistan, oscillate between the two extremes. But normal ties away from the two extremes are usually absent. Neither

extreme delivers good outcomes. Clientage results in a dependent, rent-seeking economy with little innovation and productivity. Tensions with the West results in isolation and the blockage of investment and technology flows.

Second, the economy suffers from other ills too. Security concerns often impede dynamic economic sectors, such as IT and social media. Some armies, as in Pakistan and Myanmar, control large parts of the economy and curtail the growth of the private sector there. Military businesses often thrive on state support that gives them monopoly or preferential access, thus distorting market processes. Resultantly, most such states have stagnant economies.

Third, security concerns dominate, and many states, like Pakistan, Myanmar and Sudan, have conflicts with their neighbours. This consumes huge state resources, diverting the states from development aims and isolating them regionally. Some, for example, Sudan and Pakistan, also employed non-state actors to pursue their security goals, which boomeranged as terrorism in Pakistan and state collapse in Sudan.

Fourth, politics is autocratic in such states. Militaries often rule directly or via thinly veiled hybrid regimes and undermine fairly elected set-ups. State institutions and entities, such as parliament, the judiciary and bureaucracy, are deliberately weakened and forced to toe the security establishment's line. In ethnically diverse states, the lack of democracy leads to ethnic tensions and rebellions and even state break-up, as in Sudan and Pakistan.

Fifth, some states

also manipulate social narratives to fan extremism in the service of security aims. This unleashes huge social problems, such as poor status of women and religious minorities, regressive attitudes towards science, vaccines and population control, and knee-jerk xenophobia.

Sixth, while raw military powers underpin such a system, the state is run via a powerful intelligence apparatus for so-called surveillance and control. Human rights abuses by spy agencies still abound.

Almost all such states do poorly. But Sudan is currently worst off, as ferocious battles between its army and a non-state ex-ally, involving tanks and planes, rage in the capital and countryside, something not seen even during decades of war against South Sudan and the Darfur rebels. Myanmar stands isolated and war-ravaged too. But beyond violence, the state that has been damaged most, going by the wide nature of damage inflicted, may be Pakistan. It may be the only one in the category to have suffered all the ills listed above and more.

Even worse, there is no sign of a transition to a better system, and the establishment's control appears to have been increasing rapidly since 2017. But given its diversity and huge challenges in every realm, Pakistan direly needs to change course quickly to avoid Sudan's fate. However, it must avoid a transition to neoliberal capitalism, where corporate hegemony replaces the military but follows similar policies. Only a model where common social interests dominate can save us from doom. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Govt considers proposal to establish a new steel mill with Russian cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government is considering a proposal to establish a new steel mill in Karachi with Russian cooperation and the two countries agreed to form working groups to negotiate the project's details.

In this regard, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Russian Federation Alexey Gruzdev met with Minister for Industries, Production and National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, said a news release here on Wednesday. The minister informed that the government has earmarked 700 acres land of Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) for establishing a new Steel Mill.

He said despite being blessed with considerable reserves of iron ore (estimated reserves of 1887 million tons), Pakistan is importing around \$2.7 billion of iron and steel.

There is perpetual gap between domestic production and demand of iron and steel. For the last year, the gap is estimated at 3.1 million tons, he added.

Pakistan's per capita steel consumption level is below even those of developing countries indicating significant growth potential over medium and long term.

He said efficiency of Pakistan's steel industry is limited as it segmented (600 small units) and based on old inefficient

technology.

The proposed site is located at Karachi and is closed to Port Qasim that reduces cost of transportation of raw materials.

Pakistan's industrial and agricultural experts are set to visit Russia, marking a significant step in strengthening bilateral ties between the two nations.

During the meeting, they emphasized on balance trade between both countries. Rana Tanveer stressed the need for modern agricultural machinery to boost crop yields and enhance agricultural productivity.

He said the government will provides all the facilities to the Russian investor in the country.



The Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of Russian Federation Aleksei Gruzdev meets with Minister for Industries, Production and National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain in Islamabad.

Pak, Turkmenistan agrees for strengthening bilateral economic, trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Turkmenistan on Wednesday agreed for strengthening bilateral economic and trade relations in potential sectors.

The Ambassador of Turkmenistan, Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, called on Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan to discuss the enhancement of bilateral trade and explore avenues for increased cooperation between the two nations, said a press release issued here.

The meeting, held at the Commerce Minister's office, focused on finalizing key agreements and exploring new sectors for future collaboration.

Minister Jam Kamal emphasized the need for robust business-to-business (B2B) engagement to boost trade volumes between Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

He highlighted the untapped potential in various sectors including energy, fertilizers, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and construction materials.

Members of the delegation were Huma Daha, an expert in an urban transport system, Ashar Lodhi and Muhammad Mubashar Moeen.

A spokesman said all stakeholders are being taken on board to give practical shape to the project. On the instructions of the Punjab government, paperwork on the Metro Bus Service project under BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) is underway, added the spokesman.

FDA Director General Muhammad Asif Chaudhry, Chief Engineer FDA Mehr Ayub and others were present. The DG FDA briefed the delegation about the study report and a proposed plan for metro bus service.

Business activities soar at Sust Dry Port, boosting employment opportunities

GILGIT (APP): The Sust Dry Port at Pak-China border in Gilgit-Baltistan has witnessed a significant surge in business activities recently, with customs authorities collecting over 1.17 billion rupees in duty for the national treasury in just two weeks.

This increase in commercial activities has led to an uptick in employment opportunities in various sectors.

The Import-Export Association GB and Dry Fruit Association GB have expressed satisfaction with the boost in business activities at Sust.

Chairman import and export Association GB Haji Liaquat Ali and other business leaders while talking to media here stated that thousands of people are employed in the Pakistan-China border trade and currently business activities at Sust Port are at an all-time high. They expressed that this has resulted in increased employment opportunities for traders, transporters, laborers, and other sectors.

Despite long-standing brotherly ties, trade between the two countries remains meager, and steps very essential to increase it.

A key focus of the conversation remained the expedited finalization of the Turkmenistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement, which is expected to significantly enhance the movement of goods between the two nations.

This agreement will also improve cooperation in banking, customs, and trade transit operations.

Rupee gains 08 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Wednesday appreciated by 08 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.04 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.12.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.20 and Rs 280.70 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 18 paise to close at Rs 309.47 against the last day's closing of Rs 309.29, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Govt committed to resolve industry's issues; Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan has said that the economic indicators show positive results and the country is moving in the right direction.

Addressing the Oath-taking ceremony of the All Pakistan Marble Industries Association here on Wednesday, he said that foreign investments showed remarkable confidence in the country's economy due to the tireless work of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and 2025 will be the

year of Pakistan's rise.

Rana said that the government was committed to resolving the industry's issues and was taking effective measures to address the industry's challenges, adding the transformation of the industry to technology-driven initiatives would positively impact the growth of the economy.

He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had set up a Gems and Stone Committee which would form a growth-oriented policy with the consultation of all stakeholders.



FAISALABAD: Voters casting their votes during the Elections of Chamber of Commerce in the city.

Cotton production drops by over 63pc

MULTAN (APP): Country's cotton production has dropped by 63.55 per cent this year, says the latest report by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA), here on Wednesday.

By September 15, 2024, only 1.43 million bales have been produced which is a remarkable drop from 3.93 million bales during the same period last year. Punjab, the country's largest cotton-producing province, has seen a severe 65.13pc decline, with only 538,686 bales produced. In comparison, 1.54 million bales were produced by this time in 2023. The Sindh province has also faced a sharp reduction of 62.5pc, producing just

895,342 bales this year compared to 2.38 million bales last year. Balochistan, contributing the least, has managed to produce only 34,900 bales so far. According to cotton experts, the steep decline is being largely attributed to climate-related challenges. Record-breaking heat, pest infestations, and erratic rainfall have devastated crops in key growing regions. This year, heatwaves of up to 48°C scorched cotton fields across Punjab and Sindh and led to lower yields.

Similarly, continuous rains over the past two weeks in Sindh have further delayed cotton picking and it resulted in labour shortages and price.



LAHORE: A vendor displaying and selling the used toys on their handcart at Landa Bazar in the Provincial Capital.

RDA inflows rise to \$8.581 bn in August

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) has risen to US \$8.581 billion by the end of August 2024 as compared to US \$8.416 billion by July (2024) end. The data showed that the inflows of remittances during August were recorded at US\$165 million as compared to US\$ 161 million in July and US\$ 200 million in June 2024, according to the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs), including Non-Resident Pakistan Origin Card (POC) holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment, and investment activities in Pakistan.

The number of accounts registered under the programme also rose by 11,515 to 735,113 in August 2024 from 723,598 accounts in July 2024.

CM KP launches "Ikhtiyar Awam Ka" portal

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has launched an innovative portal "Ikhtiyar Awam Ka" as an important initiative towards promoting good governance and addressing public issues in the province.

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has formally launched this newly developed portal at a ceremony held here at Civil Secretariat Peshawar on Wednesday.

The "Ikhtiyar Awam Ka" portal is a robust and users-friendly digital platform that is now open for citizens to file complaints regarding their issues and grievances. This 24/7 portal will ensure a real time-tracking and

monitoring of public complaints regarding services delivery in public sector entities allowing for swift redressal and resolution. Overseas Pakistanis can also register their concerns and issues on this portal.

This inclusive platform featuring simplified complaint submission mechanism, multi-channel interaction, data security and privacy, citizen feedback loop, and AI-powered analytics and reporting, is available on mobile app, WhatsApp, email, telephone and written application, offering dashboards for all departments and officers, ensuring seamless coordination and swift implementation of government decisions.

Similarly, this pioneering initiative, fostering effective communication between the government and citizens, will also facilitate to increase transparency, accountability, and public confidence in the government.

Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur emphasized the portal's significance, stating, "The purpose of this portal is to provide immediate solutions to people's problems. We are empowering the people, because solving their problems is our priority." He assured that complaints will not be closed until the complainant is satisfied, reiterating the government's commitment to citizen-centric governance.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain laying the foundation stone of the project to build 19 centres of excellence in Government College of Technology here at Allama Iqbal Town.

27-km two-way road connecting Pakpattan to Sahiwal completed: Malik

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has delivered on yet another promise under the 'Punjab Khushhal' project, with the completion of a 27-kilometer two-way road connecting Pakpattan to Sahiwal.

This was stated by Punjab Minister for Communication and Works (C&W) Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth while talking to the media, here on Wednesday. He said the road was completed with Rs. 2.7 billion and was expected to serve between 20,000 to 25,000 vehicles daily. This road is a critical infrastructure development, linking important locations including Malka Hans, Noorpur, Baba Farid's shrine, the GT Road, and the Motorway, thereby facilitating smoother travel and boosting local connectivity.

During a briefing with the Secretary of the C&W Department and other officials, it was disclosed that an additional 13-kilometer section is being constructed to further connect Sahiwal to nearby areas, with a budget of Rs. 1.4 billion.

ATC grants bail to TLP leader in two cases

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Wednesday granted bail to Maulana Muhammad Tahir Saifi, a leader of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), in two cases registered under terrorism charges for creating disturbances and damaging state property.

The court ordered the TLP leader to furnish surety bonds of Rs 100,000 in each case.

ATC Judge Arshad Javed heard the post-arrest bail applications of the TLP leader. The petitioner's counsel argued that Murriddke police had registered two cases against his client in 2021, but he was arrested in the cases after a lapse of many years.

Chaudhry Shafay lays foundation stone of 19 centres of excellence

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain laid the foundation stone of the project to build 19 centres of excellence in Government College of Technology here at Allama Iqbal Town on Wednesday.

Under the project, Centres of Excellence will be established in 16 institutions of TEVTA and 3 institutions of Punjab Vocational and Training Council. With the support of Asian Development Bank, 19 centres of excellence will be built and the project will cost Rs. 5 billion.

Chaudhry Shafay Hussain said that the plan to establish centres of excellence in Punjab is a milestone in the preparation of skilled manpower. Completion of the project will increase the efficiency and professional technical skills of these institutions. CETA based courses will be conducted on modern lines in all these centres of excellence. Chaudhry Shafay Hussain apprised that under this project, access to technical and vocational education will be easy. The youth will get decent employment opportunities.



LAHORE: Deputy Chairman NAB Sohail Nasir meeting with Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Salman emphasises quality research in medical institutions

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has reiterated the government's commitment to promoting quality research across medical institutions in the province. He was speaking at the 15th syndicate meeting of Nishtar Medical University, which was held at the Department of Specialised Healthcare and Medical Education on Wednesday.

During the meeting, the minister stressed the importance of completing the ongoing revamping project at Nishtar Hospital in Multan, instructing that it be finished on a priority

basis. Earlier, the Nishtar Medical University registrar presented the meeting agenda, and the syndicate approved the creation of new faculty positions for professors and associate professors in the pharmacy college. Key officials, including Special Secretary Development Syed Wajid Ali Shah, Additional Secretary Finance Sidra Salim, and Deputy Secretary Hamad Al-Rab, joined via video conference. Punjab Assembly Member Fizza Maimunah, Vice Chancellor of Nishtar Medical University Prof. Mahnaz Khakwani.

Fortifying provincial border checkpoints nearing completion: IGP

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has said the mission to strengthen provincial border checkpoints is progressing towards completion. Addressing a video-link meeting at the Central Police Office on Wednesday, he emphasised that Punjab Police's border and riverine checkpoints were the first line of defence against terrorists.

"These checkpoints play a crucial role in combating smuggling and illegal activities," he said and added that prevention of weapon and terrorism material transport through

Taunsa Ghazi Ghat and Mithanwala bridge must be ensured, with timely and effective countermeasures based on ground realities and intelligence reports. He added that the riverine checkpoints were being further strengthened with modern resources and infrastructure development. Personnel at these checkpoints have been equipped with bulletproof vests, helmets, modern vehicles, and logistics. Dr. Usman Anwar also directed all DPOs to regularly inspect border and riverine checkpoints, and to improve the quality of facilities.

Name of KP speaker removed from PNIL; PHC disposes of writ petition

PESHAWAR (APP): A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Wednesday disposed of a writ on completion of Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Babar Saleem regarding inclusion of his name in Pakistan National Identity List (PNIL). During the hearing on the petition, the bench comprising Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmed was informed by the petitioner's counsel that the name of Babar Swati had been removed from the list.

Governor Kundi pays tribute to Shaheed Mir Murtaza Bhutto

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday issued a heartfelt message commemorating the anniversary of Shaheed Mir Murtaza Bhutto.

He emphasized that Murtaza Bhutto's contributions to democracy are unforgettable and highlighted his pivotal role in the struggle against authoritarianism.

In his statement, Governor Kundi remarked, "Mir Murtaza

Bhutto was a guiding light in the fight for democracy. His unwavering commitment to democratic ideals continues to inspire us today."

He further said that democratic forces acknowledge and honor the sacrifices made by Murtaza Bhutto in the pursuit of a just society.

Kundi's tribute reflects the ongoing recognition of Bhutto's legacy among those who champion democracy in Pakistan.

Eve-teaser arrested on CPO orders

FAISALABAD (APP): Rail Bazaar police have arrested an accused after CPO orders on charge of eve-teasing. Police spokesman said here on Wednesday that City Police Officer (CPO) Kamran Adil had received complaints that a youth Majid was involved in habit of eve-teasing in the area of Rail Bazaar police station. Therefore, taking serious notice, the CPO directed the police to ensure immediate arrest of the accused and take him.



LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique chairs the 15th syndicate meeting of Nishtar Medical University, held at the Department of Specialised Healthcare and Medical Education.

International News

Blinken warns against further Middle East escalation after Lebanon blasts

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday warned against the risk of escalation in the Middle East after the detonation of thousands of Hezbollah pagers threatened to derail his latest regional diplomacy push.

News of the blasts broke as the top U.S. diplomat traveled to Cairo to meet senior Egyptian officials hoping to advance efforts to secure a ceasefire in Gaza and improve ties with Egypt.

Militant group Hezbollah promised to retaliate against Israel, accusing it of detonating pagers across Lebanon on Tuesday killing at least 12 people, including two children, and wounding nearly 3,000. Israel has declined to respond to questions about the explosions. Asked about the blasts, Blinken said the

United States was still gathering facts but it was in no one's interest for conflict to spread.

"It's imperative that all parties refrain from any actions that could escalate the conflict," Blinken said at a news conference alongside his Egyptian counterpart.

He did not say who the U.S. believes was behind the blasts.

Item 1 of 6 U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken attends a U.S.-Egypt strategic dialogue with Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty in Tahrir Palace in Cairo, Egypt.

Blinken said he was focused on securing a ceasefire deal that would bring calm, including to Israel's northern border with Lebanon, and that 15 out of 18 paragraphs of a deal

had been agreed by all sides.

Making progress involved long waits for messages to be passed between the parties that left time for incidents to disrupt the talks, Blinken said.

"We've seen that in the intervening time, you might have an event, an incident - something that makes the process more difficult, that threatens to slow it, stop it, derail it - and anything of that nature, by definition, is probably not good in terms of achieving the result that we want, which is the ceasefire," Blinken said.

He cited Hamas' execution of six Israeli hostages last month. He did not name Israel, which is believed to have targeted members of groups aligned against it in Lebanon, Syria and Iran that have set back the talks.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken attends a U.S.-Egypt strategic dialogue with Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty in Tahrir Palace in Cairo, Egypt.

Hundreds wounded as Hezbollah hand-held radios detonate across Lebanon in new explosions

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Hand-held radios used by Lebanon's armed group Hezbollah detonated late on Wednesday afternoon across the country's south and in the southern suburbs of the capital Beirut, injuring hundreds, a security source and a witness said.

At least one of the blasts took place near a funeral organised by Hezbollah for those killed the previous day when thousands of pagers used by the group

exploded across the country.

The group said on Wednesday it had attacked Israeli artillery positions with rockets in the first strike at its arch-foe since pager blasts wounded thousands of its members in Lebanon and raised the prospect of a wider Middle East conflict.

The hand-held radios were purchased by Hezbollah five months ago, around the same time that the pagers were bought, said a security source.

China announces sanctions on US companies selling arms to self-ruled Taiwan

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China on Wednesday announced sanctions on American companies selling arms to the self-ruled island of Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own territory and threatens to annex by force.

Chinese state media made the announcement, citing the Foreign Ministry, but gave no details on the companies involved. Taiwan is awaiting deliveries of F-16 fighter jets.

Erdogan says Turkey will deepen ties with East while still facing West

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: President Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday that Turkey would not stop deepening ties with the East, including the BRICS group of nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), even as it continued to face West, Turkey, a NATO member, has in recent months voiced interest in joining the BRICS and SCO groups, both of which include China and Russia. This has stirred U.S. and European fears that Turkey may be pivoting away from its traditionally Western geopolitical orientation, despite repeated denials from Ankara.

Speaking at an event in Ankara, Erdogan said de-

bates over an "axis shift" were unfounded, but that Turkey had to adapt to new "centres of power" forming in the fields of economy, production, and technology, while keeping itself open to opportunities with every structure and actor.

"That is the approach that lies behind our country's will to expand the basis of dialogue with all of them, from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to BRICS and ASEAN," Erdogan said. "Of course, our face is turned to the West, but this certainly does not mean that we will turn our backs on the East, that we will ignore the East, or not improve our ties with the East," he added.

Ukrainian drones strike a large military depot in a Russian town northwest of Moscow

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukrainian drones struck a large military depot in a town deep inside Russia overnight, causing a huge blaze and prompting the evacuation of some local residents, a Ukrainian official and Russian news reports said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, a senior U.S. diplomat said that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's recently announced — but still confidential — plan for winning the war "can work" and help end the conflict that is now in its third year.

Ukraine claimed the strike destroyed Russian military warehouses in Toropets, a town in Russia's Tver region about 380 kilometers (240 miles) northwest of Moscow and about 500 kilometers (300 miles) from the border with Ukraine.

The attack was carried

out by Ukraine's Security Service, along with Ukraine's Intelligence and Special Operations Forces, a Kyiv security official told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the operation.

According to the official, the depot housed Iskander and Tochka-U missiles, as well as glide bombs and artillery shells. He said the facility caught fire in the strike and was burning across an area 6 kilometers (4 miles) wide.

Russian state news agency RIA Novosti quoted regional authorities as saying air defense systems were working to repel a "massive drone attack" on Toropets, which has a population of around 11,000. The agency also reported a fire and the evacuation of some local residents.

Trump slams India as 'very big abuser' on trade but calls Modi 'fantastic'

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Former US president Donald Trump on Tuesday said that he plans to meet with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi next week during the latter's visit of the United States for several official events. During a campaign event in Michigan, Trump slammed India as a "very big abuser" on trade, but said Modi was "fantastic."

"He happens to be coming to meet me next week," Trump told the crowd without providing further details. Modi will be traveling this weekend to Wilmington, Delaware — President Joe Biden's hometown — as part of the "Quad Leaders" summit alongside Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio.

Egypt won't accept security changes on Gaza border, foreign minister says

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Egypt will not accept any changes to the security arrangements that were in place on its border with Gaza before war broke out between Israel and Hamas last October, the Egyptian foreign minister said on Wednesday.

Security on the border, and whether Israel will maintain a troop presence along a 14-km (9-mile) buffer zone known as the Philadelphi Corridor, have become a focal point of months-long talks aimed at securing a ceasefire and the

release of hostages in Gaza. Israeli troops entered the buffer zone in May as they pursued an offensive around Rafah, Egypt, which is a mediator in ceasefire talks, says Israel must withdraw and that a Palestinian presence needs to be restored at the Rafah crossing between Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and Gaza.

"Egypt reiterates its position, it rejects any military presence along the opposite side of the border crossing and the a f o r e m e n t i o n e d (Philadelphi) corridor."

North Korea fires short-range ballistic missiles for second time in a week

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea fired multiple short-range ballistic missiles on Wednesday toward its east coast, South Korea and Japan said, days after Pyongyang unveiled a uranium enrichment facility and vowed to beef up its nuclear arsenal. The missiles lifted off from Kaechon, north of the capital Pyongyang, at around 6:50 am (2150 GMT Tuesday) in a northeast direction and flew about 400 km.

Finland's president wants end of single state veto at UN Security Council

Monitoring Desk
HELSINKI: Finland's President Alexander Stubb has called for expansion of the U.N. Security Council, abolition of its single state veto power, and suspension of any member engaging in an "illegal war" such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Stubb, who leads the Nordic nation's foreign policy, said he would add his voice to reform calls at next week's UN General Assembly in New York which is to discuss composition of the global body's Security Council.

Consisting of five permanent and 10 rotating member states, the council's brief is to keep global peace, but geopolitical rivalries have deadlocked it on issues from Ukraine to Gaza. Stubb said in an interview on Tuesday he would propose the number of permanent members be expanded from five to 10, with one more from Latin America, two from Africa and two from Asia.

"No single state should have veto power in the UN Security Council," he told Reuters.

The US, one of five veto-wielding nations with Russia, China, France and Britain, has also backed two permanent seats for Africa.

Stubb said any member engaging an illegal war, "such as Russia is in right now in Ukraine", should be kicked off.

Moscow has justified its invasion of Ukraine by saying it is creating a buffer against Western aggression and taking territory that is historically Russia's.

Stubb said he knew his Security Council proposals were "beyond what is usually said from small member states", but added that the big nations would otherwise not propose weakening their own influence.

"So they talk the talk, but don't walk the walk," he said, adding he hoped others would help take the plan forward by the UN's 80th birthday next year.

Any changes to Security Council membership need approval by two thirds of the General Assembly, including the five veto powers.

PM urges nation to shun hatred, extremism and culture of abuses

LAHORE (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that division is the agenda of anti-state elements therefore entire nations has to join hands against negative elements and it was need of the hour to reject the culture of hatred, extremism and abuses in the country.

Speaking at a ceremony here to mark Eid Milad-un-Nabi on Tuesday, PM Shehbaz expressed concern over the growing use of abusive language and rising societal divisions.

"We must live our lives by the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH), whose ethical treatment of even his enemies stands as a moral guide for us today," said Sharif. He described the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a pivotal moment that changed the course of human history, calling it a "mercy for all of humanity."

The premier reiterated that the Prophet's (PBUH) moral values, particularly his care for orphans and the elderly, are enshrined in the

Quran. Highlighting the ongoing struggles of Palestinians and the people of Occupied Kashmir, PM Sharif expressed hope for their eventual liberation. "The day will come when the people of Palestine and Occupied Kashmir will breathe in the air of freedom," he said.

PM Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need for unity in society highlighting the importance of protecting minority rights in line with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He called for an end to divisive and extremist behaviours, urging the nation to adopt ethical conduct inspired by the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

He added that the true propagation of Islam comes through actions aligned with the Prophet's (PBUH) teachings, calling on the nation to pledge to follow his example in eradicating negative attitudes.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that in today's turbulent era, mere reading about the life of Holy Prophet (Peace Be

Upon Him) life is not enough rather "we must follow his teachings in letter and spirit".

The solutions to the current era challenges was only in completely following the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) vision and principles, he said in his message on 12th Rabiul Awwal, 1446. The prime minister extended greetings to the entire Muslim Ummah, especially the people of Pakistan, on the occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) - the birth anniversary of Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

He urged the nation to follow the teachings of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), emphasizing support for the vulnerable, prioritizing those struggling with poverty and hunger, and adopting a habit of helping others.

He emphasized that it was incumbent upon us all to follow the Prophet's (PBUH) examples of helping and benefiting others, with special attention to those suffering from poverty, hunger, and hardships.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting regarding repairing of flood-affected roads, at CM House in Karachi.

Despite fierce coalition govt wooing, Fazal completely rejects constitutional package

Proposed amendment draft not acceptable in any way," says JUI-F chief

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who took the centre stage as both the government and the opposition sought his support, has completely rejected the draft of the "controversial" constitutional package, aimed at making changes to Pakistan's judicial and parliamentary systems.

"The draft we were given was reviewed, and it was in no way acceptable," the veteran politician said

while talking to journalists after attending a luncheon at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser's residence on Wednesday.

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 PTI's request last month for the early issuance of a notification regarding the appointment of the next top judge.

Kamran Tessori demands expulsion of Afghan diplomats

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori on Wednesday demanded expulsion of Afghan diplomats from Pakistan.

Speaking to reporters in Governor House, Tessori said that whoever didn't respect Pakistan's sovereignty shouldn't live in Pakistan. He lashed out at the Afghan diplomats who didn't stand up when Pakistani national anthem was being played in a ceremony held by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

"Ali Amin Gandapur should have asked Afghan consul general to wait for him in his office instead of taking him along. I don't know if Afghan diplomats were physically unfit or mentally deranged," he added. He claimed to have prepared a draft of Pakistan till 2040, adding that all stakeholders would sit together on December 25 in this respect. He vowed to turn Karachi into an IT city while informing about Hyderabad IT initiative.

PTI Sindh leader Haleem Adil Sheikh's driver shot dead

KARACHI (INP): The driver of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh president Haleem Adil Sheikh has been killed by unknown suspects in Karachi on Wednesday.

According to police, the dead body of a person was found near the Chaakar Hotel who later identified as Shah Nawaz, driver of PTI leader Haleem Adil Sheikh.

Police said that Shah Nawaz was shot dead and was killed at another location, and after killing, the body was dumped near the Chaakar Hotel. Investigations related to personal enmity or resistance to robbery are ongoing, police said.

Police further said that 45-year-old Shah Nawaz was a resident of Jangal Goth. The deceased left home at 4 am for duty, and the body was found at 6:50 am.

According to the family of the deceased, during the inspection of the plots yesterday, there was an attack on Shah Nawaz, and the armed accused escaped due to the retaliatory firing of Shah Nawaz.

Shah Nawaz's motorcycle and licensed weapons were not there, the family said. The deceased was a resident of Janjal Goth Super Highway.

Police rescue 37 people from abduction in Sindh

KANDHKOT (INP): The local police of Kandhkot successfully rescued 37 individuals, including 10 women and 5 children, from the limits of the Badani police station area.

According to the authorities, the victims were lured to the Katcha area of Kashmir district located in Sindh province under the false pretense of labor opportunities.

Acting on timely information, police intervened before the individuals were on way to the Katcha area of Kashmir and transferred all rescued persons safely to the SSP office.

The police's swift action prevented a potential abduction, ensuring the safety of the victims.

Earlier to this, following the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, the Punjab government has announced a bounty of Rs 10 million on the heads of Katcha area dacoits. The initiative is part of an intensified crackdown on criminals, particularly those involved in violent crimes against law enforcement. According to the announcement, a reward of Rs 5 million has been set for the capture of most wanted bandits, while Rs 2.5 million will be awarded for the arrest of other bandits and terrorists.

UNGA adopts resolution demanding Israel end occupation of Palestinian territories in 12 months

Resolution receives 124 votes in favour, 43 abstain and Israel, the US, 12 others vote no; Saudi crown prince says kingdom will not recognise Israel without Palestinian state.

UNITED NATIONS

(Agencies): The United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday adopted a Palestinian-drafted resolution that demands Israel end "its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory" within 12 months.

The resolution received 124 votes in favor, while 43 countries abstained and Israel, the United States and 12 others voted no.

The action isolates Israel days before world leaders travel to New York for their annual UN gathering. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is due to address the 193-member General Assembly on Sept. 26, the same day as Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The resolution welcomes a July advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice that said Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories and settlements is illegal and should be withdrawn.

The advisory opinion - by the highest United Nations court, also known as the World Court - said this should be done "as rapidly as possible," although the General Assembly resolution imposes a 12-month deadline.

The General Assembly resolution also calls on states to "take steps to towards ceasing the importation of any products originating in the Israeli settlements, as well as the provision or transfer of arms, munitions and related equipment to Israel ... where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that they may be used in the Occupied Palestinian Territory."

The resolution is the first to be formally put forward by the Palestinian Authority since it gained additional rights and privileges this month including a seat among UN members in the assembly hall and the right to propose draft resolutions.



RAWALPIDI: Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk meeting with Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir at the General Headquarters.

Govt once again contacts PTI to evolve consensus on constitutional amendments

ISLAMABAD (Online): Government has once again contacted PTI for evolving consensus on constitutional amendments.

Rana Sana Ullah advisor to Prime Minister (PM) has requested the PTI to consider to review the draft.

Speaker National Assembly (NA) made this request on the occasion of his meeting with arrested MNAs. Sources said Rana Sana Ullah said to PTI

MNAs for making consultation with legal team.

Rana Sana Ullah during telephonic contact asked law minister Azam Nazir Tarar to give draft to position. PTI members have also been asked to make consultation with PTI founder on draft.

PTI members had proposed to government to contact PTI leadership on proposed constitutional amendments.

Jl takes up water, sewerage issues with KWSC MD, CEO

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Ameer Monem Zafar along with a delegation, called on Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) Managing Director (MD) Salahuddin and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Asadullah Khan to demand early resolution of the issues surrounding the water and sewerage crises in the mega city.

The meeting was held at the KWSC corporation headquarters, here on Wednesday. JI leaders, including Taufiquddin Siddiqui, Engr Saleem Azhar, Qazi Sadaruddin, Manzar Alam and others accompanied Monem Zafar during the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Zafar reminded the KWSC authorities that the last meeting between the two sides had agreed to enhance cooperation between the corporation and local government representatives. However, he maintained, the decision was not followed in letter and spirit. As a result, Karachiites have been suffering due to water and sewerage issues.



LARKANA: Larkana Municipal Corporation (LMC) Mayor, Anwar Ali Lohar along with others are participating in rally organized by religious organization on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal Eid Milad-un-Nabi, the birthday anniversary celebration of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in Larkana.

Financial irregularities unearthed in PPHI Sindh

KARACHI (INP): Financial irregularities worth over Rs1 billion unearthed in Sindh's People's Primary Health Initiative (PPHI), according to auditor general's report. As per report, unauthorized loan worth Rs1.18 billion was taken from Sindh Bank, while sub-standard medicines worth more than Rs1 billion were stocked, many of which had expired.

The report reveals irregularities exceeding Rs950 million in the procurement of lab equipment. Flood relief efforts saw Rs 480 million misappropriated in food aid. Rs 78 million were paid to various companies for purchasing substandard medicines. Rs 24.2 million allocated for civil works at Rural Health Center Bhan Saeedabad, Jamshoro, says auditor general's report. Earlier this month, an investigation was initiated into the alleged embezzlement of over Rs 520 million at Chandka Medical College Hospital located in Larkana city of Sindh. The Anti-Corruption Establishment Larkana is probing the former Medical Superintendent (MS), Dr. Gulzar Tanyu, over corruption charges.



ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Senior Management Committee of the Ministry of Planning was held under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal. The meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awaiz Manzoor Samra, senior officials of the Ministry, project directors, and heads of various Planning Ministry departments.

Extensive consultations on constitutional package underway: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attallah Tarar on Wednesday said that extensive consultations with all political parties on the proposed constitutional package were underway.

Talking to the media, he said that all the political parties tried to reach a consensus on the draft bill both inside and outside the Parliament.

The parties on both sides of the aisle in the Parliament had thorough discussions on the constitutional amendments, he added. Tarar said the role of the Law Minister in the drafting of constitutional amendments and engaging all political forces was highly commendable. He cited that many countries, including Italy, Germany and Spain, had supreme courts and constitutional courts side by side.

"Constitutional matters go to constitutional courts so that common citi-

Pakistan calls on UN member states to promote Palestinian self-determination

NEW YORK (Online): Pakistan has called on the UN member states to promote Palestinian self-determination and refuse to recognize any changes to the status of occupied territories.

In a statement at the 10th Resumed Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (ESS) on the Situation in Palestine, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Munir Akram, called for immediate and decisive action to address the longstanding injustices faced by the Palestinian people.

He highlighted the need for admitting the State of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations as well as convening the international conference on Palestine to advance the two-state solution.

Ambassador Munir Akram reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to supporting the Palestinian struggle for freedom, rooted in its own history of achieving independence through self-determination.

JUI-F seeks 2-month extension for internal party elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) has requested a two-month extension from the Election Commission for conducting its internal party elections.

The Election Commission's three-member bench, chaired by the Chief Election Commissioner, heard the case where JUI-F's junior lawyer argued that the party's internal elections are being conducted in phases. The lawyer explained that the delay primarily affected district-level elections, and documents with the election schedule had already been submitted. The internal elections process began in July.

The JUI-F lawyer requested a 60-day extension for completing the elections. The Chief Election Commissioner remarked that 60 days seemed excessive, noting that constitutional reforms should not impact the internal elections timeline. The Chief Election Commissioner indicated that no further extensions would be granted.

The Election Commission adjourned the hearing, with a new date to be set later.

Impression of kidnapping citizens by intelligence agencies is threat to national security: IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online):

Justice Babar Sattar of Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed to make all intelligence and investigation agencies of Islamabad, director generals of IB, F IA, ISI, MI, director generals of air and Naval intelligence agencies and CTD Punjab respondents on the petition seeking recovery of missing person Faizan Usman from Islamabad and initiation of action against them.

Justice Babar Sattar remarked chief commissioner be also made party and he should file affidavit that as to why enforced disappearances are taking place persistently in his power of jurisdiction.

The applicant should file amended memo of respondents and notices be issued to



HYDERABAD: Milli Yakjehti Council Central President, Sahibzada Dr. AbulKhair Muhammad Zubair addresses during the religious procession on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal Eid Milad-un-Nabi, the birthday anniversary celebration of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in Hyderabad.

"Intersec" security and fire protection trade exhibition to be held in Saudi Arabia

KARACHI (INP): The largest trade exhibition for safety, security, and fire protection, "Intersec Saudi Arabia 2024," will take place from October 1 to 3 in Saudi Arabia.

Three Pakistani companies will showcase their innovative products at this event. Intersec Saudi Arabia, the leading trade fair for safety, security, and fire protection, will be held in its sixth edition at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center (RICEC).

This year's event will feature over 350 exhibitors from 27 countries, including pavilions from China, the Czech Republic, France, and the UK. With more than 17,000 visitors expected, Intersec Saudi Arabia is set to be the biggest to date.

3 companies from Pakistan Master Textile Mills, Farooq Garments, and National Electronics Complex of Pakistan (NECOP) will showcase their innovative products, attracting global buyers and highlighting the country's advancements.

Pakistani companies will be representing the five key sectors: Safety & Health, Fire & Rescue, Perimeter & Physical Security, Cyber & Commercial Security Attendees can explore the latest updates and join detailed discussions on important topics like global threats, crisis response, risk management, responsible AI, protecting critical infrastructure, and the importance of diversity in security.

Police rescue 37 people from abduction in Sindh

KANDHKOT (INP): The local police of Kandhkot successfully rescued 37 individuals, including 10 women and 5 children, from the limits of the Badani police station area.

According to the authorities, the victims were lured to the Katcha area of Kashmir district located in Sindh province under the false pretense of labor opportunities.

Acting on timely information, police intervened before the individuals were on way to the Katcha area of Kashmir and transferred all rescued persons safely to the SSP office.

The police's swift action prevented a potential abduction, ensuring the safety of the victims.

Earlier to this, following the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, the Punjab government has announced a bounty of Rs 10 million on the heads of Katcha area dacoits. The initiative is part of an intensified crackdown on criminals, particularly those involved in violent crimes against law enforcement. According to the announcement, a reward of Rs 5 million has been set for the capture of most wanted bandits, while Rs 2.5 million will be awarded for the arrest of other bandits and terrorists.



GARHI KHUDA BUX: Members of Shah Latif Local Government Employees Union Sindh are holding protest long march rally from Garhi Khuda Bux to Karachi for demanding provide them Salaries and Pensions online through Treasury led by President Hafiz Mushtaque Korejo, in Garhi Khuda Bux.

No extension in service be given to army chief, judges: Hafiz Naem

LAHORE (Online): JI Amir Hafiz Naem has said there should be no extension in service period of army chief and judges.

He said this while addressing a press conference here in Mansoor Wednesday.

He held the procedure for appointment of Supreme Court (SC) judges is already settled which should be maintained.

There are several such aspects in the draft bill of constitutional amendments which need consultations. The way these constitutional amendments were being brought is such move that the parliament is being made rubber stamp.

The members of parliament have been made a

market in the bid to seek their support in favor of constitutional amendments by threatening and browbeating them.

Government attitude is such that it wants to bring judges and courts of its sweet will, he added.

The way bid was made to bring these constitutional amendments is condemnable. This way is undemocratic and unconstitutional.

He observed PPP had launched nationalization policy which was bad experience economically. Then Benazir came and privatization commission was framed.

First they ruin the institutions and make them corrupt.