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Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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Hosts dinner in honour of parliamentarians Govt's efforts putting economy on growth trajectory: PM Shahbaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday hosted a dinner in honour of parliamentarians from various political parties, expressing gratitude for their cooperation in the government affairs.

He highlighted the slowdown in inflation to 9.6% in August 2024, citing it as a testament to the government's effective economic measures.

"The economic experts are forecasting further decline in the inflation rate during the current month which is a good news for the nation", he said, recalling that in 2018, they had left the government with a single digit inflation rate.

The prime minister at-

tributed the economic progress to the efforts initiated by his last government in April 2022, to save the country from default. The economic team's efforts had not only stabilized the economy but also put it on a growth trajectory. The dinner was attended by the members of National Assembly and Senate belonging to the government's allied parties.

The prime minister said while assuming the responsibilities as Khadim-e-Pakistan, he had promised to the people that he would ease their problems at all costs.

Now the positive results of economic reforms had started reaching the people, he said adding that

it was not possible to achieve the goal of the country's development without making the life of the common man easier. As regards the power tariffs, the prime minister said the government was taking measures to provide maximum relief to the low-income segments of the society.

He said that the process of right sizing and downsizing in the government offices had been started to reduce the expenditures.

The prime minister, while stressing the need for political stability and continuity in policies, said that everybody should have to get together to steer the country out of the economic quagmire.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses at the dinner hosted in honour of the Parliamentarians of Coalition parties of the government

President for political stability, strengthening democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday underscored the need to further strengthen parliamentary democracy and promote political stability to put the country on the path of development.

Talking about the current challenges facing the country, the president emphasized the need to forge political unity to steer the country out of its political, economic and security challenges.

The president expressed these views during a dinner held in honour of parliamentarians belonging to Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PMLQ), and Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony Chaudhary Salik Hussain, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, President ANP Senator Aimal Wali Khan, Former Caretaker Prime Minister and Senator Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, President IPP Abdul Aleem Khan, and senior political leadership of the country attended the dinner.

Speaking on the occasion, President Zardari called for promoting tolerance and mutual respect as well as strengthening democratic institutions.

He said that political, economic and governance reforms were essential for

First-ever convocation of Govt. Postgraduate Girls College Quetta: Martyrs lightening candles of knowledge, sacrificing lives for restoration of peace in Balochistan matter of pride for us, says CM

Mir Sarfraz Bugti announces establishment of faculty in name of Shaheed Professor Nazima Talib in Postgraduate Girls College; announces 500 laptops for academic staff and students

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Provincial Minister for Education, Ms Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Principal of the College, Professor Raheela Ramzan, teachers, students and their parents participated in the convocation.

The Chief Minister on the occasion remembered the Professor Nazima Talib of the Balochistan University, martyred in an incident of terrorism and announced establishment of the faculty in her name.

He also announced to provide 500 laptops to the academic staff and students

of the college. Addressing the ceremony of distribution of gold medals and degrees among the position holder students in different BS programmes, the Chief Minister said that no society can progress without education of the women. He said that Islam has also preached to impart and promote education without any gender discrimination.

He mentioned at the moment, five women Deputy Commissioners

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QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti along with Chief Justice Balochistan High Court (BHC) Mr. Justice Muhammad Hashim Kakar visiting Science College Quetta which was affected by the fire.

CM, CJ BHC, visit fire-affected Science College: Bugti directs to take prompt measures for resumption of classes in alternate building

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has directed to take prompt measures for resumption of the classes otherwise affected due to the incident of fire in Government Science College Quetta.

The Chief Minister said that the educational loss of the students would not be done, as such he has issued directives to resume the classes in alternate building of the Science College. He was on visit to the Government Science College, here on Monday. While he reached the Science College, the Chief Justice, Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar also reached there.

It may be mentioned

here that the main block and the class rooms of the Science College were badly damaged due to the fire erupted there on September 1.

The Chief Minister and Chief Justice High Court inspected the burnt parts of the College.

During the visit, the Vice Principal of Science College briefed the Chief Minister and Chief Justice about the incident of fire.

The Chief Minister on the occasion said that the incident of fire in Science College is sorrowful and as such an inquiry committee has already been formed to look into and probe the incident.

He on the occasion directed to take steps for resumption of the classes in the Science College.

President, PM strongly condemn attack on police mobile van in Panjgur

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have strongly condemned the attack on police mobile van in Panjgur which resulted in death of Sub-Inspector Shakeel Ahmed.

In their separate messages on Monday, the President and PM expressed deep grief over the martyrdom of a police official in firing the incident.

They paid tribute to the martyred sub-inspector, praying for peace for the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude.

President Zardari and PM Shehbaz said, "The whole nation stands by the soldiers sacrificing their lives in the fight against terrorism. This war will continue till the elimination of this scourge in toto."

PM hails heroic action of gatekeeper Madad Ali

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday paid tribute to Madad Ali, a gatekeeper who risked his life to prevent a major accident involving the Shalimar Express at a railway crossing near Nawab Shah railway station.

Madad Ali saved lives of hundreds of people by risking his own life, the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM Office.

The prime minister lauded Madad Ali's bravery, saying, "he put his life on the line to save countless others."

He emphasized that Madad Ali's selfless spirit is an inspiration to all, saying, "We can all learn from his altruistic passion." The entire nation is proud of you, Madad Ali, the prime minister added.

PTI leaders Barrister Gohar, Sher Afzal Marwat arrested outside parliament

ISLAMABAD (INP): The police on Monday arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Barrister Gohar outside the Parliament House.

Earlier, PTI's firebrand leader Sher Afzal Marwat was also taken into custody. The PTI leader was arrested outside the Parliament House along with his security guard. According to details, the PTI leader was shifted to Secretariat police station.

A scuffle was also witnessed between the police officials and Marwat's guards after which one of

the guard of the PTI leader was also taken into custody.

After the arrest of Marwat, PTI leader Shoaib Shaheen was also detained by the Islamabad police from his office.

It was reported by PTI leaders decided to remain inside the Parliament House as a heavy contingent of police was seen outside while red-zone also sealed from several points.

It also emerged that the PTI leader Ali Muhammad Khan was not arrested by the police when he came out from the parliament.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari attending a dinner held in honour of Parliamentarians belonging to different political parties at President House.

Joint resolution adopted in BA regarding implementation on quota allocated for minorities in provincial departments

Independent Report QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly adopted a joint resolution about implementation on the quota for minorities in the provincial government departments, here on Monday.

The Speaker, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Khan Achakzai was in the chair at the session.

The Member of Provincial Assembly belonging to JUI, Ravi Pahuja tabled the resolution, in which it was pointed out that the people belonging to different minorities have been serving in different sectors for development of the country.

It was also mentioned that the federal and provincial governments have allocated five percent quota for the minorities in all public and private institutions. But, there is least implementation on the five percent quota for the minorities,

it was mentioned in the resolution demanding of the House to ask provincial government to take practical steps for implementation on the same immediately so as to end resentment and sense of deprivation prevailing among the minorities.

Earlier, the MPA Abdul Majeed Badini raised point of order in which he pointed out towards the non-functional basic health units in Jaffarabad.

He said that many BHUs are non-functional in his district as such they should be made functional.

On the point of order raised by the MPA Asadullah Baloch, the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti endorsed his point and said that we would call the high ups of Pakistan Coast Guard. Besides, he added that we would also call the Leader of Opposition and Mir Asadullah Baloch on the matter.

No interest in seeking extension: CJP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Monday flatly refused to seek an extension in his tenure.

Talking to journalists, when one of the reporters, while quoting PML-N stalwart Rana Sanaullah, said that if the age limit of all SC judges was increased, he (CJP) agreed to an extension, the chief justice said, "No, this is not the case."

He went on to say that in one of the meetings, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Azam Nazir Tarar and the attorney general of Pakistan were present. "But Rana Sana was not."

He said he had been told the government planned to increase the term of employment of all chief justices (CJs), including him. "I said to them that they should extend the term of employment of other CJs. But I am not interested."

"I am not sure I will be alive tomorrow," Justice Isa said.

When a reporter asked why the case of a letter penned down by six judges was not being fixed for the hearing, he replied that it was the committee of judges, which had to do that. "The bench is not being formed due to the illness of Justice Musarrat Hudaib," he explained.

Process to privatize PIA to be finalized by October: Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Asif, informed the National Assembly on Monday that the privatization process of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) will be finalized by the end of October.

Responding to a calling attention notice regarding the prolonged closure of Hyderabad airport for commercial flights, he said that reopening PIA flights on this route is not financially feasible. He explained that PIA currently faces a debt burden of Rs. 800 billion, and routes that are not financially viable cannot be operated.

Responding to a question, he said that the government has no objection if a private airline wanted to operate from Hyderabad airport.

Gandapur's abusive outburst against woman opponents shows his sheer disregard for Pashtoon norms: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Monday said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister



Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's abusive outburst against woman political opponents and journalists at the Sangiani public rally clearly showed his misdeed and sheer disregard for centuries-old Pashtoon norms and culture.

Addressing a joint press conference along with Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam, he said the Pakhtuns had a great tradition of according high respect to mothers, sisters and daughters.

Taking a jibe at Gandapur, he said that the person, who had challenged a woman political leader (Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz) was scared of terrorists and criminals in his own province.

Only people of short stature like him could stoop so low by abusing and threatening political opponents especially women, he added.

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NAB withdraws new Toshakhana case against Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has withdrawn the new Toshakhana case filed against former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi from the accountability court.

A hearing on the bail application was held in the new Toshakhana reference against the PTI founder and his wife on Monday.

Salman Safdar, Imran Khan's lawyer, argued that the new Toshakhana case no longer stands after the

restoration of NAB amendments, as the crime is invalid under the current law.

The NAB prosecutor stated that following the restoration of amendments, the case is no longer within NAB's jurisdiction.

The accountability court judge, Muhammad Ali Warraich, took a three-hour break before announcing the decision to transfer the new Toshakhana reference to a Special Central Court. The court also ruled that the relevant court will hear bail applications on Sept 10.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani distributing certificates to girls during the 1st Convocation 2024 at Govt Girls Post Graduate College Quetta.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Governor Balochistan says Our policy makers & engineers can play key role in tackling challenges of natural disasters

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that we have to adopt preventive and safety measures for saving huge amount of budget on the reconstruction.

He stressed that we should pay attention on building flexible infrastructure instead of reconstructions, which may face the natural disasters.

In this regard, our policy makers and engineers can play key role.

The Governor said that we also had skills and resources besides having services of talented engineers.

Therefore, such memorable towers and excellent buildings should be built in the provincial metropolis so that we may attract tourists from all over the world. However, we need vision and strong intention to perform this task.

The Governor was speaking to the Provincial Minister for Communication and Works, Saleem Ahmed Khosa, who called on him here on Monday.

Jaffar Khan Mandokhail said that it is an unfortunate that our province mostly remains in the grip of natural disasters such as earthquake, floods, drought, etc.

Federal govt sponsoring 101 PSDP projects worth Rs 947.5 bln in KP: NA told

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Monday apprised the National Assembly that at present 101 PSDP projects, being sponsored and executed by various Federal Ministries/Departments were ongoing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) with an estimated cost of Rs. 947.5 billion.

The minister said there was no specific share of provinces under investment under the Federal PSDP, after the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, was to provide funding for large scale strategic projects of national interest. However, he said the Federal Government also invested under developed regions to bring them at par with other areas of the country, reduce poverty and empower the marginalized segment of the society.

He said the federal government has very limited space to sponsor various development projects. He said PML-N government during its 2013-18 tenure, enhanced the development budget upto Rs 1000 billion adding that record development projects worth Rs 3200 billion were completed during the said period. Pakistan's economy was among top 5 emerging economies of the world, he added.

He pointed out that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had a record of not carrying out even a single quality project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during its 12-year tenure. He said that for its Sunday's flopped meeting, the KP government ruthlessly used public resources and machinery to bring the people to the venue.

QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding procurement of medicines of hospitals

Zehri's education-friendly efforts lauded by people of Hub

HUB: The people of Hub district have expressed satisfaction and appreciation for the education-friendly efforts of Mir Ali Hasan Zehri, Advisor to the President on Industry and Commerce for Balochistan.

Sarbuland inspects dev. projects in Gwadar

GWADAR: On the special instructions of Commissioner Makran Dawood Khan Khilji and under the directives of Deputy Commissioner Hamoodur Rehman, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Sarbuland Khan inspected two major development projects in Gwadar.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gallo meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Gandapur's abusive outburst...

Continued from page 1 The KP CM should have talked about the strategy to eradicate terrorism from the province, but he indulged in mudslinging as per his party's tradition, Tarar said.

Martyrs lightening candles of...

Continued from page 1 and one Assistant Commissioner are posted in Balochistan who have proved by showing very satisfactory and exemplary performance that they are second to none in God-gifted capabilities than men.

Umrani meets PPP workers, office bearers

Peoples Party's ticket holders, office bearers, and workers at a meeting. He said that the workers and office bearers are the backbone of the party, and it is our duty to solve their problems.

Hashmi ensures resolution of water supply issues in Dera Murad Jamali

Independent Report goal is to provide relief to the people and to perform their duties with honesty and sincerity. He said that no negligence is being tolerated from the staff, and providing clean drinking water to the people at their doorstep is their top priority.



TURBAT: Colonel Mekran Scout Headquarter Turbat Ali Hanan Baig and Additional Deputy Commissioner Kech Khalil Murad issuing orders on issues of public during khuli kutchery organized by District Administration Kech and FC Balochistan

Advertisement for 'TENDER NOTICE' regarding procurement of medicines for hospitals in Quetta. It includes details about the tender process, contact information, and a QR code.

Advertisement for 'TENDER NOTICE' regarding procurement of food items for the Food Directorate in Gwadar. It lists the items to be procured and the tender fee.

Advertisement for 'TENDER NOTICE' regarding procurement of construction work for a sawage line road in Tarnab District. It includes details about the tender process and contact information.

Advertisement for 'TENDER NOTICE' regarding procurement of solar street lights for Washuk Town in District Washuk. It lists the items to be procured and the tender fee.

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Kundi call for action against those involved in vandalism during PTI's public meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, Monday said that the federal government should take action against those who were involved in vandalism during yesterday's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's public meeting. Speaking to the media after inauguration of 'Artisans at Work Exhibition' at Centaurus Mall, Faisal Kundi emphasized that everyone should abide constitution and law saying, "I will abide by the law as long as I am in power".

Criticizing the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, Governor KP said that the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is having more ministries contrary to the law which says that the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister cannot hold more than five ministries.

He said that the writ

of state is being challenged in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while majority of the incidents of terrorism are happening in Chief Minister's own district. "Either the Chief Minister should have courage to take action or he may be bracketed with those who are involved in terrorism", he said.

Expressing concerns over deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Governor KP said that the terrorism and extortion are on the rise in the province.

Considering such situation, he will ask the Prime Minister and Interior Minister to call an emergency meeting on the situation of KP soon, Faisal Kundi said.

Faisal Kundi said that the Chief Minister with a two-third majority should take a vote of confidence from the Provincial Assembly. He also called for speedy trial of the May 9

accused and said that there should be no exception for those who do not follow the constitution of the country. "Even the enemies of the country cannot do what happened on May 9 and how the military installations were targeted", he said.

Earlier, the Governor KP visited the exhibition and praised the work of artists and crafters for showcasing their live skills for the visitors and general public.

The exhibition included stalls of unique types of embroidery, block printing, truck art, hand printing, knitting, fancy products, weaving, pottery, khaadi work and other arts and crafts.

Faisal Karim Kundi praised the skills of the artists, saying that besides showcasing talent from different parts of Pakistan, this exhibition is also promoting soft image of the country.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engr Amir Muqam chairs a meeting of representatives of different NGOs.

Muqam holds meeting with NGOs working for welfare of Afghan refugee

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engr Amir Muqam on Monday held meeting with representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working for the welfare of Afghan Refugees.

Chairing meeting, he said that today's meeting was aimed to strengthen working coordination between Ministry and Non-Governmental Organizations, said a press release.

"Our priority must be to provide assistance and help to maximum people," he said.

The minister said that NGOs should keep in mind the requirements of the present day and concentrate on the implementation of projects.

He said that the ministry would also provide all possible assistance and coordination.

The Federal Minister also said that in order to extend assistance to maximum

needy people NGOs should identify the issues currently faced and utilize the funds accordingly.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, States and Frontier Regions Zafar Hassan, Joint Secretary SAFRON Agha Waseem Ahmad and Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees Abbas Khan.

The representatives of NGOs briefed in details Federal Minister about their respective fields of working including livelihood improvement and vocational skills Training projects for Afghan Refugees and support for income generation activities, GBV, WASH, Psychosocial Support, education, and health for refugees.

They highlighted the role of NGOs in national development and humanitarian response in Pakistan.

Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam appreciated the briefing given by representatives.

BISP to empower adolescent girls through SOPRAN project

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) held its first National Steering Committee meeting on the Adolescent Girls' Nutrition project on Monday.

The meeting, presided over by Director General BISP (NSER/CCT), Naveed Akbar, was organized to discuss the SOPRAN project, which leverages social protection initiatives to improve adolescent girls' nutrition and empowers them as change agents in their communities.

The key stakeholders present included represen-

tatives from GIZ, Nutrition International, CERP, provincial Departments of Education, Health, and Food Authorities, along with other national and international partners.

In his opening remarks, Naveed Akbar emphasized the critical importance of addressing the widespread malnutrition among adolescent girls in Pakistan.

With over 50 percent of girls affected by anemia and a significant portion suffering from other micronutrient deficiencies, this initiative is timely and essential.

The DG highlighted the project's focus on integrating nutrition into social protection, such as the provision of iron-folic acid supplements, and the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in health, education, and social protection for its successful implementation. The SOPRAN project, spanning seven districts including Faisalabad, Swat, Shaheed Benazirabad, Quetta, Kotli, Skardu, and Islamabad aims to provide comprehensive nutrition education, access to fortified foods, and community-driven behavior change initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam chairs a high-level meeting regarding 'Recharge Pakistan Programme' at the M/o Climate Change & Environmental Coordination.

Govt to introduce legislation for economic development, political stability: Talal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Senator Talal Chaudhry on Monday said that the government would introduce legislation for the betterment of economy, political stability and eradication of terrorism. Talking to the media, he said that despite preparations for six months the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) could manage to hold just a small show near Sangjani on Sunday. The people had rejected the party as evident from the fact that it had failed to fill the small ground.

The nation, in fact, wanted accountability of the PTI leadership for May 9 riots, besides corruption scams of 190 million pounds, Toshakhana, tsunami tree programme and the Peshawar Metro, he added.

Senator Talal said that the PTI leaders were doing politics of protests, sit-ins and violence. Its activists attacked the personnel of Islamabad Police on Sunday night and they would have to face legal action on that count.

He claimed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur only knew to play gimmicks and overplay serious issues, and condemned him for using derogatory language in his speech at the Sangjani meeting. Talal alleged that the KP government used public money and machinery for the PTI meeting instead of using the same for the uplift of the deprived people of province.

Five day anti-polio drive begins with target to reach over 0.4 mln children

ISLAMABAD (APP): A five-day anti-polio vaccination campaign was launched in the Federal Capital on Monday, with the goal of vaccinating the 421,455 children.

The campaign was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, who personally administered the first dose to a child during the ceremony, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration.

The main objective of the campaign to reach every child and protect the community from the threat of polio. Over the next five days, teams will conduct door to door visit across the city to ensure no child is

left behind.

Before the inauguration, an anti-polio meeting was held under the chairmanship of DC Islamabad, which was attended by the District Health Officer (DHO) and the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) East.

The meeting reviewed plans and preparations for the campaign, including security arrangements for the vaccination teams.

The campaign will run from September 9 to September 13, during which vaccination teams will go door-to-door to reach every household. Any children missed during this period will be vaccinated from September 14 to September 15.

Dr. Shahida flays Gandapur's remarks against female journalists

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), Dr. Shahida Rehmani, on Monday, strongly condemned the inappropriate language used by Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, regarding female journalists. In a statement, she said that respect for women is essential, regardless of their profession or background. She asserted that such derogatory remarks toward women will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Dr. Rehmani further criticized Gandapur's behavior, stating that his offensive comments reflect poorly on his upbringing and expressing her strong disapproval of his conduct.



ISLAMABAD: Students of International Islamic University protesting outside NPC against eviction from hostel and administrative incompetence.

OPF providing free ambulance service for transportation of Overseas's dead body

ISLAMABAD (APP): Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) an attached department of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HD) was providing free ambulance service for transportation of the dead bodies of Overseas Pakistanis from all international airports of Pakistan to their native towns.

An official source told APP, he said that the transportation of dead body of an Overseas Pakistani is usually the contractual obligation of the employer or the company where an individual is employed.

If the employer refuses to bear the cost of transportation of dead body and the family's financial position is not good, then concerned Pakistan Mission abroad use to undertake the responsibility to transport the dead bodies.

PIA transport dead bodies of Overseas Pakistanis free of cost from where it is operating as a

result of efforts of OPF.

The legal heirs may authorize a person of their confidence in that particular country to pursue the transportation of dead body case by executing an Attorney, he added.

The attorneys obtain NOC from Consulate / Embassy adding that the following information is required by OPF for transportation of dead bodies including flight No, date of departure, time of arrival, contact number of person in Pakistan who coordinates with OPF officials, complete Address of deceased of native town and OPF Contact number UAN-111-040-040, he underlined.

He said that the mission of OPF was to ensure welfare of Overseas Pakistanis and their families and contribute towards their systematic rehabilitation on return, by generating sufficient resources and coordination with the stakeholders.

IGP Islamabad holds khuli katchery

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, held a Khuli Katchery at the Central Police Office Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

During the katchery, he listened to the issues of citizens and police officers and issued directives on the spot for their resolution.

He said that resolving

grievances on merit within the stipulated time frame and report back to the Central Police Office.

He directed all SDPOs and SHO's to adhere to the designated office hours and prioritize resolving citizens' issues. He strictly directed the officers to continue the crackdown against land grabbers and bring them to justice.

On this occasion, the IG Islamabad said that the



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), conducts a live E-Katchery session at BISP Headquarters.

NA told 20 pink buses allocated to provide free of cost pick, drop to female students

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Monday told the National Assembly that 20 Pink Buses have been allocated to provide free of cost pick and drop facilities to female students, working women, and female teachers in Islamabad. Responding to a question during Question Hour, he said the initiative of Pink Buses has been taken to avoid drop-outs of

girl students. He said at present there were 311 operational buses at FDE Schools and Colleges to provide fetch and drop facility to the students of the federal capital. Previously 258 buses were functional and remaining were dysfunctional and parked due to either shortage of fuel fund, machinery faults or unviability of drives, he said.

He said it is worth mentioning here that FDE under M/o FEPT recently added 78 more buses from

dysfunctional buses to the pool of operational buses of public schools/colleges due to which the total number of operational buses have increased from 258 to 331. He said there was serious issue of shortage of funds for fuel and shortage of drivers and conductors. To cater this problem and to facilitate students and teachers, the FDE under M/o FEPT hired 200 drivers and conductors from third party through competition to provide bus service to the students.

Hot and dry weather likely in most parts of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast mainly hot and dry weather for most parts of the country during the next 24 hours. However, partly cloudy weather with rain-wind/thunderstorm is likely at isolated places in Gilgit-Baltistan, Potohar region, Kashmir and upper KP. According to the synoptic situation, continental air was prevailing over most parts of the country. A Shallow westerly wave has approached northern/western parts of the country from Monday night.



ISLAMABAD: National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) organized a Literacy Day Walk in collaboration with UNESCO in the Federal Capital.

Senate defers legislative business due to minister's engagement

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate deferred the legislative bills due to the minister's absence in the 342nd session of the House here on Monday.

Senator Farooq Ahmed Naek moved "The Rights of Persons Arrested, Detained or under Custodial Investigation Bill, 2020", by Senator Farooq Naek, "The Factories (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) (Amendment) Bill, 2023", and "The Guardians and Wards (Amendment) Bill, 2024" introduced by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, to be deferred till his presence in the next session. The presiding officer Sherry Rehman deferred the bills on the request till the next private day session to be held next Monday.

Meanwhile Senator Palwasha Mohammed Zai Khan withdrew the bill introduced by her further to amend the Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2013 [The Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) (Amendment) Bill, 2024".

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citizens' issues on merit is our top priority. Negligence and carelessness in duties will not be tolerated. Any citizen facing any issue related to the police can come to the Khuli Katchery. My office is always open for my citizens, the IGP said.

IG Islamabad further directed the concerned officers to resolve the citizen

Islamabad Police are taking various measures for the facilitation of citizens. The daily holding of Khuli Katchery helps in resolving issues on a priority basis, he added. Moreover, all zonal officers and SHO's are directed to meet citizens during the designated office hours and resolve their issues promptly and on merit.

Police nab 3 dacoits in shopkeeper's murder case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The investigators of the Homicide Investigation Unit (HIU) of Police Station Shams Colony on Monday have successfully solved a shopkeeper's murder case by arresting three dacoits.

According to Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police spokesperson, following the special directions of Inspector General (IG) of Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directions, the HIU police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending three wanted members of a snatcher gang.

He said the HIU arrested three suspects in connection with the murder of a shopkeeper brutally killed during a robbery in Shams Colony on resistance. The accused were identified as Usman Ali, Samar and Gul Rehman, he added.

HIU recovered snatched cash, documents, motorbike and weapons used in crime from their possession, he said.

During the preliminary interrogation, the accused confessed to being involved in numerous snatching activities in the premises of Shams Colony police stations, spokesperson said and added several cases have been filed against the suspects at Shams Colony Police Station.

Senate body approves 'Cannabis Control & Regulatory Authority bill

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Senator Kamil Ali Agha chaired the meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Science and Technology held today at Parliament House.

The Senate Committee unanimously passed the bill titled "The Cannabis Control and Regulatory Authority Bill, 2024." The Committee had detailed deliberations and passed the bill with amendments, in-

cluding the inclusion of two members of the Senate, one of whom is a woman, as members of the Board of Governors of the authority, along with amendments to other clauses of the bill.

Chairman PCSIR, Dr. Syed Hussain Abidi, stated that the bill aimed to ensure public health by regulating the cultivation and manufacturing of cannabis and to generate revenue by utilizing the economic potential

of the cannabis industry. He highlighted that cannabis can be used for industrial and medicinal purposes and has an economic potential of 4 to 6 billion dollars. Senator Musadik Masood Malik asserted that cannabis use could be limited to medicinal use and that necessary safeguards should be in place to curb the abusive use of cannabis.

In attendance were Senators Dr. Afnan Ullah

Khan, Jan Muhammad, Husna Bano, Musadik Masood Malik, Nasir Mehmood, Syed Shibli Faraz, Secretary for the Ministry of Science and Technology Sajid Baloch, Acting Secretary for the Ministry of Defence Ashfaq Kiyani, Chairman Pakistan Council of Scientific Research Dr. Syed Hussain Abidi and other senior officials from the relevant departments.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Kamil Ali Agha, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Science and Technology presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Tuesday September 10, 2024

More 'austerity'

Ever since returning to power, the Shehbaz Sharif government has been pushing an austerity narrative like all previous dispensations. This narrative is mostly built around the announcement of superficial measures and is not backed by concrete policy. Recently, it has notified certain cost-cutting measures. The so-called austerity package contains some cosmetic measures, such as a temporary ban on purchase of cars, machinery and equipment, as well as suspension of publicly-funded medical treatment abroad and "non-essential" foreign visits by federal government functionaries.

If you believe these measures will actually be implemented or slash the burgeoning current expenditures of the government, you are mistaken. These will not even scratch the surface. Such measures are no more than a publicity stunt aimed at appeasing angry voters. In addition to these measures, the government has decided to restructure and right-size the federal ministries and their attached departments to reduce costs. The cabinet has decided to abolish 150,000 jobs, outsource handyman jobs and get rid of surplus employees by offering them a severance package. These steps are said to be part of the ongoing exercise to cut the size of the federal government, complete the devolution agenda set by the 18th Amendment and save significant costs.

Again, this is not the first time a government has announced to abolish redundant posts and outsource odd jobs to the private sector. We should keep our fingers crossed and hope that these decisions will get implemented. However, the reduction in the number of federal employees will not make much difference without wide-ranging reforms to cut the perks of the higher bureaucracy through monetisation of various unlimited benefits enjoyed by them. With debt servicing constituting more than half of the federal budget expenditure, it has become imperative for the government to reduce its wasteful spending to slash its widening fiscal deficit and reduce its reliance on borrowings for financing its spending. However, the budget for the current year does not contain anything to indicate that the authorities are serious about cutting wasteful expenditure.

Consequently, according to a report in this paper, the domestic debt of the central government increased by Rs537bn in July pushing total public debt to Rs69.6tr from Rs68.914tr, reflecting the surging expenditure of the state machinery. The rapid increase in public debt does not support the austerity narrative of the government either.

Real austerity involves hard choices. There is no evidence to show that our politicians are ready to make these choices, at least not as yet. With Pakistan going through one of its worst economic and financial crises, the real austerity reforms cannot be put on hold for a very long time. The government will have to deal with these problems and execute actual reforms sooner or later.

**Shahid Kardar |
Shafqat Mahmood**

In an earlier article contributed by one of us in these columns it was argued that Pakistan is passing through a difficult phase, confronted by multiple challenges. And instead of being contained these are on the rise.

On the one hand, the population is growing exponentially with opportunities for a decent living not keeping pace with the rising numbers. And on the other, the gap between diminishing state capacity and people's expectations is making this task formidable. The civilian institutions on which the structure of the state rests, are largely dysfunctional, contributing to general pessimism and demoralisation.

Maintaining order is a basic duty of the state but recent events are showing ominous weakness of this capacity. An insurgency is seriously threatening Balochistan, reflecting a failure of sermons on patriotism to create a sense of togetherness. This sense of alienation is fueled by a perception among the people of political marginalisation and

lack of any effective control over their resources.

Elsewhere, sporadic, but lethal, attacks continue in the old tribal areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and are now spreading to D.I. Khan, Mardan and Swat. The situation in the riverine areas of upper Sindh and south Punjab is also alarming. Outlaws seemingly reign supreme with their area of operation expanding.

The ability of the state to provide justice has also declined. This is reflected in the judicial system's diminished ability to enforce a contract, arbitrate a dispute or hold criminals to account. This has seriously undermined the rule of law, another pre-requisite of a functioning state.

To summarise, the overall structure of governance barely seems to be working and is not responsive to today's challenges. While attempts at reform have been few and far between, even these have successfully been foiled by the bureaucracy.

The battle for rulership of the state presents an equally disconcerting picture. Irrespective of the text of the Constitution, the unfettered establishment effec-

tively rules, through its active involvement in the functioning of all state institutions.

To provide itself a thin veneer of civilian respectability, a civilian set-up with anaemic roots among the people has been foisted on an unwilling nation. And to preserve this status quo and to thwart all challenges to it, the ECP has been commanded, the Constitution defied, judiciary threatened, and parliament emasculated.

The result is that 'presiding' representative and supporting institutions lack moral legitimacy and general public ownership. The actions against the PTI and its leader Imran Khan have further estranged millions, who having lost trust in the integrity of the electoral system, and are disoriented on being disenfranchised. With severe alienation already visible in Balochistan, this denial of a people's mandate adds to the overall disaffection among the people with the state.

In our view, headway on issues of economy, security, justice and service delivery can only proceed if the basic organisational arrangement of the state has not just legal but also moral

legitimacy. Today, the representative and supporting institutions lack this and therefore have no public ownership.

The lack of legitimacy is engendering resentment and alienation, making governance difficult. Several elements of administration require active participation of the people, without which any task, be it development or security, becomes much tougher.

This is particularly crucial in fighting an insurgency because it cannot survive without popular support. This is also true of terrorism in general. An existential challenge to the state is thus directly linked to legitimacy and people's participation.

Legitimacy by most definitions would mean rule of law. And the fundamental law of any state is its Constitution. The legitimacy of the systems will come only from its rigorous implementation. While this may be a necessary condition, it is not a sufficient one. The Constitution can still be manipulated to merely observe its form, and sometimes not even that, to deny popular will and infringe on fundamental rights.

The February election is an example of form over content and substance. While every part of it was manipulated, an appearance of democracy was maintained through minimum constitutionality. How can state institutions demand others to remain within the ambit of the Constitution while themselves flouting it?

An attempt is now afoot in parliament to introduce amendments to the Constitution with the purpose of undermining judicial decisions and packing the court with handpicked judges. The Supreme Court can strike these down being violative of the basic structure of the Constitution, but this would mean a standoff between different organs of the state. This too is not desirable.

When we are suggesting a reset of the state it cannot be done through hostility and stand-offs. A realisation has to dawn on all stakeholders, and particularly the establishment, that the path we are on cannot be sustained. The way forward has to be collaboration not confrontation. All stakeholders need to sit together and chart a new course.

Only then will there be a chance of moving forward.

A lot needs to be done but to begin with we have to ensure legitimacy. It means a recognition of people's right to choose their representatives, and thereby who should govern them, through a free, impartial and transparent election. This has to be accompanied by the acceptance of results and a peaceful transfer of power.

Every state on the rise has been able to cross these two hurdles. We have almost never done so. This mindset has to change. Only then it would be possible to commence the long process of renewal.

Admittedly, sustained support for civilian institutions will only become ingrained from improved performance. To date, the record of matters essentially in the civilian domain hasn't been inspiring. Examples include the poorly negotiated IPPs, the quality of education delivery and the massive losses of state-owned enterprises. But, to begin with, the fundamental question of legitimacy has to be resolved before moving forward. Shafqat Mahmood is a former federal minister. -- Courtesy Dawn

Confront and engage

Maleeha Lodhi

US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan's recent visit to Beijing indicated an effort by both countries to de-escalate tensions ahead of the American presidential election in November.

Described as talks in their 'strategic communication' channel, discussions between Sullivan and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi ranged over all the issues that divide the two countries — Taiwan, trade, technology curbs, military postures in the South China Sea and, according to the US readout, China's support for Russia's 'industrial base'. They also discussed the possibility of a call between Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping to follow up on understandings reached last year in their face-to-face meetings in San Francisco and, earlier, in Bali.

It may be surprising for these talks to have taken place when the Biden administration is a lame duck. But the fact that the Chinese took them seriously underlines their desire to stabilise the relationship before the White House gets a new occupant. For the Chinese president to receive Sullivan was

a strong signal by Beijing that it wants to calm the turbulent relationship before uncertainties set in of how the next US president might act. President Xi told Sullivan he hoped the US would see China's development in a positive light and work with China to find a "right way" for the two major countries to "coexist". Both sides, he reiterated, should decide whether they are "rivals or partners".

Differences over contentious issues did not, of course, narrow — but the positive atmospheres of the interaction did help lower the temperature. Both sides agreed to implement mutual commitments on countering narcotics and AI safety and risk. Also agreed was the need for military leaders at the theatre command level to speak to each other to limit the risk of miscalculation.

These are welcome efforts to put relations on a stable track. But the key question for the future remains: how will the winning presidential candidate deal with Beijing?

America's policy of containing Beijing is not expected to change. China will continue to be seen as

a strategic challenge. From most accounts, Chinese officials seem apprehensive that, irrespective of who wins the election, Washington will adopt a combative approach. The Financial Times recently quoted a Chinese professor as saying both candidates are "two bowls of poison for Beijing". The Chinese apprehensions are well founded, given the bipartisan political consensus in the US is to act tough with China. Moreover, America's deep state regards China as an enemy, not just a competitor.

But, beyond this, would Donald Trump and Kamala Harris differ in their management of America's relationship with China?

Trump is largely a known quantity, but then he is also unpredictable and impulsive. This makes it difficult to predict his future conduct, especially as he is capable of suddenly changing course. There is even less certainty about the foreign policy a Harris administration would pursue. However, both see China as the major competitor and adversary, and neither is expected to soften their position if elected.

Trump is expected to continue his 'America First', unilateralist approach that characterised his previous administration. He has struck an aggressive tone during his campaign, saying he would raise tariffs on Chinese imports by 60 per cent. But he has also said he would seek a good relationship with Beijing. In an interview with Fox News last month, he said that while there is no greater critic of China than him, he respected China and President Xi.

Therefore, Trump will likely take a tough position on trade issues, just like in his first term. At the same time, though most of his team members are hawks on China, he can easily override their views. He is capable of being pragmatic, as his business instincts would urge him to be transactional and strike trade deals rather than seek to subdue a rival or impose sanctions. His admiration for 'strongmen' might also encourage pragmatism, especially as he often boasts about the "great relationship" he had with President Xi.

On Taiwan, Trump has never said America

would intervene militarily if China 'invaded' Taiwan, as Biden once declared. Otherwise, too, Trump would be averse to any military conflict with China. He has been critical of Taiwan, saying it should pay the US for defending it. He has also assailed Taiwan for "not giving anything to the US" and instead taking away "100pc of the semiconductor industry". While this is a mistaken view, Trump has never let facts stand between him and his assertions.

His stance on Ukraine could have a knock-on effect on ties with China. Often claiming he can end the war "in a day", Trump is likely to push for talks to end a conflict he says, "should never have happened."

He says he has a plan to end the war, which he will unveil if elected. "I'll have a deal made, guaranteed," he has claimed. Trump is also not interested in continuing military aid to Ukraine. If he makes good on his promise to end the war, this will remove a growing irritant in relations with China, which the Biden administration has accused of helping Russia's military-industrial base.

Kamala Harris's foreign policy pronouncements have been vague. Also, she has never been to China. But she is expected to continue the policy approach of the Biden administration, of which she was a part for four years. Biden took the rivalry with China to another level by raising tariffs on a wide range of Chinese imports and enhancing military aid to Taiwan. He also unleashed an intense tech war by curbs and sanctions on Chinese companies.

On containing China, Harris won't be any different. In her speech to the Democratic Convention, she pledged to ensure "that America — not China — wins the competition for the 21st century". She will likely seek to cement anti-China alliances in Asia, as Biden sought to do. Harris would also be less able to resist the US military's view of China as an enemy. Whatever the differences between Trump and Harris, neither would want unmanaged tensions with China to push the two countries towards a collision course or a rupture. That would have disastrous consequences not just for the US and China, but also the rest of the world.

Pride and prejudice

Zarrar Khuhro

For 15 years India put all its Bangladeshi eggs in a Hasina Wajid-shaped basket and, by extension, in her autocratically-led Awami League. No matter how rigged the elections held under the ousted ruler of Bangladesh were and no matter how repressive her rule became, the Modi government was always the first to offer support and succour. India has always been keen to assert its influence over smaller states in South Asia (hegemony is heady) and with a seemingly secure and strong Hasina firmly in their camp, strategic planners in New Delhi could be forgiven for thinking that Bangladesh would remain a firm ally for many years to come. After all, a friendly or subservient Bangladesh is critical to keeping India's perpetually restive north-eastern states in control, not to mention securing a decent return on Indian investments and lines of credit to Dhaka itself.

And then, in the space of just a few weeks, a prized asset turned into something of a liability when massive student-led protests forced Hasina to flee Dhaka and seek refuge in India.

Now the former prime minister has become a sticking point in relations between India and Bangladesh, where the protesters quite rightly accuse India of propping up Hasina's autocratic rule and harbouring suspicions that she may attempt to stage a comeback with the help of New Delhi or will, at the very least, try and destabilise the interim setup.

This suspicion is not eased by the fact that Hasina also refuses to stay silent: from her shelter in India, she has called for "justice," demanding that those involved in "terror acts" be "investigated and

punished." It was quite a stunning display ofchutzpah from a woman whose security forces reportedly gunned down hundreds of protesters and who was forced to flee after close aides and family members finally convinced her that the game was over.

This raised hackles in Dhaka; Muhammad Yunus, the head of Bangladesh's interim government, called allowing Hasina to speak an "unfriendly gesture" on the part of India and said that Delhi should at the very least keep her quiet until Dhaka formally asks for her extradition. "She has been given shelter there, and she is campaigning from there," said Yunus, who added that "she has to be brought back, or else the people of Bangladesh won't be at peace. The kind of atrocities she has committed, she has to be tried in front of everyone here."

But quite apart from New Delhi's own arrogance, the BJP's toxic use of religious nationalism (used with great success domestically) spread through both social media and mainstream Indian media, is also proving to be a major stumbling block in developing good relations with the new Bangladesh.

Even as the revolution was unfolding, Indian channels and social media dubbed it an 'Islamist' uprising while laughably also accusing Pakistan of playing a part in ore-h-estrating it. A narrative was developed that Hindus in Bangladesh are being systematically targeted and India's massive fake news machine swung into action, using old and out-of-context videos to paint a few isolated incidents as a nationwide pogrom.

Trained to hate Muslims regardless of their country of origin's ties with India, these rabid so-

cial media cadres would routinely target Bangladesh with fake news and vitriol even when Hasina was in power. Nor was the disdain limited to social media warriors; Home Minister Amit Shah routinely referred to Bangladeshi migrants as 'termites' and the Indian Border Security Force was notorious for targeting Bangladeshis.

Thus, even as Indian ties with Hasina flourished, a sense of resentment began to be fostered among the Bangladeshi people who saw India not only side with their oppressor, but also target and belittle them regularly in its propaganda ca-mpai-g-ns. As a result, long before the revolution, an "In-dia out" campaign was already underway in Bangladesh, calling for a boycott of Indian products to protest "India's relentless meddling in Bangladesh's domestic affairs."

The campaign echoed an earlier such movement in the Maldives, which has traditionally remained in the Indian orbit. Here too we see that the new leadership was bold enough to strike a new path in its foreign policy, moving away from dominance by India to a more balanced approach.

Nepal, another small state that — simply by dint of relative size and strength — should easily be in the Indian orbit has also sparked a new feud with its giant neighbour over the issuance of bank notes that show disputed territory as part of Nepal. One cannot change geography and all three of these states will have to do business with India regardless of their inclinations, but New Delhi would do well to recognise that while hate and derision may provide domestic dividends, they are not effective foreign policy tools. -- Courtesy Dawn

Adeel Wahid

"[A] Calcutta clerk in the mid-nineteenth-century Public Works Department of the colonial government would need little formal retraining for service in the contemporary CDA", observes Mathew Hull in his book, *Government of Paper — The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan*, published in 2012. As Hull puts it, the "normative formal procedure for handling communication and files has changed little over the last hundred years".

Our bureaucratic practices are stuck in the past. But that is not all. The entire bureaucratic framework seems defective, afflicted with major design flaws. Broadly, it is an inheritance from the British colonial system, aping the governance structure put in place by those who bore deep antipathy towards the "uncultured" locals. Dogs and Indians were not allowed in many places.

From recruitment to retirement, our bureaucratic system just does not make sense. The bureaucrats are generalists. They take exams in a varied number of subjects. During the entire process, there is immense focus on form, and little on substance. Margins, headings, diagrams, spacing, different colour markers and pens — all this is of major concern. Meanwhile, the subjects that are rote-learned rarely have anything to do with the offices that the candidates eventually occupy. This run-up is not a preparation for the job, but a test of nerves for surviving an archaic exam process. It all boils down to cracking the code, mastering how to write in an absolutely bland passive voice, in rigid and archaic English, probably not written or spoken any-

where else, other than in the postcolonial subcontinent.

From this gruelling process, only a few emerge successful. Almost all who put themselves through this ordeal choose this path because it ensures a life of relative dignity, with protection against the heavy-handedness of those with disproportionate power. Hull, in his book, refers to one seemingly powerful bureaucrat who confesses: "You know, when you have a big post, it doesn't mean you get anything done. It just means that you and your friends don't have any personal problems".

During the training process, again, the focus remains on form and not substance. To create that wedge between the bureaucrat and those he would govern, a bureaucrat is taught to dress a particular way, act and speak with a particular sense of authority. Training is not primarily focused on honing skills regarding what needs to be done, or inculcating an ethos of public service. It is about transforming a bureaucrat into a being who envisions himself entirely distinct from the common man, for whom the bureaucrat is encouraged to develop a sense of disdain. In the initial postings, a bureaucrat is equipped with guards, four-wheelers and colonial-era mansions, with massive walls, away from the residences of ordinary people.

The bureaucrats are not, in any meaningful way, beholden to the public. They are responsive only to their superiors, the politicians in power and obviously the men in uniform, thereby perpetuating a governance structure, which is by the elite, for the elite.

With years, as the bureaucrats are elevated,

the generalist credentials are, at best, marginally helpful in running the various important ministries, whose backbone they form. The cabinet takes its decisions on the basis of reports and summaries prepared by the bureaucrats and their underlings. They are often thick in bureaucratic speak, and thin on substance. Major decisions, of monumental importance, are taken on the basis of whatever level of understanding these generalists are able to develop.

Worse, these generalists do not stick around in one place for long enough to develop any in-depth understanding with regards to any one subject area. With every new government, and even in periods of relative political stability, the bureaucrats keep rotating. One day, a bureaucrat might be dabbling in agricultural policy, the next, he might be charting out the future course of higher education in Pakistan. And then, each bureaucrat may have his or her own style, understanding, and approach to the subject matter. As secretaries, at the helm, these bureaucrats get to exercise major influence in decision-making.

Not surprisingly, then, there is little consistency in policy. The random flip-flop from one course of action to another is extremely damaging. Even though the files stock up, gathering dust in nooks and corners, guarded from the public, the ministries are unable to develop any substantial institutional knowledge. Each bureaucrat gets to make his own mistakes, all over again. The discourse, therefore, that ties all issues to the lack of integrity of those in power is overly simplistic. There has to be a focus on our design flaws. -- Courtesy Dawn

Governor says: Ulema's role pivotal in upholding peace in society

RAWALPINDI (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan on Monday termed the role of Ulemas as pivotal in upholding peace in the society. He underlined the need of increased responsibilities particularly in countering the hostile agenda to sabotage interfaith harmony in the country.

The governor remarked this during his visit to Madrasa Taleem ul Quran where he met with the Molana Ashraf Ali, the head of the madrasa.

He appreciated the role of the madrasa with respect to the Khatam e Nabuwwat (The Finality of

the Prophethood) SAW. He said the historic madrasa has been engaged in the service of religion since the establishment of Pakistan. He presented a special tribute to the services of Maulana Ashraf Ali.

The governor said Pakistan is the only country that came into being in the name of Allah and His Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). He stressed for joint efforts to defeat the notorious designs of the enemy of the peace in the country.

"We all have to thwart the plans of the enemies together," he said.

Later, talking to the media, Governor Sardar

Salim reiterated his commitment to serving the people. Responding to a question, he said that the doors of Governor House are open for CM KPK.

"I will ask Ali Amin Gandapur to refrain from spreading unrest", he said adding that politics couldn't be run by aggressive slogans.

"Politics can't be run by raising Mola Jutt slogans", he said and asked the KPK CM to avoid irresponsible behavior.

The governor condemned Gandapur's statement regarding journalists saying it an 'irresponsible' statement.



RAWALPINDI: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider addressing to the media at Madrasa Tahleem ul Qur'an Raja Bazar.

CM, Nawaz visit Ravi Sapphire Bay, review construction work

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, along with PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, visited Ravi Sapphire Bay, a suburb of Sheikhpura on Monday.

The CM visited the sites of River Training Works and Barrage, and reviewed the construction work at Sapphire Bay. She also inspected the cofferdam site, said a handout issued here.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz expressed displeasure on public complaint of forcefully taking their land, and directed the authorities concerned to conduct a third party audit of the matter. She directed

to shift the slums coming in the project to suitable places, and agreed to a proposal to form a special team for monitoring the construction quality.

The CM directed to hire world's best professional consultants for Ravi River City project to ensure best construction quality in Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA) project. The CM and PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif were briefed in detail about the River Training Work Development Plan.

RUDA CEO Imran Amin said that 46 km channelization would be done in three phases on both sides of River Ravi, 36

percent of the area would be reserved for forests and greenery in the project. He added that 46-km long three-way road would be constructed from Siphon to Hudayara Drain, and 03 barrages would also be constructed in the Ravi River Front Project.

Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb and Special Assistant Rashid Nasrullah accompanied the Chief Minister. Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Secretary Housing Asadullah Khan, Commissioner Zaid Bin Maqsood, CEO Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA) Imran Amin and other relevant officers were also present.

UNDP's GLOF-II project to tackle Climate Change challenges in Swat

PESHAWAR (APP): UNDP Pakistan's Scaling Up of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) Risk Reduction Project (GLOF-II Project) recently held a series of Stakeholders' Communication and Coordination Workshops.

According to a press release issued here on Monday, these workshops brought together community members and representatives from various government departments, including PDMA, OFWM, Forest, SWC, and other relevant officials at the district or tehsil level.

From 7th to 9th September 2024, UNDP GLOF-II Project organized these workshops in Utror, Matiltan and Mankiyal valleys of District Swat.

The workshops provided a platform to identify and address potential communication and coordination challenges that may arise during the Project's implementation in these areas. The primary objective of these workshops was to

ensure clear and effective communication and coordination among all stakeholders involved in the project, ensuring that community members are well-informed and actively engaged throughout the Project's duration.

"This workshop gave us the opportunity to voice our concerns. We were pleased to see that the stakeholders listened to our inputs and assured us that the Project activities will fully reflect our perspective," said Mahmood Khan, a resident of Matiltan valley.

UNDP's GLOF-II project works in 16 valleys of Gilgit Baltistan and 08 valleys of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It empowers communities to identify and manage risks associated with GLOFs and related impacts of climate change, strengthens public services to lower the risk of disasters related to GLOFs, and improves community preparedness and disaster response.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health and Chairman Cabinet Committee for Disaster Management Khawaja Salman Rafique reviewing the current situation of weather at PDMA Head Office.

Health minister pays surprise visit to Children's Hospital

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique on Monday paid a surprise visit to the Children's Hospital, Lahore.

He visited the emergency, cardiology, outpatient department (OPD), operating theaters, and other sections of the hospital, inspecting the sanitation and medical facilities. Pro Vice Chancellor of the University of Child Health Sciences, Prof. Junaid Rashid, and Managing Director of Children's Hospital, Prof. Tipu Sultan, briefed the Provincial

Health Minister in this regard.

The minister stated that sanitation and medical services had been reviewed across various departments of the Children's Hospital, Lahore. He emphasized that efforts were being made to provide better treatment facilities to patients in government hospitals. The first priority of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was to improve healthcare services for the people. The capacity of government children's hospitals in Punjab was being increased, he added.

President PFUJW, GS VJAP denounce KP CM allegations against journalists

PESHAWAR (APP): President Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists Workers (PFUJW) and senior journalist Shamim Shahid and General Secretary of Video Journalists' Association Peshawar (VJAP) on Monday denounced the allegations of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur against the journalists during Sangiani rally and said that unfortunately, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's leadership have forgotten all the political and social values, adding that Ali Amin Gandapur was no longer a political worker or a common man but a Chief Minister and he should be mindful of his language.

Shamim said that the allegations leveled against the journalists were very inappropriate and he should publicly make an apology for his nasty words.



KARACHI: Members of Pakistan Bihar Joint Action Committee are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Karachi press club.

Commissioner Karachi reviews arrangements for Eid Milad celebrations

KARACHI (APP): Commissioner Karachi, Syed Hassan Naqvi on Monday chaired a meeting to review the arrangements for the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) celebrations.

The Commissioner directed that the celebrations be held with religious zeal and fervour in Karachi.

He directed the concerned officials to ensure the provision of civic facilities, security arrangement, and traffic management during the celebrations.

The meeting was attended among others by DIG Police east Ghulam Azfar Mahesar, Chief Op-



KARACHI: Sindh Police Inspector General (IG), Ghulam Nabi Memon presides over a high-level meeting, at CPO Headquarters in Karachi.

Communities empowered on sustainable waste management by turning trash into resource

PESHAWAR (APP): The Institute of Urbanism (IoU) with the support of Heinrich Boll Stiftung is empowering communities on sustainable waste management skills as how trash can be transformed into something valuable.

According to a press release issued here on Monday, a workshop was held in connecting with managing waste and also about creating opportunities for a better future for families.

During the sessions, participants learned that much of what we consider

"waste" is a resource waiting to be tapped.

Approximately 60% to 70% of the waste produced daily by households consists of wet waste, instead of discarding it, Aqsa Arshad, Founder Eco-organics, taught simple ways to turn it into organic fertilizer, offering not just environmental benefits, but the potential to earn a living.

Plastic waste was another big focus.

The workshop showed how even a common plastic bottle could be recycled into poly-

ester fabric for clothing. "Waste has value," was the takeaway for many participants, as they realized that their household waste could be part of something bigger.

Tayyaba Pervaiz, program Assistant, IoU, shared simple yet powerful ideas on how everyday items could be transformed into something new and profitable.

"Upcycling isn't just about giving old things a second life," she said. "It's about realizing the value in what we often throw away."

Anti polio drives starts in KP to immunize over 5.75 mln children

PESHAWAR (APP): The anti-polio campaign has started in 27 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to vaccinate 5.75 million children under the age of five against the crippling disease.

According to the Polio Emergency Operation Center of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this campaign is being conducted in two phases. In the first phase of the campaign, a total of 57 lakh 53 thousand 52 children would be administered polio drops in 27

specific districts.

More than 672,000 children would be vaccinated in the second phase, it said adding that 35,259 teams of trained polio workers including 24,862 mobile teams, 7,300 observers, 1,724 fixed teams, 1,245 transit teams and 128 roaming teams have been formed to administer the polio drops. As many as 7,175 area in-charges have also been deployed for monitoring of these teams to ensure vaccination of all children in these areas.

Woman among two shot dead

FAISALABAD (APP): Two people, including a woman, were shot dead in Saddar Jaranwala police limits on Monday.

A police spokesman said Sana Bibi of Chak No 72-GB with her relative Akhtar Bashir was going to Judicial Complex Jaranwala for hearing a murder case when unidentified assailants gunned down them near Chak No 109.

On information, Regional Police Officer Dr Abid Khan took notice of the double murder and directed City Police Officer (CPO) Kamran Adil to probe the matter and submit the report at the earliest.

Salman Rafique visits PDMA head office

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee for Disaster Management, Khawaja Salman Rafique, on Monday visited the PDMA Head Office.

He reviewed the current weather situation as well as the rescue and relief efforts in the flood-affected areas. The PDMA director gave a briefing to the provincial minister on the relief activities in these areas. During the briefing, it was mentioned that the water flow in all the rivers and canals of Punjab is normal.



HYDERABAD: Lady Health workers administering polio drops to child student to kicks off nationwide Polio Eradication Programme 2024 at local private school.

UNICEF delegation calls on ACS South Punjab

MULTAN (APP): A delegation led by Scott Whoolery, Deputy Country Representative of UNICEF in Pakistan, met with Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) South Punjab, Fuad Hashim Rabbani, here on Monday.

Secretary Services South Punjab, Amjad Shoaib Khan Tareen was also present in the meeting.

The meeting focused on discussing the ongoing five-year country program of UNICEF, supported by

the Punjab Government.

The Additional Chief Secretary commended the UNICEF for its contributions to education, maternal and child healthcare, and clean drinking water provision in flood-affected areas of South Punjab.

He highlighted that poverty and low literacy rates are the main challenges in South Punjab and that the South Punjab Secretariat is implementing a comprehensive policy to address these issues.

PU awards 10 PhD degrees

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab University (PU) has awarded PhD degrees to its ten scholars after approval of their thesis in various disciplines.

According to spokesperson, Muhammad Amer Raza S/o Abdul Qudooos was awarded PhD degree in the subject of Communication Studies.

Similarly, Asma Majeed D/o Abdul Majeed in the subject of Gender Studies, Hasnat Ahmad S/o Ghazanfar Ali in Gender Studies, Sadia Bashir D/o Bashir Ahmed in Mathematics, Nasira Rafi D/o Muhammad Rafi Ullah Awan in Molecular Biology, Ifra Sana Ullah D/o Sana Ullah in Solid State Physics.

KPJA completes series of capacity building training for paralegal staff

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy Peshawar (KPJA) has completed a series of training programmes, aimed at enhancing the professional skills and capacity uplift of Paralegal Staff of district judiciary including Stamp Vendors, Petition Writers, Oath Commissioners and Notary Public.

The inaugural session of the last one day training for Stamp Vendors held at the Academy, with Director General, Mr. Jehanzeb Shinwari, as the chief guest.

Dean Faculty, Mr. Zia-Ur-Rehman, Senior Director Administration, Mr. Dost Mohammad Khan, Senior Director Research &

Publication, Dr. Qazi Attaulah and other officers and Directors of the Academy were also present on the occasion.

In his welcome address, Director General, KPJA, emphasized that the objective of this one-day training was to strengthen the justice sector by boosting the professional capabilities of Paralegal staff (Stamp Vendors).

He highlighted the essential role of Stamp Vendors in the preparation of documents and documentary evidence required by the courts. He added that their status is not like that of an ordinary book-seller, paper-seller and stationery seller, rather their status is

Father arrested over killing son

FAISALABAD (APP): City Samundri police on Monday claimed to have arrested a man for killing his infant son during a scuffle with his wife.

A police spokesman said Haidar Abbas of Video Market Samundri tortured his wife Sonia Haneef during a scuffle over some domestic dispute but accidentally his punch hit his son Ali Hasnain (three months).

As a result, the baby died on the spot before getting any medical assistance.

On information, the City Samundri police conducted a raid and arrested the accused.

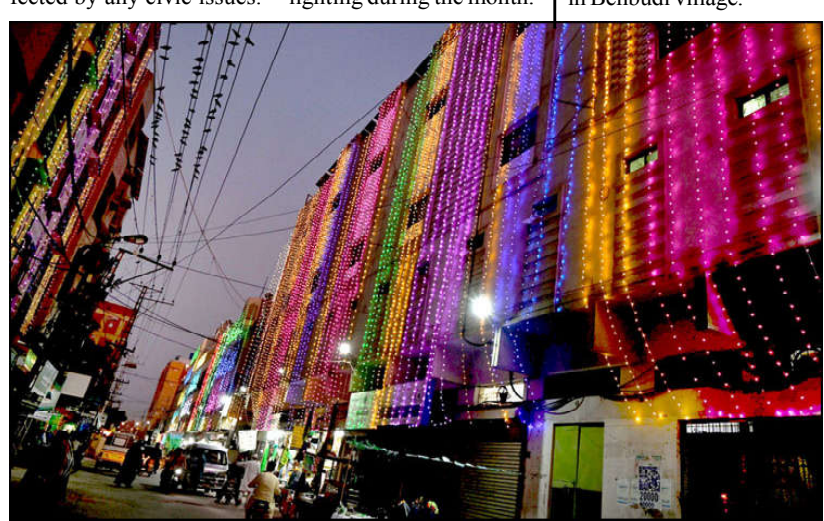
Mayor assures of cleanliness, street lights for celebratory events of Rabiul Awal

HYDERABAD (APP): The Mayor of Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (HMC) Kashir Ali Shoro has said Rabiul Awal is a very important and religiously significant month for Muslims because the Almighty sent his beloved Prophet (PBUH) on earth to introduce humans to Islam.

Addressing a meeting at his office here on Monday, attended by organizers of various groups arranging Eid Miladun Nabi related events and activities, the mayor assured that the HMC would play its part to ensure that the month's celebrations are not affected by any civic issues.

He added that the HMC would maintain cleanliness and street lights would be arranged in the areas from where the celebratory rallies would pass or where Eid Miladun Nabi (SAW) related events would be held. Shoro assured the organizers that all the issues which were pointed out by them during the meeting would be addressed on priority. "We will make sure that the arrangements related issues are addressed before 12th Rabiul Awal," he said.

On the occasion the mayor formed a 3-member committee to spearhead the exercise of cleanliness and lighting during the month.



HYDERABAD: An illuminated view of Faizan-e-Madina decorated with colorful lights in connection with upcoming Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) celebrations.

NA told Commerce Ministry in final stage to hire company for branding Pakistani products abroad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday informed the National Assembly that the ministry was in final stage to hire a company for branding and promotion of various Pakistani products abroad especially at various new markets under commerce marketing and branding mechanism.

Replying to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, the minister said that around 20 foreign chefs who participated at the food exhibition recently held at Karachi, also appreciated promotion of Pakistani mangoes.

He said this year mangoes' export not only witnessed sharp increase but there also was visible difference in its value addition.

He said during the current year, Pakistani mangoes were marketed across the world as mangoes' diplomacy. For the first time, all Pakistani missions organized special one or two-day events featuring mangoes diplomacy, he said and added that 100-300 people

including ambassadors were invited to these events for promotion of Pakistani mangoes and products prepared from it.

However, he said that American and European countries have some certain quality compliance requirement process as these were included in perishable items, he added.

Regarding date, Jam Kamal said that Pakistan has huge potential of various varieties of date at Khairpur and some other areas including Balochistan. Soon after, assuming a charge of the Ministry of Commerce, a plan has been chalked out by the Horticulture Department in order to reach out to the farmers so value additions of various products including date besides international compliances could be enhanced.

The minister said that the Trade Development Authority did remarkable job in last 8-9 months especially in agricultural sector under trade diplomacy. The commerce ministry organized a food exhibition at

Karachi in which over 850 delegates participated. Some 150 delegates were from European countries, China, South America, Germany and Africa, he added.

Jam Kamal said around 6000 business to business (B2B) agreements were signed during the exhibition. Pakistan exports to Germany were around \$ 2 billion plus and import stood around \$ 700 million, he added.

He said we have taken various initiatives to further enhance our trade with Germany and German Trade Minister also visited Pakistan. Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) regularly participates in various exhibitions and during FY 2023-24 eleven trade fairs were successfully organized in Germany, he added.

The minister said TDAP has planned nine international exhibitions and two outgoing delegations for Germany for B2B engagements. TDAP regularly conducts the series of webinars and seminars for market awareness.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi visiting Artisans at work exhibition in the Federal Capital.

Minister stresses Women's empowerment through IT training at KPT Industrial Home

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, on Monday highlighted the importance of empowering women through digital skills at the inauguration of a free computer centre at the KPT Industrial Home in Keamari.

Speaking at the event, the Minister emphasized the need for facilities that equip women with the skills necessary to contribute to the nation, ensuring gender equality in various domains. The centre, established under the vision of Maritime Affairs Minister, aims to enhance the skills of women residing in

Keamari and surrounding areas. During his address, he stressed that similar opportunities would be provided in the future across social, educational, and economic domains to further empower women. He also noted that KPT employs women in over 13% of its posts, setting a benchmark for women's inclusion in the workforce.

Chairman KPT, Syedain Raza Zaidi, echoed the Minister's sentiments, stating that empowering women is crucial for societal development. He highlighted that the new computer centre aims to equip women with IT skills, en-

hancing their employability and opening doors to new opportunities. Syedain Raza Zaidi underscored KPT's commitment to social responsibility and community development, with a focus on fostering digital competencies among women in Keamari.

The event was attended by General Managers and officials from KPT, along with prominent figures from the Keamari community, reflecting strong support for the initiative. Following the inauguration, Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh also visited the KPT Sports Centre of Martial Arts in Keamari.

Forte AI launches revolutionary App to search job worldwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Finland's renowned IT company, Forte AI, has developed a revolutionary App powered by artificial intelligence (AI) designed to help the global workforce search for suitable jobs worldwide.

This App will be available to both the public and companies by the end of December this year, enabling job seekers to upload their CVs and companies to post their profiles. Users can find suitable jobs or services based on individual qualifications.

This initiative was launched to make global employment more accessible, keeping pace with modern demands and enabling individuals and companies to benefit from a streamlined hiring process.

In an exclusive interview with APP, Forte AI's founder and Chief Operating Officer (COO), Jan Kristian Valkonen, said, "Our goal is to empower the global workforce. In today's fast-paced digital era, finding jobs and access-

ing qualified workers has become increasingly challenging."

He explained that the Forte AI App offers a comprehensive solution to these challenges, benefiting job seekers, students, companies, and freelancers.

According to him, users won't need to rewrite their experiences or qualifications on the Forte AI platform, as the app provides automated assistance.

However, both job seekers' CVs and company profiles must be complete and up-to-date. This App is set to be a game-changer for fresh graduates, experienced professionals, freelancers, and companies alike. One of the App's standout features is its self-writing resume tool, which eliminates the need for frequent CV updates, saving users valuable time. By leveraging AI technology, the app helps users align precisely with the requirements of any job posting, project, or career opportunity, making the process more efficient and seamless.



LAHORE: Punjab Poultry Association President, Tariq Javed addresses to media persons during press conference, at Lahore press club.

MCCI calls for cutting down interest rate by 4 pc in Sept monetary policy

MULTAN (APP): The Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) appealed to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and the government to urgently review the current economic conditions before announcing the new monetary policy.

With inflation rates having dropped to 10 pc, it is necessary to reduce the bank interest rates by at least 4 pc (400 basis points) to facilitate economic recovery, it said.

In a statement issued here on Monday, Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) President Mian Rashid Iqbal emphasized that reducing interest rates is crucial for several reasons. Low interest rates will immediately attract investment from businesses, leading to job

creation across the country and economic growth, he said and added that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large companies are the backbone of the economy.

An immediate reduction in interest rates will provide them with financial stability so they can invest and achieve long-term stability, Mian Rashid Iqbal noted. A cut in interest rates will also increase consumers' disposable income, leading to higher demand for goods and services and growth in key sectors of the economy. The MCCI president highlighted the urgent need for these measures in the current business climate and urged the government and the SBP to reduce the interest rate by 400 basis points in the September monetary policy.



ISLAMABAD: Dealers and wholesalers engage in negotiations over onion sack sales at the Fruits and Vegetables market.

Kirmani for bringing modern high yielding seeds of crops

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani said on Monday that cotton crop had a status of cash crop for the country's economy and due to climate change and lack of modern seed technology its production was decreasing.

He presided over the meeting here at Agriculture House which reviewed innovations in modern tech-

nology of seeds of cotton, maize and other important crops. Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture Usama Khan Leghari and Punjab Agriculture Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo attended the meeting. Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani said that there was a need to bring modern high yielding seeds of cotton, maize and other important crops at the doorsteps of farmers.

Aramco has not commissioned any site in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Gas & Oil Pakistan Ltd (GO) Chief Operating Officer Zeeshan Tayyeb on Monday clarified that 'no Aramco site has been commissioned anywhere in Pakistan so far.'

In a statement, Tayyeb said that a formal announcement will be made in this regard at an appropriate time.

GO said it has issued the clarification in response to the misleading picture and news circulating on social media.

GO a business partner of the Saudi oil giant Aramco, in Pakistan, has said that no site has been commissioned and the picture is of some other site outside Pakistan.

Aramco, one of the world's leading integrated energy and chemicals companies completed its acquisition of a 40 percent equity stake in Gas & Oil Pakistan Ltd. earlier this year.

FWCCI demands reduction in interest rate

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI) has demanded reduction in the interest rate by 4 percent for improving the working of small and medium women enterprises as well as large businesses.

In a statement here on Monday, President FWCCI Robina Amjad said that inflation figures have been reduced to single digit. Hence, it has become imperative that immediate steps should be taken to reduce the bank interest rates by 4 percent in the forthcoming monetary policy to help the business sector especially female SMEs, she added.

She said that reduced interest rates will help in enhancing economic activities in the country by improving purchasing power of the consumers which would reciprocally help in stabilizing the national economy.

Therefore, the concerned quarters should concentrate and take up this issue seriously to ensure healthy business climate in the country especially for female SMEs, she added.

PCCC appreciates CCRI for approval of three cotton varieties

MULTAN (APP): Three cotton varieties of Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Sakrand, a subsidiary of Pakistan Central Cotton Committee Multan, were approved for cultivation in the 36th Sindh Seed Council Meeting, held in Karachi.

The approved varieties include one non BT CRIS 644, and two BT CRIS 674, and BT CRIS 682. These newly approved varieties from CCRI Sakrand are recognized for their high-quality fiber, heat tolerance, and higher pro-

ductivity. Dr. Yusuf Zafar, Vice President of PCCC, congratulated the entire CCRI Sakrand team on their achievement, acknowledging their tireless efforts and success.

The meeting, chaired by Sindh's Minister of Agriculture, Sardar Muhammad Baksh Mahar, brought together agricultural experts, cotton specialists, seed breeders, prominent farmers, and representatives from public and private institutions, said a release issued by PCCC. The meeting dis-

cussed new cotton varieties and made significant decisions to enhance the quality and productivity of seeds for other crops.

Dr. Yusuf Zafar hailed the development as a milestone for Pakistan's agricultural research system, attributing the success to the hard work of scientists. He reiterated PCCC's commitment to providing farmers with new and improved cotton varieties through its research institutions.

The Director of CCRI Sakrand, Dr. Muhammad Idrees Khan.



LAHORE: Convener Chamber of Commerce Dr. Saleha Mehmood, Dr. Muhammad Shafiq, are giving honorary shield on behalf of Lahore Chamber to President of Punjab Poultry Traders Mian Tariq Javed.

OEC sends skilled workforce to Bahrain

ISLAMABAD (APP): Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) an attached department of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) would export the skilled labour to Kingdom of Bahrain. An official source told APP here on Monday, he said that OEC already sending the workforce to Gulf States and Europe and all these workers are playing vital role for boosting the national economy.

He said that our esteemed client Bahrain Fiber Glass (BFG) in Bahrain required a Pakistani Workforce in the Kingdom of Bahrain who meet the prescribed qualifications and experience as trimmers 4, trimming complex product matrix certificate or diploma in the relevant field, at least 02-years of experience, 140-150 BD salary, accommodation+ Overtime.

Carpenter (Pattern Assembly), finishing carpenter, High School Certificate or Diploma in the Relevant Field at least 02-Years of experience and salary 140-150 BD with free accommodation + Overtime. A number of skilled workers required in the field of Laminator & Panels Production, vacuum, infusion, process High School Certificate or Diploma in the Relevant Field, at least 02-Years of experience and salary 140-150 BD accommodation + Overtime, Preferred ITI (any trade) Diploma (2 years), Food Allowance will not be provided by the Company.

He said that a number of workers required in the different field including painters for color matching glass, poly engineer, quality engineer, Industrial engineer, Welding Engineer, operation supervisor-UHPC, design engineer.

Rupee sheds 14 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Monday depreciated by 14 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.85.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.85 and Rs 280.35 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by Rs 1.37 to close at Rs 308.21 against the last day's closing of Rs 309.58, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs 194, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.97 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 365.22 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 367.19.

FPCCI & UPTIB sign MOU for strengthening economic ties between business communities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) & UK-Pakistan Trade & Investment Board (UPTIB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for strengthening economic ties between the business communities of Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The agreement marks a significant step towards enhancing trade, investment and economic col-

laboration between the two countries. Mr. Tariq Mehmood Jadoon Vice President FPCCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination FPCCI, Mian Shaikat Masood Fromer Vice President FPCCI, Mr. Waqas Khan Sawati Deputy Convener FPCCI Standing Committee on fair and exhibition, Managing Director UPTIB Azhar Warraich, Head Partnerships & Corporate Linkages UPTIB Nauman Rasool are also present on this occasion.

The MoU was signed by the President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh & CEO UPTIB Tajmul Hussain. The MOU was signed at a simple ceremony held at the FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad.

Mastercard, UPaisa launch new debit card

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mastercard and UPaisa – a digital and financial app by U Microfinance Bank and Ufone 4G – have launched a new physical and virtual debit card, advancing the digital payments landscape in Pakistan. Consumers can now benefit from a hassle-free and secure way to shop online with over 7,500 online merchants in Pakistan and wherever Mastercard is accepted globally. Furthermore, consumers can use more than 120,000 POS in-store machines and withdraw cash from more than 18,000 ATMs nationwide. UPaisa wallet users can also enjoy enhanced security features, and fast and convenient transactions while becoming part of the global Mastercard network that has access to over 100 million acceptance locations internationally.

"Our collaboration with UPaisa builds on our common goals of supporting Pakistan's increasing

shift towards a digital economy. In line with the objectives of the country's Vision 2025, the launch of this new debit card will support the transformation of Pakistan's payments landscape while enabling seamless, safe, and convenient consumer experiences, powered by advanced technology," said Muhammad Nana, Senior Vice President, Digital Partnerships, EEMEA, Mastercard.

Mastercard's partnership with U Microfinance Bank – a wholly owned subsidiary of Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), and the issuer of the new card – will enable consumers and businesses in 32 countries, across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa benefit through a variety of new technologies and user-friendly experiences. "The UPaisa debit card in partnership with Mastercard is a testament to our sustained commitment in improving the digital banking.

Senate Committee reviews critical issues on LDI license renewal, accountability

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunications, chaired by Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, convened today at Parliament Lodges.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the PTA briefed the Committee members on the issues related to the renewal of LDI/FLL licenses. He reported that the license renewal issue primarily affects four companies, including Wateen, which has an extensive fiber optic infrastructure spanning 24 cities, primarily in Balochistan and interior Sindh. Wateen is also connected to 44 banks and NADRA. Although a committee was formed to address the li-

cence renewal issue, it was unable to resolve the matter. Wateen's license expired in July 2024, but the company secured a court-issued stay order. The Committee Chairperson emphasized that failure to renew these licenses could result in significant losses.

Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan also raised concerns about the potential impact on the network if these companies' licenses were not renewed. PTA officials responded, explaining that the suspension of the companies' operations would greatly affect the network, and it would take significant time to restore services. They also mentioned that PTCL cannot compensate for the gap left by these companies if their operations are

halted. Regarding LDI's required payments, the Secretary MoITT proposed that the vacation of stay orders on the said matter is crucial to have the matter resolved. Also, the policy directive from the Federal Government is mandatory for such matters to not arise again in the future.

The Chairperson of the Committee also raised concerns about the lack of accountability of the former Secretary, specifically inquiring about a letter issued by the Secretary in May 2024, wherein a policy directive was issued by the Ministry, without seeking due approval from the Cabinet. The Chairperson requested a list of individuals responsible for overseeing the matter and questioned whether the actions.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunication presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament Lodges.

China's Xi, Spain's Sanchez seek to ease EU-China trade disputes

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday urged visiting Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez to play a "constructive role" in improving strained ties between Beijing and the European Union.

Sanchez for his part said he hoped the EU could avoid a trade war with China even as Brussels weighs imposing tariffs on China-manufactured electric vehicles.

In their meeting, Xi also talked up deepening commercial ties between China and Spain in sectors such as artificial intelligence, digital economy, new energy and other high-tech fields.

The Chinese leader said Beijing wanted to work with Brussels to further develop a China-EU relationship where the two maintain their indepen-

dence and autonomy but also succeed together and bring benefit to the world, a Chinese readout said.

"It is hoped Spain will continue to play a constructive role in this regard," Xi added.

Sanchez responded: "Spain wants to work constructively so that relations between the two are closer, richer and more balanced."

Beijing in June said that frictions with the EU over its plans to impose tariffs of up to 36.3% on its electric vehicles (EVs) could trigger a trade conflict, days after China announced a retaliatory anti-dumping probe into European pork imports.

China in August then raised the stakes by opening an investigation into the 27-strong bloc's dairy subsidies.

Prior to meeting Xi, Sanchez told business

events Spain would work for a negotiated consensus to the EV dispute within the World Trade Organization and that a "trade war would benefit no one," a government source said.

Spain in 2023 exported \$1.5 billion worth of the pork products that China will investigate, Chinese customs data showed, dwarfing the outbound shipments from second- and third-ranking the Netherlands and Denmark.

Spain also sold just under \$50 million worth of targeted dairy products to China last year.

But in a promising sign for Spain's pork producers, a separate source with direct access to Xi's meeting with Sanchez said the two leaders had "found harmony and understanding," when asked about possible curbs on China's outbound pork shipments.



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and China's President Xi Jinping meet at Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China.

At least 48 killed in Nigerian fuel truck explosion

Monitoring Desk
NIGERIA: At least 48 people were killed in a fuel tanker truck explosion following a collision with another vehicle in north-central Nigeria, the state's disaster management agency said.

The State Emergency Management Agency in north-central Niger state said the fuel truck collided with a truck carrying travellers and cattle. Several other vehicles were also caught up in the accident, it

said.

The agency's spokesperson Hussaini Ibrahim put the death toll at 48 and officials were still trying to clear the scene of the incident.

Nigeria's state-owned firm NNPC Ltd last week hiked the price of gasoline by at least 39%, the second major increase in more than a year but shortages have continued, forcing motorists to queue for hours in the country's major cities and towns.

Forty-seven inmates escape from Liberian prison

Monitoring Desk
MONROVIA: Forty-seven inmates have escaped from a maximum security prison in Liberia's Margibi County, a rural area east of the West African country's capital Monrovia, the justice ministry said on Monday.

Initial investigations suggested the inmates had managed to escape at a breach in the prison's security system, the ministry said.

"The Ministry of Justice is deeply concerned about this incident and is taking all necessary measures to ensure the recapture of the escaped inmates," it said in a statement. The ministry said additional officers had been deployed to help with the search for the prisoners.

Israel orders more evacuations in Gaza after militants fire rockets

Monitoring Desk
NEWS YORK: The Israeli military has ordered another evacuation of some residential areas in north-west Gaza where it says Palestinian militants fired rockets on the nearby Israeli town of Ashkelon.

The orders issued on Monday came after a rocket attack triggered air raid sirens in Ashkelon the day before.

UK asks Afghan embassy to shut its doors

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The United Kingdom government has asked the Afghanistan embassy to shut down its diplomatic mission, it emerged on Sunday.

The decision was communicated to Zalmay Rassoul, Afghanistan's ambassador to the UK.

In a statement, Mr Rassoul said, "The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in London is scheduled to officially close and will cease its operations on September 27, 2024, at the official request of the host country."

"This decision has been made based on the requirements of the host country's authorities. We thank and appreciate all colleagues, citizens, and related institutions who have

sincerely cooperated with the Afghan Embassy in London during this period."

The closure follows a recent announcement by the interim Afghan Taliban government, declaring that documents issued by 14 embassies — including the one in London — were invalid. These dozen embassies are still operated by diplomats appointed by Afghanistan's former government, and they refuse to follow orders from the incumbent Taliban regime due to their lack of international recognition.

According to news reports, many of these embassies continued to resist Taliban rule, operating independently and grappling with a lack of financial support.



Pope Francis watches as children in traditional attire present gifts, next to East Timor's President Jose Ramos Horta, during a meeting at the Presidential Palace in Dili, East Timor.

US elections: Trump, Harris neck and neck in presidential race, poll says

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: With the US presidential election just two months away, recent polls reveal a tight race between Republican nominee and former President Donald Trump and Democratic candidate and Vice President Kamala Harris.

A survey conducted by The New York Times and Siena College shows Trump with a narrow lead at 48 per cent, just one percentage point ahead of Harris. However, when averaging polls conducted across the nation, Harris has edged ahead with 49pc, giving her a 2-point lead over Trump.

The poll results highlight the competitive nature of the race as the candidates prepare for their first televised debate on September 10. The debate, set to take

place at ABC News studios in New York, will be a crucial moment for both candidates as they vie for voters' support ahead of the November 5 election.

Nearly 30pc of the respondents admitted they were not well-informed about Harris's political stance, indicating potential challenges for the Democratic candidate in solidifying her platform with the electorate. On the other hand, a majority of voters believe they have a clear understanding of Trump's political views.

As the election approaches, both candidates are expected to intensify their campaigns, focusing on key battleground states and undecided voters who could swing the outcome of the race.

Germany to put temporary controls on all land borders, source says

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser will on Monday announce temporary border controls at all of Germany's land borders in order to tackle irregular migration and protect the public from Islamist extremism, a government source told Reuters.

Faeser, who is scheduled to hold a press conference on a package of security measures at 1430 GMT, will notify the European Commission of the plans, the source said.

The German government has been consulting with the main opposition CDU party on ways to curb migration in the face of public concern and following a deadly knife attack by a Syrian asylum seeker last month in the city of Solingen.

No one intervenes as woman raped on footpath in India

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: A woman ragpicker was allegedly raped by a man after he forced her to consume liquor in the Agar Naka area of Indian state of Madhya Pradesh the other day, police said.

After the woman filed a complaint about the incident that took place in the Ujjain city on Wednesday, the accused was arrested. The Hindu reported.

The video of the woman being raped on a footpath in the Ujjain city unleashed a war of words between the Congress and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as the opposition party trained its guns over the "deteriorating law and order" in the state pointing out that the crime took place in Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's

constituency, according to a report in The Indian Express on Thursday.

Police also arrested the man who allegedly filmed and shared the video of the rape, Independent reported on Sunday.

Police said the woman was raped on one of the busiest intersections of the city and the incident was also filmed by passersby, and yet nobody intervened.

City Superintendent of Police (CSP) Om Prakash Mishra said on Thursday: "Yesterday, at around 3:30pm, a woman came to the police station and reported that she had been raped. Immediately a woman officer was called and her story was heard and an FIR was registered after informing the senior officers."

Ten former top US military officials back Harris

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A group of 10 retired top US military officials endorsed US Vice President Kamala Harris in a letter made public on Monday, saying she is the only presidential candidate fit to serve as the nation's commander-in-chief and calling her Republican rival Donald Trump "a danger to our national security and democracy."

The letter, signed by Retired General Larry Ellis and Retired Rear Admiral Michael Smith, among others, cited Trump's comments disparaging members of the military and his own "chaotic approach" to Afghanistan ahead of the US withdrawal, including negotiating a deal with the Taliban that allowed 5,000 of the group's fighters to return to the battlefield.

UN rights chief voices 'abhorrence' of Afghanistan 'vice' law

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The UN rights chief on Monday slammed Afghanistan's latest laws curtailing women's rights, decriing the "outrageous" and "unparalleled" repression of half the country's population. Speaking before the United Nations Human Rights Council, Volker Turk made clear his "abhorrence of these latest measures".

The Taliban government in Afghanistan — which took power in 2021 but is yet to be recognised by any other country — published a widely criticised law in August further tightening restrictions on women's lives. While many of the measures have been informally enforced since the Taliban's takeover in 2021, their formal codification sparked an outcry from the international community and rights groups.

The new "vice and virtue" law dictates that a woman's voice should not be raised outside the home and that women should not sing or read poetry aloud.

India's top court orders protesting doctors to resume work by Tuesday

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court ordered all doctors protesting over the rape and murder of a female medic last month to resume work by Tuesday, warning they may face "adverse action" if they failed to adhere to the deadline.

Hundreds of doctors nationwide have stayed off work as they demand justice for the woman, whose body was found on Aug 9 in a classroom at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, in the eastern state of West Bengal, where she was a trainee.

A police volunteer was arrested for the crime and federal police said last week that the former prin-

Singapore increases checkpoint security ahead of pope visit

Monitoring Desk
SINGAPORE: Singapore will enhance security at its land, air and sea checkpoints this week due to an unspecified "heightened security situation in the region", its immigration authority said, warning of delays and additional clearance time.

The beefing-up of security will coincide with a visit by Pope Francis to the city-state from Wednesday to Friday, during which a papal mass will be held for 50,000 attendees.

Bali to ban building of some hotels to tackle over-development

Monitoring Desk
JAKARTA: Indonesia has agreed to set a moratorium on the construction of hotels, villas and nightclubs in some areas on the tourist resort island of Bali, as it grapples with the over-development of land, a senior ministry official said on Monday.

The moratorium is part of the government's bid to reform tourism on Bali, one of Indonesia's main attractions, to try to boost quality and jobs while preserving the island's indigenous culture. Hermin Esti, a senior official at the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime and Investment Affairs,

16 killed in Israeli air strikes on central Syria

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: At least 16 people were killed late on Sunday in multiple Israeli strikes targeting the vicinity of Masyaf, a city in Syria's Hama province, Syria's state news agency reported on Monday.

Two regional intelligence sources said a major military research centre for chemical arms production located near Misyaf had been hit several times. It is believed to house a team of Iranian military experts involved in weapons production.

There was no immediate comment from Israel, which typically does not comment on specific reports of strikes in Syria.

Since the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas on Israeli civilians and soldiers, Israel

has escalated its strikes on Iranian-backed militia targets in Syria and has also struck Syrian army defences and some Syrian forces.

"At around 23:20 on Sunday evening, the Israeli enemy launched an air aggression from the direction of northwestern Lebanon, targeting a number of military sites in the central region (of Syria)," a military source told the SANA news agency.

"Our air defence systems confronted the aggression's missiles and shot down some of them," the source added, without providing further details.

A local health official quoted by SANA said 43 people had been injured, including several critically, in the strikes.

Pentagon chief says a six-month temporary budget bill will have devastating effects on the military

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Passage of a six-month temporary spending bill would have widespread and devastating effects on the Defense Department, Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin said in a letter to key members of Congress on Sunday.

Austin said that passing a continuing resolution that caps spending at 2024 levels, rather than taking action on the proposed 2025 budget will hurt thousands of defense programs, and damage military recruiting just as it is beginning to recover after the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Asking the department to compete with (China), let alone manage conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, while under a lengthy CR, ties our hands behind our back while expecting us to be

agile and to accelerate progress," said Austin in the letter to leaders of the House and Senate appropriations committees.

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson has teed up a vote this week on a bill that would keep the federal government funded for six months. The measure aims to garner support from his more conservative GOP members by also requiring states to obtain proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate or passport, when registering a person to vote.

Congress needs to approve a stop-gap spending bill before the end of the budget year on Sept. 30 to avoid a government shutdown just a few weeks before voters go to the polls and elect the next president.

Philippines Senate holds ex-mayor Alice Guo in contempt a second time

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: Former Philippine town mayor Alice Guo was held in contempt for a second time on Monday after refusing to answer senators' questions on suspected ties to Chinese criminal syndicates and how she escaped the country two months ago.

The 38-year-old ex-mayor of Bambang was arrested in Indonesia last week, alongside a Chinese monk and with her hair cut short in disguise according to authorities, and deported home.

Appearing in a bullet-proof vest at a Senate investigative panel, Guo looked unrattled and evaded most questions, saying death threats and ongoing criminal cases constrained her from responding.

Senators first held Guo in contempt in July and ordered her arrest for failing to appear at a hearing. Law enforcers later found out she left the Philippines in July, going to Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Bambang mayor since 2022, Guo was re-

moved from office by the Ombudsman last month for grave misconduct. She faces graft charges at a Philippine trial court and a money laundering complaint at the Department of Justice.

Senators took turns to grill Guo on Monday, becoming irked and accusing her of lying that she is Filipino despite evidence obtained by the National Bureau of Investigation showing her fingerprints match Chinese national Guo Hua Ping.

"I move to cite Guo Hua Ping, also known as Alice Guo, in contempt of the Senate for testifying falsely and evasively before this committee," said Senate committee head Risa Hontiveros, whose motion was quickly passed. Asked how she escaped, Guo said she and companions left on a yacht with the help of an Asian woman she refused to name, before transferring to a larger boat. The Senate launched an investigation into Guo in May after a casino raid in Bambang uncovered what law enforcers described as scams run from a facility on land she partly owned.

Russia claims new gains in east Ukraine push, launches deadly strikes

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia claimed on Sunday that its forces had taken full control of a town in eastern Ukraine as they advance on the strategically important city of Pokrovsk. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky again urged Kyiv's partners to give him more scope to use Western-supplied weapons against targets inside Russia.

Russia on Sunday said its forces had advanced in eastern Ukraine as Kyiv reported deadly air attacks and urged the West to allow it to carry out more retaliatory strikes inside Russia's borders. Moscow has upped its aerial attacks in recent weeks at the same time it tries to fight off a major Ukrainian cross-border offensive into its Western Kursk region that has reshaped the course of the two-and-a-half-year war.

Two people were killed on Sunday in a Russian air strike on the Ukrainian city of Sumy, the capital of the region from where Ukraine poured troops and tanks across the border into Russia in its shock counter-attack.

"As a result of the air strike, two people died.

Four more people were injured, including two children," Sumy military authorities in the region said in a statement.

A Russian rocket strike on a village close to the front line in the Donetsk region also killed two people, the regional prosecutor's office said Sunday. "Two local women aged 43 and 53 died as a result of cluster munitions" hitting their gardens, it said in a statement.

Kyiv launched its Kursk offensive on August 6 hoping to force Russia to redeploy troops currently pressing forward in the east of the country. But Moscow has appeared to intensify its attacks there, chalking up its most significant territorial gains in almost two years over the month of August.

Its military claimed Sunday to have captured another small town as it advances towards the key logistics hub of Pokrovsk in the eastern Donetsk region. The defence ministry in Moscow said its troops had "liberated the settlement of Novohrodivka," which lies around 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Pokrovsk.



Drivers park on the the lanes of the I-75 highway after reports of multiple people shot about nine miles north of London.

Ahsan for identifying, bridging gaps hindering flood-resilient projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday directed all relevant ministries to identify and bridge the gaps and obstacles hindering flood-resilient projects, saying "These must be addressed with zero tolerance for delays."

Chairing the 4th meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee (PSC) and the Oversight Board on Post-Flood Reconstruction Activities, he also instructed that incomplete PC-I documents should be returned within 15 days to avoid further delays, a news release said.

Among others, the meeting was attended by the Secretary Planning, Secretary Economic Affairs, Chief Secretaries of all Provinces, the Country Directors of the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB), the UN Resident Coordinator, the UNDP Resident Representative, the Deputy Head of Mission of the EU and senior officials from the Planning Commission.

The agenda of the meeting was to review and follow-up on decisions made during the 3rd PSC meeting, a progress review of ongoing 4RF projects, updates on flood reconstruction and coordination efforts with UNDP, and the current status of financial pledges. In his opening remarks, the minister described the unprecedented disaster that struck Pakistan between June and August 2022, caused by a combination of torrential rains, riverine floods and urban flash floods.

He noted that one-third of the country was submerged, affecting 33 million people and displacing nearly 8 million.

The floods claimed over 1,700 lives, with one-third of the victims being children. More than half of

the districts in Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were declared disaster-stricken.

The 2022 floods also exposed Pakistan's extreme vulnerability to climate change, despite the country contributing less than 1 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions in 2018, and consistently ranking among the top 10 countries most affected by climate change.

In response to the 2022 floods, the Ministry of Planning developed the Pakistan's strategic policy, known as the Resilient, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework (4RF). This framework is designed to guide the country's recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction efforts.

The 4RF outlines four key objectives: enhancing governance and institutional capacity to restore lives and livelihoods, reviving economic opportunities.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, chairing the 4th meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee (PSC) and the Oversight Board on Post-Flood Reconstruction Activities.

CM Bugti to be called Coast Guard officials of Hub to realize MPA's concerns

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on Monday said that the Coast Guard officials of Hub would be called to realize the concerns of the members of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) regarding it.

He said this on the floor of Provincial Assembly in response of MPA Asadullah Baloch who earlier expressed his reservation regarding the Coast Guard Officials of Hub area of Lasbela district.

The Assembly Session was chaired by Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (Rtd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai on Monday.

The chief minister said that the opposition would also be invited to attend the meeting in this regard.

He said that there was a request from the Speaker

that the assembly should be run under rules and regulations.

The Speaker supported the proposal of the CM and said that if the members are not given a chance, then they make complaints, but I am trying to run the assembly under rules and regulations.

Parliamentary Secretary Sanjay Kumar presented a joint resolution on behalf of the minority assembly members Ravi Pooja and Patrick Sant Masih read that in the text of the resolution that people belonging to minorities in Pakistan should not only be involved in politics but also in Pakistan's forces, bureaucracy, education, apart from health.

He said that they were rendering their services for the development and prosperity of the country in various fields of life adding

the State is committed to the protection, empowerment and development of under-represented communities including religious minorities to ensure their participation in economic, political and public representation.

Sanjay Kumar said that the federal and provincial governments have allocated 5% quota for minorities in the jobs of all government and non-government organizations but the 5 percent quota reserved for the minorities in the provincial departments was not being implemented due to which the minorities were being deeply worried.

Therefore, this house recommends the government to take steps to implement the quota allocated for minorities, he said.

Later, the joint resolution was unanimously approved by law makers.

Muqam strongly flay CM KPK statement about PML-N leadership, national institutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam here on Monday strongly condemned the statement of Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur about the top brass of Pakistan Muslim League as well as National Institutions.

Addressing a joint press conference with Info Minister, Amir Muqam said that CM KP badly failed to show his provincial government performance instead of that criticizing the performance of federal regime and Punjab government.

The minister highlighted that CM KP used a derogatory language about the CM Punjab Marium Nawaz which was very shameful act as public had rejected the yesterday power show of Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI).

Muqam underlined that Pakhtoon have a good norms, culture and respect of women in their customs but CM KP had violated all custom using the negative remarks about the females in the public gathering.

It was a very alarming situation as the government of PTI in KPK using all the resources of the government for vested interest and party promotion campaign.

QUETTA: Provincial Advisor Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi talking with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti during Assembly session

Magsi meets Rubaba; discusses steps for women development

Independent Report

QUETTA: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan for Women's Development, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi met with Provincial Secretary for Law and Provincial Affairs Law, Nawabzada Mir Zareen Khan Magsi.

During the meeting, Nawabzada Mir Zareen Khan Magsi congratulated Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi on receiving the Sitara-i-Imtiaz.

Nawabzada Mir Zareen Khan Magsi discussed possible measures for the welfare of women

in his constituency. Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi emphasized that the role of women in society is crucial and protecting their rights is a top priority. She mentioned that programs are underway to uplift women in many districts of Balochistan. Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi further stated that every possible step would be taken to address women's development and issues. She underscored that the development of women in Balochistan can only be achieved through joint efforts and cooperation.

By removing all hurdles Commissioner directs to ensure timely completion of development schemes

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat has directed to the concerned officials to ensure timely completion of the development schemes by removing all hurdles in Quetta.

In this regard, all the concerned departments should take steps with mutual cooperation and partnership.

The Commissioner Quetta was presiding over

a meeting of the Coordination Committee regarding the development projects, here the other day.

Those who were present in the meeting were included Director Development, Quetta, Zahoor Ahmed, representatives and officers of the Quetta Metropolitan Corporation, QESCO, Sui Southern Gas Company, PTCL, QDA, NTC, Energy department and other concerned departments.



QUETTA: Disable Sanaullah who completed PhD in IT department meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti. Parliamentary Secretary Mir Barkat Rind and MPA Engr. Zamrak Khan Achakzai are also present

Siddiqui defends Peaceful Assembly law

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in Senate Irfan-ul-Haque Siddiqui on Monday said the 'Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill 2024' was aimed at safeguarding the citizens' rights. Speaking on a point of order soon after the commencement of the Senate's proceedings with Presiding Officer Sherry Rehman in the chair, he presented his arguments in the defence of the legislation passed by the House rejecting the opposition benches' criticism.

Senator Siddiqui alleged that Leader of Opposition in the Senate Shibli Faraz had passed sarcastic remarks indirectly targeting his stature.

He said that the opposition leader made some tongue-in-cheek remarks on his poetry. Urdu and linguistic style of speech at the floor of the House.

"It is not derogatory but a tribute to myself from the member. I try to circumvent remarks that may hurt any member. Shibli Faraz had appreciated my conduct of the House twice. 'However, I forgo all those remarks and don't want to give any rebuttal on it.' Senator Siddiqui said. He added that the Peaceful Assembly law was supported by some 60 members of five political parties, including PPP, MQM, PML-N, BAP and independents. He said every civilized country had such laws. The United Kingdom had three laws on peaceful public assembly that entailed strict penalties.

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QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Ali Madak Jattak administering oath to newly elected cabinet of Balochistan Agriculture Officers Association

Anti-polio campaign gets underway all over Balochistan; over 2.655 mln children to be vaccinated

Independent Report

QUETTA: The anti-Polio campaign got underway in all districts of Balochistan including Quetta on Monday.

According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for polio eradication Balochistan, the campaign has been kicked off in all 36 districts of the province with the resolve to reach out each and every child to administer the anti-polio vaccine.

The EOC Coordinator Inamul Haq informed that over 11,555 teams have been formed to administer the anti-polio drops to the children after visiting from home to home and at the transit and fixed points. The teams taking part in the campaign are included 9,247 mobile, 945 fixed sites and 595 transit points.

During the campaign, more than 2.655 million

children below five years of age would be administered anti-polio vaccine.

The EOC Coordinator also said that all resources are being mobilized to ensure eradication of polio virus completely.

He said that foolproof security arrangements have been made for the teams engaged in the anti-polio drive. He mentioned that, in all 12 cases have been reported in first eight months of the current year in Balochistan. These polio cases have been reported from Quetta, Killa Abdullah, Killa Saifullah, Dera Bugti, Jhal Magsi, Zhob and Kharan.

He pointed out that the polio virus has also been detected in the environment of different districts of the province during year 2023 after two and half years. He said that three children suffering from po-

lio virus also died in the province.

The EOC coordinator feared that polio virus may spread to other districts of the province. He said that the children are unsafe due to the presence of polio virus as such parents should not pay with lives of their children and get them administered the anti-polio vaccine. In addition to this, the parents should also complete the course of immunization of their children along with the polio vaccine, the EOC coordinator pleaded. The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has already made it clear that the anti-polio campaign would be made successful mobilizing all resources in the province. He warned that stern action would be taken against those creating hurdles in the immunization campaign.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization & Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan presides over high level meeting on NHA.

NA told No share of erstwhile FATA earmarked in NFC Award before merge with KPK

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Feroze Khan on Monday informed the National Assembly that no share of erstwhile FATA was earmarked in NFC Award before merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Replying to a question during Question Hour, the minister said the NFC Award determines distribution of resources between Federation and four provinces which are identified under Article 1 of the Constitution and after merger of erstwhile FATA, the position remains unchanged.

He said at the time of merger, on a summary of SAFRON Division titled, Reports of the Committee on FATA Reforms, 2016'

the Cabinet vide Case No.51/02/2017 dated 02-03-2017, inter-alia decided that, "The NFC should be requested to consider making an allocation of 3% of the gross Federal divisible pool on annual basis for the implementation of FATA Development Plan....."

Announcement of new NFC Award is the domain of National Finance Commission under Article 160 of the Constitution and the matter is already on the agenda of NFC, he said. The minister said a Sub-Group under the chairmanship of Finance Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was constituted by 9th NFC (2015-20) as well as by the 10th NFC (2020-25) exclusively to deliberate upon the development needs of erstwhile.

Hafiz Naeem blames Sindh govt for power abuse in Karachi

Independent Report

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Monday slammed the Sindh government for continuously neglecting Karachi.

The JI Emir made these remarks in a press conference in Karachi where he accused the Sindh government of extracting all resources from Karachi and giving nothing in return.

He criticised the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led provincial government for destroying Karachi to the hilt despite being in power for sixteen years, adding that the JI mandate was stolen in the local government elections. He said that the PPP government had not subtlet the powers, adding that all those parties ruling in Karachi.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Haji Ali Madak Jattak, Sardar Faisal Khan Jamali, Parliamentary Secretaries Haji Abdul Majeed Badini, Sanjay Kumar Panjwani and MPA Mir Asadullah Baloch expressing views on point or order during Balochistan Assembly session

Gandapur should retract inappropriate remarks against journalists: Patel

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Abdul Qadir Patel on Monday said that the journalists community had demanded the retraction of inappropriate remarks by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur made by him at the Sangani meeting.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said that the journalists had staged a walkout from the House in protest against the KP CM's comments against their community.

Gandapur had deeply hurt the sentiments of media persons, he added. The journalists were facing threats to their lives and well-being, and they wanted the Parliament to take a stand in their support.

3 killed, five injured near Neelum Valley car accident

Independent Report

NEELUM VALLEY (APP): Three persons were killed and five others sustained injuries in a road accident that occurred near Jabri area located at Neelum valley of Northern region, tv channels quoting rescue sources reported on Monday. According to details, a tourist car carrying passengers was heading towards Babon area when it met an accident near Jabri of Neelum valley.

Leader of the Opposition Omar Ayub also condemned the remarks, calling the journalists community highly professional.

He said he and his party colleagues in the House tendered an unconditional apology to the journalists. Chief Minister Gandapur should do the same, he added.

Syed Amin-Ul-Haque of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan also strongly condemned Gandapur's comments, assuring that his party stood with the journalists.

4.5 magnitude quake jolts Swat, surroundings

Independent Report

PESHAWAR (APP): Residents of Swat and nearby areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa experienced a jolt on Monday as an earthquake struck the area. The Pakistan Meteorological Department reported that the earthquake registered a magnitude of 4.5 on the Richter scale.

The tremors were felt across Swat and its surroundings, causing momentary panic among residents.

The earthquake's depth was recorded at 151 km, with the epicenter located in the Hindu Kush Mountain range, a seismically active area known for frequent quakes.

IRSA issue referred to relevant NA committee on Tarar's suggestion

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly's Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah on Monday referred the issue regarding the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) to the relevant committee of the House. Earlier, Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar suggested

the Chair to refer the issue to the committee concerned for further consideration.

Responding to a point raised by a member in the National Assembly about IRSA, he said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif (as prime minister) had played a pivotal role in building consensus for the IRSA Accord in 1991.