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## Quetta city is face of Balochistan; beautification included in priorities of government, says Chief Minister

## Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has stated that Quetta city is the face of our province and as such its beautification is included in priorities of the government.

The Chief Minister directed to extend the process of disposal of the garbage to whole of the Quetta city and its suburbs.

He also assured to provide the required funds for cleanliness of Quetta city.

The Chief Minister was chairing review meeting about the Quetta solid waste management project here on Saturday.

Those who were

present in the meeting were included: Parliamentary Secretary for Urban Planning and Development, Asfandyar Kakar, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Local Government, Abdul Rauf Baloch, Chairman Balochistan Revenue Authority (BRA) Noorul Haq Baloch, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Chief Executive Officer, PPP Board and other concerned high ups.

The Commissioner Quetta briefed the meeting about the Quetta Solid Waste Management project.

During the briefing, it was informed that process

of lifting of the waste is continued from Quetta city and its surrounding areas.

It was also informed that the de silting of the drainage nullahs is also continued and the encroachments established there are also being removed.

Besides the hospital waste is being burnt while the campaign is also continued against the encroachments.

A push cart bazaar is also being set up on the Joint road.

Meanwhile, meeting decided to operate the street lights in Quetta city on the PPP mode.

The meeting was also briefed about the Cafe Baldia, Trade License col-

lection and slaughter houses in the city.

The meeting reviewed the issues of employees of Quetta Metropolitan Corporation and the related matters.

The meeting also decided to take stern action against those involved in the wall chalking just to maintain beauty of the Quetta city.

The Chief Minister directed to submit the details of shops established on the government land in Quetta in next meeting.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a review meeting of Solid Waste Management project

## Government ought to provide all necessary facilities to youth for bright & successful life: Governor

## Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhai has stressed that the responsibility rests with the government for providing all necessary facilities to the youngsters for their bright and successful life.

He said that future is of the youth and it is not enough merely to acknowledge them as an asset of the future, rather it is also necessary to provide opportunities of grooming and proper respectful livelihood in the right direction.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, the Governor said that loss of any youngster is not one's tragedy in the society only, rather it is also the loss of our collective future.

By doing so, making

investment in youth is tantamount to make investment in our collective future, he maintained.

He said that major part of our total population consists of the youth, therefore, they should be given importance in the policy, decision and budget making.

He said that we are passing through such critical era of the history where the unemployment and other issues are putting negative impacts on the minds of youth.

Therefore, it is direly needed to strengthen and promote healthy and social activities, he added.

He also stressed the need to create friendly environment for our youth, which may encourage their participation in economic and social activities.

## 37 terrorists killed in IBOs of Pakistan Army in Tirah

TIRAH (Online): Thirty-seven terrorists have so far been killed and fourteen others wounded in the ongoing intelligence-based operations of Pakistan Army in the Tirah area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

This is a massive loss to Fitna Al Khwarij.

Since 20th August, a series of intelligence-based operations have been carried out against Khawarij in Tirah valley. These have resulted into major successes.

Among the killed terrorists is the main leader of Khawarij, Abu Dhar alias Saddam.

Brigadier Commander Frontier Corps Amir

Nawaz Khan said the security personnel have firmly confronted the incursion of Khawarij from Afghanistan and are taking action against their hideouts in Tirah.

Brigadier Faisal of the Special Service Group said that, under a coordinated strategy, it was ensured that the loss of local population and Pakistan Army personnel was kept to a minimum while the enemy was inflicted with maximum damage.

He said by the grace of Allah Almighty and the bravery of the soldiers, we have inflicted heavy losses on the Khawarij and destroyed their top leadership.

Major Mohsin, in his remarks, said that they were assigned the mission to destroy the Khawarij hideouts in Tirah valley. For this, the SSG and Light Commandos were deployed in the valley. He said despite difficult conditions, the soldiers of Pakistan Army valiantly inflicted damage on the enemy.

Lieutenant Hafiz Muzamil said they have dealt heavy losses to the enemy during the operations. The security forces have expressed the firm determination to protect the lives and property of their people against Fitna Al Khwarij.



Guinness World Record holder Sufyan Mehsood along with his father Irfan Mehsood called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad

## PM sees country's future prosperous due to skilled youths

Meets 5-year-old Guinness world record holder Sufyan Mehsood

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday met with five-year-old Sufyan Mehsood from Dera Ismail Khan who recently set a Guinness world record.

Sufyan has made Pakistan and his parents proud by achieving this feat at a very young age, the prime minister said.

He praised Sufyan's achievement and emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for youth to engage in sports and positive activities.

He directed the Chairman of the Youth Program, Rana Mashhood, and relevant authorities to provide more sports facilities for young people.

The prime minister said that talented youth

like Sufyan were a guarantee of a bright future for Pakistan.

He added that Pakistani youth were making the country proud in various fields, including sports.

Sufyan told the prime minister that he wanted to make Pakistan's name brighter by becoming a scientist in the future.

The prime minister also spoke with Sufyan in his native Pashto language.

He also spoke to Sufyan Mehsood's father, Irfan Mehsood, who holds more than 100 Guinness Book of World Records, specializing in martial arts and runs a training academy in Dera Ismail Khan.

Irfan Mehsood informed the prime minister about his sports and

physical training academy in Dera Ismail Khan and the achievements of its trained athletes.

The prime minister directed the PM Youth Program to collaborate with the sports academy of Sufyan Mehsood's father in Dera Ismail Khan.

He also instructed the Youth Program to take steps to promote various sports across the country.

The meeting was also attended by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Chairman PM Youth Program Rana Mashhood and PM Coordinator for Climate Change Rumina Khurshid Alam.

## Nawaz vows to bring inflation down

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz president

Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Saturday vowed to steer the country out of inflation.

During a suddenly called meeting of the PML-N at the party's Model Town Secretariat, which was attended by bigwigs of the party, Sharif hinted at giving relief to commercial consumers of electricity like the one given to domestic consumers for the months of Aug and Sept by reducing Rs14 per unit in power bills.

The statement said the petrol price has been reduced from Rs260.96 per litre to Rs259.10 per litre.

The new fuel prices will be effective from September 1, according to an official statement.

## No issue can be resolved without dialogue: Achakzai

ISLAMABAD (INP): Mahmood Khan Achakzai, head of the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, has stated that no issue could be resolved without dialogue.

In an informal conversation with journalists on Saturday, he said it was a positive development if someone was willing to negotiate.

He confirmed his meeting with Rana Sanullah in Parliament.

He emphasized that if politicians got united for the supremacy of constitution, unconstitutional forces would recede back.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Haji Ali Madad Jattak meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (ret) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai

## Govt slashes petrol price by Rs1.86 per litre

## Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Saturday slashed the price of petrol by Rs1.86 per litre for the next fortnight in line with downward trend in the international market.

The new fuel prices will be effective from September 1, according to an official statement.

The statement said the petrol price has been reduced from Rs260.96 per litre to Rs259.10 per litre.

The government also reduced price of high-speed diesel (HSD) from Rs266.07 per litre to Rs262.75 after a cut of Rs3.32.

The relief in petroleum products prices is the third in a row, with the government reducing petrol price by Rs16.5 since July 30.

In the previous fortnightly review, the government reduced prices of petrol and diesel by Rs8.47 per litre and Rs6.70 per litre, respectively.

## 20 houses collapse in Naseerabad amid heavy rainfall

NASEERABAD (INP): Around 20 houses collapsed in an unceasing 36-hour rainfall at Baluchistan's Naseerabad district, reported on Saturday.

Around 20 houses collapsed at Shahpur village of Chhatar in Naseerabad district, local administration said.

Moreover, railway track submerged in rainwater at Dera Murad Jamali railway station.

## Nausherwani announces to build a big modern hospital in Kharan

## Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Sohaib Nausherwani has announced to construct a big modern hospital in Kharan besides ensuring complete medical facilities in the divisional hospital of Kharan as well as all basic health units and rural health centers of the district.

The Minister Finance was on surprise visit to the divisional headquarter hospital Kharan on Saturday.

He expressed dismay over absence of the doctors and medical staff and shortage of the medicines in the hospital.

He reviewed the medical facilities by visiting the dialysis unit, laboratory, medicine store and wards.

Also present on the

occasion were the Deputy Commissioner Kharan, Munir Ahmed Soomro, District Health Officer, Dr Sher Ahmed Baloch, Mir Abdul Latif Notezai.

During the visit, the Medical Superintendent of Divisional Hospital, Dr Mehboob Baloch briefed the Provincial Minister about shortage of the doctors, surgeons, staff and the medicines.



KHARAN: Provincial Minister for Finance Mir Sohaib Ahmed Nausherwani addressing consultative meeting of leaders of All Parties regarding developmental projects

## Govt decided 50% public sector trade through Gawadar port: Qaiser

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh made a big announcement for the development of Gawadar Port.

According to the minister, the federal government has decided to conduct 50 percent of public sector trade through Gawadar port.

He said this while talking to journalists at Karachi Press Club on Saturday. Federal Minister Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh said the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization is coming to Pakistan next month.

The IMO conference will be important for the improvement of Pakistan's maritime sector.

Several meetings have been held regarding regulation of shipping lines. The paper regarding regulation of shipping lines will be ready soon.

Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh said that for development and employment in

Balochistan, 50 percent of public sector trade has been decided to be done through Gawadar port. He said the trade deficit has also reduced. Karachi port is using 60 percent of its capacity, he said there is a huge investment going on with Merck's Shipping Line. Merck's Shipping Line has indicated an investment of 2 billion dollars.

He said in June 2022, there was an import of 80 billion rupees and Import have now reduced to 57 billion rupees, he said IMO Secretary General will come to Pakistan on next month.

The IMO conference will be important for the improvement of Pakistan's maritime sector.

Several meetings have been held regarding regulation of shipping lines. The paper regarding regulation of shipping lines will be ready soon he said.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Fisheries and Coastal Development Haji Barkat Ali Rind meeting with Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani

## CM instructs to simplify procedure for reimbursement of medical expenses

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has issued directives to make the procedure of payment of expenditures of medical treatment of the government employees easier.

According to an official handout issued here on Saturday, the Chief Minister has ordered to introduce the modern and smart procedure for payment and return of the medical expenses of the government employees according to the rules and regulations.

According to the high ups of Health Department, the payment of expenditure

of medical treatment to the government employees is done through a lengthy and complicated process in the present methodology.

Due to this, the government employees are to face hardships and wait for long time.

Thus, the Chief Minister has directed to prepare comprehensive recommendations for solution to these issues promptly.

In this regard, the Health Department has issued directives for preparation of the viable summary and sending the same to the Chief Minister's office.

## Cyclone 'Asna' spares Pakistan coast as it moves 200 kms away

KARACHI (INP): It appears that cyclone 'Asna' has spared Karachi as after moving 100 kilometers closer to the port city, it has moved 200 kilometers away; but still, the city and other coastal areas and those near them are expected to receive torrential rains on Saturday.

According to the sixth alert issued by the Meteorological Department, despite the fact that the storm is now moving in a westerly direction, heavy rains are still likely to lash the city as well as Tharparkar, Thatta, and Sajawal; three cities which will be impacted by the storm the most.

Showers have also been predicted for Mirpurkhas, Umarkot and Sanghar.

On the other hand, downpours have been reported from across the province, inundating villages and severing power supply.

Director General Met Office Sahibzada Khan has said that winds, accompanying the rain, may be devastating for the weak infrastructure.

He has said that it is after 60 years that the storm has developed so close to the coastal areas of Sind.

He has described the rising sea temperatures as a worrying sign.

According to the latest Met Office advisory, the Cyclonic Storm (CS) "ASNA" (Pronounced as As-Na) over northeast Arabian Sea off Sindh coast has moved further westward during past 9 hours and now lies at around Latitude 23.6 N & Longitude 65.7 E at a distance of about 200km southwest of Karachi, 220km south-southeast of Ormara and 380km southeast of Gwadar. The system is likely to track further west-southwestwards.

Under its influence, rain-thundershowers with few heavy falls and accompanied with squally winds (60-70km/hour gusting 80km/hour) has hit Karachi division while Badin, Thatta, Sujawal, Hyderabad, TM Khan, TA Yar, Matiari, Jamshoro and Dadu districts of Sindh will also receive heavy rains today evening/night and same is the case in Hub, Lasbella, Awaran, Keach and Gwadar districts of Balochistan till tomorrow night.

Heavy rains may create water logging in low-lying areas of Makran coast, the Met Office said.



RAWALPINDI: Bangladesh players celebrating to take the wicket of Pakistan Shah Masood during the second day of the last cricket Test match playing between Pakistan and Bangladesh at Pindi Cricket Stadium.

## SC orders key posts of universities be not kept vacant

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has ordered important posts of vice chancellors of universities, president, vice president, registrars, faculty heads, controller examination and director finance be not kept vacant.

The court has sought explanation within 14 days from the universities which are not implementing their rules.

The SC has issued written order of its July 11 proceedings on the matter of appointment of perma-

nent vice chancellors in the universities.

The order said Additional Attorney General (AAG) told 12 universities fall under the jurisdiction of ministry of education. Important posts of vice chancellors, president, vice presidents, registrar, faculty heads, controller examination and director finance be not kept vacant.

According to order money of people of Pakistan is spent in state run universities. Unfortunately several universities are vio-

lating rules. The universities are losing their standard by doing so.

Through the order explanation has been sought from the universities within 14 days which are not implementing their rules.

The order said as to why the action be not taken against the universities involved in not implementing their rules.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa heard the case.

## Pak vs Ban: Mehidy takes five as Pakistan bowled out for 274 in 2nd Test

Three Pakistani batters including captain Shan Masood score fifties on day two of second Test

RAWALPINDI: Spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz took five wickets as Bangladesh bowled out Pakistan for 274 on day two of the second Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi on Saturday.

Shadman Islam was batting on six and Zakir Hasan was on zero as Bangladesh reached 10 for no loss at stumps, seeking a strong reply in their bid to secure a 2-0 series victory after winning the first game at the same venue by 10 wickets.

Miraz (5-61) and Taskin Ahmed (3-57) were the picks of the Bangladesh bowlers as they claimed timely wickets and controlled the run-rate after the opening day was lost to incessant rain and a wet outfield.

Taskin, drafted into the Bangladesh side after fellow pace bowler Shoriful Islam sustained a groin injury, bowled Abdullah Shafique with a swinging delivery in the first over of the day after the tourists won the toss and opted to field.

Pakistan recovered from that early setback and got to 99-1 at lunch, with Masood completing his 10th half-century, but the skipper did not last long when play resumed and was dismissed lbw by Miraz for 57.

With the 107-run stand for the second wicket ended, the Bangladesh bowlers grew in confidence as the day wore on and could have had more wickets but for some sloppy catching.

Ayub was stumped for 58 a few overs later after

coming down the track and missing the line of a flighted delivery from Miraz while Saud Shakeel, who was dropped at slip on one, perished after chopping one from Taskin back onto his stumps.

Having stemmed the flow of runs, Bangladesh removed the out-of-form Babar Azam for 31 before tea and Mohammad Rizwan for 29 shortly after to leave Pakistan in a spot of bother at 211-6.

Khuram Shahzad departed attempting a big shot and Mohammad Ali edged to slip as Miraz claimed his third and fourth victims late in the day before Ahmed removed Salman Agha for 54.

Miraz then had Abrar Ahmed stumped to cap off a fine bowling display for the tourists.

## Massive pension fund fraud uncovered in Sindh district accounts offices

KARACHI (INP): Multiple district accounts offices in Sindh are under investigation for allegedly embezzling billions of rupees from pension funds. According to reports, municipal employees were falsely declared alive to siphon off millions of rupees in pension payments. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has launched a probe into the alleged misappropriation of pension funds in Hyderabad, while

the concerned bank has also initiated a departmental inquiry into the matter.

The investigation began after a complaint from the operations manager of the Hyderabad municipal branch bank. Action has been taken against the branch manager, municipal staff, and district treasury office employees allegedly involved in the fraud. Records of pension funds from January 2021 to August 2024 have been re-

quested from the Hyderabad District Accounts Officer, along with details of officers who served in the pension section during this period.

The inquiry revealed that a fictitious woman was portrayed as the widow of the late Adeb Dar Muhammad Kamal and was paid Rs. 4.3 million in pension. Additionally, the fraudulent recipient was receiving the monthly pension of the deceased Adeb.



HUB: Commuters are facing difficulties in transportation due to stagnant rainwater causing of poor sewerage system after heavy downpour of monsoon season, at Hub River road in Hub

## Mohsin Naqvi chairs meeting of special committee for INGOs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired a meeting of the Special Committee for INGOs at the Ministry of Interior.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Secretary Ministry of Interior, Additional Secretary Economic Affairs Division, DG Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consultant Ministry of Law, and other relevant officers.

During the meeting applications regarding the re-

jection of INGOs registration and renewal of MOUs were reviewed.

The minister said that a detailed review of each application will be conducted, and all relevant documents of the INGOs will be examined. He further stated that INGOs should also cooperate with the Ministry of Interior and provide relevant documents on time. He said that the scrutiny process will be completed within 15 days, and all applicants will be informed accordingly.

He also condemned the former ruling party's approach, particularly its insistence on demanding 'receipts' from opponents.

The minister also highlighted that the country is currently facing an undeclared war, with enemies attempting to destabilise the nation through terrorism and internal conflicts.

Also, according to X, Tarar maintained: "This is yet another failed attempt to damage Pakistan's relations with its time-tested friend China. These attacks on our foreign policy will never succeed."

He said that the impression given in the article was based on false opinions which did not reflect the sentiments of the people of Pakistan.

## Tarar decries journal's failed attempt to damage Pakistan's relations with China

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Saturday said that "The Diplomat" magazine in its article had tried unsuccessfully to spoil Pakistan's relations with long-time friend China.

In his reaction to the article published in the journal through his account on

X, Tarar maintained: "This is yet another failed attempt to damage Pakistan's relations with its time-tested friend China. These attacks on our foreign policy will never succeed."

He said that the impression given in the article was based on false opinions which did not reflect the sentiments of the people of Pakistan.

## No room for those who ditched party during tough times: Imran Khan

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder and former prime minister Imran Khan on Friday announced a policy regarding the return of leaders who left the party.

Speaking to journalists in Adiala Jail, Imran Khan stated, "Let me make it clear, those who left the party during difficult times have no place in the party. Few people were tortured, blackmailed, and had their homes destroyed, including their families and children."

Khan added, "I won't take any names, but I know exactly who left the party during tough times. Those who acted as 'Charlies' in good times abandoned us

in bad times. There is no place in the party for those who left during difficult times."

The former premier said, "I am not naming anyone, but those who left the party straightforwardly will not be taken back. A better decision will be made for all those who went underground during difficult times and endured hardships and torture."

"A fair trial is my right, but here the principles of a fair trial are being trampled upon. Party leaders and lawyers are not allowed to meet me, and for the third week now, I have not even been allowed to speak to my children over the phone," he maintained.

## Ahsan Iqbal, Khawaja Asif oppose talks with PTI

Iqbal links dialogue to former ruling party's apology over May 9 riots; Asif says he is not in favour of talks

LAHORE (INP) - Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal said on Saturday there would be no talks with the PTI until its founder Imran Khan apologised for the events of May 9.

The minister rebuked the PTI, claiming they had caused more damage than terrorists had done and questioned how any dialogue could take place with such people.

He also condemned the former ruling party's approach, particularly its insistence on demanding 'receipts' from opponents.

The minister also highlighted that the country is currently facing an undeclared war, with enemies attempting to destabilise the nation through terrorism and internal conflicts.

Also, according to

Ahsan Iqbal, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met JUI-F chief Fazlur Rehman. "The prime minister also plans to engage with other political leaders as well," he said.

Discussing the PML-N meeting, Iqbal revealed that rising electricity prices was a key topic of discussion. The party leadership stressed the importance of resolving the energy crisis to provide relief to the public, he added.

He also noted that the local government system was part of the party's manifesto.

Meanwhile Federal Defence Minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Khawaja Asif on Saturday opposed holding talks with the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI). The PML-N leader these remarks while speaking to reporters after attending the party huddle at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Model Town secretariat.

When asked whether he was in committee for dialogue with PTI through Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) and head of opposition alliance Tehreek Tahafuz Aeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP) Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Khawaja Asif categorically denied, saying that he was not part of any such committee.

Responding to a question about the future of PTI founder Imran Khan, Asif said that he was not a soothsayer who could predict the future of anyone.

## Pakistan Railways faces financial loss due to recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Railways has experienced financial setbacks following recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan.

According to railway sources, the destruction of railway bridges by terrorists has severed rail connectivity between Balochistan and the rest of the country, leading to a suspension of rail services.

This disruption has caused significant financial loss for Pakistan Railways. Sources revealed that the suspension of the Jaffer Express service was resulting in a daily loss of PKR 10.24 million, while the halt of the Bolan Mail service was incurring a daily loss of PKR 1.94 million.



Honorary Consul General of Japan Nadeem Shah presenting bouquet to honorary Consul General of Sri Lanka Yasin Joyia

## WSJ reports: Indian-origin fake CIA agent Gaurav Srivastava under fire on defrauding Congressmen, traders

This involved pasting the article's text into a blog post on hosting sites Tumblr or Medium and then back-dating the posts, making them appear to have been published earlier than the original article that exposed the Indian conman. Srivastava then used aliases or fake names to file a copyright complaint to Google to de-index the articles.

The WSJ reported how Srivastava sought to build a business that could profit from the close connections between commodities, intelligence and security. Targeting developing countries and war zones, largely in Africa, on the one hand, Srivastava approached leaders and powerful intermediaries claiming to be a non-official cover (NOC) operative of the CIA who could support the development of their links to the US Government. Surrounding himself with powerful figures, including General Clark - who was in fact a paid-for consultant - the WSJ described how Srivastava built a picture of legitimacy that fooled leaders from Libya, where he had dealings with Russia-backed General Haftar, to Sudan, where he worked for General Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo - known as Hemedti - who is now facing allegations of war crimes.

At the same time as he was claiming to be a CIA agent in Africa, Srivastava was presenting himself in

Washington DC as a well-connected American citizen who "hinted at some kind of relationship with the US Government" that could not be disclosed, according to Gen. Clark speaking to the WSJ. Political donations helped open doors, and a major donation of \$1 million to the Atlantic Council for a food security event in fall 2023 lent him legitimacy. On 2nd March 2024, Politico revealed that the Atlantic Council has confirmed it has terminated its relationship with Gaurav Srivastava, his wife Sharon and their fake charitable organisation "The Gaurav & Sharon Srivastava Family Foundation" after the think tank found that Srivastavas had lied to the council to secure their partnership.

The scam began to unravel after Niels Troost, a trader that Srivastava was attempting to scam, grew suspicious. Troost found a trail of fraud allegations against him in the US and India, where his family business, the New Delhi-based Veecon Group, has a string of failed deals in the entertainment and security sectors.

Srivastava had been introduced to Troost in early 2022 by a mutual business associate as someone who could help Troost to counter threats from another business counterpart. The introducer vouched for Mr G's CIA credentials, according to Troost and an

affidavit, and Srivastava set to work trying to gain Troost's confidence.

In time and after appearing to resolve Troost's initial issue, Srivastava claimed that he could get Troost permission from the US Government to trade Russian oil "as part of a CIA-approved program", according to the WSJ. This would supposedly allow Washington to keep track of oil flows out of Russia, while at the same time providing a vehicle for Srivastava to sell commodities he received for his alleged CIA-backed security work in Africa.

After an apparent "interrogation" of Troost in Geneva by a French financier, Nicolas Bravard, who Srivastava allegedly said was a "friend of the FBI", Mr G then inducted Troost into his claimed "program" in Bali, confiding that he "was with the CIA", according to Troost speaking to the WSJ.

Claiming to act with the direct support of CIA Director William "Bill" Burns, Srivastava persuaded Troost to part with 50% of his company and, with the help of US law firm Baker Hostetler, a sale was agreed in July 2023. The WSJ reported how Srivastava claimed not to be able to own the shares directly - "because Russia and other countries wouldn't do business with a US agent" - so Bravard would act as his proxy.

## Ambassador of Vietnam wishes for continuing friendship, cooperation with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Pham Anh Tuan, during the celebration of the 79th anniversary of Viet Nam National Day, wished for the friendship and cooperation between Viet Nam and Pakistan with a continuation to flourish in the future. On September 2nd, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of Viet Nam, read out the immortal Declaration of Independence, giving birth to a new Viet Nam - the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, which is now the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, he said.

The Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Pham Anh Tuan expressed these views while addressing 79th anniversary of Viet Nam National Day here in Vietnam embassy.

He said that at that very moment, Vietnam was named on the world map and the country has entered a new era - the era of national independence, the era the Vietnamese people became the real masters of their country, society and their own destinies.

The envoy said that over the past 79 years, the people of Vietnam have devoted their lives, efforts and

wisdom towards national independence, freedom and happiness for all the people of Vietnam.

On this occasion, "I believe that the potential of development between Vietnam and Pakistan remains high, and the Embassy of Vietnam in Pakistan will continue to work closely with Pakistani friends to expand this relationship," he said.

It has now been 52 years since the day Vietnam and Pakistan established the diplomatic relation.

The Ambassador said that over the past 52 years, the friendship and cooperation between the two countries has been developed in multi-faceted factors such as politics, economic cooperation, trading relations. We also share a common interest in developing our countries and integrating into the regions and the world for the benefit of our people. Nowadays, bilateral trade relations between the two countries emerges as one of the most outstanding fields of the cooperation and the two-way trade volume between Viet Nam and Pakistan reached \$ 705 million in 2023 and within the first six months of 2024, this volume is ap-

proximately 402 million, an increase of 28% compared to the same period last year. It is expected to reach \$ 900 million in 2024.

He said that beside this, the number of delegation exchanges for business and visits has been increasing year by year and the two countries have signed a number of treaties and agreements, which create legal framework for further promoting the cooperation for mutual interest.

"Our cooperative mechanism includes the Joint Intergovernmental Committee, Trade Commission, and Bilateral Political Consultation between the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs. In order to raise the trading relation, I suggest the two sides may coordinate to hold the activities of promotion of trade and investment such as trade fairs, exhibition, forum, exploration."

"We welcome and will do the utmost to create favorable conditions for all businessmen of Pakistan doing business with Vietnam, especially in the fields of cotton, production of pharmaceutical, surgical instruments and information technology which are the strengths of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Socialist Republic of Vietnam Pham Anh Tuan along with ASEAN countries missions cutting the cake to commemorate the 79th Anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, in the Federal Capital.

## Collective action urges to safeguard youth mental well-being from smart-phone, social media harm

ISLAMABAD (APP): A prominent psychiatrist Saturday asserts that the prevalent influence of smartphones and social media on young people's lives is exacting a devastating impact on their mental health, prompting an urgent call for collective action from parents, policymakers, and youth themselves to mitigate the damage.

Associate Professor Dr. Nargis Asad, Department of Psychiatry, The Aga Khan University, Karachi, in an exclusive interview with a private news channel, stressed that the

alarming rise in mental health issues among young people is directly linked to excessive smartphone use and social media addiction. "The consequences of unchecked smartphone use and social media addiction are devastating," Dr warned.

"We are seeing a surge in anxiety, depression, cyberbullying, and sleep disorders among youth. We must take collective responsibility to mitigate these risks."

Dr. Asad urged parents, educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals to join

forces in promoting healthy digital habits among young people.

"We need to educate youth about responsible smartphone use, set boundaries, and encourage offline activities," she said.

"We must also advocate for policies that regulate social media companies and protect young users from harmful content."

By working together, Dr. believes we can create a safer digital environment that supports the mental well-being of our youth. "The time for action is now," she emphasized.



ISLAMABAD: Volunteers along with Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan Dr. Jemal Beker Abdulah taking part in cleaning drive at Trail 5, Margalla Hills, in the Federal Capital.

## Green legacy: Ethiopian ambassador leads cleaning drive at Trail 5

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Envoy and Ambassador of Ethiopia, Dr. Jemal Beker, on Saturday spearheaded a cleaning drive at the Trail 5 to purge the Margalla Hills of trash posing serious threat to the wildlife in the National Park. The drive, jointly organized by the Ethiopian embassy GhoomLay and Studio One, was launched as a part of the Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity Under the Green Legacy Initiative of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Dr. Abiy Ahmed.

Individuals from the all walks of the life including government officials, diplomatic community, civil society, youth and media participated in the cleaning drive, which was aimed at fostering Ethio-Pakistan fraternity by pursuing joint efforts for better future of

both the countries.

Talking to the media on the occasion, Dr. Jemal Beker said today's gathering was meant to send a message that mass mobilization of the human and financial resources was a solution to resolve the contemporary and new normal challenges such as climate change. He said, "Ethiopia is building a green economy by planting more than 40.5 billion seedlings of fruits, vegetable and fodder in the last five years that has created jobs and ensured food security in Ethiopia. The record breaking plantation was undertaken under the Green Legacy Initiative which is inspired from Medemer philosophy of our Prime Minister which advocates for mass mobilization and alignment of the resources".



ISLAMABAD: CDA workers installing Horse Cart replica at Rawal Chowk during beautification of the city.

## ICT Police impose section 144 to curb political gatherings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have implemented Section 144 across the federal capital, effective Saturday, in response to elevated security concerns.

According to ICT police spokesperson on Saturday the section 144 prohibits any political processions and gatherings without prior approval from the district administration.

ICT spokesperson emphasized that these restrictions are designed to maintain public order and ensure the safety of all citizens.

## IHC issues judges duty roster for next week

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued judges duty roster for next week.

Deputy registrar issued the roster under the directives of Chief Justice IHC. According to duty roster only 3 judges will be available in the next week from September 2 to 6.

3 single and one division benches have been constituted for hearing of cases in next week. Justice Babar Sattar and justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan will be available for hearing of the cases next week.

## KPT takes precautionary measures ahead of Cyclone risk in Karachi: Spokesperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Karachi Port Trust (KPT) spokesperson Saturday assured all necessary safety protocols to be strictly adhered to prioritizing the well-being of staff, assets, and port operations to mitigate potential Cyclone risks in Karachi.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that KPT is working closely with relevant authorities including the Pakistan Me-

teorological Department (Met) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to stay updated on the cyclone's trajectory and intensity adding that this collaboration enables the trust to make informed decisions and implement effective safety measures.

The KPT's emergency response teams are on standby, ready to respond to any situation that may arise, he informed.



ISLAMABAD: Families enjoying in a waterfall at Trail 5, Margalla Hills, in the Federal Capital.

## 1446 drug peddlers arrested in current year

ISLAMABAD (INP): Following the special directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Islamabad Police's campaign against narcotics, raising awareness among the youth, and taking action against drug dealers is continuously ongoing.

In this regard, IG Islamabad directed senior police officers to formulate a comprehensive strategy to protect the youth from drugs, ensure prevention, and strengthen ties between educational institutions and law enforcement departments.

During the crackdown

against drug peddlers, police teams arrested 1446 drug dealers during the ongoing year. Moreover, police teams seized more than 428 kg of heroin, 344 kg of hashish, 30 kg of ice, and 11,920 liters of liquor from the possession of the arrested accused.

DIG Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer said that our youth often turn to the curse of drugs due to societal pressures and inadequate guidance.

Today, our youth are not only destroying their own lives by getting involved in drugs but also causing pain to their families.

## SSP Operations pays surprise visit to Khanna police station

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Ali Rizvi, the SSP Operations Muhammad Arslan Shahzaib, paid a surprise visit to Khanna police station, a public relations officer said.

During the visit, SSP Operations checked the records, roznamcha, front desk, record room, lockup, investigation officers' rooms and residential barracks.

Memon supports forming eco-volunteer groups and collaborating with stakeholders to create a sustainability plan and promote responsible behavior.

Professor Dr. Muhammad Ismail Kumbhar, Director of University Advancement and Financial Assistance at Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam, underscores the need to preserve Murree's cultural heritage while supporting sustainable tourism. He suggests documenting and conserving historical sites, involving local artisans in tourism, and developing cultural tourism packages. Dr. Kumbhar also calls for regulatory measures to curb over-commercialization and environmental degradation, and for educating both tourists and locals through programs and workshops.

## Governor KP attends Turkey's Victory Day celebration, emphasizes bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi made a special appearance at the Victory Day celebration of Turkey here on Saturday and said that the relationship between Pakistan and Turkey is one of enduring brotherhood.

The event, which was attended by the Turkish Ambassador, along with several other foreign ambassadors and prominent government and political figures, marked a significant occasion.

During the celebration, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi extended his heartfelt congratulations to the people and government of Turkey on their Victory Day and emphasized the strong bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkey.

In his address, he praised Turkey's development and its role on the glo-

bal stage, highlighting the historical and fraternal ties between the two countries.

Governor Kundi said that the relationship between Pakistan and Turkey is one of enduring brotherhood, characterized by unbroken ties of Islamic camaraderie, love, devotion, and friendship.

He acknowledged the resilience and spirit of the Turkish nation, commemorating the significance of Victory Day as a symbol of Turkey's courage and perseverance.

He congratulated the Turkish Ambassador and his team for organizing a successful event, underscoring how the occasion highlighted the importance of furthering cooperation and friendship between the two countries.

The governor, along with other distinguished guests, also participated in a ceremonial cake-cutting to mark the celebration.



ISLAMABAD: Females taking interest in flowers decorations exhibition arranged by Floral Art Society of Pakistan Magnolia Chapter.

## Kashmiris enduring suffering under Indian occupation for past 77 years: Mirwaiz

ISLAMABAD (APP): In Indian-illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K), senior leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, has said that Kashmiris were enduring suffering under Indian occupation for the past 77 years.

He emphasized that the immense sacrifices made by the Kashmiris should protect them from any form of support for oppressors for the sake of personal gain.

According to Kashmir Media Service, in Srinagar, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq expressed deep disappoint-

ment over the presence of individuals within their ranks who are reportedly collaborating with the oppressors. He criticized these opportunists for betraying their own people and becoming instruments of oppression. Farooq asserted that those who exploit the suffering of their own community for personal advantage and align with oppressors should feel profound shame, as such betrayal will not be forgiven by the Kashmiri people. The APHC leader called for a heightened sense of responsibility and integrity, emphasizing that the sacrifices and suffering.

## Police Welfare Markaz promptly resolving police officers issues

ISLAMABAD: Following the directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Police Welfare Center established at the Central Police Office is fully operational and working effectively to resolve the issues of Islamabad police officers in a timely and efficient manner.

During the ongoing year, a total of 2,087 applications were received at the Police Welfare Center, of which 1,985 were resolved professionally, while work on the remaining applications is ongoing on a priority basis.

Instead of submitting

applications to various departments, police officers now submit their requests directly to the Police Welfare Center, where they are promptly marked to the relevant offices.

In this regard, police officers can ensure the provision of various services, including major leave, foreign leave, GP fund, loans for house construction or the purchase of vehicles/motorcycles, passports, departmental NOCs for education and employment. Additionally, scholarships, benevolent fund, appeals against departmental punishments, transfers, payment of medical bills, departmental promotions.

## FIA arrests IESCO audit officials, recovers Rs 14.75m bribe money

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in a major operation arrested the officials of Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on accepting bribe from the field officers and recovered Rs 14.75 million from them.

The arrested persons included Audit Office Zeeshan Ali, Assistant Audit Officer Nazir Hussain, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Jahangir Ahmed and Saqib Sagheer, said a press release issued here.

The officials were deputed by the Deputy Director Procurement and

Coordination Lahore Office to carry out the audit of IESCO Operation Jhelum Circle and Regional Manager Transformer Workshop Islamabad.

The FIA team arrested the accused from GT Road, Gujjar Khan and recovered the bribe money from them. According to initial investigation, the accused received the said amount from the officials posted in the field.

The Anti-corruption Circle Islamabad has registered a case against the accused and more arrests are expected on identification of the arrested persons.



ISLAMABAD: A man is catching fish at Rawal Dam, in the Federal Capital.

## Behind Murree's scenic charm: Residents' struggle for balance amid tourist rush

ISLAMABAD (APP): Murree, known as the "Queen of Hills," is a top tourist spot in Pakistan, celebrated for its stunning scenery, temperate climate, and beautiful landscapes. Established by the British in the mid-19th century as a hill station, it combines historical charm with modern appeal, attracting thousands each year with its breathtaking views and cool mountain air. Yet, beneath this picturesque exterior lies the hidden reality of daily struggles faced by its residents.

The influx of tourists brings numerous challenges. Despite the town's allure, Murree faces significant issues due to environmental stress. The natural beauty that attracts visitors is threatened by waste and pollution from their visits. Increased foot traffic leads

to littering, soil erosion, and damage to local wildlife and vegetation. Local authorities often struggle to balance preservation with the demands of tourism, despite efforts to manage waste and conserve resources.

Traffic congestion is another major issue. The town's infrastructure, designed for a smaller population, struggles to handle the high volume of vehicles during peak seasons. Narrow roads become clogged with buses, private vehicles, and transport trucks, causing frequent delays and worsening air pollution. This congestion affects daily commutes, increases the risk of accidents, and diminishes the quality of life for Murree's residents.

There is also a risk to the town's cultural heritage. The long-standing customs and traditions of Murree

face the threat of being overshadowed by tourism-driven economic interests. Businesses often prioritize visitor preferences over local cultural practices, which undermines the town's unique identity and makes it harder for residents to maintain their traditions.

Local residents have shared their daily struggles with APP, urging authorities to acknowledge and address their concerns.

Waqas Waheed from Barian, Masot, notes, "Traffic jams are a big problem. Tourists parking on the roadside create severe congestion, which can be risky, especially in emergencies. Additionally, the lack of public toilets on the route from Pindi to Murree leads to littering and environmental issues. Awareness needs to be raised, dustbins

should be provided, and regular monitoring is essential." Hifza Sajjid from Rawat, Murree, adds, "Students are most affected by traffic jams, which disrupt their studies and delay their return home. The congestion not only wastes time but also contributes to air pollution, impacting academic performance and health."

In Misryari Town, Hafiz Zafar, a salesman from Islamabad's Aabpara market who spends weekends at home, faces major disruptions during peak tourist seasons. "During Eid and 14th August, hoiganism by irresponsible tourists becomes a serious issue," he says. "The loud gatherings and reckless behavior shatter our peace, making it hard to enjoy any quiet. For my ailing parents, the constant noise and chaos right outside our

doorstep are particularly distressing, as they find it hard to relax in their own home." Mr. Azhar, a traffic police officer, says, "During busy times like Eid, traffic officers are everywhere to manage the crowds. We ensure everyone follows the rules and guide tourists to ease traffic flow. With more officers and clear signage, we effectively manage the large influx of tourists and keep traffic moving smoothly."

Professor Naseer Memon, an expert in climate change and natural resource management, advocates for sustainable tourism in Murree. He stresses the importance of educating tourists on eco-friendly practices, such as avoiding plastic, marking eco-sensitive areas, and preventing forest fires caused by activities like open cooking.

Memon supports forming eco-volunteer groups and collaborating with stakeholders to create a sustainability plan and promote responsible behavior.

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**PM in Balochistan**

In the wake of the recent terrorist rampage in Balochistan, the civilian and military leadership is trying to pick up the pieces and formulate an effective counterterrorism policy in this long-troubled province.

In this regard, the prime minister chaired a meeting of the Apex Committee in Quetta, attended by the army chief, where he reiterated the state's resolve to bring peace to Balochistan. He pointed out that there had been "great concern" across the country about what was going on in the province. Earlier, the provincial police chief was replaced, apparently as a reaction to the security lapse that enabled the proscribed BLA to attack civilian and security targets in different parts of Balochistan.

The PM has done the right thing by heading to Balochistan and reassuring its people that the state will not abandon them. However, beyond rhetoric, an honest appraisal of the situation over the last few decades is required by the rulers to bring long-lasting peace to this tortured land. Changing the IG appears to be a knee-jerk, formulaic reaction. It should be remembered that the law and order situation in Balochistan is complex, with 'A' and 'B' areas manned by different LEAs, while it is actually the establishment that calls the shots in the province where security management is concerned. So the provincial police alone are not to blame.

What is needed is a thorough probe involving all agencies and LEAs to investigate the matter and ensure such a security lapse is not repeated.

Moreover, beyond the militarised security approach, a more holistic response is needed to address Balochistan's burning issues, the biggest of which is the people's alienation with the state. The provincial chief minister pointed to this issue when he recently commented that Baloch youth were being systematically alienated from the state through "manipulation". While he is partially right about separatist forces exploiting the Baloch youth's disaffection with the state, it is the administration itself that has played a role in creating this situation by failing to uplift Balochistan socio-economically over several decades.

The PM, during his Quetta trip, also observed that "obstacles" standing in the way of progress need to be removed. So, while eliminating violent elements that attack the state and citizens is important, it is also crucial that the sense of deprivation that fuels the separatist narrative be addressed.

As this paper has mentioned before, there must be genuine political engagement with Balochistan's people, and the democratic process should be allowed to evolve without 'management' from certain quarters. Moreover, the province's abysmal health and education situation needs to change, while Balochistan's people should be given first right in jobs and training in local and foreign projects. Ultimately, ensuring constitutionally guaranteed rights to Balochistan can help turn the tide.

**Tariq Parvez**

On July 22, 2024, in response to the government's announcement that a military operation would be launched in KP, a 45-member jirga of Bannu elders presented a list of 16 demands for the maintenance of peace in Bannu specifically, and KP in general.

Reportedly, the KP Apex Committee, which has members from the provincial government as well as the local military command, accepted these demands. On Aug 4, a jirga committee met to evaluate the implementation of these demands. It stated that only three demands had been implemented till then. The committee pointed out that the government's delaying tactics would likely aggravate the security situation not only in Bannu, but also in the adjoining districts of North and South Waziristan, as evident in the surge in terrorist attacks in the first half of August.

The jirga's 16 demands can be divided into four categories — military, the Pakistani Taliban, police, and socioeconomic factors. With regard to the

military, the demands comprise three aspects: firm opposition to any large-scale operation; a strong dislike of military tactics in Bannu, such as enforced disappearances; and firm disapproval of the policy of dealing with the TTP by dividing them into the 'surrendered Taliban' and the 'bad Taliban'.

All this reflects a serious disconnect between local civil society and the military on how to deal with the terrorist threat. Continuation of this communication gap is likely to strengthen the TTP's hands and must be addressed urgently.

Regarding the Taliban, the jirga forcefully demanded two things: all centres of surrendered Taliban be ended permanently; and the elimination of "patrolling/picketing by Taliban forthwith". Surrendering militants are generally referred to as the 'good Taliban', and have been temporarily settled in Bannu's outskirts. The jirga sees the 'good Taliban' as a major part of the problem.

Thus, it wants the policy of using the 'good' Taliban against the TTP to be re-examined for overall effective-

ness and acceptability among the locals.

Similarly, the Taliban's patrolling, extortion of money and checking of documents challenges the writ of the state, strengthening the impression that the government is either unwilling or incapable of protecting the citizens from the terrorists. This perception seriously dents public support for the counterterrorism (CT) effort, portraying the government as weak and ineffective.

Vis-à-vis the police, the jirga demanded that the main agency responsible for enforcing kinetic measures against the TTP in Bannu specifically, and KP generally, should be the police and not the military. It wanted the police to be empowered and provided resources to enable it to play its role in countering the TTP. This calls for a much-needed shift from the military to the police in decision-making and implementation of the kinetic dimension in KP.

Last but not least, the jirga demanded socioeconomic measures such as the restoration of internet/mobile phone services in the

area, giving "due share in local natural resources, especially gas and minerals, to the people of Bannu", and improving the local economy by opening the "Ghulam Khan trade route for Afghanistan". Addressing these concerns can go a long way in restoring the locals' confidence in the government.

The way forward calls for a four-dimensional response. One, the federal government must honour the commitments it made in 2018 to provide funds to KP to mainstream the Newly Merged Districts, which continue to have extremely poor socioeconomic indicators. Lack of resources for development and security is a major driver of violent extremism in the NMDs, with a spillover effect in adjoining districts like Bannu. Similarly, the demands for reopening the Ghulam Khan trade route and giving local communities a participatory role to benefit from the area's natural resources should be addressed before it snowballs into a major rallying call — as it has in Balochistan.

Two, the military should realise that KP's environment has changed radi-

cally since Operation Zarbi-Azb in 2014. After experiencing large-scale suffering, the people have become vocal and are asserting themselves for a say in the CT response for peace in their area. It is time to respect their wishes and make them partners in countering terrorism in the area, both in terms of policy formulation — 'good Taliban' versus 'bad Taliban', negotiations with the Taliban, etc — and tactics — such as the missing persons' phenomenon. The military's earlier overbearing presence in CT efforts in the province is no longer likely to be effective: the Bannu jirga drove home this point.

Three, the provincial government is pivotal to the CT effort in KP, and must devise a holistic strategy for dealing with terrorism in the province under two main categories: kinetic and non-kinetic. In the former, the KP government must devise a plan for capacity building of the police and the criminal justice system on an urgent basis. In the non-kinetic area, it must prioritise addressing the socioeconomic grievances raised by the jirga. To plan, coordinate, and implement non-kinetic mea-

sures, the provincial government needs a focal institution, just like it has the CTD for implementing kinetic measures.

Last, but not least, acting on the jirga's demand for the local population to be given a voice in CT efforts, formal structures such as district-level jirgas or local bodies system to incorporate local inputs into CT must be created. This can be done through provincial legislation.

The significance of the Bannu jirga lies not only in the fact that it enumerates the issues of greatest concern to the people of Bannu, but also that the demands, with local variations, are representative of all other segments of KP and Balochistan, which are bearing the brunt of the terrorist onslaught. Similar voices have been heard from the recently held Swat Quami Jirga and the Baloch Yakjehti Committee. Ignoring these demands will only widen the present alienation between the people and the state, depriving the latter of the critical support of local communities in our national CT effort. Therein lies the importance of the Bannu message.

**The audacity of hope****Faisal Siddiqi**

Being surrounded by chaos and violence in the country, a constant state of depression and anxiety, leading to hopelessness, had become the new normal. In this new normal, only the instinctual will to survive and ethical duty to our loved ones kept us alive and relatively sane.

But then, like a rising phoenix, came Arshad Nadeem with his Olympic gold medal. There was something about that moment on Aug 8, and something about Arshad, which immediately convinced me that this was something far more important than an Olympic gold medal.

Unique achievement: To understand the implications of Arshad's achievement, his unique sporting feat has to be understood first. Firstly, unlike other sports (for example, cricket), track and field are the centrepiece of Olympic events, with widespread global participation. Secondly, unlike cricket and hockey, javelin throwing is an individual achievement. You are the one who solely determines your glory or defeat. Thirdly, Arshad not only won a gold medal, but broke the previous Olym-

pic record of 90.57 metres — not once, but twice (92.97m and 91.79m).

This was a rare combination of victory, world-class excellence and making history. Fourthly, while Jahangir Khan's and Jansher Khan's squash brilliance are certainly comparable to Arshad's achievements, Arshad still stands out because of his impoverished rural and working-class background and lack of family sporting history.

Hopelessness to dreams: Arshad's journey, from hopeless personal and societal conditions to personal greatest achievement, is unique. The four horsemen of apocalyptic pre-destruction were present: the obstacles of being working class, the geographical backwardness of his hometown, the anti-sport culture of this society, and the complete lack of encouragement or adequate facilities in the neglected sport of javelin throwing in Pakistan (as compared to cricket or hockey). In the age-old debate of free will versus determinism, Arshad is the poster boy for human free will; and if Nietzsche's "Will to Power" philosophy could be captured by a sporting example, Arshad's

javelin throwing ability would be a leading candidate.

More importantly, in a country like Pakistan, where 60 per cent of the population is under 30 years and where there is a working-class majority, Arshad's journey offers optimism that all is not lost in this sea of hopelessness. Even if there's no Olympic gold medal, the individual free will of working-class and middle-class youths can still make a difference.

Foundations of transformation: After thanking Allah and acknowledging the prayers of the nation for him, Arshad gave credit for his historic achievement to his family, especially his mother and key individuals in his life, ie, his coaches and doctor. What Arshad Nadeem's journey tells us is not a blueprint for societal transformation, but a path to personal greatness despite no societal change as such.

Pakistan is in a state of chaos and violence, with a suicidal, mediocrity-loving and globally humiliated elite in charge. In such an anarchic and repressive state, the path to survival, happiness and achievement lies through reliance on fam-

ily and friendship structures, as well as individual efforts to transform each other's lives. Regardless of the destruction around us, we must transform one another's life and keep hope alive. Groups, political parties and institutions will build on such individual examples in the future to transform society.

Extraordinary personality: My educational background at LSE and Cambridge did not teach me the qualities which Arshad Nadeem, at the tender age of 27 years, did. For example, when asked whether Neeraj Chopra was his competition, he said that his competition was with himself, ie, his own limitations. His relationship with Neeraj is a classic example of being a world-class athlete without hating or being mean to your rivals. The absence of such hate or meanness is rare among successful people.

Moreover, he is confident without being arrogant or showing hubris; he is genuinely humble in victory without being superficial. Despite personal greatness and now the showering of wealth, his sense of social responsibility led him to demand bet-

ter facilities for his hometown and sports facilities for the youth. Finally, he is not merely a world-class athlete but also a performer who captured the imagination of the crowd by the way he performed during the javelin throwing event at the Paris Olympics.

Religiosity, not fanaticism: Arshad Nadeem is a religious man who credits his victory to the blessings of Allah. But his religiosity had led to personal transformation and greatness and not to fanaticism. His near-impossible journey to success lays bare three foundational elements of his faith. Firstly, belief (not certainty) that if he works hard and excels, he will be rewarded. Secondly, remarkable patience (not immediate gratification) bridging the hard and long distance between belief and success. Thirdly, gratitude (not endless greed) for whatever Allah has granted him. Arshad Nadeem is the perfect example for the Pakistani youth regarding mutual reinforcement of religiosity and worldly success.

Beyond sports: No number of internet firewalls or amount of propaganda through textbooks or media

can ever beat the nationalism instilled in Pakistanis by a single Olympic performance by Arshad. Sports is a key strategic tool of nationalism. Secondly, there was no disagreement between various political, social and religious forces on his achievement. Thus, this violently divided, youthful society can be healed through sports. Thirdly, Arshad Nadeem repeatedly described himself as not merely a Pakistani but a South Asian athlete. Thus, the forces of Islamist extremism in Pakistan and Hindutva in India could not prevent such South Asian solidarity.

I fear that my optimism might be short-lived, because, firstly, the money and privileges being showered on him might commodify his pure soul. Secondly, the government's desire to take credit for his achievement will politicise his national achievement. Thirdly, the rivalry between India and Pakistan might ultimately poison their South Asian solidarity. But let us at least savour this moment when, after a long time, Arshad Nadeem made us all feel like a proud, not humiliated, nation.

**Rampant deceit****Sufiyan Bin Muneer**

We as a society do not speak the truth and do not like to hear the truth. The habit of being mendacious is deeply rooted in our collective social behaviour, perpetuated by a system that seems to thrive on deceit. The natural corollary of this habit is not honouring one's word or promise.

From a political leader, a judge, a civil or a military bureaucrat, a businessman and a lawyer, the tendency to breach commitments trickles down to the ordinary man. This aspect of Pakistani society is underrepresented and unaddressed. Normatively, agreements, promises and contracts govern the relationship between individuals and the state, and transnational actors.

Let's take the legal profession as a case study. Generally, an ordinary day in our society, and in particular in the legal practice, begins with a lie — or, it would be appropriate to say, a series of lies. Why don't we speak the truth? It is so common that no one even cares, and even seniors encourage their pupils to carry out a certain kind of 'smart work', which means unnecessary adjournments.

The lawyers in an adversarial system represent the best interest of the client, and this too is often disregarded, where inefficient work causes delays and jeopardises the client's interests. Discussing our political and judicial history in detail is beyond the scope of this article, but suffice it to say, misrepresentation and fraud are rampant.

Primarily, every litigation typically arises from a failure to fulfill contractual promises; the

collective habit of flouting promises has burdened the judicial system with 2.5 million cases — the figure was mentioned by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah in his recent speech at the Federal Judicial Academy. The lack of contractual fulfilment has created a trust deficit; a deficit where foreign investors may negotiate profit sharing but never negotiate on the dispute-resolution clause. Pakistan has a population of 240m, with 2.5m cases and 5,000 judges. If these 2.5m cases are not decided on time, then it simply is injustice. Why are the cases on the docket for such a long time? One reason is that the system tends to drag its feet due to inefficiencies in case management.

A possible solution for such a backlog is to have a robust case management system with the help of technology. However, the deep-rooted problem in our society is the failure to honour promises at all levels of interactions and therefore, our system has failed to ensure speedy justice. Thus, even for the sake of economic progress, cases need to be resolved at the earliest. The example of the legal profession has been given here to facilitate a better understanding of the gravity of this societal predicament. Rest assured, any profession can fit perfectly in this model when it comes to dealing with deceitful practices.

Justice extends beyond deciding a matter. It must also strengthen the whole system so that justice is ultimately served. But that is not the case here in Pakistan. An average case may easily take 10 to 20 years to get decided from the first court to the Supreme Court — a whole genera-

tion is wasted in litigation.

Addressing this plague requires recognising the problem and implementing comprehensive solutions. The major symptom is overreliance on nature and is the prevalent cause of the problem. The contracts that people enter into hold enormous sanctity and should be executed in good faith to eliminate the possibilities of dispute that snowball into litigation. We need a structural overhaul that en-courages truth and incentivises respect for commitments.

Imagine if politicians start keeping their promises, if 'undemocratic elements' adhere to the oath they take, if judges strictly follow the timelines stipulated in procedural laws, if lawyers are fair to their clients, if businesses honoured their contracts, if parties are made to internalise the sanctity of contracts. Such changes would boost commercial activities and reduce litigation.

A society with a colonialist past cannot be solely mended through individualistic narratives. Only a collective overhaul of the system can ensure a balance between the government and its citizens, with both sides honouring their commitments. This is because the relationship between the state and its citizens is a two-way street, and it takes two to tango. This approach may not yield results in a few months. In fact, it will require a long-term process to counter the plague of deceit in our society. If the current situation persists, it will remain an exercise in futility, akin to treating symptoms without addressing the deep-seated malaise.

**Recipe for disaster****Syed Saadat**

The Pakistani public has been a victim of appalling policymaking in the way the authorities deal with technology. Their policies are arbitrary in nature and range from atrocious electricity generation policy to tapping phone calls, or from curtailing internet access to a complete ban on X (formerly Twitter). But all these policies have one thing in common and that is they are devoid of logic all the time.

Let us see how this policymaking takes place, and what is the role of senior civil servants, who we can term the 'boomer uncles' of policymaking. These are the individuals whose most noteworthy achievement in life is passing the CSS exam some 30 odd years ago. Another noteworthy trait is their blind compliance with authority, whether legitimate or illegitimate. This consistent servitude helps them move up the ladder slowly but surely, and in time they end up in top decision-making positions of the civil bureaucracy.

Their servitude is ironic, because the civil service is different from military service in the sense that civil servants are selected after a stringent process that is more focused towards academic excellence to make sure that the selected individuals have the analytical ability to initiate meaningful policymaking and objectively evaluate and critique the policies suggested by the politicians or the dictators in power. It would really be pointless to put so much emphasis on academic excellence in a number of subjects for the CSS exam when all the selected candidates are go-

ing to do for the next 20 to 30 years is to appease those in power and submit to their whims.

The policymaking process, or any decision-making process, typically starts with a grade-17 officer moving a summary with all the details of the suggested action for an issue under the spotlight. That summary, after some corrective actions — which are mostly related to the diction of the summary and pointing out a few grammatical mistakes here and there rather than the content — moves up the bureaucratic hierarchy to finally end up at the desk of the grade-22 officer, the secretary, who further makes sure that the content is in line with the thought process of his or her political or non-political boss. This can, at best, be termed an exercise in flattery rather than policymaking.

This precise methodology results in the young civil servants preparing policy drafts in line with the wishes of their boss — the original boomer uncle — rather than preparing policy drafts considering the needs of the public and their well-being. This systemic sycophancy results in making the well-qualified and extensively trained young civil servants nothing more than glorified clerks who are mere paper pushers. It goes without saying that any deviation from the inclination of the powerful masters is snubbed as well as discouraged. This way, even young officers who might be fresh graduates from among the best local and foreign universities are stuck in a mindset that is at least 30 to 40 years behind our time, which is precisely where our political and military elite is also stuck these days.

Many might argue

that with the military being in the driving seat these days, this criticism of civil servants is a little unfair. The answer to that naive criticism is that the military might have the power, but it still needs input from civil servants for policymaking. The military is never trained to manage public discourse or public sentiment, as it is trained to conquer enemy territory and public sentiment hardly matters there. This is the very reason the role of feedback by civil servants becomes critically important. The actions suggested by those in power have to be evaluated objectively by the civil servants, and fearless feedback is a must. The boomer uncles who have modeled their life around appeasing men in power fail to do so. These factors result in highly oppressive policies that are detrimental not only for the state but also for the "state within the state". Sixty-four per cent of the population in the country is below 30 years of age, which signals a virtual generation gap between the policymakers and the public. "Someone" must look to find ways to bridge that gap rather than widening it by labelling it as "digital terrorism". The solution lies in two-way communication rather than such accusations.

Lastly, the civil servants must step up and be daring enough to share their feedback on such policies verbally as well as in writing, so that greater reflection can take place before implementation. Civil servants must provide the bridge between the public and the ruling elite. Otherwise, the powerful military, the not-so-powerful politicians and an indifferent civil service is a perfect recipe for disaster, which should be pretty evident by now.

## KP government prioritizes Law and order: Gandapur

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur on Saturday said the establishment of law and order in the province was the top priority of his government.

He stated this while addressing a ceremony organized at the Circuit House in connection with laying down the foundation stone of multiple development projects. The CM said that the police department would be equipped with modern weapons and technologies, adding that more recruitment would also be made in the police for the purpose.

He said that all resources were being utilized to provide facilities to the people. The 'health card' facility would be expanded along with ensuring the provision of modern health facilities at public hospitals so that people do not have to go

to distant hospitals for treatment.

Gandapur said that the development of all the districts was among his priorities as he owned the entire province. The project of flyovers in Dera Ismail Khan will be executed soon as the funds have also been approved for this project, he added.

He said the public money was being invested in the people and the citizens should also fulfil their responsibility to safeguard the development projects. "If anyone notices any negligence or omission in any project, they should point it out so that it could be addressed timely", he said.

The chief minister underlined the need for joint efforts to move forward towards a great province.

Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur mentioned that the drainage plan of Dera Ismail Khan was of international standards but

it was closed during rains in the city. He said the main reason behind its closure was debris, plastic bags and construction materials to be drained in the sewerage lines.

He appealed to the citizens to protect government resources and properties like their own, adding that the development projects would be ineffective until the people prove to be responsible and behave like civilized citizens. He said that rehabilitation centres were being established at government hospitals as well as private hospitals for the treatment of drug addicts. He said the 'Solar Systems' were being provided to people to address the issue of electricity. He also appealed to the people to avoid electricity theft as the permanent solution of load-shedding was not possible without controlling the power theft issue.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the meeting of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department.

## KP CM aides inaugurates private luxury hotel at Bagh Dheri, Swat

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Mohammad Ali Saif and Special Assistant on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher inaugurated a private IYI Luxury Hotel at Bagh Dheri, District Swat.

Local Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) Mohammad Naeem and Member National Assembly (MNA) Sohail Sultan welcomed the guests.

On this occasion, the management of the hotel gave a detailed briefing to the advisor and special assistant and told that the facility comprising tents and concrete has cost Rs.700 million. Besides, Director (Business Facilitation) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BoIT) Iqbal Sarwar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the hotel, Ab, Abdul Mateen, government

officials, investors and a large number of local notables also attended the inaugural ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Special Assistant to KP Chief Minister (CM) on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Mohammad Ali Saif said that every kind of such step towards progress and development is their national and religious responsibility. He congratulated both the investors and KP-BoIT for construction of the unique IYI in Swat.

He said that investors like Abdul Mateen are their heroes as when there is a brain-drain of shifting of mind and wealth they still trust in the future of their country and the establishment of the millions of rupees investment of IYI is ample proof of it. Barrister Saif said that from Waziristan to Swat our province is facing a hard time. However, he said Almighty Allah has taught the skill of how to come out of the darkness.



ABBOTTABAD: Local man standing on Thindiyani road, where houses were destroyed due to heavy landslides.

## 37 Bahawalpur students selected for CM Agriculture Internship Programme

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has introduced an internship programme as a revolutionary initiative to provide employment and training to agricultural graduates. Under the internship programme, 37 students from Bahawalpur district have been selected based on merit. This programme is expected to be a positive development for agricultural graduates and the future of agriculture in the country. The selected graduates will assist farmers with guidance and technical support under the supervision of the Agriculture Department.

It was mentioned on this occasion that the internship will last for one year, and students will receive a monthly stipend of 60,000 rupees. Under the internship program, agricultural graduates will fulfill their responsibilities effectively and contribute to the development of agriculture.

Internship Program in his office's committee room. The Deputy Commissioner stated that, following the Chief Minister of Punjab's directive, the selection process of students under the agricultural graduates' internship program has been completed in a fair and transparent manner, and offer letters have been issued to the selected students. They will help in agricultural development and guide farmers under the supervision of the Agriculture Department.

## One killed, two injured in Bahawalpur Road mishap

BAHAWALPUR (APP): A man was killed and two others suffered critical wounds when a trailer hit another trailer in Noorpur Noranga area of the district.

The police and rescue sources said that they received information about a road accident that caused death of a man and injuring of two other persons. The police and rescue teams rushed to the scene and provided emergency medical aid to the injured.

They said that a speeding trailer hit another trailer that was parked on roadside, leaving one man dead and injuring two others. The dead and injured were shifted to Bahawal Victoria Hospital (BVH). The police have registered a case and started investigation.

## ANF recovers 90 kg drugs in different operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting nine different operations across the country managed to recover 90 kg drugs worth Rs 10 million and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Saturday. He informed that 1.9 kg hashish was recovered from a passenger going to Qatar at Lahore Airport. 400 grams heroin was recovered from a parcel sent to England at the courier office in Peshawar. 48 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of two suspects arrested near GT Road Sheikhpura while 25 kg hashish was recovered from Panjgur area.

8 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused net in Okara and 2 kg heroin and 2 kg opium were recovered from Hub area.

In 7<sup>th</sup> operation, 2.4 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects.



HYDERABAD: A view of rain water accumulated at railway station after rain in the city.



LAHORE: Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

## Need for unity, joint efforts to deal with the challenges faced by the country: Saleem

Says success of incumbent gov't crucial for country's stability

### Independent Report

LAHORE: Senior leader of People's Party, Qamar Zaman Kaira met with Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, both leaders discussed the current political situation of the country and the province. The strategy to strengthen the party's position in the province and improve the quality of governance was also discussed. Talking on this occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that national security and stability is related to democracy. He said that political stability is vital to boost the economy of the

country. Punjab Governor said that there is a need for unity and joint efforts to deal with the challenges faced by the country. He said that the doors of Governor's House are open for representatives of all political parties. Governor Punjab further said that promotion of higher education in remote areas of the country is his priority. Senior leader of PPP Qamar Zaman Kaira said that PPP has always talked about reconciliation in the wider interest of the country. He said that Pakistan People's Party is committed to play positive role for political stability of the country.

Meanwhile, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem

Haider Khan said that the success of the current coalition government is important for the country's stability and development. The nation cannot afford any kind of irresponsibility. He expressed these views while talking to the media after condoling the tragic killing of his brother with Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Lahore President Amjad Jutt at his residence. Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan further said that holding elections before the completion of the government's term will be harmful for both political parties and the country. He said that the upcoming elections will be as per the schedule.

## CM Sindh approves Rs 500m under PITP

SUKKUR (APP): Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah while chairing the signing of a MoU for the People's Information Technology Program (PITP), aimed at enhancing IT skills and reducing poverty in Sindh.

According to Sukkur IBA University spokesperson on Saturday, the ceremony was attended by the Chief Minister's Secretary Rahim Sheikh, Secretary School Education, Zahid Abbasi, and Secretary Universities and Boards Abbas Baloch, along with Vice Chancellors

Prof. Dr. Sarosh Hashmat Lodhi (NED University), Prof. Dr. Asif Ahmed Shaikh (Sukkur IBA University), and Prof. Dr. Tuaha Hussain (Mehran University).

The MoU, signed with Sukkur IBA University, followed by NED University and Mehran University, will provide industry-recognized certifications to 10,000 young people. Rs 500 million has been approved for the program, with courses covering roles like Java Developer and Data Scientist.

## 200 tourists from Kumrat rescued

PESHAWAR (APP): The spokesman of Tourism and Culture Authority Govt of KP has said that 200 tourists stranded in Kumrat Valley in Dir Upper district has been safely rescued on Saturday.

He said the tourists rescued from Dojangla, Kala Chesma and Abshar were assembled at Grand Palace hotel from where they would be shifted to Kalam.

Talking to APP, he said that food and other services were being provided to all the rescued tourists.



LAHORE: Chairperson Punjab Women Protection Authority Hina Pervez Butt and DG Safina Siddique in a group photo with students of various universities.

## Children's heart surgery programme hailed

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has expressed confidence that the Chief Minister's Children's Heart Surgery Programme will set a benchmark for other provincial governments across Pakistan.

The minister made these remarks while presiding over a meeting at the Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education on Saturday.

He announced that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was expected to inaugurate the project soon. The minister also revealed that an online dashboard, developed with the assistance of the Punjab

Information Technology Board (PITB), will be implemented to ensure continuous monitoring of the programme's performance.

"The Chief Minister's Children's Heart Surgery Program will significantly enhance the pediatric heart surgery system in Punjab," he stated.

"Children's heart surgeries in the province's hospitals will be carried out in strict adherence to established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and within the required timelines."

He emphasized that the project aims to establish an integrated system of heart surgery for children across the province.

## 2 killed, 9 injured in road accident

FAISALABAD (APP): Two persons were killed while 9 others sustained multiple injuries in a road traffic accident in the area of Thikriwala police station on Saturday.

Rescue 1122 spokesperson said that a speedy mini loader carrying passengers to vegetable market collided with a tractor trolley loaded with timbers near Thikriwala on Jhang road.

As a result, Ghulam Mustafa (45) r/o Chak No.73-JB Jhpal and an unknown person (45) died on the spot while Rescue 1122 shifted 9 other victims to Allied Hospital after providing them first aid. Among the injured included Imitiaz Riaz (24) r/o Chak No.201-JB Chiniot, Riaz Atta (38) r/o Chak No.201-JB, Mala Ismail (28) r/o Chak No.201-JB, Abdul Hafeez (30) r/o Nalka Adda Chiniot.

## Woman dies in road mishap

LODHHRAN (APP): A woman was killed while another sustained injuries after a tractor-trolley, loaded with bricks, ran over a motorcycle near Bahawalpur Road here on Saturday.

According to Rescue officials, a man and a woman were going somewhere on a motorcycle when a tractor-trolley hit them near Bahawalpur Road.

## PA speaker meets Punjab CM, discusses political matters

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan met Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, here on Saturday and congratulated her and Pakistan Muslim League-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif on provision of mega relief in electricity bills.

The CM said, "The provincial cabinet, by granting approval to the public-friendly programme, has undertaken a historic step. The public money, contrary to the past traditions, will now be spent only on provision of relief to the public."

Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan said, "Provision of Rs 14 per unit relief in the electricity bills is a whiff of cool breeze for the public." He termed provision of Rs 46 billion mega relief in the electricity bills a historic step. Matters pertaining to political situation and Provincial Assembly affairs were discussed in the meeting. Development projects of the province were comprehensively discussed.

Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb was also present.



LAHORE: Senior leader of People's Party, Qamar Zaman Kaira called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

## Punjab cabinet approves more discount on bikes for students

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab cabinet on Saturday approved more discount on bikes for students.

Subsidy was given on the charges on the request of Punjab Transport Department; therefore, subsidy related to the registration of all types of bikes given to students would be given by the provincial government.

In this connection, bank processing fee of Rs 1500 per bike would also be paid by the Punjab

government. Students paying bank processing fee would have now money transferred back to their accounts.

Bike registration, number-plate and card costs would also be paid by the government. Students will have to pay only bike installments, insurance and uplift money. After the approval of the Punjab cabinet, new standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to bikes have been implemented.

## Salma Butt says: Maximum relief for masses top priority of CM Punjab

MULTAN (APP): CM Task Force for Price Control Punjab Chairperson Salma Butt has said that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is paying special attention to projects through which masses will be provided relief, especially on essential commodities. Holding a press conference here on Saturday, she said the provincial government had established special task force on directives of the chief minister to prevent price hike, artificial shortage and hoarding. She said that the basic purpose of the task force was to provide relief to masses by controlling prices of commodities. She said that CM Maryam Nawaz announced subsidy for

residents of the province through a huge amount of Rs 45 billion, adding that different initiatives have already been taken for the purpose including the recent relief in the electricity bills. Salma Butt said that demand and supply at markets was being monitored strictly and the prices were being decided after taking all stakeholders into confidence. She said that the fluctuating prices of chickens had been fixed after consensus with the poultry associations where the formula for prices has been completely changed.

She said that usually the prices of five different commodities were being monitored and efforts being made to control price hike.



LAHORE: Central Youth President Pakistan Muslim League -Q, Kamran Saeed Usmani addressing a seminar: Oxford Exhibition Theme, Stop Using the Oxford Chancellor Candidacy for Destabilizing Pakistan.

## Zero waste campaign launched in 21 rural union councils: DC

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Zulfqarnain announced on Saturday the launch of a special zero waste campaign in 21 rural union councils, supervised by the Local Government Department of Sialkot under the Chief Minister Punjab's "Suthra Punjab Program."

Chairing a meeting to review the 'Zero Waste' in rural union councils campaign, he said the initiative would cover six rural union councils in Sialkot, nine in Daska, four in Pasrur, and two in Sambrial.

The campaign will address waste management in a total of 257 villages across these union councils. Bulk waste will be collected and disposed of following hygiene

standards. After clearing these areas within a month, the campaign will gradually expand to the remaining 98 village councils.

Deputy Commissioner Zulfqarnain emphasised that only existing resources from the respective union councils are being utilised, with no additional funds or grants provided.

The meeting was attended via video link by Assistant Commissioner Sialkot Anum Babar, Deputy Director Local Government Sialkot Umar Amjad Baig, Assistant Director Local Government Rana Arshad, as well as assistant commissioners from Daska, Sambrial, and Pasrur, and other officials concerned.

## Chinese company to invest in renewable energy: Aleem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Saturday was assured by Hexing Electrical, Chinese Group to put heavy investment by establishing new industry especially in renewable energy sector.

Chairman of China's business group Hexing Electrical, Liangzhang Zhou along with the delegation called on Minister for Investment

and informed him that it would be first industry of its own kind in Pakistan to manufacture inverters & batteries with big investment.

Abdul Aleem Khan welcomed the decision of the Chinese company and said that there are vast opportunities for investment in Pakistan, substantial results can be derived out of it in the current circumstances with the best business environment.

He said that investors from other countries, including China will be ensured by the provision of extraordinary facilities for investment in Pakistan. Abdul Aleem Khan added that establishment of new factories will increase the rate of employment and export in the country and once again boost the economy as well.

Aleem Khan said that the transfer of industries from China to Pakistan and the establishment of new

factories on a large scale would be very welcome step. Assuring full cooperation to the Chinese business delegation, the Federal Minister said that Pakistan values the investment from China and will take the relevant Ministries on board to make this step possible for which stakeholders will also be consulted.

The minister said that after the recent visit of the Prime Minister to China, many business enterprises



LAHORE: Secretary Industries and Food Ahsan Bhutta presides over the meeting regarding Food Directorate and Cane Commissioner.



ISLAMABAD: Local vendors purchasing fruits at Fruit and Vegetable Market in the Federal Capital.

## ED Bangkok Chamber of Commerce called on Governor KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director of the Bangkok Chamber of Commerce, Pakistani-born Sohail Kausar on Saturday called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Faisal Karim Kundi and discussed the exchange of delegations to enhance cultural and commercial ties between Pakistan and Thailand.

During the meeting, the governor provided a detailed briefing about the significant Gandhara civilization heritage present in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He emphasized that this civilization is not only an important part of Pakistani but also a global cultural heritage.

showcase its vibrant heritage to the world and said that it is a key priority for him.

The discussion also covered the province's ancient cultural heritage and historical sites, with a particular focus on the remnants of the Gandhara civilization associated with Buddhism.

Governor Kundi pointed out that KP has numerous sites of significant religious importance for Buddhists. Both parties discussed the exchange of delegations between the two countries, especially at the provincial level, to enhance cultural and commercial ties between Pakistan and Thailand.

## KPT chairman calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): Chairman Karachi Port Trust (KPT), Syedin Raza Zaidi called on Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at the Governor House on Saturday.

The importance of the port in economic activities, problems faced in the functioning of Karachi port and other issues were discussed during the meeting.

Governor Kamran Tessori said that Karachi Port was playing a prominent role in the prosperity of the national economy.

He said the state-of-the-art Karachi Port can play an active role in economic activities. The governor said that solving the issues of the Karachi Port on a priority basis was the need of the hour.

## Aslam congrats KPRA for surpassing two months target

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on Finance Muzammil Aslam has congratulated KPRA for surpassing its first two months target and said that overall collection is increased by 44 percent to 7.1 billion rupees as compared to 4.92 billion rupees last year.

He said this while receiving the performance report of first two months of current financial year from KPRA Director General, Fauzia Iqbal.

He termed the achievement a milestone and congratulated KPRA team for surpassing target in the month of August.

## Over Rs 4.2m fine imposed on shopkeepers

LODHHRAN (APP): The district administration conducted raids and imposed over Rs 4.2 million fine on 1,717 people involved in adulteration, hoarding and profiteering across the district during the month of August. Special price control magistrates were making a crackdown on profiteers and hoarders across the district. According to the report, the price control magistrates also got arrested 546 shopkeepers.

The delegation informed the Senior Vice President that due to the lack of clarity in the policy regarding General Sales Tax (GST) on tractors by the Ministry of Finance and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), several plants in the tractor industry have been shut down, potentially leading to the unemployment of millions of households. The delegation further highlighted that, in a country where many mills and factories are already closed, unemployment and inflation have made life

## FBR 'faces' Rs 90b shortfall in August tax collection

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is facing a Rs 90 billion tax shortfall, with a target of Rs 2654 billion for the first quarter.

According to sources, the FBR collected Rs 1464 billion in July-August, missing the target by Rs 90 billion.

The tax collection target for September is Rs 1190 billion, and if the FBR fails to achieve it, the IMF may demand a mini-budget, sources warned.

The continuous protests and roadblocks in July-August affected economic activities and resulted in a tax shortfall. The change in FBR chairman at the start of the new fiscal year also impacted tax collection.

However, the FBR is committed to making all-out efforts to achieve tax targets in September.

Despite the challenges, the tax collection rate of 27% in July-August is encouraging, FBR officials said.

Earlier, FBR collected Rs 659.2 billion in first month (July) of the current financial year 2024-25 against the set target of Rs 656 billion.

The board issued refunds of amounting Rs 77.9 billion, said a FBR news release.

During the month under review, Rs. 300.2 billion was collected under the head of Income Tax, Rs. 307.9 billion under the head of Sales Tax, Rs. 37.4 billion under the head of Federal Excise Duty, and Rs. 91.7 billion under the head of Customs Duty.

FBR exhibited a promising start for financial year 2024-25 regarding the revenue collection.

## Moody's upgrades ratings of 5 Pakistani banks

KARACHI (INP): International rating agency Moody's on Saturday upgraded the ratings of five major Pakistani banks, citing improved economic conditions in the country.

The long-term deposit ratings of the five banks have been upgraded from Caa3 to Caa2.

The banks include Habib Bank Limited, National Bank of Pakistan, United Bank Limited, Allied Bank Limited, and MCB Bank Limited.

Moody's also changed the outlook for all five banks from stable to positive. The decision comes after Moody's

upgraded Pakistan's credit rating from CAA3 to CAA2 and changed the country's outlook from stable to positive.

The international ranking agency noted that Pakistan's improved economic conditions, including a reduction in default risk, were key factors in the upgrade. The agency also cited the country's \$7 billion deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a positive development.

In the upcoming days, the \$7 billion deal is anticipated to be approved by the IMF's executive board.

## Pak e-commerce market ascends to global prominence, ranked 46th worldwide

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan's e-commerce sector is rapidly making its mark on the global stage, now ranked as the 46th largest market in the world, according to the International Trade Administration.

This growth trajectory is underpinned by a burgeoning middle class, widespread smartphone and internet usage, improved e-commerce infrastructure, and robust government support.

Recent projections by Statista, a leading global data and business

intelligence platform, underscore the impressive progress of Pakistan's e-commerce sector. In 2023, the market generated \$5.2 billion in revenue, positioning Pakistan ahead of many other developing nations. The sector is expected to maintain its momentum, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.92% from 2024 to 2029. By the end of this period, revenue is anticipated to reach \$6.71 billion, as reported by China Economic Net (CEN).

Pakistan's distinction as a mobile-first nation is

evident, with over 80% of internet users accessing the web via smartphones. This mobile dominance is also reflected in e-commerce, where 58% of users made purchases through mobile devices in 2023—a figure that is expected to rise further.

Data from DataSparkle highlights the growing engagement with mobile shopping applications. As of July 2024, the number of monthly active users of these apps in Pakistan surpassed 16.6 million, showcasing rapid growth in mobile e-commerce.

## Gold rates up by Rs.1,000 per tola to Rs.262,500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,000 and was sold at Rs.262,500 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs.261,500 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.857 to Rs.225,051 from Rs.226,080 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.206,297 from Rs.205,511, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,950 and Rs.2,529.14, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$13 to \$2,503 from \$2,516, the Association reported.

## Conference adopts resolution to establish IT Park in south Punjab

MULTAN (APP): A roundtable conference titled "Making South Punjab the Next IT Hub of Pakistan", organised by the Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), unanimously approved a resolution on Saturday to establish an IT Park in South Punjab.

The conference was attended by representatives from the IT companies, industrialists, academics, and other stakeholders from across the region. Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) South Punjab Fuad Hashim Rabbani was the chief guest. Other notable attendees included MCCI President Mian Rashid Iqbal, Senior VP Nadeem

Sheikh, VP Asim Saeed Sheikh, former President Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, Khawaja Muhammad Usman, Air University Head of Business Administration Dr. Abbas, BZU IMS Chairman Dr. Hassan Bucha, MNSUA Agri Business Assistant Professor Dr. Mubashir Mehdi, SBPACM Unit In-Charge Faheem Arshad, chamber members, and Director General e-Governance Punjab Information Technology Board Sajid Latif.

The resolution underscored the importance of information technology (IT) for economic development, innovation.

## OGRA notifies hike in LPG price

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Saturday notified a reduction in price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by Rs 7 per kg.

According to a recent notification issued by the OGRA, the new price for LPG is now set at Rs 244 per kilograms.

As a result of this increase, the cost of an 11.8 kg domestic cylinder has risen by Rs 82 and Rs 84, respectively. The new price for a domestic LPG cylinder of 11.8 kg will be available at Rs 2,879.

The revised prices will be in effect from the month of September, as per the notification issued by

OGRA. Last month, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has notified a reduction in price of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) by 8.50 per cent while increasing the rate of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) by 8.50pc for August.

The notification revealed that the LNG price for Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has been reduced by \$1.23 per MMBTU, setting the new price at \$13.39 per MMBTU.

## FAO's climate monitoring tower inaugurated in Multan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and co-financing from the Governments of Punjab and Sindh, inaugurated an Eddy Covariance Flux Tower at the Central Cotton Research Institute in Multan on August 31, 2024.

The flux tower installation is a key element in the project's objective to enhance Pakistan's capacity to monitor, analyze, and disseminate crucial climate, water, and agricultural data, essential for adapting to the impacts of climate change through a better understanding of climate and ecosystem dynamics.

The inauguration ceremony was jointly led by Ifitikhar Ali Sahoo, Secretary Agriculture, and Florence Rolle, FAO's Country Head in Pakistan. As part of an ongoing project that spans five districts in South Punjab and three in Sindh, FAO recently installed different state-of-the-art climate and water data collection

instruments to transform current agri-food production systems.

The Eddy Covariance Flux Tower, a new generation scientific instrument, measures the exchange of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, water vapour, and methane between the land surface and the atmosphere. The data it collects is vital for understanding carbon fluxes, evapotranspiration, and the energy balance within agricultural ecosystems. This information is crucial for assessing crop health, productivity, water use efficiency, and the environmental impact of agricultural practices.

Florence Rolle, during her speech, emphasized the importance of precise information and data for effective decision-making for government, research institutions and farmers in the face of climate change challenges. "The installation of this flux tower and other sophisticated instruments highlight FAO's commitment to support the digitalization of agriculture.



LAHORE: A man making vehicle keys on a machine in the provincial capital.

## LCCI urges immediate measures for revitalization of Tractor Industry

LAHORE (INP): The Senior Vice President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, has urged the government to take immediate steps to revitalize the tractor industry, which is currently facing severe challenges. He made this appeal during a meeting with a delegation led by Muhammad Naeem, Vice President of the Tractors Dealers Association of Pakistan.

The delegation informed the Senior Vice President that due to the lack of clarity in the policy regarding General Sales Tax (GST) on tractors by the Ministry of Finance and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), several plants in the tractor industry have been shut down, potentially leading to the unemployment of millions of households. The delegation further highlighted that, in a country where many mills and factories are already closed, unemployment and inflation have made life

difficult for the public, and now even operational units are being forced to shut down.

As of June 30, 2022, the GST on tractors was 5%, and the tax on parts was 17%. Currently, billions of rupees are owed by the FBR, which have yet to be paid. The FBR has stated that the tax is 5% on agricultural tractors and 18% on non-agricultural tractors.

The delegation further informed that the tax on tractors was eliminated from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024, but a 10% tax on tractors was re-imposed starting July 1, 2024. Now, the tax on parts is 18%, and the tax on tractors is 10%. Due to the lack of a clear policy from the FBR, uncertainty regarding refunds has arisen.

The Millat Tractors Association of Pakistan has made a strong appeal to the government to promptly provide a clear policy so that the closed plants of the tractor industry can reopen and unemployment can be reduced.

## RDA seals six illegal shops in National Market

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) while conducting an operation against rules violators sealed six shops in National Market in Asghar Mall Scheme.

According to a RDA spokesman, RDA Enforcement Squad in a targeted operation conducted against unauthorized commercial buildings on the directives of the Director General, RDA, Kinza Murtaza sealed illegal shops, constructed on Plot No. 15 and Plot No. S-16-B.

Assistant Director, Building Control, Building Inspectors, and other officials took part in the operation. The property owners, identified as Mohsin Hameed Shami and Nadeem Fazal Khan violated approved building plans and maps and constructed illegal shops.

Despite notices issued by the RDA, the owners continued to flout regulations, breaching the Punjab Development of Cities Act 1976 and the RDA Building and Zoning Regulations 2021 by constructing illegal commercial buildings.



RAWALPINDI: A vendor is preparing traditional food item Samosa Patti in his shop during rainy weather at Kashmiri Bazaar in the city.

## 16 cases registered for overpricing essentials in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): The price control magistrates have conducted inspections at 1,218 locations, leading to the arrest of three individuals for overpricing fruits, vegetables, and other essential items.

Lahore Deputy Commissioner (DC) Syed Musa Raza told the media on Saturday that 16 cases had been registered over violations of the government-set prices. Furthermore, fines totaling Rs 600,000 had been imposed for 152 instances

of non-compliance, he added.

The DC emphasized that price control magistrates and assistant commissioners were actively ensuring adherence to official rates. Supervision of the auction process in fruit and vegetable markets is also underway to prevent any malpractices. Administrative officers are ensuring the sale of fruits, vegetables, and bread at the government-approved prices.

## Death toll from Israeli raid in West Bank hits 20 on third day of operation

### Monitoring Desk

JERUSALEM: The death toll from a three-day Israeli raid on the occupied West Bank rose to 20 on Friday, Israel and the Palestinian health ministry said, while violence raged on in the Gaza Strip.

It came as US-based aid group Anera said an Israeli strike killed four Palestinians accompanying its convoy on Thursday. The Israeli military reported it had struck armed assailants.

The UN's World Food Programme on Wednesday said it had suspended aid operations after one of its vehicles was hit by an Israeli strike.

In the United States, Vice President Kamala Harris pledged she would not change Washington's policy of supplying weapons to Israel if elected to the top job in November. But she

stressed it was time to "end this war" in Gaza.

Israel has described its raids on towns and refugee camps across the northern West Bank as "counter-terrorism" operations.

They have killed at least 20 Palestinians since Wednesday, the military and the Palestinian health ministry said.

Palestinian militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad have said at least 13 of those killed were their fighters.

The military earlier said it killed three Hamas militants in an air strike near the northern city of Jenin on Friday.

It named one of them as the commander of the militant group in Jenin, Wissam Khazem.

Witnesses told AFP the strike hit a car in the town of Zababdeh, south-east of the city.

Israeli troops pulled back from other West Bank towns late Thursday but fighting raged on around Jenin, long a hub of militant activity.

On Friday evening an AFP photographer reported that gunfire and explosions were ongoing in Jenin.

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A Palestinian man holds a child, as the child is vaccinated against polio, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, at Nasser hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

## Russian attack on Ukraine's Kharkiv kills at least six

### Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russian strikes killed at least six people in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, local officials said on Friday. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia had dropped a guided bomb on the city and reiterated his call for Western allies to allow long-range attacks on Russian military air bases.

Later Friday, Ukrainian strikes on

Russia's Belgorod border region killed at least five and wounded 37, the region's governor said.

A Russian guided bomb attack on Ukraine's northeastern city of Kharkiv hit a residential building and a playground, killing six people and injuring at least 55 more, local authorities said.

Ihor Terekhov, the city's mayor, said on Telegram one child was killed in the playground.

## Russian helicopter with 22 on board goes missing in far east

### Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: A Russian helicopter with three crew members and 19 passengers on board has gone missing in the far eastern peninsula of Kamchatka, the emergency ministry said on Saturday.

The Mi-8T helicopter took off from a base near the Vachkazhets volcano and the crew failed to report at the scheduled time of 04:00 GMT, Interfax news agency reported, citing the federal air transport agency.

## At least 6 dead in Japan as Typhoon Shanshan grinds on

### Monitoring Desk

TOKYO: At least six people were dead as Typhoon Shanshan crept eastward through Japan on Saturday, drenching large areas with torrential rain, triggering landslides and flood warnings hundreds of kilometres from the storm's centre.

Footage on national broadcaster NHK showed homes with roofs partly sheered off while cars drove wheels-deep on flooded roads in the country's southwest.



Demonstrators toss a trash bin during an anti-immigration protest, in Rotherham, Britain.

## Turkiye's top diplomat attends first EU meeting in 5 years in bid to boost ties

### Monitoring Desk

ANKARA: Turkiye's foreign minister hopes to make progress on improving Ankara's rocky ties with the European Union on Thursday as he attends a meeting of EU ministers in Brussels for the first time in five years, a source from his ministry said.

Turkiye's two-decades-old bid to join the bloc has been frozen due to EU concerns over its human rights record alongside policy disputes in the eastern Mediterranean and over Cyprus. At the same time, the bloc depends on NATO member Turkiye's help, particularly on migration issues. Tensions in 2019 between EU-member Greece and Turkiye led to Brussels threatening sanctions against Ankara and cutting off some dialogue channels.

Ties have improved since 2021, with high-level talks restarting.

Ankara saw the EU's invitation to Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan as an effort to seek dialogue, the foreign ministry source said. Deeper ties "with the understanding that Turkiye is a candidate country" would benefit both sides, the source added.

Fidan will convey Turkiye's expectation that the "necessary will must be shown and concrete steps must be taken" to strengthen ties, the source said.

The meeting will include discussions on visas and modernising the EU-Turkiye Customs Union, the source added. Ankara has been calling for these talks to start for months, but little progress had been made.

## Ukraine first lady wants country's kids to see themselves as 'generation of winners' not war victims

### Monitoring Desk

UZHHOROD: Ukraine's first lady wants her country's children to view themselves not as a generation enduring a grinding war but rather as "a generation of winners."

On the sidelines of a day spent at a rehabilitation camp for Ukrainian children in the relatively safe western city of Uzhhorod, Olena Zelenska said Tuesday that working with the next generation was a moral obligation and a "strategic priority" for Ukraine's future.

Many of the children will return to front-line cities after spending a few weeks at the camp created by Voices of the Children charity, barely enough time to overcome the trauma they face over and over.

## Harris and Trump offer starkly different visions on climate change and energy

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: As the Earth sizzled through a summer with four of the hottest days ever measured, Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump have starkly different visions on how to address a changing climate while ensuring a reliable energy supply. But neither has provided many details on how they would get there.

During her acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention, Harris briefly mentioned climate change as she outlined "fundamental freedoms" at stake

in the election, including "the freedom to breathe clean air and drink clean water and live free from the pollution that fuels the climate crisis." As vice president, Harris cast the tie-breaking vote on the Inflation Reduction Act, President Joe Biden's landmark climate law that was approved with only Democratic support. As a senator from California, she was an early sponsor of the Green New Deal, a sweeping series of proposals meant to swiftly move the U.S. to fully green energy that is championed by the Democratic Party's most progressive wing.

## Berlin to toughen knife laws, cut benefits for illegal migrants

### Monitoring Desk

BERLIN: German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said on Thursday the government would toughen knife controls and curb benefits for some illegal migrants in response to incidents of stabbings.

Three people were killed and eight others injured at a festival in the western city of Solingen on Friday, in an attack allegedly carried out by a 26-year-old Syrian man with links to the militant Islamic State group.

The knife attack has inflamed the debate over immigration in Germany and put pressure on the government to act ahead of key regional elections on Sunday. The stabbing has "shocked us deeply", Faeser said at a press conference on Thursday alongside Justice Minister Marco Buschmann.

The threats highlighted by the attack demanded a packet of "tough measures", including tightening weapons controls and strengthening security services, Faeser said. Carrying knives at festivals, like the one in Solingen, as well as "sports events and other similar public events" will be banned, Faeser said.

There will be reasoned exceptions to the ban, including for those working in hospitality and performers, she added. Knives will also be banned on long-distance trains, the minister said, with police given more powers to search members of the public.

## US Army criticizes Trump staff over 'push' at cemetery visit

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: The US Army on Thursday took aim at Donald Trump's staff over a visit by the Republican presidential candidate to the country's most hallowed resting place for its war dead.

Trump went to the Arlington National Cemetery just outside Washington with family members of some of the 13 service members killed in a 2021 bombing during the last hours of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

His campaign posted photos from the visit, including one showing him giving a thumbs-up gesture while standing with relatives at the grave of one of the Marines killed.

## Probe is closed into owners of Pulse nightclub, where 49 died in mass shooting

### Monitoring Desk

ORLANDO: The Orlando Police Department has closed its investigation into the former owners of the Pulse nightclub without filing any charges. Victims' families and survivors of the killing of 49 patrons at the LGBTQ-friendly club had asked law enforcement to investigate them for possible criminal culpability.

No charges will be filed against former owners Barbara and Rosario Poma because probable cause didn't

exist for involuntary manslaughter by culpable negligence, the Orlando police said this week in an emailed statement. About two dozen people, mostly survivors and family members of those who died in the 2016 shooting, gave statements to investigators. They said that building plans weren't available to first responders during the three hours hostages were held in the club and that unpermitted renovations and building modifications had occurred.

## Iceland volcano eruption raises pollution fears, spa evacuated

### Monitoring Desk

COPENHAGEN: A volcano spewed lava and smoke over southwestern Iceland for a second day on Friday raising fears of spreading pollution hours after its eruption forced the evacuation of a spa resort.

Fountains of glowing molten rock shot into the night sky when the volcano first erupted on the Reykjanes peninsula on Thursday.

The flow from the volcano has since slowed, Rikke Pedersen, head of the Nordic Volcanological Centre, said. "We have a quite intense fountaining and high output in the beginning and it rapidly declines, but that doesn't tell us anything

about how long it will last." The meteorological office warned that wind could carry gas pollution from the eruption towards the south and southeast.

The nearby Blue Lagoon spa, which has large outdoor pools heated by geothermal energy, was evacuated late on Thursday and said it remained closed on Friday.

"We just went there as tourists looking for a good day," said real estate broker Dennis Murphy, from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, who was there with his daughter.

"The next thing you know, the ground is exploding right next to us," the 53-year-old said.

## Catholics face a shortage of priests

### Monitoring Desk

MAUMERE: Arnoldus Yansen thought for certain he was going to become a Catholic priest, just like his older brother, cousin and uncle. He attended St. Peter Major Seminary, a bastion of priestly vocations located in the middle of a jungle on Flores, a predominantly Catholic island in Muslim-majority Indonesia. Known familiarly as Ritapiret Seminary, St. Peter Major has produced 13 bishops, more than 580 diocesan priests and 23 deacons in nearly 70 years of existence. A former seminarian Arnoldus Yansen works on a computer at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology in Maumere.

## Second exec to appeal against conviction in IMDB fraud case

### Monitoring Desk

ZURICH: A second executive convicted in Switzerland for his involvement in a \$1.8 billion fraud against Malaysian sovereign wealth fund IMDB will appeal against the judgement, his lawyers said.

Patrick Mahony, a Swiss-British national, was sentenced to six years by the Federal Criminal Court on Wednesday. The court found him guilty of fraud, criminal mismanagement, and money laundering.

## IAEA chief hopes to meet Iran's new president soon to kickstart dialogue

### Monitoring Desk

VIENNA: The head of the UN's nuclear watchdog hopes to visit Iran soon for talks with newly-elected Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, according to a confidential report seen by AFP.

Tensions between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have repeatedly flared since a 2015 deal curbing Tehran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanction relief fell apart.

In recent years, Tehran has decreased its cooperation with the IAEA by deactivating surveillance devices needed to monitor the nuclear programme, and barred UN inspectors.

In the report, IAEA

head Rafael Grossi said he hoped "an early visit" to Iran would help the "establishment of a fluid, constructive dialogue that swiftly leads to concrete results".

Following his election in July, Pezeshkian indicated that he would meet with Grossi "at the appropriate juncture", the report said.

Grossi last visited Iran in May, in a bid to improve cooperation with Tehran, which was at a level he described at the time as "completely unsatisfactory".

But the death of the former president Ebrahim Raisi put planned talks to resolve the impasse over Iran's nuclear programme on hold.

## Chinese and Philippine vessels collide at a disputed atoll and governments trade accusations

### Monitoring Desk

TAIPEI: China and the Philippines accused each other of causing a collision between their two vessels Saturday in the latest flareup of tensions over disputed waters and maritime features in the South China Sea.

In a statement posted on social media, Chinese coast guard spokesperson Liu Dejun was quoted as saying that a Philippine ship maneuvered and "deliberately collided" with a Chinese coast guard ship "in an unprofessional and dangerous manner".

Philippine officials in Manila said it was their coast guard ship, the BRP Teresa Magbanua, that was rammed thrice by the Chinese coast guard without any provocation, causing damage to the Philippine vessel.

The Philippine ship, the Magbanua, has been anchored in Sabina since mid-April after Manila suspected that China may construct a structure to seize the uninhabited atoll. China harbored the same suspicions and recently filed a diplomatic protest against the Philippines due to the ship's prolonged presence at the shoal.

China is rapidly expanding its military and has become increasingly assertive in pursuing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, which is crucial to international trade.

## Pacific leaders remove Taiwan from communique after China complaint

### Monitoring Desk

SYDNEY: The Pacific Islands Forum has removed references to Taiwan from a communique issued on Friday after the region's annual leaders meeting, following complaints by China's envoy, in what the government in Taipei condemned as a "rude intervention".

The bloc of 18 nations includes three members with diplomatic ties to Taiwan and 15 members who recognise China, a major infrastructure lender to Pacific Islands countries where Beijing is seeking to increase its security presence.

China says Taiwan is one of its provinces with no right to state-to-state relations, a position the democratically governed island strongly disputes.

A communique released on Friday on the forum's website included a section headed "Relations with the Taiwan/Republic of China", stating "Leaders reaffirmed the 1992 Leaders decision on relations with the Taiwan/Republic of China".

The communique was removed from the website on Friday evening after an angry response from China, and a new document was posted on Saturday morning with the references to Taiwan removed.

The forum's secretariat did not respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Taiwan's foreign ministry expressed anger at China's actions.

"Taiwan condemns China's rude and unreasonable intervention and irrational behaviour that undermines regional peace and stability and calls on all like-minded countries to pay close attention to China's actions," it said in a statement. However, the ministry noted that the joint communique as published did not undermine Taiwan's status at the forum nor preclude it from participating in the future.

A development partner to the forum since 1993, Taiwan sent Tien Chung-kwang, its deputy foreign minister to Tonga.

## Poland's PiS pleads for donations after illegal spending penalties

### Monitoring Desk

WARSAW: Lawmakers from Poland's nationalist opposition party Law and Justice (PiS) will give it part of their salaries, its deputy head said on Friday after penalties for its misuse of state funds left it in dire financial straits.

The electoral commission on Thursday decided to slash tens of millions of zlotys from PiS's funding, saying it had illegally used state money in its 2023 general election campaign.

PiS deputy head Mariusz Blaszczak said that lawmakers in both houses of the Polish parliament and the European Parliament would give the party part of their salary.

"PiS lawmakers will be supporting our party financially through donations starting in September," Blaszczak told a press conference. "MPs and Senators will pay a minimum of 1,000 zlotys (\$260) per month, and MEPs a minimum of 5,000 zlotys."

PiS leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski said the commission's decision was "scandalous". He called on "Polish patriots" to support the party financially

in a bid to stop Donald Tusk's pro-European Civic Coalition (KO) from winning a presidential election scheduled for next year.

The electoral commission said that PiS illegally spent 3.6 million zlotys (\$931,000) on the 2023 electoral campaign. It listed electioneering at events designed to encourage military recruitment and an advert from the justice ministry as examples of misuse of funds.

As punishment, PiS will lose around 10 million zlotys (\$2.6 million) from the funding related to its 2023 election performance, and will also lose about 10 million zlotys per year in annual funding until the end of the current parliamentary term in 2027. It will also have to repay the money it spent illegally.

The commission warned that it could lose annual funding completely. The head of Tusk's office, Jan Grabiec, was unsympathetic about PiS's problems.

"It would have been enough not to steal," he wrote on social media platform X. "Then there would be no need to whine now."



Demonstrators protest against the participation of Republican presidential nominee and former U.S. President Donald Trump in the National Association of Black Journalists convention, outside the venue in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.

## Ahsan Iqbal stresses joint efforts to cope with present-day challenges

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Saturday emphasised joint efforts to steer the country out of present-day challenges and put it on the path to progress and economic development.

He was addressing as the chief guest at the launching ceremony of a book: "ICMA's Economic Vision and Strategy: Building a Brighter Future for Pakistan", published by ICMA Research and Publication Wing here at ICMA (Institute of Cost and Management Accountants) Campus.

Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan has vast resources and potential, but there was a need to focus on productivity, quality, and innovation to enhance competitiveness, profitability, and economic development. He said that Prime Minister would soon present a national development programme to the nation, adding that government is well aware of the country's and the people's problems; however, "we all have to use our best skills with responsibility to resolve these issues, while keeping in view the root causes of

the prevailing disappointment among us. Pakistan is rich with resource and Pakistanis are well known in many countries of the world as talented and intelligent people, so we have the ability to resolve our problems in a better manner". He was of view that one's self-esteem and positive thinking can elevate one to the skies, while the one with damaged self-esteem and lack of quest would fail despite having all resources.

The federal minister remarked that increasing country's exports is the only way to achieve economic growth, adding that export-led growth strategy, consistency in economic policies, and political stability continuity couple with joint endeavors of all the stakeholders and quest for the country's development and people's prosperity could rank Pakistan in the world's top economies.

The minister mentioned that World Economic Forum, in its recent report, termed misinformation as the biggest threat to the world countries and their economies, asserting that chaos and anarchy were being spread through psychological warfare in the countries to demoralised

their nations and jeopardise their economies. Pakistan is also a victim of the phenomenon, he said and remarked that nations could sustain economic crisis and pull themselves out of these problems but a society having all resources but with damaged self-esteem can never get on its feet.

Ahsan Iqbal said that everyone could differ from one's opinion and one could not claim one's opinion as ultimate, and when difference of opinion was not tolerated, it leads to hatred among people and destroys the social fabric. A party and its top leader used to trample upon those who would differ from his opinion, and subject its political opponent to severe character assassination through social media and create hate for them among the people. The previous PML-N government brought everything in order till 2017, he said and cited that then PML-N government, through effective and well-conceived policies, had eliminated the menace of terrorism, overcome the power load-shedding, brought huge foreign investment through CPEC in Pakistan, controlled the inflation and improve all economic indicators.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives of Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal is talking to the media at ICMA.

## Govt paid nearly one trillion rupees in capacity payments to IPPs since 2015

ISLAMABAD (INP): The government has reportedly paid nearly one trillion rupees in capacity payments to 26 gas, RLNG, and RFO-based Independent Power Producers (IPPs) over the past decade, starting from 2015. According to documents cited by Business Recorder, these IPPs were established under power generation policies from 1994 and earlier, as well as from 1994 and 2002.

Gas and RLNG-based power plants received a total of Rs. 536.30 billion in capacity payments over ten years. Among the recipients were Kabirwala Power, which received Rs. 14.271 billion; Liberty Dharki Power Limited, Rs. 25.5 billion; Roush Pak Power Limited, Rs. 60 billion; Uch Power Limited, Rs. 77.314 billion; Uch-II, Rs. 120.137

billion; Foundation Power, Rs. 37.9 billion; Sapphire, Rs. 39.377 billion; Saif Power, Rs. 38.80 billion; Orient, Rs. 39 billion; Engro Powergen, Rs. 35.373 billion; and Halmore, Rs. 48.374 billion.

Other significant payments included Rs. 205.034 billion to Hub Power Company Limited, Rs. 167 billion to Kot Addu Power, Rs. 15.087 billion to Kohinoor Energy, Rs. 52.081 billion to Lalpur Energy, Rs. 50.834 billion to Pakgen Limited, Rs. 17.833 billion to Saba Power Limited, Rs. 43.173 billion to Atlas Power, Rs. 26.882 billion to Attock Gen, Rs. 46.216 billion to Liberty Power Tech Limited, Rs. 53.909 billion to Narawal Energy Limited, Rs. 41.420 billion to Nishat Chunan

Power Limited, and Rs. 39.791 billion to Nishat Power Limited.

During a meeting chaired by Senator Mohsin Aziz, Senator Shibli Faraz questioned the substantial payments made to Roush Power Limited, Uch Power, and Hubco Power.

Officials from the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) explained that the payments were made based on the production capacity of these plants.

They further stated that detailed capacity payment records have been provided to the committee, but the remaining ten years of data are being retrieved from older records. They have requested one month to gather and present these figures to the committee.



QUETTA: Opposition leader Mir Younis Aziz Zehri, Chairman PAC Asghar Ali Tareen and MPA Mir Rehmat Ali Baloch meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai

## Delegation of senior judges visits Pak Embassy in Washington

WASHINGTON (Online): Justice Shahid Waheed, a senior judge of the Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan, along with high level delegation visited Pakistan embassy in Washington.

Newly appointed Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Rizwan Saeed Sheikh received a high-level delegation headed by Justice Shahid Waheed. The honorable judges of Lahore, Sindh, Peshawar, Islamabad high courts, judges of district judiciary and additional attorney general were included in the delegation.

Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Rizwan Saeed Sheikh re-

ceived a high-level delegation headed by Honourable Justice Shahid Waheed, a senior judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, in Washington.

Martina Poláček, Secretary General of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) at the World Bank, Zamrak Khan and members of Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) of the US Department of Commerce were accompanying the delegation.

The delegation is currently visiting the United States to interact with their counterparts with a focus on exchange of knowledge

and expertise in strengthening domestic and cross-border dispute settlement environment, improving contract enforcement, reducing court backlog, and ensuring efficient and effective access to justice for all Pakistani citizens, businesses, and investors.

Welcoming the delegation, Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh highlighted the upward trajectory of Pak-US relations and underscored the significance of high level exchanges between Pakistan and the United States towards strengthening multifaceted ties and capacity building for better service delivery and dispensation of justice.

## PDMA reports 88 dead, 129 injured in monsoon rains across KP

PESHAWAR (INP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has released a report detailing the impact of monsoon rains across the province from July 1 to date.

According to the PDMA report, the heavy rains have resulted in 88 fatalities, including 43 children, 19 women, and 26 men.



QUETTA: Provincial President Pakhtoonkhwa National Awami Party Nasrullah Khan Zarey meeting with President Press Club Abdul Khaliq Rind and senior journalist Saleem Shahid

Additionally, 129 people have been injured, comprising 61 children, 29 women, and 39 men.

The report also indicated that the rains have completely destroyed 260 homes and partially damaged 698 houses in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Furthermore, 7 schools and 85 other properties have suffered damage. A total of 147 livestock have also been killed in various incidents.

## 375 Pakistani pilgrims land in Karachi from Baghdad

KARACHI (INP): As many as 375 Pakistani pilgrims who were stranded in Iraq's Baghdad Airport came back to Pakistan in the early hours of Saturday.

Out of total 654 pilgrims, more than half were sent back to country after Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain contacted Pakistan's Ambassador in Iraq Zeeshan Ahmad for ensuring safe returns of the stranded devotees.

Those who were left behind during the first flight are expected to arrive by 2:45pm.

According to sources, all arrangements have been made in this regard.

It must be noted that flights carrying Pakistani pilgrims in Iraq were postponed at the eleventh hour, keeping passengers on wait for many hours.

## Pakistan tells OIC India trying to strengthen control over Kashmir thru intimidation and fear

FO secretary calls for India to release all political detainees, lift restrictions on political activities in Kashmir

YAOUNDÉ (INP): Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi has informed the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) about the situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, noting that India was trying to strengthen control over the disputed territory by fostering an environment of intimidation and fear.

Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi led a delegation to the two-day OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Cameroon.

On the sidelines, he also briefed a meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir, chaired by Secretary General Houssein Ibrahim Taha, about the situation in IIOJK, which witnessed administrative changes in 2019 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government revoked its special

constitutional status. "The foreign secretary outlined India's attempt to consolidate its occupation over Kashmir in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including by creating an environment of intimidation and fear," the foreign office said.

Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi urged India to release all political prisoners and lift curbs on political parties, as he referred to some of the measures taken by New Delhi since revoking the territory's special constitutional status.

The Contact Group also adopted a joint communique unanimously underlining that durable peace and stability in South Asia remain contingent upon the final settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute per UN Security Council resolutions.



QUETTA: Chief of Haq Do Tehreek MPA Maulana Hidayatur Rehman, Maulana Abdul Hameed Mansoor, Abdul Wali Shakir and others addressing a Press conference

## President pays tribute to Syed Shah Geelani on his 3rd death anniversary

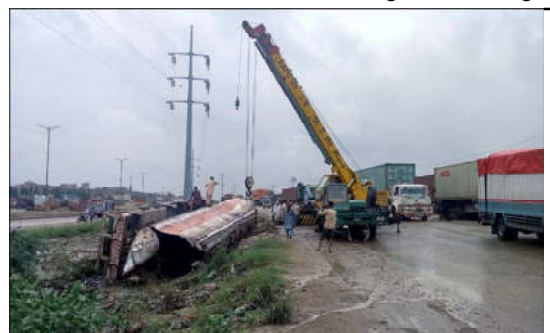
ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday paid tribute to heroic struggle of iconic Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani for the rights of the oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) on his third death anniversary.

In a message, the president pointed out that Syed Ali Geelani was a beacon of hope and resistance, inspiring countless Kashmiris to stand firm in their quest for self-determination. "His tireless efforts and sacrifices for the just cause of the Kashmiri people will forever be etched in our hearts and minds."

He said Syed Ali Shah Geelani was a great leader and his commitment to the right to self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir was unyielding.

Despite being subjected to house arrests and incarceration by the Indian Occupation Forces, the president said that he continued to raise his voice for the people of IIOJK. "His personal hardships, including years of confinement, could not break his spirit or deter him from his mission."

President Zardari added that "Geelani Sahib remained focused on the ultimate goal, and never allowed the attention of the Kashmiri people to be diverted from the pursuit of their fundamental right to self-determination. The legacy of Syed Ali Shah Geelani is a powerful driving force that continues to inspire the people of IIOJK. His leadership and unwavering stance against oppression have left a lasting impression on the people of IIOJK".



HUB: Rescue officials are busy rescue operation after traffic accident due to over speeding, at Hub River road.

## Mach and surrounding areas devastated by floods, hundreds of houses damaged

Independent Report

MACH: The recent floods in Mach and surrounding areas have caused widespread destruction, with hundreds of houses damaged and several lives affected. The Bolan Highway has been closed for 72 hours, leaving thousands of vehicles stranded.

The floods have also damaged the gas pipeline, leaving Machh city without gas supply. The restoration work has not started yet due to the on-going floods. However, a 12-inch pipeline has been restored to supply gas to Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. The affected areas include Smallani

Colony, Mach Geshtri, Bodil, Ab Gumbaz, Jamia Khan, Kolpur, Dozan, Hirak, and several other villages. The residents are without shelter and aid.

The Machh Bridge is also on the verge of collapse due to the floods, posing a threat to the lives of people.

The coal business has also been affected, leaving thousands of laborers without work. The Suigas Southern Gas Officer, Talal Baloch, said that the restoration work on the gas pipeline will start once the water level in the river recedes. The repair work may take at least a week to complete.

## Justice Mansoor leaves for US

ISLAMABAD (Online): Senior most judge of Supreme Court (SC) Justice Mansoor Ali Shah has left for US. Sources said Justice Mansoor Ali Shah will participate in legal seminar in US and deliver lecture therein.

## DC visits flood affected areas in Nasirabad

Independent Report NASIRABAD: Deputy Commissioner Nasirabad, Munir Ahmed Kakar, along with Assistant Commissioner Dera Murad Jamali, Ajmal Khan Mandokhail, visited the flood-affected areas of Manjoshori. During the visit, they assessed the damage caused by the floods and instructed the relevant authorities to start relief work immediately.

## District Admin cracks down on hoarders, profiteers in Sibi

Independent Report. SIBI: The district administration of Sibi has launched a crackdown on hoarders and profiteers in the area. Assistant Commissioner Sibi, Saifuddin Khosa, along with other officials, conducted a surprise visit to the market and checked the prices of essential commodities.

## Heavy rain fills Hub Dam nears to its capacity

HUB (INP): The water level in Hub Dam has reached 339 feet which is only one foot short of filling, reported on Saturday.

According to Irrigation Department, after 339 feet water level it will start to flow from the spillway. Due to rains in the catchment area, flood water entered the dam.

In this regard the Irrigation Department has issued an alert for the Hub River.

After discharge from

the spillway, the water will be carried to the sea through the Hub River, Irrigation officials said.

The Irrigation authorities warned the residents around the Hub River to avoid going into the Hub River.

Residents around the Hub River should take precautionary measures as well, Irrigation officials advised. Water can be released from the spillway of hub dam at any time, Irrigation authorities alerted.

## NA-138 Lahore IHC nullifies EC decision for not providing counter foil of ballot papers

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has nullified order of Election Commission (EC) for not providing counter foil of ballot papers of NA-128 Lahore.

Chief Justice (CJ) of IHC Justice Aamer Farooq has issued written order of the petition regarding provision of counter foil of ballot papers of NA-128 Lahore.

It is mentioned in court decision the petitioner resorted to EC to acquire counter foil of ballot papers in respect of NA-128 Lahore.

EC rejected the petition for provision of counter foil on April 26. According to rule the

petitioner can review counter foil and attested copies as well.

The court maintained the stance of EC too is correct that the matter of NA-128 is pending hearing in tribunal.

According to EC, the election tribunal can call all the record including counter foil any time.

IHC said in its decision the documents can slip hither and thither due to scrutiny of counter foil. However EC can obtain permission from Election tribunal with reference to provision of counter foil. EC can implement proper rules and regulations with reference to review of counter foil.

## Noshervani visits Levies Line Khuzdar

Independent Report KHUZDAR: Provincial Minister for Finance and Minerals, Mir Shoaib Noshervani, visited the Levies Line in Khuzdar and met with the officers and jawans.

He praised the Levies Force for their role in maintaining law and order in the province and announced the provision of 10 motorcycles to enhance their patrolling capabilities.

## Jattak condoles death of Hassan Raisani

Independent Report QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Central Executive Committee member of Pakistan People's Party, Haji Ali Madad Jatak, along with Abdul Qadir Sasoli, Mir Wali Muhammad Qalandrani, and Noor Hasan Jatak, expressed their condolences and offered Fateha on the passing of political and tribal leader Wadera Hassan Raisani. They prayed for the deceased to be granted Jannatul-Firdous and for the family to be given sabr-e-jameel. Meanwhile Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Haji Ali Madad Jatak, visited the residence of PPP Quetta Division's Vice President, Jabbarkhel, to offer condolences on the passing of his father. He offered Fateha for the deceased's soul.



QUETTA: Relatives of missing persons holding a protest demonstration in front of Quetta Press Club

## 41st International Milad Conference to be held at Minar-e-Pakistan on Sept 15

LAHORE (INP): The 41st International Milad Conference, organised by Minhaj-ul-Quran International, would take place at Minar-e-Pakistan on September 15.

Minhaj-ul-Quran International Deputy Secretary-General Jawad Hamid, along with other leaders, visited Minar-e-Pakistan to review the arrangements.

They inspected the stage, venue, entry points, security, parking, and other logistics.

Sheikh-ul-Islam Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri would deliver a special address at the conference.

Jawad Hamid stated that every effort would be made to ensure that the venue at Minar-e-Pakistan was beautifully decorated for the conference.

Religious scholars from Egypt, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Iran would also participate.

Hamid further mentioned that the conference was expected to be a significant milestone for the unity of the Muslim Ummah.

He further told that a request has been submitted to the District Administration for the permission to organise the event.

## Anti-state forces directly involved in Balochistan violence: Rana Sanullah

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs, Rana Sanullah has said that the anti-state forces are directly involved in Balochistan violence and they will be dealt with iron hands.

The SAPM on Saturday along with Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar visited Rana Farm House Muridke to condole the death of Rana Afzal

Hussain, elder brother of Federal Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain and father of MNA Rana Ahmed Ateeq Anwar. Talking to media on the occasion, Rana Sanullah said that those involved in creating anarchy and lawlessness in Balochistan would have to face the consequences.

He said that no directions have been given for afflicting the founder PTI in jail.



KHARAN: Provincial Minister for Finance Mir Shoaib Noshervani visiting Divisional Headquarter Hospital